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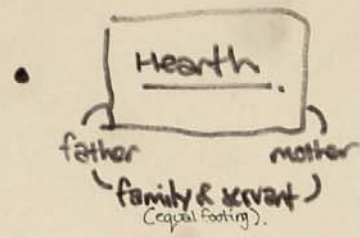
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Inthrow is one of five visual art projects within a programme that has formed the On the Edge research, hosted by Gray's School of Art and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Board. This research is interested in evolving and testing fresh thinking and approaches to the visual arts. All the projects take place in remote rural places and offer different artistic outcomes. Key to the investigation is the concern to produce work of quality.

Anne Douglas

HEARTH
COMPONENTS



- EVENINGS AT THE FIRESIDE — prepar
- place
- knitting
- the m
- SONG
- POETRY
- ORAL

inthrow

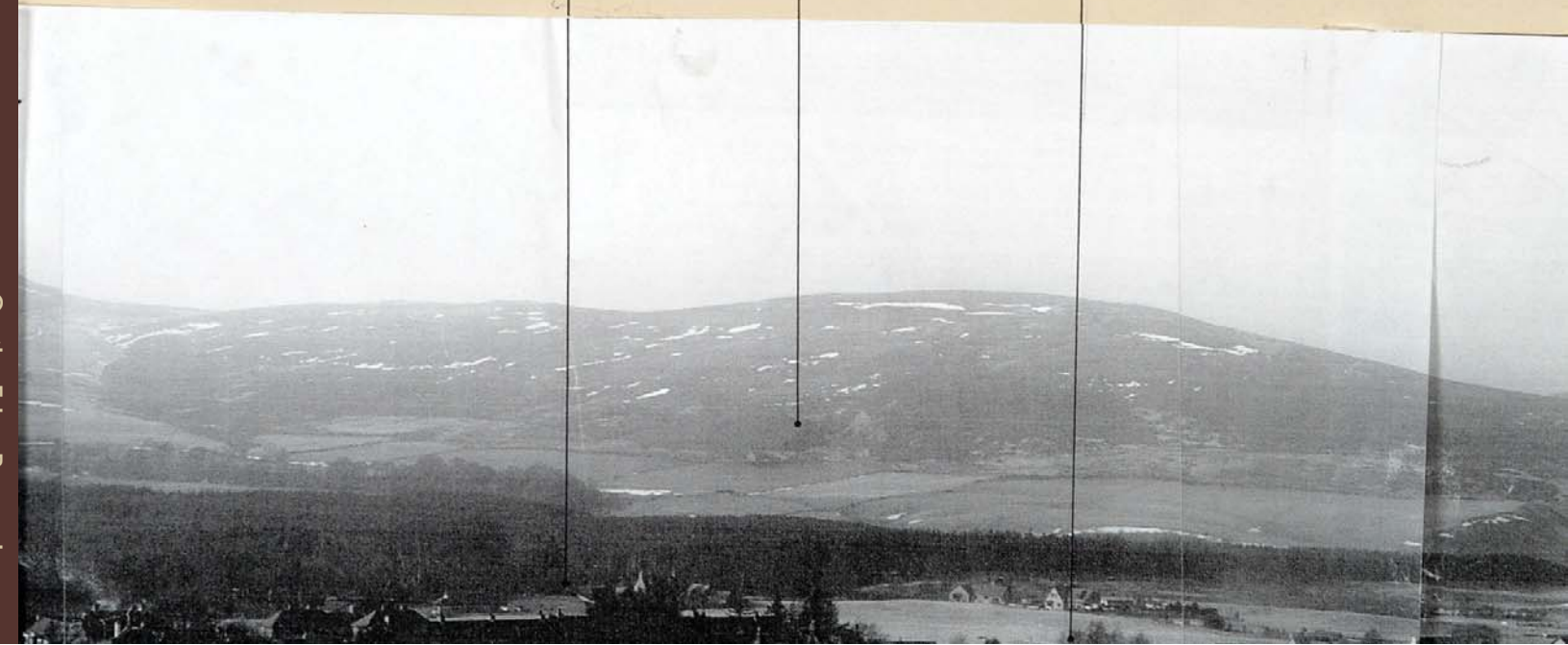
inthrow

TORSTONE - AGRARIAN HEARTH

FIELD-INDICATOR

FAT'S FARM

S.S.W



On the Edge Research

On the Edge

Visual Arts Research

The term 'on the edge' both defines geographical and therefore social and cultural circumstances as well as a critical positioning. Each project takes risks by suspending belief and allowing outcomes and output to emerge from the interaction and playfulness of its participants. In other words, the 'edge' is a quality of engagement.

www.ontheedgeresearch.org

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Most of the material for the Whitehillock DJ performance is taken from original compositions and recordings by Norman Shaw (nimrod33), including the two pieces produced in collaboration with Willie Thompson and Stevie Wilson, local participants in the *Inthrow* DJ workshop.

Special thanks are due to Willie and Stevie who so enthusiastically engaged with the project, and Duncan Hart for recording the performance; plus the audience.

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Aberdeenshire
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artsdevelopment

Special thanks also to those who gave permission for the use of their music:

Excerpts from WAULKING SONGS FROM BARRA, CDTRAX 9003 in the Scottish Tradition Series published by Greentrax Recordings Limited, including "Robh thu 'sa' bheinn?" (Were you in the mountains?) and "Is moch an diugh a rinn mi gluasad" (Early today I set out) were used with the permission of the School of Scottish Studies Archives, University of Edinburgh, and representatives of the singers.

Peter Christopherson of Coil for '7-Methoxy-B-Carboline (Telepathine)' (Eskaton, 1998); David Michael of Current 93 for 'In an English Garden' (Durtro, World Serpent, 1999)

'Bandy's Roup' transcription used with kind permission of the North East Folklore Archive, Aberdeenshire.

4 Preface: A Long Conversation

Anne Douglas, Chris Fremantle and Gavin Renwick

6 Foreword: Hearth and Heart

Dr Ian Hunter

8 Architecture of the Project

Gavin Renwick

10 The Geographical Location of the Project Inthrow

Chris Fremantle and Anne Douglas

Living in the north east of Scotland

What kind of opportunity did the On the Edge research framework provide?

The thinking and organisation of the Scottish Sculpture Workshop (SSW) – the research challenge

Developing a new concept of an arts organisation: Imagine Lumsden

Valuing traditional knowledge in revealing change – tools and methods

The idea of a living archive for the village

Listening and the Vernacular

26 The Summary of Human Settlement: Cultural Continuity in Strathbogie

Enabling others: multiple minds, hands and eyes

34 A DJ Workshop on the Hills - A Sonorous Landscape

Heather Delday and Norman Shaw

46 Photography as the Lens of the Project

Gavin Renwick

Bandy's Roup – the ballad

55 The Research Perspective

Anne Douglas and Chris Fremantle

On the Edge programme - a new question

58 Bibliography





Preface: A Long Conversation

Anne Douglas

Chris Fremantle and I lived in Lumsden with our respective families for a number of years. Within that period Chris was the Director of the Scottish Sculpture Workshop (SSW). We talked a great deal about closing the gap between the work of the Scottish Sculpture Workshop and our living in the village in and among neighbours and friends. Willie Petrie introduced us to the poetry of the Doric. His wife showed us the true meaning of 'neighbour'. Pat Dunn lent his way of life as a farmer to Inthrow. His retirement from farming and that of his wife Jean as health care worker has led to a shared interest of developing a beautiful garden in a space that was once part of a field. Sally and John Thomson continue their deep commitment to family and the valuing of the young people of the village. In distinctive ways their way of life enriched ours and fuelled the experience of the project.

Chris introduced us, the village, to Gavin during the development of the third Bridge project, Owegaeing (1998). Gavin was the first artist whose interests could take forward the tentative repositioning of sculpture within everyday living that Chris and I had outlined. Gavin reconnected the village to its surroundings, in particular its deep historical roots. Chris co-opted other artists and inhabitants into the process, opening up a space for deeper exploration. I feel that we have all gained a sophisticated expectation of the role of 'artist'. We have to think carefully how we develop this expectation appropriately.

Chris Fremantle

I first met Gavin in Dundee. I had started a programme of what SSW called Bridge projects.¹ The aim was to bring together artists and others over a month in the summer, promote collaborative working, avoid predefined outcomes, document and publish the workings. I asked, amongst others, Arthur Watson for recommendations for project leaders and he suggested that I come down and hear the lecture of a new research student. Gavin spent two hours with a couple of overhead projectors talking us through *Whaur Extremes Meet*.² I was stunned. The whole approach that this project had developed resonated in so many ways. The workshop that Gavin led in 1998 changed my thinking about the role of SSW. I began to see a political role for the organisation, raising questions about rural change. It took a while for the realignment to work through. Anne Douglas and I got to know each other as neighbours and as collaborators, initially through a research project at Gray's School of Art, entitled 'Room with a View'. We developed a discussion about the role of artists working in rural locations. The opportunity to bring these threads together occurred in 2001 through the development of a programme of change for the organisation. This coincided with the development of *On The Edge Research Project*.

Gavin Renwick

After a public talk in Dundee a demonstrative American with an English accent invited me to Lumsden, Aberdeenshire. He turned out to be the director of the Scottish Sculpture Workshop, his name Chris Fremantle. The artist Arthur Watson had been the strategist and this apparent casual meeting his intention. Unknown to Chris and myself at the time our discussion and creative sparring would continue until the present day. Despite my title being 'artist' and his role being one of 'enabler' our relationship became what could be more accurately described as collaborative. My practice originated in collaboration and, with hindsight, Chris's offer ironically provided one of the first opportunities for me to develop a singular practice within my newfound role of Ph.D. candidate. In many ways Chris required me to be an intermediary; between disciplines and between the SSW and its host community. The resulting project, a one month workshop for artists and architects, was an intense inquiry into place. For me this engagement was to prove a catalyst for an ongoing enthrallment with Strathdon and its inhabitants.

