

The Exotic Terrains – *grounding critical walking practice in the post-Anthropocene*

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Bio

Louisa King is a lecturer in landscape architecture at University Technology Sydney and PhD candidate at RMIT University, Melbourne. Her practice is one of site responsive landscape experimentation, carried out through installation, drawing and performative writing. She has an interest in cultural landscapes and the way mapping and collective performative action can act to re-animate landscapes that have been erased by the destructive practices involved in eco-genocide and late settler capitalism. Exploring the dialectic potential of a geo-subject as a means to re-animate lost landscapes, her interest lies in critical cartography, fictocritical writing, and performative landscape animations.

Abstract

This paper discusses critical walking methodologies as a means to access specific forms of “earth-bound” knowledge in the complex political ecologies of the post-anthropocene. By illuminating more-than-representational methodologies, walking is tested as a way to make direct encounters with an entangled field of material, discourse and meaning. With a focus on the agency of the moving body and the moving landscape as coextensive participants in a world-making project. The paper will discuss strategies emerging from critical walking practice, which embed walking within the aesthetic fields and ‘environmental crossings’ (Gabrys, 2012) of climatic change and greater earth system collapse

Introduction

In my creative practice research, I gathered in from Anthropocene studies, (the More-Than-Human, the Posthuman, Political-Ecologies, Material and Human Geographies) ideas of geo-subjectivities and theoretical models capable of accessing and making encounters of the Anthropocene. This is attempted by joining a geologically aware subject to landscape via critical walking practices, located within a folded political, social and economic stratum. Walking becomes a novel cartographic tool for the practice to navigate a serpentine terrain. This is intended to expose the ontological entanglements of our emerging environmental condition, by bridging knowledge forms between science and humanities. By mapping fields

of ontological entanglements as a means to collapse the false binary of nature/culture, walking is utilised as a way to locate the agential relationship of things to things and formations to formations. The agency that I hope the walks can locate, that which can un-‘freeze’ us, to refer to Bruno Latour in the above quote. Performative action by its very moving-toward and away from things, in locations sometimes close but also some time far away, draws together the contemporarily fragmented, vast world into the body.

I gesture towards walking to locate the thought place or places where we might encounter the socio-ecological concerns of such crisis in non-binary response terms. Thought place are ‘sensitive zones’ of acute sensorium and thought-space, in which complex entangled ontologies and epitomes can be entered. By attaching a focus on affect, as opposed to the individual self, I will look to shift the perception of ourselves as bounded entities in the world to bodies as assemblages and processes. Highlighting, the way that creative practice can access the ‘sensitive zones’ of earthly contemplation where we can locate potential geo-onto-epistemologies. I will point to how walking accesses through the ‘intra – actions’ of the body and the phenomena of the landscape, the sensitive zones for earthly contemplation. These transformations are located somewhere between affect and transcendence through both corporeal and incorporeal transfigurations.

I begin by exploring walking practices and walking methodologies merging from Land Art practitioners working in the late 1960s - 1970s in the United Kingdom and United States. These practices are then developed to explore more contemporary walking practices, which will be discussed in the following sections. However, before this a discussion, some key theoretical idea will be unpacked, which situated the political ecologies and the walking practices which can attend to them.

Practice opens up the landscape, which then again opens up practice

Emerging from a diverse range of creative practices can be perceived the contemporary drive to reconsider nonlinear relationships of time, the corporeal and materiality. This could be seen as axiomatic of a new inquisitiveness into the deep temporalities and flows of matter put forward in the ‘so-called’ Anthropocene hypothesis. With a greater understanding of our implicit participation in impending planetary disasters, creative practices which approach both the poetics and the politics (or locate the poetic within the political) can attend to the

eco-social enmeshing found within the exigency of greater earth system collapse, it is the very making visible that gives practice this agency. These types of works seek to deal with and within the very forces of the earth directly as a subject of inquiry (Grosz, Yusoff, & Clark, 2017). In making-with(in)-landscape, any sense of a landscape as a pictorial perspective (which privileges the viewing individual over all others) becomes subverted by the non-hierarchical nature of a field. In these fields' ecology becomes a more accurate term to describe the condition we live our daily lives through. Here, 'ecologies' are composed of a matter, the political, the sensible (which is often the unfairly distributed) and discourses. These make for intricate 'aesthetic fields' (Demos, 2016) which can be intercepted by practices and actions. And such complex political ecologies, require novel modes of operating to unwrap their muddy complications. 'Making-with(in)-landscape' is a reaction against representation's and romanticization of the environment which only ever give us forms of Nature. To expose and tend to the climates of uncertainty which humanity now finds itself, creative works should follow a model of intercepting into the assemblages these ecologies are formed through.

With these ecologies in mind, the paper will later discuss how an affective and materially led thinking becomes useful in shifting ontologies from bounded individual entities towards bodies as entangled assemblages and fields of forces relations, a notion of performativity that give models for considering a new potential co-formation. By co-joining concepts regarding these complex ecologies together with walking methodologies and ideas of performativity, the paper will seek to address calls to action which seek alternatives to apathy, denial or fear. Latour points to the essential nature of performance in locating our agency to act with and within the very climate of fear within the climate crisis. Latour who states 'You are a force of geology. And you should have acted and you did not, so you freeze up. This is why performance is essential' (Latour, 2016) is considering the very movement of performative 'things' within fields of relations as being a model for thawing our responses to the fear, which are often binary in nature and only ever repeat a cliché.

