CRATERS
The author is grateful for the permission of Ashley Mason to intersperse fact with fiction.

This catalogue accompanies the *Craters* exhibition, that never took place.

[It is also an accompaniment to the thesis: Ashley Mason, *Towards a Paracontextual Practice* (*with footnotes to Parallel of Life and Art*) [June 2019].]
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IMMINENT
BODIES
A FOREWORD
Temporal dislocation of labels of *Craters* exhibition,
*February 2018*
In the beginning, there was a missing image; a crater.

I still remember running through London, among the gravestones. Markers, marking each coffin below. We create holes intentionally, and accidentally. We respond to holes as a problem to be filled in, to be built over or written over: forgotten. Every grave is a crater, displaced soil slipping through our fingers; finally at rest, captured in the slithers of light creeping through the apertures before the earth is returned. We choose to mark our graves, our chambers, with wood, with stone. We mark what matters with matter that endures, that withstands the hollowness of this world that we often cannot. Multiple threads to weave together into some kind of accord. Shrieking out of the shadows. There’s nothing casual about the outcome; it is hard to ignore the swagger of the coming storm. The drifting motes are steered to unknowns.

Some things can’t be spoken. There are silences everywhere escaping our grasp, evading our perception. We’re constantly second-guessing our next word, our next step; attempting to thwart the inevitable fall to the footnote, always imminent. We burrow out our lives from sedimented layers littered with cavities; excavating the blocks from which we build the bunkers we believe will protect us from the awaiting abyss. The focus is always placed on tracing the origins, the crater’s creator; following their footsteps accounting for their whereabouts before their acts of devastation; accounting for the guiding forces which have influenced their trajectory. But, a shift to victims, to what once existed that now haunts the craters created in their wake. For we will never know the beginning; there isn’t a beginning to know of anyway.

Forests of words; passing imprints. The beginnings always seem more difficult; the ends easier, a slight pressing and the ink is left there, slicing through the air to meet a point. Violent ends; this pen is both a weapon and a womb. We always begin with a blank piece of paper. Yet, this empty surface is always-already framed by other former chasms, punctured with other characters. Guiding the awaited meteor, until the lines, pauses, and ellipses scatter over and turn the innocent white to shadow. Casting over the long-quarried ground of written markings; seeping through the crevices, filling the fissures between with their stories of other interstices, other constellations. These leaves are littered with marks, leaving their mark on an inner landscape, untold. As I write, sideways, the gaps precede my every pretence, my every gesture. Stay with me and I will find you a crater.
There’s something missing from this picture. It’s as tangibly absent as typographic formations from the blank expanse of paper upon which I fail to write; paradoxically attempting to articulate the emptiness of this non-existent image, to catalogue a void. My thoughts remain only a faint probing in the infinite darkness, until the words eventually start to tumble over the precipice. The instinct is always to fill the void, to shout over the silence.

The omission was imperceptible at a glance, a negligible pinhole in the overall composition. From darkness to light; from periphery to perception. The creation of nothing. One tries to reassemble the image grain by grain; to reconnect it to its caption. Yet, something is always lost with each reproduction: a solid wall gives way to a lacuna.

Who would have known of the lacuna at all were it not for reproduction? The same situation, on two different occasions; captured in still-life, one with a figure and one with a crater. An opening in the background; another faint layer of dust and life at the edges that once were. Now all we’re left with is a loss we cannot grasp, and a tale we cannot tell.

A source is never a singularity, every document is already fractured and scattered from prior collisions on its journey. And so, we search beyond the boundary, reproduce each footstep beyond the defined margins of the content, the walls of the gallery, reaching for the betrayed origin in order to accept the exception, to acknowledge the inheritance, and to re-reveal the wonder of this absence.

The instinct is always to fill the void, to fill the fireplace with fire. Yet, the crater is accepted as an exception, as an absence, as a frame of nothingness. It is the mantlepiece which is filled with momentary representations of our fleeting existence, our story, with so many layers of dust resting on the surface. However incomplete, our only tangible possessions are our stories.

It’s easy to forget all of the footnotes; to pretend that each quotation, removed from its previous context, was only here and never there, never elsewhere than on the wall of the gallery. Never a pause to consider, what’s missing from this picture? The piece that matters most: the story not yet written (or, the case of the missing crater).
A coincidence. In 1953, a temporary exhibition at the ICA gallery in London was plundered. Two figures disappeared, a *Mile Wide Crater* and the excavation site of a *skyscraper*. I was so deeply captivated by these figures that I continually returned to them and the spaces where they once were, perhaps so haunted as to be guilty of removing them myself.

The Independent Group’s 1953 exhibition was fleeting. Once all of the images were taken down, the places where the figures once were suspended all became empty. Yet, when I returned to the scene of the crime, the absence of the two figures still leapt out at me from the void.

No literal frames were left behind by the thieves. There was nothing to accentuate the additional blanks from the expanse of wall evident before. Two images alongside each other; spot the difference. I was immediately struck by the potential parallels that surfaced. No one else, other than me, has ever noticed.

Everything began with the quest for the disappeared images. I was distracted by their ghosts, labels, notes — haunted. I tried to decipher the monochrome variations, the blurred to resolution. Presence may be found in recollections; a new work may be borne from the debris and shadows.
From the other side, there is an image. There wasn’t, but now it is there, suspended, amongst all of the others. I can’t explain how and when it appeared; an unknowable number of different narratives are possible. Copyright, discovery, temporality, delayed circumstances. Why photograph the (w)hole before it was finished?

It wasn’t the only image, there was another. The skyscraper, the crater; the space between the universe beyond and the core below. It’s believable that these images, as clippings from the leaves of the same family of trees, came to be upon the gallery walls at a later time to all of the others due to awaiting copyright permission for their inclusion. Yet, perhaps just as likely true is the tale which suggests that the Editors chose to make these last minute additions after (re)discovering the images within their imaginary museums. No doubt there are other possibilities; indecisions.

Before, there was breathing space. The distances between were greater and each of the already-suspended images drew air from a greater expanse of absent-present, of white. No one would have known that they should have been there, had they not, had they not been included within the accompanying exhibition catalogue. There were no outlines on the wall to suggest missing pieces: missing in spite of never, or not yet, having been present.
Interior view of Parallel of Life and Art exhibition
Nigel Henderson, September 1953

MISSING:
TWO CRATERS
“In February 2018, I was invited to create a temporary exhibition at the former premises of the Institute of Contemporary Arts in Dover Street, London. Three years previous to this invitation, I had serendipitously uncovered an empty space in the photographic records of one of the former exhibitions held within the gallery in 1953. This exhibition was called Parallel of Life and Art. At some point during this exhibition’s duration, two of its figures mysteriously disappeared. I asked myself what might now be drawn from these craters. The subsequent exhibition Craters presents the findings, interrogates the ghosts, the blank sites and spaces between: what once filled and will follow the absent–present. In the first piece, Missing, I photographed the evidence — the photographs of the original photographic exhibition (of photographic reproductions) and the exhibition catalogue — and, like the protagonist of Blow Up, sought to determine what I had witnessed.”

— the Author
78. **Mile wide crater (wide angle lens photo).**

Arizona meteorite crater, widest (one mile) found before Quebec pit, was gorged by 20,000ton missile hurtling over 25,000mph 50,000 years ago.
The two* missing** images were found to be of a crater*** and skyscrapers,**** or, more precisely,***** a view looking down on a space between skyscrapers, a blank site under construction.

* There was in fact a third image, a portrait of a jet pilot, also featured in *Life Magazine.*
** Though they may instead be *appearing* images, for there are no time stamps on the exhibition photographs to clarify whether the images were removed, lost, stolen, or added later, nor any indication within the *Parallel of Life and Art* documentation (held within the Nigel Henderson Collection at the Tate Archives, London) as to why this (dis)appearance may have occurred.
***** At least, as precisely as I am able to determine from the grainy, blown-up images.


Looking down from approximate height of finished building, lens shows the first few floors taking shape, east river is in distance.
Mystery lake in north Quebec excites scientists. Six explorers bearing amazing scientific news flew into Toronto two weeks ago. Far to the north, they had clambered over the barren $7\frac{1}{3}$ mile rim of a round lake which probably had formed by a gigantic meteorite that smashed into Quebec province 4,000 years ago, blasting out the largest known meteorite crater on the earth’s surface. The men were members of an expedition organised by the Royal Ontario Museum and the Toronto Globe & Mail after a prospector named Fred Chubb, studying some aerial photos, noticed a strange rimmed, circular lake. It contrasted sharply with the unrimmed, fingerlike lakes gouged across Quebec by the Ice Age. Seeing the picture, the museum’s Dr. V. B. Meen decided to fly to the strange pit. He found that the crater was postglacial, for it had an uplifted edge not worn down by glaciers, and millions of boulders strewn on the lake slopes had no glacial scratches. He found no trace of volcanic ash, so he ruled out the possibility that the crater was that of an extinct volcano. He decided it must be a meteorite crater, although he did not locate any fragments — which could have been buried or scattered. He did spot some meteoritic clues: significant alignments of fractures in the 500-foot-high cliffs, and concentric ripples 60 feet high creasing the granite plain around the rim, as if the rock crust had been shoved up by a tremendous missile. If future studies confirm the expedition’s findings, the $2\frac{1}{4}$ mile-wide hole will be the largest known meteorite crater in the world.

‘Biggest Meteor Crater?, *Life Magazine*, 14 August 1950
Officeworkers wonder about A–bomb as they see a new building go up. Last week a construction worker shimmied up a steel column high above Fifth Avenue to set waving a U.S. flag, fastened there to signify this was as high (400 feet) as New York’s new Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Building would go. Officeworkers in nearby buildings (left), who had stuck close to their windows to watch the framework go up for eight months, watched the final rise with mixed feelings. Some were glad that the riveting was about over, but others admitted they would miss the deafening noise. In a week in which a book about the A–bomb became a best–seller (pp.26–29), staccato sounds of riveting gave many a sort of reassurance that normal life would still go on. The building’s steel framework was supposed to be finished by July 14 (Life, June 12), but the work was six weeks behind schedule. Nevertheless the contractor still hoped to meet his deadline and have the building ready for occupancy by April 1, 1951.

