

A large, moss-covered tree trunk in a sunlit forest. The tree is the central focus, with its thick, gnarled trunk and sprawling branches. Sunlight filters through the dense green canopy, creating a bright, ethereal atmosphere. The ground is covered in fallen leaves and more moss.

THE ALPINE FELLOWSHIP
2017

CHŌRA

LANDSCAPE
AND
MINDSCAPE

Edited by Roger Scruton



The Alpine
Fellowship

A charity project of the German Foundation
"Argosphia Stiftung"

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Preface

In the *Timaeus* Plato refers to the *chōra* (χωρα), the place outside the city, as ‘that which gives space’, the site in which things take their shape. This sense of things as shaped, as taking, losing, solidifying, exhibiting and hiding certain forms and meanings, was the main concern of the Alpine Fellowship this year, meeting as in the last two years under the benign auspices of the Cini Foundation on the Isola S Giorgio in Venice.

We asked about the landscapes that we have created to surround ourselves and the landscapes that we have been able to inhabit. A landscape is always a mindscape: it is a reworking of the natural world as a picture of our fears and longings. The study of landscape emancipated the art of painting from the human figure and turned our eyes both outward to the world in the art of Corot and Turner, and inward to consciousness in the art of Van Gogh and Cézanne. This fusion of the world and its observer can occur in poetry, in painting, in music, in abstract argument. It forms the background to the philosophy of the later Heidegger, who referred to Plato’s *Chōra* with the German term *Lichtung*. In the music of the great ‘place-making’ composers of the 20th century—Sibelius, Vaughan Williams, Mahler, Bartók, Janáček—landscape is inextricably wound into both melody and harmony, as though a place and its history has found a voice beyond space and time.

But our landscapes today are no longer visions of nature. Through video games and special effects the masters of digital imagery have created new worlds, which transcend our comprehension. What does it mean to create

landscapes and objects to which we can travel, and increasingly inhabit, virtually? What makes a landscape real? Those are some of the questions that we asked and which are explored in what follows.

In the afterword to the first of these volumes, recording the Fellowship meeting in 2015, the aim of the Fellowship was described as follows:

‘The Alpine Fellowship grew out of conversations among friends who enjoy the life of the mind. We want to bring together those who share our concern for the future of the intellectual life, and who wish to restore the links between thought and culture. We reach out to creative people of every age, who want something better than the education that has in so many ways put a barrier between them and the real knowledge that they are seeking. Most of all we want to explore and learn from imaginative worlds, to turn away from the things that reduce and demean us, and to restore confidence in our human capacity to transcend ephemera.’

This aim has guided our subsequent meetings and will, we hope, guide the many meetings to come.

Roger Scruton

Welcoming Remarks.

Jacob Burda

I have to confess that when I sat down to collect my thoughts on the theme of landscape a few weeks ago I felt stuck. I wanted some intelligent opening, some insightful thought of my own, but nothing quite came to me. So I was about to do what I always do in situations like these—to remind myself of some thoughts of the people that I have studied so far: Heidegger, Nietzsche, or the German romantics.

My hope was to find something relatable on the theme of landscape that I could use to kick-start my own reflections, something to help me put this talk into the right context in which to address you today. But as I began pulling quotes from these authors it became clear to me that I was taking a well-trodden path in speeches like these. You take an idea from someone great that you then situate yourself in response to, so ensuring that what you are about to say is in line with what's expected. And as I was reading the ideas that I wanted to use, it was clear that using them would come at the cost of partially removing myself from what it was that I truly care about in this topic.

I am not suggesting that it is always wrong or unhelpful to quote someone great in your speech. Rather what I want to do is to bring awareness to a theme that I think underlies the approach that I wanted to take, and which in a way prompted Alan and me to initiate the Fellowship some years ago.

There is a tendency in the humanities to hide behind these great figures to such an extent that one's own genuine thinking and creative contribution become sidelined. What's more, most people's eagerness to appear impressive

or intelligent is so overpowering that the level of debate is often unintelligible for the majority and unenjoyable for the person doing the talking. And here I speak from personal experience.

I went to a conference on Althusser and Marxism the other day and was looking forward to hearing some careful reflections on the current functioning of our capitalist society, areas where the system is working and areas where it isn't. Instead what I heard were papers that were pitched at such a high level that none of the basic ideas were mentioned. The speakers went on to find loopholes in some other person's arguments, leaving educated listeners totally clueless about how any of that related to the topic on which we had all come together.

Now I accept that there is a place for rarified readings and that academics often feel that they have to justify their own existence by working on topics in a way that is totally different from the competition. But there nevertheless is something sad about such intelligent people working on such important topics in ways that have little relation to anything outside of their narrow field of research. A lot of academia these days is about creating a world of your own in a way that is removed from the reality that gave rise to the problems in the first place. There is something dead about constantly giving interpretations of someone else but never saying anything yourself.

The reason I am saying all this is that my hope is that the kind of intellectual community that we are forming at the Alpine Fellowship is different from this. As I see it, the people who make up our group this year all approach

their particular artistic and intellectual pursuits with passion, because their personal lives are inseparable from their creative work.

I am glad to say that we at the Fellowship have been overwhelmed by the creativity, care and passion in the hundreds of entries that reached us this year. What we saw as the unifying theme in the entries for our Theatre, Writing and Visual Arts Prizes was that people write, think and produce because they believe that their work has the capacity to make their world more meaningful. The Fellowship aims to be a place where young, talented and motivated people come to meet with others who are more established. The high quality of applications made it extremely difficult to select this year's Fellows. Let me take this opportunity right now to congratulate you all.

Now to the second half of this talk—what is it that moves me in our theme of landscape? At the most basic level a desire to protect and care for the landscapes that I inhabit. A landscape is something distinct, unique and particular. It is particular precisely because it can be distinguished from everything else. These distinctions make it the unique individual thing that it is, bestowing upon it a character, shape and essence. These distinctions also mean that a landscape is bounded, that it begins somewhere and ends somewhere. In short, it means that it has boundaries.

If we want to care for and protect these boundaries we have to stand up and fight for their existence. The concern for our environment which is shared by so many here in this room today is a clear example of this. We push back when large companies threaten the ocean in their search for oil,

or when individuals recklessly tear down parts of the rain forest in their desire for profit.

Related to this is a personal challenge that I face, a challenge which I would summarize as my own struggle to protect and care for what I value. Now the reason I am saying this is because there is what I perceive to be a threat to my ability to value the things that I do. This comes in the form of an ideology, which holds that all discrimination is invidious. This belief system tries to remove distinctions, remove boundaries and level all kinds of differences in the attempt to render things homogenous and flat.

Now I can see the motivations behind this kind of approach and I share parts of its concerns. We would like there to be a world in which we are all given equal chances to be the best versions of who we can be. According to some people, the best way to do this is to make sure that all boundaries are removed and all differences eradicated. And this is, I think, exactly where the illusion and fantasy lies.

A world without boundaries and distinctions is dysfunctional and ultimately self-destructive. We would like the world to be one happy and all-embracing place in which we can afford not to care about the things we value because they will somehow be able to protect themselves. Unfortunately this is not the way things stand or, I fear, the way that they will ever stand. Our time on this earth is finite as are the resources and capacities of the landscapes we inhabit; and as tempting and understandable as it is to want the finite to expand into and ultimately merge with the infinite, we need to be aware of

the fantastic nature of this enterprise and to distance ourselves from it clearly if we care for the finite things that matter.

To concretize even further what I am rather abstractly referring to I will include myself in the equation by saying that it is challenging to stand here before you today and say the kind of things I am saying about protecting boundaries, values and differences in light of the particular person that I am. As a white, educated, affluent, Western male I am, by all accounts, extremely privileged. Addressing you as that kind of person about the importance of preserving values and differences feels somewhat uneasy.

This is because there lurks, in the form of an indeterminate historical guilt, a voice that constantly wants to remind me that the privileges I enjoy have come at the expense of others. I am supposed to feel guilty for being the kind of person that I am because my ability to thrive is contingent on a system that allows for a person like me to do well while it constitutionally excludes others.

I don't think I am alone in having this feeling, of course. Moreover, I think that finding a response to that kind of problem, or problems closely related to it, may in fact come to define much of the future course taken by the different landscapes that I call home. As I see it there are at least two ways to respond to this difficulty. The first one is to be so overwhelmed by this feeling of guilt that the only viable option is to erase yourself. By this I don't mean literal self-eradication but rather the removal of one's own identity, which is the perceived cause for all the feelings of guilt. The attempt here is

so to adopt the narrative of those that have historically been oppressed that one's particular identity fuses with the ideology of homogeneity, until all differences are gone and the feeling of guilt appears to cease.

I think that this kind of option is deeply problematic and in a way cowardly. Erasing my identity and values in the hope of blending in with the ideology of sameness is precisely what I hope to avoid. In a world in which we are all connected online retaining my individuality and values against the threat of a vacuous conformism is a real problem. The challenge is, as I see it, to figure out how to be able to remain true to what I care about whilst inviting others to do the same.

Let me thus end this talk by saying that I encourage each of you here today to be in touch with what you would like to get out of these next days together, independently of the expectations or customs that prescribe a certain form of being. If we manage this I know that we will all come away enriched.

Opening Remarks

Alan Lawson

‘Where are you from?’ This is such an ordinary question, and we tend not to ask ‘who are you?’ or ‘to whom do you belong?’, but we ask ‘from where?’. Because a landscape is behind each of us, a space from where we come. Indeed we cannot make much sense of a person without some contextual or topographic link to the spaces which we ourselves inhabit. What makes up that space is philosophically still up for grabs, so to speak. The distinctions between mind, body, and environment, are blurry: mind, it seems, commingles, acts upon and is *acted* upon. The space we inhabit is selectively interpreted by us. This was made clear in last year’s symposium—where Kia Nobre revealed the extent to which *what we see* is predicated on ‘what we are looking for and by the categories that we bring to it.’

But this does not diminish the landscapes themselves, it merely reminds us that we may be missing things, allowing our focus to alienate elements we don’t think are important. This begs the question of what else are we missing, indeed how much of our landscapes are hidden, so to speak, because of the way in which we live in them?

Much has been said of the nature of this pre-existing space, this *chōra*, if you will. Plato’s *Timaeus* sets the conversation off, to be continued notably by Jacques Derrida and Julia Kristeva, but I’m more interested further down the line, as it were, in the specific geographical and social landscapes that we associate with my initial question, ‘*where are you from?*’. Clearly, we don’t expect the answer to be paraphrased from Plato. I am from ‘the receptacle, the nurse of all becoming and change....’ Quoting Plato in answer to ‘where are you from?’ might be acceptable on a spiritual retreat, but for the purposes

of getting to know each other we are surely seeking some context: a land, a nation, a status, perhaps. Refugees have a landscape. They have the memory of the home they lost, the status they acquire, and the landscapes in which they find themselves.

To talk about ourselves, and our landscapes, we commonly borrow the word ‘root’. ‘Where are your roots?’—we might mean cultural, geographical, racial or social roots, and the metaphor makes clear that landscape is a clue to understanding *who* we are. That personal identity has, at least in my tradition, been connected with a specific piece of land, and a way of living in that land. A joke I make is that I am something of a bonsai tree. My roots are contained within a small clay pot, from which the word Bonsai was formed. That is not to be rootless exactly, but, like so many other people in this globalised age, to be *portable*. And to extend the metaphor further: personal identity becomes a creation rather than an inheritance. I was born to Scottish/Spanish parents, my roots remember these different places and feel at home in them, but I have walked them to a new land, the Swiss alps. This has become my adopted home. And so, in effect, I choose a landscape to be then changed by it, to become something other than what I set out as. Myself a product of living in that place.

So one question that arises is ‘what landscapes will we choose for ourselves?’, ‘and what is significant in making those choices?’ I think this is important since as many of the world’s landscapes are under threat and since we are pathologically repeating the mantras of climate change and sustainability—we may have to reflect upon *which* landscapes we wish to preserve, perhaps

we cannot have them all, since a carbon free world might be obtainable only at the expense of biodiversity as a result of wind farms or the harnessing of tidal estuaries.

On this point there seems to me a certain terrible wrongness in destroying one set of habitats to feed the energy demand of other places. Or indeed to feed the demand of virtual landscapes. I recently read that the average household energy consumption of the US is about 11,000 kwhours per year, over double that of Italy, and triple the world average. When my wife and I lived in Italy we got used to the fact that one couldn't boil the kettle and run the dishwasher at the same time, or the switches would go. What initially struck me as a rather annoying idiosyncrasy of the Italian home, is really a simple and effective route to sustainability. But that isn't really on the agenda for governments: being thrifty and saving energy as a means to combating climate change might appeal to the protestant Scot within me, but it ain't no vote winner. People want to run their appliances at full tilt *and* sleep in the sound knowledge that the orangutans are swinging happily through the trees. But even an economic idiot such as myself can see that this can't be possible without someone, something, or somewhere, paying the cost.

The digital economy uses a tenth of the world's energy and this is set to rise, it is likely therefore that the digital landscape will come up against the forests and marshes, and the creatures that live there, in direct competition. Digital landscapes require energy. So 'what landscapes will we choose?' will indeed be a question. George Monbiot, referencing Richard Louve from his wonderful book *Last Child in the Woods*, made an excellent point in the

Guardian in 2012 when he noted that 'the collapse of children's engagement with nature' ... 'is even faster than the collapse of the natural world', and he continued, it 'reflects a second environmental crisis: the removal of children from the natural world. The young people we might have expected to lead the defence of nature have less and less to do with it.' Maybe the landscapes that I privilege, the fells and the moors for example, are just not as important to younger generations....

But I have some sympathy for younger generations and their engagement with the new digital landscapes. Whole communities have evolved that are not defined by tradition or nation state or limited by geography. We can go to war in virtual clans, or build worlds, that are made up of real people from Alaska to Mexico to Indonesia, and we can agree strategies, share certain values, and abide by specific rules, we can narrowly even be friends of sorts. It is a type of adventure and a type of community, but with much less physical risk. When I was a lad I packed my ice axes and made my way to the alps for adventure and for community, now young people can do something like this from their bedroom. Perhaps what I want to suggest is that there is an intrinsic need to be rooted to a community, a piece of land, or a set of values. Man is after all a 'social animal'. Digital landscapes offer this at a very affordable price, a way out of one's analogue world, and the limits of social mobility, and into new worlds, new people, values, and communities. Surely there is something rather beautiful in this liberation.

So again I think it seems to prompt the question of choice, what do we choose for a landscape, what is important? But of course it's not a fair choice

if people never have the experience of stalking a deer for example, of crawling for hours through wet grass in the early hours of the morning, examining newts and blueberries, and scat, and of the contradictory emotions of thrill, satisfaction, and sadness that come with killing a large and beautiful beast, and of the fraternity that exists amongst people that go hunting, or indeed climbing mountains, or surfing giant waves, or making a living from a north sea trawler, or a herd of goats. What do we know of these landscapes without properly living in them? Landscape and the people in it offer a sense of 'I', a home.

Here we are gathered in Venice, this most beautiful and beguiling of places, and we, I suppose, a community of sorts. Thomas Mann famously chooses it as the landscape to drop poor Aschenbach into, the suppressed elderly artist consumed by Dionysian forces, and the most forbidden of loves. Where is Aschenbach from? Where does he want to go? What choice of landscape does he make, and what is made for him? Well there's a long lecture just there. But let me finish with one or two of my favourite passages, that I think are indicative of this confluence between personal identity and landscape.

The man with the 'red lashed eyes' and the long white teeth bared to the gums, prompts the hallucination in which a landscape of 'tropical swamp-land' ... 'moist and lush and monstrous' ... 'with hairy palms thrusting upwards' reveals itself to Aschenbach. The orgiastic and phallic nature of this dreamscape escapes no one, except perhaps Aschenbach himself who 'with a shake of his head' ... 'resumed his perambulation'. And in this little description Mann confirms the Apollonian restraint that characterises Aschenbach.

'Perambulation' is such a deliciously sober piece of diction, and a heavy nod to his northern Germanic roots, and such a far cry from the heat, cholera, and 'stale smelling lagoon' that becomes the set for Aschenbach's infatuation, his transformation into a painted and somewhat grotesque Silenus, his death, and then the abstract landscape of the Platonic ideal, as Mann points us to the distant figure on a sandbar, where sky meets sea in some Turner-esque vision, the figure of Tadzio 'pointed outwards, hovering ahead and onwards, into an immensity rich with unutterable expectation.'

Venice is the space for Aschenbach's destruction and emancipation. The landscape of Venice is the proscenium for poor Aschenbach's fate to unfold, and the landscapes of dream are actors, that speak in images, in Mephistophelian whispers from Aschenbach's subconscious. Landscape it seems reveals its potency.

Part One

**THE ALPINE
FELLOWSHIP,
DRAMA PRIZE,
AND MORE ...**

The Alpine Fellowship:

Drama Prize

As part of our attempt to unite the world of ideas with the traditions of artistic expression we have instituted a drama prize, judged by Mike Lesslie, with the purpose of encouraging young writers for the theatre, cinema and television to address themselves to a given theme, in the format of a one act play. Among our company this year were many people with distinguished careers in theatre and cinema—including the playwright and screenwriter Jessica Swale, the stage designer Christine Jones, the documentary film-maker Luc Jacquet—and our proceedings opened with a performance of the one-act play *Exiles* by Phil Ormrod, the winner of the Drama prize. Present with us also was Jane Pessoa Quiambao, runner up with a play that was in its way every bit as impressive as the winning entry.

Exiles (the allusion to the least known work of James Joyce is deliberate) was performed in the theatre of the Cini Foundation by Vinette Robinson (known for her role as Ophelia, playing opposite Michael Sheen's Hamlet at the Young Vic, as well as the TV series *The A Word*, and *Sherlock*), and Gethin Anthony, a rising star of the stage and screen known for his seminal performance in *Game of Thrones*. There follows the author's synopsis and a brief extract from the play.

Exiles

A Play by Phil Ormrod

Synopsis

Most of all, they want to thank us. A brother and sister, exiles: they've spent months running from what was once their home, through unimaginable hardship, but finally here they are. Standing in front of us, unsure where to start.

They want to thank us for giving them refuge. A small plot of land, on a new island, reclaimed from the sea by our Foundation. Terra Nullius: fresh, uncontested, ready to receive their imprint.

Our project hasn't been without controversy. But these two trust us. They see only a haven: a place they can finally close their eyes without fear of danger or surprise.

And the chance to bury their mother. Or rather, what they've been able to carry of her, which isn't really their mother at all, just an object they associate with her—a metonym for a body long since dust, scattered on some hillside back along the way. Still, with us as witnesses, they'll do their best to give her something like a burial.

They hope it's a good way to mark their arrival: to plant something, to root themselves here.

It's an awkward little affair. An intimate moment in unfamiliar company, and everything's deferred. Asking strangers to remember things they never



Vinette Robinson and Gethin Anthony perform *Exiles*.

knew or saw. Saying a body that isn't really a body is returning to a soil it never touched.

Finding this blank landscape a cruel mockery of the one they left behind—that they're now frantically trying to talk back into existence, even as the land swallows words and objects and offers nothing in return.

And maybe it's the blankness, or just the low-down strangeness of artificial land; or maybe how the sea threatens to reclaim it; or maybe it's the weight of all the ground they've covered, finally catching up with them now they're at rest;

But whatever the reason, something seems to go wrong with them. Like they're losing their grip on the world—like they're no longer on solid ground.

Because however much we've given them—and though we're asking nothing in return—their safety still comes at a price; and it's very hard to bear.

Exiles: an Extract

Phil Ormrod

her *this is the start*

him *how we'll make ourselves at home
make the land feel like ours
when we got it like this
it needs to mean something*

her *it means a lot*

him *someone said we should fight over it*

her *i think the problem is
it's hard to feel you own something
when it's just appeared like this
in your life
so
painlessly*

him *pain/lessly?*

her *when it's a gift*

him *anyway none of us has any stuff
and there's more than enough space
so what would we fight over?*

her *we wouldn't fight, though
would we?*

him ,

her *are you,*

him *no
we wouldn't really fight
it was a joke*

can i say

her ,
*so there's something we want to put here
which i know is kind of a surprise
but look i think it makes
it marks everything
nicely
to put something here,
in the earth*

him *can i just —*

her *i think it's the right way
to round this off
and then you can get to the reception
and the boats and,
all of that, so—*

her *so let's just do this and—*

him *but there's a difference—*

her *let's just—*

him *isn't there there's a difference
between bad choices*

her *right but —*

him *there's a difference between
a confused decision
when you're scared*

her *we just agreed to move on*

him *and just a choice. a calm choice.*

,

her *with a bit of optimism, we said*

him *i'm just getting everything straight first*

her *right
,
so -*

him *and when we were walking—*

her *what?*

him *when we were walking*

her *what?*

him *to get things straight*

her *i don't—*

him *when we were walking out of the city*

her *we said—*

him *i changed my mind*

her ,

him *i changed my mind*

*there were thousands of us
in the crowd, the walkers—
we joined this crowd and it stretched on forever
out in front of us
and we weren't even near the back*

*and we were holding on to mum
because other people were faster
and we didn't want to get separated
so we were holding on to her
but she was getting on with it
she was putting one foot in front of the other
and she kept apologising
which broke my fucking heart because
she was taking it on herself like
i'm sorry i never wanted you to see
anything like this
like as a parent she felt powerless
because her instinct was to protect us
and she couldn't*

her *of course she couldn't
against, what, the whole universe
of course she couldn't*

him *and you said—*

her *we both said things*

him *you said you were sorry*

*that you'd been away
you were sorry you hadn't been back*

We include here a famous poem by Marianne More,
subject of the ensuing essay by John Burnside.

The Steeple-Jack

Marianne More

*Dürer would have seen a reason for living
in a town like this, with eight stranded whales
to look at; with the sweet sea air coming into your house
on a fine day, from water etched
with waves as formal as the scales
on a fish.*

*One by one in two's and three's, the seagulls keep
flying back and forth over the town clock,
or sailing around the lighthouse without moving their wings—
rising steadily with a slight
quiver of the body—or flock
mewing where*

*a sea the purple of the peacock's neck is
paled to greenish azure as Dürer changed
the pine green of the Tyrol to peacock blue and guinea
gray. You can see a twenty-five-
pound lobster; and fish nets arranged
to dry. The*

*whirlwind fife-and-drum of the storm bends the salt
marsh grass, disturbs stars in the sky and the
star on the steeple; it is a privilege to see so
much confusion. Disguised by what
might seem the opposite, the sea-
side flowers and*

*trees are favored by the fog so that you have
the tropics first hand: the trumpet-vine,
fox-glove, giant snap-dragon, a salpiglossis that has
spots and stripes; morning-glories, gourds,
or moon-vines trained on fishing-twine
at the back door;*

*cat-tails, flags, blueberries and spiderwort,
striped grass, lichens, sunflowers, asters, daisies—
yellow and crab-claw ragged sailors with green bracts—toad-plant,
petunias, ferns; pink lilies, blue
ones, tigers; poppies; black sweet-peas.
The climate*

*is not right for the banyan, frangipani, or
jack-fruit trees; or for exotic serpent
life. Ring lizard and snake-skin for the foot, if you see fit;
but here they've cats, not cobras, to
keep down the rats. The diffident
little newt*

with white pin-dots on black horizontal spaced-out bands lives here; yet there is nothing that ambition can buy or take away. The college student named Ambrose sits on the hillside with his not-native books and hat and sees boats

at sea progress white and rigid as if in a groove. Liking an elegance of which the souch is not bravado, he knows by heart the antique sugar-bowl shaped summer-house of interlacing slats, and the pitch of the church

spire, not true, from which a man in scarlet lets down a rope as a spider spins a thread; he might be part of a novel, but on the sidewalk a sign says C. J. Poole, Steeple Jack, in black and white; and one in red and white says

Danger. The church portico has four fluted columns, each a single piece of stone, made modester by white-wash. Theis would be a fit haven for waifs, children, animals, prisoners, and presidents who have repaid sin-driven

senators by not thinking about them. The place has a school-house, a post-office in a store, fish-houses, hen-houses, a three-masted schooner on the stocks. The hero, the student, the steeple-jack, each in his way, is at home.

