No   Before   or   After

Welcome

Emily Richardson

No Before or After; Responses to Shifting Landscapes evolved from a research based film project about embedded narratives in contested landscapes with a focus on how memory and time are inscribed in landscape. As part of this project I wanted to bring together a group of artists, writers, researchers and filmmakers whose work responds to the ideas around shifting landscapes and the impact of our increasing need for energy. Living on the East coast of the UK and being aware of this shifting landscape, the idea was to connect this coastline with the far North, particularly the archipelago of Svalbard in the Arctic circle to ask questions about the interconnection of the fastest melting place on the planet with changes being experienced closer to home and how a creative response can contribute to the conversation.

During the research process I met the contributors we have gathered here today and wanted to bring them together to show and talk about their work, connecting threads of ideas together in a way that could spark future conversation and collaboration.

I was inspired by Jean McNeil's Ice Diaries, written on a writer's residency in Antarctica which melds science, literature, memoir and fiction together in a seemingly effortless way. Her thoughts about writers as archaeologists of the present stuck with me. I have always thought of my work as an archaeology of sorts, bringing material up to the surface of film. The commitment of Bridget McKenzie's paper The Roles of Culture in Response to the Earth Crisis in giving people the tools to respond to the situation in all its complexity is empowering. Arieh Frosh and Ed Compson's The New Scroby Sands Offshore Wind Farm Information Centre project creatively explored the historical, cultural, and political narratives surrounding wind energy and oceanic thinking, resulting in a multifaceted open work that builds a complex picture of their research. Ruth Maclennan's open ended research and filmmaking has been focused on how the climate emergency has irrevocably changed how we see and understand landscape and places, particularly those in the Arctic. All the speakers today are deeply engaged in creative responses to landscape in one form or another. The panel discussion at the end of the day will be chaired by Kenneth Paranada, Curator of Art and Climate Change at the Sainsbury Centre, Norwich.

I am really grateful to all the contributors and everyone who has ventured east to Great Yarmouth to participate in today's event and I hope it is stimulating and fruitful for all involved.

Thanks to originalprojects; for helping organise and hosting this event and the exhibition which will be at their space Prime Yarc in Market Gates from 5th -27th July.

Thanks to Possible Worlds for their design of the social media campaign, publication and web application and thanks also to Arts Council England for funding this project.
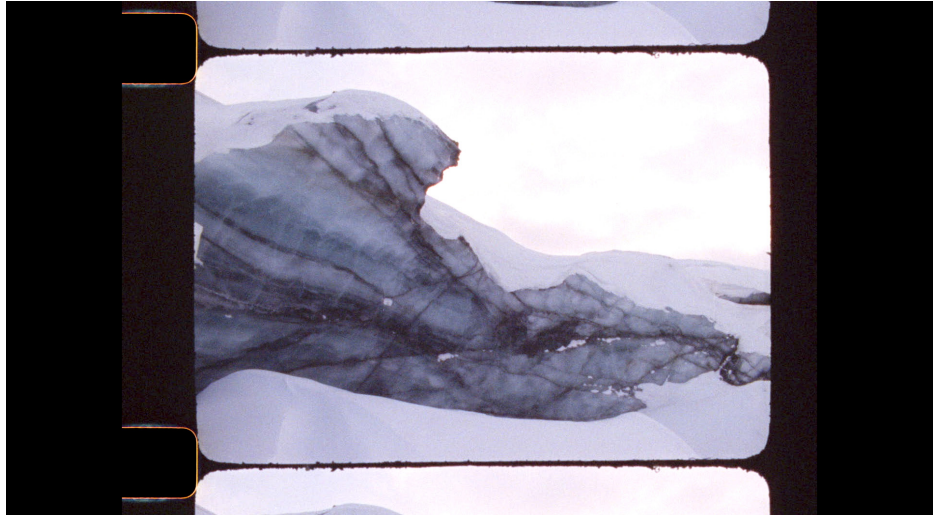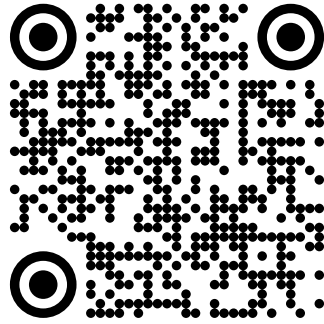
Building The Graph

A knowledge graph is a tool for thought.