Geo-social imaginaries, Exotic Terrains and landscapes that move

Narrating stories between the geologic earth and the social formations that are moved its material flows, allows for what Katheryn Yusoff calls 'structures of exchange', which exists between both the geologic and the social strata of the earth. Creative practices responding

critically to questions arising from Anthropocene hypothesis, refer to the geologic as a model to mine deep temporal material narratives as a way to reflect on the relations between geologic forces and social practices (Clark & Yusoff, 2017) The immensely vast time scales of the geologic earth, offer up numerous entry points into possible ontological shifts towards the material self. The ‘violent’ tremors and movements of the geologic landscape in past epoch, are reminders of current day tumultuous era in the present-day landscape (Massey, 2005). Discussed through the practice examples, later in the paper, are the different ways that this tool of a geologic imaginary might manifest within the walking methodology. Before a discussion of the theoretical and philosophical underpinning of practice, I would like to call upon a geologic imaginary to frame a discussion on movement, ecology and temporality through the phenomenon of an Exotic Terrain.

An Exotic Terrain is a term used by geologists to explain the phenomena of large segments of earth strata, which seem to be ‘alien’ or materially and formally foreign to the country rock in which they sit. These terrains are gigantic pieces of strata which have come loose from the upper mantle and wandered to a new resting place. Their union did not seem to be the product of sedimentary, igneous or metamorphic processes. Appearing as a complex and diverse ‘geological potpourri’, which early 18-century geologist hypothesised must have been the result of cosmic or divine intervention. These rocks are similar to glacial erratic rocks, ones that have wandered from their original location of production which take their name from the Latin *erraticus* or *errare*, to wander or to stray, *err*’. (New Oxford english Dictionary (Second Edition), 2018)

However, with the theory of Continental Drift, which emerges in the late 1970s, illuminates the ability of crustal fragments to "roam" thousands of miles from their origin and fetch themselves up in new locations, ‘crumpled, against an exotic shore’. These are performative landscapes the size of continents, carrying out a processional oscillation across the earth, with no sense of a true origin or a geographic location. These landscapes are met at thresholds with other geologic bodies where they suture themselves temporally to more stable formations. Here they can do two things: one is to remain in place and slowly attached themselves to the surrounding country rock. Or they can sew themselves to other orogenic belts, and move even further across the globe. Some, even inflect themselves inwards towards the core, where they will liquefy when they pass through the extreme heat of inner mantle of the earth. An

example of this is the Farallon Plate (Fig. 1), which began subducting when Pangea broke apart at the end of the Jurassic, becoming dislodged and stuck in the center of the earth, which it remains till this day.

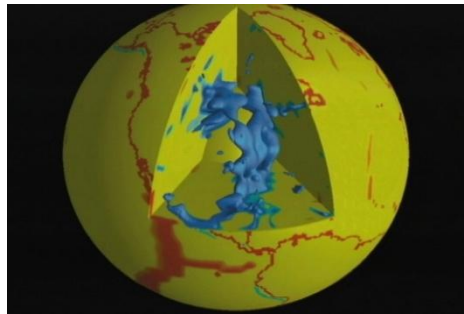


Fig.1. The Farallon Plate; hidden and stuck within the centre of the earth (Snodgrass)

Geologists are still unclear as to why certain terrains stop moving and some continue on to other movement belts. This imaginary of the Exotic Terrains is useful for two reasons: first, it points to thinking of a landscape as an in-formation process, the slow temporal coming together and pulling apart of all matter and subjects. The collapsing of a vast and immediate temporal dimension and the production for conjoined temporal misalignments, is a useful model for considering the contemporary condition of fragmented time and space. Secondly the geologic imaginary of the Exotic Terrain as wanderers moving with intent across the globe, gains an ontology through a gesture towards a free will and therefore maybe also agency or an agential potential as Karen Barad (Barad 2007) would describe it, more of a relationship to agency and not as something that one ‘owns’ or ‘has’, in the unknown nature of their ‘choice’ to stay put or keep moving.

Towards the Many Moods of the Climate Crisis

To begin to unpack critical walking methodology, as a means to access specific shared environmental knowledge of epoch(s) and the landscapes on which they play out, here the argument turns towards ways in which creative practice researchers work directly in landscape as a critical special field for the contemplation of socio-environmental challenges. This, of course, encompasses a multitude of practices and practitioners, and a survey of these is not intended here. Alternatively, I wish to position my practice as a landscape practitioner, who makes works in landscape with the very medium of the earth as my primary material.

The climate historian Dipesh Chakrabarty calls for creative work which can reconcile the many ‘moods’ of climate change (Chakrabarty, 2017). The many moods describe a spectrum of responses, as opposed to the binary of optimism or pessimism, asserting that in order to come to terms with our implications as geologic agents we need to develop an ‘epochal consciousness’. Chakrabarty here suggesting that to consider ourselves as geologic and as emplaced within the deep time and planetary space of the earth, there should be more we need both aesthetic responses as well as those of the technocratic, which can problematize and open up a multitude of response. The former intended to achieve a perceived possible mitigation and the later to offer up a nihilistic or other, denial of evidence (both metric and felt) of this changing planet and our agency within such change. Instead of landscape design operating as a positivist project which sees the environment as a problem to be solved, and seeks moral responses of guilt, fear and a resulting paralysis. Walking is alternatively offered up as a way critical landscape making can problematize this epoch. As the “geosocial” (Clark Yussoff, 2017), through the collapse of biosphere and the geosphere, hints towards notions of agency, vitality, politics and ethics.” (Stephanie Springgay, 2017). Walking is seen as a way to access spaces for ‘contemplation’ in landscape where we might conjure up response counter to the ‘reactionary’, which might invite alternative responses on the binary of optimism or pessimism, the latter also makes possible a scientific conversation which both naturalizes ‘humanity’ and locates and exhumes multiple human and more-than-human narratives of places, which are held within the ground, awaiting unearthing.