It could not be dangerous to be living in a town like this, of simple people, who have a steeple-jack placing danger signs by the church while he is gilding the solid-pointed star, which on a steeple stands for hope.

“The power of the visible is the invisible”:

Space and confusion in the poetry of Marianne Moore

John Burnside

It is no accident that the name ‘Dürer’ is the first word of Marianne Moore’s great poem, ‘The Steeple-Jack’, one of the landmark works of Modernist writing. For one thing, ‘Dürer’ (as what these days would no doubt be called a ‘tag’) suggests a mental climate in which certain values—a sense of perspective, an attention to the real world and a reverence for the phenomena of this world for their own sake—are fundamental. While sidestepping mere literalism, and both too early and too spiritually alert to succumb to reductionism, Dürer was a realist of the best kind, an artist who wanted to experience, and to depict, the world as it is, not as he, or his church, or some artistic fad, would prefer it to be. Of course he would have enjoyed living in a place that has:

eight stranded whales

to look at; with the sweet sea air coming into your house

on a fine day, from water etched

with waves as formal as the scales

on a fish

just as he would have noticed, and approved, the way in which local builders had learned from their natural surroundings when constructing:

the antique

sugar-bowl shaped summer-house of

interlacing slats

—the human-made echoing the interlacing wave forms of the sea, and of the morphology of fishes. As we know from his diaries, Dürer was prepared to go a long way to see the real thing, when he could:

“Antwerp, November 22, December 3, 1520

At Zierikzee, in Zeeland, a whale has been stranded by a high tide and a gale of wind. It is much more than 100 fathoms long, and no man living in Zeeland has seen one even a third as long as this is. The *fish* cannot get off the land; the people would gladly see it gone, as they fear the great stink, for it is so large that they say it could not be cut in pieces and the blubber boiled down in half a year.”

Some days later, he continues:

“December 9. Early on Monday we started again by ship and went by the Veere and Zierikzee and tried to get sight of the great fish, but the tide had carried him off again.”

After quoting the above passages in his 1905 biography, T. Sturge Moore, notes that “the object of the whole expedition was, doubtless, that Dürer might see and sketch the whale”, going on to repeat the well-known story of the artist’s near-death, while out whale-watching:

“In the Netherlands, Durer’s curiosity to see a whale nearly resulted in his own shipwreck, and indirectly produced the malady which finally killed him. But Durer’s curiosity was really most scientific where it was most artistic; in

his portraits, in his studies of plants and birds and the noses of stags, or the slumber of lions.”

Of course, the whales in ‘The Steeple-Jack’ act as a reminder of the history of New England coastal towns, where whaling was for many years the main industry, but the syntax makes it clear that they are, in one sense at least, secondary to the implications of this particular artist’s gaze. Moore’s strategy depends very much on her reader’s knowing a fair amount about Dürer’s artistic method and philosophy, but she does not hesitate to assume that knowledge. Unlike some of her contemporaries, (for example, the T.S. Eliot of *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*) she is optimistic about ‘the culture’, though she accepts that the nature of its art might change with time. (Much could be said about this assumption with regard to recent arguments about cultural elitism; for my own part, I find it heartening that Moore appears to trust in the power of imaginative making, *poiesis*, to continue—and to renew itself—on its own momentum, independently from any social class or elite group. This, I think, arises from a fundamental conviction that the ability to recognise Dürer’s value-set is not based on educational or class background, but on innate imaginative and intellectual characters).

What I most want to emphasize, however, (given our concern with ‘space’ and place) is that, by beginning her poem with the artist’s name, Moore is invoking Dürer’s determination to see the universe as it is, rather than as we are told it must be: to see, that is, for himself, and not simply to accept the authority of contemporary experts, or churchmen, or those systematic philosophers (and later, reductionist scientists and economists) who gladly bend the given world



Albrecht Dürer
The Large Piece of Turf
Albertina, Vienna

to fit their theories of what is real. It is the same impulse that informs an underlying change of emphasis, in the 17th Century, when, as the age of (relatively) independent artisanship heralded by Dürer becomes a reality, many Northern (i.e. non-Catholic) painters are no longer content to expend all their energies on conventional religious works and instead apply themselves to the reflective surfaces of an oyster-shell, or the skin of lemon. (The spiritual forerunner of much of this is, in fact, Durer's own *The Large Turf*, painted in Nuremberg in 1503, whose attention to detail allows us clearly to identify a number of plants, including cock's-foot, creeping bent, smooth meadow grass, daisy, dandelion, germander speedwell, greater plantain, hound's-tongue and yarrow, this realism, this honouring of the actual, this *specificity* is continued in the work of the still life painters, as they reproduce the blemish on a fallen plum as carefully as the striation of some—at that time exotic and glamorous—Turk's-Cap tulip. However, when I say that such painting moves away from the literal religious tradition, I do not mean to suggest it is not *religious*, only that it shifts the focus towards the observation of Nature and natural law. (I do not have time here, sadly, to go into the roots of Dürer's project in the philosophy of Albertus Magnus who, in *De Mineralibus*, his mid 13th century enquiry into stones, metals and what he called 'intermediates', expresses this element of his philosophy thus: 'The aim of natural philosophy (science) is not simply to accept the statements of others, but to investigate the causes that are at work in nature'). What I do want to suggest is that artists came to feel that there was nothing wrong with painting the world as a reflection of God's Grandeur, just so long as it was *this* world they were painting—because it is *this* world, and not another, idealised place, that God (however we might choose to think of Him, Her or It) uses to mirror that grandeur.

However, the invocation of Durer's practice, informed as it was by the conviction that close observation of Nature should be the starting point of our imaginative apprehension of the world, (here, we might also appeal to Marianne Moore's own image of *poiesis* as the creation of "imaginary gardens with real toads in them") is only half of what the poet is up to here. Notice how, as she insinuates this constellation of expectations around the artist's name, Moore also introduces the poem's principal concern, which is: what reasons do we have to live in "a place like this" and, by extension, what makes for a coherent place, rather than a mere space? At first, even though she takes a panoramic view of the town (a God's eye view, even; though I, for one, cannot help remembering the work of Carleton Watkins, whose commercial photographs of industrial and railroad towns changed landscape photography in American forever) it might seem that she has not given herself much to work with, for what follows, as we have noted, is a description of a quiet, very 'ordinary' New England coastal town, whose only visible inhabitants are a student named Ambrose and a steeplejack, named C.J. Poole, (clues abound throughout the poem that the speaker is as non-native as Ambrose's books), a place that, apparently, *could not be dangerous*—and therefore, by implication, must be a little dull. But is it?

If we take another look at the poem, we find that the answers are many, and they relate to the balance of order and 'confusion' that the poem rehearses—a balance, a meaningful tension, a fact of life that informs every aspect of our experience and the best of our empirical philosophy. We enact this tension on a daily basis, though we are not always conscious of the work we are performing. Yet every time we *imaginatively* experience place as place, and not as a mere

agglomeration of objects and intervening spaces, we are involved in an act of making, a *poiesis*. This act of making is, in fact, dramatized in the poem, as the speaker, (and, following the speaker's voice as it travels across the panoramic scene, the listener or reader), make order of what is before them. For place is not a given, it is a making—and that making is essential creative work, for there are forces at work that would seek to unmake place, and render it formless, neuter, or even (as Aboriginal people sometimes say of land that has been exploited to the hilt by mining companies or developers), dead. The unmaking of places, begun by the process of Enclosure, is the work of colonists, exploiters and developers of a certain kidney, who know that places have resonance, (that places are *homes*, and might therefore be defended) while spaces are imaginatively empty and inert and are thus more accessible to exploitation.

The two poles of the creative tension that leads to order are presented in 'The Steeple-Jack', almost in a throwaway manner. The first pole is represented by "the elegance of which the source is not bravado" that informs the design of the aforementioned "antique sugar-bowl shaped summer-house of interlacing slats", as well as the commendable restraint, (we do not forget that Moore was a lifelong Presbyterian) mingled with astute craft implied by

*church portico has four fluted
columns, each a single piece of stone, made
modester by white-wash*

The other pole is represented by a necessary wildness in Nature that we find everywhere, even in this safe little town, a "confusion" that it is a privilege to experience, even as the mind discovers its underlying order:

*You can see a twenty-five-
pound lobster; and fish nets arranged
to dry. The*

*whirlwind fife-and-drum of the storm bends the salt
marsh grass, disturbs stars in the sky and the
star on the steeple; it is a privilege to see so
much confusion. Disguised by what
might seem the opposite, the sea-
side flowers and*

*trees are favored by the fog so that you have
the tropics at first hand: the trumpet-vine,
fox-glove, giant snap-dragon, a salpiglossis that has
spots and stripes; morning-glories, gourds,
or moon-vines trained on fishing-twine
at the back door;*

*cat-tails, flags, blueberries and spiderwort,
striped grass, lichens, sunflowers, asters, daisies -
yellow and crab-claw ragged sailors with green bracts—toad-plant,
petunias, ferns; pink lilies, blue
ones, tigers; poppies; black sweet-peas*

Perhaps our own age might use the term chaos rather than confusion here, (as in chaos theory, or as an acknowledgment of the constant non-hierarchical process of order out of confusion that emergence theory discovers, wherever it observes dynamic, (i.e. self organising) systems).

We need to dwell in order, but we only get it if we see confusion as a privilege, and as a starting point. Order—place, home—must be drawn *from* the confusion, rather than imposed upon it and this requires careful observation and a sophisticated understanding of Nature. As Spinoza notes, in *Ethics, Demonstrated in Geometrical Order*, (1677): ‘Nothing comes to pass in nature, which can be set down to a flaw therein; for nature is always the same, and everywhere one and the same in her efficacy and power of action; that is, nature’s laws and ordinances, whereby all things come to pass and change from one form to another, are everywhere and always the same; so that there should be one and the same method of understanding the nature of all things whatsoever, namely, through nature’s universal laws and rules.’ What we see before us is, indeed, confusion, or chaos, or flux—or whatever term one uses to designate the mystery of *natura naturans*—and that is, that *must* be, the starting point of our making, our *poiesis*, of place. This confusion is to be celebrated, even as it is made habitable by our interventions, (notice the sheer celebratory enthusiasm of that long list of plants, for example) and this is precisely why Dürer would have lived here happily: looked at with a sense of the primacy of natural, rather than imposed order, the coastal town depicted in the poem is a habitable place in the fullest meaning of the term: that is, it is amenable to the practice of *poiesis*, thus bringing about a native culture, trade with other cultures, a sense of order appropriate to the terrain, a set of basic and incontrovertible values expressed in a simple, economical

architecture appropriate to the location and, as the poem ends, a confidence that, in the midst of confusion, a “solid-pointed star, which on a steeple stands for hope” is not presumptuous. Most important of all, however, is the *sustained* sense of privilege that comes of witnessing and finding order within a constantly shifting world, making sense of it, not by imposing control or a false order upon it, but living in it according to a careful observation of nature, experience and the feeling that elegance, safety and hope are not unrealistic aspirations.

There is so much more to say about this poem, (especially its form) but I want to conclude with a brief discussion of the idea of the “solid-pointed star” and what it stands for. “The Steeple-Jack” was composed in a dark time: (it was originally published in the mid-30s as part of a sequence, entitled ‘Part of a Novel, Part of a Poem, Part of a Play’, which also included ‘The Student’ and ‘The Hero’, (the sequence element was later discarded, when the three component poems were published in the *Collected Poems* of 1951). Considering the times—the Depression, rank social inequality and the stirrings of Fascism in Europe—it is hard not to imagine a lesser poet giving way to the temptation to ironize that invocation of “hope” with which Moore concludes this, the first part of her triptych, but that would have been to ironize, and so risk dismissing, the idea of home itself. However, Moore goes on to explore, in the following poems, what hope is, and in so doing, she offers, via the figure of a certain kind of hero, one of the finest definitions that anyone could hope for:

*tired but hopeful—
hope not being hope
until all ground for hope has
vanished*

On one level, we might argue that to say this is to state the obvious: just as we do not require faith where there is clear evidence of a phenomenon, so we do not require hope if there are clear grounds to feel optimistic. In the same way, if home already existed, we would not need to imagine it, drawing order from the seeming confusion we find in the world about us. But home does not exist as a given. As Jesus says, (Luke 9, 58): 'Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.' Like hope, home must be found, in a process of imaginative making that begins with the given—Nature, space—and ends with a dwelling place. In recent years, it has become fashionable, in some quarters, to argue that home—like meaning, like hope, like Nature—does not exist, but is a merely human construct. Need we really point out how absurd the 'merely' in this proposition is? Or might we remind ourselves, with Moore, (in 'He Digesteth Harde Yron', a poem about hope that takes one of its cues from the saddest of now-invisible phenomena, an extinct bird)

*The power of the visible
is the invisible; as even where
no tree of freedom grows,
so-called brute courage knows.
Heroism is exhausting, yet
it contradicts a greed that did not wisely spare
the harmless solitaire

or great auk in its grandeur;
unsolicitude having swallowed up
all giant birds*

Throughout her work, Marianne Moore engages with the 'unsolicitude' that swallows up, not only giant birds, but place, hope, faith, home. If *poiesis* has any worldly function, then surely it is, at least in part, this resistance to reductionist thinking, in a celebration of the invisible phenomena that make the visible habitable.



Winslow Homer
Boys in a Dory I

"It could not be dangerous to be living in a town like this, of simple people..."

Corporate Landscapes

Pasquale Gagliardi

What is actually a 'landscape'? How can we conceptualize it in order fully to understand its quiddity? I will borrow the original argument brought forward by Georges Duby, in his book *Dialogues* (1980).

Men must feed themselves, wrest from nature the conditions for their survival; and can do so only by taking account of the environment that characterizes their habitat. History shows us, however, that their productive practices are not necessarily in functional accord with this environment, but are equally determined by rites, symbols, ideas—in brief, by a worldview. A pure productive practice does not exist; every productive practice is immediately a symbolic practice of appropriation of the world; every productive practice is a way of responding, fitted to a determined environment, to the basic biological requirement, but in so far as that is already culturally formulated. And the signature through which an environment testifies to this *cultural requirement of survival* is called landscape.

According to Duby, then, the landscape is a *natural* reality that has inscribed within itself a *cultural* code. This cultural code is in the first place an aesthetic code. I will mainly refer, in my reasoning, to 'corporate landscapes', i.e. landscapes that characterize corporations and, in general, utilitarian organizations. The reason behind my interest in 'corporate landscapes', is the fact that corporations are *par excellence* productive social systems, expressly governed

by instrumental rationality. There, the symbolic value of practices—and the weave between 'expressive' disinterested (aesthetic) actions and 'impressive', interested actions aimed at practical goals results—in contrast—more clearly than in other (non-utilitarian) social aggregations. As G.A. Fine noticed, 'work is a minuet between expressive form and instrumental function'. (*Kitchens: The Culture of Restaurant Work.*)

In order to better understand this weave, I will propose some reflections on the relations existing between *ideas/concepts* and *images/forms*, *identity* and *style*, systems of *meanings* and systems of *sensations*. To translate an idea into an image (or vice versa) entails passing from conceptual abstract order to formal concrete order, expressing, that is, representations of the *mind* in terms of relations between formal elements perceptible to the *senses*. In a visual image these relations are spatial and chromatic, in an auditory perception they are temporal relations between sonic stimuli of different pitch and intensity, and so on. Every cultural system seems to have structural correspondences between its ontological or deontological codes and its aesthetic codes, that is to say, between systems of beliefs and of values, on the one hand, and specific patterns of relation between formal elements on the other. Hauser (*The Social History of Art*, 1952), studied the connection between the geometric style and the autocracy of forms of government in the cultures of Neolithic peasantry, Vernant (*Mythe et pensée chez les Grecs*, 1969) studied the relationship between the structuring of space and political organization in ancient Greece, and Panofsky (*Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism*, 1951) studied the relationship between Gothic architecture and scholastic philosophy.

Students primarily interested in mental representations of cultures often use the expression ‘vision of reality’ metaphorically to indicate a ‘conception’ of reality. I am suggesting that we use the expression literally, to look at the corporate landscape as a materialization of a worldview, and strive to interpret the aesthetic code written into the land. How and when does a land become a landscape? A land becomes a landscape when it is aestheticized. This will happen in two different ways, working, that is *in situ* (in the physical place) and also *in visu* (into the eye). The first way consists of writing the aesthetic code directly onto the physicality of the place, populating it with artifacts. Every landscape has a scenographic element, meaning that it is ‘constructed to be seen’. This setting displays and hides, provides backgrounds and close-ups, sequences and articulations. Often the setting constitutes a real visual metaphor: it prompts one to interpret a factory as a cathedral, a pathway as a labyrinth, and a ministry as a monastery. The second mode of aestheticization of a physical place—the writing of the aesthetic code into the eye—consists in educating the eye, in furnishing it with schemata of perception and taste, models of vision, ‘lenses’ through which to look at reality.

Of course, the ‘aestheticization’ of the corporate stage is not achieved solely by creating and acting on its visible characteristics: a landscape can be physically constructed to furnish sensory experiences that involve the other senses as well. It is also true that in the human species not all the senses are equally developed or have the same completeness, the same perceptive potential as sight. Nevertheless, the dynamics described with reference to vision are very likely common to all the forms of sense experience: every organizational culture educates the sense of taste, of smell, of touch, of hearing, as well as of sight.

The corporate stage is constituted not solely by inanimate material artifacts but by human beings as well: ‘bodies’ are a vital—in the twofold sense of essential and alive—component of the landscape. They too, like material artifacts or inert nature, can be ‘aestheticized’, thereby giving material form to a particular conception of an organization’s identity and strategy. (Think of the standardized body language and the dress code of an airline hostess or of the MacDonal employee.) Thus emphatically highlighted is the character of landscaping as a ‘technology of control’ and the relationship between aesthetics and power. The ‘vision’ embedded in the landscape can be both a means with which individuals are able to define their personal identities, and a means with which an organization can assimilate people and control them.

An interesting question is: to what extent the great social, economic and technological changes that distinguish the present age foster the birth of organizations which not only have organizational structures different from traditional bureaucracies but are physical and spatial settings radically at odds with those to which we have been accustomed for so long. Let’s then move to the new, emerging landscapes.

The traditional organizational landscape—as outlined so far—is primarily a unitary physical space, partly natural and partly artificial, in which it is generally possible to regulate (facilitate or impede) flows of information and relationality, both within the organization and between the organization and the environment. But what landscape characterizes the organizations unconstrained by a territory, virtual communities or temporary organizations that are going to be the organizational forms of the future?

It is difficult to apply the idea of 'landscape', as something unitary which everyone—members or customers—are able to perceive, to de-territorialized organizations, or at any rate to organizations whose members spend increasingly more time outside formal work areas. Actors perceive only the fragment of landscape in which they are located or with which they are in contact. They can 'imagine' (or know through media-transmitted images or sounds), the work settings of the persons with whom they must coordinate themselves, but they cannot perceive them sensorially and directly. In these cases, social interactions based on sensory contact (and therefore which may be regulated in their proxemic features by means of gestures and the reciprocal positioning of the actors in space) are significantly reduced. In the new physical workplaces, moreover, the fragments of the 'corporate' landscape experienced by each actor may be confused with the domestic landscape and with other organizational ones: in situations like telecommuting, e-mail at home or day-care at work, the walls that separate work from the family and the other institutions to which the worker may belong, even temporarily, weaken or disappear.

If the language of things and space is—as we have seen—both a means with which individuals are able to define their personal identities, and a means with which an organization can assimilate people and control them, the new work settings will probably prompt the invention and diffusion of new corporate artifacts and new semiotic conventions. Some authors have pointed out that both of these processes—identifying and assimilating—will presumably be based to an ever greater extent on 'portable' symbols: company T-shirts or corporate ties can be expected to replace architecture, and busi-

ness cards to replace diplomas and awards hanging on office walls or other 'office-bound' symbols. In a certain sense, the only alternative to a virtual corporate landscape might be a miniaturized and—so to speak—pocket-size landscape.

Some commentators maintain that in these circumstances it will be more difficult for managers to use landscaping to condition the workers' aesthetic experiences, and that there will be more space for individual freedom and empowerment, while others argue that it is impossible to determine '...on whether the new workplace aesthetic is representative of democracy or dictatorship, of employee empowerment or managerial control—or of all, at one and the same time' (G. Cairns, 'Aesthetics, Morality and Power', *Human Relations*, 2002). For sure, the traditional tried and tested systems of socialization, communication and control will become largely obsolete, and the central role played in the new learning environments by computer-mediated communication will lay the basis for new kinds of aesthetic experiences, while rendering others unlikely.

The computer screen separates the users from a real world of multiple perceptions which engage all the senses, and ushers them into a virtual world of infinite potential—made up of images, sounds and information—which requires and refines some senses but dulls others. It is also likely that of the two modalities of aestheticization illustrated earlier—*'in situ'* and *'in visu'*: the direct writing of the aesthetic code onto the physicality of the place, and education into perceiving in a particular way—the latter will assume more importance. If it is not possible to structure the setting so that it furnishes

the sensory stimuli desired, the only alternative is to educate people to select stimuli by filtering them through the corporate aesthetic code. I'm eager to look at more empirical data that might shed clearer light on these new sensory maps, and on the emotional climate that supports or is generated by them.



Winslow Homer
West Point, Prout's Neck
Clark Art Institute

The Gift of God: from Ravenna to Sinai.

A landscape of the mid-sixth century.

Judith Herrin

I was asked to talk about landscapes of the mind and I will stay with this attractive conceit. What was the mental landscape of those living here in the Adriatic in the sixth century? They had little concept of 'East and West' because they belonged to the Mediterranean world of the Roman Empire. Extreme East for them was the distant frontier of the Euphrates border with Persia, and extreme West was the NW corner of Spain, Brittany or possibly Cornwall. Nonetheless Italy and the Adriatic fell into the western half of this vast empire.