As both a visualisation and a system for arranging data, knowledge graphs provide human researchers with a new way to record, identify, and explore connections and themes within their work. They also represent the conceptual underpinning for large language models, enabling machines to parse and manipulate data in autonomous or programmatic ways.

No Before or After is the ideal project to be understood through graph-based thinking. Using a handful of modern web technologies, we built a visualisation that programmatically identifies thematic and conceptual links within Emily's large and growing body of research. By adding a software layer to the artist's research, we hope to provide a new way of exploring and understanding that work and, in turn, a new and potentially valuable output for research-based practice.

A vast amount of material is gathered, consumed, and produced during the course of a project like this - but the huge majority of that material is never seen. Today, though, open source tools and agentic development make it more possible than ever to bring audiences directly into the work - whether that is research-based, archival, or of an entirely new form.

No Before or After is a visual knowledge explorer that transforms written notes into an interactive network diagram. Users write notes in simple text files, and the app automatically connects related ideas, people, and places as clickable nodes on a web page. Built with modern web technologies, it helps researchers and creatives discover hidden connections in their work. It uses ReactFlow, D3, vanilla JS, and a little Python to parse content written in markdown, convert it to structured JSON data, and render it in a node-based view. It also calls a weather API to display live meteorological data from Svalbard.

*Built by **possibleworlds.space***

scripts > JS generate_graph_links.js > ... Meeting with Greg ...
graph-data > unstructured.md
Keywor

```
109
110    // Helper to truncate label text
111    function truncateLabel(label, maxLength = 30) {
112      if (!label) return '';
113      return label.length > maxLength ? label.slice(0, maxLength) + '...' : label;
114    }
115
116    // Build content-to-content edges: connect nodes that share at least one keyword, limit to 3 edges per node
117    // Do not create edges for image nodes
118    const contentEdges = [];
119    const edgeSet = new Set();
120    const nodeEdgeCount = Array(nodes.length).fill(0);
121
122    for (let i = 0; i < nodes.length; i++) {
123      if (nodes[i].type === 'image' || nodes[i].data.image) continue;
124      for (let j = i + 1; j < nodes.length; j++) {
125        if (nodes[j].type === 'image' || nodes[j].data.image) continue;
126        if (nodeEdgeCount[i] >= 3 || nodeEdgeCount[j] >= 3) continue;
127        const shared = nodeKeywords[i].filter(k => validKeywords.includes(k) && nodeKeywords[j].includes(k));
128        if (shared.length > 0) {
129          const edgeId = `${nodes[i].id}-${nodes[j].id}`;
130          if (!edgeSet.has(edgeId)) {
131            const label = shared.join(', ');
132            contentEdges.push({
133              id: edgeId,
134              source: nodes[i].id,
135              target: nodes[j].id,
136              label: truncateLabel(label)
137            });
138            edgeSet.add(edgeId);
139            nodeEdgeCount[i]++;
140            nodeEdgeCount[j]++;
141          }
142        }
143      }
144    }
145
146    // Write new graph data (preserve tag-to-content edges, replace content-to-content edges)
147    const newGraph = {
148      nodes,
149      edges: [...contentEdges, ...tagToContentEdges]
```

```
markdown_to_graph.js > imageNodes > data > image
    nodes.forEach(imgNode => {
      nodes.push(imgNode);
    });

110
111    // For each content node, find which manual keywords appear in the note text
112    const nodeKeywords = nodes.map(node => {
113      if (node.type === 'image' || node.data.image) return [];
114      const note = node.data.note || '';
115      const noteLower = note.toLowerCase();
116      // Find all keywords that appear as substrings in the note
117      return MANUAL_KEYWORDS.filter(kw => noteLower.includes(kw));
118    });
119
120    // Build a map of keyword -> node indices
121    const keywordToNodes = {};
122    nodeKeywords.forEach((keywords, idx) => {
123      keywords.forEach(keyword => {
124        if (!keywordToNodes[keyword]) keywordToNodes[keyword] = new Set();
125        keywordToNodes[keyword].add(idx);
126      });
127    });
128
129    // Only keep keywords that appear in at least one node
130    const validKeywords = Object.keys(keywordToNodes);
131
132    // Tagging system
133    // Create tag nodes for each valid keyword
134    const tagNodes = validKeywords.map((keyword, i) => ({
135      id: `tag:${keyword}`,
136      type: 'tag',
137      position: {
138        x: 1000 + 600 * Math.cos((2 * Math.PI * i) / validKeywords.length),
139        y: 1000 + 600 * Math.sin((2 * Math.PI * i) / validKeywords.length),
140      },
141      data: {
142        label: keyword,
143        type: 'tag',
144        keywordType: KEYWORD_TYPES[keyword] || 'concept', // Include keyword type
145        note: '',
```