Environmental Crossings

In order to locate moments of contemplation of earthbound musings, zoomed in scales and specific forms within these ecologies is needed. Jennifer Gabrys and Kathryn Yussoff propose the idea of an ‘environmental crossings,’ the happenings of material transformation changes within the forces of the physical earth (Gabrys & Yussoff, 2012). They point to creative works ability to draw attention to the material changes that underpin ecological disasters. By making a case for making-with(in)-landscape these material changes, expressed via phenomena registered directly by the body, becomes more acute when in the field where they can be immediately encountered. I talk here of throwing ourselves into the field, and asking “can you feel this change? can you sense your own force?”, I propose through the practice that walking as a performative action draws us closer and throws us further.

For an example of the physical and material transformations that occur at the ‘environmental crossings’ Gabrys & Yusoff give the example of ice, which carries the narrative for 0° (Gabrys & Yusoff). For them ice, holds the “narrative of the threshold, the melting a pervasive and nearly predictable icon of climate, a sign of complete earth system shut down” (Gabrys & Yusoff, 2012). As we follow the narrative vector of melting ice, the material carries new meaning as it passes through various thresholds, which effect its physical state (frozen, liquid and gaseous). Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison work *Greenhouse Britain 2007*, gives an example of how practice can track these thresholds and articulate such ‘crossings’. Their encounter is not fully embodied, still remaining abstracted through an interface of publication or exhibition. Still, they draw attention to working with the thresholds and physical parameters of material to tell stories which cross ontologies. I extend this idea of environmental crossings to an actual encounter within environments and an actual crossing of the thresholds through the moving body. The field of relations that landscape provides is rife with forces that cannot be encountered solely through the sensing body. But must however be received also through matter, discourse and movement. In taking both meaning and discourse (as suggested above) and attaching phenomena, the fields opens up more points of access and encounter.

When practice operates directly in the landscape, it can build an empathy with non-human agents and entities, as creative works happen in duration in the spatiotemporal realm. Duration, as an expression of a becoming other, as Henri Bergson points out, operated in ever unfolding nature of the spatiotemporal that gives the mobility to maneuvers negative binary reactions. These maneuvers follow towards an emphatic, which is more nuanced, relational and suggestive towards the more-than-human. This is what Bergson calls “a qualitative progress”, and is essential for the ‘creative evolution’ we need as critical-thinking-makers who continue to frame this changing world. Bergson points out that there is no ‘negation in the duration’ just a multifarious set of potentials, a truly heterogeneous territory (Lawlor, 2016).

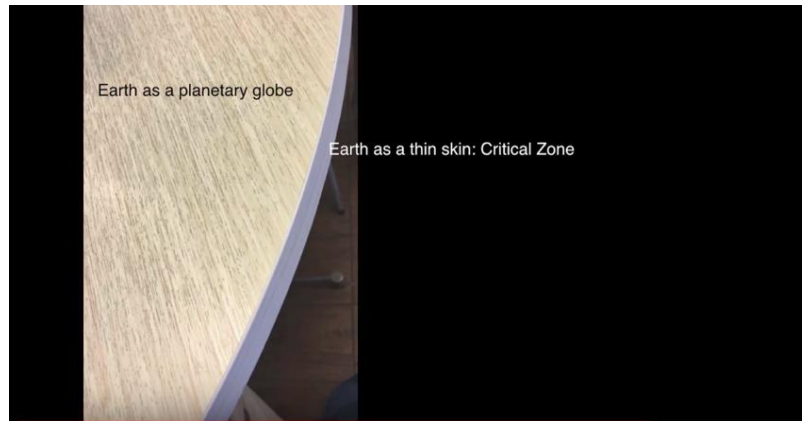


Fig.2 . Earth as thing skin; critical zone (Latour, 2016)

Walking as the critical framing of the landscape

Walking as a critical creative practice comes to us primarily from Land Art practitioners working in the United Kingdom and the United States in the late 1960s to 1970s, belonging to a tradition of walking as art or more specifically as a spatial sculptural practice. This came with the departure, effected through abstract expressionism, from art-as-object to an ‘unbounded investigation into the relationships between ideas, act and the material world’ (Solnit, 2002), emanating from a call from the performance artist Alan Kaprow. A clear and familiar example here would be British artist Richard Long’s *A Line Made by Walking, 1967* (Long, 1967), also the work of Hamish Fulton. In 1973, having walked 1,022 miles in 47 days from Duncansby Head to Land’s End, he resolved to ‘only make art resulting from the experience of individual walks’ adding that ‘If I do not walk I cannot make art’ (Fulton, 2005). Here walking made several translations in meaning and framing, from an everyday activity to performative action to an in-formal form of sculpture and back again. Whatever its place in the lineage of art making, it is the relationship between landscape and the walker which remains most co-productive to this argument.