Consider Theodora. Her name means 'gift of God'. She was an entertainer, often condemned as a harlot. Justinian was so enthralled by her gifts that he raised her to the throne as his Empress. She returned his favour by her example in a famous incident in 532 when his rule was threatened by the mob in Constantinople—declaring she would prefer to 'die in the purple' rather than flee. They triumphed and went on to build Hagia Sophia, an enormous church and for the next nine hundred years the largest dome in the world, still standing in Istanbul today.

How wide was the impression made by Theodora? In her youth she had travelled to Egypt and seen much of the eastern half of the Roman world. After her return to her birthplace in Constantinople and her unprecedented elevation to the role of empress, she barely left the imperial capital, where she died in 548.

If I were to ask you where is the most remote place that is also central to our mental world, now in the 21st century, what would you say? I don't mean somewhere on the edge, like Lindisfarne, where precious words were reproduced in magnificent Bible texts. Is there anywhere that plays a central role in our civilisation but is also utterly remote from the seats of authority and power?



Empress Theodora and attendants
Basilica of San Vitale, Ravenna

For Christians of the sixth century that place was the rocky desert mountain of the Sinai peninsula, which remains the most unforgiving landscape imaginable. More specifically, the holy mountain, on which today steps are cut into the rock for pilgrims: this was the mental landscape that formed the background to so much Byzantine religion and power.

It was here, above the site of the Burning Bush, that the composition and delivery of the ten commandments took place. To protect the holy men who thanked the Lord for this even greater gift, Justinian and Theodora built them a remarkable fortification, dispatching their army over 2,000 km from their capital to undertake its construction: St Catherine's monastery.

At the centre is the basilica of St Catherine. A few years ago I was privileged to crawl into the roof. The timbers are perfectly preserved as the conditions are too hot and dry even for termites. There, carefully carved on plaques attached to the cross-timbers, with its original, glorious red colouring, easy to read, an inscription says: 'For the commemoration and eternal rest of our empress Theodora.' This enables us to date the construction of the basilica roof, built shortly after 548, the year of Theodora's death.

Another inscription records good wishes for the salvation of the emperor's soul and for the soul of the architect, Stephanos, and his children. The red and gold is on the beams of the ceiling of the church below, and the same bright red is used for the inscriptions.

Now, let us travel nearly 2,000 km from Constantinople in a quite different direction to a point just south of here (though Venice itself did not yet exist). Theodora is depicted, in the famous mosaic of the empress with her ladies in waiting, in the apse of San Vitale in Ravenna. Opposite her, on the northern side of the altar stands the emperor Justinian with the bishop and soldiers, in an image that recorded the nature of imperial regalia and splendour for centuries to come.

Other signs of her collaboration with the Emperor are preserved on capitals atop the columns that support the church structures. These intertwine their initials as a demonstration of their joint patronage of the monuments. In both churches, at Ravenna and Mt Sinai, near contemporaneous sixth century mosaics preserve the Old Testament associations of the holy mountain. In both Moses is shown approaching the Burning Bush, where he takes off his sandals, and receives the law, on stone tablets.

At Sinai, this is related to the New Testament description of the Transfiguration, when the three apostles were terrified by the sight of Jesus in a mandorla of light, accompanied by Moses and Elijah. At Ravenna the associated images of Isaiah and Jeremiah foretell the Incarnation, while the story of Abraham and Isaac very clearly displays the greatest sacrifice demanded of Abraham and the celebration of his obedience by the high priest Melchisadek.

These mosaics display a preoccupation with key events from the Old Testament and the landscape made holy by their occurrence there. The rocky desert mountain of the Sinai peninsula is associated with views of Paradise—hinted at both at Sinai (the Transfiguration scene) and in the Christ

enthroned on the orb of the world from Ravenna. Projected on a glowing gold background, the glimpse of Heaven inspires the viewer/worshipper who longs to enter that higher world. Yet both scenes are set firmly in the utterly unforgiving desert associated with Moses as he led the children of Israel out of Egypt towards the promised land.



St Catherine's Monastery,
The Transfiguration

Landscape in the sixth century AD still retained this original significance. The quite extraordinary element of Theodora's presence in these isolated places is that no image of her survives from Constantinople. There is a splendid description of one such image, however, in the pleasure gardens that lay along the Bosphoros just outside Constantinople:

'There also the Empress Theodora stands upon a column, which the city in gratitude for the court dedicated to her. The statue is indeed beautiful, but still inferior to the beauty of the empress: for to express her loveliness in words or to portray it in a statue would be, for a mere human being, altogether impossible. The column is purple and it clearly declares even before one sees that statue that it bears an empress.' (Procopius, *Buildings* I xi.8.)

Another long inscription in the church of Sts Sergius and Bacchus in Constantinople, which was the first church the imperial couple built together, also records her direct patronage. Twelve lines of Greek dodecasyllables are neatly carved on the lintel running around the church.

And it is most interesting that this octagonal building, with its segmented dome, was the model for San Vitale in Ravenna. This is clear from the representation of Bishop Ecclesius in the apse at Ravenna—he was sent to the imperial capital on an embassy from the Gothic King Theoderic and must have visited this church, newly consecrated. There he would have seen the long dedication. Since Theodora specially favoured one particular group of Christian monks, the Monophysites, who were generally condemned as heretics, and this monument became their centre, the dedication also clarifies her independent patronage.

Bishop Ecclesius returned to Italy and set about constructing an octagonal church, just as grand as that of Sts Sergius and Bacchus. He put himself in the apse mosaic so that no one would ever forget his role in the building.

So Theodora is not given the position of patron, which the bishop claims instead. Similarly, at Sinai the abbot of the monastery claims this role. But as you see her in Ravenna standing opposite her husband, Justinian, you realise the power of the Byzantine Empire in the sixth century. The Emperor ordered and helped to pay for an amazing number of buildings, secular and ecclesiastical, throughout the territories under his control. But only in Ravenna has a record of the joint patronage of his wife Theodora been preserved. Today we can admire these images as the rarest of sixth century portraits—the sole surviving visual representations of the couple who ruled the Roman world from 527-565.

As though backing the proud Roman claim to rule the world, we find images of Old Testament stories that remained the bedrock of Christian civilisation. Those paths of pilgrimage form part of the mental landscape of Byzantium, and on their rugged stones and desert mountains shone the golden light of a civilization epitomized by its God-given Empress, the extent of whose sovereignty is captured in the mosaic at Ravenna, 2,000 kilometres from her seat of power.



Saint Catherine's Monastery
Sinai, Egypt

Listening to Landscape:

A Romantic Evocation of Sound and Mood.

Andreas Dorschel

According to Carl Gustav Carus, the leading Romantic theorist of an art of landscape, such art fulfils its purpose in ‘representing a certain mood of the inner life (meaning) by emulating a corresponding mood of the life of nature (truth)’ (‘Darstellung einer gewissen Stimmung des Gemüthslebens (Sinn) durch die Nachbildung einer entsprechenden Stimmung des Naturlebens (Wahrheit)’)¹. Mood (‘Stimmung’), then, conjoins an inward and an outward perspective. On reading these words, Caspar David Friedrich’s art springs to mind. As Carus was not just a theorist, but also a painter,² the link between soul and nature he imagined would have been accomplished through pictures. Did Romantic poetry and music, or some Romantic poetry and music, aim at the same feat and, if so, did they prove capable of it?

A landscape poem by Joseph von Eichendorff, ‘Im Walde’ (‘In the Woods’), written presumably 1835,³ reads:

[1] Carl Gustav Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei, geschrieben in den Jahren 1815—1824* (Leipzig: Fleischer, 1831), S. 41.

[2] For examples of his landscape painting, see Gerd Spitzer, *Malerei der Romantik in der Gemäldegalerie Neue Meister Dresden* (Leipzig: Seemann, 1996), pp. 24–28.

[3] The poem first appeared in *Deutscher Musenalmanach für das Jahr 1836*. This volume was already available in autumn 1835; so Eichendorff must have written ‘Im Walde’ no later than summer 1835.

*Es zog eine Hochzeit den Berg entlang,
Ich hörte die Vögel schlagen,
Da blitzten viel’ Reiter, das Waldhorn klang,
Das war ein lustiges Jagen!*

*Und eh’ ich’s gedacht, war Alles verhallt,
Die Nacht bedeckt die Runde,
Nur von den Bergen noch rauschet der Wald
Und mich schauert im Herzensgrunde.*

Ignoring rhyme, but approaching literal meaning, a prosaic translation could run as follows:

*A wedding passed along the mountain,
I heard the birds singing,
Many riders flashed by, the horn sounded,
That was a merry hunt!*

*And before I knew it, it had all died away,
Night covers the horizon,
From the mountains alone the wood still rustles
And in the depths of my heart I shiver.*

Eichendorff’s landscape could, it seems, hardly be more different from one of those intangible landscapes his contemporary Caspar David Friedrich

painted, say *Der Mönch am Meer* (*The Monk by the Sea*) (1808/10).⁴ Friedrich deliberately avoids structuring the width of space through clearly identifiable objects. In Eichendorff's enumerative manner, by way of contrast, the landscape seems to fall neatly into little images, each compressed into a single line: the wedding party, the birds, the riders with their horns. Yet this is less true of the second stanza. Mountains and night are not something in the landscape; they are the landscape surrounding us, or the lyrical self.

An important dimension to the experience of landscape that is more like being immersed in it than like pointing at particular items, as a sightseer would, can be sound. The rustling of the woods is all around us. Sound is crucial to Eichendorff's poem both in the way it is made and in the way it is about something. Even apart from rhyme, 'Im Walde' constitutes a web of sound. What seems unrelated in the English prose translation is linked through sound in the German original. For instance, 'schauern' in the final line sounds akin to 'rauschen' in the line before; the heart's reaction thus has poetic naturalness about it. Between 'to rustle' and 'to be afraid', that's all but lost. Except for cases of rare luck, there is no way to capture a poem's unique blend of sound and sense in a translation.

Just as sound matters a lot to how the poem is made, it matters a lot to what it is about. Eichendorff's landscape is heard just as much as it is seen. Both senses are carefully balanced. The poem's *persona* presumably sees the wed-

[4] Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Alte Nationalgalerie, Ident.Nr. NG 9/85.

ding pass along the mountain (l. 1), hears the birds sing (l. 2), sees the riders flash by (l. 3), hears the horn sound (l. 3), but then hears all the previous sounds die away ('verhallen') (l. 5), sees the night cover the horizon (l. 6), and finally hears the wood rustle (l. 7). The course the poem takes, from daylight into darkness, means that the eye is ultimately rendered useless for the experience of nature, while the ear persists.⁵ The mention of individual lines left out the stanzas' concluding verses, i.e., lines 4 and 8. These verses do not refer to a perception, be it visual or aural, but to contrary moods: cheerfulness and—possibly—anxiety.

Is this, in the words of that Romantic theorist of an art of landscape, Carus, a case of 'representing a certain mood of the inner life (meaning) by emulating a corresponding mood of the life of nature (truth)'? Yes and no. The final inner shiver—'mich schauert im Herzensgrunde'—is borne out in the outer sphere: the dying away of the cheerful sounds of wedding, birds and hunt, nightfall and rustling of the wood. But then it is not borne out by these outer events, either: the sounds of weddings, birds and hunts disappear as a matter of course, every day is followed by night, and woods cannot help but rustle. We all know these things and thus the final line takes us unawares. It would be wrong to say that 'Und mich schauert im Herzensgrunde' is shocking, because it is prepared to some extent. But it makes us wonder whether there was more to the events than has been said. Precisely because the mood does

[5] Cf. (with reference to a prose passage in Eichendorff), Richard Alewyn, 'Eine Landschaft Eichendorffs', *Euphorion* 51 (1957), pp. 42–60, p. 43: "Es ist Nacht geworden, die sichtbare Welt ist versunken, und nur an das Ohr noch drängt die Landschaft heran."

not—to refer to the term Carus uses—fully ‘correspond’ (‘entsprechen’) to the outward event, this is a poem that can strike us with wonder.

There is, however, a different version of the poem, in three stanzas, that attempts to solve the riddle rather than posing it. While it is in the manner of Eichendorff, it does not seem to be due to him; possibly, Robert Schumann wrote its second stanza for his choral composition op. 75 no. 2.⁶ That middle stanza mediates between the sprightly initial and the somber concluding stanza:

*Der Bräutigam küßt die blasse Braut,
Die Mutter spricht leis: “nicht klagen!”;
Fort schmettert das Horn durch die Schluchten laut,
Es war ein lustiges Jagen.*

*The bridegroom kisses the pale bride,
The mother says quietly: “do not wail!”;
The horn goes on to blare loudly through the canyons,
That was a cheerful hunt!*

This second stanza parallels the first stanza: in both cases, the first line refers to the wedding, the third to the horn, and the words of the fourth are almost

[6] The piece is part of Schumann’s *Romanzen and Balladen II*, for mixed choir. The composer had set the two-stanza version in 1840 as the penultimate song of his *Liederkreis* op. 39 for voice and piano.

identical. While we would take these at face value in the first stanza, they would assume bitter irony in the second stanza. The additional stanza is supposed to make intelligible why the lyrical self, at the end, feels a shiver in his heart: The disconsolate bride had been forced to marry.

Yet this account appears to be utterly implausible. From the first line—‘Es zog eine Hochzeit den Berg entlang’—we get a panoramic view. The mountain is at the centre of a landscape, seen from a distance.⁷ Thus we cannot believe that the scenic viewer would be able to spot the paleness of an individual or eavesdrop on words whispered into an ear of that individual. One might argue that the two-stanza version lacks plausibility, too, as we do not understand the ego’s fright in the last verse. But these are very different implausibilities. The two-stanza version makes sense as an enigma. The three-stanza version, by way of contrast, suggests a rationale for the final mood and thus, by its own standards, has got to be reasonable. That it is not probable, indeed not credible at all, constitutes a flaw. The mood in question requires distant views; specific perception of individual acts such as the bridegroom’s kissing or the mother’s appealing words lead into particular moral feelings, for instance of blame, that destroy the frame of mind circumscribed in the final line rather than providing a basis for it.

[7] Berthold Hoeckner explores the crucial role of distance for experiencing landscape, vis-à-vis Schumann’s music, in ‘Schumann and Romantic Distance’, *Journal of the American Musicological Society L* (1997), no. 1, pp. 55–132, specifically sect. 4, pp. 91–109.

The art form aesthetically cognate to landscape appears to be painting. It even seems to be of a piece with it: Out in the open, do we not experience landscape as an image? Carus would have been assured of it. Music has never been particularly good at drawing images of anything.⁸

Robert Schumann's op. 39 no. 11, from the *Liederkreis*, does not convey an image of the landscape as seen at once;⁹ rather we listen to movement through the landscape. As the onlooker is not a hiker—he or she is just watching—that movement can only be that of the riders. Schumann does not prepare for it; rather the music, 'ziemlich lebendig' ('rather vivid'), leaps into the gallop manifested, within 6/8 metre, as an alternation of eighth and quarter notes.

From reading Eichendorff's poem, we might expect the sound of the gallop to continue only to the fourth line; the fifth line, after all, suggests, that the action, and hence the sound, had all faded away. But the composer is not most keen on illustration. Against the surface of the text, Schumann continues (albeit after a *decrescendo* to *pp* at 'war Alles verhallt') the audible motion to the penultimate line. Discontinuing it for the final line gets at the heart of the matter: Here is a break; the mood is not an effect caused by and thus similar to outward events, but a subjective realm of its own. While the shiver is somehow

[8] August Halm cites Berlioz as an exception: *Von Grenzen und Ländern der Musik: Gesammelte Aufsätze* (Munich: Georg Müller, 1916), pp. 98–99.

[9] Robert Schumann, *Sämtliche Lieder für eine Singstimme mit Klavierbegleitung, nach den Handschriften und Erstdrucken, vol. I, Ausgabe für mittlere Stimme* (Frankfurt—New York, NY—London: C.F. Peters, not dated), pp. 80–81.

inextricable from the landscape setting—mountain, night, woods—it could not have been predicted and cannot be explained by reference to it.

The pulsating riders' motif—present through seven of the eight lines, either as foreground or as background—receives nuanced treatment, though. Setting the last verse of the first stanza, 'Das war ein lustiges Jagen!', melodic diminution by eighths livens up the motif (bars 17–19). After the sixth verse, 'Die Nacht bedeckt die Runde', the composer, leading the middle and lower voices in thirds, uses the rhythmicized chords for a transition into the rustling woods' peculiar atmosphere. While the rhythmic structure is preserved, tying-over and legato articulation calm down the movement (bars 31–36). Thus Schumann creates difference in unity. The unity is that of landscape; together with the ego of the poem, we keep in the same place after all. But that same landscape is shown in a different light. Darkness has set in where the scene was bathed in light to start with. The 'flashing'—'blitzen'—of the riders had suggested not just speed, but also shine—reflection of bright sunlight on their metal gear. In terms of key, we had been in the luminous sphere of A major (from the start) and then D major (from bar 13). Through F-sharp major in the piano interlude Schumann moves to g-sharp minor for the line 'Die Nacht bedeckt die Runde'. If its dimmer light is musically manifested by means that go along with greater repose, such as legato, that again seems to set the verse that follows into relief. For the words of the final line 'mich schauert's im Herzensgrunde'¹⁰ do not seem to stand for an attitude of composure. Those who shiver are discomposed. Or are they?

[10] Schumann added the "s".

‘[M]ich schauert’s im Herzensgrunde’ can mean several things. ‘Schauern’ is motion, too, but not forward motion like riding. We possess a nuanced language for such motion, with words like ‘to shiver’, ‘to tremble’, ‘to shake’, ‘to quake’, ‘to quiver’ or ‘to shudder’. They do not all mean the same; but neither are they defined in a way that would allow for sharp contrast. The German language distinguishes—though again not clearly—between ‘schauern’ (the word used by Eichendorff) and ‘schaudern’. ‘Schaudern’ features a negative accent. Ludwig Tieck calls it ‘a vertigo of the soul’ (‘einen Schwindel der Seele’).¹¹ ‘Schaudern’ can mean ‘to be horrified’; used with a prepositional phrase, ‘vor etwas schaudern’ often comes close to ‘shrink back from something’. ‘Schauern’ is more open for negative as well as positive sense. While ‘Schauergeschichten’ are ‘horror stories’, there are also ‘Schauer der Ehrfurcht’, ‘shivers of reverence’ or ‘awe’. This suggests, however, that the negative meaning prevails if nothing is added. Both in Eichendorff’s time and now, imagining the lyrical self in a mode of anxiety would be the most likely take on the poem. Such a reading would not at all have to be influenced by knowledge of the additional middle stanza. Though likely, finding anxiety in the ‘Schauer’ is not the sole sensible interpretation. ‘Schauer der Ehrfurcht’, ‘shivers of reverence’ may be anything but far-fetched for a Romantic mind spellbound by nature. As ‘rauschen’ in the penultimate line is a mirror word to ‘schauern’, the latter may then be empathy.

[11] Ludwig Tieck, ‘Ueber Shakspeare’s Behandlung des Wunderbaren’, in *Der Sturm. Ein Schauspiel von Shakspear, für das Theater bearbeitet von Ludwig Tieck* (Berlin—Leipzig: Nicolai, 1796), pp. 1–44, p. 33.

Schumann seems to come close to such a reading. True, the last verse is set apart. For the first time in the song, the composer discontinues rather than just modifies the rhythmical pattern, opting now for longer notes. The musical conclusion makes sense; but it was far from predictable. Like the Romantic project elsewhere, this particular musical design, too, is quite remote from Enlightenment psychology of the d’Holbach type, where inner states are effects caused by external circumstances. The subjective sphere, as imagined by a Romantic artist, is a world of its own. In a non-mechanical way, though, landscape can touch a self and seems to do so here in Schumann’s rendering, as testified by the vocal line on ‘mich schauert’s’, ascending by a sixth, and the expressive chromatic descending line on ‘Herzensgrunde’—placed in the bright sphere of A major, the home key. Schumann’s music of anxiety sounds very different, as listeners would know from the immediately preceding song from op. 39, ‘Zwielicht’ (‘Twilight’). Although a turn to empathy with nature may be less stark than a turn to anxiety would have been, it can and should amaze as much—Schumann was aware that we would need a moment to fully realize it and hence repeated the final line, with that marvellous leap down by an octave towards the tonic at the end.

This looks like a satisfactory conclusion. But it might be self-satisfied rather than satisfactory. Any of the musical elements mentioned—a line ascending by a sixth, a chromatic descending line, a key of A major, a leap down by an octave towards the tonic—is no more straightforward than a word such as ‘schauern’. Perhaps, they are not meant to be. Relating ‘mich schauert’s im Herzensgrunde’ to anxiety instead of empathy could hardly be wrong. That reflection upon Romantic art we owe to the Romantic artists themselves.

Caspar David Friedrich's open skies are screens, as his fellow Romantic, the poet Clemens Brentano realized:

Das, was ich in dem Bilde selber finden sollte, fand ich erst zwischen mir und dem Bild, nämlich einen Anspruch, den mein Herz an mein Bild machte, und einen Abbruch, den mir das Bild tat; und so ward ich selbst der Kapuziner, das Bild ward die Düne, das aber, wo hinaus ich mit Sehnsucht blicken sollte, die See, fehlte ganz.¹²

What I should have found in the painting itself, that I found only between myself and the painting, i.e., a claim made by heart upon the painting and a refusal perpetrated by the painting upon me; and thus I myself became that Capuchin monk, the painting became the dune, yet wherefore I should look out with longing, the sea, was altogether missing.

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What each of us hopes to find in Eichendorff's poem or in Schumann's song, that we only find between each of us and the poem or song. We must, as it were, enter these works of art, hoping to render them complete in this way. But once we have entered, we realize that we, too, cannot provide the finishing touch. Such is the nature of Romantic landscape and, entwined with it, of Romantic mood.

[12] Clemens Brentano, 'Verschiedene Empfindungen vor einer Seelandschaft von Friedrich' [1810], *Werke*, vol. 2, ed. Friedhelm Kemp (Munich: Hanser, 1963), pp. 1034–1038, p. 1034.



Caspar David Friedrich
The Monk by the Sea
Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz

next page:
Robert Schumann
Im Walde

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Im Walde

Ziemlich lebendig *mf* *ritard.*

Es zog ei - ne Hochzeit den Berg entlang, *ritard.* *Im*

p

ritard.

