

A photograph of a person with dark hair, wearing a white t-shirt and a grey jacket, standing in a forest. They are reaching up with their right hand towards a thin branch, holding a pair of orange-handled scissors. The forest is dense with green trees and sunlight filtering through the canopy.

NURTURE

Living in the Landscape Summer
School and Exhibition 2023

Editors

Elina Härkönen
Lotta Lundstedt
Kathryn Burnett
Mette Gårdvik
Roxane Permar

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Nurture: Living in the Landscape summer school and exhibition

Partners

The Umeå University Sweden
The Nord University of Norway
University of the West of Scotland
UHI Shetland, University of the Highlands and Islands
The Yukon School of Art
The University of Alaska Anchorage



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Image: Mari Parpala, 2023.

Introduction

The fourth international and interdisciplinary art methods school Living in the Landscape (LiLa) took place in between March and October 2023. This series of schools is organized by the University of Arctic's thematic network Arctic Sustainable Art and Design (ASAD). This year (2023) we have undertaken another hybrid delivery with in situ site working in Umeå and the High Coast area of Sweden.

The core aim of the LiLa series of methods schools is to bring together students and scholars from different disciplines and circumpolar higher education institutions to develop culture-sensitive and sustainable research on sociocultural landscapes of the Arctic region. Additionally, Lila seeks to create encounters and dialogue between traditional forms of culture and contemporary practices and discover how these could be presented through art (Härkönen & Stöckell, 2018).

The participating MA and PhD students and scholars this year came from several ASAD partner institutions: Umeå University (Sweden), the University of Lapland (Finland), Nord University (Norway), the University of the West of Scotland (Scotland), University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI Shetland), Yukon School of Art (Canada), and University of Alaska, Anchorage (USA). The participants came from the disciplines of art education, general teacher education, fine arts, creative practice, and clothing design.

Launching of the 2023 Lila school took place online in March 2023. Via series of online seminars and group work, community-enhancing activities were conducted steadily over a series of weeks so that participants would get to know each other even before the fieldwork week later in May 2023. Small group discussions, virtual tea-times and tasks facilitated by the country teams brought participants together to undertake deepening awareness of landscape as taskscape as well as participants each executing their planning for delivering to both the Lila 2023 exhibition (at Relate North: Umeå) and this publication as appropriate.

Our landscape theme: Forest

As with previous Lila schools our starting point for art-based practice working was the anthropologist Tim Ingold's (1993) concept of taskscape. It refers to our way of being and dwelling and the tasks we perform while in our daily landscapes.

Together with Västerbottens Museum in Umeå we planned this year's methods school landscape theme as based on their exhibition: *How many trees are there in the forest?* This exhibition showed traces of human activity and different aspects of use of the forest. With material from the forest, photographs, film, objects and archive material, insight was offered via the exhibition of the large collection of 'forest knowledge' that has accumu-



Figure 1. Participants explored their safe and uncanny relationship to forest with multisensory approaches. Image: Mari Parpala, 2023.

lated over a long time. When visiting the Sune Jonsson Center for Documentary Photography the students found interest in Jonsson's humanistic vision, characterized by a respect for people. His photographs and books show a deep understanding of the conditions for the small farmers, especially in the Västerbothnia countryside and a feeling for the traces people have left in the surrounding agricultural landscape. As the school progressed, the participants' interest in examining their relationships with landscape alongside taskscapes brought in various themes and responses - as this collection evidences - but our common emerging theme from our forest working was most especially the concept of nurture.

Nurture: our emerging theme of methods practice

In this Lila collection what we have observed together is a deepening appreciation of the complex and fascinating balance between nature and nurture. You cannot grow a full garden just because you have a packet of seeds: seeds need to be planted, nurtured, watered, and cultivated before they grow. Forests too are no simple emergence but rather are a layered space of natural and social tension and harmony, located in place. In Lila 2023 our exploration of methods thinking has facilitated further exploration and examination as to how we as artists and creative communicators learn how to use our tools, and finely tune our skills, with practice. As an example, the

students facilitated a communal flower planting workshop for the participants to give an opportunity to take an active interest in landscape. In this intervention of “giving back“ to nature discussion was provoked in regard of our human roles and methods, our ‘sensing’ of sustainability and nature as nurture.

The aim of the publication

Each participant worked on their art-based processes and collected knowledge and materials during the school. For the closing of the school, the final works are displayed in the exhibition in Ljusgården, Umeå University, Sweden in relation to the symposium Relate North. The joint artistic experiments undertaken during online school are displayed on Lila website (www.asadnetwork.org/lila).

This publication consists of participants artist statements and visual essays where some of the processes are introduced in depth. These essays have elements from the fieldwork week locations and each writers’ own places. The artworks, artist statements and the visual essays show how the art-based approaches made the participants consider their dwelling, identity and working in relation to the themes, forests and nurture. The works reflect how our living can be made more sustainable and consistent for the other beings dwelling in these same landscapes.

In Caol, Lochaber, Scotland

10 October 2023

*Lotta Lundstedt, Kathryn A. Burnett
and Elina Härkönen*

References

Härkönen, E., & Stöckell, A. (2019). Cultural sustainability in art-based interdisciplinary dialogue. *International Journal of Art & Design Education*, 38(3), 639–648. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jade.12246>

Ingold, T. (1993). The temporality of the landscape. *World Archaeology*, 25(2), 152–174.

Image: Mari Parpala, 2023.

Exhibition



Mairi Summers

Dwelling Places

a story of attentional practices with stones and trees

As part of LiLa I began to explore the relationship between trees and stones, taking initial inspiration from the area of temperate rainforest which borders, and once covered my croft*. The name for this woodland is Càrnach, a Gaelic name meaning 'place of stones'. During our field work in Umeå we visited an exhibition of Sune Jonnson's documentary work at Västerbotten Museum. He shared the powerful testimony of a small-time farmer who had worked hard to clear his land of stones in order to grow crops. I was struck by the great efforts involved to support a family on these areas of poor agricultural land, and I reflected on the original crofters who, over 100 years ago, had cleared crofts of stones and trees.

During our visit to the High Coast, I created graphite rubbings as a method for attune my perception to attend both outwardly and inwardly simultaneously. In this I was attempting to hold the space between myself and stone or tree, in efforts towards developing understanding and learning through attention.

The artwork presented is a collection of development work, gathered into a book form, which expresses a story about the journey of my attention with trees and stones throughout the LiLa Summer school. This work maps the development of what Tim Ingold, in his article 'The Temporality of the Landscape', terms a 'dwelling perspective', and in the process of making space for myself on my croft, how I place myself in relation to specific features of the landscape.

** croft - an area of agricultural land held in a system of tenure, unique to the Scottish Highlands and Islands*



Mixed media, a detail
148 x 210mm, 2023.



*Quilted linen, partially hand-coloured, 2023.
Pattern by Nielsen, 2020.
Photo: Bigna Lu Abderhalden, 2023.*



Bigna Lu Abderhalden

Same but Different

Landscapes are shaped by a long story, interacting parts and not least, by their observant participant. As Ingold (1993) argued, the landscape is a work in progress that is constantly evolving. Being in the landscape of Höga Kusten with the concept of temporality in my mind, I started noticing how there are contrasts but no borders. I noticed how all those single parts built something bigger that had movement and was a process rather than a picture. I noticed how this mixture of endless elements resembles personality. This was the basis for my artwork.

With this reversible jacket, I summarised my thoughts around belonging, individual backgrounds, feeling comfortable and fitting in, using shapes and colours found in the landscape. I looked at the parallels of landscape and personality and how society affects both. Both landscapes and personalities can be formed into looking exactly the same. Nevertheless, taking a closer look, they have underlying individual stories that make them different whilst still being connected to their surroundings. These inner maps are a snapshot of the collection of a landscape or person but might not be visible to everyone.

Reference:

Ingold, T. (1993). The temporality of the landscape. *World Archaeology*, 25(2), 152–174.

Aleksi Remes

Forest Spirits

While in Louevaara's snowy landscapes, we blended into our surrounding environments as if we were creatures or spirits of the forest. Inspired by our visit, I wanted to illustrate this idea of forest-dwelling spirits in a dream-like depiction. My artistic background consists mainly of drawings and paintings with fantastic themes, so I relied on my familiar strengths when creating this artwork.

Whilst this painting of forest spirits itself depicts themes such as nurturing and co-existence within a landscape, due to its initial conception, it also carries our experiences in Louevaara. I aimed to deliver a similar sense of serenity that we felt amid Lapland's winter nature.

*Acrylic painting on watercolour paper
42,5 x 63,5 cm, 2023.
Image: Aleksi Remes, 2023.*





*A concrete-made birdbath, 2023
Image: Emmelin Øwre Lyngås, 2023*

Emmelin Øvre Lyngås

Cold Baths – Needed for Birds and Humans

I have been dwelling on how I'm going to add something to the nature. I decided to add a birdbath to the forest in a place where the natural water-source is low. I have a close relationship with the small birds in the forest, and in Norway we see that the small-bird population is sinking drastically. To have a clean water-source can be my little "first aid" to help the nature and the forest to have a healthy number of birds for the different species. To be living in the landscape, and participating in nature, I wanted my art to be something useful, for the animals. My vision for the spa is to blend in the surroundings and not to disturb, but rather something that seems to be a natural part of the landscape. The Bird Spa is also a way of reminding humans to help in the ways they can, and that it doesn't have to be big to have meaning.

Berit Oksfjellelv

Roots

In my essay, I tell the story of how my father and I had a plan to make baskets from birch roots, a traditional sustainable technique for making containers. My father passed away after collecting roots more than 20 years ago. I made a table sparer then, with large difficulties, as my mentor was no longer there. Participating in Lila made me revive the project, and I merged a tiny basket. I intended to find new roots in Sweden. Whilst not succeeding, destiny or coincidences took me on another journey: knitting socks and embroidering them to make reinforcements under the heel and toe balls to make the socks last long. Visually, the embroideries were supposed to look like birch root merging. My daughter joined me for many of the steps.

I discuss the important tradition of knowledge in action relating to Tim Ingold's article about culture, nature and environment, and Antti Stöckells' emphasis on how hand-crafting is a gathering of cultural skills from one generation to another. The title of the project is, therefore, literally and figuratively meant.

A roll of yarn (diam.10 cm) older than from the 90's.

A roll of birch roots (diam 20 cm) year 2001.

A table sparer made of birch roots (diam. 12 cm.) year 2002.

A pair of woollen socks (knitted and embroidered) (size 40) year 2023.

A birch root container/basket (8 cm. diam. /4 cm. height) year 2023.

Image: Berit Oksfjellelv, 2023.







Elina Härkönen

All They Talked about was Money

My work examines the controversy surrounding land ownership. In past years, I have encountered a few brutally clear-cut forests in my everyday life landscapes in Northern Finland. The landscape has changed drastically. Suddenly, a large area of old forest has disappeared, leaving a barren gap in the middle of the forested hill. It has turned out that these lands are privately owned and then inherited by the next generation not living in the region. The one and only motive for the clearcuts has been money growing in those trees.

I started my art piece after experiencing the sorrow of the drastic loss of a forest I regularly visit. The sight of the pile of cut-down trees was unbelievable. I had childishly believed that such an old forest, with its thick old tree trunks, would be left out of forest management.

During the LiLa fieldwork, we visited the Västerbotten museum where the Swedish Photographer Sune Jonsson's exhibition touched on the same topic of ownership and the value of a landscape. The name of my work refers to a statement in one of his interviews with local people living in remote areas that were the target of government reforms.

Where is the real value of the land we say we own?

*Tufted Wall Hanging
90x140cm, 2023*

Image: Elina Härkönen, 2023.

Annika Kokko

Time Travelling in the Forest

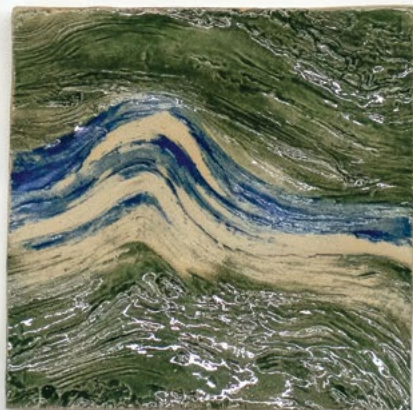
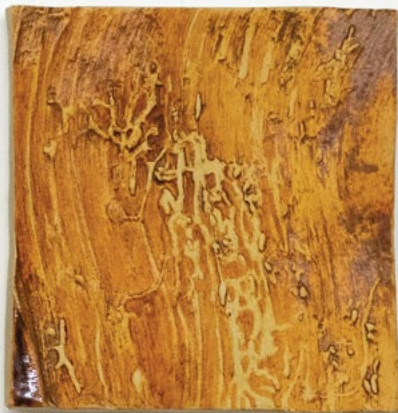
During LiLa, I spent a lot of time in nature – especially in forests. While dwelling in different landscapes, I started to pay attention to different shapes, details and textures around me. I became fascinated by them, and I wanted to investigate them further. I chose to use clay as my research tool. I thought it would be an interesting way to study different forms and textures that can be found in forest landscapes. My other goal was to bring the forest to the exhibition without actually taking anything away from the forest. When I found a particularly interesting form, I placed a bit of clay on top of it and made an imprint. This printing process led to a collection of clay tiles.

During this art-based research process, I understood that I was actually able to see the history of the landscape through its forms. I saw annual rings of trees, cracks in rocks from the Ice Age, signs of seasons as old and new growth and also marks that people have left to the landscape – traces of time, everywhere! According to anthropologist Tim Ingold (2002), a landscape is the most solid appearance in which history can declare itself. In this exhibition, I am presenting my time travels in the forest. Ingold (2002) also emphasised that a landscape is in a continuous process of changing. In these tiles I show forms of landscapes at the moment I printed them. They have already changed by now – because time goes on.

References

Ingold, T. (2002). The temporality of the landscape. In *The perception of the environment: Essays on livelihood, dwelling and skill* (pp. 189–208). Routledge.

Clay, glaze and wood.
45 x 45, 2023.
Image: Annika Kokko, 2023.





Gini Dickinson

A Collection of Smörkniv (Spread Knife)

This is a collection of smörkniv, a humble tool explored with curiosity. All smörkniv here are made by my hands since our trip to Umeå, in May 2023.

During this trip, I intended to work on previous eco-feminist ideas involving action research as a character, The Feminist Lark, exploring my place in a landscape as a female body. The Feminist Lark navigates landscapes with no boundaries and finds unbridled joy and a space to just be. Free from the constraints of our modern structures, she sets a place for feminist joy.

When discovering a new place, my hands and mind were drawn to the smörkniv and explored its cultural significance. Since our fieldwork, I have been continuing to whittle smörkniv from wood wherever I find it and I have made a silver smörkniv, a 'samlasked' (gather spoon) and a 'detangaffel' (detangle fork). Through carving and crafting, our minds connect to our bodies and new understanding and ideas can form (Tim Ingold, 2013). These tools represent the craft's ability to detangle thoughts, spread knowledge and gather people.

Reference:

Ingold, T. (2013). *Knowing from the Inside, Making: Archaeology, Anthropology, Art and Architecture*. Routledge.

*Installation, Wood; birch from Höga Kusten, Sweden; honey locust and London plane found in London; eco silver
Variable size, 2023.
Image: Gini Dickinson, 2023.*

Frida Langseth

Hand-to-Hand

Inspired by the rocks from an old seabed and lichen-creating patterns on the rocks that I saw during our fieldwork in Umeå's Högklinten, I embarked on an art-based journey to incorporate nature's details into yarn dyeing and knitting. This project bridges tradition, culture and sustainability. The process begins with the collection of lichen and Scotch heather, emphasising the importance of mindful interaction with the environment. The act of colouring yarn with the involvement of my grandmother underscores the rich cultural heritage passed down through generations. Traditional methods, including dyeing by the bonfire, offer insights into the history and eco-friendly practices applicable in modern contexts. Knitting a pair of mittens from hand-dyed yarn symbolises the connection between past and present, celebrating self-sufficiency and cultural legacy. This harmonious blend of tradition, conservation and self-sufficiency honours the wisdom of forebears and shapes a sustainable future rooted in nature.

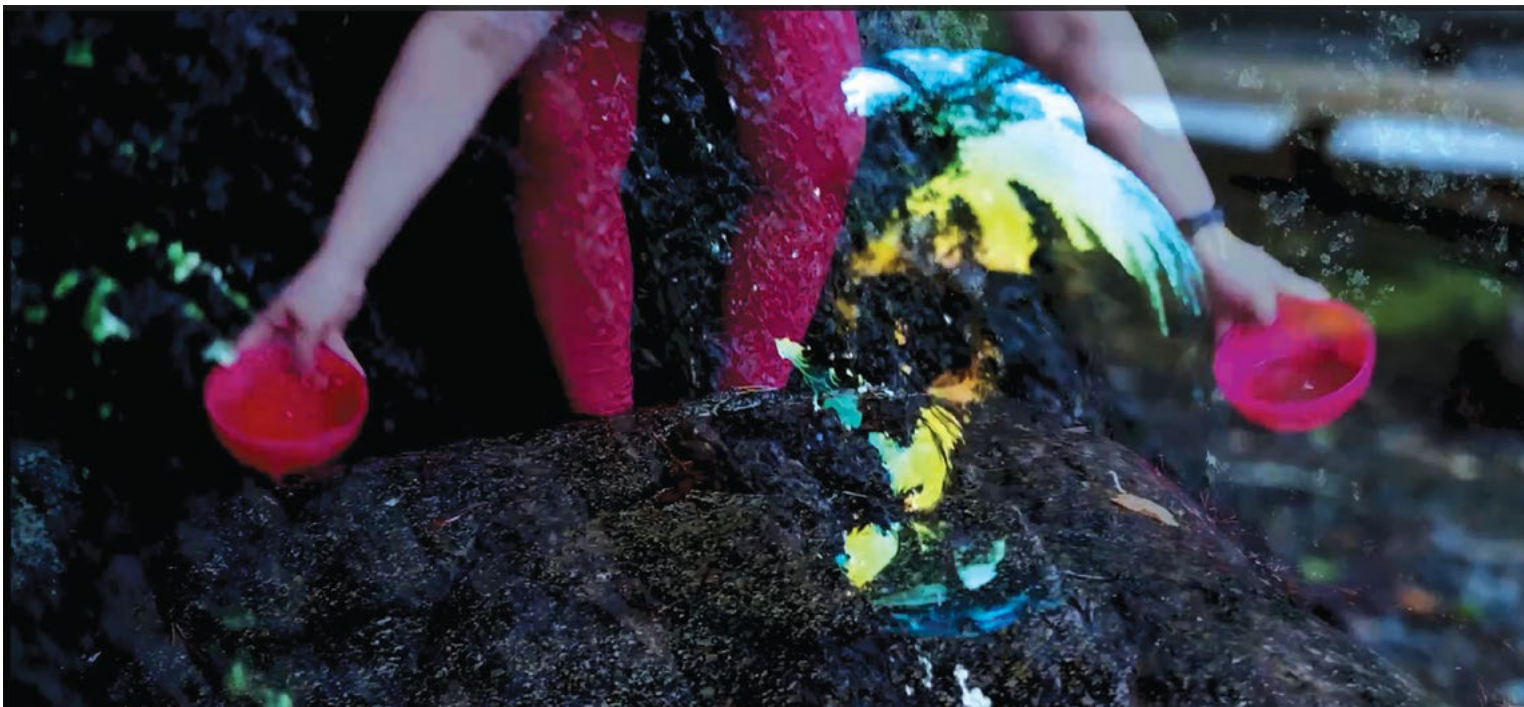
Throughout my artwork, I try to interweave themes of co-knowing and taskscape, emphasising the shared knowledge and collective effort that enrich the experience of connecting with nature and preserving cultural heritage.

*Knitted wool mittens, yarn coloured with lichen,
size small/medium, 2023.*

*Knitted wool mittens, yarn coloured with Scotch heather,
size small/medium, 2023.*

Image: Frida Langseth, 2023.





*Making Connections; Present Body, video 4:00, 2023.
Image: Mira Kemppainen and Heini Kankaro, 2023.*

Heini Kankaro & Kerriane Flett

Connections

Our collaboration started in LiLa's fieldwork week in Umeå when we met each other. We discovered that we both enjoyed performance art and working collaboratively. The use of colour is also an important element within our individual art practices. With these shared elements identified, and the 'new connections made MADders' was formed!

In the exhibition, both artists' videos are displayed side by side, viewed as one work comprised of components made by each half of the duo MADders, highlighting the dialogue between the artists, their landscapes and the shared connection formed during LiLa 2023.

In our work, you see two landscapes 'talking together' the way people interact with each other. Knowing when to be quiet is a challenge when it comes to virtual walks.



*Connecting; Present body, video 4:01, 2023.
Image: Trish Matthews and Kerriane Flett, 2023.*

Sometimes, the feeling of excitement is so intense that pausing when communicating proves difficult and interruptions happen. This is also true of our landscapes when they are in conversation. They also experience a language barrier; sometimes, both are silent and sometimes both speak. Communication at times proves difficult. To convey this visually, we have added pauses in the conversation, represented by pink block colour, which allows time for contemplation during occasionally busy conversation. Sometimes, during communication pauses, silence and time for consideration are as important as pace, movement and noise, creating a rhythmical experience akin to an in-person conversation. Important to the flow of the final work, the pink moments of contemplation also provide enduring symbolism, linking both to the MADder name and to issues surrounding feminism. The use of the pink colour became an important element in our individual videos and then in the combined final production, visually symbolising our 'connections' across many levels.

Jane Ronie

The Basket that became a Nest

If this nest could talk, it would have quite a story to tell. It would be a story of transition, of changing identity and purpose through the coming together of different people from different places. It would also be a story of reciprocity and community, perhaps a tale of an emerging social landscape formed through the process of its making.

This crocheted basket has been made with mainly wool, with inclusions of a variety of gifted materials that represent people, place and reciprocity.

As a nest, both visually and symbolically, it is the keeper of notes that are written reflections of participants of LiLa 2023. My perception of it as an artefact is the embodiment of our collective presence. Leaning on the words of Ingold (1993), it is a representation of the ‘temporality of the landscape’, one aspect of our shared ‘taskscape’ created during our time of ‘dwelling’ in Sweden.

‘There was Love in the Room’ is a film that accompanies the nest. It is a series of photographs showing the opening and reading of notes back in Scotland. This was my method of sharing this part of the process with my fellow LiLa participants, and it allowed everyone to read and consider each other’s experiences and memories of LiLa.

I treasure these words and memories. They come from people I care deeply about.