139
140
141   Web cams
142   https://worldcam.eu/map/11529#4/70.23914877440168/-35.81233978271485
143
144
145   Alcoa
146   Nuclear bunker data centre article
147   https://rai.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-9655.13481
148   Future-proof: bunkered data centres and the selling of ultra-secure cloud s
149

```
150
151
152    Earth Observation Guide
153    https://business.esa.int/newcomers-earth-observation-guide#ref_2.1.1
154
155
156
157    Research methods 22/11/23
158    Reading and internet research
159    Working out a method for documenting research (bookmarking and note taking)
160    Writing up notes / quotes / references
161    Image making tests - drone
162    Adding to network/database/contacts spreadsheet
163    Use similar model to Umbrella House Dropbox folders in G-drive
164
165
166
167    Ecocinema and Tech
168    Sarah Abbott (Canada)
169    Deep listening and the intuitive field
170    Ideas of observation, deep listening, non verbal communication (with non-hu
171    Moving from an ocularcentric view to a relational one
172
173
174
175    Milena
176    phytography
177
178
179
180    Rehana Zaman
```

Terminal   Output   Debug Console   Ports   Problems

josh@Joshs-iMac emily % npm run dev

> emily@0.1.0 dev
> next dev

▲ Next.js 15.3.3
- Local: http://localhost:3000
- Network: http://192.168.0.245:3000

✓ Starting...
✓ Ready in 6.2s

```
josh@Joshs-iMac emily % npm run generate

> emily@0.1.0 generate
> node scripts/markdown_to_graph.js && node scripts/generate_graph_links.js

Parsed markdown, generated 223 nodes and 844 edges (with image and manual tag nodes).
Keywords with types: 123
Generated 138 content-to-content edges and preserved 706 tag-to-content edges.
Keywords with types: 123
josh@Joshs-iMac emily %
```

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Contributors

Jean McNeil

Jean McNeil is originally from Nova Scotia, Canada. She has published sixteen books, spanning fiction, memoir, poetry, essays and travel. Her account of being writer-in-residence with the British Antarctic Survey in Antarctica, Ice Diaries, won both the Adventure Travel and Grand Prize at the Banff Mountain Film and Book Festival in 2016. Her most recent novel, Day for Night, was awarded the gold medal in the literary fiction category of the Independent Publishers Awards in the US in 2022. A new book on writing about landscape and the environment, Latitudes: Encounters with a Changing Planet, was published in March 2025. She directs the Creative Writing programme at the University of East Anglia and lives in London.

"Throughout my writing life I have used an expeditionary method of research. As well as winning the Fellowship to be British Antarctic Survey/Arts Council England writer-in-residence in Antarctica I have held official residencies and fellowships in Svalbard, the Falkland Islands, in Australia and South Africa and have been writer-in-residence with the Natural Environment Research Council as well as BAS in subsequent ship-based expeditions to Greenland and the length of the Atlantic Ocean. As research for one my novels I trained as a professional safari guide, gaining both vehicle-based and walking qualifications in east and southern Africa, an experience that I write about in Latitudes. I grew up in the Canadian wilderness and much of my work focuses on the mutuality of our relationship with the land – landscape, environment, nature, climate change are collapsed, for me, in this term and my writing is based on a mode of land art: it is just that, but in literary form.