Tempo ich hör - te die Vö - gel *ritard.*

schla - gen, *Im Tempo* da blitzten viel Rei - ter, das

Waldhorn klang, das war ein lu - sti - ges Ja - gen!

p *ritard.*

Und eh ich's gedacht, war *pp* *ritard.*

p

al - les verhält, *Im Tempo* die

ritard. *p*

Nacht be - dek - ket die Run - de, *Im Tempo.* nur von den

ritard. *pp* *p*

Ber - gen noch rau - schet der Wald, und mich

schau - erts im Her - zens - grun - de, und mich

schau - erts im Her - zens - grun - de.

pp *pp*

Part Two

**THE ALPINE
FELLOWSHIP,
WRITING PRIZE,
AND MORE...**

The Alpine Fellowship:

Writing Prize

With more than a thousand entries the judges of the writing prize had no easy task in discovering those stories, essays and poems that could form the short-list. Here is what John Burnside wrote, in his capacity as chair of the panel:

It is always difficult to compare any two pieces of writing, let alone the chalk and cheese of poetry and literary prose. Reading these stories and poems, I was reminded, again and again, of all the ways we can look at, interpret, discover and lose *chōra*, however we decide to understand the term, whether in the context of passage, or of dwelling, of a specific morality of place or of the duty of mourning, and honouring, those places and 'spaces' that we see being misappropriated, denatured or destroyed on what can seem a daily basis. Throughout, I was struck by the several ways that our writers approached the given topic, and it was genuinely hard to settle on only three pieces. That said, the three I did finally choose seem to me marvellous in very different ways.

Our second runner-up explored those most liminal of dwelling places, the homes we make for our dead, and use in so many surprising ways in life, including one place, (the Friends Burial Ground by Southampton Common) that, for this former resident of nearby Avenue Road, came vividly back to life after almost forty years away, (and it is a mark of the piece's descriptive

power that it did come back so vividly). This was an elegant, thoughtful, measured piece on place, memory and belonging that lyrically engaged with the subject matter and I want to congratulate *Bridget Blankley on A View from the Graveside*, a truly memorable runner-up.

Our first runner-up is a moving story of loss of place and family tensions, as a young woman returns to her old home to help her mother move out just hours before the demolition men move in: at once sad and poignantly funny in its observation of character, it tells an all too familiar story of loss of home place in a fresh and economical way, combining sharp attention to detail, painful irony and a measured tenderness to create a highly memorable short fiction. With all the hallmarks of finely-honed and incisive fiction writing, our first runner-up is *Domain*, by *Caroline Zarlengo Sposto*.

Finally, from two inventive works of prose to a poem that announces its wit and energy immediately in the first lines:

*Japanese architects deliberately
inserted mistakes into their designs
to appease the gods, who believe only they are perfect.*

and sustains that energy, and the interrogation of diverse ideas of building and dwelling with regard to earth and sky (the basic ground of ikebana), mortals and the Divinities all the way to the end—no mean feat in a poem that runs to seventy lines. At the same time, the poem brings in a number of Japanese terms and ideas that may well help us all in our deliberations and discussions

of chōra, as we come together here in this extraordinary place, and we may learn a little more about space and its occupancies from the poem's resident ikebana teacher, who gently rearranges the chrysanthemums and plum blossoms of her students before congratulating them on their efforts:

*She criticized
our arrangements, redid them with a smile—
kiku here, with space, ume there with space.
Space—necessary and good.*

I had a hugely rewarding and enjoyable time reading all the entries for this competition, and read several that will stay with me for a long time; but this more than worthy winner nudged my thinking in ways that sometimes surprised me, and it is my pleasure to announce that the winner of this year's Alpine Fellowship writing competition is *Japan, Autumn*, by *Emily Franklin*.



Hokusai, Landscape with Mount Fuji

Japan, Autumn

by Emily Franklin

*Japanese architects deliberately
inserted mistakes into their designs
to appease the gods, who believe only they are perfect.
We do this with memory—
forgetting, mottling as soul salve.
Ill-advised dog later put down—rebranded as diseased.
No I never smoked, seatbelt always fastened.
How unusual, a woman employed in the science lab—
(really we could not afford cereal, or medical tests required)
besides, a pet! (your brother contaminated one sterile albino mouse
so we had to keep her). Ruby, electric white
(her red eyes later gouged on the wheel).
This how we catalogue the past—warily, poorly lit, parenthetical
frozen dinners morphed now
so that boxed Salisbury steak becomes
hand-stuffed cabbage. The sweet relief
of broken memory. In Tokyo,
we argued in ramen alley about selfies
but really about your potholes of memory
dirt-crusted with skewed views
facts, names of preschool kids swapped
for movie stars. Your brain famous for its*

*limbic system - hippocampus, amygdala, cingulate gyrus,
mammillary body, all diagramed years ago.
If not the brain, then at least the decorative facts.
Those days in which you recited ancient Edo pottery,
dynasties of information, explained with sketches.
Now forgotten. Or, you held onto details
we don't need. I am a bit fuzzy, were your words,
noodles dangling like reeds on your chin.*

*In Kyoto along the canal
handmade paper flowers
tossed in for luck
each one slipping, current-bound.
What to do? Hold onto washi fibers
from the gampi tree's bark
or let go, mitsumata shrub
in the form of paper stars now
floating away. No matter.
You will not pocket the paper
nor the word for it. Washi. Washi.
This is what we need: take only
what your hands can keep.
Maybe that is pain's definition:
Only one person retaining memory
for two. How burdensome being architect
collecting flaws, unable to sieve memories.*

*Ikebana class one morning: arranging bulky kiku,
burnt orange kinmokusei, ume—Japanese apricots eaten in winter.
Nothing lasts, our teacher said. She lived alone,
side-street house with fusuma instead of walls, sliding screens
allowing her to configure space
for different occasions. She criticized
our arrangements, redid them with a smile—
kiku here, with space, ume there with space.
Space—necessary and good. A space is a thing!
Do you understand? Absence an object itself.
Hold on.
to space, she said as she took
photographs of our work that was really her work by then.
I cannot accept the space.
I must accept the space.
You whispered. What does she mean by space?*

*Back at the canal
you do not wish for more washi stars.
This is my problem.
Only the canal and I remember
and even then this water only knows us
as shadows. Both of us leaning, willow bent
memory looming over what we've thrown.
Oh those flowers we recognize but cannot name.*

Domain

A Story by
Caroline Zarlengo Sposto

Though the grass was still winter brown, and the trees still barren, the late afternoon breeze hinted at spring. I leaned against the faded siding, tossed my cigarette butt onto the driveway, dug my iPhone from my pocket, and called my brother.

“Be glad you’re twelve hundred miles away,” I said in response to his relaxed, ‘Hello’.”

“Too much church?” he asked.

The background sounds on his end indicated he was—*once again*—in a restaurant.

“Not church,” I said. “Cleaning.”

“Cleaning *what?*” he asked above the clinking of silverware and glasses.

“The house. She’s had me on my hands and knees scrubbing floors. She says mopping pushes the dirt around.”

“Did you tell her they wouldn’t care?”

Before I could answer, the screen door flew open. “Lisa,” my mother scolded. “We’re running out of time. You know the company will be here tomorrow.”

The sight of her, small in the doorway, brought a lump to my throat. Her skin looked transparent, her hair reminded me of a dandelion gone to seed.

“I’m talking to Steven,” I said. “You want to say, hello?”

“We don’t have time,” she snapped, and disappeared into the house.

I said goodbye to my brother and the surrounding silence engulfed me. I recollected the sounds of the past: children playing on swing-sets, barking dogs, rubber balls crashing into chain link fences, giggling packs of teenage girls taking the short cut through the alley on their way home from school, and the next door neighbor who was forever listening to a radio and working on his car.

A lone mourning dove cooed from a wire. I put my phone in my pocket and went inside. Mom was humming. She always hummed when she was irritated—not a song, but a meandering melody that cracked on the high notes. I followed her hum to the dining room where I found her on her hands and knees scrubbing the baseboards. I wanted to snap at her, but pleaded instead. “Mom, please ... just ... *stop!*”

Without looking up, she scrubbed more vigorously and muttered, “I don’t want them to think we’re low class.”

“They won’t think of us at all.”

She started humming again as she scraped at a stain with her thumbnail.

“This is insane,” I said. “If they knew we were in here cleaning like this ...”

She paused, looked up at me, and asked, “Did you bleach the toilet?”

With a sigh that felt like a primal scream, I picked up the jug of Clorox and started down the hallway. I poured an extravagant amount into the toilet bowl. The smell brought back childhood memories of a heavily chlorinated public pool. Mom always wore a bathing cap covered with multi-colored rubber flowers, even though her self-styled breaststroke kept her head far above the water. I remember feeling embarrassed the time she caught me chewing bubblegum in the shallow end and made me get out and spit it into a Kleenex in front of my friends.

“You can’t chew gum in the pool,” she said. “It steals your breath.”

I didn’t know quite what she meant, but didn’t dare question her authority—then or now.

I left the bathroom, closing the door behind me. Crimson light was bleeding through the west-facing dining room windows. Despite my hooded sweat-shirt I felt chilly, and I was tired. We’d been working hard since dawn, now the sun was setting, and we hadn’t stopped for lunch.

I paused to look at the faded pencil marks in the hallway where my father used to document our heights. I had overtaken my brother for a while, but he passed up me during our freshman year in high school. It seemed he continued to be ahead of me in a lot of ways from then on. It wasn't until I was a twenty-six year-old virgin that I came to terms with the fact that I was a lesbian instead of an old-fashioned Catholic girl who had yet to find the right man. And not for another few years—after Dad's death when I was thirty—did I marry Gail in a civil ceremony in San Francisco.

Our friends threw us a big reception with a country swing band when we returned home. Mom looked angry in the photos, but that was only because Gail had borrowed her wedding dress, and then kicked off her pumps and danced for hours, trampling the hemline. By the end of the party the bottom of the heirloom gown looked as if it had gone through a paper shredder. Mom must have hummed all the way home that night.

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“Lisa,” Mom called. “What about these drapes?”

I went in and took an obedient look at the pleated avocado green poplin with the geometric print. Crowned by padded cornices of the same fabric, anchored at the bottom by little washer-like weights sewn into the hem, they might have been a retro treasure, but they were faded and the lining revealed a jagged brownish water stain.

“Let's not worry about them,” I said.

Mom pulled the edge of a drape aside and squinted out into the sunset. A rotting tree limb and some tarpaper shingles that had blown from the roof littered the lawn. She gestured with her mottled hand and broke into a recitation.

“Busy old fool, unruly sun, why dost thou thus through windows and through curtains call on us? Must thy motion lovers seasons run?”

I heard the words, but found myself paying more attention to her face. The rosy light flattered her classic profile. For the first time, I noticed that her forehead was unusually low, and her hairline as straight as if it had been drawn with a ruler. For most of her life she had worn her bottle auburn hair in sweeping, movie star bangs.

“John Donne ... the poet,” she said, brushing a small, dead moth from the sill into her dust rag. “I don't want you to think I'm an old lady who's losing it.”

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On our last pass through the kitchen she insisted we double check the drawers, one of which turned up a sandwich bag filled with twist ties. She pocketed them as if they were diamonds.

“I think we've done it,” I said, hefting a heavy-duty trash bag toward the door. My mother nodded like a child and followed me, pausing to give the light switch near the doorway one last, loving wipe.

“Are you sure Gail won't want those drapes?” she asked.

“No,” I said. I wanted to tell her about our breakup, but the time wasn’t right. *Breakup* is a silly expression for a marriage. Marriages don’t break up. They unravel. Ours had. After nineteen years as a couple, and a lifetime as friends, Gail told me she could no longer see the point. I later learned that her new partner was a younger woman—a nurse practitioner named Sheryl-Ann, and that they were looking into ways to have a baby. Hard as it had once been for Mom to understand that I hadn’t “turned gay” and to accept the reality that Gail and I were in love, I dreaded telling her about my impending divorce. It would be like coming out all over again.

I went to put the trash bag at the end of the driveway. When I turned back to see Mom approaching the car, I realized she was taking care not to stumble in the dark, but before I could get to her, she was in the passenger seat. I hoped she hadn’t heard the scavengers across the street wrenching away gutters and drainpipes. It occurred to me to call the police, but I let the impulse pass.

I wondered what she was thinking as we rode together in silence through of the grid of narrow streets and cookie cutter houses toward the main thoroughfare.

Finally, she spoke. “What did Steven call about?”

“Nothing,” I said. “I called him.”

“You called him at work? What for?”

“I don’t know. I just wanted to—”

“Complain,” she said. “You called him to *complain*. Nowadays everyone has a phone in their back pocket so they can complain whenever it strikes them. It’s a sickness.”

We fell silent.

I knew that though she was lashing out at me, it was the company that upset her. It was just her way. Whenever we were expecting visitors, she’d get nervous and start scrubbing our already clean house from top to bottom. She needed things to be just so. From the time we were six or seven, my brother and I were, thrust into our Sunday clothes, and pressed into service with dust cloths and a can of furniture polish hours before anyone was expected to arrive. I remember more than once being sent to the living room and pass the hors d’oeuvres while Mom put the finishing touches on her hairdo, or frantically fanned a drop of clear nail polish she’d dabbed on a run in her stocking.

The past couple of days at the house had felt like more of the same, minus the dress clothes, the aroma of cooking, and my brother. But then, with family, it’s always more of the same.

“I know you think I’m crazy,” Mom said, gazing through the windshield.

“No—”

“I’ve always believed,” she said. “That even if I’ve been set up to fail, I should hold my head high.”

“Of course,” I said, wondering once again, if my brother and I could have done more.

I took her to dinner, dropped her off at her little apartment and went back to the motel.

My first impulse when I kicked off my shoes was to call Gail. Then I remembered those days were gone. I put my head on the pillow to rest my eyes. The next thing I knew it was four-thirty in the morning. Once I realized where I was, I found myself drawn to the old neighborhood once again.

I cruised slowly past the lawns where my brother and I had thrown newspapers from our bikes after school. The streets were empty and the houses, now looked small and drab.

I parked my car at the corner, and walked to the edge of the barricade. Shivering in the sunrise I heard bird songs that were soon drowned out by the sound of the demolition company rolling in. I saw that our house, too, had been stripped of its gutters the night before. I felt violated, but there was nothing I could do.

I took out my iPhone with the notion that my brother should witness what I was about to see, but I couldn't bear to do it, and put the phone back in my pocket.

The workmen's voices pierced the air with a nonchalance that struck me as callous. They were mostly talking about ball games, though I couldn't make out everything they said.

The men didn't enter the house, so they would never know the floors were scrubbed and the toilet bowl had been bleached to a dazzling white.

Startled by a loud, scraping sound, I squinted toward the sunlight and spotted the silhouettes of oversized dumpsters being hauled in. Next came the roar of engines followed by crashes, groans and the cracks of wall studs splintering like Popsicle sticks. When the cloud of dust settled, the home where we had fought, laughed, cried and grown was a heap of rubble that looked as if it had fallen from the sky.

A View from the Graveside.

A story by

Bridget Blankley

I like cemeteries, not enough to rush out and book a plot, but I like them. I like to visit, spend time in the yew-tree quiet and feel in touch with the earth again. The problem is any old cemetery won't do. It needs to be right. I tried Hollybrook when I first came to Southampton but it was altogether wrong. The paths were too wide, the trees too tamed and grass is too short. What's worse is that it's far too popular. Maybe because of the location, maybe because it's just too big, I don't know, but somehow it feels more like a park with gravestones than a cemetery. It's strange really because the first cemetery that I remember visiting was a park. When I was a kid we used to go to a park in Burton where we used to picnic on a table made from the last memorial to one William Glossop, Merchant, 1800-1840. We went there most weeks and had our jam sandwiches and orange squash with Bill (as I liked to call him). I guess we chose that spot because the gravestone was so bare, not much carving to make the plates wobble, but I remember Bill because he was only 40, the same age as my mum at the time. I used to watch her on the bus, all the way home, checking for any signs of her imminent demise. But even though it had been turned into a park the Old Burton Cemetery still had that slightly untamed feel: there was ivy and daisies and hidden nettley places and enough wild life to drown out the noise from the world outside.

I didn't know it then, but I do now, the beauty of cemeteries is that they take us away the everyday world and give us a chance to look at our lives from the

outside. They give us the space to see what's important and what isn't; they help us decide where we want to be. It was that feeling of being elsewhere Hollybrook didn't have, and that I needed when I wandered along The Avenue with a vague plan of walking to The Common.

The Avenue's not a bad place to walk, not in the early autumn and not if you pick your time. Too much traffic in the rush hour, but it was about two o'clock and I was indulging in a little early autumn leaf kicking when I saw a gardener battling with a recalcitrant wheelbarrow as her hat made a break for freedom, heading straight for the main road. It stopped before it reached the traffic and I picked it up. It was all a bit too picture perfect: the autumn leaves, the wind, the gardener in faded cotton overalls pushing a barrow full of tools, but that's how it was and probably how it had to be: because it led me to the most perfect cemetery that I had ever visited, and as I have said, I'm very fond of visiting cemeteries.

The cemetery, or more precisely the Friends Burial Ground, is normally kept locked but I'd passed by just as the key was being turned, and at a time when I most needed a quiet green space, I had the chance to go inside. Occasionally all the cogs on the universe seem to engage and the world turns just for you.

What can I say, it was perfect, it is perfect, or would be if it was open more often; but then maybe some of the magic would be lost. A little piece of paradise needs rarity to separate it from the day to day. It's tiny, not much bigger than the land my house is built on, but as the gates closed behind me

I stepped out of the city and into that 'otherworld' that I'd been looking for. It had a bench, of course it had a bench. There had to be a right place to sit and the bench was in that place. Like the gods on Mount Olympus you have to have a viewing platform to really see the world around you. The bench, and there was only one, was just where it needed to be for you to see your place in the grand scheme of things; the 'dust around the moon' as my Gran used to say.

I've been to meetings of the Society of Friends at home; joined in that welcoming silence that can convince you that even the worst of weeks won't last forever; and left determined to return the next week; but never actually done so. What I didn't know is that their burial grounds have the same ordered togetherness. The tombstones facing each other across the paths, equal rows, equal distances, identical stones. Like the meeting house everyone here was valued in the same way, no one had precedence, no one was ignored, Roger lay behind Grace and James was to the right of Angela, whilst Philip and Iris waited for the resurrection to her left. The bench, at the northern end of the plot, invited visitors to join in the silent contemplation, a true 'Communion of Saints.' The first time that phrase made any sense to me at all.

There was a church I visited once, in Wales, that had a cemetery but no grave stones, not one. It just had a single monument, 'To the dead of the parish.' Well that isn't exactly what it said, it was carved in Welsh, but I looked up the translation when I got back to the hotel. I wondered how the people there knew their history, their place in the world. But the next day, when I went back and it wasn't raining, I understood; they already knew. They were of the valley, they

knew the names of the people who were buried there. They knew more than their names, they knew the actual people, they were neighbours and relatives and the family of their relatives. They didn't need to be reminded, they could already remember. But what about the rest of us; those of us who don't belong anywhere, who have left our places of birth and wandered? What happens when we die? When we are scattered in anonymous Gardens of Remembrance, with our name on a list that's removed after twenty years? Where will we fit in the landscape of the future? Crematoria are busy places. They have a lot of passing traffic, one set of mourners leaving by the side door as the next set arrives. They aren't places of quiet contemplation, they're a terminus to pass through. A stop-off before a farewell drink at the nearest pub, and the rest of your life. They are neat and ordered and impersonal. If they only see sterile gardens, instead of places of restrained chaos, our children will grow up to believe that their world is an ordered place, that their lives can be controlled. It makes me sad.

The grass in the Quaker burial ground was trimmed, but not cropped, the fallen leaves were gathered, but the trees were left to overhang the path and drop haws and berries on the residents. More tended than tamed, it was the perfect place to be on an October afternoon. I must have sat there for a couple of hours, I didn't really notice, it was the sort of place where you told the time with a sundial not a mobile phone, so I left my watch in my pocket. The sounds from the road were lost amongst the holly, and drowned by a persistent wren who staked his claim to a hazel sapling and a great pile of slowly rotting leaf-mould. My mind was slowed by the ancient serenity. I had stepped outside of myself, waited for the world to rotate, then gathered myself again. I knew where I was going, where I needed to be.

I couldn't stay for ever. The magic would have been lost and in any case, the gardener was beginning to show tiny signs of impatience. Not enough to make me feel unwelcome, but enough to make me realise my selfishness. She had allowed me, as a favour, to share what she treasured. I was a stranger and I was taking advantage of her hospitality. I got up to leave, thanking her, admiring her work, and hoping that the gods, or the fates, or the universe, would lead me back again the next time I needed to be there.

As I left I tried to decide, how it is that we become part of the environment? Is it by what we leave, or by the trail of where we have been? I thought of a churchyard, on the Norfolk coast I think, every few years it would be buried by sand. The paths, the graves, even the church itself would fall prey to the wandering dunes that make up that part of the east-coast. Once the sand reaches the sills of the leaded windows volunteers arrive with barrows and shovels and rescue the church, and its ancient inhabitants, from the sand. It's an endless task. If they pile the sand on the windward side of the churchyard then it just blows back again with the first storm. If they move it to the leeward side, more sand blows from the beach to replace it. I wonder why they bother, this dwindling band of locals. They don't need access to the church, it has long since fallen out of use; replaced by an angular multi-denominational meeting place in the town centre. As for the grave yard—well the residents there are already buried by six feet of sandy soil, another six feet of sand is unlikely to make any difference to them. So who is it that is shaping that Norfolk landscape, the people buried there, who will, at some stage, serve to anchor the sand-dunes; or the people that move the sand, fighting against the storms? Does it matter? I think it does. I think that somehow, we all want to

leave a trail, a scar in the land. Like those ancients who carved giants into the chalk hills, we want to shout across the generations that we were here. That is why, unlike the people from that Welsh valley church, we want, at the very least, to know that our name will be carved on the stones on which we walk.



Ken Worpole
An English Graveyard
With the grave of William Blake

Two Poems and a Workshop

Gillian Clarke

We were fortunate that the distinguished Welsh poet Gillian Clarke attended our meeting, and permitted us to compose poems under her guidance. She told us that we should write in our mother tongue, at least initially, since this is imprinted on our lives and body rhythms, and contains the words that first entered our soul. (Though she also warned against the iambic pentameter, ‘the tune in the heart of every builder’, which is constantly trying to impose its rhythm on English verse, forcing the words along tracks that are not their own.)

We should listen to words for the meanings contained in them, beyond the mere things to which they apply. Poetry happens when a page comes alive and word music replaces mere description. But description is important too, and Gillian coaxed us all to write a poem of the moment, picking out first a thing, then a colour, then a person, and so on until a whole landscape might be captured on the page.

The results of Gillian’s workshop were impressive, and quite startling, with a metaphysical poem in German from Jacob Burda, and some lyrical stanzas in Hungarian from Julia Marton-Lefèvre, the quality of which, she assured us, reflected the brilliant teaching she had just received. Among the many English products, heartfelt verses from Ken Worpole and a fully formed landscape from Jessica Swale both had a powerful impact on

the audience. Jessica’s contribution is included here, as a record of a most memorable event.

There follows two poems by Gillian herself, one—‘Flood’—written in the wake of a previous visit to Venice, the other—‘River’—evoking the landscape of Snowdon, with its mysterious inner river, the residue of vanished mining operations and mining communities.