1 Scottish Sculpture Workshop, Bridge Projects, 1996-1999.

2 A multi-disciplinary collaboration between Gavin Renwick, architect, and Wendy Gunn, artist. An outcome of this research-led-practice, initiated in Turkey, was a nomadic debating chamber which was erected in Istanbul, Athens, Belgrade, Budapest, Prague, Berlin, and Glasgow throughout 1990.

Foreword: Heart and Hearth

Dr Ian Hunter | Director of Littoral

Littoral is a non-profit-making trust which aims to develop new arts projects in response to issues about social, environmental, and cultural change.
www.littoral.org.uk.

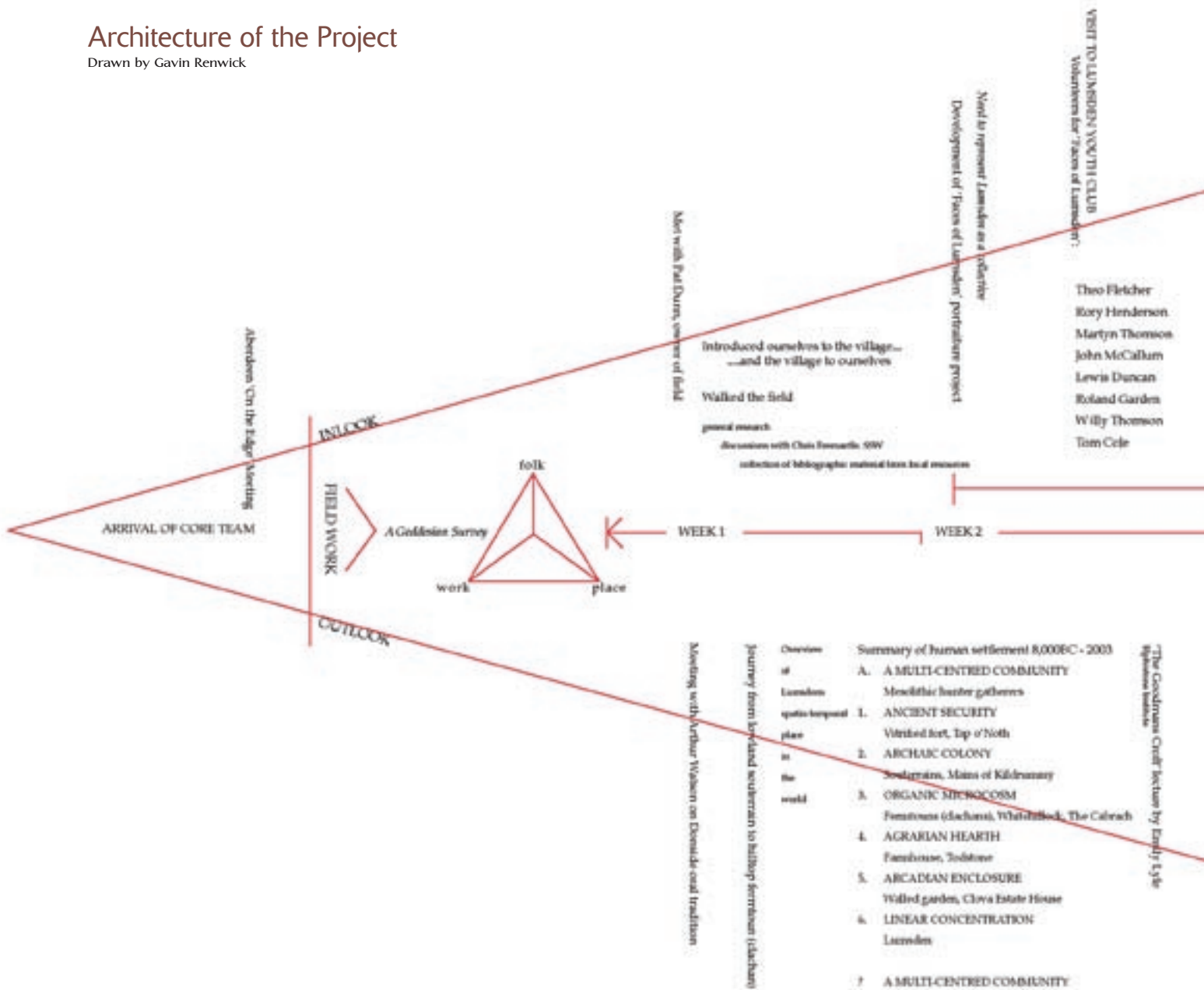
I first came across Gavin Renwick as part of the 'Whaur Extremes Meet' project, which he and artist colleague Wendy Gunn designed and then took across the capitals of Europe on the back of a pantechnicon van, some time in the early 1990s. Basically, a hybrid piece of demountable architecture/theatre/sculpture, the project functioned primarily as a temporary meeting place or public platform that could be driven right into the heart of any town or city. It could be quickly set up to facilitate and catalyse a new critical urban discourse or public space for civic dialogue, then demounted almost instantly and away again. Of course it was a much more complicated, sophisticated and politically astute project than space allows here for full discussion. But, in many ways it anticipates some of the methodologies and creative strategies that Gavin has continued with, and refined, as part of the INTHROW project i.e. a deceptive lightness of touch, a resolute sense of fitness of purpose, a radically pared down economy of means, an empathy for the ordinary, and an acuity for 'deep listening-in'. This, combined with a sophisticated use of conversational drift (Helen and Newton Harrison) and the dialogic aesthetic (Grant Kester), drives his acute eye (and ear) for the (often invisible) fault lines that connect up the tacky realms of vested interests and professional sycophancy, and pervades and preserves the power relationships and dominant ideologies of the establishment; be they lairds, ladies, lawyers, lecturers, landowners or lollards.

INTHROW is a fine work which has been admirably executed by an artist who demonstrably deeply loves and dwells readily and easily within the region of his concerns. I think that Gavin in partnership/dialogue with Sergio Rodrigues (a photographer), Norman Shaw (a sound artist), Pat Dunn and Willie Petrie (two inhabitants of Lumsden) and indeed the many others involved, has succeeded in grounding a project which has achieved that critical bridging (I would want to argue 'binding') process so necessary in connecting academe and non academic worlds, project partners and the communities in which they are located, global networks and local communities... Invoking the notion of dwelling one must, of course, also acknowledge Martin Heidegger's concept of *Dasein* (Being and Time, 1962). *Dasein* is further translated as that state of fullness of 'being or dwelling in the world' or of 'being in a field of care', which also brings with it a 'thrownness' and 'disclosure' in and of the world itself. Heavy stuff, as they would say in the pub in Huntly! However, Gavin's project in achieving some of these qualities, cuts through all the crap and, pointing us to the 'heart and hearth' of the matter, astutely raises once again the central question: Mortals live by saving the earth... (but) saving does not only (mean) snatching something from danger. To save really means to set something free in its own existence (Heidegger, 1977, p328)

Or as Pat Dunn would put it '... if they dinnae know about things, there's nothing to be said'

Architecture of the Project

Drawn by Gavin Renwick



INITIATION OF PAIRED INTERVIEWS

Pat Dunn
Willie Petrie
Edith Petrie
Albert Ellis
Barbara McHardy
Bella Anderson
Jim Kenworthy
Alfred Doric Group

Other participants
reciprocal presentation

Patricia requests home scene videos to be interviewed
Additional cultural house visit

Historical tour of London with Albert Ellis

CONSTRUCTION OF ROCKET CASE

Theo Fletcher
Rory Henderson
Martyn Thomson
Eoghain Fiddes
Neil Kane

Submission of dissertation: answer home scene 2007

ADDITIONAL 'On the Edge' meeting

Discussion of post reading, the first for 30 years
Visit to industrial landscape, studios and houses
Pat Dunn

WEEK 3

WEEK 4

- Alford Doric Group
- € Bella Anderson
- Υ Tom Cole
- o Heather Delday (3)
- o Anne Douglas
- Υ Lewis Duncan
- € Jean Dunn
- o Pat Dunn (26)
- € Albert Ellis
- ln Eoghain Fiddes (66)
- Theo Fletcher (4)
- € Chris Fremantle (2)
- Υ Roland Garden
- o Carol Gray (2)
- Υ Rory Henderson
- ln Neil Kane (6)
- Jim Kenworthy
- Υ John McCallum
- € Barbara McHardy
- On the Edge
- € Edith Petrie
- € Willie Petrie
- o Gavin Renwick (5)
- o Sergio Rodriguez *
- School of Fine Art/Visual Research Centre
- Scottish Sculpture Workshop
- o Norman Shaw *
- Υ Martyn Thomson (3)
- Υ Willy Thomson
- University of Strathclyde (29 M.A. students)
- o Arthur Watson (4)
- Υ Johnny Wilson
- Υ Stevie Wilson

UNIVERSITY OF STRATHCLYDE, A.A.D. WORKSHOP

29 graduate students divided into 6 groups, one for each part of the
'Anatomy of Human Settlement, 1600 BC to 2000'

The Geographical Location of the Project Inthrow¹

Chris Fremantle and Anne Douglas

INTHROW is centred around the village of Lumsden. Lumsden is located 55 kilometres due west of Aberdeen, between two sets of hills – the Ladder Hills, foothills of Cairngorms, and Coreen Hills. This is otherwise known as ‘God’s own country’.

Living in the NE of Scotland

The North East of Scotland has been inhabited since the retreat of the Ice Age 6,000 years ago. Evidence of that inhabitation is visible everywhere.² This part of Scotland was relatively isolated until 19th century, although it has a university founded in 1496 and the Romans made incursions into the area. Historically Scotland was well connected with Europe and France in particular. The North East of Scotland also had, and continues to have, many connections with Scandinavia and the Baltic. For example, the harbour town of Portsoy on the north coast was for a period part of the Hanseatic League.