*Left:* ‘Peak Performance’, *Life Magazine*, 14 November 1949

*Right:* ‘Skyscraper’s Start’, *Life Magazine*, 12 June 1950

Looking up from excavation, camera’s wide-angle lens distorts workman, frames with other buildings the space skyscraper will fill.
Parallel of Life and Art, exhibition catalogue, October 1953
Parallel of Life and Art, exhibition catalogue, October 1953
“Ghosts fill the frame, as if the theft had freed the characters, had allowed them to leave that frozen representation while staying on-site. I feel that they are more present in their absence. The visitors’ gaze held them back, but now they can wander…”.

there’s a small crater in the photograph, an inconsequential, yet wounding detail — a black, blank space at the very top edge, barely visible, yet, there; concealing
“We were brought up with the problem of holes. Holes in cities are made by the abandonment of sites and city centres, industrial dereliction, clearance by planners of historic centres, new connective systems that cut great swathes into the urban fabric. ... We have evolved an attitude to holes in cities and invented a language of architecture and urbanism to embody these ideas. It is part of our attitude that we must seize on the qualities that holes in cities possess, work with them to invent an appropriate language for the revival of a place. Another part of our attitude is that we should not be frightened of holes in cities; it is important not to try to fill every hole if we were developers.”

A: let’s jump straight into craters, into the rabbit hole. loss seems to have consumed the cake; is pushing up against the windows. there are heavy burdens to bear. how have you found it there, amongst it all, such a tiny speck of dust, calling “crater!”?

A: The crater is both a site where something is tangibly missing and a site whose sense of loss sets in motion all stories. I devoured any portrayals or understandings of crater and site, to pore myself into the history of cataclysmic, yet, creational encounters in the landscape and the traces left behind. It was a strange intuition that took me to the Arizona desert, drew me to the image I would soon discover (dis)appeared. The pieces in this exhibition map an expanse to which the Parallel of Life and Art exhibition was only hinting: the interconnected web of referentiality of the ‘empty’ site.

A: these holes are unnerving. do you see those posts emerging from the ground, from nothing, transforming space to |||||

A: Spaces between are continually transformed by wires and cables and pylons and posts and pavements and curbs and cracks and drains. By walkers and weather, glistening sunshine and floods of tears. So present, yet, so invisible. Intervals. Walls, steps, ha–has, firebreaks, and screens. Layering, repeated renewal: new places worth inheriting. For the Smithsons, their task was to create buildings capable of charging the space surrounding them. Though they were also drawn to greenways. Interstitial places ‘green’d’, connective spaces, links and byways, cuts of planting, protective fringes, softened edges. These are all also spaces between.
A: a carved out tongue sets down actions, against the ordinary; ladders await the right roll of the dice, the markers move, you too?

A: During the late 1970s, it was suggested that industry might return to (northern) city centres, whose industrial built heritage had been gutted through state directive-led demolition. Where once stood warehouses, depots, manufacturing works there were now only lacunae. The cost was: destruction of quality of place (and thereby pride in place) that could not be affordably replaced; vandalism; political manipulation of recessions in the construction industry; and, a continued loss of built quality and lack of choice due to a high proportion of the bravest proposals being obstructed.


—, The Space Between (Cologne: Walther Konig, 2017), pp. 77, 83.


“Originally at least upwards the air was safe; each man on looking up owned a piece of sky, be his territory however small. Now it is not so; a tall building... Unseen eyes could be looking down at you... from higher up the hum of machinery, exhaust fumes... for the traveller a new freedom... for the everyday life, a noise, a paraffin cloud... even walk away on to a mountain slope, there can be this same intrusion.”

A: take two. at war with words, cutting through the sky, supporting — do you feel the weight?

A: At the time of the Parallel of Life and Art exhibition, the cosmology of our world had altered. The bomb (nuclear, hydrogen, atomic) changed everything: man had manipulated the subatomic to offer the possibility of destruction on a previously unimaginable scale, where anywhere might be annihilated without warning. The landscape has always been identified with origins, and expulsion: with eve and the garden and the serpent. It seems violence has always moulded our universe, and will continue to do so, if not of a cosmological hand, then of our own.

A: given a second chance to see, to wait awhile between, how patient?

A: Alison and Peter developed varying solutions to the perceived ‘problem’ of holes within cities. For Berlin, they conceived of holes within the city as open, yet, with opportunity for reconnections. For Glasgow, ‘greening’ was explored for holes borne of abandonment and industrial dereliction: an indication of no present appropriate use, yet, a signal of hope, of temporary resting. In Worcester, few remnants of the original urban fabric remained, only layers of meaning. Thus, remnants as ‘markers’ were envisaged, to offer a new grain and to mend.
A: grab the magnifying glass, look closer, then closer again. A doubling. Your craters, too, are twins; conceived as two, recollecting.

A: Much of their work bears the impact of their origins in ‘empty’ spaces and bomb-sites. For the Smithsons, this association with pauses (in the built fabric; in the construction industry) extended to 1962, and the beginnings of the Economist. Their own experiences of the wounds of war prefaced their intention to rethink architecture in the 1950s, leading to the ‘as found’. Not only those buildings still standing, present and proximate, but also the traces that constitute remembrance: site as a fabric of embodied marks to be read.
“The most mysterious, the most charged of architectural forms are those which capture the empty air. The standing columns of the temple whose cella walls have gone, … Such forms are doubleacting, concentrating inwards, radiating buoyancy outwards. … ‘an empty area that is available to be used’ or even ‘an area around everything that exists, continuing in all directions.’ Yet space could also be defined as ‘the distance between objects and persons’, and also that between words.”

A: av(o)id is centred on absence, the letters hug the edges while the o disappears within itself. fully stopped, yet, fainting. tracing gestures to double acts.

A: While their predecessors promoted a tabula rasa approach to the existing, the Smithsons were conscious that the new ought to be considered within the context of what already exists. Architects are witnesses to past generations, triggered by the revelations of a building site. A building cannot exist outside of its context. The interaction between existing and addition enacts the space between, a ‘space that is left open for interpretation’. A dialectical space, manifested through the ways in which texts and built projects relate and interconnect with each other. A book as a small building Holes in Cities recurred between 1953 and 1988. They revealed that a city is always–already full of holes, some evident, others unexpected. Blackouts, air–communications terminations, and dustmen strikes all threatening to disrupt. The Smithsons began writing Ordinariness and Light, during one such pause in building activity, a pause dictated by the world shortage of steel between 1952–1953. A pause appropriate for considering future directions for the post–war world, and for rethinking the ‘piecemeal tinkering’ of the comprehensive redevelopment areas in London between the wars.
A: a last re-mark, appending the empty air, where from here? from there? to step within the , to disappear.

A: Alison Smithson lived in South Shields when the war started, during the aerial bombardments, ‘sky–watching’. There was a makeshift air–raid shelter in her garden, made of railway sleepers and high walls. For Alison and Peter, both their House of the Future and Patio and Pavilion spoke to a portion of the sky, intent on pursuing the right of all dwellings to hail such a fragment of the heavens, so replete with unbreathed air. Aerial reconnaissance progressed to space exploration: the site from global to planetary. All was placed in orbit, outside, encircling; looking up to unknowns, and looking down upon blank surfaces, bare walls, and a city centre full of holes.


ch 2. dc (tr) in each stitch.

Tying loose ends.

The text is a textile, woven. The analogy seems to imply multiple threads, but all can be composed from a single yarn. More than one: more interesting, more complex — a disrupted rhythm while the fingers adjust to the intrusion, the tension.

tr (db) in each stitch, with ch 1 between.

Different thicknesses. Of needles, of yarn. Different weights. Different spacings between the entangled threads, one pushes and pulls through. It is the lacunae that allow the connections to be made, the strands to intersect. Place a blank sheet of paper under a microscope.

yoh. slip stitch.

Repetition. The instructions are brief, abbreviated. No need to say the same thing again, and again. The end is the same. Calluses.

In French, the word crochet has multiple meanings, among them a form or technique of textile production, as well as ‘bracket’. Indeed, it was within an English translation of a text by Jacques Derrida which followed the English word ‘bracket’ with the French crochet (in brackets) that I first became aware of these divergent etymological roots.

Parentheses. Parents protecting their children, their inheritors. Pausing, deflecting; including the removable, the supplement, that which the sentence’s comprehension is deemed not to depend upon. Too young.

Wounds.

ch 2. dc (tr) in each stitch.

t (db) in each stitch, with ch 1 between.

yoh. slip stitch.

ch 2. dc (tr) in each stitch.

t (db) in each stitch, with ch 1 between.

yoh. slip stitch.
The Economist premises were bombed heavily during the Blitz. Subsequently, in the late 1950s, the magazine began to seek the consolidation of its offices (then scattered throughout St James’s) on one site. Gradually, they were able to build up a half-acre site in St James’s. The Smithsons won the commission in May 1960. Though the site was surrounded by bomb-sites, the Economist buildings necessitated the extensive demolition of existing Victorian structures. It was one of the last buildings constructed as part of the city’s postwar office boom (prior to Office Development Tax, the Betterment Levy) and is now one of the few remaining 1960s office buildings in London.

The plaza generates a pre-entry space to each of the buildings, an intermediary space before the city, an authorial pause, where the man in the street can choose to find his ‘secret’ way. The pavilion and route arrangement may be seen to originate within the Smithson’s Berlin Hauptstadt project of 1957, where different levels separated the pedestrian from the vehicular. Both were sites of accumulated meanings. The plaza is also considerate of the adjacent existing Boodle’s Club, whose party wall was actually interrupted in its centre by a light well. To enclose this light well, a bay window with chamfered corners was added. This discreet reference has been both admired as ingenious and criticised for its uncomfortable relationship with the ground: “as if the bay window had emerged from the rabbit-hole into which Alice disappeared”. The Economist plaza is intimate, miniature, a cluster of cups upon a table.
The bombs rained down heavily during the Blitz; before then war seemed so much more distant. I can recall the path I used to take to the museum; now these paths are indiscernible from the rubble. It was a time of conflict, both external and internal, for the war gave me opportunities I would never have been privileged to before, as a woman. There were only two of us there, two of us others; despite our qualifications, being in sufficient status to organise the move of the Petrology rock and thin section collections from the old museum in Jermyn Street, St James’s to our present home in Exhibition Road. The old museum no longer stands there now; it had survived the devastation of war only to be torn down. The old building was crumbling, in the end. Structural investigations had led to the discovery of serious problems within the fabric; there were large cracks in several of the cast iron roof beams possibly caused by bombs dropped on Piccadilly during WWI, and the foundations had shifted. The building was ruptured, like the stones overwhelming the display cases it held. Pieces of elsewhere; pieces from other fissures left behind, other holes, threatening to collapse in.