Alan Lawson
And the ice melts and seas rise—Portrait 3
Plaster and Wax Sculpture, 2016

Flood

*When all's said
and done
if civilisation drowns
the last colour to go
will be gold—
the light on a glass,
the prow of a gondola,
the name on a rosewood piano
as silence engulfs it,*

*and first to return
to a waterlogged world,
the rivers slipping out to sea,
the cities steaming,
will be gold,
one dip from Bellini's brush,
feathers of angels,
Cinquecento nativities,
and all that follows*

River

*The current does a double-turn
under the bridge, about the boulder,
black water in a sleeve of silver,
light's italics at the rock's shoulder.*

*Ages of ice and water made this place,
seepage of springs, a gleam of streams
rising from mist and murk as flood
meets deep and secret aquifers.*

*Blue with copper, Craftwyn's waters
smoothed boulders for gateposts, walls,
a corner-stone for a farm, slipped blades of ice
between the slate so it splits clean as a page.*

*Weather, miner, shepherd, farmer made this place,
worked the slopes, hollowed the heart of it,
plundered its power, built hafod and hendre,
turned water into fire, roofed Europe with slate.*

Poem for Gillian's Workshop

by Jessica Swale

a painted trunk,

lizard mottled,

stands and observes...

the mother hen coos of mother tongues.

hair pale

Wales in her lilt,

the tilt of her voice siren song, cotton soft.

her wit, incisor sharp

the grumbling tum of a boat chugs by,

a man in a bow tie,

a dark dot

ink blot

under a cornflower sky

She sits, still as the tree,

a ring nestled tight on the skin

He sits nearby,

his glinting like a wink in the sun

bags and birkenstocks lie mud brown,

as we nestle down,

burrowing like seeds

she has pressed into the soil,

hoping for a sprout

before lunch.

Panel Discussion:

The Promise of Landscape.

In the first of our panel discussions, chaired by Andrew Huddleston, three contrasting approaches to landscape and its meaning were given by Julia Marton-Lefèvre, Luc Jacquet and Roger Scruton. Julia drew on her long experience as an environmental activist and administrator to present an unusually optimistic view of the natural world and the landscapes that we treasure. She began from the definition of landscape given by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, of which she was until recently Director General: landscapes are *'areas where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced a distinct character with significant ecological, biological, cultural and scenic value and where safeguarding the integrity of this interaction is vital to protecting and sustaining the area.'* The dry definition presents a vital fact, which is that the landscape depends on us, not only for its beauty, but for all the other values that we find in it. In response to this the International Union has developed a policy of 'protected areas', which now store 15% of terrestrial carbon, help reduce deforestation, habitat and species loss and support the livelihoods of over a billion people. Conservation means nothing, Julia argued, if it is not aimed at protecting nature and its resources for all the inhabitants of the Planet, rather than for the chosen few. Parks and other

From *Il Etait une forêt*
by Luc Jacquet



natural environments are a fundamental health resource, and advances in medicine are as dependent today on the pharmaceutical qualities of plants, animals and microbes as they have always been. More than a quarter of modern medicines originate from tropical forest plants, and the trade in them is worth \$108 billion annually. Nature does not merely provide us with cures, it protects us from disasters: coral reefs and mangrove forests protect against storms and tsunamis, wetlands sponge up floods, forests prevent landslides, and so on.

The real problem, according to Julia, is the decline in biodiversity: one in three amphibians, one in four mammals, and one in five plants face extinction today. She referred to a study initiated in 2008 by a wide range of bodies, known as TEEB (The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity), according to which we are squandering natural assets at the rate of \$4.5 trillion a year. Hence in 2010 the UN committed its members to a decade of action devoted to reversing the loss, and Julia spelled out some of the strategies so far adopted. We are not moving fast enough, she concluded, but at last we are moving.

Luc Jacquet, the renowned director of environmental documentaries, including *The March of the Penguins*, introduced his new film, *Il était une forêt*, in which he explores, in collaboration with the botanist François Hallé, the life of a tropical forest and the interdependence of its flora and fauna. Through a short extract Luc demonstrated the 'travelling' technique of the camera, accompanying the melancholy words of François Hallé, revealed at first almost hidden in the leafy undergrowth, and then, as though transported, sitting in the crown of a mighty moabi tree.

Roger Scruton took off from a question posed by Pasquale Gagliardi: 'how does land become a landscape?' and he compared this to the question 'how does a human being become a person?' In both cases raw material acquires a new form from our way of relating to it, and this new form is also a new kind of thing. Landscapes, like people, form an intentional, not a material, kind. Landscapes are born at the moment when outer and inner come into correspondence, when earth, sea and sky are not seen as objects to be struggled against, but as subjects to be respected, as people are respected.

Seen in that way landscapes emerge when the earth is observed with the eyes of the wanderer rather than those of the pilgrim. Referring back to the discussions of Judith Herrin and Andreas Dorschel Roger distinguished 'object spaces' from 'subject spaces', arguing that the pilgrim is crossing arduous object spaces to the unique subject space that is his goal: the place of martyrdom or the place once visited by God. The wanderer, by contrast, has mislaid God, but is seeking him everywhere, can find him anywhere, and therefore sees all places as potential 'subject spaces', that might look back at him with his own eyes.

Roger went on to consider a question raised by Jacob Burda, which is the question of the boundary. In what way and to what extent are landscapes edged by boundaries? As Nonny La Pena had illustrated with her remarkable virtual landscapes (see the Afterword below) the actual seen world is without boundaries, and can be reproduced only with the aid of a 360 degree Google camera. When we paint a landscape, however, we set a frame around it and bring things within that frame into bounded relations. This is like the funda-

mental gesture of home-building, the 'taking into possession' that turns land into a settlement. The painted landscape is no longer a background, as in the *Virgins* of Raphael, but has come into the foreground, to occupy the frame. The scenery that formerly shone only with the reflected light of the Virgin now replaces her: the landscape itself becomes sacred, as in the paintings of Caspar David Friedrich.

The pilgrim and the wanderer have something in common: they are not at home. The wanderer has lost a home in this world, but wanders in search of it, as in the songs of Schubert and Mahler, knowing that home is in this world or nowhere. The pilgrim is seeking a place in time that has been visited by the eternal. He is not in a poignant relation of longing towards the places through which he wanders, but has a definite goal, even if that goal is, ultimately, not a place in this world. Byron, the quintessential wanderer, was wrong to call his poem Childe Harold's *Pilgrimage*, since Childe Harold had no spiritual goal, but merely wandered through the places where other people keep their gods, picking them up in idle curiosity and then returning them unpurchased to the tray.



From *The March of the Penguins*
by Luc Jacquet

On Resonance with Nature and its Loss

Angelika Krebs

Introduction

I would like to explore the *aesthetic case* for landscape conservation. My main claim will be that the experience of beautiful landscapes is an essential part of human flourishing; it is not just an enriching option for all of us and certainly not merely a subjective preference for some of us. Beautiful landscapes can make us feel at home in the world; this constitutes their great and irreplaceable value. Please note that the aesthetic argument does not have to carry all the burden of justifying our conservationist attitude. Its role is limited but important, more important than most people tend to think. This is because the argument provides a metaphysically innocent understanding of our feeling that we are part of nature and should try to fit in rather than stand out. It serves to underpin in a deeply humanistic fashion our horror at the ever-growing grey crust that threatens to cover all of the earth's surface.

As a first step, I will clarify the *concept of landscape*: a landscape is a larger natural whole whose principle of unity is its gestalt, character, 'Stimmung,' mood, or atmosphere (section I). Then I will distinguish various ways of how we experience landscape atmosphere, namely perception, empathy, sympathy, and infection (section II). I will do this in order to prepare the ground for the specifically aesthetic claim in the last and main section: how, when we experience the atmosphere of a landscape *aesthetically*, we respond to it by resonating or feeling at home (section III).

But before I embark on the stony road ahead, let me get you into the right mood by presenting a passage from German writer Peter Kurzeck's autobiographical 2003 novel *Als Gast* ('As a guest'). In the passage, the author recalls a walk he took with a friend in the city forest of Frankfurt, which—apart from the highway and its hum in the background—is as empty and quiet 'as if the earth had long stopped speaking to us.' The following translation of this passage is my own, with the help of others.

Through the piece of forest now, along its edge. Such a scanty little forest—however one walks, one always walks along the edge. And the forest as if emptied out. Rather as if just erected, you say to yourself. No roots? Without roots, the trees? Professionally put up by professionals. Quality forest. Guaranteed to last. Life-size. And secured with care. Like the real thing. Exactly almost like the real thing! And so quiet, as if the earth, every spot of earth, the plants, the stones and every thing, as if all the world had long stopped speaking to us. And then we had stopped too. A long time ago. We do not answer! So quiet, but behind the quiet a hum, a growing hum. From all sides. And coming towards us. Or as inside one's own head.¹³

[13] Peter Kurzeck, *Als Gast* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 2012), 191-192.

Kurzeck's walk does not lead through a forest, but only through a piece of forest. A real forest is large and deep; you can enter deep into it. Such an inside does not exist in a piece of forest. A piece of forest is not a forest anymore.

Between the trees in the piece of forest, there is nothing left, no undergrowth, no shrubs, no mushrooms. Even the trees do not look like real trees any more—they look more like fakes, highly praised in the excited language of advertising that culminates in the paradoxical cry: "Exactly almost like the real thing!"

We are unable to resonate with such trees, with such a piece of forest, with such highly artificial and cut up nature. It seems that in a world like this, we also have stopped resonating with and between ourselves. Yet, behind this dead quiet, the cars on the motorway are roaring louder and louder. The machine world seems to be the only thing that still grows as nature used to grow. The machine world threatens us. It intoxicates us.

I. The concept of landscape

As Aristotle already taught in his *Physics*, nature is that part of the world which has not been made by human beings but comes into existence and vanishes by virtue of itself. Artifacts are the opposite of nature in this sense; they are made by human beings. The distinction between nature and artifacts is polar or gradual (like the distinction between light and dark) and not binary or dichotomous (like the distinction between being pregnant and not pregnant); one cannot be a little bit pregnant but it can be more or less light or dark. There is hardly any untouched nature on earth anymore. Most of what we call nature, the conservation of which we are concerned with, lies, in fact, between

the extremes of pure nature and pure artifact. It is a mix of the purely natural and the purely artificial in which the purely natural aspect prevails.

In nature, we can distinguish natural organisms and things (like plants and rocks) from larger natural units (like landscapes, parks or gardens). There is no sharp boundary between landscapes and gardens. *Gardens* are, first, laid out for aesthetic enjoyment and in this respect they fall somewhere between art and nature; second, they usually surround a house and are themselves surrounded by a fence, so that they mediate between the house and the landscape.

Landscapes are especially pertinent to the experience of natural resonance. This is because they are relatively free from human ends. In twelfth-century Old High German, "lantscaf" denoted a larger natural area and its population. In fifteenth-century Netherlands, the term could also refer to a painting of a larger natural unit. Art historians still talk of landscapes in these terms. Today, the boundaries of landscapes are no longer political, as they were in the beginning. Taking up a proposal German philosopher and sociologist Georg Simmel made in his classic piece on the philosophy of landscape a hundred years ago, for us today it is atmosphere or character that constitutes the *unity* of landscapes.¹⁴

Where a larger natural area loses its character through a natural catastrophe or human destruction, it lacks the unity necessary for being a landscape. It turns

[14] Georg Simmel, "Philosophie der Landschaft," in Georg Simmel, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen 1909–1918* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2001), 471–482, English: "The Philosophy of Landscape," *Theory, Culture and Society* 24, 2007, 20–29.

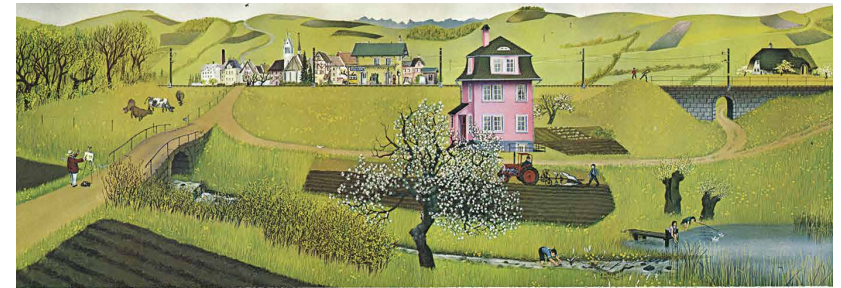
into an expressionless *heterogeneity*, into a non-place or landscape garbage. It does not turn into an ugly “landscape.” Ugly landscapes are the opposites of aesthetically attractive and, in this broad sense, beautiful landscapes. Not every landscape change amounts to landscape destruction. The change can also be for the good. The Golden Gate Bridge might be an example. Still, much of what goes on around us does amount to landscape destruction.

An artistic exemplification of this is Jörg Müller’s set of pictures, *Alle Jahre wieder saust der Presslufthammer nieder* (“Every year the jackhammer’s pounding returns”).¹⁵ Four of the seven pictures in this series are illustrated here.

These pictures show a typical Swiss countryside and how it changed between the years 1953 and 1972. Can you guess what season it is in the various pictures? In the first picture it is obviously springtime, the fruit tree in the middle of the picture is in full bloom; in the second picture it is autumn, the tree’s leaves are yellow. But what about the season in the last picture? It is difficult to tell. For nothing much remains of nature. The trees, meadows and fields are gone, the cows are gone, as are the brook and the pond. All that remains is the grass. And grass is green all year round. As it happens, it is autumn, the mini-tree planted on the roof of the discount store has yellow leaves.

[15] Cf. Jörg Müller, *Alle Jahre wieder saust der Presslufthammer nieder* (Aarau: Sauerländer, 1973).

Jörg Müller
Every year the jackhammer’s pounding returns



II. Perception, empathy, sympathy, and infection

Let me now, in order to prepare the ground for the specifically *aesthetic* type of landscape experience, to be explored in the last section of my talk, distinguish four more basic types: perception (or understanding), empathy (or reproduced or vicarious feeling), sympathy (or fellow feeling) and infection (or contagion). The contemporary debate on empathy, in which ‘empathy’ can mean any of these different phenomena, still needs to regain the conceptual standard that phenomenology reached at the beginning of the last century, most notably in the writings of Max Scheler and Edith Stein.¹⁶

When we *perceive* that a landscape is peaceful, we remain affectively more or less neutral. We simply realize that it is peaceful.

When we *empathize* with a peaceful landscape, we move with its atmosphere, enacting it but not sharing it. As the example of cruelty makes clear, empathy occupies an intermediate position between perception and sympathy. Cruel people are not sympathetic to the suffering of their victims, but they still need empathy in order to fully enjoy their victims’ pain.

When we *sympathize* with a peaceful landscape, we move with its atmosphere and share it. We resonate emotionally, as we do when we listen to a favorite

piece of music. Sympathy is an emotion in the full sense, including bodily feeling, cognitive evaluation and behavior, while empathy is ‘only’ a vivid mode of cognitive understanding. Sympathy comes in two variants: participatory sympathy and meta-sympathy. Only the first is relevant for landscapes. In the second, we are sad *about* the sadness or bad situation of another, but we do not accompany her through her sadness as in the first variant.

When we are *infected* by a peaceful landscape, we are swayed by its atmosphere. Infection is causal while perception, empathy and sympathy are intentional; they are directed towards the expressive quality of the landscape. In being directed towards an “other,” they presuppose some distance between self and other. Infection is not alert to this distance. Infection is highly relevant for mental health and wellness, but it does not play much of a role in aesthetic experience.

III. Feeling at home in nature

In this final section I want to spell out how resonating aesthetically with landscape atmospheres can make us feel at home in the world. I will distinguish between stronger and weaker understandings. While beauty, especially functional beauty, allows for feeling perfectly at home, sublimity affords only a partial or ambivalent version.

Aesthetic landscape experience involves not only attending to landscapes closely, perceiving their atmosphere and empathizing with it, but also sympathetically sharing it *for its own sake*. In stressing the ‘intrinsicness’ of aesthetic experience, as well as the distance that is constituent of perception, empathy

[16] See Max Scheler, *Wesen und Formen der Sympathie* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1999), English: *The Nature of Sympathy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954); and Edith Stein, *Zum Problem der Einfühlung* (Freiburg: Herder, 2012), English: *On the Problem of Empathy* (Washington: ICS Publications, 1989).

and sympathy (as they are directed towards an ‘other’), this understanding is reminiscent of Kant’s aesthetics, even if his aesthetics is much colder than that. As John Dewey, among many others, observes, sympathetic emotions play no role in it: ‘To define the emotional element of aesthetic perception merely as the pleasure taken in the act of contemplation, independent of what is excited by the matter contemplated, results, however, in a thoroughly anemic conception of art.’¹⁷ Instead of aesthetic contemplation, I therefore prefer to speak of aesthetic ‘resonance’.

Still, in tandem with Kant, it is important to distinguish between aesthetic experience on the one hand and physiological and psychological impact or effect, on the other. My main thesis does not concern causal impact or effect. Rather, it concerns the quality of the aesthetic experience itself, which can include, as a by-product, the mood of feeling at home.

Like most or all intrinsic activities, aesthetic sympathetic attention or resonance is accompanied by pleasure. The pleasure is of a disinterested kind. In Kant’s terms, it is ‘*interesseloses Wohlgefallen*.’ Georg Henrik von Wright calls this kind of pleasure ‘*active pleasure*’ and contrasts it with, first, ‘passive pleasure’ such as the good taste of an apple, and, second, the ‘pleasure of satisfaction,’ that is, the feeling we have when we achieve what we want.¹⁸ Similarly Roger Scruton, who calls active pleasure ‘pleasure in’ and contrasts

[17] John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (London: Perigree, 2005), 264.

[18] Cf. Georg Henrik von Wright, *The Varieties of Goodness* (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1993), 63-65.

it with ‘pleasure from’ and ‘pleasure that.’¹⁹ Active pleasure or pleasure in is something we cannot intentionally induce. It arises only when we are absorbed in an activity and forget about our daily worries. It is a *by-product*. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi has popularized the notion of the self-forgetful drive, which characterizes active pleasure as *flow*.

Csikszentmihalyi has also presented empirical findings to show how, in some particularly successful cases of actively pleasant intrinsic activities, the subjects become aware of themselves as part of a larger whole. As he sees it, there is nothing esoteric or metaphysical in this: ‘When a person invests all her psychic energy into an interaction—whether it is with another person, a boat, a mountain, or a piece of music—she in effect becomes part of a system of action greater than what the individual self had been before.’²⁰ Martin Buber in *I and Thou* describes the same phenomenon in different terms, when he writes about the mystic:

What the ecstatic man calls union is the enrapturing dynamic of relation, not a unity arisen in this moment of the world’s time that dissolves the *I* and *Thou*, but the dynamic of relation itself, which can put itself before its bearers as they steadily confront one another, and cover each from the feeling of the other enraptured one. Here, then, on

[19] Cf. Roger Scruton, *Beauty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 28-31.

[20] Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Flow* (New York: Harper & Row, 1990), 65.

the brink, the relational act goes beyond itself; the relation itself in its vital unity is felt so forcibly that its parts seem to fade before it, and in the force of its life, the *I* and the *Thou*, between which it is established, are forgotten.²¹

Another example of this phenomenon familiar to musicians is the feeling you can get when, after rehearsing a symphony with the orchestra, it suddenly seems as if the music or the orchestra *plays you*. Before, it was you who played your instrument together with all the others who played theirs. Now, you feel a part of the whole. And this is a new experience over and above the active pleasure you have felt all along in rehearsing the symphony with the other musicians.

Thus, the affective quality of aesthetic experience highlighted so far lies in sympathy and in flow plus, in some cases, the feeling of being at home. The *physical metaphor of resonance* underlines this affective quality. However, the metaphor might be misleading in at least three ways. First, physical resonance occurs when one object vibrates with another at the same or a similar natural frequency, e.g. when the G- and D-strings of a violin vibrate with a G-major chord on a piano. This is a *causal* phenomenon, whereas aesthetic resonance is first and foremost intentional (i.e. mentally directed) sympathy.

[21] Martin Buber, *Ich und Du* (Darmstadt: Lambert Schneider, 1997), English: *I and Thou*, (London: Continuum, 2004), 69.

Second, physical resonance is not only causal but also *instantaneous*; aesthetic resonance, in contrast, requires a 'gymnastics of attention' (to borrow a phrase from Roger Scruton's *Notes from Underground*). It takes time and effort; only sometimes, in learnt spontaneity, does it occur instantaneously. We can distinguish the immediate seizure by an aesthetic atmosphere from the discrimination that sets in afterwards, which may or may not validate the first immediate impression. This first impression is directed and is not to be confused with infection.

Third, physical resonance tends to be *bilateral* (and even amplifying: think of the famous example of marching soldiers collapsing a bridge). Not only does the violin resonate with the piano, the piano resonates back with the violin. Aesthetic resonance, however, is a one-way connection: I resonate to the object, but it does not resonate to me.

VI. Beauty

Landscapes are *beautiful* in the broad sense when they invite and reward intrinsic sympathetic attention or resonance. Their appeal is not limited to some of us, but open to all. Aesthetic landscape resonance is not just a subjective preference, as travel guides and art criticism prove. It is a universally (and perhaps particularly easily) accessible form that the desire for beauty can take. The desire for beauty is an anthropological constant. Man does not live by bread alone. Fulfilling this desire in one way or another is an important part of the good human life. As morality requires respect for the essentials of the good life of all human beings, conserving beauty is a moral obligation.

How beautiful landscapes and other beautiful objects or ensembles manage to lure and satisfy us is, of course, the central question of aesthetics. Classical answers stress symmetry, harmony or unity in diversity. Modern answers focus on the experiencing subject. According to the Kantian answer, beautiful objects or ensembles bring our faculties of imagination, "Einbildungskraft," and understanding, "Verstand," into free play. This intellectual Kantian model should at least be complemented by the idea of a "free play of sympathy," to borrow again a phrase from Roger Scruton.²² It is not only our cognitive faculties that are attracted and challenged by beauty but also our affective powers. Beauty does not only make us think about many things, it also makes us feel many things. It makes us open up and grow both rationally and emotionally.

Do the *atmospheric* and the beautiful then amount to the same thing (at least for beautiful landscapes and nonrepresentational forms of art)? Not necessarily. Something might have a strong positive or negative atmosphere in the sense of an overwhelming impact, infecting us but not inviting us to attend to and sympathize with it for its own sake. Kitsch could be an example of this. We might formulate this point differently: what is merely atmospheric *has* an atmosphere, while what is beautiful *expresses* an atmosphere. If we put the point like this we would, however, be employing a weak notion of expression that would allow us to say that beautiful landscapes express atmospheres. We could not limit the notion of expression to artworks that admittedly are expressive in a different and deeper sense than landscapes. Expressive art is

[22] Roger Scruton, *The Aesthetics of Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 355.

a kind of communication. It pursues meaning. It articulates, explores and meditates on human concepts in a structure all of its own. Expressiveness in art is an achievement. This does not hold for landscapes. Compared with art, the expressiveness of landscapes is a superficial phenomenon.