The locale is characterized by a distinct dialect and a strong traditional culture of music and song. The dialect, ‘the Doric’, is a type of Scots and is particularly strong in the rural parts such as Lumsden. INTHROW is in fact a Doric word meaning, according to the Scots dictionary, ‘right through, in the heart of’ for example, ‘towards a fireside’. For a considerable period ‘the Doric’ was banned from schools, and it is only recently that the cultural significance of the vernacular language has been recognized.

The village of Lumsden is located in Strathbogie (literally valley of the river Bogie) in the centre of Aberdeenshire. It has a population of approximately 300, and is a construct of agricultural improvements in early 19th century. It is one of a significant number of planned villages in the North East of Scotland – villages laid out and constructed on ‘greenfield’ sites – from the late 18th and early 19th century. The village was laid out by the landowner of Clova Estate, a member of the Lumsden family, in 1820s. Prior to that scattered farm settlements or ‘clachans’ characterised the area. The human impact of these changes are manifest within cultural forms such as Bothy Ballads. These are a unique form in the North East of Scotland, and one of the richest ballad traditions in the UK³. Bothy Ballads express in songs the loves, lives and hardships of people living and working on the land.⁴

1 This is a revised version of a paper given at the Sensuous Knowledges Conference, Bergen, October 2004 http://www.wl.khib.no/index.php/khib_en/ku_fou/konferanser_seminarer/papers_fra_sensuous_knowledge_creating_a_tradition

2 For example there are large numbers of stone monuments from different periods: bronze age stone circles of a specific type (recumbent) that only otherwise occur in the South West of Ireland; iron age Pictish ‘symbol stones’ carved with pagan and Christian images, in some cases on the same stone; and iron age hill forts with vitrified stone ramparts.

3 See work of Francis Childe in recording ballads across UK

4 such as Bandy’ Roup p54

The process of creating 'planned villages' forms part of the narrative of agricultural improvement and the industrialization of cities. Very significant changes to patterns of inhabitation in Scotland were taking place at this time. These included the Highland Clearances. In fact there were significant lowland clearances as well. Lumsden is part of that history. Employment has traditionally been in farming, mostly working for tenant farmers or directly for estates. Bear in mind that rural Scotland is characterised by a few individuals owning huge tracts of land. The area surrounding Lumsden is divided into three estates that own everything you can see.

What kind of opportunity did the On the Edge research framework provide?

The development of On the Edge as a research project created a formal framework in which to evolve coherent and critical activities against clearly articulated questions. The framework was flexible and open, founded on enquiry rather than production, and this supported experimentation. OTE offered a research opportunity to the project partners. They reciprocated by offering up an issue, desire or challenge that we all believed would form an art project that addressed both their needs and the research aims.



The thinking and organisation of the Scottish Sculpture Workshop (SSW) – the research challenge

A modernist approach

In 1979 Frederick Bushe, a sculptor and educator, established the Scottish Sculpture Workshop (SSW) in Lumsden, in the former village bakery, as a centre for manufacturing object based sculpture. This was part of a significant movement to 'put means of art production in the hands of workers'.

20 years later at the end of the 90's this had become an established sculpture organisation built around an urban industrial model, dislocated into rural North East Scotland. The organisation was faced with the need to change. The surrounding context was itself going through significant change. The characteristics of the current phase of rural change are well known: the impact of agricultural subsidy, genetic modification of crops, the organic or slow food movement, suburbanization, and depopulation. SSW had an economic relationship with the village, but no significant engagement in the community, nor did the community feel any ownership of the organisation. Many artists came to Lumsden, some explored, some made friendships. The relationship with the community was unclear. Aspects of the organisation were valued, but other aspects were completely opaque.

Raising the case for change

As Director (1996-2003), I was faced with the need to make the organisation relevant, both to a new generation of artists, and to its circumstances and context. It was significant that other parties were also interested in the dialogue about the role of sculpture in the landscape, the role of the arts in rural areas, and the role of culture in regeneration.⁵ The location of the organisation was identified as one of its strengths. This identification came through discussion and project activity with artists and researchers. Artists commented that the location was unusual in providing such easy access to a landscape of considerable diversity.⁶ Increasingly this moved to the forefront, becoming a more significant attraction than the 'site for manufacturing objects'.

The discourse of 'site specificity' in the visual arts was very significant in this process. It was and is critical to the understanding of contemporary practice, but it also provided a pivotal concept for organisational reflection. Site specificity is an idea that enables artists to engage directly with circumstances.⁷ It can be a form of political statement, and it can be formulaic. But when the organisation begins to think about its relationship to a location in terms of site specificity, then this brings to bear a range of complex issues and certainly engages the organisation in thinking about sustainability as more than financial security.

5 Thinkglobal, Cumbria College of Art and Design, 2000, published 2001 ISBN 1 85850 182 2

6 unpublished interview with John Hunter 1998

7 Kwon, M (2002) One Place after Another MIT This book "seeks to reframe site specificity as cultural mediation of broader social, economic and political processes that organise urban life and urban space" p3 Kwon views the arts an ideological system that is framed and sustained by a network of interrelated spaces and economies, studio, museum, art market, art criticism. The developments in SSW pick up on the notion of site specificity as a node of multiple transactions across different individuals and qualities of experiences – aesthetic, ethical, social, political and economic.

SSW became increasingly focused on the development of the artist, rather than merely supporting the production of work. I began to diversify the programme seeking to position the organisation not as a 'sculpture workshop' but as a 'cultural organisation' with a 'specialisation in sculpture'. The organisation moved to focus on the role as an international residency centre – a location for engaging with culture.



Developing a new concept of an arts organisation: Imagine Lumsden

Anne Douglas: *"In parallel with this developmental trajectory a long term dialogue developed with Gray's School of Art in Aberdeen. As an academic organisation, the Art School through its research was seeking to redefine its academic role by developing relationships with non academic partners within the region. We were developing new thinking about the role of the artist within culture and the significance of this role to the education of the artist. Chris became involved in some of the ad hoc projects previously noted. This resulted in the identification of shared questions and approaches. In particular Chris was struck by the device of an 'imaginative agenda' that framed and stimulated the development of a programme of activity.⁸ How would you apply an 'imaginative agenda' to thinking about the future development of a sculpture organisation? How might it enable the organisation take on a new role and contribute to the sustainability of a rural community?"*

Chris Fremantle: *"The construction of such a question significantly assisted with framing site specificity as more than a visual arts strategy. It placed the interests of the organisation (sculpture) within a broader canvas (culture) that enabled the organisation to relate its core purpose to its context. This has previously been problematic because there is a very limited visual art, let alone sculptural tradition, within the North East of Scotland. The organisation had seemed isolated and irrelevant.*

⁸ Fremantle was involved in one of the ad hoc projects, 'Room with a View' (1998), that took place between Gray's School of Art and Duff House, an outstation of the National Galleries of Scotland. The premise of this project was, 'If the Duff family, the original owners of the 18th century house, lived now, what kind of artwork would they commission or collect today?'

Prior to INTHROW, there was a long period of conceptual development, in dialogue with researchers at Gray's School of Art. It had a number of dimensions:

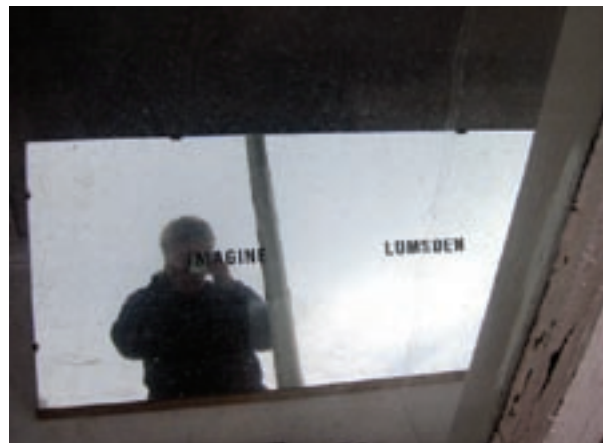
- *The development of the idea of a cultural organisation with a specialization in sculpture – actively engaged in redefining sculpture as a process*
- *The exploration of the idea of the artist working within the landscape, on the land, or in relation to ideas of inhabitation*
- *An environmental concern in relation to the rapid change and growth of suburban settlements around Aberdeen*
- *Imagining what the relationship could be with the community*

These processes were tested in a number of earlier projects including Owegaeing.”

Creativity developed in the dialogue between the inhabitants of the village, researchers and arts administrators, and artists. Gavin Renwick's role was at the heart of the dialogue. His primary activity was listening. The nature of his role provided him with enough time to listen. Both by his presence and by his actions he shaped the dialogue, created focal points and drew people into the process. Gavin worked with a wide range of people to establish threads of activity and tools. But other people also played important roles, as we will see, in supporting and challenging this process, and it is in no sense a monologue.

Raising the project brief

One of the key focal points of the programme at SSW was land, and this was carried into On The Edge. Marginal rural land that is no longer used for agriculture tends to become a prime site for housing in rural Aberdeenshire leading to developments that are a suburbanisation of rural space. The core group within the project development started to question the assumptions underpinning 'development' in these terms and to play with the notion of the symbolic value of re-appropriating land from the private into the public domain. How might this happen? What would it mean as an expression of different values? Who would be involved in the revaluing? This questioning had come about through a long relationship and deep understanding of place by the authors and by drawing others, such as Gavin, into the discussion.



What do you do with a field? An imaginative agenda

As the OTE framework developed, so we developed the imaginative agenda. A provisional title of the project was 'What do you do with a field?' and a brief was prepared. This brief focused the project on the issue of marginal rural land⁹. As in all On The Edge projects, it was developed in discussion with the artist.