Although some of this impetus for critical walking practices emerges from Psycho-geographic Theory of ambulation and the city via work of Guy Debord and the Situationists, I am not specifically nor directly employing this thinking. Notion such as the *Derive* and *Flâneur*, Stephanie Springgay and Sarah Truman suggest might not be so helpful for a socio-ecological inquiry. They suggest that these theories of independent embodiment put forward the individual and undivided self which is counter to the affectual body in a field of non-

hierarchy force relations, and also denies something of the social in the collective sense. (Springgay & Truman, 2017)

Aesthetically speaking, Land Art walking practices attempt to connect the body with the material earth which is useful to present ecological concerns, which would make these models a clear reference for an eco-social creative inquiry. However, reprisals of some the aesthetic operations of Land Art appear to highlight a slightly outmoded form of production for attending to complex political ecologies. Like Psycho-geographic theory, they deny existence of entanglements, as many modes of art making in this movement show a tendency to separating nature and culture. (Demos, 2016)

On the hand, the use of cartographic artifacts and their tendency towards spatial, material and temporally oriented thinking, which find alliance with conceptual frameworks emerging from critical environmental studies makes elements from early Land Art useful to contemporary practice, with a focused on the temporal flows of the material earth, as the carriage of earth-bound knowledge. The practice to be discussed below suggests walking as a spatial, materially and temporally contingent activity, which surveys and constructs meaning in the landscape.

Rebecca Solnit, in the book *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* (Solnit, 2002), states that like eating or breathing, walking as a universal act can be imbued with different cultural meanings, and therefore constituting political statements. Catherine Harris, on embarking upon one of her performatives transects, offers an anecdote regarding Roman soldiers; trained to count their steps as they walked, so that this would survey the newly conquered land, as they marched. This gesture was a two-fold action of an imperialistic advance forward in to new territories and a projected Euclidian survey. The soldier, in projecting himself forward, makes the very map that will in time 'legitimise' his actions and occupation of that land. The politicising nature of walking adds to its agency as vehicle brings with it both a historical relationship to power and the potential to access the politico-ecological entanglement of the current state of affairs.

Francis Alÿs walking works often directly seeks to subvert the hidden, temporality-extruded spatiality of a landscape. He does this through working with archival material, often cartographic in nature, to look for invoiced vectors, revealing their agential relationships, if

only for the duration of the work but also to durations that exist outside of the work which he's walking refers to. The walking then remains a record of this temporal enfolding. His 2009 work "The Green Line" begins with Alÿs standing on a freeway easement, an escarpment above a busy freeway in an Israeli Jewish settlement in the West Bank. He opens a can of green paint and begins to walk and drip the paint as he moves. (fig . 3) The paint's impact with the sandy, gravelly ground is awkward and uneasy, and the line waivers from side to side as Alÿs maneuvers the rough terrain.



Room 11

The Green Line

In 1995, Alÿs realised an action in São Paulo called *The Leak* in which he walked from a gallery, around the city, and back into the gallery trailing a dribbled line from an open can of blue paint. This action was reprised in 2004 when he chose to make a work in Jerusalem. Using green paint, Alÿs walked along the armistice border, known as 'the green line', pencilled on a map by Moshe Dayan at the end of the war between Israel and Jordan in 1948. This remained the border until the Six Day War in 1967 after which Israel occupied Palestinian-inhabited territories east of the line. Though palpably absurd, and greeted by onlookers with some bewilderment, Alÿs's action of dribbling green paint behind him raised the memory of the green line at a time when the separation fence, seen in his paintings here, was under construction to the east of the green line. He later encouraged various commentators from Israel, Palestine, and other countries to reflect on his action, and their voices, sometimes sceptical, sometimes approving, can be heard while the video of his action is screened. Most importantly Alÿs wanted to ask what the role of poetic acts could be in highly charged political situations, while acknowledging that the relation of poetics to politics is always contingent.

The Green Line (Sometimes doing something poetic can become political and sometimes doing something political can become poetic) 2004

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Fig. 3 Francis Alÿs, *The Green Line 2004, Jerusalem*. In collaboration with Philippe Bellaïche, Rachel Leah Jones, and Julien Devaux. (Alÿs, 2004)