‘Economist Building’ online: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1264050> [accessed 12 May 2016].

Irene Scalfert, “‘Architecture is not made with the brain’: The Smithsons and the Economist Building Plaza”, in Architecture is Not Made With the Brain: The Labour of Woman. There were only two of us there, two of us others; despite our qualifications, being in sufficient status to organise the move of the Petrology rock and thin section collections from the old museum in Jermyn Street, St James’s to our present home in Exhibition Road. The old museum no longer stands there now; it had survived the devastation of war only to be torn down. The old building was crumbling, in the end. Structural investigations had led to the discovery of serious problems within the fabric; there were large cracks in several of the cast iron roof beams possibly caused by bombs dropped on Piccadilly during WWI, and the foundations had shifted. The building was ruptured, like the stones overwhelming the display cases it held. Pieces of elsewhere; pieces from other fissures left behind, other holes, threatening to collapse in.

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The Economist buildings are clad with Portland roach bed facings, the first major building to use the roach bed layer for cladding material. Roach is the top layer found on the Isle of Portland. Its distinguishing feature is its prevalent number of cavities, the remaining casts of missing fossils scattered throughout the rock. These holes or pockets offer excellent resistance to air pollution: absorbing and collecting from the air the final soots from London’s fireplaces. Small fissures or hollows within the stone (that may cause it to deteriorate, particularly if left exposed) are not recommended. These defects often cause larger blocks to deteriorate, with only the saw-cuts able to reveal their presence. Waste results as the affected units are removed. “But this difference, specially shelly Portland Stone, is the little that appears to be eaten away by the innumerable small creatures entombed in it. The material itself constitutes a graveyard on the most intimate scale, a ruin under the microscope.” Techniques employed in the extraction of Portland stone have included blasting: drilling a series of holes parallel to the quarry face, filling each with gunpowder. In order to aid extraction of the stone, it is worked in sympathy with its jointing pattern, associated with the tectonics that folded the Weymouth Anticline and shambles Syncline. Tasks once completed by hand were eventually replaced with machines. Tasks once above ground were eventually taken under; mining as opposed to quarrying. Following WWII, London and other devastated cities used Portland Stone facades within their reconstruction. Later, the increased use of concrete and glass forced the contraction of the industry.
I remember journeying, via train, to the outer lands. I saw that the land beyond the window folded in on itself, in strata. I arrived to a sea of monolithic stones; accompanied by so many monumental. I was temporarily occupying a gap myself, during the war, while I had the chance. I grasped the rocks before me, where the ground was disappearing slowly back into the sea. Rarely a geologist; once the bombs stopped falling I was forced to revert, turn backwards, erase my presence, to return to shadowed scripts. There are few credits; my name is often absent despite my contributions to the field. And so I wandered anonymously through the faces of Portland; brushing against the abyss. The material is porous; so porous you could pour yourself into its surface, and never find your way out again.


Blow-Up: a film by Michelangelo Antonioni, 1966, London. The opening sequence occurs within the plaza of the Economist buildings; a circulating car filled with protesting mimes, mute. There is no one else around. The city is elsewhere, off screen, out of frame, while the plaza remains its own microcosm. The film follows Thomas, a photographer, eventually leading to a park where he photographs a couple. On developing the film, Thomas discovers, in the background, what appears to be a murder. Thus begins his search for evidence, with obsessive scrutiny and closer observation: the images are enlarged, blown up, in an attempt to aid comprehension. Yet, the ambiguity generated by the photographic grain leads no further toward any kind of definitive answer. Photographs, in the end, are as “elusive as the transient events that they capture”. Blow-Up: photographic enlargement yet also destruction. Thomas passes through a protest, activists fighting against nuclear war. Indeed, the street of the Economist was also the sight of a nuclear disarmament march in the 1960s. The destructive potentials of the atom were blown into public perception, with government guidelines advising what actions might be taken in the event of a nuclear explosion. Blow-Up was filmed in 1964, in the distant aftermath of WWII, thus allegorising a world where the actions of this period may be erased from view. Within Blow-Up, the protagonist, Thomas, discovers that the image itself dissolves the closer he becomes to it.
I continued to work as a scientific assistant to the Geological Survey’s Directors, later becoming a secretary for the new Atomic Energy Division. The bomb had changed everything; an atom of matter could now be harnessed for the motives of powerful men. I was only a geologist for three years, officially. Some names are only meant to be from history; I know that the bible never mentioned me. Nor could I marry. Up until 1975, and the introduction of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, female survey staff were required to resign on marriage. I hope that cobwebs have been blown away. I know that the air feels clearer now, as I disappear.


Indeed, the extras used within the film included students from the Architectural Association. Steiner, ‘Brutalism Exposed’.


The Economist buildings are clad with Portland roach bed facings, the first major building to use the roach bed layer for cladding material.

...as if the bay window had emerged from a party wall was separated the pedestrian route arrangement may be dissolves the closer he becomes to it. Public perception, what actions might be permitted, Capital Gains, what will the sight of a nuclear destruction. Thomas discovers, in the...
I have an image in my head. It transitions between the dark room of Blow-Up, the Parallel of Life and Art exhibition, and the scattered wall pin-ups of a detective. This scene must be recreated. Delve into notes, documents, reproductions and compose a spatial constellation, a representation of the deductive process undertaken, the attempt to identify the images within the exhibition through increasingly blown-up images, fighting resolution.

A blown up photograph.

I suppose that’s what started it, at least that’s how I’ll choose to remember it. A blend of instinct and deduction and I was transformed into a detective, evidently captivated by the idea that I had been guided to something significant; something which was nothing, something which no sooner grasped had disappeared.

What had been before, a mere few hours ago, was the projection of a scene shot within Alison and Peter Smithson’s Economist Plaza, London, from 1964; a plaza I photographed myself a year ago. This film is about a photographer. It is also about facades, screens, veils and the unseen: white faces — blanc, blank — miming disappearances, ellipses, filling in the gaps with silences and gestures. Copy of a copy; mimes enacting a routine.

A double play.

Temporal inconsistencies: interrupted, at once intent on deductive reasoning, yet, led inexplicably down alleyways after broken strings, leaving nothing but further silences, more spaces to be comprehended and rebuilt, akin to the bomb-sites the photographer drives through. Tracing, retracing footsteps, returning to the scene of the crime. Missing bodies, missing pictures, craters: somehow this film founded on the black and white dots of a blown-up photographic image captured before-the-fact the image of myself as I encountered my own disappearance.

The camera pans around an empty plaza, a vertical column of unbreathed air, enclosed by a cluster of skyscrapers; white faces, blank facades, masking empty interiors, the soullessness of media, of publication, of economics — these thin veils reveal nothing.
patter patter quotations of Parallel of Life and Art exhibition (sources; origins)
PATTER PATTER

AN EXCHANGE
marks that constitute remembrances in place and that are to be read through finding out how the existing built fabric of the place had come to be as it was…".

With the indexical function of the photograph suspended, the creative potential for spatial and temporal plays, and thereby visual ambiguity, was opened. ‘portable museums’ — which they would pass between one another, and that exemplified Malraux’s statement: "An artbook is a museum without walls." Also affected, since in reproductions within books, the size of artworks is usually similar and therefore the sense of scale between different objects is lost. The...
The hunter of these absent figures, on uncovering their empty chambers, is identified (anonymously) as a chambermaid — I believe she may have once worked as a servant in Lewis Carroll’s family residence, though she herself has now disappeared within the family tree.
Female representations: the mummy of Mut–en–mennu, a female bulb scale mite, the tribal tattooing of an eskimo bride, the Helsinki women’s 100m semi–final, the Corps de dame by Du Buffet, and ‘In a 1910 gymnasium’ — an image full of women. Also, the presence of Justin Henderson.

Male representations: the mask of Quetzalcoatl, a male bulb scale mite, a bark drawing of a native spearing a kangaroo, M. Henri Farman in flight, Jackson Pollock in his studio, a portrait of a jet pilot, a man shaving with an electric razor, and the funeral of King George VI (though the male protagonist in this case is hidden in a coffin).

Female sources: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office.


Female authors: none, aside from the absent credit of one female photographer,

Female influences: unknown.


Female editors: Alison Smithson.

Alice through the Looking Glass  

Nigel Henderson returned to the gallery space at different times during the exhibition to take photographs of the entire installation. In one set, his second daughter Justin (b. 23 February 1946; d. 6 July 2007) is captured in various locations around the room. She is only seven years old in the photographs which contain her:

TGA 9211.5.2.59 — sitting in a chair, reading, blurred, adjacent to Etruscan Funerary Vase (28), framed by window.

TGA 9211.5.2.71 — standing within the doorframe, facing the camera, surrounded by: excavated figure from Pompeii (29), women’s 100m semi-final (106), dismembered (not disassembled) typewriter (12), radiograph of a jeep (14), figures of men, animals and symbols (40), marigin weathering of granite (77), and carved wooden grave figure (81). There is no trace of the portrait of a jet pilot.

TGA 9211.5.2.72 — standing beneath Etruscan Funerary Vase (28), facing camera, adjacent to window.

TGA 9211.5.2.90 — only just in shot, far left hand side, very blurred, sitting in chair, showing entire rear wall, as well as the cyclist, football x-ray, two anatomies, etc., she is also once more framed within the window, though on this occasion not the focus of the image.