On looking back at the brief the emphasis was not purely visual – "In describing our approach as visual it is not our intention to suggest that we are simply seeking an aesthetic response to the problem. Rather, whilst the aesthetic has a role to play, we are seeking to develop a visual method for imaginative thinking about potential uses of marginal rural land which addresses a number of key issues" (INTHROW brief 2002) Reflecting later at one of the OTE Soundings Renwick commented "the briefs were an opening gambit".

⁹ "This project is intended to explore one particular issue, the value and potential of marginal rural land for public use... We intend to place priority on new and imaginative thinking about the value and potential public and community uses of this land. We believe that this issue is of general importance to rural communities, and relates to issues raised by the Scottish Executive in *Designing Places: A Policy Statement for Scotland, 2001*.

The key issues are

- the need for approaches which enhance the visual character of the landscape and the settlement;
 - the need for public space which is valuable to a range of ages and interests within a community;
 - the need to generate effective models of public ownership which prioritise local democracy and empowerment;
 - the need to create a sustainable future for the land and communities."
- (INTHROW Brief, May 2002)

(INTHROW Brief, May 2002)

The artist's response to the brief – a proposition in three key stages

Gavin responded to the brief in the form of a visual document, 'INTHROW (What to do with a field)' incorporating evidence, strategic thinking and tactics.¹⁰ This document was prepared following a period of work on the project and was not an immediate response to a brief in any conventional way. Rather this document sought to consolidate initial findings into a proposed programme. It is not an artist's proposal for making a work, or even for developing a process. It shares more in common with a manifesto than an artist's proposal. As a manifesto it is intended to motivate people to common concerted action for change. It is also a long term programme to achieve change in the realm of artists' practice within society. It is visual itself, and it demonstrates visual thinking, but a number of the tactics described are not primarily visual.

In the document Gavin lays out a context for the work linking it to the literary traditions of the twentieth century¹¹ that placed regionalism and the creative use of vernacular at the heart of creative practice. The introduction goes on to establish the link between land and culture.

Gavin's proposal – his response to the brief was for three stages of work, short, medium and long term. The short included a number of discrete tactics working with the other artists and members of the community. The medium term work would develop the idea of a living archive of traditional knowledge. The longer term work proposed to consider the relationship of the village to the surrounding landscape and explore the issues arising more broadly in Scotland surrounding the new Land Reform Bill.

¹⁰ Inthrow (What to do with a field?) February 2003, Summary of Intentions revised July 2003.

¹¹ With particular reference to the Scottish writers Lewis Grassie Gibbon and Hugh MacDiarmid. MacDiarmid developed a language for writing that has been described as synthetic Scots. It is developed from spoken language.

“... the hearth is the fulcrum around which traditional extended family groupings arrange both their domestic structures and social activity. People come and go between different hearths all the time. The camp is therefore a multi-centred communal place where interior and exterior spaces are not necessarily perceived as separate...”¹²

INTHROW Doric for ‘towards a fireside’

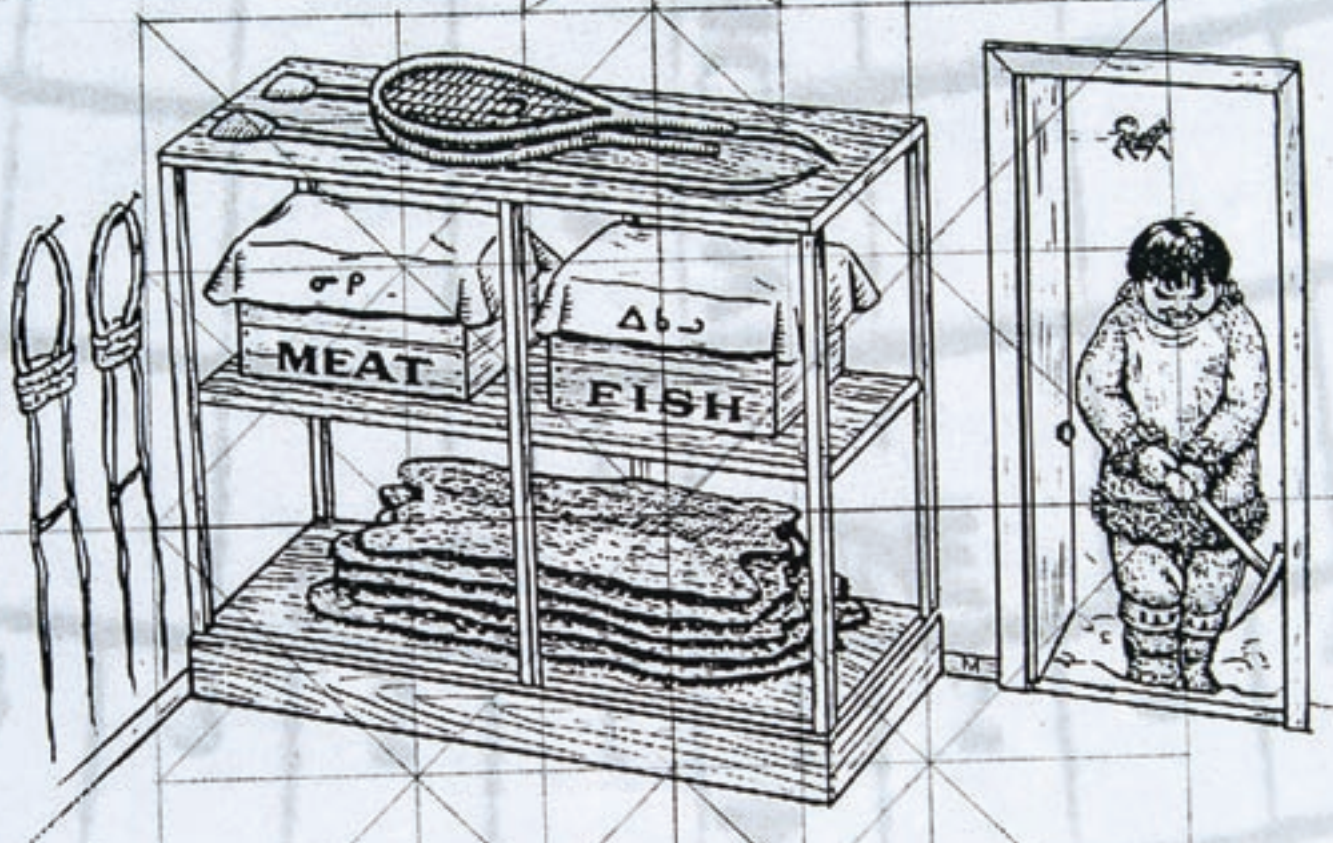
Gavin returns time and again in his work to the concept of hearth. He proposes its exploration in a number of ways. Within INTHROW the hearth is a key generative metaphor.¹³ It establishes a form of ‘aesthetic production’ drawing different individuals into conversations and activities (such as revisiting peat cutting or walking within the surrounds of Lumsden) that are linked by their relationship to values of dwelling.

Gavin identified the importance of developing work in Scotland as a mirror to the work in the Canadian North West. He commented on the relevance of post-colonial thinking to Scotland’s new nationhood under devolution in parallel to the Dogrib land claim. The ‘right to roam’ legislation in Scotland parallels the change in the understanding of land ownership required for the Dogrib land claim. Community buy-outs of estates, particularly taking place in the west of Scotland, parallels the Dogrib negotiation with the Canadian Government for the return of their traditional lands. The traditional knowledge, intangible heritage, and culturally oriented processes developed by Gavin are critically relevant in both contexts.

Gavin’s role in the project is in part framed by coming into the community (of researchers as well as of inhabitants) and partly framed by relating the circumstances in the North East of Scotland to those in the Canadian North West.

¹² Renwick, G., 2001 Home: The Outpost of Progress, Spacex Gallery and Visual Research Centre, University of Dundee.

¹³ Returning to the document ‘INTHROW (What do you do with a field)’ the ‘short term’ items include, ‘Design of two initial ‘hearths’, one replacing the village bus stop and intended primarily for the youth, one sited at a deserted clachan/fermtoun within walking distance of Lumsden. (‘The distance between two points is measured in memories.’) In ‘medium term’ the next stages are iterated, ‘Construction of hearths with the aid of youth club members’, and ‘Inauguration of hearths with an oral tradition programme including: Wi Ilie Petrie and his local ‘student’; Arthur Watson, artist; Frieda Morrison, traditional singer; Norman Shaw, artist and DJ; with the Lumsden Youth Club. Again there is a mixing of communities between artists and locals.



Λβηδσζ ρσ τ υφχψ

Chipping the ice and snow away.



Gavin Renwick:

*See, when you thought of home, what did you think of?
Did you think of the house, or did you think of farm, the land?*

Pat Dunn:

Ah well, partly both, you thought of the house too, but the fairm was your living you see.

Gavin Renwick:

*In Canada, the Dogrib very much think of their land as their home – homeland – as
opposed to the house.*

Pat Dunn:

Well, I suppose the land would have been first, ken.

Gavin Renwick:

That's what always came first?

Pat Dunn:

Well that was your living. You had to have the land in good nick to get the good crops.

Valuing traditional knowledge in revealing change—tools and methods

To this end Gavin identified a number of methods including

- A The idea of a living archive.
- B Listening and valuing the vernacular terms in the Doric language that articulated relationships between dwellers and their land.
- C A visual tool – the ‘Summary of Human Settlement: Cultural Continuity in Strathbogie’ that connected current patterns of inhabitation with six visible phases of inhabitation of the same landscape in the past (from the Megalithic to the present).
- D Enabling other artists, researchers and dwellers to engage with the different artistic tactics and take these further by involving their own skills, minds and imaginations in the discussion of land.¹⁴



¹⁴ The idea of ‘revealing change’ is not Renwick’s description of his practice. Rather it is the critical reflection of curator Tom Trevor of Spacex Gallery, Exeter, England. Tom Trevor and Ian Hunter, Director of Littoral and polemicist for rural cultural development were invited to engage with the project in a Sounding. Both Hunter and Trevor had previously worked with Renwick and were invited to participate in the Sounding to explore the dynamics of the project. Ian Hunter described rural change as being ‘like a knife that is so sharp that you don’t feel when it cuts you.’.