Landscape beauty is special though and *cannot be replaced* by other kinds of beauty. If it were replaceable, nothing much would follow from the aesthetic argument in terms of landscape conservation. One reason why landscape beauty is special is that we experience landscapes synaesthetically and feel them with *all our senses*, not only with our eyes and ears, which are more capable of aesthetic distance than our noses, tongues and fingers are. We even move around in landscapes. Hiking is a favorite way to appreciate natural beauty. Sensual feeling and, yes, infection is part and parcel of aesthetic landscape experience.²³ We can thus add infection to the affective aspects of aesthetic landscape experience outlined so far, which include sympathy, flow and feeling at home. Infection serves to increase the immersive effect of beautiful landscapes, so that we may feel at home in them, both sensually and aesthetically.

The other and more striking reason why beautiful landscapes are irreplaceable is that they fulfil our conscious or unconscious longing to be part of and not alienated from the natural world, the world that is just there, that comes

[23] See Hans Jonas, "Der Adel des Sehens," in Hans Jonas, *Organismus und Freiheit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck, 1973), 198-225, English: "The Nobility of Sight," in Hans Jonas, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 14, 1954, 507-519.

into being and vanishes by virtue of itself. No fake or imitation of nature can fulfil this longing. It needs beautiful landscapes to heal the rift between subject and nature, both the nature out there and the nature in us. *Living in harmony with nature* in this sense is more than an enriching option for a good life; it is an essential part of human flourishing. As Martin Heidegger and his follower Otto Friedrich Bollnow put it, beautiful landscapes teach us how to ‘ *dwell on earth.*’²⁴ They give us a sense of place and make us honor it. They invite us to put down roots somewhere and identify and care for it as our special ‘Heimat.’

V. Sublimity

There are stronger and weaker forms of feeling at home in nature. So far I have concentrated on the strongest one, *perfect sympathetic coordination*, which feels like unity.

Often, however, we succeed only *partially* in our attempt at sympathetically moving with something. Our failure need not be due to ourselves; it could also be due to the landscape. The classical distinction between the beautiful and the sublime is relevant here. For our purposes, it can be reconstructed as follows. Only the beautiful (now in a more limited sense than before and no longer synonymous

[24] Cf. Martin Heidegger, “Bauen, Wohnen, Denken,” in Martin Heidegger, *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1951), 145–164, English: “Building Dwelling Thinking,” in Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought* (New York: Harper, 2013), 141–160; and Otto Friedrich Bollnow, “Die Stadt, das Grün und der Mensch,” in Otto Friedrich Bollnow, *Zwischen Philosophie und Pädagogik* (Aachen: O. F. Weitz, 1988), 44–62.

with “aesthetically attractive”) allows us to be fully taken up in it. The sublime, in its infinite extent and power, entices us to sympathetically move with it, too. The subject enjoys participating in its magnitude and strength. However, the subject also feels painfully reminded of her own insignificance and vulnerability. The sublime confronts us with a tension between a celebration of the landscape and self-diminution. Still, insofar as the sublime appeals to us and invites us to partially move with it, neither leaving us cold nor threatening us existentially, it is possible to talk about feeling at home, in a weaker sense, in sublime nature too.

VI. Functional beauty

A third understanding of feeling at home in nature opens up when we attend to the landscape that surrounds us not as such, but in relation to ourselves, that is, in its functionality for our own good. A landscape that looks as if it affords a good human life is beautiful in the functional sense. It is ugly if it doesn’t. Thus, contrary to so-called *positive aesthetics*, there is a sense in which nature can be *ugly*.²⁵

In functionally beautiful landscapes we feel at home, not only because they have a good physiological and psychological impact on us, but also because they indicate, by the way they look, sound and smell, that they can support human life and provide for its needs. *Evolutionary aesthetics*, which traces our

[25] For positive aesthetics see Allen Carlson, *Aesthetics and the Environment* (London: Routledge, 2000); and Malcolm Budd, *The Aesthetic Appreciation of Nature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

sense for beauty back to our sense for landscapes with a high survival value for our species, like the savannah, finds a limited justification here.

To conclude, we are natural beings who long to live in harmony with nature. The ongoing destruction of beautiful landscapes turns us into aliens in our own world. Our own world is rapidly becoming so empty and so quiet as if the earth had long stopped speaking to us. And then we had stopped too.



Vincent van Gogh
Wheatfield with crows
Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)

Part Three

**THE ALPINE
FELLOWSHIP,
VISUAL ARTS
PRIZE,
AND MORE...**



Oliver Eglin
From 'Il Gattopardo',
vignettes of contemporary life.

The Alpine Fellowship: Visual Arts Prize

The 2017 Visual Arts Prize was awarded to Emma Bayer. Emma produced a cinematic essay in response to the theme of Landscape, and her short film was screened on a perpetual loop at the entrance to the Palladian Refectory for the duration of the symposium. Guests could take time away from the heavy schedule of lectures, performances, and discussions, to watch what is a strange and touching portrait of contemporary landscape, shot from point of view. The images of streets are interspersed with moments of savage natural beauty, shot in the Russian landscape. One finds oneself looking up at buildings, dwarfed, and at the reflection of streets in shop windows, of fashion boutiques and religious icons, side by side, until finally a golden box with blinking eyes in a window display waves the viewer off. The film is never normative, but a sense of estrangement is built up in the reflections of life. Home appears to be nowhere, except perhaps as a promise or a hope. The shopping arcades take on a religious capacity and one is left with an odd mix of questions and concerns. But at the same time something beautiful appears to linger in the attention to detail, and in the gilded warmth of a shop interior.

The runners up were Oliver Eglin and Iliya Mirochnik, whose entries are reproduced in this volume. The former convinced the panel with his photographic vignettes of contemporary life 'Il Gattopardo', and the latter with his monumental painting series 'Salzburg Recollections'. Both artists

surprised the judges with their skill and with their sensitive interpretations of landscape.

There follows Emma Bayer's remarks that accompanied her entry:

'I began my research with attempts to catch the general pattern of the modern landscape, the landscape of my high-tech world. The first attempts to identify something uniting the world context failed—my shots clearly showed eclecticism, the lack of unity of styles and an endless postmodern mix of everything.

But in the process of creating this work, I noticed that very often in my videos were showcases, boutiques, shops, even when I was shooting monasteries, historical monuments. This is what we see every day at the level of our eyes. This is what was created to attract our attention.

And speaking sincerely, the main object of our urban landscape is not even a skyscraper, but a mall. Richly decorated architecture was built for shops, boutiques penetrate into historical areas and follow pedestrians step by step. And not only in the real, but also in the virtual world. Suffice it to recall the abundance of online stores, advertising. Our way of thinking also reproduces an ideological shop, since we consume images of ourselves and others, patterns of behavior, beliefs, attitudes. Man reproduces the mental store.

Perhaps overconsumption is a force that allows society to build skyscrapers, transform the surrounding landscape. At the individual level, a person can

forget his problems through shopping, escape to an endless merry-go-round of people and enjoy the world of affordable goods.

I think I and my contemporaries are lucky. Thanks to the developed travel industry, we are able to diversify the landscapes in our heads. For centuries man has been striving for the nature and harmony that give him mountains, seas, other countries and everything, that goes beyond his life and has existed for thousands of years. Through this experience, a modern man, hi-tech and eternally in a hurry, can leave for a while the environment of simulations and irony and try to touch the ancient and archetypal forms. Through nature, man can still recognize the divine, existential, categories of time and space, freedom, death.

This is what unites us with Corot, Turner, Plato and Derrida. Simply because we are human beings, deep inside we are striving for knowledge, nature, harmony, even if we have surrounded ourselves with a global market.'



Iliya Mirochnik
Saint Georg Trakl
Triptych

Landscape and Dramatic Form.

In a wide ranging discussion, chaired by Mike Lesslie, Christine Jones, Katherine Rundell and Jessica Swale considered the role of landscape in theatrical and cinematic creations, whether as background to the action, as subject-matter, or as raw material. Katherine spoke briefly about her academic research topic at *All Souls*; about the physical landscape of the Shakespearean stage, where staging could work as a visual joke that undercuts the lines being spoken; and, too, about the fact that boy actors who played the female parts during Shakespeare's time could, under a law passed by Elizabeth, legally be kidnapped off the street and indentured into service on the stage. Christine introduced us to her original and powerful way of creating stage sets and background scenery through the elaboration of collages inspired by crucial ideas, images and dramatic situations in the work. (One of her collages is illustrated in this volume p. 158.) Jessica's reflection on her recent work deserves quotation in full, and here it is, followed by a summary of Christine's reflections:

Dramatic Landscapes

Writing pictorially for theatre and film

Jessica Swale

I am *playwright*. A *wright*—a *maker* of drama—not a writer, in the same sense that a *wheelwright* makes wheels. My role is not simply to write the words, it is to create the landscape, the world in which a story plays out. And then to write the story. And in creating a landscape, I form a world in which the character exists and, sometimes, which the audience might share in, in order to immerse themselves in the narrative.

There are two elements of landscape that we must consider as dramatic writers. Firstly, the landscape in which the story takes place, the space in which the debate plays out, the scene, the *mise en scène*, i.e. the setting, the 17th century brothel, the Victorian school room, the deep Indian Jungle.

The second landscape which we must respond to is the landscape of the theatre space itself, in which the audience will encounter the work. Are we writing a modern studio theatre or an outdoor amphitheatre in Greece? The landscape of the theatre space itself is an interesting conundrum and often (rightly) affects what we write, and how we write, for that space.

For me, landscape has become increasingly important in my work as I have found myself writing predominantly for film. In theatre, the landscape is imagined by the audience. We may hint at it in stage directions, but the job of the playwright is essentially to write dialogue which helps the audience to imagine a place *through*

speech. In film, in contrast, our role is to create the world pictorially, not only through the dialogue (and most often not through the dialogue at all), but instead through image. We write the world of the film, the detail of the picture, we are essentially directing the film on the page through the visuals we conjure up. By way of example, here are the same scenes from *Nell Gwynn*, an original play of mine, which I'm now adapting for the cinema. Firstly the film opening, then the play:

Nell Gwynn film opening

EXT. THE OPEN SEAS, 1660s

A vast, dark ocean. Rolling waves. Then a shock of vivid colour. A galleon, brimming with bright oranges, dissects the view, sailing on, up the channel, past White Cliffs, into the mouth of Thames, where London unfolds before us.

The smoke and soot of the city loom. Londoners trade on the river banks, shouting, rowing, washing. Into the docks it sails, where the oranges are rolled off the boat, into vats, then baskets—one grasped by a pair of grubby, youthful hands. A glimpse of a linen blouse. As she hurries through the street, an array of feet pass up by; booted and be-jewelled, dirty and crooked, then bang—in through a pair of wooden doors, into a heady swell of noise and colour. The playhouse.

All of life's here, from poxed beggars to toasts of the town. Pan up to see the orange seller. NELL GWYNN. Our sparkish heroine. NELL moves through the crowd, selling fruit.

Nell Gwynn play opening:

The time is the 1660s. Charles II has ascended the throne.

We begin in the playhouse in Drury Lane.

SCENE ONE

Playhouse.

Fanfare.

In the theatrical version, unlike the film version, there is no description at all! I leave that up to the audience's imagination, and of course, the designer. And whilst I work closely with the designer, as I of course imagine where and how the play takes place on stage, it is ultimately up to the designer to create the landscape on which my words play out. In film, I have a far greater responsibility, visually, for creating the landscape.

In cinema, landscape is character. In his talk, Roger Scruton proposed that we understand ourselves through our relationship with our landscape. In drama, we understand character not only through the way in which the character relates to and interacts with the landscape, but the way they appear in it—how we shoot them. Perspective. Tone. Juxtaposition. This allows us to show the landscape's effect on the character. One might, for example, use scale to demonstrate a character being overwhelmed by the world around them—if they appear dot-like on the vast vista of a Martian landscape, as opposed to a drone shot in which we see a character standing on the top of a cliff, shot from below to show them towering powerfully over their territory, reigning over it. In this manner, the environment becomes a fantastic tool to help screenwriters reveal story and illuminate character.

Film writers always want to avoid exposition—we never want a character to simply explain how they feel, we live by the mantra of 'show not tell.' So demonstrating a character's power, or vulnerability, or courage, through their placement within a landscape can be a great tool. It is no coincidence that we often describe the development of the character as their 'journey'—their physical relationship with the landscape, and the way they face its challenges, often plays out quite literally.

In writing landscape for film, we create a myth which we ask the audience to invest in. Even though we, as the viewers are often omnipotent voyeurs, we don't necessarily see the world through the protagonist's eyes. Our choices, in how we write that landscape, allow us to dictate the emotional climate. Choices of scale, the minutiae of detail, the muscularity of the descriptive language used to envision a view, how we use tone to create a landscape, tell us a great deal about the emotional climate, as well as the character's persona. What do we highlight? What do we draw attention to?

We are not just telling the story, but choosing the perspective from which to tell that story. This is particularly important when adapting a novel. *Persuasion* by Jane Austen begins with a long and turgid passage about the Elliot family tree. It is inherently undramatic, lacking in dynamism, essentially it is a cold introduction to the novel. In prose, this doesn't present a problem because readers are used to absorbing information through descriptive passages. Yet, in film, each scene has to be active. In adapting *Persuasion* for the cinema, I wanted to begin the film in an exciting, bold manner. We want to get to know our protagonist, Anne Elliot. One way

of doing so, without having to lay out long passages of information, or engage a narrator or voice over (which always seems to me a lazy option) is to find a way of demonstrating her character... through her relationship with the landscape—in a new scene which I would invent. A scene which didn't exist in the book, but yet which is still faithful to the novel's tone and voice.

In order to imagine an alternative beginning, I looked for clues in the novel which would allow me to explore Anne's backstory, specifically her history with Wentworth. I would present something of her character to the audience, in order to tell them what had happened before our story begins, in a dramatic manner. In the novel, we find out how Anne feels because her inner thoughts are described in the prose. This makes it a wonderful novel, but is not much help to the film writer.

142 Instead, the clues came through Anne's relationship with landscape. I found the following elements in the novel, to help me invent something new. Firstly Anne loves the outdoors, she is sorry to lose her garden at Kellynch and part of her dislike of Bath is because it's a big town, not the countryside. Secondly, she has been in love with a sailor who left the country in order to fulfill his naval ambitions- therefore, Anne may have a particular relationship with water and the sea. And finally, Anne finds her feet in Lyme Regis, a place which represents landscape in its most dramatic form—shifting sands, erosion, geology, history in rock formations. In the period in which the book was set, Britons were becoming increasingly interested in geology, with the publication of Darwin's new books and the

craze for historical investigation spreading amongst literate circles... so I thought Anne might well read those same books, and I decided to give her an interest in geology which would give her a desire to explore the landscape further as she becomes emboldened, as the story progresses. At first she is scared of the landscape, then, over time, she tackles it and eventually conquers it.

I initially wrote a scene which hints at Anne's memories of the past- the water, the boat, the sense of loss. It would hint that she has quiet private memories which, perhaps, we will be party to later on. As follows:

Persuasion Original Opening

1 SUMMER, 1814. SOMERSET. 1

2 EXT. A TRICKLING BROOK, KELLYNCH HALL GROUNDS, DAY

Dappled sunlight on the water. A leaf nudges into the frame and dances on the current. Pan up to see ANNE, our heroine, leaning against a tree, watching the leaf as it bobs, boat-like, down the stream. She's lost in thought.

She turns her attention back to the notebook in her lap. A list of expenses, peppered with crossings out. Scanning the list, she changes 4 horses to 2, then, after a thought, to 1.

Sounds of a carriage.

Peering through the trees she sees LADY RUSSELL arriving with MR SHEPHERD, a lawyer.

However, I realised quickly that this treatment of the subject was too subtle. An audience would see that she's out in the landscape, but unless you knew the novel, you would be unlikely to connect Anne watching a leaf bobbing boat like to the idea of a lost naval love. I decided instead to add new scene which revealed Anne's past with Wentworth, but which also demonstrated her flaw... her lack of courage and inability to take a risk for love, via her interaction with a landscape which later she would conquer. This theme (Anne's quiet fear of risk) is an element on which the narrative turns, so I felt, if I could demonstrate it, physically, through her relationship with her landscape at the beginning, then we would better understand her in the story to come:

New Opening

SUMMER, 1807. RIVER FROME, SOMERSET

*Dappled lemon sunlight on shifting water.
Sounds of splashing and laughter, as two pairs of feet wade through the shallows, a skirt hem twisting in the current.*

Pan up to discover two young lovers, ANNE ELLIOT and FREDERICK WENTWORTH. Hand in hand, they head up stream, trying not to fall over, ANNE holding her skirt up, FRED with his trousers rolled up.

They clamber out and shin up some rocks. He offers her a hand- and pulls her up into his arms. A moment, their faces close, a shared smile,

then up they go again until they arrive on a ledge. ANNE looks down at the water below. It is higher than she'd thought. She steps back. There's a noise behind her, as FRED throws his shirt off and runs full pelt at the edge—

Anne Frederick!

Frederick Wooooo!

—and with a leap, he is airborne. Splosh! And he's gone. A beat. Silence. Anne's smile falls away—

Anne Fred? Frederick!!

Then he rises, laughing in the pool below-

Wentworth Come on in, it's lovely!

She hesitates. It's too high.

Wentworth (Cont'd) Come on, Anne. Jump!

She looks down at the water below, but she just can't...

EXT. SUMMER 1814, A TRICKLING BROOK, KELLYNCH HALL
GROUNDS, SOMERSET, DAY

*A pair of feet through water. Pan up to see ANNE, seven years on and
a little less youthful, sitting with her bare feet in the brook, leaning
against a tree, lost in the memory.*

*She turns her attention back to the notebook in her lap. A list of ex-
penses, peppered with crossings out. Scanning the list, she changes 4
horses to 2, then, after a thought, to 1.*

*Nearby, a carriage rolls past. Peering through the trees she sees LADY
RUSSELL arriving with MR SHEPHERD, a lawyer.*

EXT. KELLYNCH HALL EXTERIOR

Pulling shoes on, ANNE hurries over to embrace LADY RUSSELL.

In this latter version, we learn so much more about Anne, not only about her character, but we are now set up to engage with her journey. Later on, as she grows and becomes emboldened by her choices, she will encounter a similar landscape again, and this time, conquer it. She will climb the rocks in Lyme and take a dip herself. She will find fossils and connect with the past. She will swim alone.

None of this is in the novel, but as the novel is full of Anne's thoughts, which help the audience understand her in a way which I can't emulate on film, here instead I demonstrate her thoughts and feelings through her actions.

This, to me, is the great joy of adapting a novel for film—how can you take the clues from the novel and find a way of reimagining the story, visually, for a contemporary audience?

In theatre, in contrast, we have to consider the landscape of the building or the stage as we write, as that space automatically has a dialogue with the story. The theatrical space is quite unique in that the audience co-exist with the protagonists. Unlike in film, where we are quite clearly separated from the characters by the screen, in theatre, though we often imagine a 'fourth wall', there is still a liveness, a dynamism which we must consider in our decisions of how to write for that space.

To engage directly with the space provides a host of creative opportunities for playwrights. Woe betide the writer who writes with no consideration of the theatre building. Of course, we are used to having our plays performed in a wide variety of spaces, many of which are beyond our control; my two 'big plays' are performed most weeks somewhere in the UK or beyond, and have been staged in every type of building from conventional theatres to amphitheatres, disused gyms, hotels and gardens, none of which I took into consideration when I first wrote them. However, when we first write the play, the space which it is commissioned for becomes a key part of our creative thinking.

By way of example, I have written both for the indoor and outdoor spaces at Shakespeare's Globe. The outdoor space, the 'main house' is open air and holds an audience of 1700, 700 of whom stand in the yard. It is the most democratic theatre space I have ever worked in, in that, because you play in

natural light, the audience can see the actors just as well as the actors can see the audience. This allows a two-way conversation, sometimes quite literally. The audience space wraps round the stage in the 'wooden O', meaning the actors are surrounded almost on all sides, so they play to the crowd and have to address in front and behind them, down to the pit and up three levels to the patrons in the upper gallery. No one audience member is more important than the next, hence it is a democratic, egalitarian space, in which politics and power can play out to great effect.

This is a *big* space—so it demands big themes. One has to write boldly, and stage boldly, so that actors can move around and avoid getting stuck addressing a small portion of the audience. There is no room for 'table and chairs' scenes in this space—they tend not to work. The best plays for this space hold big ideas, universal themes, timeless notions, bold characterisations, often comedy.

Laughter works brilliantly here, though conversely, so does silence. When a single actor stands on that stage and has everyone's attention, there's something quite unique about the focus, the quality of that silence which I've never seen created as effectively in a conventional indoor theatre space. When an audience sits in the dark, we expect complete silence, it is part of the contract. But when 1,700 people co-exist in an open air space, many standing, there is often some movement, some level of noise, as folks shift from foot to foot, or pull on a coat, or take a step to get a better view. Therefore, in the rare moments of absolute silence, not only does everyone stop making noise, but they also become very still—and that is quite palpable. It is unique, special to witness. There is nothing like seeing a character draw nearly 2,000

people together in a moment of static, collective witness. It can be electric. And playwrights who know this can use it to their advantage, writing plays which hold many moments of bumptious comedy and dynamic movement, then turn on a hairpin to allow an actor to directly address the audience in a moment of quiet communion.

The indoor space, The Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, is quite different. Whilst the outdoor space was built to mirror Shakespeare's Rose theatre, the Wanamaker playhouse was built using plans from the 17th century—the earliest plans for a theatre building to exist as far as we know—and it is a close reproduction of the original Blackfriars theatre, which was adapted as a playhouse in 1596 during Elizabeth's reign. Shakespeare's company, the Lord Chamberlain's Men, used that theatre from 1608, and in it staged many of Shakespeare's later plays.

It is a unique space. Lit entirely by beeswax candles, each play performed there looks something like a Carravaggio painting in its intimacy and use of light and shade to dictate tone. The space uses a thrust stage, surmounted by a musician's gallery, and both the stage and ceiling above are ornately painted in golds, burnt umbers and rich tones. It seats 340 people in three levels, incorporating a small pit and two horse shoe galleries above. It uses shutters to keep out the natural light, so any play, at any time of day, feels as though one has stepped back in time, and late into the night.

The space dictates a picture to the audience which a playwright must embrace. Unlike the open air space, which allows us a far blanker canvas on which to draw, the Wanamaker playhouse provides a specific set and tone

which it is almost impossible to rebel against. It is dark, it feels both like a sanctuary and a sacred building. It draws us in, like looking through a pinhole camera, rather than the wide perspective of the outdoor space. The smell of the candles transports us immediately to another time and place.

I was invited to write a play about the composer Thomas Tallis for this space, in collaboration with The Sixteen, Britain's foremost choral music choir. In order to find a way in to the drama, I sat in the playhouse and tried to imagine how Tallis must have felt, writing his music for the Queen, changing his parameters each time a new monarch took the throne (six times during his lifetime, each of which dictated a complete about turn in the nature of his composition, swinging from Catholic decoration to puritanical Protestant song).