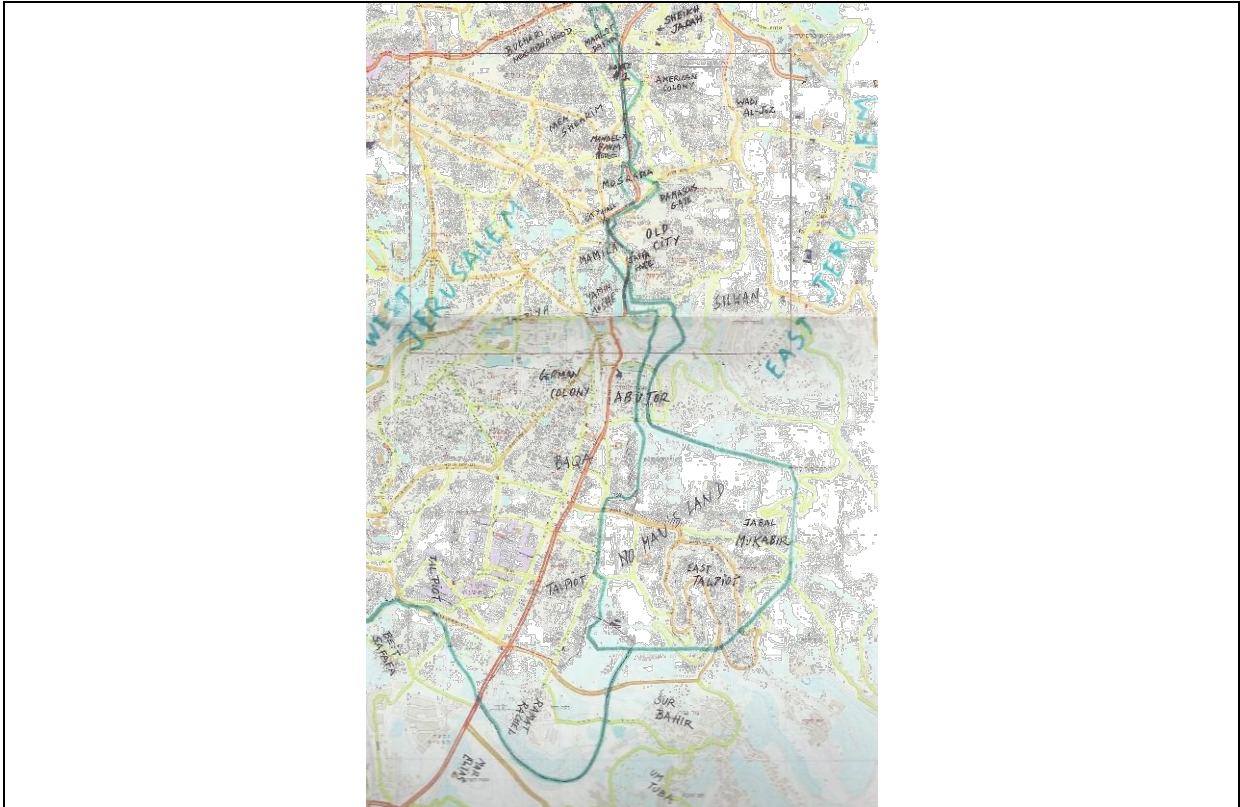


Fig. 4 Francis Alÿs, *The Green Line* 2004, *Jerusalem*

The Green Line is tracing a vector, a frontline during fighting in the area between December 1947 to June 1948. The green of the paint which Alÿs pours, marks the green line which marked the frontline, the ‘ground of which the pencil measures 3-4-millimeter-wide’ (fig.4) , Alÿs asks the question of not only the arbitrary nature of the boundaries but also who actually obtains ownership of the width of the line. As a way of making knowledge, creative works are poised to access specific earth-bound knowledge through both embodied and empirical means. The vector is always politicised in this way. The idea of a vector has a number of uses, not only as the sense of a line that we can walk and a line that can be drawn, but also in the sense that one might make something a vector and locate an agential potential,

In Catherine Harris, *Transect Collaborative* located in the Lobo Canyon, New Mexico, 2009, she cuts an ‘almost’ perfectly straight line, the work seeks to subvert the Cartesian logic of cartographic representations, as trees, cliffs and ‘unstandable’ grounds are encountered becoming cut short by the line (fig.5). As provocation, the group before they walk contemplate a 1765 ordinance drawing, which surveyed a Native Indian reservation on the site, a set of three lines which truncated the pre-colonial site, as it had been known and co-

formed over thousands of years. a section line through a scrubby canyon landscape with a group of fourteen participants by walking.



Fig.5 Stills from Harris, Catherine, *Transect Collaborative*, 2009, Lobo Canyon, New Mexico. (Harris, 2009)



Fig.6. Hester, Bianca. *Walking A Lava Flow*; production still, 2015, (Hester, 2015)

Bianca Hester's "Walking a Lava Flow (2015), traces a line walked through the city of Auckland, New Zealand. The walk through the notion of an Active embodied measurement enacted a measuring of the deep temporalities of the city by tracing the course of the once moving outpouring of lava created during an eruption some 28,500 years ago.

The two-time scales of the geologic and the social become enfolded through the walker's movements. Hester often makes use of cartographic instruments in her walks, as a means to elicit new encounters with the landscape. By considering multiplicities of movement, measurement and material, Hester's practices offer up a critical appraisal of walking and its capacity to subvert Cartesianism and unearth hidden socio-material narratives of sites.

The paper will now discuss three walks carried out in locations in Australia, on Maria Island, Tasmania and in North Melbourne and South Melbourne. The walks are public walks comprising usually a group of about 6-15 participants. Some engage members of the public and some are made via collaboration with other artists and designers. The walks often occur very early in the morning. Each walk uses writing and mappings, as 'hinges' into and out of the walks. Opening up points of conversation, pause and producing moments for more acute co-formations between landscape and practice, environment and knowledge.

Walk : 01

Island Walk

Island Walk (2016). Hobart: UTAS - University of Tasmania. PSi Performance+Design Working Group (PSi_P+DWG)

Made in collaboration with Dr Justy Phillips, Dr Fernando Quesada, Dr Jaquie Naismith, Dr Maria Kunda

The walk was situated upon a confluence of Triassic, Jurassic and Permian sedimentary and intrusive rock, which had formed over 44 million years ago. As we walked, these rocks had also walked, travelling at the slowest rate imaginable, but they moved nonetheless. The average walker will walk at 5.0 kilometers per hour, eroding the ground beneath them at a minuscule and variable rate, similar to that of the massive dolerite intrusions, which extrude themselves upwards from the center of the earth. Participants followed a ficto-critical travelogue, which navigated and narrated a network of geologic boundaries, faults, sills, inclines and synclines, wandering, as the rocks themselves do, at different speeds and tempos.

The writing was choreographed to reveal a folding of the tempos of the walking and co-formation through rhythms with the deep-paces of the subterranean bodies beneath.