I will read from and speak about my latest book, Latitudes: Encounters with a Changing Planet. This talk, illustrated with my images of the places in it, will explore how the book is a new approach to writing, a kind of anti-memoir told through landscape. One of the greatest challenges writers face is to try to articulate the climate crisis. We have plenty of renditions of what this means for us, as a species – our loss, our anxiety and grief – but little understanding of what we mean for the realm we call nature: its consciousness, its will, its multiple quests. How to write about this realm on its own terms? This is what Latitudes attempts to do, to write from inside the land and place, based on many decades living and working in and writing about the world's great wildernesses."

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Arieh Frosh and Ed Compson

ARIEH FROSH AND ED COMPSON are independent artists who work collaboratively on socially engaged, technologically-driven projects. Since 2020, their ongoing series of artworks, workshops, and research experiments have involved technologies that might only become visual through translation, from seabed scanning, to electromagnetic listening, to recording wind speed. They do this to engage with a world that operates — and is made operational — through non-visual means, with visual and material effects. This approach, combined with a critical employment of fiction and an experimental use of tools, allows for a questioning of how machine and ecological thinking operate, interpellate us, and affect imagination.

Between them, they have exhibited at sites including Centre for Contemporary Art, Glasgow; NiMAC (Nicosia Municipal Arts Centre), Cyprus; CLC Gallery Venture, Beijing; Ginny on Frederick, London; Plicnik Space Initiative, London, and the Sainsbury Centre, Norwich.

"OUR PRESENTATION WILL GIVE AN OVERVIEW OF OUR RESEARCH into offshore wind energy infrastructure and its relationships with submerged landscapes.

The submersion of Doggerland is a story of a changing climate, one that resonates with the contemporary context of anthropocentric actions leading to the rise of sea levels and coastal erosion. Doggerland is an area now understood through proxies: through seabed scanning and filming, sediment sampling, the finding or trawling of artefact. This seabed scanning, which is primarily provided by offshore energy, positions Doggerland as a site that gets revealed through a renewable energy infrastructure that is one part of the effort to limit the loss of land to the sea.

We will include excerpts of our film The Doggerland Energy Complex (currently showing at the Sainsbury Centre as part of the exhibition A World of Water), filmed site visits from across the UK and Netherlands, and other physical material gathered during our research and workshops. We will also share aspects of our recent exhibition from The New Scroby Sands Offshore Wind Farm Information Centre, drawing attention to how we have approached reflecting oceanic time within our exhibition and film practices."

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Emily Richardson

Emily Richardson, Bolex filming, Svalbard, 2025

EMILY RICHARDSON is a filmmaker and researcher examining the trace of human presence on particular landscapes and environments on the cusp of change. Her films document sites of power and corporate interest at particular moments in time uncovering layers of narrative embedded in these contested landscapes, whether East London prior to the Olympics, abandoned military architecture of the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment of Orford Ness, the oil industry on the Scottish coastline, the contentious expansion of Sizewell nuclear power station, or the exploitation of the Far North.

Her films have been shown in galleries, museums and festivals internationally including Tate Modern and Tate Britain, London, Pompidou Centre, Paris, Barbican Cinema, London; Anthology Film Archives, New York and Venice, Edinburgh, BFI London, Rotterdam and New York Film Festivals and is distributed by Lux, London, Lightcone, Paris, Video Data Bank, Chicago and Canyon Cinema, San Francisco.

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"MY WORK SITS WITHIN A LINEAGE OF ARTIST FILMMAKERS addressing ideas about our relationship to and impact on natural and constructed landscapes and environments through a reflexive observational approach to making work that includes walking, photography, filmmaking, sound recording, historical and archive research, books and podcasts.

I'm currently working on a project, No Before or After, which Responses to Shifting Landscapes is part of, examining ideas around extraction, preservation, and memory through the lens of a journey to the Arctic World Archive's (AWA) World Memory Bank which, despite the thawing permafrost, professes to protect world memory for 500-1000 years in a former coal mine on Svalbard in the Arctic Circle by storing data on 35mm film. Extraction and preservation are a major part of Svalbard's history. The location acts as a conduit for telling a story about the storage and preservation of memory, the writing of cultural narratives and the exploitation of the Earth's resources.