Justin, as Kitnick notes, is therefore always associated with openings, framed by thresholds between the present and the beyond (past and future), and situated between reproduction and death. Everything contained within the image — photograph and child — is, for Kitnick, a consequence of reproduction. Indeed, the child played a crucial role following WWII as a symbol of new life after a disturbing period of death and destruction. Genealogical roots would continue to rake through the cratered ground. In these images, Justin’s body acts as a reference point, by which we are made aware of the exhibition’s distorting sense of scale — between micro and macrocosmic; between the close-up and wide-angle view. She appears always blurred, haunting; she appears, to Kitnick, akin to the figures enveloping her, alternately transparent and darkened. The (female) Figure is here conveyed as but a surface, a looking glass, impacted upon by the world outside the walls of the gallery. The feminine is easily overwhelmed.

Lewis Carroll, Through the Looking Glass, and what Alice found there
The Office of Public Sector Information (OPSI) is the body responsible for the operation of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO) and other UK public information services. OPSI is part of the National Archives and is responsible for Crown copyright. It publishes, through HMSO, the London Gazette, Edinburgh Gazette, Belfast Gazette and all UK legislation. HMSO was established as a new department of HM Treasury on 5 April 1786. The creation was a result of the advocacy of Edmund Burke for reforms of the corrupt, expensive and inefficient Royal Household and the Civil Service. From 1822, all government departments had to buy stationery through the HMSO. In 1889, HMSO was granted Letters Patent and appointed administrator of the rights of Crown copyright. Most of its publishing functions were privatised in 1996 as The Stationery Office (TSO), though it retained the role of administering Crown copyright. This covered material created by civil servants, ministers and government departments and agencies: Ordnance Survey mapping, press releases, academic articles and public records, amongst other documents. Copyright can also come into Crown ownership by transfer of the copyright from the legal owner to the Crown. Copyright in a work assigned to the Crown lasts 70 years after the death of the creator. Prior to 1996, HMSO was the publisher of nearly all government material, including official histories. It is one of the world's biggest publishers, holding over 49,000 titles in stock, producing 2.3 million passports a year, and an array of other publications including guides to long-distance footpaths.

The Keeper, and chief executive officer of The National Archives, manages Crown copyright and Crown database rights on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen (or, when applicable, His Majesty the King). There are numerous credits for HMSO within the Parallel of Life and Art exhibition catalogue, it remains unlikely that the true sources (male or female) of these figures will ever be known. Many of the images are of sites, of spaces, of earth — territories of the kingdom (or, more rightfully, queendom) which, since conquered, are consequently ‘owned’ by whoever wears the crown. Thus, the subsequent images — by merely capturing, framing this ownership — are owned too: any reproduction requires prior permission. ... Yet, if he had not ascended, HMSO might not ever have been ‘Her’. ...
Alice Austen was an American photographer, whose works became abandoned in an archive. Raised in a well-off family, she eventually ended up in the poorhouse, before the discovery of her images in the archive by Oliver Jensen, an editor at *Life* Magazine. The magazine included a feature on her work; later, Jensen wrote and compiled *The Revolt of American Women* in 1952, the year Alice would die. The book contained many of her photos but only one was included in the exhibition *Parallel of Life and Art*. Her friend, the gymnast and professional teacher Daisy Elliott, asked Alice to photograph her students in her studio, with its impressive array of calisthenics equipment. This photograph was credited within the *Parallel of Life and Art* exhibition catalogue as ‘In a 1910 gymnasium’ from ‘The Revolt of American Women, Oliver Jensen’. There was no acknowledgement of the sexuality of the subjects within the caption; a feminist critique might be inferred only from the photograph itself and the corresponding book reference. Indeed, once the exhibition ended, all that remained were the installation photographs taken by Henderson and the catalogue. The matter-of-fact description eludes to a subversive feminine strength; a blunt and ironic reading—between-the-lines of the societal changes that had taken place with regards to equality between women and men. Women were slowly being allowed access to masculine space.

It is perhaps an incidental detail that this image was assigned to a misspelled category, ‘1901’. One can assume that the switch of 0s and 1s was unintentional (that the subtitle should have read ‘1910’ in alignment with the creation date of the photograph). Yet, perhaps it was to highlight the dawn of the 20th century, and with it the dawn of the ‘revolt’ of women, before which the gymnasium was no doubt a man’s terrain. Still, the copyright fell to the book’s author, a male writer, while the photographer remained anonymous. Thus, though the female was represented in her photograph, the presence of the female photographer, Alice, was once more absent. Like Justin, Alice remained in the shadows. It remains unknown which editor selected the photograph for inclusion, and why, but there was only a solitary female editor involved.
Alison Smithson

Alison Smithson and her husband Peter were ‘absent’ from the exhibition. While the work of both Nigel Henderson — coffee grounds, handprint, dis-integrating mirror, and distortion of a Victorian lantern slide — and Eduardo Paolozzi — plasterblocks — were both featured and credited, nothing created by the Smithsons was included (though they had opportunity, within an ‘Architecture’ section).

Alison was the only female member of the Independent Group at that time (and joined by only one more, Magda Cordell).

Alison wrote several novels during her lifetime. Her most well-known, Portrait of the Female Mind as a Young Girl (1966), may be seen as semi-autobiographical, chronicling the imagined lives of a girl whose fantasies transport her, through marriage, to multiple different escapes from the reality of her life within a working class household, swapping grim conditions for a modern, high-tech environment. The novel bridges between gender roles and home, the ordinary and the extraordinary of technology, as well engaging with past, present and future roles of women. Alison believed that it was only through technological progress that women could be granted individual freedom and mobility. Within her architectural work this might be seen in her focus on the home environment. Conclusion never occurs within this narrative, there any many possible outcomes for the protagonist. The text highlighted the postwar emphasis on marriage and the ideal of the ‘nuclear’ family (the foundation of the Welfare State). A bleak period for feminism. Alison, indeed, gained a reputation for being difficult.


Alison featured within B. S. Johnson’s edited text (and film), The Evacuees (1966). She had grown up in South Shields, in the north east of England. Amongst the shipyards; amongst the sirens. Though a draughtsman’s daughter (later, a School of Art principal), few other threads remain as to why she became an architect. Only war. The worst air raids rained down in October 1941; many lost their lives, thousands lost their homes. Alison could identify the planes. She was evacuated to her grandparents in Edinburgh, to a contrasting cityscape: from craters to order and the Mound. She was determined. King’s College School of Architecture, University of Durham, Newcastle in 1944. Sixteen years old. Female.

“I will tell you what I will do and what I will not do. I will not serve that in which I no longer believe … and I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as wholly as I can, using for my defence the only arms I allow myself to use — silence, exile and cunning.”

1 Alison Smithson, Portrait of the Female Mind as a Young Girl (London: Chatto and Windus, 1966).

2 “His mind seemed older than theirs: it shone coldly … like a moon upon a younger earth … he was drifting amid life like the barren shell of the moon. Art thou pale for weariness Of climbing heaven and gazing on the earth, Wandering companionless…? He repeated to himself the lines of Shelley’s fragment.”

3 The artist, like the God of the creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails.”

4 Alison Smithson, Portrait of the Female Mind as a Young Girl (London: Chatto and Windus, 1966).
Within the *Parallel of Life and Art* documentation held within the Nigel Henderson Collection at Tate Archive, there was a folder of empty folders. I placed *Bare Chambers* inside.

*October 2015.*
A REVIEW FROM

REMOVES NO.1:
Parallel of Life and Art exhibition model, October 2015
REMOVES NO.2:

Parallel of Life and Art exhibition model, October 2015
Mystery lake excites scientists. Six explorers, bearing spheres of an expedition, organised after studying some aerial photos, noticed a strange rimmed, circular lake. It contrasted to the strange pit, for it had an uplifted edge. Not worn down by glaciers, no glacial scratches, no trace of volcanic ash, it must be a meteorite crater. It had no fragments, no meteoritic clues: no uplifted edge worn down by glaciers, no glacial scratches, no trace of volcanic ash, it must be a meteorite crater, although he did not locate any fragments which could have been buried or scattered.

A poet had published a book of drafts. These re-writings included all of the false starts and dead ends, erasures and hesitations, notes and insertions, all of the traceable sheets relating to the 'work in progress' which had become the work itself. The 'messy actuality of writing's visible quarry' was presented as text, as a 'rough, repetitive, even fastidious, process of extrication and explication', where "reading becomes the memory ground of composition". Under-licable marks, typically removed, fissures, notes for drafts, became a their own notations means of reducing the itself. The "writing is and occupies" the site, relies not on knowable parameters, but on the thresholds conscious of their all existing fractures and dead notes and insertions, all of 'work in progress' which "messy actuality of writing is treated as a process which demands local, contextual, as much as conceptual space". Drafts and notations may thereby be seen as a productive (and, creative) means to elucidate such contextual traces within a written text.
REMOVES NO.3:

Parallel of Life and Art exhibition model, October 2015
REMOVES NO.4:

Parallel of Life and Art exhibition model, October 2015
**Crater: noun and verb, c'tion nd event; the mrkng and the mrk itself.** The crter, like the trce, is mrkng of nd mrk within lndscpe, whether the erth or pge. It is shdowed out-physicl, sp’t relity of the outline but depth. depth of future c’retive potent’lities, where compositions might rise from the hollowed ground, might be divined from the scattered remnnts found within both its depths.

But, so, beyond of its c’retor nd wht existed for e r e. But, so, beyond of future c’retive potent’lities, where compositions might rise from the hollowed ground, might be divined from the scattered remnnts found within both its depths. Perhaps there is difference in force, between meteoritic impact nd subtle shifting cross the surfce. different pressure reflective of scle, dependent upon position, of the weight of thought assigned to ech nd its degree of w’vering:

Between the swiftly c’vered directed expns of spce of the meteor nd the t’mpltive puses of the building ready for occupancy by April, 1951.

Officeworkers wonder about A-bomb as they see a new building go up. to set waving a flag, fastened there to signify this was as high. Officeworkers in nearby buildings (pp.26-29) staccato sounds of riveting gave many a sort of reassurance that normal life would still go on. The
It was an image I was unable to erase from my mind. There were so many others on display, exquisite landscapes, enchanting portraits, yet, it was a small, roughly square image that eclipsed all of their light.