The walk set out at a comfortable hour, 9.00 am. Prepared in advance, was a map of the geology of the island. The map is entitled Geological Atlas of Tasmania 1:50 000 series. Sheet 8512N (77), Maria Island Dept. of Mines (M.J. Clarke, 1981), (fig 12). Several key notes had been made on the map, extracting a number of key moments that might be intersected, in particular, the Permian limestone. The island has a rich and complex history, as most islands tend to, and was a rich hunting ground of the original inhabitants, Tyreddeme people of the Paredarmerme nation of Oyster Bay. We were to walk the known track on the island. By walking with the maps as a method for making, the work sought to subvert the ‘Cartesianism’ of the map, (fig 11) a type of spatial knowledge that fails to make meaning in the nature/culture collapse of the Anthropocene, where we transverse ‘mud’ rather than a uniform stratum (Klingan, 2015) Here, collectivised walking traced out vectors in pre-formed spatial landscape knowledge (maps, GIS, words) and retrace these through the shared-discourse of the group as we dislodged the fixedness of the map.

The agency of the geologic was potent during this walk, in its power to elicit conversation between disciplines – from concrete works – Māori chiefs – tuberculosis spores – hundreds of thousands of *Eurydesma* sp, the fossil of an ancient clam, abundance in the ancient oceans of the Permian – (fig 7-10). We pick them up and study them. One of us knew the name of the ancient clam that dwelled within. Another person suggests they are no longer fossil and have almost transformed into limestone. Another offers up the image of a seabed at the time of a mass extinction.

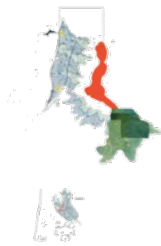


Fig.7 Geological Atlas of Tasmania, 1981

Fig.8 Study for "Study for Walk", 2016, Maria Island

Fig.9 *The Permian fossil cliffs*, 2016, Maria Island

Fig.10 *Walking towards the fossil cliffs*, 2016, Maria Island

Fig.11 *Eurydesma fossil*, Maria Island, 2016, Maria Island

Fig.12 *Inspecting the Map Before We Commence Walking*, 2016, Maria Island

The material agency of objects in the field elicits knowledge sharing and socialising of the strata (Yusoff, 2016) as material and field come into alignment through language, movement and the walk, revealing in a more acute manner the agency of collective knowledge *co-forming* landscape. We discussed the *Eurydesma* sp, and an underlying geologic fault which has brought these fossils up from a lower hidden stratum. Jacky points out that the tombstone of two Māori chiefs, a husband and wife, banished to the site for their political agency in the Māori resistance wars of the late 18th-century, is made of limestone from the fossils. Margaret then takes us to the concrete works, where the limestone in which my fossils would rest was churned up to make cement for building Hobart. Rebecca Solnit makes the comparison between walking and language, stating that “Language is like a road; it cannot be perceived all at once because it unfolds in time, whether heard or read” (Solnit, 2002). Material flows are encountered through conversation and shared knowledge – both material and immaterial – in a complex political ecology.

Anthropologist Tim Ingold refers to walking as a ‘becoming knowledgeable’ (Ingold, 2010), a knowledge that is produced along movements through the temporal landscape. These movements are initiated through everyday activities without any locatable sense of fixed Cartesian space. The walking practice is not intended to form a spatial body ‘or critical mass’, a type of architecture to be installed into the landscape. Rather it is the socio-material potential of moving together through the landscape, conversing with one another to produce collective dialectic, where the entangled status of knowledge fields might play out. I refer here to walking, thinking and talking as being productive of what might be considered of as knowledge interferences. Such, interferences become essential as we move into a post-Anthropocene era, where current Cartesianism and post-Enlightenment thinking are exposed as the scaffold of colonialism, violence and domination, of both earthly and non-earthly bodies, where some voices clearly count and others ‘are relegated to the sensory background’ (Demos, 2016)

The walk drew attention to a sequence of erasures; first to the erasure of the Tyreddeme clan from their ancestral lands, then the Māori chiefs from their island of exile, the Irish convicts and the wombats. Through time and conversation, temporal qualities augmented the encounter with that place, as the strata of the site became unearthed through conversation and collaboration. By producing vectors as we walk and by ‘linguaging’, we make the types of ‘,

where the scientific and the mythic can converse with each other. Michel Serres refers to this phenomenon in his *Atlas*, (Serres & Martorell, 1995)

“We are changing paradigm. In a different way more difficult, subtle and complete, the life and Earth sciences, henceforth put in the center of cognition, take over. They practice a more sharing, open, connected way of knowing, in which he who knows participates in the things he knows, is even reborn from them, tries to speak their language, listens to their voices...The life and Earth sciences are once again sewing together the tear that was separating the subject and its objects. Dare I say they become human from it? Yes.” (Serres & Martorell, 1995)

In the folding of embodied and sensorial encounters with the landscape through walking, scientific knowledge of the materiality of the site becomes just another formation of such knowledge, just as two people might come together and, through conversation, share with each other their diverse knowledge of the landscape.

Walk 2: Lagoon Walk

6.45am Thursday 23 July 2016

The intention of this walk was to open up the potential of walking to reveal a site's 'climate' and further hidden narratives that this material condition might point to. We focused on climates which have been erased but which revealed themselves at the micro and macro scales were explored through the walks. Together with my collaborator Saskia Schut, we proposed one short walk which would approach notions of land and duration. Lagoon walk used the sense of equilibrioception and thermoception to draw attention to shifts that occurred in the ground plain as a way to register the topographic difference of erased hydrological and atmospheric landscapes. Springgay and Truman, in their summary for theories of an embodiment which are relevant to walking methodologies, explain embodiment as lived experience, as a type of bodily response to the physical material and formal qualities of space (Stephanie Springgay, 2017). They draw attention to the relationship between landscape and walking and both the sensual and the tactile. Often when we focus on eco-cide, it is the lost functionality of these landscapes and the vital role they play in the very feedback loops which hold up that complex system against the prevailing tendency towards inevitable collapse, that

that we mourn most. But what about the loss of the sensual qualities of landscape, as they succumb to human made climate change and overall environmental destruction? Lost experience and lost encounters.