Reference:

Ingold, T. (1993). The temporality of the landscape. *World Archaeology*, 25(2), 152–174

*Nest (materials) wool (Icelandic Lettlopi Aran)
inclusions: wool, cloth, sheepskin, reindeer hide, birch bark
contents: notes written on paper.
150 x 150 x 100mm, 2023.
Film ‘There was Love in The Room’, 2023.
accessible by QR code in Visual Essay.
Image: Jane Ronie, 2023.*





*Mixed media painting on a wood piece
16 x 2.5 x 31 cm, 2023.
Image: Aybike Gül Karaoğlu, 2023.*

Aybike Gül Karaoğlu

Connecting with One of the Northern Landscapes

For several years, I have been doing research on anthropogenic pollution in natural resources such as rivers, sediments and soil. The natural resources of Earth are being severely affected because of anthropogenic effects, global warming, for example. Compared to the previous year, the temperature of the oceans was measured 1 degree higher, which affects all living beings detrimentally. Thus, waste management is also becoming increasingly important because the waste we produce emits greenhouse gases and this contributes to the rising temperature. Nature has been tolerating some of the pollution, and if it cannot, some parts of it will die.

In my artwork, I focused on expressing how the environment has changed from the past to what the situation may look like in the future if no action is taken. I portray an old Scandinavian threshing house surrounded by a beautiful natural landscape with healthy forest and reindeer. On the other side is an arid landscape with half-dead trees and no animals.

For this piece, I used mostly natural materials from the forest, such as mosses, cones and discarded cut wood pieces that I gathered from Västerbotten, Sweden during our fieldwork. In Istanbul, Türkiye, I gathered the bark of a palm tree trunk and a sheet of PVC foam I found.

Humans use all sources for ourselves, but more like our ancestors, we should care about and support nature. When we live in a city, we live in patterns and we do not pay enough attention to the nature that nourishes our souls. Because nature will somehow take back what has been taken from it, we must live in harmony with it, even understand it and become one with it.



Thuy Nguyen

A Dialogue of Landscape and Subconsciousness

*I love mountains.
It is Sun and Wind
The sound of the wind
A slice of peace
A drop of happiness
I cry and smile.
Listen to the silence.
There is an inner voice.
Without silhouette*

Once, a visitor came into my studio where he looked at my paintings, and before leaving, he said, “It is so lonely”. I was a bit surprised and looked at the paintings again. I agree with him, but not totally. I feel warmth, love and excitement; it could come from a tiny flower, a yellow brushstroke, or even several tiny dots hidden in the green mountain. I might have been a recluse in the past; I do not know. However, colours or images are merely devices that connect my soul to landscapes. They are silent, peaceful dialogues.

*Painting, Water color on Do paper.
60x120cm 2023.
Image: Thuy Nguyen, 2023.*





Claude Goffeney

Delicacy

In this artistic statement, I present the way of thinking in pastry art as a short-lived art form in a composition of forest materials by context transfer. Time and space are inevitably interwoven and connected (Ingold, 1993) as the materials I collected represent different stages and steps during the calendar year. After the process of building up my artwork with carefully selected elements and then combining them with an association of contrast and harmony, I decided to relocate my artwork and bring it back to a cultural setting so that it would not be degraded outside. I have focused on structures, layers, consistencies and colours. My taskscape represents the co-existence of the very moment and the cyclic movement of time during a year in the forest. How will this composition affect and challenge our way of thinking about art across disciplines?

Reference:

Ingold, T. (1993). The temporality of the landscape. *World Archaeology*, 25(2), 152–174

Composed of forest materials collected during LiLa Summer School 2023.

16 × 8 × 8 cm, 2023.

Image: Claude Goffeney, 2023.



Roxane Permar

Windlins

The definition of what constitutes a forest is complicated. This film attempts to imagine the idea of the forest for Shetland, a place where the landscape is treeless. It considers the forest as an idea, an experience of loss and renewal, a metaphor, and an image, as in a large number of vertical or tangled objects, such as a forest of sails and masts carried by fishing boats once visible around Shetland's natural harbours or the dense mass of the newly constructed forest of 103 wind turbines looming over Shetland's north-central mainland today. It is an invitation to look, to see, to listen and to hear, to discover the world around us, to retrieve knowledge and culture lost with the disappearance of forests in Scotland and Shetland, to better understand the forest and to learn how to overcome a fear of the forest and be able to be within it. The duality of loss and renewal is embedded in the word 'windling' or 'windlin' in the Shetlaen language. It is a bundle of grasses, a sign of both end and beginning, of hope and renewal, as the hay has been harvested and then secured in a bundle for positive, productive use. In dialect, however, it can also mean something that is torn off by the wind.

*Digital film, looped 00:06:00 mins, 2023.
Images: Roxane Permar, 2023.*





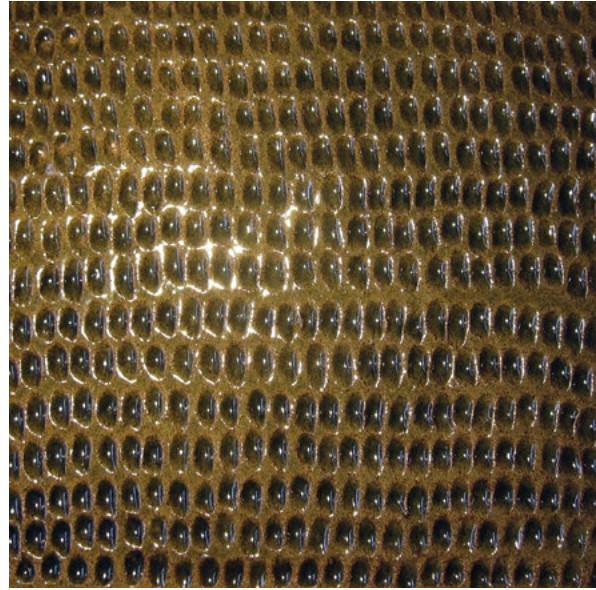
Lotta Lundstedt

Skogen I

Forestry based on monocultures and clear-cutting dominates Swedish forests today. It may seem wonderful when these forests are more structured and tidier, but it makes them more sensitive. Rich diversity makes nature more resistant to changes, such as climate change and extremer weather. Ecosystem-based forests contain decaying plant parts and new tree seedlings, where several species of plants and animals have the opportunity to flourish.

In the Swedish forest today, we see a greater spread of the monocultural forest than before, which worries me, especially in the area around the High Coast, where I spend a lot of my recreation time. In this work, Skogen I, I wanted to highlight how a more structured forest must coexist with a wilder one. From detailed and zoomed-in photographs from this area, I have created patterns for embroidery, knitting and ceramics.

*Installation, Textile and ceramics.
Variable size, 2023.
Image: Lotta Lundstedt, 2023.*





Mari Parpala

Living in the Landscape Together

The fieldwork week of the Living in the Landscape summer school gathered master's and doctoral students and university staff from almost all over the world to study and explore the landscape. This year, the destination was Sweden, more precisely Umeå and High Coast. My role during the week varied from IT support to janitor, so there was no time to plan the actual artwork and gather material for it. I focused on documenting the work of others and watching from the sidelines what kind of community and what kinds of projects were developed during this fieldwork week.

During the week, the group formed a close-knit community like a small family. Shared meals, snack breaks, art moments, small tinkering and shared experiences bring content and meaning to landscape research. When there is space and time to get to know each other, get attached and be present, one becomes more deeply committed to the matter. This is also the case with the environment and a landscape because when we find it meaningful, we want to take care of it. I hope this photobook opens the idea of LiLa's fieldwork week for others and brings warm memories to the participants.

*Photo book,
21× 29,7 cm, 2023.
Image: Mari Parpala, 2023.*

Katri Pyy

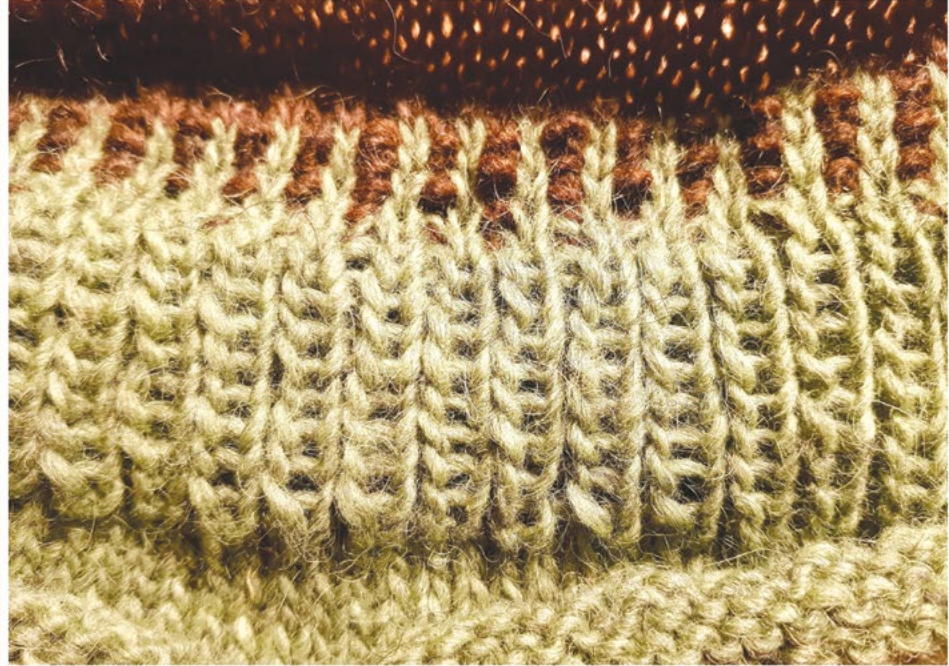
Retired Birch

Finnish nature wakes up from its hibernation in Lapland very late in spring, and its colourful life of flora is enjoyed only for a short period. In my taskscape, I wanted to explore the possibilities of extracting natural dyes in watercolour form. I combine two long-standing speciality traditions: the tradition of paint-making and the tradition of natural dyeing.

Whilst gathering my paint materials, I had a connection with a landscape I did not have before. The actions of dwelling in the forest felt meditative and calming. I started to notice many small organisms that you normally just walk by. Most eye-catching for me was the end stages of decaying wood, as many mushrooms and polypore organisms overran the surface of the wood.

*Watercolour painting,
42 × 42 cm, 2023.
Image Annika Kokko, 2023.*





Katrin H. Sten

Perks of the Anthill

When hiking in a forest, berry or mushroom picking, it becomes clear that humans are not the only ones foraging among the trees. By looking at the ants and their taskscape; their nests, pathways and manners of organising their society; building anthills, caring for their brood, harvesting and collecting food – it is obvious that ants can teach us a lesson or two. Through my process of focusing on the anthill, I have been using the concept of mimicry—in other words, what nature can teach us about the design process, not seldomly with sustainability as a goal.

The shape of an anthill is like the traditional poncho; hence, I have elaborated on the poncho to mimic the ants' nest, not only through shape but through functions such as climate control and durability. Knitting as a technique resembles how the ants construct the façade from the bottom and up and the chosen material, unspun wool, has the same qualities as wigs, pine and spruce needles, cone seeds and smaller leaves that compose the sturdy façade of the nest keeping it dry, ventilates but also isolates the inner parts and most important can easily be repaired if needed.

*Knitted, felted and embroidered wool, amber
80 cm x30-70cm, 2023.
Photocollage: Katrin H. Sten, 2023.*

Ezgi Tanrıverdi

Familiarity with the Unknown

My work focuses on perception, what we find familiar and unfamiliar and what is beyond the understanding of these concepts. The “Uncanny Self” workshop held on LiLa field trip, and my findings of the safe places, were combined as a starting point to investigate how we perceive the place and how it changes in our unconscious mind.

The journey of creating the artwork blends finding my purpose in a place, letting a landscape shape my ideas and using other people’s imaginations and thoughts as a catalyst. Just like how the workshop was about putting others into an experience to explore the unfamiliar and familiar, I was having my own uncanny experiences during the creation of the work, as my own art wasn’t my safe place anymore, because now it had become invaded by other’s minds and imaginations:

*The feeling of time and space is lost in the forest,
I am no longer in the space with my own mind but with the “other”
a space that is already unknown, strange and unfamiliar,
I have no more of my reliable conscious mind, now the other guides me,
now I am the other and my guide is the other*

*Textile sculpture.
Fabric, polyester filling, yarn, plastic canvas, 2023.*







Diana Hamilton

Between

I have struggled with my sense of self and identity in the world of artists and makers. As an educator and facilitator of art and creative practice, I have always found myself in the middle, shying away from identifying more fully as an artist. Always facilitating or teaching others to develop their own practice whilst never settling on a practice or finishing any work of my own. Always between other young artists or makers; inspiring, encouraging and supporting. More recently, however, I have located a better 'place' for my sense of creative self as connections to more local environments and landscapes have become more meaningful.

Living in a place of natural beauty for 20 years, I realised that I had become somewhat "blind" to it. I decided to revisit my landscape and learn from it, allowing it to inform my developing practice as informed by place. Working with my sense of residual memory to create artwork using reusable materials and found objects to reimagine landscapes, I attempt to preserve a sense of place, space and time in my work. Using traditional crafts such as weaving, papermaking and embroidery allows me to explore my roots in unique and personal ways that involve me carrying on the traditions of my mother and grandmother whilst also responding to the creative and craft heritage of my local place.

Watersource, Mixed Media 30cm x 30cm, 2023.

Aidan J. Andrew

Comforting Crossroads

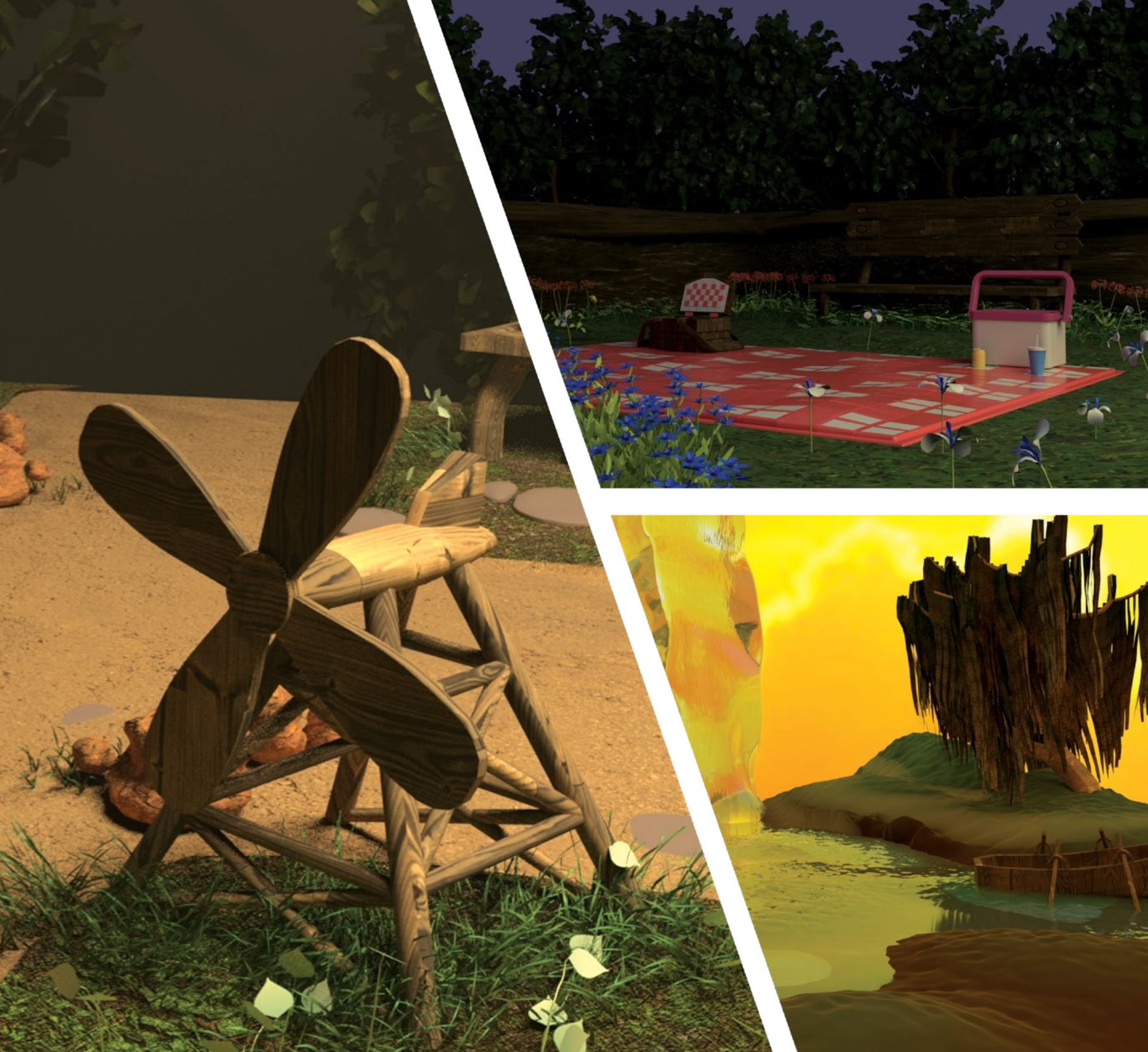
Forests always create a mystical atmosphere for me. The small spots and hideaways I find on the paths I experience can mean more than the grandest of vistas. Comforting Crossroads is a 3D environment rendered in a style that reflects the childlike experience of finding and exploring nature that initially inspired this work.

Through LiLa, I came to better understand my taskscape, drawing connections between my creative headspace, and the forest landscapes that I surround myself with for inspiration and comfort. Creating with a digital medium is inherently disconnected from the natural world, and knowing this helped create new connections, a bridge between the inspiration of the real world, and the imagination of the imaginary. Both the natural world and my work can share in the idea of co-creation, particularly in the forest where animals and plant life grow together, and the wind and water co-exist with the land.

While creating this piece, I wanted each element to pay tribute to a different piece of the puzzle that, to me, makes up a forest. The windmill represents the wind through the canopies and the blowing fields of grass, whilst the well in the background aims to draw connections to water and the mystical groves in which these landscape elements are portrayed.

*A 3D Environment Render, created using Autodesk Maya,
Displayed as Still, 1080p, 2023.
Image: Aidan, J. Andrew, 2023.*







Viktig

SURRANDE, kravlande,

Värdefull

Saara Lappeteläinen

Greetings from Ecosocial Services

I participated in LiLa with many emotions and thoughts in me. In my usual taskscape, I was experiencing anxiety and I felt frustrated about the disconnection between myself and the organisms surrounding me. I wasn't feeling the giving and getting, and there was a lack of action.

During our week in Sweden, I was hoping to find connection, agency and hope in the new landscape. My approach to this was to closely investigate and experience with the whole body and all the senses. I tried to see, feel and understand all the little things that we were surrounded with. After focusing on the details and finding thoughts and emotional connections there, I started to imagine all the vital things in the landscape that we cannot see with our eyes.

We get so much from our surrounding world (ecosystem services) on which we completely rely. Everything is intertwined and the line between us and the other beings is not really there. With my work, I wanted to somehow visualise the agency of nature that is often overlooked by us whilst roaming in the landscape. This also aims to be a reminder on behalf of those who have no voice we can hear. Without ecosystems, there are no social systems.

*Watercolour paintings with collage.
5 x 11,5cm x 14,5cm, 2023.
Image: Saara Lappeteläinen, 2023.*

Susannah Rose

A Birch pillow of care

My work is an exploration of sensory encounter with the birch tree in Scotland and Sweden. I used the processes of tapping birch sap and dyeing with birch bark as a method of co – knowing, paying attention to the language of the tree through interactivity.

In an intermingling of ecological and geographical influences I added water to birch bark from Sweden and birch collected from a tree felled by beavers in Scotland. The bark released colour as I heated it and the cloth changed from white to a warmer delicate pink.

The pillow I have sewn from the cloth dyed with birch is a call to care, for the precarity of forests as ecosystems adapt to climate change. It is an invitation to pause and rest, to smell the scent of the forest and by doing so reconsider our relationship with the forest.

The birch tree is a pioneer species: the first to take root after the ice retreats. The boreal forest will be the last forest on earth. Human induced climate change is causing rising temperatures and, in the Arctic the treeline is moving north shrinking the tundra. In Scotland it may become too warm for birch to flourish.

The pillow is made from linen dyed with Birch bark. It is filled with moss and lichen gathered beneath the beams of birch trees in Scotland. The birch trees grow along the edges of the oak wood and the moss gathered there is imagined as protective layer in the pillow.

Birch pillow of care. Birch bark dyed linen. Moss, Lichen.

50cm x 34cm, 2023.

Image: Susannah Rose, 2023.





Trish Matthews

The Forest Library

The Forest Library is an inclusive, intergenerational literacy and well-being project. It endeavours to reconnect the Northern Forests through the creation of contemporary folk tales that highlight the importance of our native trees and forests to the health of our planet. Each story is centred around different native trees from the Gaelic Tree Alphabet and is made into bespoke, handmade books.

One copy was made for the Forest Library and one for each of the storymakers. The finished stories are shared and exchanged with other Northern Forest communities to help inspire climate action and travel inside wooden snow-bunting boxes or story boxes. The snow bunting is a bird mainly found in the tundra areas, but it also visits parts of Northern Scotland during the winter. In folklore, it symbolises hope and new beginnings.

The story box on display contains pioneer tree stories written and exchanged between the Highlands of Scotland and participants from LiLa. Nearby are a selection of story gifts in envelopes. If you would like to take one away to share with someone, please take one.

If you have time, we would love to know where it has travelled to and if it has made you think more positively about trees or even if it has inspired any acts of kindness to nature.

*Upcycled wooden drawers hand painted in acrylics by
Trish Matthews with 3D mixed media drawer scenes
inserts made from recycled materials 2023.*

62 cm x 30 cm x 12 cm

Image: Trish Matthews, 2023.







Visual Essays

Image: Mari Parpala, 2023.

Mauragh Scott

Gathering Thoughts on Dwelling

“Is it possible to find a dwelling, a place within the world, while moving across it?” (Dean & Millar, 2005, p. 149).



Figure 1. 'y bend wood'. Figure 2. 'smooth wood'. Figure 3. 'collection'. Collecting wood in Northern Argyll and Bute. Images: Mauragh Scott, 2023.

Collecting Materials in Northern Argyll and in Bute, Scotland

Wandering a pebbled beach that lined Loch Linnhe in the Scottish Highlands, a place I once called home, I took in the vast amounts of driftwood, fishing nets and seaweed that had swept onto the shore and lay around

my feet. Along the walk, I gathered the materials that caught my eye, considering the history of each object and the journey it had taken to arrive here. Once I had reached the other side of the beach, I came to realise that my bounty was comprised solely of wood – wood from nearby fencing, wood that had washed up along

the shore, and wood that people had brought with them and burnt for a campfire. All this wood has its own past, its true origins unknown, but it came together on the shoreline, creating a collective present here.