I took a photograph. I persuaded the traces of light to be captured in physical memorial: a reproduction.

It's difficult to explain what the calling was: a lingering intuition.

I remember pausing in the gallery, before the figure, and wondering why, compared to all of the others surrounding it, compared to all of the others I knew I could not locate, it was so different and captivating.

I recall searching for the footnote, the acknowledgement within the caption. There were no captions. Only a catalogue. The image was necessarily left behind, a physical entity, suspended from the wall of the gallery once I departed. It remains there now, seemingly unknowing of the words I will attempt to arrange around it, from an originary distance.

When I return to the gallery, I remember pausing in the gallery; watching over the viewer, enveloping them in their perpetual waiting. The room is overflowing with light, with images suspended from all sides and subjects, all without the lust of guards, the room is crowded, the walls of the room converses with the weight of the light.

I know that it knows: that it was only suspended there, that day, for me to attempt to arrange these words.

Yet, somehow, I know that it knows: that it was only suspended there, that day, for me to attempt to arrange these words.

An analysis: it is a photograph of a photograph. The surrounding images encompass, command, and threaten to collapse into fragmented pieces around the viewer. There are images suspended from points, their connecting cables clearly visible as a series of fine triangles. The walls are divided, often dissolving into nothingness, a framework deconstructing itself before it meets the disintegrating ground. The ceiling is an entangled web, the rest is photography. There are microscopes and telescopes in this world, the central image is dominated by a small, roughly square image, watching over the viewer, enveloping them in their perpetual waiting. The remaining space is left open for the movements of the viewer and their gazes, all but the figure, of course, with its face to the viewer, and the empty, in turn, to the unseen and unknown photographer. The figure is a reproduction of a reproduction, a reproduction of a reproduction, the unseen and unknown photographer, who has photographed the figure, with its face to the viewer, and the empty, in turn, to the unseen and unknown photographer. The figure is a reproduction of a reproduction, a reproduction of a reproduction, the unseen and unknown photographer, who has photographed the figure, with its face to the viewer, and the empty, in turn, to the unseen and unknown photographer.
The focus is the figure, the photographer remains anonymous. Though it remains unknown as to whether the photographer is an accidental voyeur, capturing the scene in a brief, off-guard moment, or whether, instead, the photographer has photographed herself into the picture. A self-portrait. A realistic representation of the process of creation and its sources, little brought to attention. Reality revealed as an endless play of reproduction.

*Parallel of Life and Art* was the spatialisation, yet containment, of a world beyond: a constellation of sources scattered all over the war-torn Earth. It’s gaze was beyond the walls. An absence, a space between the chaos of other constructions, fighting for attention. If one traces all of the lines of descent of all creative ideas, all are interconnected in a web of references leading to each other. It is the depiction of a space within which each medium is itself interrogated. Reflexive practice. Anonymous. When each derives from others where does authorship really lie? It is a lie.

There is now a gap without an image on those heaving walls. Is the photographer working on an image to fill in this hole? The empty space waiting for occupation. Frozen in incompletion. I do not know whether any members of the Independent Group were aware of the temporal displacement. No windows can be seen in this image, though they are there, veiled. A landscape turned inward, a room as a microcosm for the cosmos beyond. The photographs of the exhibition reveal a space that engaged with extended scales — both micro and macroscopic — to the world invisible to the naked eye and unseen beyond the periphery of the atmosphere of the Earth’s spinning sphere.

Everything relies on blank space. The interval between. There’s always an impulse to re–trace, as if re–outlining the resonating words would commit them to memory, to understanding, to be referred to again at a later date. I remain drawn to the con, to the weaving of warp and weft; a double, with a cleft. To the ground. The embers still flicker, now and then, reminding of its inescapable power, the spark of every idea. Origins, etymology: it’s all about defining our existence, beginnings. Cinders; constellations. Everything returns someday, secondary, haunting.
In October 1953, an exhibition took place at the ICA, Dover Street, London: *Parallel of Life and Art*. At some point in its duration, two of its figures mysteriously disappeared. In *The Moon’s an Arrant Thief*, I took a photograph showing the spaces once occupied by the missing images, and allowed a *fantôme* on ekphrasis — means by which an absent object is brought vividly before the eyes — to take their place.
In October 1953, an exhibition took place at the ICA, Dover Street, London: *Parallel of Life and Art*. At some point in its duration, two of its figures mysteriously disappeared. In *The Moon’s an Arrant Thief*, I took a photograph showing the spaces once occupied by the missing images, and allowed a *phantôme* on reproduction — means by which an absent object is copied, doubled — to take their place.
INTO THE FOREST

AN ESSAY

1. ‘false quote’, false name, false title (false source), false pages. false hope.
2. After the second world war, a particular cultural disposition was initiated as a consequence of the inception of the Welfare State, and which the ICA and Independent Group reacted against. Britain was devastated by the war, its empire shattered. Amidst this wreckage, America ascended. Though the Ministry of Information’s portrayals of shared national identity continued to proliferate — deploying narratives of Britain’s rural heritage alongside fictions of collectivity — the popularity of the mass–culture promoted by American media endured.

i. This culture, too, was fundamental to the national identity that Britain sought to construct — one indebted to traditional values, and that endeavoured to rework the modernism of the pre–war period.

ii. An insular and xenophobic outlook, thus, pervaded throughout the reconstruction period.

3. During WWII, the iron and steel industry was taken under government control, under the auspices of the Ministry of Supply. Together with the Ministry of Aircraft production, steel production was specifically allocated. However, the key problem lay in the raw material supply. Labour promised the nationalisation of the industries in 1945, but the act was not passed until 1949. By 1951, the Conservatives forced both to be denationalised once more. It was at this time that increased demands were felt as a result of the Korean War rearmament programme; shortages followed, exacerbated by a strike in 1952. The lack of steel affected reconstruction. No frameworks; no falsework.


ii. Scaffolding Great Britain Ltd. (SGB) were thanked within the acknowledgments section of the *Parallel of Life and Art* exhibition catalogue. It is assumed that scaffolding was used in order to suspend the images from the ceiling, though no evidence remains within the photographs.

x. The first frame system was brought to market by SGB in 1944 and was used extensively for postwar reconstruction. It was the ‘scaffixer’ of Daniel Palmer–Jones that revolutionised the scaffolding system: a coupling device enabling connections. See: <https://www.sgb.co.uk/about/history/early–developments> [accessed 18 February 2018].

4. In December 1952, a severe air pollution event occurred, now known as the Great Smog of ’52. Between 5th–9th, a combination of cold weather, anticyclone and windless conditions swept up coal–burning derived pollutants and distributed a thick layer of smog over London. Only the underground continued its operations. London’s pea–soupers were well known, so much so that the event was not considered significant at the time, despite its penetration of indoor areas and severe disruption consequent of its adverse impact on visibility, reduced to a few yards. Many died. It is the worst air–pollution event in UK history, thankfully stimulating a significant amount of research, regulation, and awareness of the effects of poor air quality upon health.

i. ‘as if you were blind’.


iii. The Clean Air Act was finally introduced in 1956 (and was in effect until 1964), sponsored by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government in England.

x. Yet, whilst instinct might support the tendency towards suburbanisation, to dispersion and low density pollution sources, such developments are also environmentally costly, eating up swathes of land, leading to further transport links, more fumes. See: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1956/52/pdfs/ukpga_19560052_en.pdf> [accessed 18 February 2018].
5. This period was also preoccupied with the ‘bomb’, and, thus, with an increased building of back–yard bomb shelters. The ‘bomb’, too, became tied to other associations: namely, nuclear power. December 20th 1951: the first electrical power was generated from atoms. Electrical modernisation — heating, air conditioning, water heating and cooling, lighting, telecommunications — impacted supply chains. As did, too, the age of space exploration — sparked by Cold War competition — whose advances also affected the electrical community.

i. With the fission of Uranium in 1938, in addition to the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, the arrival of a new aleatory power was declared: nuclear. Attempts were made to relate this obscure atomic unknown with the quotidian and familiar.

x. The entrance section of the Exhibition of Science, part of the Festival of Britain 1951, consisted of five darkened rooms: a sequence which took the visitor “step by step, into the heart of matter”. Within the first chamber, the visitor found a pencil and a piece of paper. Between the threshold of each subsequent space, they then shrank “like Alice in Wonderland … first to the size of the pencil, and then to the thickness of the paper.” On reaching the fourth enclosure, the visitor became so microscopic “they were able to determine the crystals of the graphite; before a “last step, and you are ten thousand million times smaller than you began, and now you see into the atoms themselves”.

y. “One newsreel […] showed an aerial photograph of London with a white line marking the four square miles that would be ‘vaporised’ if a bomb was dropped on Tower Bridge.” Thus, the world was brought to face the atom.

* Microscopic and telescopic images unveiled the infinitesimal structures of nature. Planners proposed that the reconfiguration of the built environment in accordance with these structures would offer a balance between the constructs of man and nature. The structure of the post-war atom was, thus, manipulated as a device for explicating how the spatial and the temporal could “sustain a social order as secure, eternal and unchanging as the building blocks of matter themselves”: a microcosmos, replicated within the urban plan.

** Richard Hornsey, “Everything is made of atoms”: The reprogramming of space and time in post-war London’, Journal of Historical Geography, 34, 1 (Jan 2008), 94–117. (pp. 97, 110, 112).
6. The avant–garde Modern Architectural Research (MARS) Group (founded 1933) were, between 1940–1944, limited to Town Planning Committee work, and primarily engaged with the replanning of London. But, for many of the group, the proposals were out of touch with the realities on the ground. A complete and radical re–plan of the entire city centre may have previously been acceptable, but the current situation — with its rations of materials and fragmentation — demanded a much more delicate approach.¹

i. In the immediate aftermath, housing became one of the most pressing matters requiring attention. Many homes were left devastated, and provision for those left homeless was urgently sought. However, the local authorities placed in charge were ill–equipped to fulfil such function; the Poor Law regulations, too, were ineffectual.²

ii. A programme for reconstruction was called for, yet, the government was laboured in its response. From the beginning it was evident that reconstruction would not merely equate to a rebuilding of what had existed before. The stark excavations offered opportunities to erase the inadequate, as slum clearance programmes showed. Yet, nostalgia, too, played its role: generating a longing for the ‘everyday’ of a pre–war world.