Outflow

We begin by walking the path of an unnamed creek. We find this unnamed creek on an early topography drawing of Melbourne. It once ran down towards the Port Phillip Bay from a tract of land which is now Princes Park, a relatively high point with a drier micro-climate that would have once been grassy woodland. The walk is intended to follow the datum line of the watershed of the creek. As the leaders of the walk, Saskia and I know our destination; however, we keep this secret from our participants. As we begin to walk, we announce that we are walking the bed an erased creek (fig 13). The group passes and looks around, and we begin to notice that we are walking in the bottom of a subtle valley. The built environment so often masks any sense of hydrology systems, except of course at times of flood. We move as a mass of around 12 people, wandering through the streets of North Melbourne, following the path of the creek. As we pass over stormwater drains, we stop and listen to the water running underneath us: the creek is covered with street paving and green spaces, but it cannot be fully erased. We pause here and contemplate the life-force of this creek. It still has vitality and presence. We set off again, we feel our bodies moving downwards, our equilibrioception attuning to the topographic decline as its slopes gently towards the elevation of the bay. We continue to follow contours and sounds until we find ourselves on a football field. We all agreed this felt very much like the lowest point of the creek.(fig 14)



Fig.13. *Listening for The Unnamed Creek*, 2016. North Melbourne

Fig.14. *The Original Site of Lagoon Walk*, 2016. North Melbourne.

Fig.15. *Objects Gleaned on Lagoon Walk*, 2016. North Melbourne

Fig.16. Publication for *Lagoon Morning Walk*, 2016. North Melbourne

The Lagoon

We discuss with the group that in this place there once lay a crystal blue lagoon. The lagoon, ephemeral in nature as are most Australia waterways, would flood quite often with as much as 2.1 meters of water covering the land. The Watha Wurrung speakers from the Kulin nation camped upon what is now the top of Lonsdale street and looked out upon the lagoon, which was a great source of food and the place for meetings and corroboree, due to the abundance of food and resources afforded by the lagoon. During summer the lagoon would often dry out. A phenomenal flood fell upon Melbourne in the first week of July 1891, 125 years today. "The rainfall was very heavy, no less than 5·20 inches being registered within four days, but the severity of the flood was principally due to the heavy south west gales, such as prevailed yesterday, retarding the discharge of the water from the river into the bay". It was at this point, due to this flood, that the authorities decided to drain the lagoon (Tue 14 Jul 1891, *The Argus Newspaper*).

The draining of the lagoon

We began to encircle the northern perimeter of the site. Before we began the final leg of the walk we discussed the event of the draining of the swamp. The operation had been performed by means of a 13-horsepower engine acting a centrifugal pump, which lifted at a rate capable of raising 2,000 gallons a minute, so that an inch of water falling on the area would be removed in about three hours and a half, or a whole year's rainfall of 2 inches in 3 hours. We announce these measurements as we encircled what had been the shrinking shoreline of the lagoon.

By proposing an enfolding of large, complex, urban landscape systems within the small, intimate site of the body, through the senses and through the onto-epistemological shifts that occur through the entanglement of discourse, materials and bodies, "the ontological inseparability of intra-acting agencies", also movements, of air and of ground and multiple histories, were brought into alignment with movements of our own moving bodies. Walking here provided the means through which to locate flows between bodies, the lagoon, the yabbies which provided edible substance, and the pumps draining the lagoon. With environmental destruction comes cultural destruction, and the activities and location of this walk were intended to set the path of the creek running in to the lagoon as a field, through

which we would weave together science, art, and human and non-human narratives of that place. Saskia and I used a number of image and language-based suggestions, but we also invited local and non-local knowledge from members of the group, some students, academics and members of the public (fig 15). We do not preface specific disciplinary or non-academic knowledge in the walks. Instead, we invite in all suggested points on the meaning which might contribute to this archaeology.

Walk 03 Pliocene River Walk

This walk will be discussed to foreground the way language, writing and announcing is used in the walking methodology. We took a group of 6 participants on a walk to transverse the geologic survey of Melbourne. There are five boundaries that we would cross. The walks were 2.3 km. Like the Lagoon walk, we had an intended endpoint in mind. The intention of the walk was to slowly and gradually take our walkers into deep time. By focussing on the ground and the epoch or era in which it was laid down, we considered the changing environment around us that would have laid down these different materials, marked in colours and hatches on the map in hand. Below is a running sheet and discussion points for the walk. There are four main pauses, where we stop and contemplate as we cross from one epochal boundary to another or, as Chakrabarty might suggest, ways towards developing our “epochal consciousness”.

Pause (1) Upper Silurian - siltstone / mudstone - dated as 410 Ma)

The formation descended beneath our feet with a thickness of 3100 meters, where it meets an unknown material, most likely igneous Oldivine which the lower part of the earth's crust is primarily composed of. This 3km is a part of the ‘Thin Skin’ Bruno Latour refers to when discussing the interface of geology and atmosphere that comprises the site humans occupy on earth. It is a ‘Critical Zone’ in being an interface between states of liquid, solid and gases that define the planetary condition, but also the agency of our occupation on the surface that it produces.