The idea of a living archive

An informal conversation between Pat Dunn, Wullie Cowe, a fellow farmer, and the authors, on the occasion of Dunn selling up his cattle as part of the retirement process.

Pat Dunn:

It'd be right fine if there had been a video long ago just to see what was going on

Wullie Cowe:

...or photographs

Pat Dunn:

...a video 100 years after this. It'd be exciting for young eens coming up

Chris Fremantle:

No, it'd be like looking at black and white photographs and they'd be saying its so boring...(Laughter)

Pat Dunn:

That's right enough.

Wullie Cowe:

(But) There's always some folk takes an interest awae back

Pat Dunn:

There's something good , you ken....Oh Lord, aye

The idea of the archive was not to initiate a local history society or museum for the area¹⁵, but rather to develop a stimulus for creativity.

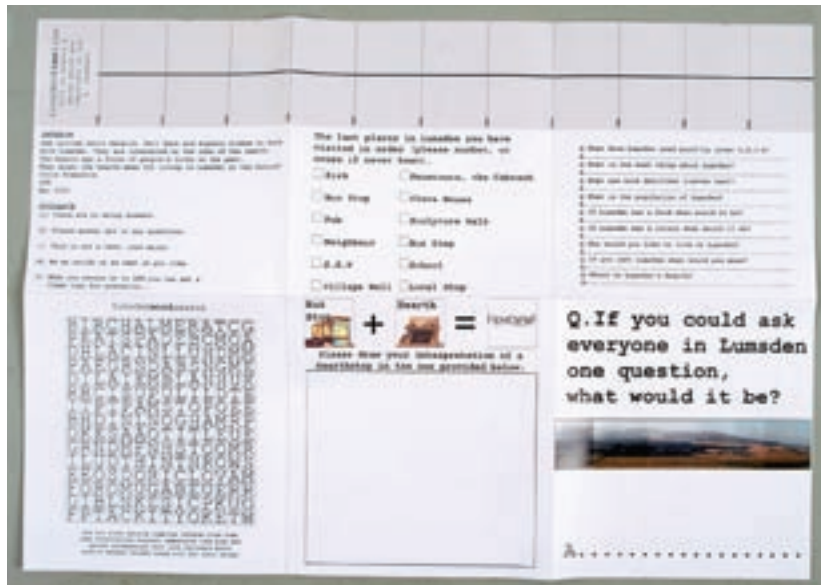
It was intended to be a living resource supporting research, but also supporting creative practice within the context of SSW.

It was intended to be a creative interaction between artist and knowledge.

The archive would seek to give the community clear ownership over its own knowledge.

It would give the community the ability to negotiate a relationship with creative practitioners.¹⁶

The archive would seek to avoid the repetition of new visitors to SSW asking the same questions.



¹⁵ Such a thing already exists in the form of the Alford Heritage Centre.

¹⁶ The development of the structured relationship between traditional knowledge archive and contemporary practitioners – the conception of the creative practitioner as a type of worker with knowledge, was also developed by Fremantle in a paper presented to the Res Artis Conference, Helsinki, in 2002 entitled 'Epistemology of a residency centre'.

Pat Dunn:

“There was folk in Old Toon... There was a gerdner (gardner) at Clova. He stayed in the old house at the steading. There was Bogmoor and all... My granfether long ago had Bogmoor. He didna stay there. He had the grazing.

Wullie Cowe:

I mine (remember) old Jimmie Davis at Cairn Gar. He said he mine 17 reekin lums across the brae face...¹⁷



¹⁷ ...He said he remembered 17 smoking chimneys across the hillside

Listening and the Vernacular

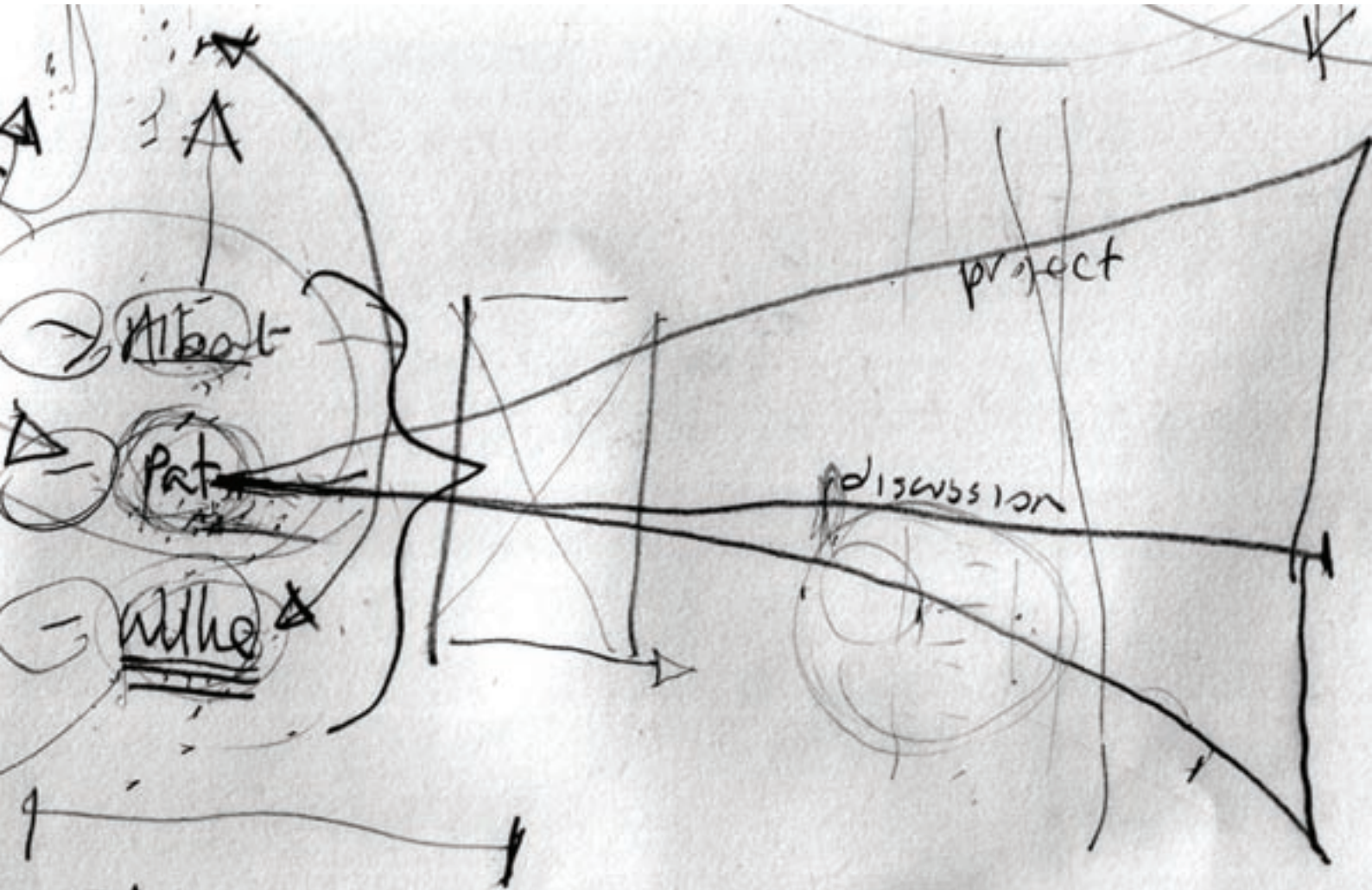
The expression *reekin lums* refers to the change in patterns of inhabitation. In living memory houses, now derelict, scattered all over the valley floor and sides, were inhabited. On a still day smoke would be seen rising (reekin) from chimneys (lums). The spread of inhabitation over the land was a function of the land use pattern. This distributed population was involved in employment on the land, in farming and estate work. Now it is consolidated into the village. Of course a significant proportion of the houses in the village also have central heating, so the village does not smell of wood or peat smoke as constantly, and the lums do not literally reek.

Renwick's artistic process has been characterised by listening, holding conversations, attending meetings of local cultural groups such as the Doric language group, investigating other areas of formal research associated with archaeology and cultural studies.

At an evaluation the curator and gallery director Tom Trevor identified this process as being "embodied through relationships – that's where real meaning lies". Serendipity has played an important role in enabling the artist to operate within the context.

Ian Hunter highlighted 'Revealing change' as an art practice strategy that can only be achieved through a process of listening, particularly with those who have experienced the change. The tactical objective is to acknowledge the change and to seek to highlight issues of value.

Another phrase that Renwick has highlighted in 'there's nae whisperin' in the braes' which roughly (and inelegantly) translates to 'there is no voices in the hills'. Historically the hills would have been alive with the sound of activity. The urban romantic ideal of the silence of the countryside is a myth. Renwick developed out of this small recurrent cultural reference an area of work.



Drawing made by Gavin mapping the shape of the project in conversation with Heather Delday, March 2004

The Summary of Human Settlement: Cultural Continuity in Strathbogie

"Although I had lived in the village for a number of years, I found this made me look at familiar places in a connected way"

This is a tool for investigating forms of life in a place.

Tools exist in relation to purposes. Tools are characterised by local variation. Repeated use over time results in a patina.

This tool is used to develop an understanding of human settlement, and this particular tool was made to understand inhabitation in the village of Lumsden, Strathbogie.

It was developed as a means of research by a group of young artists, designers and architects working in collaboration, led by Gavin Renwick.