13. Pre–war there were battles for preservation. In 1898, the TCPA was founded, with the purpose of furthering the Garden City agenda. There were struggles founded in the fear of loss of built heritage, haunted equally by the threat of future destruction. Britain’s landscape and buildings were, thus, deemed of value and to be protected. In 1941, the National Buildings Record documented all architecturally acclaimed constructions, with an incentive that any post–war reconstruction would not oppose heritage preservation. The first legislation for post–war rebuilding, the 1944 Town and Country Planning Act, offered statutory protection for listed buildings and other monuments.³

i. In 1943, Forshaw and Abercrombie’s plans for greater London were put forward. Yet, in the previous year, the design of temporary constructions remained architects’ main focus, whether housing, hospitals, or military structures. As 1942 drew to a close, however, post–war life began to be ruminated over much more purposefully: asking, would Modernism persist or would a new vision be instigated?⁴

ii. Whilst throughout 1942, architects proceeded with temporary solutions (to housing, to hospitals), in addition to military buildings, as the year ended, they were beginning to consider the firmer foundations of the future. The ‘Rebuilding Britain’ exhibition, July 1943, exemplified the trends of this reconsideration of the replacements for the craters of the urban environment.⁵

During the war, the architecture schools were relocated outside of the city into the silence of suburbia, and both these and the architectural journals of the period failed to encourage consideration of the potentials for new construction forms and planning, most especially in relation to prefabrication and housing respectively. It was not until 1943 that the *Architectural Review* began to search for such new ideas, determining a contemporaneous series of concerns and interrogating the future development of modern architecture post-war. Throughout the war, Britain was wholly dependent upon America for its resources, and subsequent exposure to US culture through films, for example, led to an inevitable transference of ideas. With the Bauhaus teachings moving from Europe to the US, the *Architectural Review* followed their precedent and began looking toward the US for inspiration; for examples of current practice “unconstrained by the rationing and limitations that dominated building in Britain”.

Welfare State visions directed much of the reconstruction during this period, all seeking to reassure and convey an un–fluctuating new world. The discussions and collaborations of the Independent Group, however, worked to develop an alternative urban narrative, one which instead bared the already present aspects of the city inherently capable of offering a more “profound form of social democracy”.

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x. ‘City Notes’ (1959) by Lawrence Alloway, a Piccadilly Circus commentary, and a film for the Smithsons’ Haupstadt project, Berlin (also 1959), into which was inserted footage of London by John McHale, are two examples of the varying directions taken by such critical engagement with the urban environment — offering two contrasting views of and approaches to the urban centre, where each, in their own way, confronted the predominating constraints of post-war reconstruction at that time.

i. Such exertions of control can be seen within the County of London Plan (1943) and the Greater London Plan (1944), in which Abercrombie foresaw an interconnected web of neighbourhoods of mixed classes, with habitual acts nullifying economic hierarchies. Identities, it was proposed, would be developed for each area, with encircling, peripheral vehicular routes leaving the centre to a clustering of amenities.*

* These messages were conveyed and in part experienced by visitors at the South Bank Exhibition, part of the Festival of Britain (1951), where the site itself was formed of its own constellation of open spaces and pavilions with routes connecting between them. Their intention was to suggest that it was within ‘collective participation’ that the “inclusive vibrancy of post-war social democracy was embedded”.

18. As part of the conflict, aerial reconnaissance programmes were coordinated, utilising the new found technologies within photography. The young generation of artists, photographers, architects, and critics who formed the Independent Group approached modernism “fresh from their wartime experiences and extracted an entirely different meaning from that of the British pre-war Surrealists and post-war Welfare State worthies.” Indeed, Nigel Henderson had been a pilot before being granted leave for trauma suffered. They had different inspirations, and thus a new understanding, which “emphasised the history of science and technology and gloried in the disorder of human existence as opposed to the preciousness of metaphysical art.” The birds eye view was captured; the rooftops framed within the frozen moment of the snapshot. Many such aerial images were featured within the *Parallel of Life and Art* exhibition. Many, too, were concerned not with the infinite but the infinitesimal. macro–photography unmasked the hidden; micro–photography exposed the invisible. See: Anne Massey, *The Independent Group: Modernism and Mass Culture in Britain, 1945–59* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), pp. 33–35.¹

i. Within his text ‘Air, War, and Architecture’, Anthony Vidler argues that, within many of the post–WWII reconstruction plans, “[t]he past was either eradicated or transformed, in an 18th–century manner, into ruin fragments, in the park [...] The city [became] no more nor less a cemetery of its own past”. The city was a composition of rubbleed vistas, and the bunkers of Alison and Peter Smithson, amongst other Brutalist architects, can consequently be seen to be haunted by the prospect of an even more destructive nuclear future. See: Vidler, ‘Air, War, and Architecture’, in *Ruins of Modernity*, ed. by Julia Hell and Andreas Schönle (London: Duke University Press, 2010), pp. 29–40 (pp. 34–36).

x. In *A History of Bombing*, Sven Lindquist constructs what Vidler believes to be the “repressed master discourse of the twentieth century: not the trauma of past lost, but the anticipatory fear of future loss [...]” In spite of the reassertions of a planned symbiosis, and increased knowledge of the atom’s capabilities, there remains a ghost within the urban fabric; a shadow of the *what if*. See: Vidler, ‘Air, War, and Architecture’, p. 32; Sven Lindquist, *A History of Bombing* (London: Granta, 2012).*¹

* The map of London after the war plots all of these past losses; these craters, these traces: “[...] if we look at the classic accounts of architectural history after 1945 — those of Reyner Banham [amongst others—] all significantly enough written by those who had served in or at least experienced the war — we find little or no mention of the war years.” The war is absent, yet, we feel its traces. See: Vidler, ‘Air, War, and Architecture’, p. 30; W. G. Sebald, *On the Natural History of Destruction* (London: Notting Hill Editions, 2012).

¹Ⅰ Vidler also discusses the bunker, not in relation to the actual protective shelter necessitated by the falling missiles, but as a descriptor of a project by Alison and Peter Smithson, Their ‘House of the Future’ of 1953–4, as Bruno Latour has noted elsewhere, may be viewed as a kind of ‘safe house’, a shelter aimed at humanity’s salvation. No, this vision was followed in 1958 by their ‘Patio and Pavilion’, which formed part of the ‘The New Topographics’ exhibition, in which the Smithsons “showed in bold a dark slot of urban and circumstantial ruins, surrounded by the debris of a great apocalyptic world.” Rather than hiding behind the glowing sites of the modern, it instead faced those of the monstrous ruin, rebranded as the ghost of the monstrous ruin surrounding it. See: Vidler, ‘Air, War, and Architecture’, pp. 36–7.

¹Ⅱ Vidler also discusses the bunker, not in relation to the actual protective shelter necessitated by the falling missiles, but as a descriptor of a project by Alison and Peter Smithson, Their ‘House of the Future’ of 1953–4, as Bruno Latour has noted elsewhere, may be viewed as a kind of ‘safe house’, a shelter aimed at humanity’s salvation. No, this vision was followed in 1958 by their ‘Patio and Pavilion’, which formed part of the ‘The New Topographics’ exhibition, in which the Smithsons “showed in bold a dark slot of urban and circumstantial ruins, surrounded by the debris of a great apocalyptic world.” Rather than hiding behind the glowing sites of the modern, it instead faced those of the monstrous ruin, rebranded as the ghost of the monstrous ruin surrounding it. See: Vidler, ‘Air, War, and Architecture’, pp. 36–7.
I choose to.

Yes, but, you must still demonstrate.

You must you must you must

Perhaps get into the habit of putting them at the base of the page.

| missing the point

a footnote then perhaps that will pacify.

| Must I scavenge some scraps from somewhere, anywhere, just for the sake of some retrospective evidence that I am not

There's no point in rebelling, we all must be judged.

I can only ever be considered in relation to those I footnote, I'd better pick the right ones.

I've managed to write these passages without once glancing at my notes, or my expanding library of books.

| other than juxtaposing quotations?

Collaging prior positions; paraphrasing to attempt to make the words my own.

It all feels prescriptive, not in any way intimate, or spontaneous.

| known to the reader already.

There's a handful of must–haves, I'm sure.

An omission could be just as destructive to a candidate's credibility as a misunderstanding.

For every

| doubt.

Are they not then looking more to the references than the text itself for answers?

Reassurances are found only in references and acknowledgements, better still in those which are

backward and forward easier, makes the evidence clearer, allows the reader to rest easy that the words before them have not sprung from thin air.

A scattering of superscripts to settle the

| turning.

I can feel the hairs bristling, I'm

engagement

muster an inertia toward these dictations.

I, too, have a voice, and that voice doesn't always need to be spoken through others.

either sprung from my own mind or else have been informed by my entire life's library.

Footnotes now seem to me to be only allusions.

the only one who has thought of these things and that thereby what I have to say has some relevance?

Some evidence for its place on the shelf.

False certainty, since these words have

source, as long as there

the reader wish to double check that all is in order.

But what of my own footsteps, observations, based on real–life actions, events, and phenomena?

I'm tempted to fabricate their

this can be done is through references, reassurances that others have been read.

Every interaction is always followed by an endless flow of additional literature, additional steps should

let the waves flow from the heart.

Some have managed to escape these binds, but I've been told here is not the place, that scholarship must be clearly demonstrated and that the only way

other contradictions in intent and affiliation.

The reader's focus becomes placed in the beside and beyond, in the other texts, rather than in the one before them, distracted, perhaps even

| I'm forced to agree or argue with these prior testimonies.

I have concerns about such alignments: it does not mean that I agree with anything else that they may have said.

That I

without recourse to others.