During the Silurian, when the material we walk on was laid down, plants had yet to exist. Without plants to stabilise the soil, the Earth was bare and scoured by erosion. A green fringe on the water's edge where we stand, began a slow transformation; a small number of plants

developed a revolutionary adaptation – vascularity, or the ability to transport water and nutrients through a network of specialised tissue. The slow events of these transformations are hidden in the 3km + layers of rock below us. As the city develops at its hyper capitalist rate (Melbourne is the fastest growing city in the southern hemisphere), and we excavate more and more of the bedrock of the city to embed car parks for high rise apartments, we pierce these events and their geologic traces.

Pause (2) - Brighton Formation; sandstone – 8 Mya

We are standing on what was once materially an ocean bed which has been uplifted at an angle of 13 degrees. This happened in the Late Miocene to Pliocene (dated as 8 to 5 Mya). Below our feet are of more or less horizontally bedded pebble and granule conglomerates (gravels), sands, and clayey sands, extended for 2000 meters. Sandstone pebbles have been derived from Silurian bedrock, the source area probably lying to the north. The Silurian diffuses into this formation. Through deep time these boundaries become ephemerally defined.

Pause (3) Eocene lava flow: basalt- 30-55 Mya

Overlying the ancient ocean shoreline, we now pass into the Eocene lava flow, in the form of a thick sequence of basaltic lava. Erupting about 30-55 Mya. The flows erupted from Hamilton and flowed 200 km east to rest upon the ground where we stand.

(Pause 4) ironstone, Pliocene river bed

We paused at the transition from marine to non-marine Pliocene sediments, and are crossing the old ocean shoreline to an ancient estuary edge. We walk for another 1.2 km around towards a ridge that embanks a railway cutting. The cutting was made in the 19th Century, as Melbourne expanded due to the economic gains from the world's biggest gold rush. We stand on the top of the ridge, one of the only 'natural', non-anthropologically formed, vantage points in Melbourne. We stand at the elevation of 25 meters above the Moonee Ponds Creek, which is located only 800 meters to the south. We draw our attention to the ground underneath our feet. It is a dark rich red, sandy, compacted loam. We invite our participants to pick up the large white and pink quartz rocks embedded in the red sandy loam, inspecting them closely. We note that they are weathered, round, smooth to touch as if something gently

abrasive has been running itself over the surface of the rock an infinite number of times. Thousands of these rocks lie underneath our feet. These are river stones and we are standing in a Pliocene river bed. We discuss with the group, that where we stand now was once one of the lowest elevations in the city, it has become inverted through time, to be now one of the highest. Collectively we imagine this site during this older time when the water flowed along this ground and the first hominids were appearing in Africa. The temperatures were cooling around the globe from an extended period of the greenhouse effect. Many mammals were becoming extinct. After the deposition of these sediments, the whole Melbourne region was uplifted on the site where we stand, the Pliocene shoreline deposits now lie 25-100 meters above sea level. Once this earth movement had begun, the rivers started to cut into the uplifted rocks and a drainage system developed. A Paleo-channel is a remnant of an inactive river or stream channel that has been either filled or buried by younger sediment.

Barbara Bender states that “Landscapes refuse to be disciplined” (Bender, 2002) , adding that they undermine the oppositional system we create between the spatial and the temporal as well as the scientific and the cultural. Through writing and ‘linguaging’ during the walk, a type of ‘earthly way of knowing’ or ‘Earthbound Knowledge’ is mined, which serves as a means to reorganize epistemic fields and modes of knowledge transfer, which form and move the Anthropocene as the *materialisation* of information. One pay reference here to the performative turn, where the power that language has enjoyed in knowledge systems is taken away, if only intermediately. By returning language back into the walk and allowing it to be reformed and spatialised, a reforming of language is hinted towards. Merrill Swain discusses *linguaging* as playful gestures towards generating and forming language (Swain, 2013). In spatialising words, while they are being spoken, through the rhythm of our bodies stepping, a co-formation of landscape with the world comes into view which offers up novel potentials for language and landscape to fold into each other.

Conclusion

Returning now to the ‘Exotic Terrain’ (E et al., 1941), and developing practices that can extrude the experience of the land into deep time and planetary space through a shared material and temporal narrative framework, the boundary between subjects and objects, body and earth, can begin to abrade. The project seeks alternatives to predominantly technocratic responses to current earth-system collapse, where knowledge is situated outside of the

participant and lies with the authoritative or the expert. Instead spoken words and walking can situate this language back into the landscape, through a type of performative translation, which locates and situates the walker within the spatiotemporal paradox of deep time. The walking enacts and reforms language, situating it back into the landscape, performing further material dialectic maneuvers between sites and epistemes.

I would finally like to end by addressing the relationship between discipline-specific ways of knowing and thinking and the agility that ‘less disciplined’ modes of creative practice research offers. A question of convention becomes interesting here – as a landscape architect, we are bound to the conventions of our discipline. In making practices more plastic and porous to the affectual fields creative practice can move beyond the representational restraints, were non-representational methodologies prefer the performative and focus upon practices over the actors themselves where the site of inquiry remains between the resonance of things and fields and embodiment (Thrift, 2007.)

Within design disciplines, especially landscape architecture and architecture, we talk about climate resilience and ecological adaptation. On the other hand, creative practice, in being somewhat freer from the weight of designs conventions can work through praxis, more closely at the point of a philosophical inquiry that is needed here. Thus, by accessing the performative, creative modes research can consider working towards a resilience of ourselves as the subject of climate and not only as instrumentalised mitigators, fortifying the earth against the very systems that hold it in place. In this sense, creative practice research in refusing disciplinary-specific knowledge is essential in addressing the question of new climate onto-epistemologies.

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