Collecting the wood on this beach made me recall earlier memories of traversing the forestry tracks two miles away up the mountainside from this shoreline. The dead tree stumps lining the landscape act as a symptom of this place's long history, with wood as a commodity. The long history of wood in this landscape reminded me of Tim Ingold's (1993) concept of a 'dwelling perspective.' Ingold explains that landscape "can be an enduring record of – and testimony to – the lives and works of past generations who have dwelt within, and in doing so, have left something there something of themselves" (Ingold, 1993, p. 152). Therefore, to have a dwelling perspective is to perform the practice of remembering the landscape (Ingold, 1993).

Walking along this beach, I found myself wondering if wood could be the tool I used to help me embody this perspective. As wood is a medium that can transcend the social boundaries of time, it is a medium that can store time within it. In one way or another, wood and time mix together, providing the perfect tool for me to understand the temporality of the landscape within which I find myself.

As I no longer live in this landscape, my mind wondered about the future landscapes I would explore throughout this summer school. I hoped that this dwelling perspective would come with me to more unknown places that I would visit only temporarily. I hoped that I

could embody the driftwood I found on this beach that day – wood that had travelled from far away but now sat as comfortable inhabitants of their new landscape.

Finding Materials in Rotsidan, Nordingra, Sweden

Arriving at the windswept section of forest land that steadily transitioned from vibrant pine trees to the harsher rocky coastline of Rotsidan, I felt dumbfounded at how I could attempt to find some dwelling in this environment completely new to myself. I wandered for a long time, looking for a place to sit but unsure of where I could place my feet, wary of disturbing something unknown to me.



Figure 4. 'mybase'. Figure 5 'globesofmoss'. My carving base and surroundings in Rotsidan, Images: Mauragh Scott, 2023.

As I did before, I gathered materials as I walked and again found myself carrying only wood. Taking the time to feel the textures and weight of each piece in my hands,



Figure 6. 'rotsidan'. My carving base and surroundings in Rotsidan, Image: Mauragh Scott, 2023.

I slowly realised the small similarities between this landscape and my previous well-worn landscape: the sound of waves from afar, the lichen that clung to the side of branches and the roughness of the bark.

This action of noticing allowed me to form a relationship with the environment around me. As I continued to observe the occasional resemblances to my home landscape, a sensation of uncanniness washed over me. The uncanny can be described as “dwell[ing] at the hinge of that which is familiar and unfamiliar, homely and unhomely, natural and supernatural or unnatural” (Mitchell & Petty, 2020, p. 404). At this moment in time, I felt suspended between two places—two histories.

Sparked by inspiration from a carved wooden doll I saw exhibited in the Västerbotten museum in Umeå the day before, I wanted to carve a figure out of the wood

that I had found as a way to root with and respond to the landscape around me. This practice of working with the wood I found, through carving, slowly made my feelings of apprehension fade away and the sounds of the forest around me gave me ease instead of suspicion as it had done previously.

As I carved a figure in the wood, I found myself not just feeling but remembering the wood, learning the knots and grains within it that would block or aid my blade's path. This also became a process of personal remembering, as I learnt and continued to learn this skill from others (including those on the trip with me). Carving became an embodied practice of re-

membering.

Time passed around me as I carved, and I wondered about the doll I had seen the day before and the new life that wood could be given after being collected and carved into new forms. This repetitive action of spending time in an environment and forming knowledge of its qualities allowed me to conduct a small act of dwelling in a landscape so unknown to myself. Once my time was up here and I had to continue my journey, I found myself disappointed in leaving this landscape and the seat I had carved out for myself.

Conclusion

Gathering wood, whether from the forest floor or the seashore, has become an action of remembering, a way forming a dwelling perspective. Each piece I gather carries with it a history and a connection to the land and those who have inhabited it. By carving it, I reflect on

and create relations with a landscape I am within.

Ultimately, these two experiences have been fundamental experiences that have helped me create my art-based approach to landscape investigation. I look forward to continuing my relationship with wood as a tool to dwell in the landscape.



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Figure 7. 'contemplating'. Figure 8. 'starting to carve'. *Beginning to carve in Rotsidan, Images: Mauragh Scott, 2023.*

Mairi Summers

Trees and Stones

This year I became the tenant of a croft in the area where I live. A croft is an area of agricultural land and crofting is a system of land tenure unique to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. Over the past year my research has focused on hyper local relationship with land in the context of crofting in the area where I live, with a particular focus on my relationship with my croft land.



The theme for LiLa this year is ‘forests’ and although Scotland has lost most of its ancient forests, we still have some areas of precious woodland. One of these areas borders my croft, it’s an area of coastal temperate rain-forest, a rare habitat named Càrnach, a Scottish Gaelic word meaning ‘place of stones’.

It is thought that this woodland once extended over the land that is now designated as crofts, over the croft that I now tenant. On the croft there are many piles of stones – land clearance cairns – formed when people were preparing the land for growing crops or grazing animals, many years ago. I have been told that smaller stones would be piled on top of large stones that were too difficult to move. These land clearance cairns now provide habitat for myriad beings.

*Figure 1. Càrnach woodland,
Image: Mairi Summers, 2023.*



*Figure 2. A clearance cairn on mycroft.
Image: Mairi Summers, 2023.*

During the summer school visit to Umeå, the curators of the Västerbottens Museum shared a translated excerpt from 'Bilder från den stora flyttningen' by photographer Sune Jonsson. Jonsson had visited areas where the forestry industry had recruited people to move north and work in the industry and were given areas of land on which to sustain their families. When all the trees were logged the industry moved elsewhere, stranding these families. Jonsson speaks to one such Västerbotten 'small-time farmer' who had visited Långsele and seen that

people there were not harvesting the fields:

"When I asked why they did not cut them they answered that there was no money in it. They should have come here and seen the rock piles that we had to pile up by hand. Piling them up has been back breaking work! If they would have seen them, they would probably have understood that it would be worth it. This has never been a place of milk and honey. If they too would have been forced to work their fingers to the bone, they would probably have thought that it was really worth the effort to bring in the barley. It was as yellow as gold. It billowed against the sky." (Jonsson 1964)

The parallels of the efforts exerted by those who cleared the crofts of stones struck me as I could feel the anger and pain in this man's testimony. I began to understand more deeply the labour required to live off the land and the need people had to clear these small areas of land of stones and trees, not for profit but for survival.

My interest in stones and trees grew, and during the field trip visit to Rotsidan, an area of coastal woodland, I gathered rubbings/frottage from several places, on a large sheet of paper which I had divided into sections by folding, much like a map. This was more for the practicality of travelling with a large sheet of paper but in the process, it has taken on significance as a record of my encounters as I explored the area.

I've been interested in Tim Ingold's notion of correspondence with materials for some time. He writes, "Correspondence is about togetherness" (Ingold 2017: 41) and during the morning in Rotsidan, I aimed to develop a sense of intimacy with this unfamiliar place. Using graphite, I took rubbings of four different stones and four different trees. Pressing and rubbing brings an intimacy with the material, physically close, touch and the quality of pressure, seeing close-up detail, catching a scent.



*Figure 3.. Graphite frottage at Rotsidan,
Image: Mari Parpala, 2023.*

In my practice I am focusing more and more on what I think of as ‘attentional practices’, - activities which attune my perception to being both outward and inward simultaneously. Somehow holding the space between, as one might in a daydream. This quality of attention brings me into a ‘togetherness’ (Ingold 2017) with other. It is a difficult balance, and hard to express since it is an intangible process. In this instance I was using the process of frottage as a method of staying within that attentional space.

Another day, we followed blue way-markers up Högklinten mountain to see extraordinary, raised cobble fields high amongst the trees. The journey up drew my focus to the summit; the heat of the day, the effort involved, the unknown distance, all caused me to press on upwards. I found myself reflecting on how my creative attention was congested by these various stresses.



Figure 4. Graphite frottage on Scots Pine tree. Figure 5. Detail of ants on Scots Pine bark. Figure 6. Completed frottage map, four from stone, four from tree. Images: Mairi Summers, 2023.

On the descent I felt playful and free to explore. Along with others, I came across beautiful trails from bark beetle larvae on a fallen Scot's pine tree. Again, I used frottage to pick up the marks. There's a parallel in the process of rubbing and the larvae tracks, a feeling the way forward and something of staying in the moment. I used the blue of the trail markers to create improvised embossed prints using water from my bottle to soften the paper into the grooves and pick up the watercolour pencil.

Perhaps these are my trail-markers for land-based practice – a trail of the instinctual, attentive, and responsive. A call to become more present and attuned; as Ingold (2013) might put it, “a process of active following”.

These encounters with stones and trees invite me to attend to how I interact with the croft land. I look at the land clearance cairns differently now, with more appreciation of the effort required in their formation.

Since returning from the field trip, my focus has been on making space for myself on the croft, constructing a workshop that will be a base for further land-based activities and practice-led explorations. I am considering planting native trees on the part of the croft littered with clearance cairns; I believe I can create a balance between honouring the labours of previous crofters, whilst also restoring some of the woodland that used to exist there by growing trees from seeds gathered in Càrnach.

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Figure 7. Bark beetle larvae trail patterns.
Image: Mairi Summers, 2023.

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Trish Matthews

Reconnecting the Northern Forests Through Stories, Wisdom and Creativity

How can socially engaged storytelling help reveal our own innate wisdom?

Stories can be powerful tools. I've worked with stories for many years now and often used them as vehicles to explore sensitive and emotive topics. Each time, they adapt themselves to whatever is needed and serve their purpose well. One of the interesting features of stories is their ability to have lives of their own. Psychologist and mythologist Sharon Blackie adds that sometimes stories can even seem to conspire with you to subvert the 'official' meaning so that the story presents itself to the recipient in another way.

I have been influenced by the work of Diana Beresford Kroeger and Robin Wall Kimmerer, who combine their scientific knowledge with their indigenous knowledge and heritage. Both have campaigned that we have so much to learn from trees, plants and the non-human world. Each tree and plant makes its own unique contribution to the forest community.

I am increasingly concerned about the deforestation of our native forests and our disconnection from the natural world. Through LiLa, I was reminded that Scotland has lost 99% of the ancient native pine forests that connect us to the Northern Forest biome. During the

early part of the LiLa programme, some of us based in Scotland went out in search of a few of the tiny fragments that remained, and we became very aware of the loss. Alongside the loss of forest, much of our forest culture has disappeared, along with the close connection we once had with our native trees, whereas it was clear from the LiLa seminars that it was still intact and surviving in many of the other Northern Forest countries.

For LiLa, I have used stories to look at the importance of native trees and forests through the creation of contemporary folk tales. The stories needed to speak both for the individual trees and the forest environment and our old forest culture, so are based around the 18 native trees of the mysterious and ancient Gaelic Tree Alphabet, starting with eight of the pioneer trees.

I designed the tree story kits to incorporate other Northern Forest ingredients, including folklore characters, proverbs, snippets from old folk tales, forest dilemmas and even magic props. The kits help stimulate imagination and enchantment. According to Blackie, access to a good imagination is important, as it can help with problem-solving through many of life's challenges.



Figures 1 and 2. Opened and closed story kits. Images: Trish Matthews, 2023.

The first stories were created and shared in Scotland with different groups and individuals, but it was LiLa that provided the perfect platform for the first international story exchange to take place, sending the stories travelling to Norway, Sweden, Finland and Turkey.

Most of the Forest Library stories started their lives in a forest setting, but being able to help facilitate the LiLa tales from the top of an ancient forest made them particularly poignant. By the time we reached the summit at Högklinten, we had already immersed ourselves in the benefits of a forest environment for over an hour, enabling the first stage of story writing to be very focused. The stories then continued to evolve slowly over the following days (see figure 3, p.72).

I am not a traditional storyteller as such—my work is more about the process of finding and creating our own contemporary stories, then seeing where the stories take us. From the discussions that took place during story writing and exchange, both the experience of being in the forest (or the recreation of a forest ambiance) and

the story-making process often seemed to have something of a transformative effect.

Sometimes, the stories help build a more balanced connection to nature by enabling people to see the forest from different viewpoints. This could be seen through some of the elements and non-human ingredients of the story – e.g., through the eyes of the mischief-maker, the tree or the other forest creatures that were chosen to feature in the story. The stories enabled people to explore difficult themes safely in a gentle way that brought more clarity, but they sometimes also tapped into other, more personal issues that needed help resolving. Clearly, the stories were not just guiding us to a better understanding of the natural world; they were also tapping into personal issues that needed help with resolving, too (see Figure 4, p.72).

The Lost Museum follows the Scandinavian natural blueprint model regarding human interaction with nature, i.e., by first getting people into nature to experience it, then observing it, and then starting to understand the



*Figure 3. Writing stories at Högklinten.
Image: Trish Matthews, 2023.*



Figure 4. Illustration from Gold Fever story by Katri, Saara and Kerrienne; artwork. Image: Trish Matthews, 2023.

importance of the natural world. These positive experiences can help everyone learn how man affects nature and can then be used as building blocks towards conservation and sustainable living.

The story workshops were intended as a catalyst for inspiring climate action. Once the stories were completed and given back to the participants, the story makers were asked to give something back to nature as a token of gratitude and respect for the abundance of gifts that we take and receive from the forest. Reciprocity has been an important ingredient in the Forest Library. The stories form part of a reciprocal cycle by being gifts to the story maker, the Forest Library and the audience that receives the story. The experience of the story workshop then inspires the gift back to the forest.

A story is never read or told the same way—each time it is shared, it will likely be a different experience for the audience and the storyteller. Part of the joy of the project

is sharing the stories but also hearing about the journeys they have been on. For example, *The Enchanted Holly Forest*, written by children in the Highlands of Scotland, travelled all the way to LiLa and then to the Nesna school in Norway. There is great excitement when the news of stories reaches back to the storymakers.

Pioneer trees help by preparing the ground and paving the way for other trees and new growth. The pioneer tree stories that emerged helped pave the way ahead for story exchange with our Northern Forest neighbours and inspired small acts of climate action. The project is still in its early stages, but already several have started to give back something to the forest either by planting trees, volunteering at community woodlands or simply by helping create a more wildlife-friendly garden.

“Mighty oaks from little acorns grow.” (14th Century old English proverb).



Figure 5. Emmelin Øwre Lyngås at LiLa receiving *The Enchanted Holly Forest* story by Rosehall primary school. Image: Trish Matthews, 2023. Figure 6. Nesna Primary School, Norway with Rosehall's book, Image: Emmelin Øwre Lyngås 2023. Figure 7: Rosehall Primary School, Scotland at their Forest Library launch. Image: Rosehall Primary School, 2022.

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Annika Kokko

Landscape as a Timekeeper

During the Living in the Landscape spring school, I became more interested in my surroundings than I had previously been. My interest grew while I read articles, took part in discussions during seminars and spent a lot of time in nature. While dwelling in different landscapes, I started to notice different shapes and details around me. That got me inspired to investigate different forms of the landscape more closely. I decided to narrow my research to contain only the forms of forests. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2023), form means the shape and structure of something as distinguished from its material. It can include shapes, lines, textures and details. I used an art-based research method to discover more about the different forms that can be found in forests. I chose to use clay as my research tool. My task was to find out what the forest wants to tell me by its forms. I started my investigation in the High Coast area of Sweden during our fieldwork week and continued my research back in my hometown Rovaniemi, Finland.

The Theory Behind My Practice

According to Ingold (2002), landscape is what you see

*Figure 1. Making the first piece on the High Coast, Sweden.
Image: Saara Lappeteläinen, 2023.*



all around when you are standing outside: a contoured and textured surface replete with diverse objects – living and non-living, natural and artificial. In a landscape, each component enfolds within its essence the totality of its relations with the other (Ingold, 2002). In my art-based research, I was interested in investigating these contoured and textured surfaces in a landscape and how they have formed into their current shape in collaboration with living and non-living things. Ingold (2002) emphasised that a landscape forms in the process of time and life cycles. Landscapes are always in the process of changing (Ingold, 2002).

I chose art-based research as my research method because, by using art, I can obtain an interesting and experiential way to do my research. According to McNiff (2007), art-based research can be defined as the systematic use of the artistic process – the actual making of artistic expressions in all the different forms of art – as a primary way of understanding and examining during a research process. Art can have many different roles and it can be used in several stages of the research (McNiff, 2007). In my research, art is a way of collecting data and presenting my results.

The Process of Printing Forms of the Forest

My research process ended up being a very physical task. I carried my research tool, clay, with me while wandering around the forests. I had many kilos of clay in my backpack as well as some tools such as a rolling pin and a knife. In addition to these, I carried a few wooden boards to put underneath the clay artworks so I could carry them back from the forest.

My process began on the High Coast. While I was wandering around the forest and walking by the sea, I paid close attention to the shapes, details and textures I saw around me. When I found particularly interesting forms, I laid a piece of clay onto them and pressed



Figure 2. Image: Saara Lappeteläinen, 2023.

Figure 3. Image: Annika Kokko, 2023.



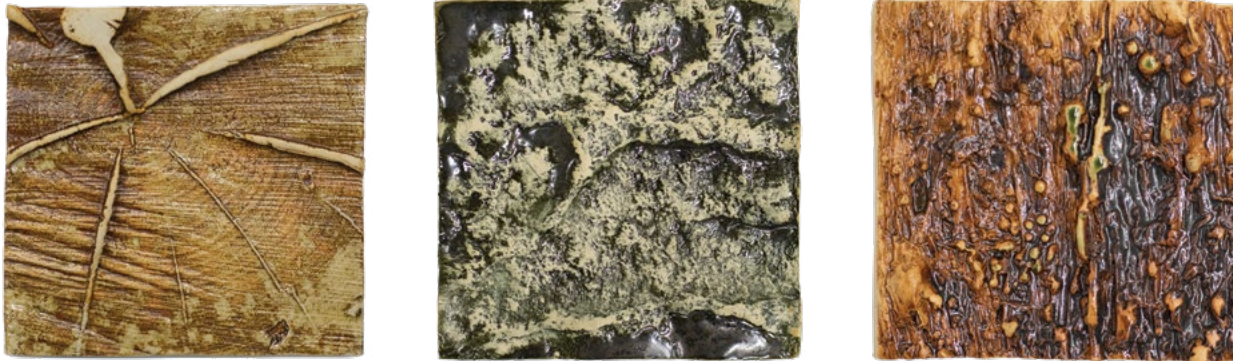


the surface into the clay. I continued this process when I got back home. I wandered in the forests of Rovaniemi, seeking all kinds of forms that could be found from the ground, trees, stones and so on. I continued my process throughout the summer and spent a lot of time dwelling in nature. At the end of the summer, I had multiple pieces of clay tiles that contained imprints of surfaces from different forest landscapes.

I finished the tiles in my university's art studio. I cut all of them to be the same size and made some final touches on them. After that, I left them to dry for a few weeks. When they had completely dried, I fired them in a kiln, glazed them and fired them again. Finally, I selected a collection of six tiles to be in the final art piece and hung them on a wooden board.

*Figure 4. Process. Figure 5. Clay tiles in the process of drying.
Image: Annika Kokko, 2023.*





Figures 6. Images: Annika Kokko, 2023.

Conclusion

While I was investigating the forms of different living and non-living things that I found from the forest, I realised that I was able to see the history of the landscape. I realised that I was able to see boundless amounts of signs that time, animals and people have left in the landscape. Ingold (2002) indicated that the forms of a landscape are generated by movement; however, these forms are congealed in a solid medium. A landscape is the most solid appearance in which history can declare itself. Thanks to their solidity, features of a landscape remain available for inspection long after the movements that gave rise to them have ceased (Ingold, 2002). Through my art-based research using clay as my research tool, I was able to experience this phenomenon in a very concrete and meaningful way. Ingold emphasised that a landscape changes – and change is itself an intrinsic aspect of our experience of landscape (Ingold, 2002). During my art-making process, I was able to truly see and feel the landscape like Ingold had described it – as a never-ending process, always changing.

Imagine a film of the landscape, shot years, centuries, even millennia. Slightly speeded up, plants appear to engage in very animal-like movements, trees flex their limbs without any prompting from the winds. Speeded up rather more, glaciers flow like rivers and even the earth begins to move. At yet greater speeds solid rock bends, buckles and flows like molten metal. Thus the rhythmic pattern of activity for all so-called living things, which nests within the life-process of the world. (Ingold, 2002, p. 201)

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Susannah Rose

Birch Encounters

My initial question when joining the LiLa fieldwork in Umeå was how I could connect my experience of the forest “where I live” in Scotland to the forest in Sweden. While researching the geography and history of Umeå, I came across information about the fire in Umeå in 1888 and the subsequent planting of over 5,000 birch trees to protect the city from fire. Birch trees contain 50% water (Sindu, 2018). The story gave me a branch to grasp onto, and the birch tree became the connecting thread between Scotland and Sweden.



My artistic practice is concerned with human and more-than-human interactions. As Ingold suggests, “dwelling in the world, we do not act upon it, nor do we do things to it, rather we move along with it” (2000, p. 201)

With the forest as a focus, my attention was drawn to the senses and how the smell and taste of a forest can connect us to subconscious memory and knowledge and invoke care. Haskel suggests:

“Aroma arrives in our bodies first, as deeply felt bodily remembrance and affect. Our brains later add a veneer of language and conscious perception, but this is literally an afterthought” (2023, p. 109).

Birch Encounters – Scotland

In Scotland, only 1% of our ancient forest remains (Trees for Life, 2023). I felt shock and grief for the loss of our native woodlands.

In our LiLa seminars, we learnt about the rich forest culture of the Arctic North through conversations with artists who still had generational links and knowledge of practices of indigenous Sami culture. It made me realise how much has been lost in Scotland – our forest culture had disappeared with the forest.

*Figure 1. Tapping for birch sap. Discovering my taskscape through interactivity. Listening for the rising sap with a stethoscope.
Image: Susannah Rose, 2023.*

As Rawlence said, “Our place has always been at the edge of the forest, with a relationship to it” (2002, p. 98).

I tapped birch trees for sap in my garden and the forest near my home – sharing with friends the gift from the tree and the new energy of spring. I felt enlivened while foraging moss from the forest floor beneath the birch trees and drying it. Walking in the forest, I collected chips from a birch tree felled by a “beaver”. I then wove a ball of birch chips and honeysuckle. Beavers were reintroduced in Scotland in 2017 after becoming extinct over a hundred years ago and are a keystone species in improving habitats. Using these bark chips felt like a positive offering from our depleted forests.