Yet, it feels as if my words cease to have validity without having already been spoken by someone else with seemingly greater authority, an academic standing.

supplement, to make the eyes dart.

Footnotes are becoming problematic for me.

All I wish for is to be able to write my own thoughts, based upon my own experiences and observations,

publisher, date), page numbers.

These notes offer a promise of expansion, of a beyond.

They wrestle with an instinct not to distract from the flow of words, yet, to sidestep, to

own feelings and observations.

Sometimes the notes elaborate on these, oftentimes they remain emotionless.

Resolute in their enforced structures: surname, forename, title (place:

understanding of a topic I am equally pursuing, whose work is impactful to the discourse of the discipline if not myself, and therefore must in some way be brought to bear upon the

these days, more attuned to including only those whom I really admire, whom I could only wish to emulate.

Their writings are often so ephemeral, so subtle, so admirable that my pen

breath falter in excitement at their resonance with my own inner thoughts.

I'm not sure if I'd even thought them, before I had read them, written already by another.

I'm more selective,

ideas have come from, but about allowing myself to remember and retrace all of the other texts that I have read and which have resonated.

A piece written long ago instinctively

mostly illegible, hastening the decline of our memory.

There's probably too much whirring.

The notes I write now seem not so much about evidencing for others where my thoughts and

scraps of paper as reminders of all of the things we must do and must not forget.

Once the task has been completed these notes are usually discarded, replaced.

Scribbles and scrawls, walking the same path.

Footmarks, footprints, frail trails, tracings of previous steps, previous locations when the ground was soft enough to accept an outline of my feet.

Treads, soon replaced by others who are

note, to shift: rising up and down, competing for space.

Footnotes: might have been at the end (of the book, or the section), but find themselves abandoned at the base of the page.

This placement can force the boundary, the threshold between

|
Footnotes: might have been at the end (of the book, or the section), but find themselves abandoned at the base of the page. This placement can force the boundary, the threshold between text and note, to shift: rising up and down, competing for space. Sometimes a physical line separates; sometimes an imaginary line is implied by an increased space, an extra return. Footmarks, footprints, frail trails, tracings of previous steps, previous locations when the ground was soft enough to accept an outline of my feet. Treads, soon replaced by others who are walking the same path. Sometimes the ground attaches itself between the treads, is carried home, or elsewhere. Stalkings, hauntings, I'm unable to shake. Notes are written on tiny scraps of paper as reminders of all of the things we must do and must not forget. Once the task has been completed these notes are usually discarded, replaced. Scrabbles and scrabbles, mostly illegible, hastening the decline of our memory. There's probably too much whirring. The notes I write now seem not so much about evidencing for others where my thoughts and ideas have come from, but about allowing myself to remember and retrace all of the other texts that I have read and which have resonated. A piece written long ago instinctively chopped: all of the quotations and references that didn't really matter, that I had put up with at the time, short of alternatives, but that ultimately failed to engage my soul or make my breath falter in excitement at their resonance with my own inner thoughts. I'm not sure if I'd even thought them, before I had read them, written already by another. I'm more selective, these days, more attuned to including only those whom I really admire, whom I could only wish to emulate. Their writings are often so ephemeral, so subtle, so admirable that my pen retracts their words before my consciousness registers the theft. Yet, every now and again, I'm forced to admit an anomaly, someone whose writings merely elucidate a certain understanding of a topic I am equally pursuing, whose work is impactful to the discourse of the discipline if not myself, and therefore must in some way be brought to bear upon the conversation. And so they are there, hidden at base or back, though I long to entirely omit them. These notes are curated, their associated quotations targeted in order to stand in for my own feelings and observations. Sometimes the notes elaborate on these, oftentimes they remain emotionless. Resolute in their enforced structures: surname, forename, title (place: publisher, date), page numbers. These notes offer a promise of expansion, of a beyond. They wrestle with an instinct not to distract from the flow of words, yet, to sidestep, to supplement, to make the eyes dart. Footnotes are becoming problematic for me. All I wish for is to be able to write my own thoughts, based upon my own experiences and observations, without recourse to others. Yet, it feels as if my words cease to have validity without having already been spoken by someone else with seemingly greater authority, an academic standing. I'm forced to agree or argue with these prior testimonies. I have concerns about such alignments: it does not mean that I agree with anything else that they may have said. That I fully identify with the context from which this other mention surfaced. And, yet, I fear to quote, to cite, to reference these sources only leads the reader further astray, into the emergence of other contradictions in intent and affiliation. The reader's focus becomes placed in the beside and beyond, in the other texts, rather than in the one before them, distracted, perhaps even put-off if they feel vindicated in a certain error of judgement, a misreading, on the author's part. Sometimes I only use a footnote because I feel I have to, better to shore it all up than let the waves flow from the heart. Some have managed to escape these binds, but I've been told here is not the place, that scholarship must be clearly demonstrated and that the only way this can be done is through references, reassurances that others have been read. Every interaction is always followed by an endless flow of additional literature, additional steps should the reader wish to double check that all is in order. But what of my own footsteps, observations, based on real-life actions, events, and phenomena? I'm tempted to fabricate their source, as long as there is a footnote then perhaps that will pacify. Must I scavenge some scraps from somewhere, anywhere, just for the sake of some retrospective evidence that I am not the only one who has thought of these things and that thereby what I have to say has some relevance? Some evidence for its place on the shelf. False certainty, since these words have either sprung from my own mind or else have been informed by my entire life's library. Footnotes now seem to me to be only allusions. You must you must you must: I choose to muster an inertia toward these dictations. I, too, have a voice, and that voice doesn't always need to be spoken through others. Yes, but, you must still demonstrate engagement: must still pander to the establishment, must ensure the standing of others in their citational research esteem. It is footnotes (and sales) that keep the wheels of academia turning. I can feel the hairs bristling. I'm missing the point. Perhaps get into the habit of putting them at the base of the page, I suppose that enables the eyes to dart backward and forward easier, makes the evidence clearer, allows the reader to rest easy that the words before them have not sprung from thin air. A scattering of superscripts to settle the doubt. Are they not then looking more to the references than the text itself for answers? Reassurances are found only in references and acknowledgements, better still in those which are known to the reader already. There's a handful of must-haves, I'm sure. An omission could be just as destructive to a candidate's credibility as a misunderstanding. For every thought I have, I must find someone else to corroborate, before I can commit my thought to paper. But, with such reflection on the existing literature, how I can end up doing anything other than juxtaposing quotations? Collaging prior positions; paraphrasing to attempt to make the words my own. It all feels prescriptive, not in any way intimate, or spontaneous. I've managed to write these passages without once glancing at my notes, or my expanding library of books. I suppose I will have to revisit each statement in the future and impose a commentary at the base of the page. There's no point in rebelling, we all must be judged. I can only ever be considered in relation to those I footnote, I'd better pick the right ones.
**LITTLE STARS**

EXHIBIT IV

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* wandering footsteps

---

* wandering footsteps
The walk begins here, on this ground, aslant, with faint footsteps. We speak of wandering as aimless drifting; but there are always intentions afoot, pacing. Back and forth, across the chambers; re–returning to the scene, origins scattered everywhere — made visible beneath the blue. The openings are our fantômes, the lacunae that can haunt us. In retreat, we imitate ghosts. Paths are plotted: multiple scales, always from above. Yet, we may chose to stray within the margins — the unmarked alleys, hernias amidst slag heaps — drawn from our intuition and inner compass. Coincidental plots. The pavements are littered with markings; ducts, drains, and pipelines all notated through chalk. Tears fall; we become lost. Lulled into the before. The surface is peeling away; exposing errant tales, the site as a palimpsest — worn, disappearing, fragmenting, the more the ground is gone over with repetitious acts. Through wandering we sidestep into unofficial histories, borne of the interstices betwixt recollections and dust. Wandering is to trace fine threads — wire–walking webs that lead to endless depths, beyond the site, to other airs.
LITTLE STARS**: image of London pavement by Nigel Henderson
with footnote — pauses & stillness
** The rushes prohibit lingering; without glancing against cold shoulders, always–already tender and bruised. Falling as still as the stars in the constellations; blinking, as trace paths intertwine. The body shivers, breathing space amidst unfolding narratives; accounts, our days are numbered, until the one beyond the last. A pause is always a ‘critical gesture’, whether comma, colon, full stop, marker, or crater; an interruption, asking: which way to the fold? Poised, awaiting announcement, direction, signals; the possibilities are all lying, just out of reach. Still waters still harbour stirring depths; resting in arresting protest, resignation, delay. A site is never stable; its roots extend in all directions — all is always under construction. The pavement is a space between each step and the next; unsound footings, asides resting, fenced in. The bats emerge from the tracks: mind the gap. Pauses are possibilities, yet, too often the voids are infilled without paying dues, without care–full attention; it will not do. The storm of supplements on site shatters the silence; due south. Any quest is always–already interspersed with intrusions; getting on and off the ship. Shortages, scaffolds, smog; awaiting the train, there and back again, with blind chance.
LITTLE STARS ***: image of London pavement by Nigel Henderson

with footnote — sites within the city
The site is a gathering of fragments, a ‘cluster of cups’. Yet, what exists is more than the physical; what exists spills over beyond the lips, where denotation eradicates ambiguity. The wind is different now, breathes deeply; now that what used to exist on this site has been razed. Down the rabbit hole. Always below, beneath, footnoted. Yet, a site is fleeting, composed of debris and detritus, the lost and the hidden, as well as things other, from elsewhere, pencilled in. The eraser anticipates the ending; attempts to peer through the cracks in the hoardings, where precipitation is seeping in. The rubble is loose and unstable underfoot, shifting and escaping scrutiny. A stray leaf drifts into the scene; drifting into other landscapes. To pace, to trace step-by-step, intimate trajectories; to intersperse the leaves of other trees within the field of potentialities. Forecast: cloudy. This site is also other sites; this tale is the shattered mirror of other narratives. It is a site known to you through disregard, inattention, and peripheral vision; it is a site known to others through trespasses, tipping, and myth: postcard propaganda. Memory is delicately eroded, stuttering. Double exposures. There will be things forgotten, things left behind, things that will remain buried within the minds of others.
LITTLE STARS ****: image of London pavement by Nigel Henderson
with footnote — surface textures
**** The worn pavement beneath our soles is softly traced over by the hesitant wanderer; the splintering cracks are absently bridged by her tangential gestures. The rain falls, washes away the precipitative treads left behind, drains all marginal marks away into the depths. There can be no cutting corners; there can be only restraint in keeping to the designated wandering space defined by the kerb,\textsuperscript{12} Our routes through the city are framed; the frames are filled with an abundance of textures. Some surfaces are more fractured than others, whether through erosion or intentionally so; cobbled together. Sometimes the erosion is repaired; more often, the widening chasm is preserved until complete ruination. Rhythms and ruptures; these raised and sunken profiles are all notations.\textsuperscript{13} The sky is doubly exposed; twice the thunder. The immediate post–WWII cityscape was filled with microscopic and macroscopic intrigue.\textsuperscript{14} Falling closer to the ground, to the fault–lines marking the surface. Faint stitches.\textsuperscript{15} These surfaces have been reconstructed over time, have been made more hardwearing — able to withstand the incessant pounding, and the burden of shadows; and, yet, they can outlive buildings.
LITTLE STARS *****: *image of London pavement by Nigel Henderson*