I wondered how he felt when he first decided to write for a choir—where did that thought come from? I imagined him here, in a church-like space, as I was, with my notebook, asking himself how and why he was motivated to write. The play which I wrote was absolutely a response to the space, and the play opened with a speech which relies on Tallis being able to stand alone, lit by a single candle, considering his thoughts and listening to the voices in his head (provided by the choir). The following extract, which opens the play, harks back to Shakespeare in order to set the tone, evoke an era and a sense of both formality and elevation in his thoughts. Written in blank verse, it is a soliloquy in which he extends his thoughts to his audience, in a manner which, I felt, places him absolutely in this specific theatrical landscape.

Scene One—

THOMAS ALONE

In the early years of Henry VIII's reign

Thomas Tallis walks onto stage. He holds a candle and looks at the audience.

Thomas Listen.

Silence.

Listen.

He closes his eyes.

What do you hear? Silence.

He opens his eyes.

Silence—but for one sound.

This voice of mine. It lands so flat and dull.

And like a hammer, knocks upon the ear.

What voice is this to praise the Lord, my God?

What good is man with mortal voice of lead,

That treads flat foot across the realms of sound?

Where is the God in him? That voice is dead.

If this, my speech, so corpulent and cold,
Was all we had to say His name aloud,
Better no sound than that.
Better no sound.

Listen.

Silence.

Listen.

Thomas closes his eyes.

A single voice sings an undecorated Amen. Then a more ornate Allelujah.

A sound divine.
A voice in song can flee the mortal man

And leave him shadowed lowly in his wake.

A note being sung will leave its host below.
And fly towards the gentle hands above.

So what think you of this—my simple thought.
That, if one boy in song may sound divine,
What if one son is coupled with his kin,
With son, and son, until they form a choir?

What better way have we to send our prayers
From churches, poor house, palace, monast'ry,

Where King in ermine bends his head in prayer
And pauper like him stoops upon his knee.

What better shape for worship can there be
Than song and choir to reach divinity?

The choir sing Videte Miraculum. It is glorious.

Landscapes on the Stage

Christine Jones

The word 'landscape' conjures images of nature, majestic mountains, ecstatic skies, a horizon. Stage landscapes are the opposite of that. They are artificially inseminated environments, made by mortals.

One of the hardest things to do on stage is to recreate nature. I try to avoid doing so at all costs and have an aversion to fake rocks. Nature can upstage scenery. If you are using natural elements, you have to create a world in which the natural and unnatural co-exist in a realm that is neither real nor unreal, but True to itself.

Robert Wilson does this by interpreting nature through his highly stylized lens. He makes worlds that feel true according to their own laws of nature. Pina Bausch did this by bringing natural elements indoors and dancing *with* them. There are few things more cathartic than watching her dancers expend themselves in the rain.

For *Let the Right One In*, a stage adaptation of the film about a boy who falls in love with a vampire, we had scenes that happened inside and outside in quick succession. We wanted the forest to be ever-present, as both a place of danger, and the place of fairy tales, where true love saves, but it was important for the interior scenes to be believable as well. We used real trees we found in a forest in Scotland, and staged all of the interior scenes amidst

them, bringing furniture on and off as needed. The forest was an envelope for all of the locations.

A set designer gets to play God, and make a landscape from scratch.

God made the world by invoking Light and separating it from Darkness. Other Gods used things like mud, human body parts, semen, or a giant's blood. For the stage, landscapes are made with words. Words are the primordial matter of dramatic landscapes.

Sometimes the most effective landscapes you will see on stage, are ones that take place in an empty space, in the minds of the actors and audience members who co-create reality.

In *Theatre for One*, which is a private performance space for one actor and one audience member, actor and audience face to face inches apart. The landscape is created in the intimate valley of space between them. There is no set. There is sound. There is light, and there is the text. In a mutually interdependent dance, the actor leads, the audience follows, and together they can go anywhere.

When someone asks me what I do, I say, I am a scenographer.

If I get a blank stare, I say, I create the backgrounds for plays. In actuality I create the foreground, the middle ground, the sky, and all the laws of physics in which the characters exist.

Landscapes in Nature exist for years and years. They age, they change, they burn, they grow, they see generations of beings born and buried. A landscape for the stage is tailored by and for one set of beings.

It is the result of a unique intersection of artists working on a particular play at a particular time. The same group of artists working on the same play at a different time will make a different world.

There are an infinite number of landscapes possible for every play. How do you determine what a landscape will be when you can make it anything you want? How does a space become a place? The extraction of a landscape from a text, is an alchemical process in which invisible intellectual and emotional responses become physicalized. Hence a landscape is not extracted from the stage directions. Most designers I know, cross them out. The landscape is distilled from the text itself.

Over the course of several readings, I pull out lines and phrases, like a forensic scientist. These lines are then distilled multiple times into a phrase, which I call the 'spine' and it guides every choice I make.

It the evidence of the mark the play has left on me. It is the vanishing point in my horizon. All lines lead to it, and from it, back into the audience.

For the opera *Rigoletto* I distilled the libretto, into an assemblage of phrases and then distilled them further into a sentence. This sentence became the departure point for my research, which I then assembled

into a collage. The collage guided the exploration in the model, and became a set.

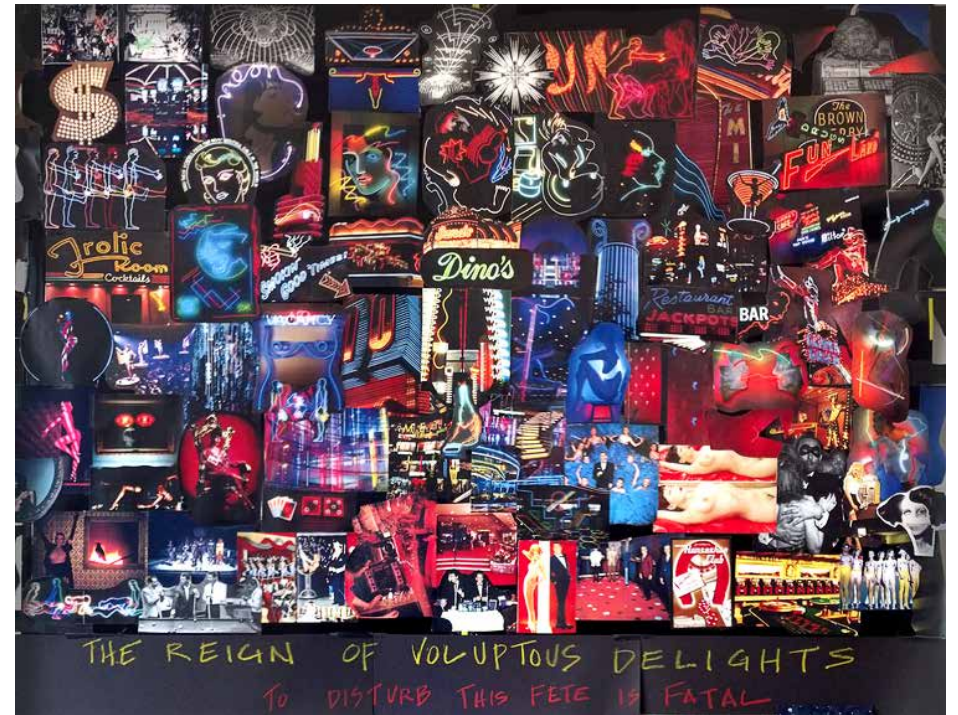
Landscapes we see in Nature, made by the Gods, move us because of their great beauty, because they are alive, and therefore vulnerable to, as well as blessed by, the elements. To make a space on stage come true we use the elements of sound and light. Lighting breathes life into a stage landscape the way a sunset paints a valley. I can't tell you the number of times I have walked into the theatre, seen the set for the first time under work light, panicked, and then sighed in relief when the first light cue came up (which is not to say that work-light cannot be the perfect lighting state for certain productions). However, regardless of the quality of light, a set needs to be lit to be a landscape.

With light a set becomes a 'stagescape'. While we may play at being gods, a theatrical designer's fundamental role is to be of service. We are interpreters, divining landscapes from words.

I touch the play, and the play touches me.



Christine Jones
Rigoletto first sketch



Christine Jones
 Collage for *Rigoletto*

AN EMPTY HEAVEN SHADOW CALLING
LEAD ME SOMEWHERE THROUGH DARKNESS
STARS BEND SIDWAYS
THERE'S A HEAVEN COMET ON ITS WAY
NO SLEEP IN HEAVEN ANGELS DON'T KNOW
LIGHT A CANDLE HOPE IT GLOWS FOR HIM
NO MORE MEMORY MEN ON SHIPS WOMEN
SWIMMING WITH THEM TO SHORE
TOUCH ME HEAVEN ALL IS FORGIVEN
LOVE ME WHERE THE WINDS SIGH
TOO UNREAL WATCHING WORDS WORD OF THE
BODY WOUNDED
IN THE MIDST OF NOTHING THERE IS ONE THING
SHOOT UP JUNK OF YOU CAN'T TELL
THE DARK I KNOW WELL BEEN THERE
THEN THERE WAS NONE SOUL BRIDE
ALL WILL BE FORGIVEN THERE IS LOVE IN
HEAVEN BELIEVE SAIL UNTIL DON'T
DO SADNESS BLUE WIND SHADOW
WHISTLES THROUGH THE TOTALLY FUCKED
GHOSTS LEFT BEHIND IN THE MOONLIGHT
HEARTACHE ON THE WIND WHISPERING
OUT TO SEA VIOLENT SAIL NAKED
BLUE ANGEL LOCKED OUT OF PEACE NO KEYS
ALL IS FORGIVEN THE HEART WILL MEND
ALL SHALL KNOW THE WONDER OF PURPLE SUMMER

THE REIGN of VOLUPTUOUS DELIGHTS

GAMBLING DRINKING FEASTING FIGHTING
LAUGHING OBLIGED

TO DISTURB THIS FETE IS FATAL

LOVE'S FLAME ENCHANTS
IMMUTABLE ENSLAVES

VENGEANCE DEMANDS VENGEANCE
PARDON GAINS PARDON

ALL'S DARK NOW

Christine Jones
Condensation of summary

THE REIGN OF
VOLUPTUOUS DELIGHTS
TO DISTURB THIS
FETE IS FATAL

Left
Christine Jones
Rigoletto first summary

Christine Jones
Final Epitome

Basquiat and Landscape

by Eleanor Nairne

When Alan first approached me to give this talk, I wondered whether it would be possible. Jean-Michel Basquiat is an artist that I have been working on for nearly three years now but he is not someone that I associate with the concept of 'landscape'. Then I remembered an incidental anecdote. Sometime in the spring of 1983, when Basquiat was 22 years old and exhibiting at Larry Gagosian Gallery on the West Coast, David Hockney came by his studio. It's an amusing encounter to imagine, particularly given that Hockney praised Basquiat for being an 'excellent landscape painter'. Hockney may have been playing the contrarian but the incident prompted me to think about whether, when we use the term 'landscape' metaphorically, it might offer a useful way of thinking about Basquiat's work.

I'm sure I'm not the only one who was curious to look at the Wikipedia entry on landscape in the run-up to this event and I was particularly drawn to the description of landscapes as 'reflect[ing] a living synthesis of people and place that is vital to local and national identity'. When thought about in these terms, Jean-Michel Basquiat was certainly a landscape painter, in that he found a way to distil down the spirit of a remarkable moment in New York in the late 1970s and 1980s into complex compositions that speak of his world, his scene and his lexicon of influences. For those of you who are not familiar with Basquiat, let me give a little background.

He was born in Brooklyn in 1960 to a Haitian father, Gerard, and a Puerto Rican Mother, Matilde and was fluent in three languages from an early age. He was expensively and thoughtfully educated, although as a precociously intelligent child, he didn't do well in traditional classroom contexts. In 1976, he joined the City-as-School, a pioneering alternative high school based on John Dewey's theories of 'learning by doing', where the cultural activity of the city was used as the primary syllabus, so students were taken to the theatre and concerts and exhibitions.

It was here that he met Al Diaz, with whom he developed the concept of 'SAMO©' a graffiti pseudonym under which they wrote cryptic, poetic statements across the city. This earned him an extraordinary degree of renown in the newly emergent post-punk downtown art scene and soon he was making collages, postcards, sculptures, performances and music, as well as drawings and paintings. He was included in a number of important group exhibitions in 1980-81 and by 1982 he was offered his first American solo exhibition at Annina Nosei Gallery and was the youngest ever artist to be included in Documenta, Kassel that summer.

He went on to collaborate with his artistic hero Andy Warhol and continued to exhibit internationally, in locations as dispersed as the Ivory Coast and Japan, right up to his death from a drugs overdose in 1988 at the young age of 27. These days he has become increasingly known for the financial value of his works and for the celebrities that have been drawn to collect them. You may have heard, for instance, of the sale of *Untitled*, 1982, earlier this year, for \$110 million, which made Basquiat the most expensive American artist

in history. If you run a Google search of his name, it gives a fairly insightful idea of the most frequent search activity around his name. What we've been very keen to do at the Barbican, is to emphasise that this is really only one part of the story and that Basquiat was a far more complicated artist than many have imagined, channelling from a host of sources ranging from bebop jazz to literature to early cinema.

SAMO© (4): Writing on the landscape

Let's begin at the beginning, which is Basquiat's work as SAMO©, in which the city of New York—and the streets of SoHo and the Lower East Side in particular—became the canvas for his artwork. At this point, I think it's useful to pause and remind ourselves of the state of New York at this time, as it's a history that has been almost entirely erased from the slick, city that we find in its place today.

When Basquiat left his Brooklyn home for good in June 1978 and moved to Manhattan, the city was on the brink of ruin. Only three years earlier President Gerald Ford had denied federal assistance to spare the city from bankruptcy. Violent crime in New York had doubled, as had car thefts and assaults, while rape and burglary had tripled and robberies had increased tenfold. Bastions of middle-class life, such as the Bronx, were now nightly lit up by flames, as landlords looked to dispose of buildings that they could no longer let or maintain.

It was this grime and violence that was portrayed in films such as Martin Scorsese's *Taxi Driver* (1976), which happened to be one of Basquiat's favourites. But as the great chronicler of the downtown scene Glenn O'Brien

has written: 'instead of dropping dead, New York came alive. There was a viral outbreak of contagious fun and madcap genius'. Basquiat belonged to this spirit, as you can see in the playful, provocative nature of the SAMO© statements. He took inspiration from the energy of the city around him and wrote work that was a direct riposte to the minimalist work that dominated the landscape of established New York art galleries at the time. SAMO© caused a buzz amid the downtown scene and earned Basquiat enough notoriety to launch his career. There were articles in the SoHo weekly news pleading for the artists responsible to come forward and eventually the *Village Voice* ran a full-page story announcing the identities of 'Jean' and 'Al' who were described as the 'new wave of magic marker Jeremiahs'.

Basquiat split from Diaz soon after, but he continued to use the moniker 'SAMO', appearing on Glenn O'Brien's cult late-night television show *TV Party* and in April 1979, spray-painting live for the first time as SAMO. It was at this party, thrown at the loft of British artist Stan Peskett, that he met Jennifer Stein, with whom he began to collaborate on a series of collages that they would turn into postcards. Colour photocopying was a new technology at the time—Xerox released their first electrostatic colour copier machine in 1973—and expensive, so it would cost them \$2.50 for one A4 sheet, out of which they could cut 4 postcards that they would sell for a dollar each.

To make the collages they drew on the detritus of the city: cigarette butts, advertisements, newspaper headlines. Like mini Rauschenberg combines, they capture something of the energy of their urban environment. As Laurence Alloway wrote of the Young Contemporaries in London in 1961, the artists 'con-

nect their art with the city. They do so, not by painting factory chimneys or queues... but by using typical products and objects, including the techniques of graffiti and the imagery of mass communications. For these artists, the creative act is nourished by the urban environment they have always lived in'.

Of course, it was American pop that really inspired Basquiat and chiefly the so-called King, Andy Warhol. When Basquiat spied Warhol having lunch with the cultural commissioner Henry Geldzahler at the WPA restaurant in SoHo in 1979 he plucked up the courage to go in and try to sell them his postcards—while Geldzahler dismissed him as too young (for which he would later have to eat his words), Warhol bought one of his early designs. It was a natural step for Basquiat to go from using smaller remnants of the city for his collages and postcards to appropriating larger architectural fragments that he would find in skips or on the street as canvases for his paintings. Given that he had no fixed address at this point, let alone money for proper art supplies, old doors and tenement windows were an economical material that also worked with the visual language that he was elaborating for himself.

In February 1981, having recently turned twenty, Basquiat had his breakthrough moment, when Diego Cortez included him in his group exhibition *New York / New Wave* at P.S.1. To date, he had only exhibited a single work in *The Times Square Show* the previous June, so it was a big deal to be included, especially as he was the only artist to be given a prominent platform for painting. Basquiat was given an entire wall, which he hung salon-style with twenty works, which were made on materials including discarded wood, unprimed canvas, an old crate and even part of a foam mattress.

As the writer Robert Farris Thompson recalled, the city of New York was his 'primary script' for these compositions, as he depicted the skyscraper-laden skyline, complete with soaring planes and cartoon-style cars. I would argue that the connection to New York goes even further, in the references to the history of major American painters in the city. The late abstract expressionist Cy Twombly, who was given a scholarship to study at the Art Students League in 1950 (where Pollock two decades earlier had trained under Thomas Hart Benton), was clearly a particularly important influence. Twombly had his first major American retrospective at the Whitney in 1979 and it seems likely that Basquiat saw the show, especially given that he cited *Apollo and the Artist*, which featured prominently, as one of his favourite works in an interview. Increasingly, even Basquiat's style of working echoed this earlier generation of New York painters, particularly Jackson Pollock, as he would place his canvases on the floor and work from above.

Of course, Basquiat's landscape was also comprised of the colourful cast of characters in the Downtown New York scene at that time. He collaborated with these writers, musicians and artists and increasingly they also featured within his work. *Dos Cabezas*, for example, was painted on Monday 4th October 1982, when Basquiat visited Warhol's studio for the first time. He had been taken by the Swiss art dealer and collector Bruno Bischofberger in order to have his portrait taken on Warhol's large-format Polaroid camera. Basquiat asked Bischofberger to take a picture of him and Warhol together and when he saw the print he chose not to stay for lunch but to dash back to his Crosby Street studio where he used it as the basis for his dual portrait: Warhol with his wild wig and Basquiat with his crown of dreadlocks.

He had the portrait delivered back to Warhol later that afternoon, still dripping in paint, and Warhol was both delighted and jealous, given that for him, speed was the ultimate accolade. The work is interesting in that it performs the historic nature of their first meeting, placing Basquiat on an equal pegging with Warhol while pre-empting the powerful artistic friendship and collaboration that would ensue in the coming years. Other portraits of friends include the famous *Hollywood Africans* (1983). The work was based on a period when Basquiat was living in Los Angeles and was visited by his friends the graffiti artists Rammellzee and Toxic. The trio coined the phrase 'Hollywood Africans' for themselves as a comment on the inescapable racism in the film industry. Other references to this include the Oscar in the upper left and the date 1940, which likely refers to Hattie McDaniel, who that year became the first African American to be given an Oscar, which was made particularly poignant given the racially stereotyped role for which she was nominated: 'Mammy' in *Gone with the Wind*.

Sometimes Basquiat liked his references to friends to be more oblique and he often worked with words that might be read in several directions—a product perhaps of having grown up trilingual. On *A Panel of Experts*, which was a key piece from his 1982 Fun Gallery exhibition, he crossed out the names 'Venus' and 'Madonna'. On the one hand these names could relate to the art historical precedent of depicting 'venus' or the 'madonna', especially given Basquiat's drawing elsewhere of ancient sculptures such as the venus of willendorf. But they also connect to his girlfriends of the time, Suzanne Mallouk, whom he nicknamed Venus, and Madonna, who at the time was an unsigned singer whose celebrity he anticipates with the copyright sign.

In exhibitions such as the Fun Gallery, Basquiat remained conscientious about wanting to hold on to some of the urban energy that inspired his work and made this scene possible. Few realise that as well as creating the work and hanging the show, he also designed the interior installation. The fun gallery owner, Bill Stelling, recalled that Basquiat conceived of it as 'a total installation where the architecture reflected the rawness of the work. He designed ... a couple of sheetrock walls dividing the space into three areas, which were left half-finished, with exposed joint compound and metal studs'.

Landscapes of the mind

What fascinates me about Basquiat's work of this period is the way in which he was also able to capture the operations of his mind, swarming with different ideas and influences. What we might consider an inner landscape. Here too, he allows something of the 'rawness' to remain—the clash between a whole series of different streams of thought left exposed. A lot of my research for the Barbican exhibition has been focused on decoding these references within Basquiat's work in order to better understand this inner landscape. This bit of geography has been really critical in helping him to be repositioned from a neo-expressionist to a postmodernist, shifting the discourse away from the idea that he simply worked intuitively.

As Greg Tate has brilliantly written 'Basquiat comes from a people once forbidden literacy... for whom virtuosic wordplay pulls rank as a measure of one's personal prowess... there are no such things as empty signifiers, only misapprehended ones'. A perfect example would be *Jawbone of an Ass*, 1982, the title of which was previously thought to be a piece of Basquiat wordplay. Of

course it's actually a direct quotation from the King James Bible: 'And Samson said, with the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jawbone of an ass have I slain a thousand men'. Samson was gifted with supernatural strength, which is conjured with the names of ancient warriors—Alexander the Great and Cleopatra, but also obscure figures such as Scipio, a Roman general whose nickname 'Scipio the African' may have caught Basquiat's attention. He was famed for defeating Hannibal, whose name appears elsewhere, offering a secondary allusion to Dr Hannibal Lecter, who first appeared in Thomas Harris' thriller *Red Dragon* in 1981. The connection is endorsed by the rhyme to 'HECTOR', a warrior renowned for his role in the Trojan war.

These fighters are interspersed with the names of philosophers—Socrates, Virgil, Anaxagoras, alongside a drawing of a pensive figure with the words 'Rodin's Thinker', who is of course an icon for philosophy. The conflation of these two strands suggests that the work can be read as a re-enactment of 'the war of the mind' often considered the theme of this biblical story. Given Basquiat's lifestyle, it is hard not to imagine that he may have empathised with Samson, whose two weaknesses were his hair and his proclivity for untrustworthy women.

Another example of this swarm of ideas is *Leonardo da Vinci's Greatest Hits* (1982), which samples from Basquiat's 1966 Reynal & Co monograph on *Leonardo* like a best of album. A key source is 'Studies of Human Leg plus the Bone of the Leg in man and Dog' whose delicate chalk and ink form is reflected in the choice of colours for this detail. The title of the drawing is echoed in the word 'HUESO' which is Spanish for bone, which appears twice to the right. References to limbs abound elsewhere on the work, including the word

'CALVES', which is crossed out and written above backwards 'SEVLAC' in a nod to Leonardo's mirror writing. The word 'heel' also appears several times, an important image for Basquiat, which could be read in relation to the bare feet of slaves, a dog being made to 'heel', the Achilles heel, as well as Genesis 3:15: 'he shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel'.