Figure 2. Birch trees growing along the edge of oak woods, I gathered moss from beneath the birch trees for the birch pillow of Scotland. Image: Susannah Rose, 2023.

Smelling the Forests – Sweden

I decided to take some of the Scottish birch forest to Sweden, burn it at the LiLa residency as a performance

and share the scent of the Scottish forest. In Sweden, I made a similar-sized ball of birch and plants collected in the forest at Högklinten. On the last day at Nordingra, we sat and smelled the burning of the Scottish forest and the Swedish forest. The intermingling of smells was an invitation to invoke memory and give thought to the precarity of forests as the climate warms and forest fires become more widespread.



Figure 3. The aroma of two birch forests. The balls of wood were collected from Scotland and Sweden. Image: Susannah Rose, 2023.



Figure 4. Smelling the forest aromas with my colleagues in Sweden as we burned the woodballs. Image: Mari Parpala, 2023.



Figure 5. Removing bark with a knife from a washed-up birch log at Rostigan on the High Coast of Sweden. Image: Mari Parpala, 2023.



Figure 6. Getting to know birch bark through play and gathering to bring home to Scotland. Image: Mari Parpala, 2023.

Encounters With Birch Bark - Sweden

During my fieldwork at Rostigan on the High Coast in Sweden, I encountered a washed-up birch log. Borrowing a knife—a new tool for me. I learnt to cut the bark from the tree, prising off the scoured flaking outer to rich burnt sienna – the colour a clue to the tannins found in birch bark. I felt like I was skinning an animal and extracting material for further use. I felt okay practising on a felled tree. It looked like it had been logged and rolled off a vessel in the Gulf of Bothnia.

I explored the bark making small sculp-

tures, getting to know the material. I gathered some birch strips and brought them home to Scotland. They were a physical reminder of the precious experience of sharing and friendship in Sweden, where I encountered a shared concern for the sustainability of our planet, forest cultures and disappearing knowledge.

I wanted to remember the birch journeys stitching together this shared concern with artists I met through LiLa. I decided to make a birch pillow of care—a place to rest and remember the smell of the forest and consider the precarity of forests as the climate warms.

Dyeing With Birch Bark – Scotland

I soaked the birch bark I had brought back from Sweden from the High Coast with beaver chips from Scotland. Adding water to a tree that was used in Umeå as protection because of its high water content. The same tree that had given me its water in the form of a “sap” in the spring.

Scouring and mordanting rhubarb leaves from my garden, I prepared the cloth. Drying it under the birch tree in my garden.

Weeks later, when heating the bark, the smell of the forest rose in steamy swirls from my jam-making pot. The cloth cooked in the stew, and I imagined myself back in Sweden.

A Birch Pillow of Care

The dyed cloth is the delicate pink of birch; it smells like



Figure 7. I used a sketchbook during the LiLa residency in Sweden, collecting sensory encounters and through material, words and drawings. Image: Susannah Rose, 2023.

a forest. I sewed the birch-dyed cloth into a pillow to rest and remember the forest and all that it gives us and the role it plays in maintaining our planet’s equilibrium. Drawing attention to how small temperature changes can have huge consequences for ecosystems. The cloth changing colour from white to pink through the dyeing process of heating the birch bark reflects this change.

The pillow is filled with moss I collected from the forest floor beneath the birch, which grows at the edge of Atlantic oakwoods in Argyll near my home in Scotland. The birch grows near the edge of the forest, between the

oaks and the open hill and farmland. I wonder if it is protecting oakwood in some way.

The birch tree is a pioneer species, the first to take root after the ice retreats. It was the first tree to take root in Scotland after the last ice age. The boreal forest will be the last forest on Earth. Human-induced climate change is causing rising temperatures in the Arctic and the treeline is moving north, shrinking the tundra. As Rawlence explained, “The downy birch dictates the terms of what can grow, survive, and move in the areas in which it takes hold. And that range is expanding fast as the Arctic heats up” (2002, p. 53). Eventually, it may be too warm for birch to flourish in Scotland.

The birch pillow of care will travel to Sweden to Umeå. A memory from Scotland of birch journeys and a sharing of stories and connections made through care for the forest.

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Figure 8. Birch-dyed cloth drying under the birch tree in my garden in Scotland – it has a sweet woody smell. Image: Susannah Rose, 2023.

Aidan J. Andrew

Connected Worlds

Having the opportunity to dive deeply into a forest environment has been an excellent creative experience. Through LiLa, I have come to understand and embrace many parts of the environment to which I am so closely connected. In this essay, I would like to give insight into a topic I have only now considered: the connection between our senses and sense in context with a forest space and the natural world as a whole:



“A purely interpretive view of creativity will be concerned primarily with the experiences of the individual” (Taylor & Callahan, 2005). This quote, I feel, expresses the need to explore elements outside the scope of our self and emotions, to improve our creative approaches. Focusing on what individuals bring with them, we can lessen the impact that the environment and other factors have on artworks.



*Figure 1. The rough, textured terrain that sits so still is ideal for drawing shapes and lines from and exploring the depth of the scene.
Figure 2. Small hideaways by the river, enjoyed only by the few who will go and find them. Images: Aidan Andrew, 2023.*

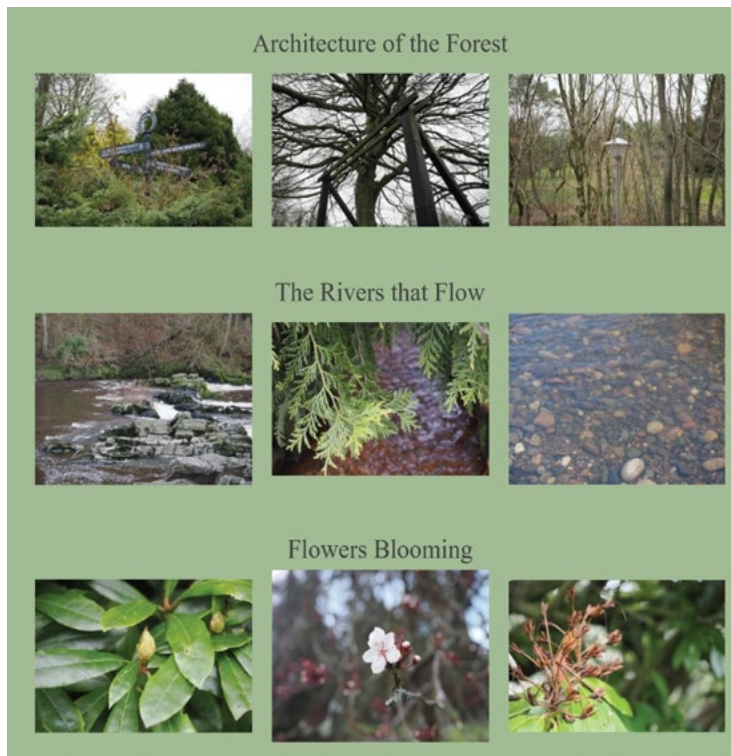


Figure 3. A collection of photos representing sounds and elements present throughout the forest around me. Image: Aidan Andrew, 2023.

As a visual artist, I have always used the natural world for inspiration, whether direct or from abstraction, but this has only been utilising my sight, or so I thought. A forest study into analysing the sounds that texture the soundscape of the forest, had me finding words that can connect the audible and visual worlds. Texture as an umbrella term encompasses terms such as dry or wet, rough or smooth. Dry, for example, has visual connections that are well understood, but through audio, we can hear the dryness of the crunch below our steps, the light rustling in the bushes and foliage, or the stillness of the wind. Describing this already creates images that can

be portrayed in the visual medium (Torell, 2017), tapping into our senses to share a world that is totally derived from our imagination and creativity (Carlson, 2005).

While journeying in a forest, we are constantly surrounded by nature, but we are often unaware of the creation process happening there. The space around us is filled with movement and life, and we are amongst it all to feel this for ourselves. There is, however, a disconnect: The world that we can explore freely is distanced from the worlds that many of us have experienced, the digital world, and the world we saw as a child.

Beginning with the digital world, we live at a technology-rich point in time where there is no shortage of entry points to this fictional realm that exists outside the natural world. Digital technology paves the way for interactive design and creativity (Sharp et al., 2019). Knowing this, we should not shy away from the utility it provides by connecting our worlds. Through games and movies, our imagination and love for the magical and mystical have grown, often showing lands like our own but distinct and different enough that we cannot truly understand or relate to them. Escapism is a rich topic that is full of benefits to us. However, there can be negative impacts on our mental health if we disconnect ourselves too much from the natural world (Fort Behavioral Health, 2021). The benefit of this fictional world is that we can experience and, more importantly, be inspired by things that can influence future creative endeavours.

Moving on to considering a world that does not have a physical disconnect as much as it is disconnected by time is the world we see through the eyes of a child. As a child growing up, we do not yet know the extent of the

world around us; every new experience in nature is vivid and inspiring. These experiences are ultimately a journey into discovery; our senses are finding new delights in the places around us (Carlson, 2005). Equally, as we discover, we experience that which we do not yet understand. With our limited understanding of the areas around us, we can only use our creative imagination to paint a picture of what these areas might actually be.

As an adult, trying to capture the idea of unknowing can be difficult. We know to a degree the limits of our natural world, thus limiting the inspiration we can draw from the world as we see it (WWF-UK, 2021). Utilising all our senses and not exclusively our sight, we can somewhat reclaim our highly active childhood imagination. We do not naturally disconnect what we see from what we hear, smell or feel around us. Having a deeper

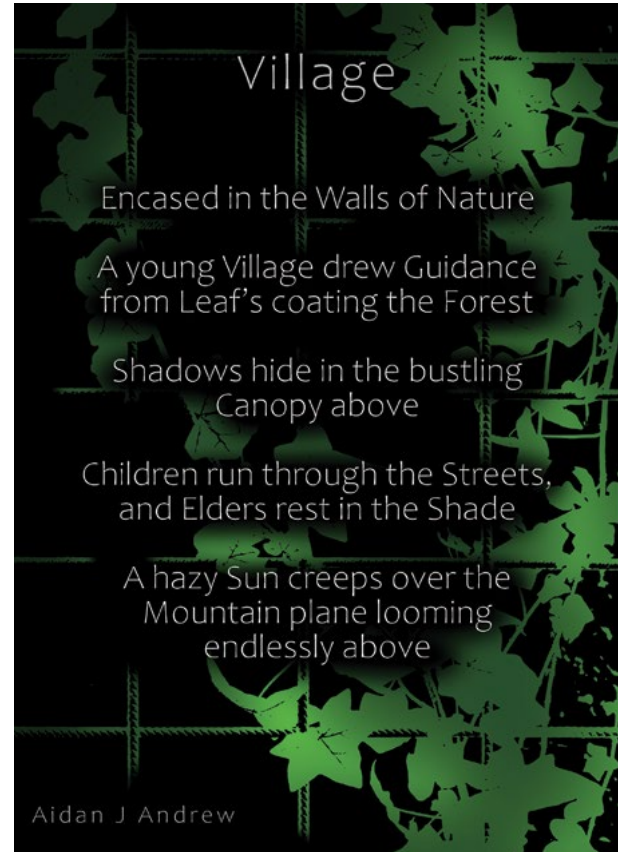
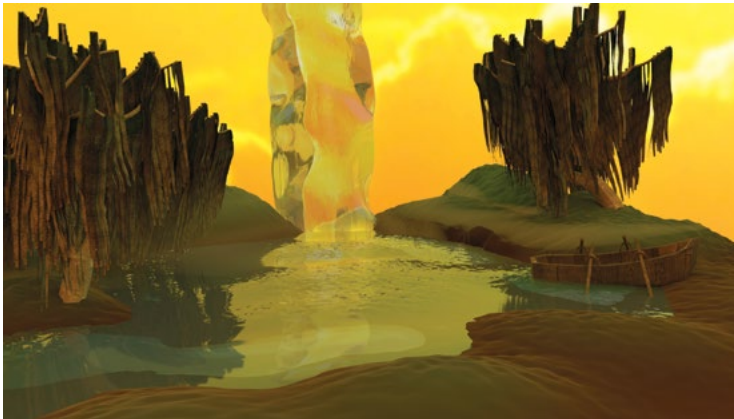


Figure 4. A piece titled *Comforting Crossroads* was created as a digital 3D environment. I wanted to include several details in the scene that reflect different elements of a forest atmosphere. The inspiration for this work was to capture the childlike joy of the imagination and exploration we find in nature. Figure 5. A scene representing the dream-like essence that forests and rivers hold. Figure 6. An example of the forest environment inspiring me to explore different mediums to express the concepts I find while there. Images: Aidan Andrew, 2023.

divine into a surrounding forest, we can build bridges between the world we know now and the imaginary world we once knew, ironically from not fully knowing.

Our sense of place is an important concept; we can enhance our understanding and creativity by better utilising our taskspace (Ingold, 1993). The places in which we find ourselves often impact us in ways that are not always obvious. If we know why these places impact us the way they do, and observe our headspace while in these areas, connections can be created between our physical and mental places.

Finally, I want to discuss the importance of these disconnects in my work for LiLa. I created a piece, Com-



Figure 8. A corner in the woods that some have found peace within, enjoying the elements while they rest. Image: Aidan Andrew, 2023.

forting Crossroads, which showcases a digital world that contains assets that symbolise parts of the natural world, such as the elements of wind and water, and connecting them to notions of discovery and retreat. I actively brought what I learnt from exploring the forest and discovering its details into co-creating these artworks alongside the natural world (Torell, 2017).

Creating bridges, bringing the joys and mystique of fantasy worlds that we long for to the worlds in which we all live, is an extremely important yet difficult task. If we can utilise our senses and sense of place, we can continue to draw from these worlds, maintaining a world full of rich creativity.

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Connection with Nature and Landscape



*Figure 1. Rundlogen.
Image: Aybike Gul Karaoglu, 2023.*

We humans come from hunter-gatherer ancestors. However, a sedentary life, from wandering to agriculture and animal husbandry, was chosen. Therefore, people engaged in agriculture and sustainably produced their food with Mother Earth.

By the Industrial Revolution, technology had developed significantly. The rapid development of technology and mass production has resulted in a reduction in product life cycles and an increase in manufacturing products with more features and higher quality (Jovane et al., 2008; Kotha, 1995). Over time, the pursuit of economic competitiveness has led to the relentless depletion and pollution of our vital environmental resources. The Industrial Revolution is one of the events with the greatest anthropogenic impact on nature and the environment. Additionally, industrialisation drove urbanisation because it spurred urbanisation as people flocked to growing industrial centres in search of employment opportunities (Williamson, 1988).

Urban life and health are intricately linked at many different levels. It offers advantages such as improved access to services and employment opportunities whilst also posing challenges such as overcrowding and inadequate infrastructure, especially in cases of extreme poverty. The relationship between urban life and health is multifaceted and not easily characterised (McDade &

Adair, 2001). However, urbanisation and modern-era demands have a potential impact on physical activity, sedentary behaviour (screen activities) and physical fitness and their subsequent influence on health. It might vary based on socio-geographic factors and gender, yielding diverse outcomes (Squillaciotti et al., 2023). The rapid pace of technology adoption in urbanised areas might detrimentally result in increasing screen time, contributing to limited mobility, rising obesity rates and potentially higher levels of depression among city dwellers.

The process of industrialisation, characterised by the shift from agrarian and craft-based economies to mechanised and factory-based production and subsequent urbanisation, had a profound impact on the emotional landscape of communities. As individuals moved from rural to urban areas, faced challenging and gruelling working conditions, and witnessed significant social and cultural transformations, it gave rise to emotions of displacement and alienation (Smith, 2000). These can evoke emotional responses such as stress, frustration and even despair, all of which are reactions to the challenges associated with industrialisation, mass production and standardised routines. They could be seen as a threat and could hinder the quest for personal meaning and authenticity while losing the meaning of life. Hence, profound societal transformations often left individuals grappling with a loss of meaning in their lives because traditional ways of living were upended.

In light of these facts, I believe humans should remember the importance of individual self-examination and the pursuit of a meaningful life. Life can become meaningful by finding genuine fulfilment and purpose in our lives. The solution is a connection with nature and the emotions we experience while in the environment that surrounds us.

However, due to the Industrial Revolution, characterised by mechanisation and mass production, human beings have adversely changed the environment through activities such as the extensive release of greenhouse gases and deforestation, which have ultimately led to pronounced and alarming global warming. One of the photos I took during the LiLa fieldwork was mistakenly shot, but on one side, it was reddish, and it occurred to me that it was like dried trees during the scorching summer due to global warming.

To decrease anthropogenic effects on the environment, humans need to recognise the beauty and importance of nature, which can inspire individuals and communities to manage our waste properly. We should implement better waste management strategies, which prioritize the circular economy in a waste hierarchy. Some would suggest applying the traditional 3Rs (reduce-reuse-recycle) rule, but some would prefer using minimisation, recovery, transformation and land disposal (Zhang, et al., 2022) However, the waste hierarchy can be generalised for zero waste as 6Rs, i.e. 1) refuse/rethink/re-design, 2) reduce/minimise, 3) reuse/repurpose, 4) recycle, 5) recover and 6) retain (positive contribution to UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”, SDG 12 “Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns”, and SDG 13 “Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts”) (Singh, S., & Hussain, 2021; Ingold, 2000).

Cultivating a strong connection to nature and taking part in nature-related activities can benefit one’s physical, mental and emotional health. We seek refuge in nature from the noise of the city, from the noise of cars and even from air and water pollution, from the asphalt that does not allow the soil to breathe. Nowadays, activities in natural settings, such as nature walks, yoga and medi-

tation, can contribute to both individual well-being and the creation of healthier surroundings. These activities highlight interconnectedness and emphasise the positive impact of nature on human health. In conclusion, we try to establish a connection with nature, especially with our own nature and our existence. In this way, we may find peace and calm our souls (see Fig 2 a-c).



Figure 2. a,b,c study from *Fieldwork*.
Images: Aybike Gul Karaoglu (a,c) and Heini Kankaro (b), 2023.

Ingold (2000) proposed the idea of an “ecology of life”, highlighting the connection between people and their environment. He advocates the perspective that humans should be seen as engaged participants within their environment rather than as isolated entities exerting influence on it. He also discusses the idea of “dwelling” as a manner of being in the world, where people change and adapt to their environment as a result of their actions and experiences. His overall point is that humans, dwellings and their environment should be evaluated more

holistically. I also agree with Ingold because people both shape and are shaped by their environment, a dynamic interplay that can be discerned through their surroundings. For example, in a farming community nestled in a fertile valley, people actively shape their environment by cultivating land and constructing landscapes and infrastructure. Simultaneously, they are influenced by natu-

ral features of the environment, climate and resources, which dictate their agricultural practices and way of life. This intertwined interaction illustrates how people both impact and are impacted by their surroundings.

In a nutshell, I had many inspiration points after our fieldwork and before creating my artwork. (Figure 3 a, b, c p. 90).

As is shown in Figure 4 (p. 91), the artwork was developed step by step. Deciding to use a piece of wood as my canvas, I first scraped it clean. I drew the house



Figure 3. a, b, c. Some materials supplied from the forest in Sweden, C. Bark of Palm tree trunk in Istanbul F. PVC foam sheet. Images: Aybike Gul Karaoglu, 2023.

onto a sheet of PVC foam and cut it for optimal shape, then I began to paint the sky and grass. I added two little branches with some moss and cut one of the cones to give the tree a shape. I added moss under the house and painted empty spaces to give a natural view.

My work compares the nature of the people who lived in the past and engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry with nature that has become arid due to global warming. Governments, policy-makers, Non-Governmental Organisations and relative institutions should

take urgent actions to protect nature, combat climate change and ensure sustainable consumption. We have one world. Thus, my artwork highlights UN SDGs 11, 12, and 13.

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Figure 4. presents the process of my artwork.
Images: Aybike Gul Karaoglu, 2023.



Saara Lappeteläinen

Hope in the Landscape

Community, Presence and Multisensory Exploration of a Landscape

Uncertainty describes the time we are living in many ways. This is a time when the climate crisis, the war and other sources of global despair are constantly lurking at the back of our minds. At times, it seems like everything is going in the wrong direction and that the turn to better is never going to happen. How do we keep going amongst all this?

During the LiLa school, questions concerning these themes kept rising in our conversations. One point of view on the theme was hope—the importance of having it and the places from which we can find it. With these themes in mind, I participated in fieldwork week in Umeå and Västerbotten. I wished to find a feeling of hope whilst dwelling in the landscape and in our recently constructed LiLa community.

Images: Saara Lappeteläinen, 2023.

Looking for Sources of Hope

In his book, *The Perception of the Environment*, Ingold (2002) explained how he sees life as a big and active unfolding, creating different forms all in relation to others. He also talked about a theory in which the mind is not restricted to the brain. These thoughts felt somehow comforting to me and made me desire to find a sense of belonging, togetherness and immersion in the things we see as others. It gave me a spark for the thought that experiencing that I am just one stitch in the fabric of life might make me less lonely and more hopeful.

To me, one place to look for hope is to find out what people are trying to do to fix issues and share knowledge with others. The idea of eco-social sophistication (Salonen & Bardy, 2015) was created to answer the



problems of modern society. It questions the way we in a capitalistic system define a good life and includes the pursuit of turning our lifestyle into a less materialistic direction. The aim is to live a more sustainably oriented life and to understand the unbreakable bond between working ecosystems and maintaining human life and social constructions. Also, the capability to visualise a sustainable future and to see the problems in the way we see the hierarchy between humans and nature are among the goals of eco-social sophistication.

Similarities and Differences

We need to understand the information in its context to become knowledge. This capability can be developed by having things shown to us in multisensorial ways (Ingold, 2002).

During the LiLa school and especially the fieldwork week, there were many eye-opening moments of similarities and differences. This led to intriguing conversations. We shared so much information and dived into wonderful, exhilarating conversations time and again. The understanding of the value of sharing thoughts, experiences and knowledge crystallised in my mind during the time we spent together. I realised that it is possible to possess knowledge without even realising it before getting the opportunity to share it with others. This is also when it becomes interesting to get together with people from different backgrounds and share knowledge with each other. It allows us to build bigger pictures with more acknowledged perspectives and gives us an opportunity to better understand our own strengths and weaknesses.

Getting new information about the landscape in which we were roaming made me understand it better. This happened on many levels. For example, the revelations about the similarities in our countries' histories made me feel more connected to the people of the land-



Figure 1: The performative investigations of the landscape were a big part of my artistic process. Images: Annika Kokko, 2023

scape. In a way, this made me feel more connected to all humans by showing that, behind the differences, there are likely more similarities than we expect there to be. The interesting similarities and differences also appeared to me in the nature elements. This made me experience feelings of understanding and peacefulness.

Presence and Multisensory Investigation

“While moving in the world, we scan the world and reveal information” (Ingold, 2002, p. 19).