A tool for discussion and communication.

It started as a need: Where are we?

A tool as itinerary through space and time.

Walking and talking resulted in the idea of selecting evident sites of human habitation. Words were used to highlight key characteristics of the sites.

ancient security
archaic colony
organic microcosm
agrarian hearth
arcadian enclosure
linear concentration

An etymological narrative. A tool as poetry.

The tool was returned to after three years with a different group and found to be still relevant. The particular photographs used to evidence the tool here were taken by another artist picking up the tool and exploring.

A visual tool. Revealing Change.



Ancient Security



Archaic Colony



Organic Microcosm



Agrarian Hearth



Arcadian Enclosure



Linear Concentration

Enabling others: multiple minds, hands and eyes

The methods and tools identified by Gavin were appropriated by the different individuals and groups that had become involved in the project at every stage. Those involved in INTROW to date include a wide range of members of the community young and old, students in architecture at the University of Strathclyde, recent graduates from that programme, curators, artists, DJs, archaeologists, local historians, researchers, technicians, farmers, retired people of Lumsden as well as young people in Lumsden.

In particular two other artists were drawn into the strategy, Norman Shaw, artist and DJ; and Sergio Rodrigues, photographer and Pepinieres¹ resident at SSW.



¹ The Pepinieres Programme is an annual EU funded exchange programme for young artists. Sergio Rolando Ferriera Rodruigues was at SSW for six months from March 2003.

A DJ Workshop on the Hills – A Sonorous Landscape

Norman Shaw is also involved in practice led research and has completed a PhD concerning Scottish Landscape and sound.¹ His practice focuses on working with found and pre-existing sound. The process of involving Norman arose from discussions between Anne, Chris and Gavin around engaging young people in the project more directly. Anne identified the need to engage the young people and to demonstrate to them that their surroundings could be reinterpreted and used within contemporary urban forms such as popular music.² Norman not only engaged young people, he succeeded in engaging the seriously disaffected.

Music is an important dimension of the culture of young people. Norman developed an indicative activity running a workshop with a small group of young people resulting in two tracks being produced. The young people were provided with digital recording equipment and sent out into the village and surrounding landscape to record sound. The sounds Norman asked them to collect included natural sound (bees buzzing), man made sound (vehicles passing through the village), and speech (both their own conversations at the bus stop and the other members of the community). Speech demonstrated various forms of vernacular including the Doric and the slang and swearing of the young people.

¹ Norman Shaw's PhD Highland Landscape Aesthetics - *Ossianic Sonority and the Sonics of the Unpresentable* Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design, University of Dundee, 2003

² Douglas commented that rural life is not perceived to be sexy in the eyes of young people. "They congregate at the bus stop (in many rural Scottish villages, and in Lumsden) and this is a symbol of 'getting out'. They take a great interest in fast cars. Skateboarding enables young people to appropriate urban public space and architecture through an activity that is skilful, convivial, self confirming, design led, branded, and fast. So mountain biking has begun to enable young people to take over and animate the spaces around villages." The activity involves developing routes through the landscape that are challenging and fast. Obstacles and structures are built that enable the development of skills. Mountain bikers now take on a bit of the urban flaneur. "The skill is aestheticised within an event structure. Success is defined by elegance."

'The basic idea was to re-appropriate the sounds of the traditional Doric culture of Lumsden and its environs within a contemporary framework, and to get younger people from the area to instigate this re-appropriation. Our main aims were to gather a team of local young people who would record the Doric language and other sounds from the environment, and to collage these sounds digitally and produce some tracks'.

Gavin then identified Whitehillocks as the location for a performance. The site is part of the 'Summary of Human Settlement: Cultural Continuity in Strathbogie'. It was interpreted through photography by Sergio Rodrigues and it was used for a performance by Norman. The performance was attended by young people and other artists.

'The next day we set off up the glen to Whitehillock where I was to do a nimrod33 set in a ruined cottage next to a standing stone. We hauled the gear into the nettle-strewn space where I performed a mix of old and new – including our new tracks – right in the very hearth of the cottage. An unforgettable gig for me – I had to hide under a hillock of coats when it rained, then re-hatch from it when it stopped'.
(Norman in conversation with Chris 2004)



Conversation between Heather Delday, artist and On The Edge researcher and Norman Shaw, artist and DJ of nimrod33 (NS) (7th July 2004)

We were sitting in a room in the Visual Research Centre, Dundee, looking at some photographs taken of Norman's sound performance at Whitehillock, a derelict farm near Lumsden. It took us both back to the experience where as researcher with On the Edge I had documented this part of the INTHROW project.³ On seeing the photos Norman reflected that 'they had to beat a path through the nettles to get the equipment installed, but hadn't been stung once'.

Heather Delday (HD): Could you tell me the story from your perspective?

Norman Shaw (NS): Well Gavin explained the Inthrow project and the 'what to do with a field?' idea and the idea of the hearth as a sort of central gathering point. I guess one of the key reasons he wanted me was because of my interest in sound and landscape. I'm interested in the way traditional sounds, from a way of life, can be brought into the present and work in a contemporary context. I felt in using the decks there was a link. In a club situation the decks are a focal point: the decks would be where the fireplace is.

We also talked about the idea of using the Doric language and re-appropriating that in some kind of contemporary context. This is similar to the way I've worked with Gaelic music, processing it digitally. The brief was really to get some of the young people in the village involved to help me compose some pieces using sounds of people speaking in Doric and also sounds from the landscape and then performing that in some kind of landscape context.



³ This is an edited conversation. The unedited text is part of Delday's PhD thesis, *Close a construct to critically investigate the relationship between artist and the everyday*, Robert Gordon University, 2005

HD: When you first arrived in Lumsden how did you bring these young people on board?

NS: I guess I was helped a lot by Gavin and Chris – press ganging people into coming along. They targeted people who they knew were into music and stuff. Four boys appeared and basically the Friday night was quite an informal get together. I set my decks up and we had a sort of jam. I showed them the equipment and how to use it. They were hip hop fans mainly, and so I was playing hip hop and stuff, just to show them.

HD: So the way you worked was through yarning with them?

NS: That's right. I had ideas to give a talk at the beginning, but actually what happened was very informal. And this in a sense let them lead the project. I sort of sounded them out to see what kind of direction they wanted to take it.

HD: And then what happened next?

NS: Well what happened next was the gathering of the material. I think I told them what we needed was essentially two groups of sounds: spoken Doric and landscape sounds. Within that you could split or divide them into different categories of sounds, like sounds of modern stuff and natural sounds which had always been there; sounds which had never changed, and sounds which are new.

HD: How did they work?

NS: They paired off. Some other people visiting helped as well.

HD: What I've found working with people, usually adults though, is that they feel more comfortable working in groups. If you are trying to start a project off working on a one to one basis is maybe too intimidating. Its maybe more natural for it to be a group thing, and here you had that sort of support network happening too.

NS: That's right.



HD: So you briefed them and they set off on the Saturday round about the town?

NS: Oh yes, and they brought fantastic material back. On the Friday night we were sharing a dram with a few of the local people, one of whom was a tree surgeon, and we managed to get him to agree to take one of the boys up a tree so we could record the sounds up the tree.

There were also the sounds of people pulling up in cars and chatting - the banter between the boys themselves. They'd have a great laugh you know, putting the recording on and telling their mates that it was not recording. They said they had trouble persuading people to 'speak the Doric' but of course all the conversations were in Doric anyway. So you'd just hear them chatting away, arsing about basically, and making a lot of noise.

The next stage was I paired them off and showed them what to do with the material. We listened through the recordings and then started selecting sounds that we wanted to use. I was really trying to ask them to tell me what sounds they wanted to use. There are also some amazing sounds of natural stuff like bees buzzing, babbling burns, the wind in the trees, cows, that sort of stuff. So you're contrasting that with sounds of cars, televisions, radios.

We had to have the stuff recorded and then the pieces finished for the Saturday night because we'd (Chris) had advertised a performance to showcase the new material.

I asked them to bring along some CD's of some of their favourite music so that we could sample that and mix that over the top. I tried to explain to them the similarities between stuff like rap and hip hop and traditional music.

Hip hop is an urban music that reflects an urban landscape and traditional music around the North East of Scotland also reflects the landscape. And importantly the function of the

oral tradition - there is an oral tradition in hip hop as much as there is in traditional Scottish music with the use of the voice. So they obviously brought along hip hop and we took some breaks and loops from that, sampled it.

HD: It seemed intensive, it was just one weekend.

NS: Aye it was!

It was exciting, but kind of fraught as well because I guess the guys hadn't had much experience with the equipment for a start - obviously. And also I think didn't really know what to expect because we didn't have time to practice. In another sense that made it more spontaneous in a way, more freeform. So, I had very much to kind of direct them around. You know I'd have to tell them what to do here - now you do this, or mess about with that record. And they were scratching with the records and stuff and having a good time. I guess a couple of them were more extrovert than the others and tended to get into it quicker.

HD: And did you get any feedback from the folk that came to the performance that evening at SSW?

NS: Oh yes, they seemed to enjoy it. There was a good load came along and I think a few in the audience, the younger folk, said they'd regretted not taking part in the project.

HD: So that was the first stage of the project, and then there was the experience of the performance up at Whitehilllock and the next day. Why there?

NS: Gavin had sussed out a spot - I think it linked in to other aspects of the project.



HD: And had you ever done a performance in a location like that before?

NS: No - aside from sort of outdoor parties, more big events really, out on the hills in the summer. More a kind of club environment, you know big outdoor things.

I hadn't actually done that kind of performance, that sort of experimental music, in that kind of location and I found that fantastic. It was *really* inspiring. The sort of thing I would definitely want to do again.

Sadly all we had for amplification was an old guitar amp that we found in the workshop. You can hear that on the recording, it's quite trebly, it's very kind of cutting. So I tried re-mastering the recording and boosted the bass a bit. But obviously working outside in remote places, its lugging all the right equipment up and installing it.