Following a recent filming trip to Svalbard in the Arctic I will be reading extracts from an essay on how time and memory are inscribed in landscape alongside excerpts of material filmed in and around the Arctic World Archive. Asking questions about what constitutes an archive, what gets remembered and what gets forgotten, why the Arctic, what place does the far North hold in our imaginations and now its stability is threatened, how do we respond?

During filming I became aware of the traces of extraction and preservation above and below ground on Svalbard, the architecture of the mining industry, the history of tourism on the archipelago, the changing geopolitics and the significance of an idea of the North in our cultural imagination, which I will talk about. At the end of the day there will be an opportunity to come to the opening of an exhibition of this work in progress at Primeyarc, originalprojects; space, just a short walk from the theatre."

Bridget McKenzie

A History for Tomorrow workshop, summoning to life radicals from Norwich past to seek their advice for our future.

Bridget McKenzie is a trainer and artist focused on Regenerative Culture. Her career includes being Tate's Education manager and the British Library's Head of Learning. In 2006, she founded Flow Associates, a research consultancy in cultural learning. In 2019, she founded Climate Museum UK, a creative collective helping people make sense of environmental issues. Through CMUK, she delivers the Earth Talk programme on dialogic approaches to environmental engagement and experiments with imaginative activism in Norwich. She also co-founded Culture Declares, an international movement of cultural workers declaring a climate and ecological emergency.

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culturedeclares.org
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@bridget.mck

"I will make an informative provocation about the roles of arts and culture in response to the Earth Crisis, expanding from familiar ideas that drive overly limited assumptions about culture and the environment. Focusing on cultural practices and environmental challenges in the Eastern region, I will address the urgent need and the many possibilities for truth-telling, for enabling community resilience and for working towards regenerative systems. I will signpost practices of people and organisations working with Climate Museum UK and as declarers with Culture Declares Emergency, including my own practice of imaginative activism and dialogic conversations.

I am dedicated to a vision of Regenerative Culture as a force of hope in a context of collapse that can feel hopeless. My 'passion work' is to advocate for the roles of Art, Design and Heritage in response to the Earth Crisis, expanding from vague claims and limited assumptions about their contribution. I come from Norfolk, with many generations of ancestors who made their living on the coast or at sea, as fishermen, sailors and coastguards as well as the women who held communities and families together with crafts, cooking, storytelling and education. My background is in museums and art history, so I am used to learning from the past and honouring ancestors. However, in these sectors, I was conscious of a tendency to avoid anticipating the future in any detail. I've always turned both ways, to the past and future, and have been highlighting climate impacts since the early 1990s. I grew up with awareness of the changing and threatened coastline, and the broader threats to peace from conflict, nuclear arms, fossil fuels and big agriculture. In the past eight years, my work has focused entirely on culture and environment, and I've developed resources, training, collectives and campaigns that push at the radical edges of what is ours to do. These include founding Climate Museum UK and Culture Declares Emergency, as well as a programme called Earth Talk, training practitioners in imaginative activism and creative conversations. All this experience has led to some well-defined thoughts about what culture can do: the many possibilities for truth-telling, for enabling resilience of human and more-than-human communities, and for working towards more regenerative systems."

Ruth Maclennan

Ruth Maclennan, All the Tears in the Sea, film still, 2025

Ruth Maclennan is an artist whose work includes films, photographs, performances, drawing and writing. Her films, photographs and writing explore how the climate emergency is transforming landscapes and experiences of place, for inhabitants and as representation. For over twelve years she has been researching climate change and geopolitics in the European Arctic. Treeline (FVU/Forestry England, 2021) was compiled from hundreds of video clips of forests submitted from around the world and toured with Artists' Film International. A Forest Tale (FVU/Arctic Art Institute, 2022) was filmed in Russian Boreal forests before the Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and is currently on show at KUMU Art Museum, Tallinn, in the Exhibition 'They Began to Talk'. Ruth Maclennan is currently Lead Artist in the ESRC-funded international interdisciplinary research network, 'Shifting Global Polarities: Russia, China and Eurasia in Transition', where she leads the arts programme including annual artist fellowships.