This unfamiliar group of people quickly turned into a safe environment in which to share and learn. This is something that allowed me to be open and observant towards the landscape and all the little nuances it had to offer us. I began to give all my attention and the power of my senses to explore and learn about the landscape. I experimented with my body. I smelled, looked closely and imagined whilst sharing all this with my fellow explorers. I made notes of the experiences and tried to understand things by drawing, photographing, talking and writing. In an attempt to feel closer to the landscape, I have also tried to dive into the local language and have continued doing so ever since.

Besides my personal artistic work during the school, I contributed to organising two workshops for our community. The other workshop was a communal activity of planting ecologically beneficial plants in the landscape. The goal was to evoke conversation, strengthen the sense of community through communal tasks and allow being active and giving back to nature and the landscape. We also wanted to challenge the ideas people have concern-

ing art and artistic methods.

There are many reasons for our decisions to use art in our investigations and actions. According to Malchiodi (2018), art has a specific way of knowing and communicating. In the following examples, Malchiodi further



*Figure 2: The communal planting workshop.
Image: Annika Kokko, 2023.*

explains the benefits of art. Because of the stimulation of all brain areas, the artistic approach can lead to many creative solutions during problem-solving. Art can also help to reach deep emotional experiences and express them. The bodily aspects of art can also provide an opportunity to involve the knowledge of all the senses in processes (Malchiodi, 2018). There are also benefits to art-based research that resonate with sustainability goals. Examples of these benefits are evocativeness, provocativeness, critical awareness, empathy and the possibility to challenge ideologies and participation (Leavy, 2018).

Hope in Many Places

When describing life, Ingold (2002) said that all beings are centres of awareness and agency. During LiLa, I was happy to notice that I was able to find the feeling of hope in many places. I found it from history, from community and communal activities, from the details found in the landscape and the energy and togetherness felt whilst interacting with nature. I realised that making art and using artistic approaches whilst exploring the landscape forced me to give time to really experience and observe my surroundings, which allowed me to see things more clearly and understand them more deeply. All of this made me feel the awareness and agency in me and in the things I was surrounded by.

*Figure 3: Sketching the senses in the landscape.
Image: Annika Kokko, 2023.*



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Berit Oksfjellelv

Roots: The Birch Root Basket That Became Woollen Socks



*Figure 1. Table sparer from 2002.
Image: Berit Oksfjellelv, 2023.*

In Norwegian, we have an expression called “*handlingsbåren kunnskap*”. Since English is not my native language, I struggled to find an accurate term to translate this, and the closest I got was “knowledge in action”. In

this essay, I will explore the term in light of my experiences with a traditional craft technique.

My father once collected birch roots and planned to include me in his creative project by teaching me how to merge baskets from them. But it never happened. He passed away before we got that far. This was more than 20 years ago.

At that time, I tried to make something out of the birch roots by myself without his expertise or help from any other mentor. It was hard physically. I used undivided roots, but with the help of pinchers and by looking at pictures from an old handicraft book, I managed to make a table sparer for hot dishes. The technique that I used is called simple binding; another name is “*østlandsteknikk*” (Andersen, 1977). I did not know that at the time. I only knew this: The making process was an important part of my grieving.

The rest of the roots I hung up in my shed in anticipation of a creative raptus. Now, I thought the time had come with LILA.

In our fieldwork in Sweden, I looked for more roots to include in my project. Because of the rocky landscape, I did not succeed, disregarding a short, tiny piece of birch root. I wondered whether this would eventually be my artistic expression for the final exhibition of LiLa but found another way, as I describe later.



*Figure 2 a, b. My father's birch roots.
Images: Berit Oksfjellelv, 2023.*



Starting All Over Again

When we returned home to Norway, the gardening season had started. As I dug up some land for potatoes, I came across an enormous amount of birch roots. I saw it as a sign to continue my initial birch root project idea. I peeled the bark off the roots and started to merge a little basket. Hundreds of times, I tried to get started, but it was like I did not comprehend what the books and videos wanted to tell me. Then, I found the old table sparer from 20 years ago and understood how I was supposed to do it. In the following weeks, I had to plan my work; the roots needed to be soaked in water for hours before merging. But not too long to avoid wood ending up crispy and fragile. The merging took a long time and was difficult and occasionally quite strenuous. It made



Figure 3. Sitting here with all these new roots, I started to merge a little basket. It took a long time and was difficult and occasionally quite strenuous. It made me reflect on how fast we live our lives now compared to earlier times. Image: Berit Oksfjellelv, 2023.

me reflect on how fast we live our lives now compared to earlier times. Yet, I kept working day by day and ended up with a little product to show at the exhibition.

Why Socks, Then?

Because I could not find any roots in Sweden, I ended up spending all my creative time knitting socks. I use woollen socks not only in the wintertime but also at hiking during the summer. I had planned to take many walks this summer, so I needed new ones.

I chose the charcoal colour for practical reasons; if they get dirty, it does not show and the socks remain discrete. As I sat there knitting, I began to see the same colour in everything. I thought about the burnt wooden spoons



from an article by Antti Stöckell (2018) where he and his students made a campfire, took the embers, put it on a piece of wood and rolled it in circles until it had made a little pit. Then, they carved the rest of the piece with a knife. Shaping by fire glows is an old method that nobody uses anymore. I found a resemblance not only to the colour of my yarn but also to the root-merging technique.

As we drove home from the fieldwork week, it dawned on me that my project was turning accurately the same way as life itself; it never becomes how we plan.

My father never got to teach me how to merge baskets, but he taught me how to add masks to the knitting needle. To teach me how to knit, he left it to his mother, my grandma. He seemed to show me how to get started on projects but never how to complete them.

I thought, Perhaps the birch root basket is not meant to be. When I cannot do it with my father, it is not worth it, one might say. In Sweden, I read a novel by Guri Sørungård Botheim (2023), called *Høgfjellsmelding* (“The Mountain Report”). One of her messages is to have closure, pass by grieving and have a new beginning. Sometimes, one must let the past be past and start on a new fresh. I realised, my socks were my new fresh. I decided to make an embroidery; I tried to make an image of a basket merging on the most wear-prone places on the socks. As an answer to the UN’s sustainability goal number 12: Responsible consumption and production, I wanted to make reinforcements under the heel and toe balls to make the socks last long. The technique can also be used to repair already broken socks.

Of course, I included my 8-year-old daughter in

Figure. 4 In this picture, one can see that I have taken off my hiking shoes and my fabric-made socks, knitting new socks on the Högklinten mountain on the Swedish coast. I always knit. I have done it since I was a little girl. It keeps me calm, makes me live out my creativity and it feels useful. Images: Berit Oksfjellelv, 2023.



Fig. 5. After knitting and washing the socks with green soap, I dried them in form using a cast. My grandfather once made it for my grandmother, who used them whilst making “lugger”, a local traditional woollen shoe one can use outdoors in the winter when the snow is dry. Image: Hallvard Kjelen, 2023.



Fig. 6. When dry, I took my grandmother’s woollen carded yarn and embroidered a spiral pattern as a reminder of birch root binding. The art of embroidering was taught to me by my mother, who was highly skilled in this craft, so I also wanted the project to honour her. Image: Berit Oksfjellekv, 2023.

the process. As you will notice, knowledge in action is a thing in our family. Stöckell (2018) also emphasised this: “An important part of handicraft is gathering up cultural tradition, especially through the skills and values from one generation to another” (Stöckell 2018, 95).

Tim Ingold (2021) tells about how his father taught him about fungus by showing him them on trips to the forest. Ingold, as I see it, discusses the difference between information and knowledge in this way:

“My father’s purpose, of course, was to introduce me to the fungi, not to communicate by way of them [...]. This is not to deny that information may be communicated in propositional or semi-propositional form from generation to generation. But information, in itself, is

not knowledge, nor do we become more knowledgeable through this accumulation.” (Ingold, 2021, p. 21)

My project seemed to have a great deal with the generational transmission of knowledge as well as objects, and I do not think one can separate knowledge and information as terms, as Ingold (2021) has. In my family, we are both very verbal and practically oriented, so we name actions and objects whilst transferring knowledge. Therefore, information is so related to knowledge that it is difficult for me to separate them.

Conclusion

I know I can learn things from a book, but for me, it felt wrong to do so with the birchroot project, which was so



Fig. 7. Woollen socks embroidered with my grandmother's hand-carded yarn dyed together with my daughter using the bark from fresh birch roots. Image: Berit Oksfjellelv, 2023.

personal and related to my father. This explains why my project took another way, where I could use the techniques that had been taught to me in person, knowledge in action so to speak; the knitting, the dyeing and the embroidering, techniques I have incorporated by learning it from women I was close to. And now I am passing it further on to my little girl. It is all about keeping the handicraft tradition alive.

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Figure 8. My daughter picked birch leaves for an early attempt at dyeing yarn. That did not succeed (too hot water?). Therefore, we used the root bark instead. Image: Berit Oksfjellelv, 2023.

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Learning From Ants

There was a most ingenious architect who had contrived a new method for building houses by beginning at the roof and working downwards to the foundation, which he justified to me by the like practice of those two prudent insects, the bee and the spider.

Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (1726)



The anthills have always been a feature of my experiences and imagination of the forest in Sweden. The ants inhabit and colonise the forest and are accordingly important creatures of the boreal ecosystem. There is clearly both temporal and spatial dimension to the societal endeavours of these insects; accordingly, the taskscape concept is appropriate. As an art historian with a special interest in architecture, I have often encountered the ideas and concepts of biomimicry that, in recent decades, have inspired architects and designers, among others. Biomimicry or biomimetics was introduced to a wider audience through the book *Biomimicry: Innovation Inspired by Nature* (1997) by Janine Benyus, who is a biologist and author. When the book was released, ideas of how we can make biology relevant and useful for design processes rapidly spread in many creative practices.

Walking and foraging in the forest, you are never alone and one of the most frequent and visible companions, with whom we seem to share the taskscape, are ants. Different species with the same features—a head with elbowed antennae, a body with two segments and six legs—all have complex social behaviours living in colonies consisting of many, many ants. The species that

*Figure 1. Anthill in the High Coast area.
Image: Katrin H. Sten, 2023.*

interests me is the Red Forest Ant (Lat. *Formica Rufa*) and more than the actual insects, my interest is in the construction of their nest. The anthills are my theme for this exploration and, more importantly, my interpretation of what we can learn from the ants about shelter, especially the surface, or façade, of the nest.

We start our interpretation of the nest by casting on 200 stitches or perhaps 40 more using unspun wool yarn. It could also be 20 less, but now it is 200 and we are using circular needles that fit the yarn to make a circumference of approximately 130 cm where the nest meets the ground and where blueberry bushes build up a fence around the mound. Green is the colour used.

A shelter is defined as something that might be a nest, a building or a den that is protecting its residents from bad weather and possible dangers or threats. The surface of the anthill plays a significant role in achieving protection and this is the common thread for understanding and interpreting the anthill in this essay. Other researchers have worked with the spatiality of the anthill, such as Professor Walter R. Tschinkel, who uses melted aluminium to cast the interior. The result is beautiful, without a doubt, an objet d'art that reveals the intricate spatial organisation of the nest; however, the method is cruel.

By looking at two aspects of the anthill as shelter—form and material—I translate these to a wearable ants' nest, showcasing the advantages and peculiarities of the Red Forest Ant by using wool as a material that mimics the water resistance and peculiar climate control of the nest.

The form of the anthill is a paraboloid that rotates around its axes. The cupola-shaped nest is closely related to the specific site in the landscape when it comes to height, width, and steepness of the slopes, all sub-



Figure 2: Amber and wool samples. Image: Katrin H. Sten, 2023.

jected to many different criteria and stimuli, such as the temperature of the site, sunrays and shading, texture and structure of the soil and existing vegetation.

By knitting in the round with a stocking stitch, there will be a curl, so after a couple of centimetres, maybe 5, we continue with a rib: one knit and one purl to stop the curl and to visualise the stems of the bushes. Where is the anthill? Well, that depends on the site... Let us continue with green and then we let the nest show by changing to brownish yarn. If you wish, use both brown and green yarn as a transition. Knit in green and purl in brown for a couple of rounds and then continue with brown-making stocking stitch.

The material used by the ants is soil in the interior den, which is expanded below the ground and might reach a deeper subsurface than the visible mound. The façade is made up of many different components, such as wigs, pine and spruce needles, resin, cone seeds and smaller leaves with soil used as an adhesive.

Given the shape and the material used, the anthill has some important features that are addressed: climate control of humidity, precipitation and temperature, anti-bacterial function, security from predators and stability. The surface includes several openings that can easily be closed from the inside or outside due to weather or time



Figure 3. Close-up photo of the surface of the anthill. Image: Katrin H. Sten, 2023.

of day. These openings regulate interior temperature and foreclose rain, making the anthill weatherproof. Resin is collected by the ants from pines and spruce and functions as a nutrient for the almost invisible fungi growing in the nest, which adds nitrogen that makes the whole nest dry and hostile to plants. Resin can make up 20% of the façade, and it is plausible that it also controls humidity.

Make holes here and there by casting off two or three stitches and then “recast” them again in the next round. Not too many but enough for air conditioning to work! The cupola needs to be handled with care. The top of the anthill is not pointed but domed and I suggest a raglan decrease according to your measurements and needs to shape the dome and fit it with your shoulders. Before casting off knit, a few rounds of rib. Wash in wool soap.

Both blueberries and lingonberries can grow on the borders of the anthill but are exceptions. A few dry leaves from the bushes can be used by the ants but it seems as if the berry bushes simply are a transition between the forest around and the nest.

Figure 4: Material samples. Image: Katrin H. Sten, 2023.





Figure 5: Close-up of embroidery and “openings”.
Image: Katrin H. Sten, 2023.

When dry embroider or felt blueberry bushes with wool yarn around the bottom of the poncho... green for the stems and leaves and blue for the berries. On the inside of the holes, sew on amber pearls so that they are not totally visible but more hiding, just like the resin collected by the ants.

The knitted anthill is a representation but also an honest gesture in trying to understand and interpret the activities and knowledge of the ants – in the temporality of the landscape. It should be worn and used in the forest where paths will be crossed with the ants.

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Torn by the Wind

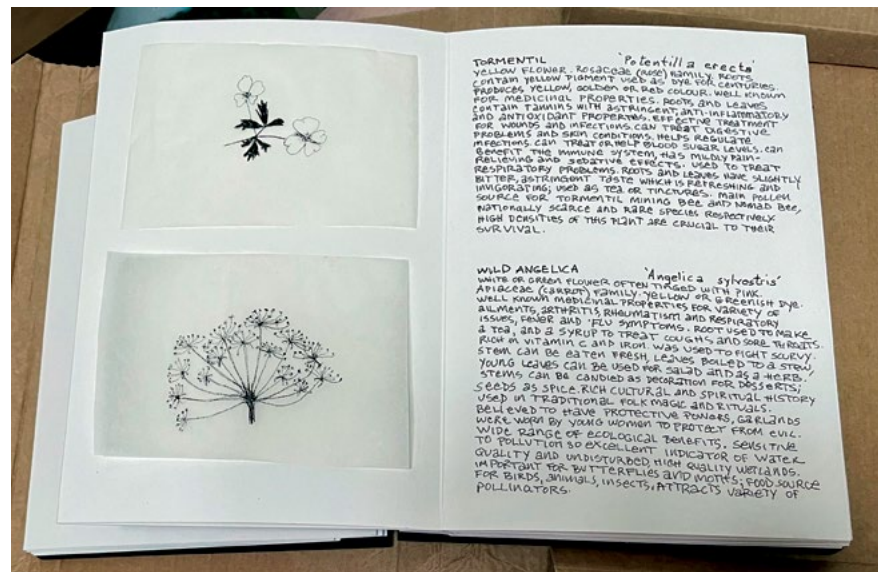
It has been challenging to consider the theme of ‘forest’ for my work in LiLa because Shetland, where I live and work, is a largely treeless landscape, and there is no forest culture as in other northern countries. Many questions arise about this theme from a Shetland perspective.

How can we understand the idea of forest in relation to Shetland’s culture as a seafaring island community and maritime hub where seascape and landscape reveal clear sight lines, uncluttered and uncomplicated by trees or tall buildings? What does forest mean? How does it connect the cultural, ecological, social and material? What are the economic and political dimensions of the forest? How could I define ‘forest’ in the Shetland context for my work in LiLa? Could I create a ‘forest’ culture for Shetland, and would it be real or imaginary?

The definition of what constitutes a forest is complicated. It depends on various factors, such as location, who is creating the definition, their role or occupation, their values and the purpose for creating the definition (Hendriks, 2021). I considered the physical nature of the forest, as

in trees, plants and ground cover. I focused on what abounds in Shetland, including kelp forests, peatlands and flora - wildflowers, lichen, moss and fungi. I considered these in relation to a range of material uses, meanings and values: culture, health and well-being, ecology, sustainability and questions around climate change, net zero and the energy transition.

Figure 1. Studies of wildflowers in Shetland. Detail. Explorations in material uses, cultural meaning, ecological value; nutritional and medicinal use. Image: Roxane Permar, 2023.



I read many texts, and I used photography, film and audio recording to look, to see, to hear, to discover the world around me to better understand the forest and learn how to overcome my claustrophobia and fear of the forest and be able to be within it.



*Figure 2. Wayfinding in the forest, Nordingrå, Sweden.
Image: Roxane Permar, 2023.*

I imagined the idea of the forest for Shetland as a metaphor or as an image, as in a large number of vertical or tangled objects, such as the forest of sails and masts of fishing boats once visible around Shetland's natural harbours in the past or the dense mass of a newly con-

structed forest of 103 wind turbines looming over our north central mainland today.

I tracked woodlands and forests by making aerial films as I travelled by plane from Shetland to mainland Scotland and onwards to Finland. During fieldwork



*Figure 3. Sculptural studies for the Rockpool, Rotsidan, Sweden.
Image: Roxane Permar, 2023.*

in Sweden and Shetland, I made drawings and floated sculptural studies in rock pools made from litmus paper and natural materials, such as bark. Audio and film recordings enabled me to listen more deeply to the wind in the trees, a phenomenon called 'psithurism'. I brought



AUTUMN HAWKBIT
CALLED SHEPHERD'S CLOCK
BECAUSE ITS BLOOMING
FLOWERS SIGNALLLED
THE TIME WHEN
SHEPHERDS SHOULD
MOVE THEIR FLOCKS
TO HIGHER PASTURES

*Figure 4. Film Still. Shetland wildlife studies, exploring cultural, ecological, medicinal and material meaning.
Image: Roxane Permar, 2023.*

together these different forms of making to create a film that employs audio and visual material I collected in Sweden alongside drawing and stop-frame animations I made in Shetland.

In my search for 'forest' in Shetland, the theme of loss, and then in turn, that of renewal, quickly emerged. It transpired that it was not only in my investigations but also in those among our group from the University of the Highlands and Islands. We all became acutely aware of the indigenous knowledge we lost through the disappearance of Scotland's ancient forests. We shared deep concern about deforestation in Scotland through the forestry industry and were shocked to learn that nearly 16 million trees were felled to construct wind farms in Scotland (Johnson, 2023).

The theme of 'loss' became the main theme in my final work, although I hope there is some optimism in it, too. This duality of loss and renewal is reflected by the word 'windling' or 'windlin' in the Shetlaen language. It is a bundle of hay, a sign of both the end and beginning,

as the hay has been harvested and then secured in a bundle for positive, productive use. In dialect, however, it can also mean something that is torn off by the wind, such as a branch of a tree, a meaning that I link with the loss we are experiencing in Shetland through wind, our rich natural resource that is being aggressively extracted for profit by large corporations from outwith Shetland, a process called extractivism (Chagnon et al., 2022).

*Figures 5 and 6. Digital drawings. Studies exploring the representation of the Viking Energy Wind Farm, 2023.
Images: Roxane Permar, 2023.*



The very heart of Shetland has been torn apart by the global race to harness wind power through the construction of the Viking Energy Wind Farm, a massive industrial-scale development that will occupy the majority of our north-central mainland, upwards of 17% of the total landmass of the mainland island, the largest in our archipelago. The destruction is seen by many as catastrophic and irreparable.

I wonder if the environmental damage caused to the

past, families annually cut peat by hand every year in their allocated peat bank.

Will Viking Energy fulfil the promise of restoring peatlands and indigenous plant life? Will individuals, as well as the whole community, ever really heal from the negative impact on our physical and mental health, loss of community and ultimately the violation of our human rights?

The theme of renewal is embodied not only by the



Figure 7 'Destroying Shetland's Future'. Study for postcard series exploring the visual politics of extractivist corporate graphics, Image: Roxane Permar, 2023.

peatlands, flora and fauna by the construction and operation of the wind farm, and its related infrastructure, will ever be renewed. The pristine peatlands, which make up 50% of our archipelago and take thousands of years to form and act as carbon sinks, have been destroyed. The traditional practice of using peat to heat Shetland homes and to cook on the Raeburn hardly exists today. In the

potential for peatlands to be restored but also by the fact that help forests and woodland forests function as carbon stores. In the face of their degeneration, communities worldwide seek to restore important ecosystems that have been damaged or destroyed (Eger et al., 2020; Layton et al., 2020).

Ultimately, my work emerges from the tension that

exists through the challenge of living sustainably in the face of the large-scale industrialisation of the land and sea through the wind industry and related renewable energies, including those such as the mining industry, which serves the manufactures of wind turbines. How can we live in harmony with the land and sea, respecting and retrieving indigenous knowledge when we know that catastrophic climate change is upon us?

My desire for optimism and renewal provides reassurance in my struggle to learn how to live with this tension and the contradictions posed by the need to battle climate change yet to do so in a way that does not inflict further harm and loss to people, communities and the environment.

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Figure 8. Psithurism. Film still. Forest at Nordingrå, Sweden. Image: Roxane Permar, 2023.



Discovering individual Stories



Figure 1. Changing perspectives at Högklinten. Image: Elina Härkönen, 2023

Writing has always been a safe space for me. Making writing part of my taskscape in Höga Kusten led me from visual and auditory observations to my inner feelings and thoughts. Thoughts about the incredible diversity of personal stories we have. Thoughts about how these stories are temporal, as Ingold (1993) explained in the context of landscapes. It is dependent on the observer(s), how many, which and how detailed individual stories will be understood. Changing perspective makes us learn to see, to hear, to smell, to feel and to live (Figure 1). It helps us learn to see details as well as the context in which they are placed. These thoughts made me more and more curious about the parallels of landscape and personality and I wondered if these could be represented in an artwork.