*with footnote — shadows*
Light tiptoeing within darkness; within the trailing twins of shadows. Infringing upon the doubles of others; lengthening and shortening, fuzzy edges. Poor imitations; shadows of doubt. To walk without any interruptions without falter false start or misdirection an ending at any point any pause the full stop will be found as found breathless endless wandering figuring within the shadows before the page is torn from the edges before the nib scars the white pebbles in the forest falls on to the pavement between skyscrapers the craters move you and move within you until the closing gap. Cast the eyes over; dustings. You can often see her wandering. Unwavering; despite the gathering gales, despite the desolate snow before her; emerging from the forest to the clearing, into the light, to glimpse the asterisks above. The shadows are deeper here, more defined. The photons are missing; obstructions interrupt their path. We are forever stalked by their loss. Look close enough, and there’s a space between self and spectre: a shadow gap.
**LITTLE STARS ******: image of London pavement by Nigel Henderson with footnote — asides**
*****  Note the little stars above, the pathways they illuminate below. They are forever lingering on the edge of the ether; swerving, wandering akin to footsteps caught in labyrinths and blind-alleys. Orbits shifting, seeking unknowns — aberrations to constellations supplementary to this one. The notes entwined with each of these diminutive celestial bodies are a double plot. Hollowed; halved. The footnotes expose the roots, the H.L.s; the leaves will emerge.\textsuperscript{18} The snowy surface is ruptured by orbs, lightning bolts — asides, indecisions, interruptions; hiding within the interstices, clawing the letters open to the firmament. The site is a sieve: punctured by unforeseen findings and serendipitous encounters; riddled with evidential tangents leading to ever-more marginal paths. Following footsteps, stalking, trespassing.\textsuperscript{19} Footsteps notate the city in steps — 1, 2, 3. The further we journey beyond the site's boundaries the greater the sprawl, the finer the ply. \textit{This} branch, chasing little stars, has reached Westminster and the site of the Economist buildings and plaza. \textit{To be continued.}
“Openings in the fabric of the visible are thus not so much produced then as encountered, fleetingly glimpsed. Here, the [crater] operates as an aperture in the real, a portal to other places and times, both future and past. The horizontal landscape of what is present is ruptured by another frequency of experience, the vertical or vertiginous force of something felt or sensed. A [crater] is experienced as a poetic fall from or faltering within what is known or certain. It exists at the cusp of recognition, where the witness is left unable to fully find the words for communicating what they have seen. The [crater] is always a little otherworldly, for it marks the opening of one world or reality onto the possibility of others. Those receptive to the [crater] thus inhabit a zone between two worlds, between now and elsewhere, between the actual and imagined.” Adapted from Emma Cocker, Glimpsed, Only in Certain Light, 2012.
I FOUND YOU IN
A FOOTNOTE
AN AFTERWORD

Gaberbocchus Press
V&A exhibition, 2003
CONSTELLATIONS ARE MADE OF STORIES

EXHIBIT V

1 small fissures
2 scattered
3 sites of accumulated meanings
4 surrounded by bomb-sites
5 necessitated the extensive demolition of existing
6 left exposed
7 an intermediary space before the city, an authorial pause
8 disintegrating, as if being eaten away by the little creatures entombed in it.
9 as if the bay window had emerged from the rabbit-hole into which Alice disappeared
10 interrupted in its centre
11 holes parallel to
12 discreet reference
13 intimate, miniature; a cluster of cups upon a table
14 a ruin under the microscope
1 the ground was disappearing slowly back into the sea
2 the building was ruptured
3 crumbling, in the end
4 the foundations had shifted
5 there were large cracks
6 pieces of elsewhere; pieces from other fissures left behind, other holes, threatening to collapse in
7 temporarily occupying a gap
8 now these paths are indiscernible from the rubble
9 marking graves
10 as I disappear
11 I wandered anonymously
12 to the outer lands
13 brushing against the abyss
14 to return to shadowed scripts
1. the hunter

2. blurred, haunting

3. bare: stripped, plundered, devoid

4. silence, exile and cunning

5. official histories

6. rake through the cratered ground

7. an incidental detail
Anonymity; ghosts. . . . the origins remain lost. . . .

pale for weariness

amongst the sirens
there were no captions

2 a lingering intuition

3 all but enveloping them in their perpetual waiting

4 and while she awakens

5 originary distance

6 collapse into fragmented pieces

7 fleeting traces

8 the land traced over with a thin veil.

9 obscuring the tale

10 before it meets the disintegrating ground

11 eclipsed all of their light
it is a lie

an endless play of reproduction

in a web of references

a room as a microcosm for the cosmos

beyond

frozen in incompletion

the world invisible to the naked eye and unseen beyond the periphery

haunting

the interval between

a landscape turned inward

a constellation of sources

anonymous

an impulse to re-trace

everything relies on blank space
with faint footsteps to stray within the margins

breathing space amidst unfolding narratives

lingering

intimate trajectories

the unmarked alleys, hernias amidst slag heaps

as well as things other, from elsewhere, pencilled in

the eraser anticipates the ending; attempts to peer through the cracks in the hoardings, where precipitation is seeping in

wandering

we imitate ghosts

double exposures

any quest is always–already interspersed with intrusions

the storm of supplements on site shatters the silence

the lacunae that can haunt us
1 note the little stars above,
the pathways they illuminate
below

2 celestial bodies

3 some surfaces are more fractured than others

4 twice the thunder

despite the desolate snow before her

5 hiding within the interstices

6 markers indicate a rupturing of the snowy surface

to glimpse the asterisks above

tangential gestures

7 as found breathless endless wandering figuring within the shadows

11 chasing little stars

Plan of Exhibition. p. 3. Photograph and model with overlay by Ashley Mason. 18 February 2018.

Fig. 1. Imminent Bodies. p. 5. ‘Temporal dislocation of labels of Craters exhibition.’ Photographs taken over duration of Craters by Ashley Mason. 18 February 2018.


Fig. 6. Missing p. 15. ’Biggest Meteor Crater?’, Life Magazine, 14 August 1950. Original photograph taken by J. R. Eyerman, © Time Inc.

Fig. 7. Missing. p. 17. This is ‘Life’s’ close-up of same scene. ‘Peak Performance’, Life Magazine, 14 November 1949. Original photograph: George Strock. © Time Inc.

Fig. 8. Missing. p. 17. Looking up from excavation, camera’s wide-angle lens distorts workman, frames with other buildngs the space skyscraper will fill. ‘Skyscraper’s start’, Life Magazine, 12 June 1950. Original photograph: George Strock. © Time Inc.


illustrations (cont.)


Fig. 17. You’ve Never Seen Me. p. 30. ‘You’ve Never Seen Me, Isle of Portland’. Original photograph taken by Ashley Mason.

Fig. 18. You’ve Never Seen Me. p. 32. ‘You’ve Never Seen Me, Economist Plaza’. Original photograph taken by Ashley Mason. 18 March 2016.

Fig. 19. You’ve Never Seen Me. p. 34. ‘You’ve Never Seen Me, Blow–Up’. Original photograph taken by Ashley Mason. 18 March 2016.

Fig. 20. You’ve Never Seen Me. p. 36. ‘You’ve Never Seen Me, Markers, Economist Plaza’. Original photograph taken by Ashley Mason. 18 March 2016.

Fig. 21. You’ve Never Seen Me. p. 37. ‘Scaffold / Parallel’. Photograph taken by Ashley Mason. 18 February 2018.

Fig. 22. Bare Chambers. p. 42. Photograph of Bare Chambers installation. Photograph taken by Ashley Mason. 18 February 2018.


illustrations (cont.)


Fig. 28. Bare Chambers. p. 52. Photograph of empty folders within Nigel Henderson Collection at Tate Archive with Bare Chambers placed inside. Photograph taken by Ashley Mason. 18 October 2015. [Note: this creative piece is fictional, with no additional or new material actually inserted within the archive.]

Fig. 29. A View From. p. 54. ‘Removes no.1.’ Photograph taken by Ashley Mason. 18 October 2015. [Note: this working model was constructed with the aid of installation photographs of the Parallel of Life and Art exhibition held within the Nigel Henderson Collection at Tate Archive (folder TGA 9211).]

Fig. 30. A View From. p. 55. ‘Removes no.2.’ Photograph taken by Ashley Mason. 18 October 2015. [Note: Ibid.]

Fig. 31. A View From. p. 56. ‘Removes no.3.’ Photograph taken by Ashley Mason. 18 October 2015. [Note: Ibid.]

Fig. 32. A View From. p. 57. ‘Removes no.4.’ Photograph taken by Ashley Mason. 18 October 2015. [Note: Ibid., The text for this piece (and that of ‘Removes no.2’) has been adapted from Ashley Mason, ‘Craters: between cleared and constructed, between absent and present’, Interstices, 17 ‘Return to Origins’ (2017), 54–66.]


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