HD: Would you be lugging more stuff up there if you'd had a better amplifier?

NS: You'd want more speakers and all that kind of paraphernalia, although these days you can get some really good stuff which is more portable.

HD: Yes and it was the audience who were doing the carrying.

NS: That's right (laugh)

Aye that's right. Very much. And you know there's a whole kind of DIY culture now in music because there are so many musicians making their music at home; in their bedrooms or wherever on computers or things. And DJ culture is very much within that kind of DIY culture as a musical thing now - a sort of movement. And I liked that, I liked all the people carrying all the equipment out to this roofless farm, because it was kind of part of the process you know, the thing started when we got into the cars in Lumsden and started driving up in the wet, that was the beginning of the performance really.

And the line of people carrying all the stuff and getting across the burn, past the standing stone – it had a sort of bardoch⁴ quality I felt – some sort of ritual which I wanted it to have.

HD: I know you come from Lewis and I know what a remarkable landscape that is. How does it influence your work?

NS: Well yes, this is a big question, but I guess the origins of it must be very much in the culture I grew up in, and the religion, stuff like the Gaelic psalm singing for instance. And I guess that is key to my interest in what I call the 'sonorous', which my PhD research focussed on. It is a kind of sound that is designed to instigate a particular sort of reaction in the listener which I guess is one that we could call religious or ecstatic or whatever. Living in a manse being brought up as the son of the manse and hearing the Gaelic psalm singing resonating through the manse some nights, that's very important.

I remember standing inside, in a loom shed once and one of the local guys was playing the fiddle along to the dickety clack of the loom. I always make a direct link with the landscape there – sort of the rhythms and the swellings and the sounds. I guess my musical interests have come from that sort of thing, but I was as interested in rock as a youngster as I was in traditional music, and my interest in contemporary music developed out of all that.

HD: That's interesting – in Lewis, when I lived there, a kind of typical music you'd listen to if you were at a dance or a wedding say, would be a bit of west coast American rock and roll and Scottish traditional dance. So there was a sort of recipe for what you would get at an average wedding, a collage.

NS: Yes it is analogous to a visual collage – bringing together these disparate sources.

I quite often try to forget about the provenance of the sound and concentrate entirely on the sound itself and its timbre and its texture, rhythms. For instance I could look at the sort of thumping repetitive rhythm of the waulking⁵ song and you can parallel that with the thud of a techno beat. It's the same sort of repetitive thing. And with repetition in Gaelic music you can compare that to repetition in contemporary music particularly dance music. I mean Highland reels and jigs are dance music just like house and techno music in clubs.

HD: So it's more than just a collage?

NS: Aye, yeah. I guess in terms of collage a word I tend to use is bricolage⁶, which is a surrealist term and that for me is kind of good because I guess ... I've talked a bit about my interest in states of mind and consciousness. I am also interested in the subconscious. And this ties in with my interest in shamanism and magic and that sort of tradition particularly in the islands, so something like bricolage ... I called it once in a little statement post-Bardoch-Dadaism.

HD and NS: Laughter

⁴ Bardoch is a Gaelic term for poet.

⁵ Waulking is a term for a method used in preparing Harris Tweed. It involved a repetitive hand motion and women would sing with a tempo fitting the rhythm of the work. These are known now as the traditional waulking songs and although traditional Harris Tweed is still made and woven on looms by hand, the waulking part of the process is not done by hand today.

⁶ Bricollage is a term used to describe the combining of different kinds of elements in an improvised manner.



NS: There's something else that occurred to me about doing stuff outside, in terms of this idea of the sonorous, and going back to Ossian⁷. A key image I used in my PhD was Runciman's drawing of Ossian singing. It's quite a rough drawing of Ossian and his harp underneath a tree that's kind of bent over and blowing in the wind. It's from the late 18th century. Runciman is really drawing a direct link between Ossian's music and the landscape itself, almost as if Ossian's singing was absorbed within the sounds that surround him, the rustling of the leaves in the trees and the wind in the trees. So I like that sort of fundamental link of sound and the landscape – and up at Whitehillock you could hear the birds singing sometimes and the wind blowing and stuff like that – it was all part of the sound, the overall sound itself.

You can talk about things like 'sound mapping' as well. It would also be interesting I think to contrast, say the sounds in the summer in the east, not really east coast, but north east Scotland with the west coast stuff, both in a sort of rural environment.

⁷ The myths of the blind bard Ossian are a fundamental part of Gaelic Scotland and Ireland's ancient oral tradition – supposedly sung by Ossian accompanied by his Clarsach (Celtic harp). Featuring such Celtic heroes as Finn MacCoul and Cuchulainn, the myths were revived in the 19th century by James Macpherson's re-writings of them in English.

HD: Have you done this at all?

NS: I used some sea sounds in the Whitehillock performance deliberately - it was almost like a journey down the burn and out to the sea and sort of hearing the sound of the sea in the glen, way up in land there, an interesting contrast.

Also when I talk about sound collage some of the pieces I produced in my research here, my PhD stuff, a lot of these collages are very kind of jagged and folded as I call it like the Lewisian gneiss⁸, and like the landscape of the west, even though I'd be using quite diverse sources from pop music as well as folk music and experimental stuff. I would say it was all jumbled together and that's exactly the way I wanted the sound to be - sort of jumbled and folded and creased and crumpled like the west coast landscape, whereas you'd expect the east coast collage to be as you say, more square and regimental almost.

HD: And (like the repetitive beat) being able to experience sound as a ... from a physiological perspective possibly?

NS: A lot of archaeological research located in Scotland, at Maes Howe in Orkney and Calanais as well and Camster Cairns in Caithness has found that many, many of these, in fact the vast majority of them, have startling acoustic properties. For instance a huge number of them seem to be built to resonate, and set up standing waves round them when the male human voice makes sound or chants inside them; a particular frequency, or frequency range, that the male voice can cover. For instance at New Grange in Ireland there, if a sound is made at a particular frequency, you get standing waves set up within that chamber which are essentially waves that stand still. If smoke or incense is burned inside the chamber the number of rings or waves inside the chamber correspond to the rings on the carvings, say on the lintel.

Also a place called the Dwarfie Stane (Dwarfy Stone) in Orkney, if a sound is made in that a particular frequency it moves.

HD: The stone moves?

NS: The stone seems to move. It's actually an illusion. The sound generates an optical illusion.

HD: Good grief!

NS: And with Maes Howe itself there have been a lot of experiments done there using old Pictish instruments, John Purser from Skye is involved in that and also Paul Devereux, an archaeologist.

HD: This is fascinating because of course Maes Howe and the Dwarfie Stone are from my home (Orkney Isles), and now all this knowledge and technology is changing how we understand these places.

NS: Yes and also the idea of sound being able to alter consciousness you know. This was done sometimes when sounds were produced in these chambers because of the shape of the chamber, the frequencies that were produced would actually resonate in your body and cause sensations such as fear or excitement or awe or whatever.

⁸ Lewisian Gneiss is a metamorphic rock which constitutes most of the landscape of the West Highlands and Islands.



For me, with DJing techno music, I loved the fact that it related to all that, but also that it relates as I said to Highland music and the repetition. The fact that a techno DJ mixes the beats so that you get a *continuous* beat running for maybe 3 or 4 hours without pause and without change. The records may change but the rhythm's the same. Good techno DJs can match these rhythms and make it seem seamless and just go on and on and on. And as far as we know this is really similar to what prehistoric people would have done in rituals at sites. I mean this is conjecture, at sites such as Calanais⁹ or Brodgar.¹⁰ or wherever, where there would be a kind of repetitive beat played and a lot of kind of ecstatic dancing. And this is still done in many shamanic cultures in northern Asia and south America. There's a very distinct link between stuff like shamanism and DJing as I mentioned earlier because the DJ as shaman is in a sense leading the whole group through their trance, taking them through. That has very, very close links with magic. Sound and magic are very, very closely linked anyway.

⁹ Calanais (or the Callanish Stones) is the site of neolithic standing stones on Lewis in the Outer Hebrides

¹⁰ The Ring of Brodgar is the site of neolithic standing stones on Orkney

HD: Have you ever done a performance back in Lewis?

NS: No I haven't.

NS: And also the sounds of the ... even places like Lewis and Shetland have changed radically over the last century, probably a lot more than they did for millennia. And this is something that acoustic ecologists are really dealing with. For so long nobody thought about sound pollution, well obviously in the city it can be deafening and I certainly find it infuriating being brought up in a rural area and just having to listen to this incessant roar of the traffic and the sub-bass of buses going past. This does affect us physiologically. There's a lot of cases now of people who have had certain sorts of disorders including mental disorders which can be traced back to some sort of sound frequency say generated by subway trains or whatever, that cause uneasiness. I talked about this earlier in the context of acoustic archaeology and the prehistoric sites, but this is something that is happening now.

HD: Yes I can relate to sound pollution, when you know what silences are like.



Photography as the Lens of the Project

Gavin Renwick

Sergio Rodrigues came to Lumsden through the Pepinieres programme. He is a young Portuguese photographer. Rodrigues' involvement in the project was developed by Chris, who engaged Sergio in the framework and highlighted key areas of investigation. He developed his own relations with the community and his own activity with the school as well as supporting the programme of revealing change. Sergio developed a piece of work with the young people in school taking their portraits. He also produced work focused around a number of the project's conceptual focal points including the 'Summary of Human Settlement: Cultural Continuity in Strathbogie' and during the roup¹ associated with the end of Pat Dunn's tenancy at Auchenleith.