Humans leave traces everywhere (Figure 2). These traces become most obvious when they are in stark contrast to their surroundings when they stand out as something different. However, I would argue that small differences are often overlooked, both in landscape and social life. I often work with maps, which show me an abstraction of the world that is out there: a model with hard borders and defined categories. This is also what I observe in society. There are groups of people. One might belong to several of them, but there are defined limits to where one does not belong. Within these groups, peo-



*Figure 2. Human traces at Rotsidan.
Image: Bigna Lu Abderhalden, 2023.*

ple are expected to be the same. It is not the reality I am looking at, but it is what I perceive in a hurry and what I will slowly accept as reality if I am not reminded by contrasts, irregularities, differences or by details that catch my eye when I am outside and become part of the landscape or the group in question. This is because under the surface, a forest is not simply a forest and an artist is not simply an artist. We (speaking of people and landscapes) are all individuals and as Ingold (1993) explained, a taskscape we are in is a snapshot of records of a lifetime or even longer time that is only available in the very moment. It should also not be forgotten that, without our surroundings, we would not be. A landscape has no end and no beginning and quite alike, a person

cannot decouple from the lives around. Even though one could argue that, with birth and death, our period is clearly defined, we will influence other lives beyond that time.

My approach to creating artwork was based on collecting. In addition to collecting thoughts in my notebook, I took photographs of details, patterns and colours. I would further argue that I collected emotions that motivated this project. I will explain my thoughts during the aggregation of my collection into one artwork, which I consider part of the process of exploring the parallels between landscape and personality.

Because being different is easiest to detect in visual aspects, such as clothing, it seemed natural to sew a piece that would be wearable. A jacket is something I associate with comfort but also with covering lower layers, which fits my idea of hidden details and the necessity of the surroundings to allow you to open up. Based on this thought and the time it takes until I am brave enough to show more and more of my story, I decided to make the jacket reversible. Thus, it would be possible to fit in entirely, to show a shimmer of your individual story as well as wear your individual story in full beauty. The pattern used for this jacket is called Hovea and was retrieved online (Nielsen, 2020). I decided to use organic linen fabric as a traditional fabric for clothes for a long time. By quilting the two sides of the jacket together, the bond between the inner and outer individuals is emphasised.

The pressure and norms put on by society will always impact our stories and on the other side, even if the thread is barely visible, there will always be a connection between the covered-up, generalised and simplified version of a personality or landscape and its actual individual story. The colours were based on detail-photographs in Høga Kusten, whilst the shapes were inspired by lichens on stones (Figure 3). Just as there are no borders in



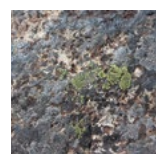
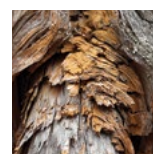
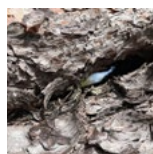
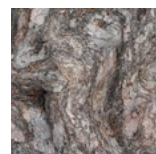
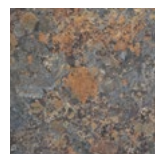
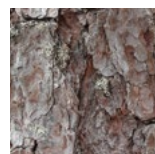
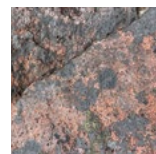
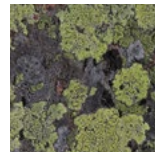
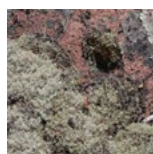
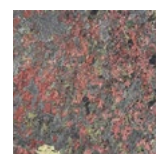
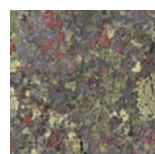
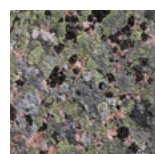
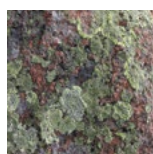
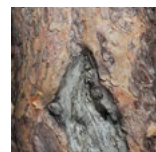
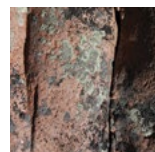
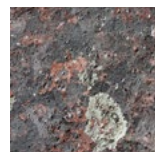
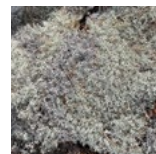
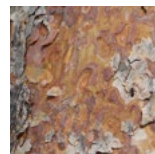
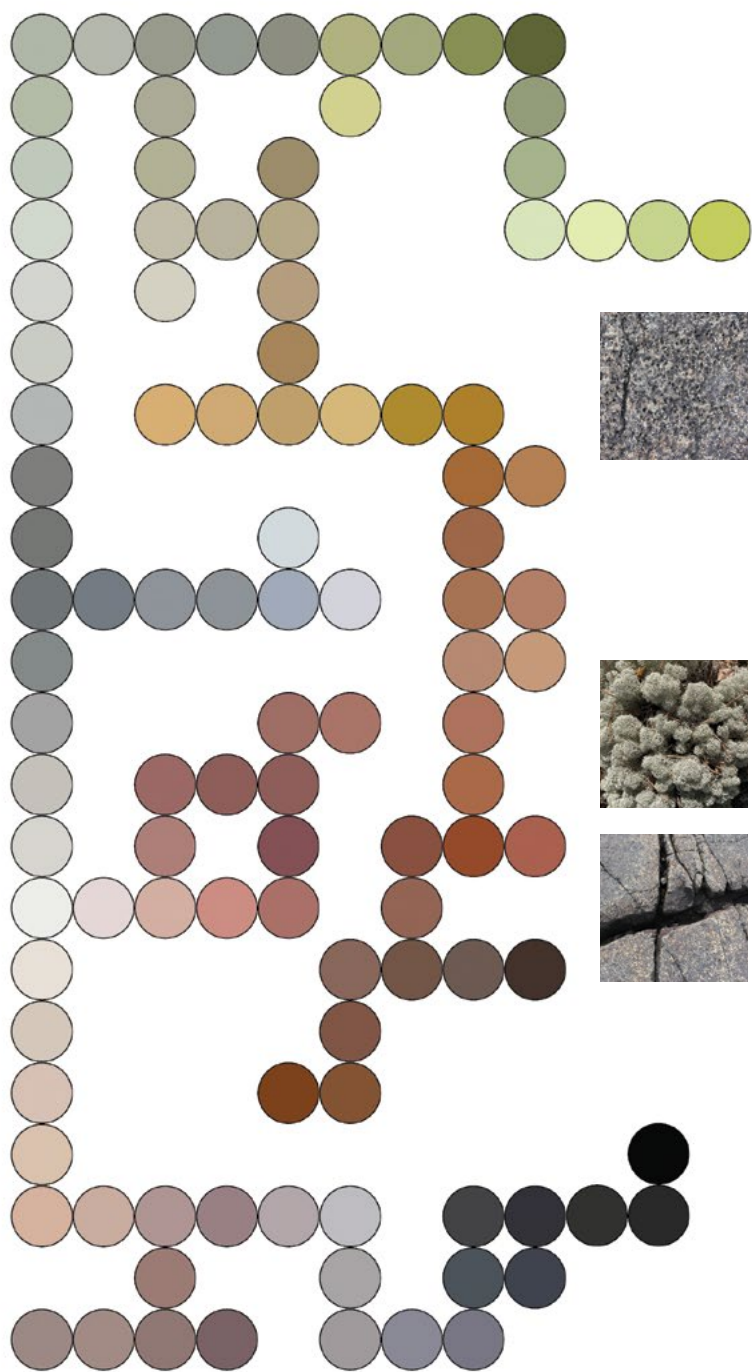
Figure 3. The outlines of lichens on stones were the source of inspiration for the shapes of the jacket. From left to right: Black-and-white photo, drawing of outlines, shapes on finalised jacket. Image and Drawing: Bigna Lu Abdehalden, 2023. Image of the jacket: Katrin H. Sten, 2023. Figure 4. Image: Bigna Lu Abdehalden, 2023.

a landscape (Ingold, 1993), the single stories of a person combine, sometimes producing new shadings. They are further connected, as if in another layer of reality. Both in the landscape and in social life, there are often several things going on at the same time, interacting with each other. The resulting soft shapes, contrasted by the lines of the quilt, bring back the thought of a map, which is a reminder that even this artwork is a snapshot in time and just a model trying to explain reality.

The parallels between landscape and personality are numerous. Joining them in a reversible jacket that reminds us of a map of a landscape but at the same time shows the collection of individual stories, I hope to convey some of the parallels explained above. I also hope to motivate you to show your colourful side and to provide spaces for others to show their stories. We can spend our lives trying to fit in, trying to be the same. However, if our surroundings allow us, we should share our individual stories. In the end, we are all the same but different.

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Claude Goffeney

An Inner Triptych

I demonstrate the way of thinking in pâtisserie art as a short-lived art form in the composition of forest materials by a context transfer. Time and space are inevitably interwoven and connected (Ingold, 1993), as the materials I collected for my artwork represent different stages and steps during a year's cycle. I have been focusing on structures, layers, textures and colours by combining elements, using contrasts and creating harmony. My taskscape represents both one specific moment and the cyclic movement of time during a year in circumpolar forest environments. How will this composition affect and challenge our way of thinking about art across disciplines?

In my approach, I intellectualise the building-up process of advanced edible art in a new context with new materials through a deconstruction of the mental process and then relocation in a new cultural context. Starting from the cultural set of minds of pâtisserie art, developing with a context transfer in a forest environment and materials, and then going back to a cultural context by relocation on a bookshelf, I create the first circular movement. Then, the temporality of the materials life cycle, the pre-work process as a maturing thinking effort before building up, processing ideas and mentalising as I would do with a short-lived pastry artwork, connects two domains in the way the steps in the creative pro-

cess are similar. Finally, collecting those materials on the Swedish High Coast, transforming them into an artistic production on the Norwegian coast as a part of the *Relate North* exhibition later in Umeå, Sweden illustrates the third circular movement.

Context Transfer



Figure 1. Collecting materials at Rotsidan, Swedish High Coast. Image: Claude Goffeney, 2023.

As a former pastry chef (see French pastry for visual associations), I have always been fascinated by how the dynamic between harmony and contrast in compositions

awakes multiple senses; I just left the taste dimension behind for obvious reasons. Different shapes and materials arouse sight, and hearing and touch are mobilised as components have their own structures and textures one feels whilst manipulating and assembling, which are completed by forest smell. This sense-based experience connects the two art contexts through transfer and association. Then, the way different elements can be combined just makes sense to me, as I would contemplate a kind of short-lived art as – let us say a piece of delicious cake. Being chosen to be consumed after a relatively time-demanding building process, it will be gone forever after a relatively short exhibition time on a plate – a temporality metaphor



Figure 2. From the sketch book during field work in Västerbotten. Image: Claude Goffeney, 2023.

Materials, Location and Relocation

Dry, soft, hard, smooth, curly, rough, crispy or fluffy, different shapes and tones: all these variations mutated into togetherness by the harmony of my composition. I collected diverse materials in two different locations in Sweden: Rotsidan, Höga Kusten and by Västerbotten

museum in Umeå. They took form at the third location, the birch forest near my home on the island of Dønna, Norway. The circumpolar areas are connected as they have marked season changes, which provide enormous contrasts. It has preserved, modified and formed the materials I selected, as they reflect the interaction of time and space during a whole year in a forest environment, from season to season, shaped by rain, wind, frost and cold or sun. Stamen from spring, lichen and lingonberry leaves from summer, pinecones from autumn and moose droppings from winter in addition to birch and spruce bark fallen on the ground, turning into a forest sculpture that stimulates our senses.

Like Goldsworthy (1996), I chose a specific natu-



QR-code of the building process.

ral environment in which the work would interact and be an integrated part and placed my artwork on a tree stump so I could highlight some perspectives and depth from the centre of the location, mixed in the same way I would have presented a dish. The most

delicate element is probably the rolled dead birch leaves shaped by rough weather conditions placed on top and the last spruce barkpiece, looking like an elk antler. It was important to me not to shape those materials by hand but to magnify their natural beauty just by using them as they were.

Taking back the contrastive environment to culture would embrace and combine the best of two worlds,

giving sustainability another face, by conserving my art, which gets a new life, instead of going back to humus after degradation, as a gift to the forest (UN Sustainable Development Goal 12.5). From sketchbook to relocation, much has happened in the creative process. I needed a realistic domain association drawing moulds as a base for my work in the first place, but it developed into more abstraction with only materials and a curly birch bark piece as a base and only material from a third location, like a metamorphosis, which later even went one step further by preserving from degradation, inside my house on a bookshelf.

Culture in Nature – Nature in Culture

The creative process gave me answers step by step, from sketching my ideas, collecting materials and reflecting on the way I was going to realise my art-based project, as I only had the main points and ideas at the start. By switching perspectives and adapting to a new context of non-edible materials, I forced myself to abstract processes and views so that I could reinvent a short-lived composition in a new type of location in nature that I would place on a suitable base surrounded by a forest frame.

Something happened during the process of building up my forest Delicacy, and a new perspective came to

Figure 3. The location for my project on the island of Dønna, Arctic Norway. Image: Claude Goffeney, 2023..



me and appeared as an obviousness, instead of letting nature decide on the future and inevitable degradation over time (cf. temporary art installations of Goldsworthy, 2013). I decided, then, just after finishing assembling the selected materials from diversity to a whole, that I would rather decontextualise from the forest and recontextualise by relocating and preserving in the context I originally mentally moved it from. Nature goes back to culture as a circular movement in the creative process. Looking for suitable weather conditions since I am living on a quite windy island, I started the building up after two days of intense and unusual summer storms when it suddenly calmed down to total quietness. My work could have been blown away by the wind before being completed as an illustration of the temporality and rhythm ruled by nature.

A Challenging Creative Process

Back to my research question, I experienced that the context transfer I operated, embodying the temporality of my taskscape, affects and challenges both the senses and mind. The connection and links between art disciplines can transform the understanding of art forms like a metamorphosis when changing diversity into togetherness. The deconstruction of a mental process followed by reconstruction and relocation illustrates how a project can grow and develop, changing direction as the process is in progress, starting with layering and finding an appropriate pedestal to place my work. It turned to go back to the initial set of minds and back to a cultural setting, giving it a new and unexpected sustainable dimension. The circular movements as pre-work and framework for the process have been an important part of this art project, emphasising the temporality dimension and helping to solve my task, giving me new perspectives on multidisciplinary understanding.



Figure 4. (a) Moose droppings. (b) Rolled birch leaves. (c) Antler-shaped spruce bark. Image: Claude Goffeney, 2023.



Figure 5: Relocation inside my house on a bookshelf.
Images: Claude Goffeney, 2023.

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UN Sustainable Development Goal: 12.5 *Sustainable consumption and production* (un.org).

Figure 6. My artwork just finished, at its originally location in birch forest in Dønna.





Katri Pyy

Colours of the Forest

Exploring gathering and watercolour-making processes

Throughout my process, it was clear that I wanted to observe and experiment with Nordic flora that connects the landscape we experienced on the High Coast with my own experiences in Finnish nature. In my process, I connect the traditions of paint-making and natural dyes, trying to formulate ways to extract colour from organic materials found in nature.

One thing combining my family since my childhood has been berry picking at our cottage. My enthusiasm for berry picking has been the starting point of my journey into other natural materials and how I can incorporate them into my art process. I have used materials I have gathered to make watercolour paints with many trials and errors.


Paints and Dyes

The process of paint-making has evolved throughout human history. What gives paint its colour is the source of pigment, which can be organic, mineral or synthetic. The sources of my colour are all organic materials gathered from surrounding nature, processing them in a way that the end resulting powder can be combined with watercolour binder. The same kind of watercolour binder base with Arabic gum and honey I used was invented in the 1700s by William Reeves (Finlay V. 2004). My modern version of this includes honey, Arabic gum,

clove oil, glycerol and hot water, and it preserves its use on multiple occasions.

The science of mixing paint colours was a respected field, notably in the Middle Ages when artists learnt it as they started as apprentices. This changed already in the middle of the 1600s when the task was appointed to a separate paint mixer (Finlay, 2004), and even more when synthetic dyes were invented and became common since the 1850's (Sundström 2002). Artists have been separated in many ways from this process, which is now dictated by the easiness of the modern world.

Today, in Western society, paint-making is seen more as a hobby that some artists take part in and is usually done with store-bought mineral-based pigments. For me, taking part in the plant-based paint-making process is a conscious choice to get closer to the materials and to be more present in the sustainable actions we take in our landscape.





*Figures 1 and 2. During fieldweek, I started to gather my materials, beginning mostly with lichen and moss. The process for different materials may vary, with the first steps being either drying or soaking material and then boiling the dye colour out in a pot.
Images: Katri Pyy, 2023.*

Gathering and Dwelling in Landscapes

During our field week on the High Coast, I found it fascinating that almost everyone took part in gathering some kind of natural material in one way or another, many using it in their artistic projects. Gathering seems to have an attraction to human behaviour that awakens when you see something aesthetically appealing or useful you have been looking for.

Gathering is a personal experience that has traditional survival knowledge related to collecting nourishment or what kind of applications these natural materials have in the sense of medicine, craftsmanship or other. The term taskscape (Ingold, 1993) by Tim Ingold has been with us during the whole LiLa experience, and it embodies those activities in which we take part in our daily

landscape. For me, my gathering journeys became my taskscape, as well as my study of sustainable handling and my knowledge of natural materials. Some of these activities started as part of this project, but I see an interest in what nature has to offer as a mindset that you interact with in your daily life.

Whilst dwelling in my outings, I focused on what the flora had to offer for my cause but also on how I am able to be most respectful in my gatherings. What I am gathering, in what type of manner and in what quantities, all its effects on the ecosystem of the forest in which I am gathering. These decisions should be conscious of making the most sustainable acts in the landscape I am affecting.

This also shapes the way we view acceptable ways of

gathering and what we find culturally supported. I found gathering in a mindful way to increase my environmental sensibility—how I observe and sense the environment in which I am. Even in my day-to-day life, I pay more attention to the plants, trees and mushrooms living on the side of the roads.

Within my summer, I saw seasons change and I paid attention as nature woke up in the spring—to the glory of growth and wilting as we neared the fall. This reminded me of Tim Ingold's (1993) ideas in 'The Temporality of the Landscape' regarding how changing and transient our experiences with our surroundings are. The passage of time and seasons shapes how we interact with our landscape and the environment is constantly changing as a result of those and human activities. I may not encounter the same flora in the same place next summer, nor is my perception the same.



Working With Natural Materials

Going into the field week, I got the idea of how I wanted to create paints out of natural materials, and my first attempt with a binder was with different berry powders. With my tests at home after field week, I tried handling mushrooms, polypores, pinecones, berries, flower pedals and plant leaves.

Natural colours are unexpected, as the result is dependent on what colouring substance the material emits, which changes depending on the age of the specimen. The second part is how the colour changes and holds in the factors whilst making solutions, such as pretreatment or processing afterwards, heat and Ph level or using mordants.

I found that yellow was the most common colour to extract from the plants, but it was harder to maintain in the last step to dry powder form. I succeeded in many beautiful brown results, and it is said that brown and yellow are the most common colours in our nature being used textile dyeing practices also (Sundström, 2002). Green is all around us, but the colourants in a plant are consistent on many variables and some of them do not dissolve into water as you would expect.

For a successful result, it was a requirement that the colourant be water-dissolvable and be able to dry as a powder. Some attempts ended up sticky, as the drying process was unsuccessful. The colourant also had to be highly saturated. I concluded that my method had too high heat for many of those, and I started to monitor the lower heat in the drying process with more success.

Figure 3. Birch leaves at the end of boiling. With some attempts, I also dyed watercolour papers, and many of those succeeded in dyeing beautiful colours in those but were too subtle. Image: Katri Pyy, 2023.



Figure 4. Boiling gilled polypore and tinder polypore.
Image: Katri Pyy, 2023.

Conclusion

My process consisted of practical attempts to learn about colours in the surrounding nature. These colours tell the story of long-lasting traditions of different species being used over time. Painting with these final colours is not the same as painting with store-bought watercolours. You experience the natural smell of material and get diverse consistencies whilst you are painting. I embraced having to use a limited colour range, using mostly cold and warm brownish colours and mixing them with yellows and blueberry blues. I liked how thick the paint could get and how dark I managed to get some of them.

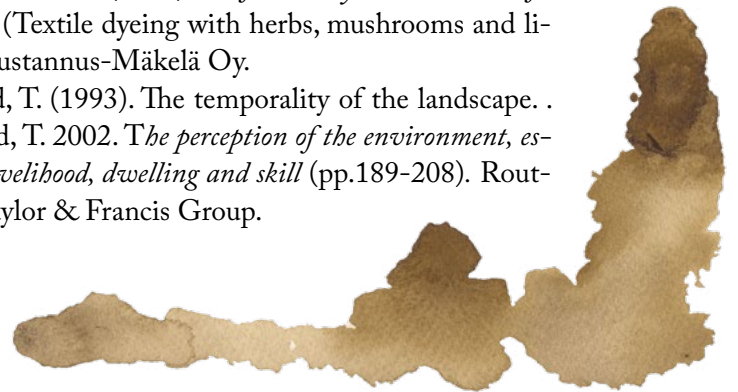
Every plant ended up with different properties, and my favourite was how charcoal, like my black alder pine paint, ended up. In my process, I also had the opportunity to share knowledge communally. Talking about my progress, I found that everybody had some natural material knowledge that they wanted to share, which also brought me new things to try. My artistic journey of bringing my experiences in the forest to paper required me to be more patient and focused on a new way of interacting with my surrounding nature.

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Between Nature and Space

I have pondered for a whilst now whether my artistic practice can be informed by investigating my own everchanging landscape. Focusing on the local area of Stranraer in Southwest Scotland, or my place, and its rich history of artists and makers, I considered what was, what is and what could be. Stranraer is a town that has a strong heritage and a focus on reuse and recycling as part of its growing identity and application for biosphere status. Historically, the town was known for lace, rope and shoe making, and the cultural industries have been ever-present, attracting artists and makers. Stranraer's local landscapes of sea and woodland and the shoreline where these spaces of nature meet offered me a landscape to explore past and place and reflect on the "value of cultural authenticity" (Hesmondhalgh, 2013, p. 2).

The town of Stranraer is located at the head of Loch Ryan. The shoreline around the loch offers an interesting juxtaposition of woodland and sea. Living and thriving together in the landscape, elements collide along the shoreline, aided by the harsh winds and daily tides of the Irish Sea. Focusing on an organic exchange of materials in space, I chose to source and gather my materials by exploring my local shoreline as a taskscape.