"In this presentation I will show excerpts from my film All the Tears in the Sea (2025) shot in Svalbard in 2023, and use them to discuss and ask questions about what forms and processes of collaboration, conversation, cross-disciplinary research and art practice might be useful (and for whom) in the current storm of ecological breakdown, war, and capitalist imperialist adventurism in the Arctic.

The film All the tears in the Sea is a letter from the remote Svalbard archipelago, where global heating and Russia's invasion of Ukraine disrupt the fragile Arctic ecology. Temperatures and geopolitical tensions are rising. Svalbard is a place of extremes, contradictory and fractured: cosmopolitan, yet determinedly Norwegian, built on coal mining yet vaunting its eco-credentials, a free economic zone and a nature reserve, a science lab and a tourist trap. The film travels through time and matter, into dreamed of pasts and threatening futures, tracing encounters with humans, birds, dying glaciers and other beings and listening to their stories."

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John Kenneth Paranada

John Kenneth Paranada Photo by Andy Crouch 2022

JOHN KENNETH PARANADA is a British-Filipino curator, writer, critic, and researcher working at the intersection of art, climate justice, and institutional transformation. He is the inaugural Curator of Art and Climate Change at the Sainsbury Centre and a researcher at the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research at the University of East Anglia, marking a first in the UK museum sector for a role dedicated to curating in response to the climate emergency.

His practice reconceives the museum as a civic infrastructure for cultural resilience, ecological imagination, and creative activism. He has curated landmark exhibitions such as Sediment Spirit: The Activation of Art in the Anthropocene (2022-2023) and A World of Water (2022 -2025), and co-edited key publications including Planet for Our Future: How Do We Adapt to a Transforming World? (2023) and Can the Seas Survive Us? (2025), which foreground art's role in fostering adaptation, equity, and planetary care.

"WHAT CAN ART AND CULTURE OFFER in a time when climate change is no longer a distant threat but a force entangled with every aspect of life, shaping our politics, economies, histories, and daily realities? And how might they not only help us imagine new ways of living but galvanise us to act collectively, urgently, and with care?

My curatorial work examines how visual culture, through objects, images, moving image and hybrid creative practices, can serve as critical tools for interpreting and responding to the intersecting crises of our time: ecological breakdown, deepening inequality, political instability, and cultural loss. Working across contemporary art, climate science, Indigenous knowledge systems, the social sciences and the humanities, I develop curatorial strategies that dissolve disciplinary boundaries and foster transdisciplinary, relational and context-driven forms of exhibition making. I understand the museum not simply as a space for experiencing art but as an active civic infrastructure, a site for ecological literacy, collective learning and cultural transformation. A space where thought becomes felt, imagination becomes method, and more just and regenerative futures can begin to take shape."

Extracts from The New Scroby Sands Offshore Wind Farm Information Centre

Arieh Frosh and Ed Compson, North Sea Night Turbines (Windpark Hollandse Kust Zuid), 2024. Commissioned by East Gallery, Norwich University of the Arts.
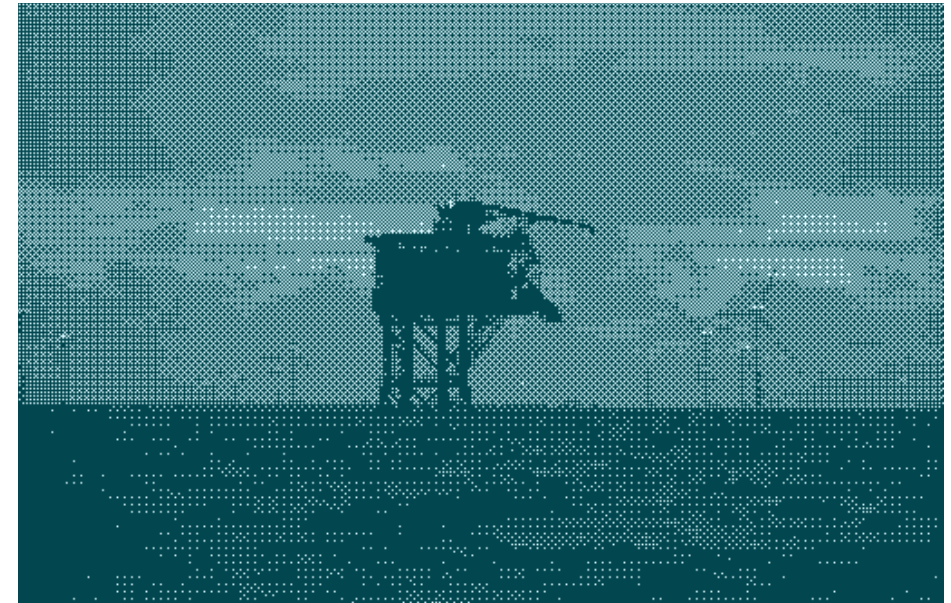
ARIEH FROSH & ED COMPSON