Stoup & Roup: A Home and Native Land

"A' was sell'd but the clamjamfry"

At the beginning of this project the initial brief from the Scottish Sculpture Workshop (SSW) was simply 'what do we do with a field' (an opportunity arising out of discussions between Pat Dunn, aware of his forthcoming retirement, and Chris Fremantle). With the inspirational land reform legislation conveniently passed by the new Scottish Parliament the issue soon became the whole estate, itself a traditional homeland for the many people and families now consolidated into the village. For the project **Inthrow** to inculcate the idea of cultural continuity in Strathbogie it became necessary not to presume that the land was a commodity but the very essence of identity. As with the Tlicho² the land needed to be understood, and presented, as home.

¹ *roup* in the Concise Scots Dictionary means 'plunder, deprive of everything' and indicates the final selling up of a farm. It is effectively a form of redistribution of equipment by auction.

² The *Tlicho* are a first nation people of Northern Canada.

In my time spent with Pat Dunn I have been fortunate enough to be shown that being on the land is implicit in any understanding of the native culture of Northeast Scotland. This replicates the Tlichó epistemology that originated through being of the land. In the context of the Tlichó such an intimate relationship 'becomes evident when noting the similarities between the term for 'their footsteps' and 'their knowledge':

'Long time ago ... our ancestors went through hard times and to this day we are still following ginaowo [their footsteps] and to this day the people use ginaowo [their knowledge] in order to survive.'
Andrew Gon, 1994

Despite the assumed dichotomy of the aforementioned travelogue the subsequent acquired comfort of experience, and ability of hindsight, has now resulted in seeing a meaningful commonality between a traditional hill farmer and the hunter, between someone like Pat Dunn and a Tlichó elder like, for example, Romie Wetrade – whom I work closely with here in the Northwest Territories. Both have a wealth of inherited knowledge and an experience of working upon, and living off, the land. An understanding of, and care for, the animals they have spent their lives around. They both have the integrity of people at home in a known world, at home on their land.

Rural Aberdeenshire is an obvious world away from the Canadian North. Yet an intimacy with ones' land and an associated complexity of knowledge about that habitat is equally demonstrated in both. The difference may be in the continuity. The following photographs document a roup, maybe the last roup to take place within the Lumsden area. The Scots Doric noun, roup, literally means 'to sell by public auction' and it often takes place once a farmer retires. It is a traditionally unsentimental event for redistributing the technology required to work the land. It is also a social gathering, in this case as much a demonstrative but unspoken honouring of a friend and comrade as a sale. However, as harbingers that foreshadow the

changing relationship between a community and its agrarian landscape, some of the people we see in these images are there not to acquire working tools, but to collect heritage.

It was through being fortunate enough to meet someone like Pat Dunn, to go with him and Willie Petrie, his neighbour, to the local museum in Alford and listen to their dialogue and rich extensive vocabulary concerning the hundreds of displayed tools (some equivalents of which were auctioned off at Pat's roup) that I fully appreciated the evolved specialisation of knowledge required to work their landscape. The more traditional tools sold at the roup, many crafted locally, are dedicated to singular tasks. By their nature they helped define the traditional social patterns that demarcate Strathbogie.

The 'Inthrow' project bought Pat's peat digging tools at his roup. Afterwards we accompanied Pat up to the traditional peat banks on the slopes of 'The Buck'. This documented activity had added resonance considering Pat was the last person to actively use this resource, with these same tools, over two decades previously. Indeed, we found piled peat bricks left by Pat, now buried under heather. This experience, once again, reverberated with my experiences here in the Subarctic. It shows that tools evolve as necessary, that in cultures still close to the land indigenous technology can itself help frame its social institutions.

Sergio's photographs of the roup, undertaken for 'Inthrow', help document the dispersal of the material residue of generations of land use, of technology that was a mediator between a society and the potential resource of its land, of tools that helped delineate the collective experience of a culture within its landscape.













Bandy's Roup

Auld Bandy, he wis roupin oot,
 His fairmin days wir deen,
 He'd bocht a wee bit hoosie
 In the toon o Aiberdeen,
 Sin a his stock an implements,
 Wir a gaun up for sale,
 He'd even sell the moose-trap
 An the auld slop pail.
 The foreman an the second-lad,
 Wir sent tae wash the cairts,
 And pent them up a green an reed,
 An ile the different pairts.
 The baillie pentit a the ploos,
 The harras an the grubber;
 The halflin he raid up the kye,
 Wi dandy, kame an scrubber.

Sin, on the mornin o the roup,
 A thing wis spic an span.
 There wis a barrel fu a beer ,
 An plenty beef an ham.
 For some had came jist no tae buy,
 But for tae get their fill,
 Auld Bandy kent the dreel fu weel,
 He'd daen the same himsel.

Fan eens the roup hid started,
 And a crood hid gaithered roon,
 The auctioneer cried oot for bids,
 Ye couldna hear a soun.
 At laist he got them in the mood,
 By crying oot, 'Noo, Dixon,
 This horse'll dee the work o twa
 An help oot in the kitchen!'

The fairmer fae the Mill o Lyne ,
 Wis set on buyin some on stots;
 Fin he saw Bandy's Bell gang by,
 He set aff at the trot.
 Noo Bell said, 'Aye my little man,
 I'd like tae ken yer game.'
 Says he tae Bell, 'Fine dae ye ken,
 My game it's aye the same.'

Weel, nae maitter fit his game wis,
 Bell must hae liked it fine;
 For noo she is the fairmer's wife,
 Doon at the Mill o Lyne.
 But aft he'll sit an mutter,
 As he thinks whiles tae himsel,
 He should hae stuck the buyin stots,
 An nae chased Bandy's Belle!

Weel of coorse, the weemin fowk wir there,
 Tae hae a wee bit splash;
 Afore the aifternoon wis by,
 They'd bocht up a the trash.
 A sma bit deem fae Pitney's,
 Fair keen on daen some bidden;
 She got on the dyke tae get some heicht,
 But fell back in the midden.

Well the Doctor fair enjoyed himsel,
 He'd drunk some muckle beer;
 His wife made up a lame excuse,
 She couldna staun the steer.
 He waved his haun tae let her ken
 He'd be wi her the noo,
 But afore he kent, he'd gien an bocht,
 Auld Bandy's breedin soo!

Then eens the roup wis feenished
 An the last chiel left the scene,
 Well Auld Bandy he'd a last look roon,
 A tear come tae his een;
 When doon the road he wandered,
 Faur he'd played fin jist a loon,
 But I'm sure his hert wis heavy,
 As he set aff tae the touon.

Performed by Scott Gardiner at the
 Buchan Folk Festival in 1993
 Transcribed by the North East Folklore
 Archive

The Research Perspective

The On the Edge research constructed a framework for project development between individuals, researchers, artists, community members; between sectors of arts administration, arts practice and policy making. INTHROW is in part an art project about inhabiting remote rural places. It is an art project that unfolds within the flux and flow of day to day living. It draws from and contributes to experience through a complex web of interactions and exchanges.

This organic way of initiating an artistic process is distinct in a number of ways. It is characterised by a number of long, exploratory conversations within a set of relationships. A local incident such as Pat Dunn's retirement, creates an aperture into a wider set of issues, such as the nature and experience of change in agriculture, revealing this in ways that are meaningful and that resonate with experiences of change elsewhere.

As participants we have become sensitized to what is happening in ways that confer value on everyday experiences – the sounds of Lumsden, processes of retirement and what these mean within wider reference points of stewardship, self organization and the inevitability of change. This process is neither about nostalgia, nor is it about deficiency. The focus on traditional knowledge is not based on any assumption that life was better in the past. The older members of the community have a strong cultural identity and social life. They are clear about their values and inheritance. They live in the present and enjoy what it has to offer.

The research opportunity has allowed a discussion to happen. As people have come in contact directly and indirectly with the project, the different contributions have given form to an unfolding process, in part by design and in part serendipitously.

Renwick's programme, epitomised by the Summary, indicated a conceptual framework for other practitioners and individuals to engage with issues of value and processes of revealing change. By working co-operatively and within a formal research framework that has enabled us to reflect consciously on process and its ethical bases, we have together raised and tested questions through research and practice in the real world. The focus has been to learn rather than to produce.

On the Edge programme - a new question

INTHROW has been as much a process of learning how to think about the changing nature of artistic practice as it has been a process of producing meaningful art. It has raised some important questions and observations.

In the three stage proposal that Gavin Renwick drew up in response to the On the Edge brief, only the first stage has been effectively realised. The Scottish Sculpture Workshop as an organisation did not choose to realise the long term vision that connected its work with the community of Lumsden in the manner that INTHROW had proposed. This turn of events placed into sharp focus our original interests and concerns as individual artists, researchers and administrators as we moved on to new contexts for working. Change does not happen seamlessly. It is frequently a disjuncture, responsive to drivers other than the ones we as individuals can foresee and control. This is as true of ecological systems in nature as it is of human systems. What is important is not change itself, but how we respond to it and harness its energy.

In moving on and simultaneously attempting to grasp what was achieved by this work, it is clear that INTHROW was not goal orientated in any conventional sense of art production. It was the beginning of a process of experiencing in new and imaginative ways - a way of life. This 'seeing' generates new meaning for those who choose to be part of the processes that the artists conceived. Seeing differently - 'imagining Lumsden' was at the root of a different expectation of what an artist might be. We had for a while a very privileged space and company - that of a village with its 300 inhabitants - to think this through.

Where artists in urban situations might be asking themselves how they can function and avoid becoming consumed by the entertainment or service industries, we were confronted with a different challenge based on finding relevance and meaning within an altogether quieter, more hidden experience of change framed by an ancient visible landscape. We now ask a different question - What status can the vision of an artist have in relation to other individuals that he/she encounters in developing work?



Chris Fremantle:

It sounds like we are being sentimental about this. Its important, people come from all over the world (to SSW in Lumsden), its important that they understand where they are....

Pat Dunn:

Aye. If they dinnae know about things, there's nothing to be said.

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