Tim Ingold reminds us that space and landscape are not the same, that landscape is somehow in between nature and space, a constant that is experienced or jour-

neyed via "bodily movement" (Ingold, 2002, p. 191). Considering the physical connections made by my own movement through the landscape, I was encouraged to gather objects that had also been moved in bodily ways by nature itself. In comparing walking and making handicraft, Antti Stöckell recognised both processes as being "characterised by repetition and continuation until a goal is reached" (Stöckell, 2018, p. 91). Conscious of the connections between handicraft, its intimate link to expression (Sennett, 2008, p. 149) and Stranraer's creative heritage, I decided to use traditional crafts and techniques. The organic movement of materials between the treescape and the seascape informed my making, helping me explore what lies between nature and space in my landscape.

My wander or gathering took me along the shoreline of the loch. I intended to capture natural relationships by using photography as a means of preserving the transitional landscape and the locations of objects as a reference for my making. However, with the change in tide and wind, I was forced to suddenly abandon the plan, which invertedly altered my process. I quickly moved through the space, gathering objects before the sea reclaimed them, returning home with soggy feet and a rich amount of materials that had been discarded by nature, time and tide. Unsure of how to recreate the

landscape from where I had gathered, I was reminded of “the authenticity implicit in having physically experienced a place” (Torell, 2009, p. 3). Using my ‘artistic memory’ as my resource, I reflected on the landscape as changing and transformative. Sevek’s (2023) observation of things “constantly reactivated and creatively transformed by artists” (p. 1) reminded me of Ingold’s



Figure 1. *Discarded by Time and Tide*.
Images: Diana Hamilton, 2023.

suggestion that a landscape is caught somewhere between nature and space as a memory is caught between reality and the episodic.

I created *Discarded by Time and Tide* over several days in an attempt to document the colours, textures and emotions experienced in the shoreline space. I used traditional crafts to incorporate and include the pieces



Figure 2. *Cherry Tree*, Images: Diana Hamilton, 2023.

found in my gathering, attempting to capture the landscape by exploring my memory of its nature and space to inform this piece organically.

Furthering this practice and gathering materials that had been moved through or discarded in the landscape, I created *Cherry Tree*. Using the branches broken and discarded from a storm, I combined these with dis-



Figure 3. Watersource.
Images: Diana Hamilton, 2023.

carded packing paper and materials left behind by the wind. Eager to incorporate the cultural significance of the area's history, I chose to use weaving and embroidery techniques to reflect the local lace-making heritage as a means of reconnecting and recolliding the materials in a way that reclaimed the memory in physical form. Choosing a circular loom to house the weave and echoing the tree of life, I included French knots and other embroidery stitches to resemble the colours of the blossom and the textures of the tree. Using repetition, incorporating knots symbolic of the local industry of seafaring, I offer the viewer a visual collision of the materials that have travelled through both the forest and the sea.

Choosing to repurpose and reinvigorate things abandoned by nature from the forest floor, I gathered this time with the reverse idea in mind. I chose to create a piece from a discarded root and attempted to reimagine the journey and importance of the root in the forest's life cycle. I looked to offer a differing juxtaposition, this time using an imagined memory instead of a residual one. I created a bed for the root that had been discarded by nature as part of the life cycle, this time using a round loom to interpret the cycle itself artistically in an attempt to preserve its memory using knowledge and imagination. I sourced and repurposed material and wool from the local reuse shop, bringing Stranraer's modern environmental identity into the piece. *Watersource* houses the root in a new bed of material, again exploring the idea of repetition, nature and gathering in an attempt to capture its temporality and place within the lifecycle of the local woodland.

Synergies of Place: Stranraer's Shoreline

In exploring my initial questioning of where culture and nature meet, I found that combining the experience of a place using movement and gathering as a means of

creating art can express the symbiotic relationships between spaces of nature and a place's history as a shared landscape of memory. Furthermore, combining these elements with repetition, expression and memory allowed me to understand how nature and culture can collide

between nature and space, encouraging exploration of the “synergies between art, cultural expression and the economy” (Burnett, 2017, p. 63) in these artworks.

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Serendipity of Gathering: People, Place and Making

Initial Thoughts - A means of capturing my own ideas

Before leaving Scotland to go on a field trip to Sweden, I considered how I might gather my thoughts during my time on this trip. I came up with the idea of making what I decided to call a ‘thought basket’. I could combine my love of crochet and make a basket containing notes of my thoughts each day. It seemed like an easy, quick way of capturing thoughts—an alternative to keeping a diary or reflective journal. I intended to write and leave notes, delaying the deep reflection until the end of my trip, perhaps emptying the basket on my return home when I could take time to sit back and absorb the experience and consider the effects that it had on me and my practice.

Developing Thoughts (Inviting Others to Add Their Thoughts)

I decided that the ‘thought basket’ could be opened up to others, creating the potential for a basket of collective thoughts, so I sent an invitation to everyone in the LILA group.

The Response – What Happened?

There was no immediate response from anyone, so I decided to take the necessary materials and tools with me and follow my original intentions on my own.

I began to crochet the basket as we sat together in the evenings, talking and often crafting together in Sweden.

Being Together



Figure 1. Sharing ideas, crafting and skill sharing across cultures Körningsgarden, Nordingrå, Sweden. Images: Jane Ronie, 2023.

People started to engage with the process, the first being Susannah, who came to me with a piece of Harris Tweed, which she had intentionally taken from home in Scotland. She had never crocheted before but, with guidance, managed to crochet a row of the basket. I was delighted.

More people came, offering materials from different places. It was as if seeing the process brought out desires to be involved.

The process of making what was originally a basket brought us together and I really enjoyed the challenge involved in combining these diverse and unusual materials, making sure that everyone who came forward was involved.

Tim Ingold suggested in his work *Making: Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture* (2013) that:

“Making is a process of growth. This is to place the maker from the outset as a participant in a world of active materials. These materials are what he has to work with and in the process of making he ‘joins forces’ with them, bringing them together or splitting them apart, synthesising and distilling, in anticipation of what might emerge.”

“To make anything is to join with the forces and materials of the world in such a way as to bring forth something that did not exist before.”

These thoughts resonated with me through the process of making, using my hands to manipulate the different materials that came together and create a new, unexpected form. There was an added joy as the ‘joining of forces’, as described by Ingold, went beyond mere material; it became the joining of people and material, and a very special form of reciprocity as the giving of material and the act of making brought all involved together. The basket became testimony to the ‘temporality of our

dwelling’ together in Sweden. My interpretation of the making of the nest and all that went with it in bringing its particular form about seems to fit with Ingold’s notion of the ‘dwelling perspective’ as “bringing to bear the knowledge born of immediate experience, by privileging the understandings that people derive from their lived, everyday involvement in the world” (Ingold, 2022).

Ingold has left me with a question: ‘What will I leave as evidence of my being, my own taskscape, after I have gone?’ The nest and all that it constitutes would have to be representative of a special, most important part of my personal taskscape, which is about bringing people together through craft.

Collecting Reflections

The Beginnings of Transformation – Basket Becomes Nest

On the morning of our departure back to our individual homelands, we met in the veranda of the house to reflect on our time together. I passed the basket around with small pieces of paper and a pen, inviting people to write a reflection of their experience of LILA and to fold up their message and place it in the basket. I promised that I would not look at the contents until I got home, where I could lay them out and photograph them to share with everyone as soon as possible after I had read them.

Once home, I emptied the contents of the basket, laying them out on a tree stump in the trees near my home. It was at this point, on reading the moving messages, that the basket really became a nest, a releasing of such community spirit, a nest that had kept these special notes safe during the journey from Sweden to Scotland.

The following QR code is a link to the film ‘There was Love in the Room’, which I made as a means to share this experience with my fellow LILA participants.



Concluding Thoughts

Being part of the LILA project has given me much greater insight into how I want to move forward with research in my emerging socially engaged art practice.

I have learnt that research as a process is about the opening up of possibilities. As social beings, we are all involved in this process. Research the word may be thought of as something that mainly resides in the world of academia, but research is something that we are all involved in—a process of continual learning. During our field trip, I was very inspired by the talk and presentation of the work of Sune Jonsson at the Västerbotten Museum through his documentation of changes to life and landscape through photography, described by Per Uno Agren as a ‘Picture Commentary’ in Sune Jonsson’s

Figures 2 : Looking Closer. Seeing beyond the naked eye using a macro lens. Rotsidan Nature Reserve – Nordingra, Sweden. Image: Jane Ronie 2023. Continue on page 130.

book ‘And Time Becomes a Wondrous Thing’ (2007). This, combined with the words that I recall from the talk at Mannaminne regarding the approach of Anders Aberg’s as ‘anything is possible’, opened up ease and excitement in me about the many ways that research might be approached.

I realise now that I am driven and intrigued by the serendipitous nature of social exchange, and I love being with people. Dialogue and physical making are at the centre of my practice, and I am interested in how the interplay between these pursuits can influence and expand our thinking.





I am curious. Listening, talking, making and being with people ignites me. My mind and imagination are wonderfully fuelled by the potential expansion of thought, feelings of belonging, and purpose that can arise from these often, magical moments of exchange.

I aspire to bring this realisation to others through participatory workshops, looking closer at nature (which is something that I did in Sweden) and responding by making with different materials.

My ultimate aim is to determine if this creates a greater connection and moral awareness of our environment. It strikes me that as humans in this interconnected world, we must learn to understand and know our place, and in so doing, perhaps we can gain a greater moral awareness through an appreciation of our strengths, weaknesses and powers. Perhaps this will help us deal with the challenges that we face in our global landscape.



Figures 3,4 : Looking Closer. Seeing beyond the naked eye using a macro lens. Rotsidan Nature Reserve – Nordingra, Sweden. Images: Jane Ronie 2023.

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Cold Morning Baths



The way we are living in the environment have a direct impact on the way the forest evolves. How we as humans see meaning and take care of the forest, will be the way generations to come, is looking and using the forest's resources. I would like to give the small birds of the world some needed attention. The small birds that live here are shrinking in population and they need to be taken care of by humans. The research of Burns (et al., 2021) describes how Europe has lost 560 million birds over the last 50 years. It is down by 17-19%, and it is clear that humans are the reason for this reduction of species in the birdlife. We must take a look at ourselves to stop taking the landscape around us for granted, and in that way forcing other species who live here to vanish. Burns (et al., 2021) point out that the house sparrow is one of the species that has gone down the most in numbers since the 1980s. The house sparrow is down by 50 %, with about 247 million fewer house sparrows in the world now, than in the 1980's.

Taking Form

In my artistic project, I have made a concrete birdbath. I have used rhubarb leaf for the shape and the pattern. It

*Figure 1. The rhubarb in my garden.
Image: Emmelin Øwre Lyngås, 2023*

was a messy and meaningful experience. The process was not too hard, the hardest part in this has been getting to the point where I had a good enough project. I had a hard time letting my mind accept a way of expressing what Living in the Landscape is for me from a forest perspective. I was looking for a meaning and substance



like Stöckell (2017) had in his article so that the art craft could have a deeper meaning than to be pretty. This made me think of the bird-bath and I had to do resources. Maybe this can be a tradition I can give back to my children and other generations to come, in a handcraft sustainable way of looking at art and the forest.

In Ingold (2002) the landscape is described as something else than 'land', 'nature' and 'space', but as something that is a part of us who use, feel and interact with the landscape. In the birdbath, I have added something

Figure 2. The start. Image: Emmelin Øvre Lyngås, 2023.

Figure 3. The uncovering. Image: Tony Øvre Lyngås, 2023



to the landscape, which has this connection to the landscape in itself. I have taken pieces from nature, and used them in a different way, to make something new and different. It is not the prettiest birdbath, but the use is the same, and the users do not seem to mind. I have never seen myself as an artist, but more as a helper and a creative person. I have used the leaves of rhubarb in a creative way and given the pattern a new life. I have also used the concrete in a different way, not to make a foundation or a sculpture. The shape and the color are not something that pops out when I have placed it in

Figure 4. Peeling of the rhubarb. Image: Tony Øwre Lyngås, 2023



the forest, it blends really well in the landscape. When leaving the birdbath in the forest, I did not see it as a sculpture or art piece, in fact, I did not see it at all. It was for me a part of the landscape.

“Like organism and environment, body and landscape are complementary terms: each implies the other, alternately as figure and ground.” Ingold (2002, p. 5)

The quote from Ingold in the way I am interpreting it, is a way to look at the world and the landscape in a gentle and humble way. To see the forest for more than what you think you see and find a deeper meaning in the environment. To live in this world is always to be living in the landscape, whether you acknowledge it or not. The way you are living in the landscape may or may not be in a good and balanced way, but you are an impact either way.

Finding Meaning

Eventually this birdbath became the Bird Spa. When placing the bath in the forest, I did first consider putting the spa in a tall tree, but it did not fit right and could not hold the water. It was tipping over, so it was better to put the spa in a place where the birds had easy access to higher branches if other animals were coming to drink the water. What I wanted to do in this art project was in a way that could be a good role model for the younger generation. To make a birdbath will not change the world and all the problems we are facing from a climatic perspective. The birdbath may not even have any impact on the children who are passing by it in the woods. They may not see it or think about what the grey bowl of water is made for. But what I do hope is that it will be in a good place for some small birds, over many years. It is sustainable and will last as long as it doesn't break. The life of birds in the harsh weather of Helgeland is not for everyone.



The house sparrow is a good example of a species that I hope will have good use of the Bird Spa. The idea that I made the birdbath is not to save all the birds, but to welcome them to the landscape and to give them the opportunity for a break from everything they need to be doing. It is a small gesture from me to the landscape, and to do this handcraft was a learning opportunity for me as well. My plan is to visit the spot in the forest where I have left the bird spa during the different seasons to embrace the landscape that I'm visiting. I want to see which bird species are living around and hopefully are using the Bird Spa when they have the need for a cold bath or drink water. I hope that the Bird Spa will provide a clean water source, a good spot for bathing and a social place for the birds to interact with each other.

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Figure 5. In the landscape. Image: Emmelin Øvre Lyngås, 2023.

Sense of Belonging in a Safe Place

I decided to focus on the term “place” and what it meant to me. I decided to find the meaning of it by exploring and letting LiLa make me find my own definition. There was some kind of levelled understanding of a landscape through the project, which led me to find my own meaning and purpose of a place through myself and others. The meaning gradually grew on me, and it finally shaped my own version.

The meaning of “place” and how it can be perceived differently by others caught my attention at the start of LiLa as I was questioning my connection to a landscape as a place. I was not only trying to learn about a particular landscape, but I was trying to understand and discover my role in nature as an artist and as an individual. This discovery was about how I interacted with the landscape and in what ways I created art with it. I have always sought something familiar from my past and childhood in this new environment of the High Coast to feel my connection again. At this stage, my learning was all about the layers of place and wishing to understand how others associate with it. How does a landscape become special to a person and become memorable for some people? What was the story behind everyone’s perception of places, and how could I achieve a similar connection? These were the questions in my mind as LiLa proceeded.

Safe Place

With proceeding to plan my workshop called Uncanny Landscape/Uncanny Self in LiLa, I started to think about what would be familiar and unfamiliar for the participants of the workshop since, according to Royle (2003), uncanny means something familiar unexpectedly arising in a strange and unfamiliar context or of something strange and unfamiliar unexpectedly arising in a familiar context. This would raise the question of what the “familiar” would be to the participants of the workshop within the context of LiLa and the landscape.

The term “safe place” first came up during this process with the need to define the familiar. The safe place would mean some part of the landscape where it in a way resonates with you, your background, past, feelings and imagination. Ingold (1993) describes this as “A place owes its character to the experiences it affords to those who spend time there” (p. 155). There is no necessity to have any specific qualities to fulfil the needs of the literal meaning of safe, but it is something that evolves into safe with the involvement of the person and his or her own perception of what is familiar. A ‘safe place’ and ‘the self’ blend and create a personal, unique perspective on a place that a person finds memorable. Therefore, the meaning of it would be linked to the self, the mind of the individuals, where it became totally familiar to be



Figures 1, 2, 3, 4: My documentation of my safe places.
 Images: Ezgi Tanrıverdi, 2023.

turned upside down in the next stage to proceed onto the uncanny context.

It is not easy to describe why I see these parts of nature as safe, but it is about how I feel when I first encounter them. Just like in these images, the feelings I have are the same as during my childhood when I saw a very tiny pond and did not know how the pond happened to be there. A tiny water pond that looks like a gate to different worlds. And a rock standing on its own,

like it is a sacred place elevated from the ground. These feelings are very much associated with my imagination, as seeing these small details carries a secret message that encourages me to be a part of it and find out about it.

Place, People and Imagination:

During the workshop, participants were asked to find a spot in the forest that they defined as a safe place with their senses and minds. Furthermore, they created their experiences of immersing themselves in this place by sculpting wax figures whilst expressing their thoughts. Everyone's view on what is safe and how they reached their familiar place in the forest was different from each other. As the workshop facilitator who had yet to define what was familiar with this new landscape, I started to change my approach after hearing participants' thoughts about the concept, which led me to find my own safe places during the fieldwork where I could define it as safe, homely and familiar even though I was in a completely new environment.

Torrel (2017) explained this approach of varieties within a place as follows: "The place can be huge and abstract, tiny and incredibly specific. It can be anything and anywhere, indoors and outdoors. A neutral place for me can be an awkward place for you" (p. 15). In my view, in the beginning, I was focused on the fact that this place was totally new to me in a physical way, and I was confused about how to define it as a safe place. However, after hearing from other participants that their connection to their safe places comes from their past, their sense and feelings or some sort of connection that they had during the immersive experience in the forest shifted my own mind into seeing what a safe place could be.

Torrel (2017) described this as "We identify with it, define ourselves within it, create it and consume it" (p. 17). It supports the idea that we define it by ourselves



Figures 5, 6, 7, 8: Participants sculpting their experiences in the uncanny workshop. Image: Mari Parpala, 2023.

and we make it safe in our minds regardless of how it would be perceived by others. Now, I was able to find various places that would feel close to me, which I would view as safe based on my senses, the similarities that the places carry between my memories and based on the feelings that are created by engaging with others in the landscape and my imagination that seeks to see what is beyond this landscape.

After the workshop, I started to work on my own artistic production of my thesis, where I explored the connection between the uncanny and my identity and put myself into personal discovery as an artist by utilising external uncanny outcomes. In this case, the uncanny outcomes are the visual and written materials that I collected from the workshop. In the artwork, I am combining the familiar and unfamiliar, just like the definition

of uncanny and trying to create my safe place with other people's minds and imagination.

Conclusion

The exploration of the uncanny and the safe place is complex because it is connected to every person's own experience, which turns the subject into personal in many layers. Defining what is unfamiliar and familiar in the context is a way of getting into the uncanny and finding your own definition of what is a safe place and what comes as familiar based on personal experiences. The process of perceiving a place as safe requires me and others to put something from ourselves into it. The place was in a way temporary and fast to originate a complex and intense connection to it; however, the people who experienced it, who brought something from themselves, can

make the space special, safe and familiar enough within a short period where it creates a sense of belonging.

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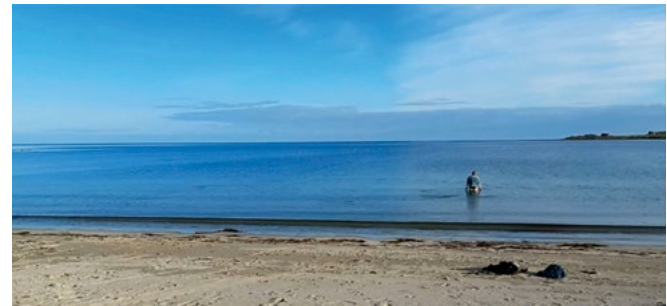
Figure 9. Exploring safe and uncanny forest space. Image: Mari Parpala, 2023

Heini Kankaro and Kerriane Flett

Virtual walks: Ongoing shared remote connection



*Figure 1. Heini walking in the landscape, Rovaniemi.
Image: Mira Kemppainen, 2023.*

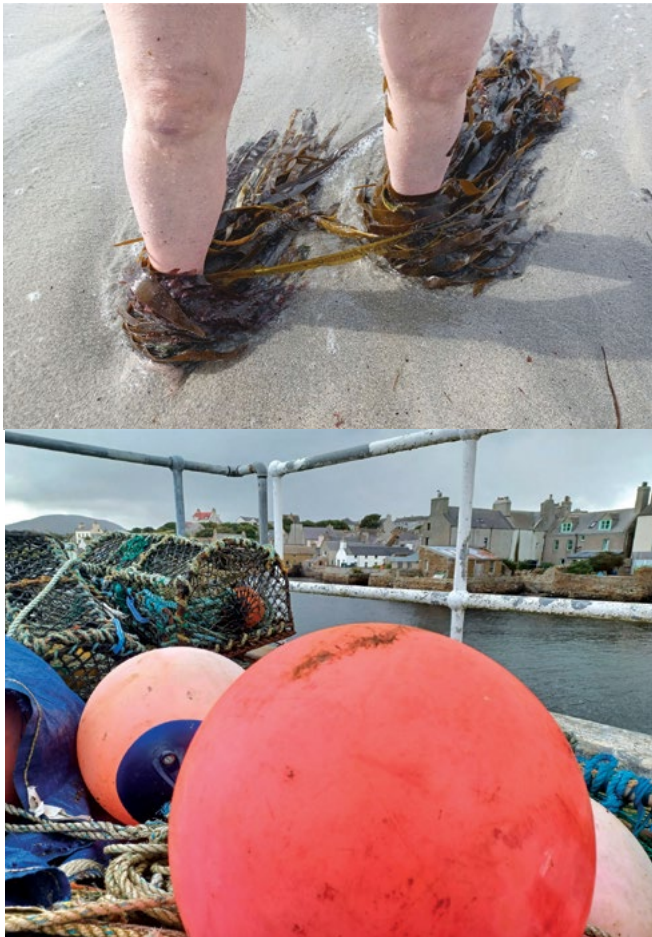


*Figure 2. Kerriane walking in the landscape, Orkney.
Image: Cordelia Underhill, 2023.*

Connections is about exploring landscapes and nature both familiar and not so; the pair enters into a dialogue about what it means to be a dweller within a landscape/ nature whilst exploring both the known and unknown. Experimental and surreal experiences of landscapes influence the visuals. Connections, both physical and virtual, have influenced the creation of this work.

MADders: a name chosen by the artists representative of their collaborative art practice. The multiple meanings of this word reflect the multiple and nebulous ways in which they relate to landscapes. Loaded with symbolism relating to the natural world, colour and the absurd, MADders describes the duo perfectly.

Kerrianne is from Orkney, an archipelago off the northernmost tip of mainland Scotland. During the LiLa project, she was part of team Shetland as she is currently studying for her MA in Art and Social Practice with UHI Shetland. Interestingly, this programme is fully online, and team Shetland was comprised of many students who do not physically study in Shetland, instead meeting online within a virtual study environment—something which would prove useful as this project progressed.