Till the glacial sediment covers us. Run the waves, the scans, the lapping at the sidelines and the puddling in the earth. Soften the sidelines to island. Smear over, unsorted, at speeds more locomotive than rock-like. A sudden circumstantial shift. Where one thing unrecognisably supplants another. Leave it for centuries.

After some speculative ideas about Doggerland in the late 20th century, coming from paleoarcheologists such as Professor Bryony Coles, it was 3D seismic data from oil and gas that gave the first detailed indication of the seabed. This has then been followed up by large academic studies, most prominently the project Europe's Lost Frontiers which came out of the University of Bradford. This both mapped Doggerland and brought it to public attention.

Seabed data is acquired through a mix of sound and sediment sampling. The sites for sediment sampling follow from an analysis of a large amount of data, which can be contributed by wind farm development and undersea cable routes. In shallower areas, and also informed by data, diving is a means to look for archaeology.

The way that the water levels move over time, it can be hard to determine where Doggerland begins or ends. It is, as many things are, a question of edges. While it might be possible to determine where the Netherlands is, this is itself a debate.

In the shallows, near Denmark, divers have conducted most of the archaeological research. Most of the North Sea is deeper, murkier, and that's where scanning, measurement and environmental proxies enter. Speculation about where a find may occur comes from this information; periods of data analysis informs the targeting of a specific area for sampling. Specificity is presented in metres. Decisions can be around the worth of an exploration of a potential landscape that might be buried under several metres of sediment. The aim is not to dredge up a tool, or a bone, or a roasted walnut shell with one hurl of tube many metres undersea, but to build a picture of land conditions. Samples are taken at intervals within the selected area. Settlements would more likely have occurred on river banks. People tend to like river banks. Ideally it would all be investigated.

Regenerative Culture

Reimagine the City event at Norwich Theatre, with Culture Declares East, Climate Museum UK and other arts organisations.

BRIDGET MCKENZIE

I am dedicated to a vision of Regenerative Culture as a force of hope in a context of collapse that can feel hopeless. My 'passion work' is to advocate for the roles of Art, Design and Heritage in response to the Earth Crisis, expanding from vague claims and limited assumptions about their contribution. I come from Norfolk, with many generations of ancestors who made their living on the coast or at sea, as fishermen, sailors and coastguards as well as the women who held communities and families together with crafts, cooking, storytelling and education. My background is in museums and art history, so I am used to learning from the past and honouring ancestors. However, in these sectors, I was conscious of a tendency to avoid anticipating the future in any detail. I've always turned both ways, to the past and future, and have been highlighting climate impacts since the early 1990s. I grew up with awareness of the changing and threatened coastline, and the broader threats to peace from conflict, nuclear arms, fossil fuels and big agriculture. In the past eight years, my work has focused entirely on culture and environment, and I've developed resources, training, collectives and campaigns that push at the radical edges of what is ours to do. These include founding Climate Museum UK and Culture Declares Emergency, as well as a programme called Earth Talk, training practitioners in imaginative activism and creative conversations. All this experience has led to some well-defined thoughts about what culture can do: the many possibilities for truth-telling, for enabling resilience of human and more-than-human communities, and for working towards more regenerative systems.