The biblical imagery is enhanced in the fourth panel, where a kneeling leg is accompanied by the caption 'Return of the Prodigal'. A reference to the parable told by Jesus about a profligate son who seeks forgiveness from his father, demonstrating God's redemptive grace. The drawing may well have been inspired by Rembrandt's painting of the story from c. 1655, which was reproduced in his copy of Janson's *History of Art*. Above this is the phrase 'Prometheus Bound' which is the title of an ancient Greek myth in which the eponymous Titan defies the gods to gift fire to the people, for which he is subjected to eternal punishment. The thunderbolt that Basquiat includes in the lower right may well be a reference to the bolt with which Zeus strikes Prometheus when he refuses to confess. Associations ricochet across the canvas, offering no single neat message but—in true postmodernist fashion—a profusion of possible meanings.

Conclusion

Let me conclude with a final work that seems to me to encapsulate these three landscapes that I have been describing—of a city, of a scene and of inner ideas. In the summer of 1984, Basquiat was invited to have a solo exhibition at the Fruitmarket Gallery in Edinburgh. It was his first solo show in a public gallery and that December it travelled down to the ICA in London.

Basquiat joined the installation and while there embarked on the making of a huge, multi-panelled work called *Grillo*. As was often his practice, he made a number of drawings to be photocopied and then pasted onto the background of the structure. One of these drawings reveals the depth with which he engaged with his time here.

His context was Britain, London and the Pall Mall Gallery, which was just a few metres away from Nelson's column in Trafalgar Square. He had recently met the African historian Robert Farris Thompson and sampled heavily from his copy of *Flash of the Spirit: Afro-American Art & Philosophy* in the making of the work in order to ruminate on Britain's colonial past. In the lower left, there is a figure with up-lifted arms and arrow hands, which is taken from Thompson's 'Emblems of Prowess' section and is a symbol said to denote 'all of this country belongs to me'. The phrase is intriguing given the frequent appearance of 'British West Indies' as well as lists of the word 'sugar' which are pointed references to Britain's use of indentured labour in sugar cultivation in their colonial territories, even after the abolition of slavery.

The word 'breadfruit' enhances this link by conjuring the figure of Captain William Bligh, who embarked on a six-year journey to Tahiti in 1787 to seek out this prolific tree as a cheap source of food for the slave population. The symbols that sparkle around this word are taken from the Nsibidi system of ideographic writing of the Ejagham people of southwest Cameroon, which Thompson used to 'explode the myth of Africa as a continent without a tradition of writing'. Elsewhere on the drawing are the words 'YERE WOLO', which Thompson explains is a Mande concept referring to 'the

search for simplicity... by stripping away the superficial covering, by discovering its inner and true origins'. The phrase literally translates as 'giving birth to yourself' and in many of these works we find Basquiat doing exactly that—assembling a whole library of reference points in order to understand and construct his place in the world.

And I'd like to end on his words. As he articulated in an interview in 1985: 'I was trying to communicate an idea, I was trying to paint a very urban landscape and I was trying... to make paintings for ... I don't know. I was trying to make painting [that were] different from the paintings that I saw a lot of at the time, which were mostly minimal and ... highbrow and alienating... I wanted to make very direct paintings that... people would feel the emotion behind when they saw them'.

I think he certainly achieves that.



Jean-Michel Basquiat
Untitled, 1984.
 Private Collection, London.
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 New York.

The View from the Grave

Ken Worpole

'When we find a mound in the woods, six feet long and three feet wide, raised to a pyramidal form by means of a space,' the architect Adolf Loos once wrote, 'we become serious and something in us says: someone was buried here. *That is architecture.*' Loos was not alone in believing that architecture began with the burial site. The pre-Christian Etruscan 'city of the dead' at Cerveteri, north of Rome—the inspiration not only for D.H. Lawrence's rhapsodic book, *Etruscan Places*, but also for Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities*—comprises a network of streets and districts as artfully planned as a Regency enclave, with elegant beehive tombs for the wealthy and rows of terraced houses for the rest.

Disposing of the dead is a practical matter. Corpses—ambiguously neither human nor waste according to anthropologist Mary Douglas—are usually buried or burnt. However, the religious and cultural taboos surrounding the place and act of disposition remain as powerful as ever, and the places where the dead lie exercise a powerful effect upon the landscape, and on the representations of landscape in the history of art. Where Poussin had portrayed the tomb as a symbol of ordered contemplation in the 1630s, Jacob van Ruisdaal's 1650's painting, *The Jewish Cemetery*, inspired the later Romantic movement, suggesting as it did a world shaken to its foundations by death.

In architectural terms there remains a strong divide between northern and southern Europe interment practices. In former Protestant cultures burial is

below ground—occasionally in a crypt—whereas in southern Europe inhumation takes place above ground in what the Italians call *tombe di famiglia* (family tombs), or in rows of *tombe in edifice* (wall tombs) or *loculi*. In the case of the latter these niches—known colloquially as *forni*, or literally ovens—may be contracted for use for as little as 15 years, after which the remains are interred elsewhere and the niche becomes available again. This is why the most famous Italian cemeteries—La Certosa in Bologna, Staglieno in Genoa—are still in use, as many *forni* are leased for a fixed period and subsequently re-used.

Cemetery aesthetics were much simpler in the world of rural Christianity, certainly in Britain. Most people were buried in the nearest churchyard, each estimated to contain the remains of more than 5,000 people, piled promiscuously on top of each other. This was rough ground until the Victorians came along, tidied them up, at the same time acquiring a taste for inscribed headstones, table-tombs and monuments, along with a pastoral aesthetic. Burial implies a return to the earth, and English churchyards are often now at one with the surrounding landscape. By contrast the formal monumentalism found in many Catholic cemeteries suggested that the tomb is an ante-chamber to the world beyond. The Catholic dead have definitely left this world; the Protestant dead—the English in particular—remain among us, peacefully at rest in the landscape that we share.

A bold interpretation of the naturalistic cemetery arrived with the Stockholm Woodland Cemetery—designed by Gunnar Asplund and Sigurd Lewerentz

and constructed between 1916 and 1940—evoking and amplifying a mythic Swedish landscape of rolling hills, forests and lakes, in a late expression of National Romanticism. It became a strong influence on the landscaped cemetery tradition in the twentieth-century.

Most architects in the monumental tradition have largely kept clear of cemetery design in modern times until recently. David Chipperfield has designed an extension to the island cemetery of San Michele in the Venice lagoon, while Enric Miralles (aided by Carme Pinos) completed in 1994 what many consider the most fully achieved modern cemetery at Igualada in southern Spain, where Miralles himself is now interred. *If the Stockholm Woodland Cemetery became the architectural gem of twentieth-century European cemetery design, Igualada may do the same for our century.*

An hour's train ride from Barcelona, Igualada is a small hill town located in harsh rocky terrain punctuated by quarries. Between 1985 and 1994 Miralles and Pinos completed their 'new cemetery' in a disused quarry on the outskirts, using materials familiar from the surrounding landscape: rusting steel, old railway sleepers, quarried stone. The main entrance gate is fashioned out of industrial steel reinforcing mesh, which leads on to the beginning of the cemetery proper, marked by a rusted sculptural construction serving as a vehicle barrier. From this clear threshold a processional path slopes steadily downwards into an open-air catacomb of burial chambers and family tombs.



Rural Graveyard England

The uprights of the barrier approximate to a Calvary cross, ambiguous enough to resist a wholly Christian interpretation (or as Asplund and Lewerentz said of the great cross commanding the entrance to the undulating pastoral grandeur of the Stockholm Woodland Cemetery, ‘To those who see it as such, a consolation, to those who do not, simply a cross.’) The majority of individual niches are in cast concrete walled tombs, but there are also sealed family vaults embedded in the gabion walls lining the main concourse where mourners congregate, fully open to the sky and the elements. The Igualada cemetery possesses a profound spiritual presence within its severe landscape: serious and purposeful without being in any way morbid.

Elsewhere, however, cremation has subverted the place and rituals of the cemetery, not only creating a new building type, but also a new funerary landscape. Catholic countries held out against cremation for a long time, but are now coming to accept the practice, though Orthodox Jewish and Muslim faiths proscribe cremation, as do the Orthodox churches of Eastern Europe and the Middle East. While cremation has solved many economic and land-use problems, it has, in my view, created a threat to the cultural fabric. The abrupt and traumatic annihilation of the human body resulting from cremation—unlike the meaningful space of the grave—leaves those who remain no true site of mourning, or spatial attachment to a subject or ‘person’ not yet entirely lost to us. And without that, the cemetery becomes a cenotaph rather than a resting place or final home.



Feilden Clegg Bradley
Woodland Hall



Italian Cemetery

More environmentally-friendly processes of disposal now challenge cremation. What is defined as natural burial has yet to be legally clarified, but the term usually describes the burial of un-embalmed bodies in bio-degradable coffins or shrouds, marked only by temporary memorials which themselves will degrade naturally, leaving behind unadorned ‘natural’ woodland or landscape. Those who choose natural burial are effectively choosing to disappear without a trace, a historically unprecedented break with the long association between death and public memory.

A recent example of a green burial architectural aesthetic is the ‘Woodland Hall’ designed by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios for Greenacres Woodland Burial Park at Rainford in Lancashire. The dramatic shape of the principal building is that of a large orthogonal box rising at one end. The main façade is indented to draw people towards the entrance doors, enhanced by a threshold canopy. Once inside mourners are led into the ‘Gathering Hall’ where a large glazed elevation at the furthest end discloses uninterrupted views to the west of the Windle Brook valley. This provides a panoramic backdrop to the catafalque (two plain wooden trestles) and the lectern, as the congregation awaits the service and committal. Two large hangar-like sliding glass doors set into the western elevation can be opened in good weather, allowing the coffin to stand in the open air. After the service mourners follow the coffin into the adjacent woodland where it is interred, and where over time it will merge into the forest floor leaving no mark behind.

At the centre of all funerary architecture and culture is the human body. Kings had their pyramids and vast mausoleums, but for most of history the poor

shared a common grave-pit. One of the defining characteristics of modernity was that it created the expectation of the right to an individual burial plot and memorial, and with this right came an increasingly elaborate and highly individualised funerary culture. During this period the grave possessed a powerful agency. It literally embodied the person, and architects could amplify or consolidate this presence in the world as they or their clients wished. With the rise of cremation (and more recently natural burial) the power of the grave as the locus of remembrance has been relinquished, and with it the 'the work of the dead', as historian Thomas Laqueur recently termed it, is further attenuated.



Igulada

Afterword

Roger Scruton

Ideas need to find their imaginative embodiment. Without the framework of philosophy the arts wander into realms of phoney self-advertisement and without the inspiration of art philosophy declines to empty abstraction. Bringing art and philosophy together, in an atmosphere of open discussion among people of all ages, has been our goal, and this meeting showed how natural and easy it is to do this, and to take inspiration from the result.

Art and philosophy both involve a search for meaning. At least, that is true of the art and philosophy that shaped the modern world—the art and philosophy of the Enlightenment, the Romantics and the early modernists. In our time, however—in the aftermath of the Second World War—both endeavours have moved away from that search, many of their practitioners seeming to discard meaning or to regard the search for it as futile. At a certain moment there even arose a kind of meta-philosophy, associated (whether rightly or wrongly) with the name of Jacques Derrida, which argued that there is no meaning to be had. This philosophy, if true, is meaningless, and is therefore neither true nor false. But such paradoxes do not deter its practitioners, who believe that they are entering the realm of ‘anti-philosophy’, where the world is displayed upside-down and fragmented in a shimmering lake of allusion.

This new philosophy goes hand in hand with new kinds of art—art emancipated from the old forms of knowledge, and devoted to breaking

boundaries and reclaiming an expropriated world. Eleanor Nairne gave us a wonderfully lucid account of this ‘anti-art’, as contained in the palimpsests of Jean-Michel Basquiat, at the time of writing on display at the Barbican, curated by Eleanor. Exchanging for tens of millions of dollars, these works vividly remind us of the distinction between price and value. But how do we justify that distinction? University courses in the humanities have by and large given up on the task. Scholarship deals in facts, not values, and it does not worry that the facts are dull, obscure or irrelevant, so long as they can form the subject-matter of a Ph. D. One thing was clear throughout our discussions, which is that true judgment cannot be reduced to scholarship, since it aims to show why things of the mind are supremely important to us.

Our two previous meetings on the Isola S Giorgio were inspired by familiar modern anxieties. The first anxiety was that sparked by the selfie plague. Quite suddenly our world has been filled with mirrors in which it is neither the self nor the other that is truly perceived but rather a theatrical caricature, a narcissistic mask, in the background of which are all the landscapes of the world. We had an interesting time debating this, studying, thanks to Julian Spalding, the great self-portrait of Dürer, in which the suffering Christ, image of judgment and eternity, looks out from the eyes of the painter at the eyes of the painter. The face in the selfie is not judging, not begging for absolution or divine acknowledgment: it is the face of the moment, a face lifted free from judgment, a face without meaning, yet conserved forever in cyberspace. And it is a form of innocent communication too, the meaning of which is fun.

This led us to our second anxiety, the theme of last year's event: anxiety about the ephemeralisation of the world by our new ways of representing it. The topic of ephemera led us to the great conundrum of time: the feature of our world that is immediately and constantly present in our experience, but which we cannot begin to explain. Here in Italy time seems to have no urgency: you cannot be late for dinner, since dinner is lazily floating towards you from the future. Things happen when you coincide with them, neither earlier nor later, so what can it mean to say of dinner, or of anything else, that it is late? Thinking on such questions evening after evening in his local pub, Raymond Tallis, who was with us last year and again this year, wrote the book, just published, which everyone should read: *Of Time and Lamentation*.

We should not blame time for all our woes, however. We are gifted with reason, which tells us of timeless things, and we can discipline the moment just as easily as succumb to it. The real lamentation is not that we live in time, since there is no other way of living; it is that we are refusing to settle down in it, refusing to make a home in the present tense. In his opening remarks Jacob Burda referred to the need for boundaries, for the frame in which we place the things that are truly ours, and his apt reflections showed just why landscape is the natural sequel to our two previous topics. A landscape is a place that has been taken into possession—a place that is framed and embellished by the eyes and hearts of human beings. It is a piece of land saturated with the sense of belonging, and our landscape art emerged from behind the religious icon as an acknowledgement that, even if we have lost our eternal home, we still have a home here and now. We achieve this—or rather the

landscape artist achieves this for us—by turning the background into the foreground, and placing us at the edge of it, like the monk in Caspar David Friedrich's painting.

But that painting, vividly discussed by Andreas Dorschel, also illustrates the intrinsic ambiguity of our theme. The romantic landscape is both a place of belonging and a place of estrangement: comforting when it shows the face of settlement, but also vast and threatening as it reveals our fragility and fleetingness beside the forces that govern the natural world. Philosophers and artists of the Enlightenment, exploring this ambiguity, distinguished the beautiful, with which we are safe, from the sublime, from which we are in a sense estranged and which we contemplate with awe.

The romantic fascination with the sublime went hand in hand with the image of the wanderer—the restless, searching, lovelorn outsider invoked in the lyric poetry of Goethe and Eichendorff and in the song cycles of Schubert and Schumann. Andreas Dorschel showed how this figure is always implicit in the romantic landscape, not looking only, but listening too, as in the Schumann song, *Im Walde*, setting words by Eichendorff. Andreas suggested many subsidiary themes—the difference between a landscape of home, and a landscape of others; between belonging and longing; between walking, hiking, listening and stumbling, as well as standing still to look; and, especially in Schubert and Schumann, the difference between the settlement where woman is, and the landscape where man wanders, seeking or rejected, as in *Winterreise*.

As Judith Herrin reminded us, reflecting on the landscapes of Byzantium, the wanderer is a modern type. In earlier times, when landscapes were hardly noticed except as the background to human life, people moved from place to place in pursuit of commerce or warfare, but not in order to appreciate the view. Particular sites were revered, but as holy places, and those who travelled to them were not wayfarers but pilgrims, seeking a place in time that had been visited by the eternal and which bore the sign of our salvation. Judith showed us rugged and forbidding mountain paths, and fortified monasteries guarding places whose only distinction was that God had once appeared there and button-holed some trembling passer-by.

Most of us are neither pilgrims nor wanderers, but settled people who are usually at home. But when we travel we observe the homes of others and may then understand from outside, as it were, how space becomes place. So John Burnside put it, in his moving account of Marianne Moore's *The Steeple-Jack*. Moore's great poem begins 'Dürer would have seen a reason for living in a town like this...', so taking us back to our first meeting on the Isola S Giorgio, and Julian Spalding's highly suggestive account of Dürer's self-portrait, in which the spirit of Christ is shown dissolved in the mortal face. There is in Moore's portrait of a New England town, where people are side by side and at peace with each other, a sense of a population in a *setting*, and yet facing out from there, as though framed into a portrait of itself.

Moore endows what she sees with two moral characteristics: home and hope. John reminded us that being at home with our surroundings we also fill them with hope—not hope for this or that but an *intransitive* hope, a hope

that is pure potential, like a feeling that we are safe, and that all manner of things shall be well.

Perhaps one of the principal anxieties of our time is that this feeling of safety is going from the world. Nothing is permanent, no landscape, townscape or mindscape lasts long enough for us to attach our hope to it, and we are unceasingly aware of the radical changes that threaten to unbalance everything. Julia Marton-Lefèvre showed how urgent the call for conservation has become, but her upbeat account of recent efforts did not extend to the melting glaciers and the many species now threatened with extinction. By way of emphasizing the message Nonna La Pena offered an extraordinary headset, which puts you down in a virtual landscape visually indistinguishable from the real thing. Wearing this device you are transported to the Greenland glaciers, there to be addressed by three-dimensional activists who explain the history of the melting glaciers.

Nonna's Tarnhelm offers a representation without a frame: all-round vision makes you stand exactly there, on the edge of things, just where you have always been standing. Except that you cannot touch what you see and all your limbs are useless. During Nonna's gripping discussion of this Alan Lawson suggested that this new kind of representation, which puts you inside the frame, is not a kind of representation at all. Virtual reality is not a mode of contemplation but an invasion and conquest of the observer. Brecht's 'alienation effect', without which there can be no aesthetic distance, has been violated, and wearers of the Tarnhelm are overwhelmed by what they see, unable to stand back from it, unable to discover the kind of meaning that is revealed

in looking, not doing, even though doing has been stolen from them. Well yes, said Nonna, but this is journalism, not art.

The question of conservation was addressed by other speakers too: by Luc Jacquet in his cinematic portrait of a primeval forest, and by Angelika Krebs in her philosophical account of the experience of beauty, and its role in taming and curtailing the instrumental approach to the landscape. Teresa Präauer, in a fine essay, had compared the landscape to a face, and I had backed her up with what Angelika considered to be a crazy theory of the subjectivity of the landscape—as though a landscape can address us, I to I. We should resist taking this metaphor literally, Angelika argued. We will not save nature by endowing it with a soul but merely bathe in the illusion that it can save itself. Nevertheless beauty is important: it is an intrinsic value, and one that puts the landscape into immediate relation with ourselves and our need for homecoming. By means of Jörg Müller's didactic tableaux Angelika showed just what happens, when the experience of beauty gives way to the specious demands of utility. Her defence of a Kantian worldview against the slow steady uglification of the world made it clear that the conservation of natural beauty involves first and foremost conservation of the culture of which our landscapes form a part, which is a culture of representation as much as of looking.

But how is this to be done? Visual education must surely be necessary if we are once again to stand up for the landscape against its assailants. In his studio workshop Alan Lawson showed us some part of what this involves. Sitting where Ruskin might have sat, looking across to the place where Aschenbach

died, we strove to capture effects of light and shade, hints of movement and solidity, with nothing more than a sheet of paper and a piece of charcoal. We learned that you increase the brightness of a piece of paper, almost to dazzle strength, by surrounding it with nodes of darkness. Distance and movement revealed their secrets, once we began to think in terms of the fundamental values from which the image is built.

The view from the Isola S Giorgio is of a place rescued from the ocean, a landscape that has risen from the sea to shine on mortal eyes like Venus. But it no more speaks of the land than does the goddess. It is one of many artificial landscapes, the first and best of them, the inspiration of art, music and literature to rival those of any modern city. But it is afloat in the ocean, a theatrical décor, carefully maintained to look like its portrait, a landscape without land and increasingly without proper residents. Venice is not yet virtual reality. But perched on the island across from St Mark's we could not rid ourselves of the sense that what we looked at was only tangentially real, a theatrical background to a drama in which we are at best the chorus.

Jessica Swale spoke of the distinct role of landscape in theatre and film, illustrating her argument with the contrasting openings of the play and the film version of her drama *Nell Gwynn*. She went on to survey the many ways in which theatrical spaces become places in an imagined life, and how the landscapes that play such an important part in Jane Austen's *Persuasion* could be re-imagined as part of a cinematic version of that flawless narrative. Her thoughts recalled Phil Ormrod's play, *Exiles*, which opened our proceedings, brilliantly performed by Vinette Robinson and Gethin Anthony, against the

background of the Venetian Lagoon in the twilight. Here was a play about an artificial landscape, performed in an artificial landscape, in which the artificial landscape is praised in grief-filled pretence by a girl who has lost the real landscape in which all her loves and memories are scattered. This drama of existential exile—exile without remainder, so to speak—had a profound effect on us. It dramatized a remembered landscape of belonging, in a world where only the reefs remain, bearing the escapees who assemble to celebrate the artificial and memory-free land beneath them.

Those who survive remember those they lost, and this is as true of those who watched the play as of the girl portrayed on the stage. Hence there is a landscape of the dead, a home that we prepare for them in order to stay in touch. The space where the dead reside is very much a place. Many will lie there forever; others only so long as the family pays the rent; but all are interred so as to belong with us. In a series of beautifully observed examples Ken Worpole showed the ways in which the dead have acquired a place among the living, and how landscape has been adapted both to those who live above it and those who lie beneath.

Perhaps the last word should be left to Schubert, whose music expresses all the ways in we both belong to this world and also wander in it unattached. His two Suleika songs, one of which was beautifully performed in their recital by soprano Nika Goric and pianist Johan Barnoin, take us back to the world of Goethe. There are those who dismiss such invocations of the East as ‘cultural appropriation’, disguises for a xenophobic nationalism that underlies the search for home, place and belonging. Schubert shows us otherwise.

His message is that there is a beauty in belonging and an equal beauty in not belonging. Schubert believed these poems to be by Goethe: in fact they were by one of Goethe’s literary lovers, Maria von Willemer. But in Schubert’s setting they convey the sense that wherever we are in this world we are also elsewhere, and that our deepest emotions tie us as much to remembered places as to the place where we are.



Igulada



Farewell to Venice



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