Orkney and Shetland make up what is known as the Northern Isles and are renowned for their lack of trees! This element made this year's theme of forest particularly interesting and challenging for Kerrianne. During the programme and before fieldwork week, Kerrianne spent time finding her forest, no easy task in a landscape devoid of trees. Settling on the shoreline as her taskscape (Ingold, 1993), studying kelp forests proved to be an area of interest early in the research phase. In her work, Kerrianne is interested in exploring opposing and contradictory phenomena and through her practice strives to embrace this dissonance. Something she carried with her to Umeå and the forests she found there. During her time in Sweden, Kerrianne explored what it means to be a visitor in an unfamiliar landscape. Wearing the colour pink, reminiscent of fishing buoys from her home taskscape (Ingold, 1993), Kerrianne set out to explore the unfamiliar (to her) forest in Umeå, in both a sensory and performative way. Taking inspiration from the situationist's idea of the *dérive* reinterpreting this idea from an urban to a contemporary rural context, she embarked on unplanned journeys through this new landscape, allowing herself to interact performatively with any areas of interest found along the way. This theory also applies to Heini, whom she encountered in this new landscape.

Figure 3. Finding my forest (kelp feet). Figure 4. Colour inspiration, fishing buoys, Stromness Orkney. Images: Kerrianne Flett, 2023.



Figure 5. Kerriane: *Exploring the forest Umeå, absent body.*
Image: Kerriane Flett, 2023.

Heini is from Finland and she is a master's student of art education at the University of Lapland. She is interested in exploring landscapes with her senses and feelings. The landscape changes year after year, but the feelings are the same—everything comes together into a meaningful whole. Her favourite taskscape (Ingold, 1993) is about feeling in the place, seeking things she did not notice before, and listening to the sounds around her. On her walks, Heini focused on the various reflections and shapes she found in nature. Image 7: Exploring the forest Umeå, absent body. Picture by Kerriane



Figure 6. Heini: *Exploring nature, present body.*
Image: Ezgi Tanriverdi, 2023.

Flett, 2023

When LiLa's fieldwork week started in Sweden, Heini explored nature with her senses. She lay on the ground in different places so she could feel the connection with nature—the warmth of the rock, basking in the warmth of the sun, the gentle breeze of the wind, the smell of the sea and the tickling grass underfoot. Sometimes, she draws her senses on paper with her eyes closed so that she can focus more closely on the experience without privileging the ocular. The most important thing was to just be and let things happen.



Figure 7. Heini draws her senses on paper. Image: Mari Parpala, 2023. Figure 8. Tactile exploration of nature. Image: Heini Kan-karo, 2023.

During the fieldwork week, the pair decided to work collaboratively on a final artistic production after both had explored the landscape individually. This meant a return to their familiar landscapes of Orkney and Finland, whilst maintaining an online working relationship

to find a way to collaborate in a meaningful way long distance. It was this ongoing shared remote connection that became a vital part of the working process and of equal importance to the final artistic output—the film.

Virtual communication became a tool to enhance their artistic process and they decided to jointly embrace *dérive* inspired walks within their own landscapes, a technique Kerriane had used during the week in Umeå. This ‘dwelling perspective’ (Ingold, 1993) made us think about our active, perceptual engagement in the landscapes we live in. The shared experience and joint enterprise shaped the direction of the work that followed. Communication and documentation became increasingly important as the work evolved, communicating visually online as a means to quickly share ideas and areas of interest.

As with all collaborative practices, there were challenges. After returning to their home landscapes, certain factors made a combined way of working problematic. The two-hour time difference between Finland and the UK is the most troublesome for coordinating their walking practices. However, as the project went on, this was overcome by the increased use of online platforms to share ongoing work and ideas between pairs. This intimate correspondence and sharing of work and ideas strengthened the duo’s connection. There is a shared humour and a creeping sense of the absurd brought on by the colour pink and informed by global environmental crises. This collaboration relates to ongoing shared and remote ‘connections’ and how artistic processes might continue, even when distanced by 4,172 kilometres.

About the Final Work, Connections: Virtual Walks; Ongoing Shared Remote Connection

The final work, ‘Connections - Virtual walks; ongoing shared remote connection’ is a virtual and visual conver-

sation between two different artists and their landscapes. Landscapes are not just space or nature. They tell of their cultural image and surroundings. The landscape is the place where dwelling can happen and when it happens, people can scan the world and reveal information (Ingold, 1993). What MADders share in their performative practice is a vision of the landscape that considers both the absence and presence of the body. When exploring a landscape, information is received from our surroundings through our bodies. The body can be present when dwelling and receiving information from the landscape. The body is never just an object that receives information without being present; it can also be absent and tends to disappear (Leder, 1990). Through this work, we consider whether the performative body can ever truly be absent.

In the exhibition, both artists' videos are displayed side by side, viewed as one work comprised of components made by each half of the duo MADders, highlighting the dialogue between the artists, their landscapes and the shared connection formed during LiLa 2023.

This collaboration between Finnish and Orcadian peers has been dictated by the restraints of social media and internet connections. This collaboration was only briefly experienced in real life. Thus, this exchange was distracted by the constraints of virtual communication. Given the breadth of the definition of this term, we have exercised the best we can to cross this divide. Separation in this collaboration includes physical, language and cultural separation. We have relied on a variety of ether-connected communication avenues, trying our best to retain haptic and peripherally visceral connections. In light of the specification for this project's absence and presence of trees and bodies, we discovered a shared love of pink, an intermediary colour between the reddish brown and light hues of a landscape with a big sky.

In the final work, you see two landscapes 'talking to-

gether' the way people interact with each other. Knowing when to be quiet is a challenge when it comes to recording virtual walks. Sometimes, the feeling of excitement is so intense that pausing when communicating proves difficult and interruptions happen. This is also true of our landscapes when they are in conversation. They also experience a language barrier; sometimes, both are silent, and sometimes both speak at the same time. Communication at times proves difficult. To convey this visually, we have added pauses in the conversation, represented by pink block colour, which allows time for contemplation during the at times hectic conversation.

During our landscape's conversation, pauses, silence and time for consideration are as important as pace, movement and noise, creating a rhythmical experience akin to an in-person conversation. In addition to being important to the flow of the final work, the pink moments of contemplation also provide enduring symbolism, linking both to MADders' names and also to issues surrounding feminism. The pink colour speaks of femininity, but it can also be a badge of sisterhood and works as a political gesture. (Elliot, 2007). The use of pink became an important element in our individual videos and then in the combined final production, visually symbolising MADders' connections' across many levels.

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Frida Langseth

Holding Hands Through Generations

The elements of nature have served humanity for ages, providing sustenance and kindling creativity. The Earth's landscape has undergone continuous transformations, which was notably evident in places such as Umeå city and Högklinten by Höga Kusten, where our LiLa group task-scaped this spring. Being there directed my attention to the minutiae within the grand tapestry of the natural world. It became evident that even the smallest details within this expansive landscape held transformative power, accentuating the vital role that seemingly minor components play.



Inspired by these subtle yet impactful details, a notion took root during conversations with fellow LiLa participants. I envisioned harnessing these elements from nature to imbue yarn with colour. The tradition of gathering plants to dye yarn is a time-honoured craft, with knowledge passed down from one generation to the next. In other words, in an underscoring of its practical and tactile transmission, knowledge is passed down from hand to hand. Therefore, it became clear to me that I would knit a pair of mittens with this yarn. In doing so, I sought to recontextualise these natural details by pre-

Figure 1. Amongst the old seabed in Högklinten lay rugged rock formations adorned with lichen, meticulously weaving vibrant patterns and infusing colour into the otherwise grey rocks. Images: Frida Langseth, 2023.



servicing their essence whilst placing them within a new narrative, one that embodies the enduring connection between tradition, nature and creativity.

The Art-Based Approach

Natural dyeing is a universal practice and a tradition that extends back to our ancestors, who sourced their pigments from nature by traversing the landscape and actively engaging with their surroundings. Their knowledge about materials was related to local information about different forest habitats and lore about the correct time to harvest for different needs (Stöckell, 2018). As we follow our ancestors' footsteps, we maintain a link to them and to the environment with which they interacted. Ingold (1993) portrayed the landscape as a living

Figure 2. These seemingly small details play integral roles in the environment. No matter how seemingly minor, it is important to understand and value every element within an ecosystem. Images: Frida Langseth, 2023.



record of past generations' endeavours, marked by the imprints of their actions and pathways. According to Ingold, our interaction with the landscape not only shapes us but also integrates itself into our very essence, forging a reciprocal bond between us and our surroundings.

Part 1: Collecting Plants

I walked through the landscape, collecting lichen and Scotch heather whilst contemplating their significance within the larger ecosystem. Although lichen and Scotch heather may appear inconspicuous in the vast landscape, I could not help but ponder how their absence might reshape the entire picture.

Even though they are individually small, their collective presence contributes to the overall visual and eco-

Figure 3. Not over-harvesting and avoiding damage to the surroundings helps to maintain the appearance and ecological integrity of the landscape. Image: Frida Langseth, 2023.

logical composition of the area. This insight emphasises the interconnectedness of all elements in nature and the potential consequences of disturbing this delicate balance.

My top priority was to make sure that my presence left no trace behind so that the landscape retained its untouched allure. This commitment aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 12 (2015), which promotes sustainable consumption and production practices. It encourages individuals to reduce their environmental footprints, highlighting the significance of being mindful and responsible when interacting with the environment.

Part 2: Colouring the Yarn

I was excited about the outcome of my yarn dyeing project, wondering about the colours that would emerge

from using lichen for one yarn and Scotch heather for the other. I had my grandmother with me in this part of the project. We carried out this process outdoors, adhering to traditional methods with a crackling bonfire. My grandmother shared her knowledge of yarn colouring, which shows how traditions are passed down through generations. This kind of knowledge transmission is a rich part of human culture and heritage.

The benefits of experience in nature include the strengthening of respect towards nature (Stöckell, 2018), which underscores the harmonious relationship between culture and nature and reminds us that many traditional practices were born out of a deep understanding and respect for the environment. This highlights how traditional knowledge often contains eco-friendly methods that can be applied in contemporary contexts to promote sustainability.

Figure 4. The approach of dyeing yarn by the bonfire using traditional methods highlights the value of traditional practices and their relevance in today's world, as they offer a deep connection to history and the environment. Images: (a) Frida Langseth, 2023, (b) and (c) Helen Langseth, 2023.





Figure 5 a, b. My grandmother, sharing her knowledge, ensures that valuable practices are preserved and continue to thrive, and this experience is a testament to the rich tapestry of cultural heritage and how wisdom is lovingly handed down from one generation to the next. Images: (a) Peder Johnsen, 2023, (b) Helen Langseth, 2023.

Part 3: Knitting a Pair of Mittens

In today's world, where most goods are industrially produced, the act of creating one's own objects carries an empowering dimension. This self-sufficiency is not just a personal achievement; it also links us to past generations, for whom self-made tools and objects were essential for survival (Stöckell, 2018). Knitting mittens hold special significance in our cold climate, as they are not just mere accessories but essential tools and a symbol of practicality and warmth, serving as a shield against the biting cold.

Beyond their functionality, they carry the warmth of tradition and craftsmanship, bridging generations as we continue to create these items by hand. In our cold climate, mittens serve as a testament to the resilience and ingenuity of those who have adapted to our environment (Gårdvik, 2021), a small but meaningful expression of our connection to the land and each other.

Conclusion

The appreciation for the interconnectedness of elements in the environment led me to a desire to incorporate nature's details into the art of yarn dyeing and knitting,



Figure 5 c,d. Images:(c) Frida Langseth, 2023 and (d) Peder Johnsen, 2023.

connecting tradition, culture and sustainability. The art-based approach involves collecting lichen and Scotch heather and considering their ecological significance. Using traditional methods for yarn dyeing showcases the relevance of age-old practices in contemporary contexts that promote sustainability. The act of crafting a pair of mittens reinforces the link to ancestors who relied on self-made tools for survival. The cycle of cultur-

al heritage, tradition, conservation and self-sufficiency weave a rich tapestry that connects us to our roots whilst empowering us to shape a sustainable and meaningful future. It is through these intricate threads that we honour the legacy of our forebears and preserve the wisdom they pass down. By knitting mittens with yarn dyed from plants, I feel like I am not only preserving tradition but also weaving a story into the very fabric of the mittens. The landscape itself, with its stark beauty and history, has become an integral part of my contemplation.

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The History of the Smörkniv: One Woman's Relationship with a Butterknife

The smörkniv is a wooden butter or spread knife traditionally made by hand. It is a humble tool with humble origins and is widely used throughout Sweden and Scandinavia today. This work outlines my introductory experience to the smörkniv; learning about a cultural connection to craft, how place and craft can become intertwined in culture and my continued reflective research by practicing craft. I want to explore what the smörkniv can tell us about the history of a culture and how craft can build community.



Figure 1. Swedish smörkniv. Image: Gini Dickinson, 2023.

My first introduction to the smörkniv was in a Umeå hostel, lying next to the floral spread, an intriguing object. The shape draws your hand to it. It is ergonomic and smooth; you want to feel the handle with your hand and touch the butter with the knife. Then, in a department store, I saw the object again, with the long smooth, wooden handle. A different wood, a different shape, still the same attraction to a similar form, the same 'need to know' the object. Intrigued by its positioning throughout daily life, I am drawn to discover why in the UK we do not have this kind of object in common use. We may have butter knives but they lack presence in everyday life, making me question the difference in our cultures that made this so.

The smörkniv holds many connections to culture in Scandinavian countries. They have been made for generations, using a few simple tools: an axe, a carving knife and perhaps some oil. The tradition of making smörkniv continues in schools today, with children as young as three being taught to whittle, aligning with the slöjd education system. Slöjd encompasses working with wood and natural materials surrounding the farm in a self-sufficient way, akin to life pre industrialisation (Sundqvist, 2018). Teaching things to children at an early age encourages the values of slöjd – a connection to

tools, nature and handicrafts – to develop young, embed intrinsic knowledge and retain an awareness of their culture.

In recent years, there have been questions about the importance of these crafts in the contemporary school curriculum (Jeansson, 2017; Framtid, 2015). Some question the use of holding onto this aspect of culture, but craft connects us to something innately human and offers ways to connect with our surroundings: “When I carve, I feel calm. It’s my relaxation, and at the same time a reminder of the forest” (Brännström Ott, 2023). The importance of this should continue to be realised. Sometimes now children may be given a near-com-

plete project to finish themselves, just a small amount of craft helps; “Slöjd affects us by satisfying the body and in turn, the soul” (Sundqvist, 2018, p.9). Sustaining handicrafts that offer reflective processes is important for calming minds and thus influencing a community, making people collectively happier through engagement in the craft.

I was honoured to have been taught the process of making a smörkniv, which I approached with a curious mind. An important part of the process is finding the correct wood. You search for your tree, chop it with an axe into the appropriate length and divide it again and again until you have a decent size to make a smörkniv.

Figure 2. Beginning to whittle with driftwood in Sweden. Image: Karin Stoll, 2023.



Figures 3 and 4. Chopping the wood found on the roadside. Images: Mette Gårdvik, 2023



You engage with the forest by getting to know the tree and feeling the wood before you begin with your knife, which enhances your connection with the material. The selective process and handmade aspect mean that many people have their own personal smörkniv, it is a simple tool that can have strong personal connections, “you have completed the circle of being both producer and consumer.” (Sundqvist, 2018, p.9), which instils pride and self-assurance.

In the Västerbottens Museum, we learnt about Swedish forest culture and Sámi people, who have moved by choice and been moved by governments for hundreds of years: “We have some knowledge about how to live in a

changing environment. The term “stability” is a foreign word in our language.” (Turi, 2009, p.11) Smörkniv and craft knowledge spread and “it is important to remember that knowledge grows roots where it is developed and used.” People lived among forests and became an extension of their environment; culture was informed by material and in this case, that was woodcrafts. Whilst moving around, crafts can become an essential tool for growing roots and community identity. The Sámi were traditionally hunter-gatherers whose customs were altered thanks to colonisers (Kuokkanen, 2017), but they continue to use craft and creativity to spread their knowledge and culture (Woodard, n. d.).

*Figure 5. The Feminist Lark engaging with the forest.
Image: Gini Dickinson, 2023.*





*Figure 6. The Feminist Lark contemplating smörkniv.
Image: Gini Dickinson, 2023.*

Learning how to make the smörkniv, for me, demonstrated the importance of making and learning together and the role that cultural practice has in sharing knowledge, developing social roots and producing new creative ideas. As I learnt to carve and whittle, many others were drawn to the crafting space. Craft and knowledge spread through the group as we gathered around our tutor.

Since being in Sweden, I have continued whittling; it has become an essential reflective practice. Working with the wood I find on my journey; I connect to the material in an intuitive way of working without a tutor. Demonstrating that “the only way one can really

know things... is through a process of self-discovery. To know things, you have to grow into them, and let them grow into you so that they become a part of who you are” (Ingold, 2013, p.1). From the moment I saw a smörkniv, I knew I wanted to know it. Perhaps alongside yearning to learn a culture, it was akin to an innate human fascination with one of our most primitive tools, the knife.

A knife, normally sharp and made of metal, changes meaning in a new material. Plastic can represent industrialisation and wood speaks to craft. Different shapes



*Figure 7. Plastic smörkniv meeting the forest,
Image: Gini Dickinson, 2023.*

are informed by different hands, inspirations and desires. The cultural desire to whittle is still strong, “we can use the knowledge of slöjd to find that brilliant combination of a small-scale approach to a sustainable society that does not exclude the necessities of modern technology” (Sundqvist, 2018, p.9).

Recently, I relocated to Canada, feeling a sense of kinship to Sámi identity, and like the Sámi, movement and instability are becoming part of my norm. I continue to whittle to feel a sense of grounding and learn about indigenous cultures, connecting to my new environment. I have stumbled upon an abundance of spreaders in a fellow northern territory, hand- and machine-made. There are cultural similarities in the relationship to forests that perhaps highlight a historical cultural connection or a need that has stemmed from a similar ecological environment. My ongoing research will engage with marginalised and indigenous communities through a feminist framework. I also plan to build on my whittling practice as a reflective and collaborative tool, considering how cultural identities are formed alongside crafts and how crafts can be used as a process to understand one another.

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Figure 8. Canadian spreaders. Image: Gini Dickinson, 2023.



Thuy Nguyen

Resolved

What is a landscape? What kind of landscape is visualised in my paintings? ‘Landscape’ is a stunning term that attracted me to participate in LiLa Landscape this year. More than once, people asked me where I had painted my landscape. I always smile and answer, “I do not remember”, or I just simply smile. My mountains could come from a place I have been to, or they could be a visual land from my childhood when I read a book.

I was touched when I read the term “temporarily landscape” by Ingold: “The landscape is not ‘land’, it is not ‘nature’, and it is not ‘space’” (Ingold, 1993) He also argued, “Landscape is not something you can see, any more than you can see the weight of physical objects. All objects of the most diverse kinds have weight, and it is possible to express how much anything weighs relative to any other thing”. In a sense, I agree with his definitions; however, you can feel the landscape in terms of volume or territory. I did not see a real mountain until I was 15 years old. In the imagination of my childhood, there is no boundary to a landscape; the imagination goes with me through time. Later, I visualise my art as existing in physical forms. Regarding art, location and space, Lisa Torell (2017) has introduced the concept that she and other artists are still working on: “What is space? What is connectivity and context? For me, space is something in relation to something else. It is a delimitation in something bigger.”

itation in something bigger.”

For me, a landscape or a space does not merely exist in the physical realm; it is founded and exists in the conscious mind; it also has a spiritual dimension or cultural relation. When something appears in art, it consists of different fragments of our lives. Sometimes, it is specific; sometimes, it is abstract. A symbol is constituted from culture, and Mary Lecron Fosster (1994) defined it as follows: “The abstract system that is culture is founded on, and held together by, the human capacity to operate analogically. Networks of meaning constrain change in any part.”

If researchers and theorists theorise by language, the artist is defined by colours and brush strokes. They are both connected in the brain. In visual art, you can feel the landscape and might connect with your inner world or your own experiences. Standing in front of a painting, you cannot weigh or estimate how heavy a mountain is; nevertheless, you feel from other dimensions: happy, calm or stable. You can feel the changes in the season. Visual association is one of the methods that audiences perceive when they see an artwork.

The year 2023 is a special one; I dove into the term ‘landscape’, and I visited four different mountain regions: Hà Giang, Vietnam; Bastej, Germany; Höga Kusten, Sweden; and Monserrat, Spain. Each place brings a spe-



Figure 1. Four landscapes. Image: Thuy Nguyen 2023.

cial narration that enriches my experiences. In Bastej, there is a story of love between a king and his beloved queen. In Monserrat, at the top of the mountain, I felt like I was talked to and whispered to by Saints in the sound of the wind. It is a spiritual land. At the end of the horizon are cities and the Mediterranean.

The Dong Van plateau in Hà Giang, Vietnam, Cliff Plateau, known as the rocky plateau or rugged mountain, is the northernmost point of Vietnam where ethnic people grow corn between cliffs. There, the children bask in the sun and wind on the high mountains from an early age. Interspersed among the soaring mountains is a river in which the water looks like the Mediterranean Sea. The river is also the border that divides Vietnam and China. The border lines along the river, crawls up the mountains and witnesses the ups and downs of the histories of the two countries.

Höga Kusten in Sweden, which is located inland, is on the coast of mid-Sweden, overlooking the sea. Rivers run around the foot of the mountains. A rocky field lies halfway up the mountain due to the rising sea in the Ice Age. I suddenly saw the pattern of algae moss on large and small rocks. They look exactly like a lacquer painting I painted in 2002 titled “Sunshine Garden”, where



Figure 2. Stones in Höga Kusten. Image: Thuy Nguyen 2023

bright and shiny dots are scattered between green and yellow. I had the feeling that I had visited that mountain in the past. The image stays deep in my subconsciousness. We see the moose have been at the mountain, rounded piles of faeces scattered all over the road, traces of their presence.

To me, nature is a human being, and a human being has the shadow of nature, which is harmonious and indispensable. The landscapes or mountains in my paintings are human silhouettes. And, within every person, there are silhouettes of nature.

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Figure 3. Unidentified landscape. Watercolor, 24x32 cm.
Thuy Nguyen, 2023

Figure 4. The vein of the stone. Watercolor, 60x120cm.
Thuy Nguyen, 2023

Figure 5. The flow. Watercolor, 60x120cm Thuy Nguyen, 2023.

Figure 6. The Harmony. Watercolor, 60x120cm. Thuy Nguyen, 2023

Figure 7. The mind map. Watercolor, 60x120cm. Thuy Nguyen 2023



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