For more, see bridgetmckenzie.uk

Notes on a Film

Emily Richardson

Filmmaking for me is tied to an archaeological methodology of uncovering and interpreting the sites featured in my work. I am motivated by the women in my family, my great-grandmother was one of the first female archaeologists in the field, I have an array of incredible aunts, one of whom can read cuneiform, my mother was a writer focused on the non-human world and an early adopter of ecological living. Her strong focus on the importance of the non-human world meant an active response to environmental issues was encouraged. This is a personal film for me and a way of linking the female knowledge of my family and the threads of cultural interpretation and readings of landscape that we have been involved in, at the same time as asking questions about the environmental implications of our digital memory.

Getting perspective on a problem allows us to see it more clearly. It is the distance from it that gives this expanded view allowing us to see something objectively in order to bring it to consciousness. Science has given us technology but art, poetry and literature are able to communicate ideas in a way that is perhaps more likely to move us towards change. Landscapes on the cusp of change, and the potential transformation that allows, have fascinated me for a long time. Now I see a connection with my great grandmother's work, my mother's work and my own in this reading of and deep engagement with landscape.

Through my research I discovered that according to the Arctic World Archive one of the safest long term data storage solutions is black and white 35mm film. Piql film writes binary data to film in four levels of grey, with 8 million data points per frame and professes to be protecting world memory for 500-1000 years in the Arctic permafrost. Considering the rate of thaw over the past twenty years, this seems rather optimistic but I am fascinated by the fact that analogue film technology could prove to be a sustainable solution to the preservation of our long term memory.

Retrieval is key to the idea of 21st century archaeology. We will be dependent on data retrieval systems to construct a history of this time in the future. Memory and memory retrieval concern us as we age, the ability to look back and remember is important to our sense of self and our ability to write our own personal histories and the social and cultural histories which shape our futures

No Before or After: Notes on a Film, video still, Emily Richardson 2025

and relationships with each other. Data will define the future. It is defining the present. As we attempt to wean ourselves off fossil fuels we shift to data dependency without a thought for the environmental impact, replacing our memory with data retrieval systems.

The landscape is a text, I have an ability to read this text, sometimes a projection of imagination, sometimes a process of research honed to the specific environment but always something I do intuitively. Thinking about filmmaking and memory, making a film so that something is not lost, not with nostalgic motivation but so that something is recorded, as an act of resistance. Creating an alternative, creating an archive. Information transmission and preservation. What gets remembered, what gets forgotten? Memory and storage, both crucial to the digital and analogue preservation of data and culture.

In the Arctic a craters form due to thaw slumps, the melting of the permafrost in the region. It has been described as a geological layer cake where hundreds of thousands of years of permafrost can be studied. As it continues to melt it creates a musical score of trickling water and thudding chunks of permafrost. What does the melting sound like?

The sound of the subterranean, the resonance of underground space. Shadows on the cave wall, perhaps the first architectural space, the first cultural space, the first site of moving images. Now a deposit of memory. Is this any less ephemeral than the flickering light? Geological time is present in the cave, and in the mine fossilised remains are present alongside the binary code representing a fragment of earth time. A site of both extraction and preservation. In the darkness what secrets are held?

Laura Mulvey wrote: "For human and all organic life, time marks the movement along a path to death, that is, to the stillness that represents the transformation of the animate into the inanimate. In cinema, the blending of movement and stillness touches on this point of uncertainty so that, buried in the

No Before or After: Notes on a Film, video still, Emily Richardson 2025

cinema's materiality, lies a reminder of the difficulty of understanding passing time, and ultimately, of understanding death." (*Death 24 x A Second*)

This sense of loss and disappearance is the reason for making, the reason for the drive to create and preserve, to mark time and thwart death. This process reveals an inner geography that is reflected in the outer geography of place, the solid material world standing in for inner immaterial thoughts, ideas and processes - the mind. Imagination.

The anatomy of the psyche, the title of a book by Edinger which ties the structure and processes of the psyche to alchemical processes and reminds us change and transformation are inevitable, movement being the only constant as time never stops. Attempting to be still or to create a lasting response to the moment is the source of my creative impulse. An impossibility and perhaps always a failure which drives us to try again. Futile but necessary. A way of finding hope in a seemingly hopeless situation which we appear to find ourselves in.

original projects;

Possible Worlds

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