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Academic year the work submitted for examination	2017-2018

Summary: Borderlines: the changing limits of textual encounters.

This thesis focuses upon storytelling, examining processes of use and interaction as texts transform and migrate through medial boundaries. It aims to excavate new ways of considering the adapted text, and how theory may inform practice (and vice-versa) to produce an intermedial weave of both text and theoretical approach.

The methodology is multidisciplinary, encompassing: adaptation studies, art, installation works, and convergent media, with analysis observing how these critical areas connect and intersect. The affordances each specific media provides is considered whilst also acknowledging that medial boundaries flex, being 'indeterminate and flexible relative to surrounding environments', or use.[1] I examine points of connection between text, media and user, and ask 'what that space, that necessary difference, enables', in the manner of how we explore, view, and navigate ever-shifting adaptational frameworks.[2] The text here is considered as being in motion, as it morphs into new forms and moves across textual borderlines. It is this aspect of cross-pollination, or textual blend occurring through media, that is the focus of the thesis.

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[1] Christa Albrecht-Crane and Dennis Cutchins, 'Introduction: New Beginnings for Adaptation Studies', in Christa Albrecht-Crane, Dennis Cutchins, eds, *Adaptation Studies: New Approaches* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, U.S., 2010), pp.16-22 (p.21).

[2] Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins, p.20.

Borderlines: the changing limits of textual encounters

Stephen C. Kenyon-Owen

A thesis submitted to Aberystwyth University in fulfilment for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of English Literature and Creative Writing

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Contents

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Overview

This thesis is based upon an ostensibly simple premise, one of storytelling; more specifically, of tales told and re-told. This is less a discussion of *the* text, but rather of how a text may be used, reformulated, and engaged with through a variety of media. The works chosen, and my analysis of them, illustrate multiple processes at play concerning textual rewriting and the affordances of the media they are reborn within. In the analysis of such processes I aim to interrogate our understanding of the nature of textual adaptation and examine how textual borders may blur and blend through use and interaction.

Possessing awareness that 'the study of adaptation is necessarily the study of media itself', the methodology of the thesis is multidisciplinary.[3] Specific approaches considered include: adaptation studies, convergent media theory, installation art, and games studies, with an overarching analysis aiming to observe how these thematic and critical areas connect and intersect. I aim to show that the rewrite 'invariably transcends mere imitation' and becomes its own form, interlaced with the fabric of previous texts.[4] Essentially, 'I intend to speak of forms changed to new entities', observing the material change as the text is repurposed and reframed within divergent media formats, and how the observer responds to such change.[5] My argument charts such processes of alteration within textual adaptation focusing on the ways in which adaptive texts morph into new forms and proliferate across medial boundaries.

The thesis develops this sense of a fabric of interlaced texts within its own structure, as each chapter seeks to build upon, or indeed adapt, the foundations of the last. Moving from what may be termed traditional to technological forms; early discussions of artistic process and its relation to adaptation are applied to the function of art installation works and curatorial practice. The manner of textual movement across media is then further discussed and reframed in light of technological approaches to adaptation through gameplay, music, and new media. Whilst this is not a study of technology in and of itself, it may be noted that increasingly the role of the reader, viewer, or user, is shifting to one of participant, collaborator, manipulator,

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[3] Michael Ryan Moore, 'Adaptation and New Media', *Adaptation*, 2.3 (2010), 179–192 (p.191), <https://academic.oup.com/adaptation/article-abstract/3/2/179/6883/Adaptation-and-New-Media?redirectedFrom=fulltext><10.1093/adaptation/apq010> [accessed 9 January 2017]
[4] Julie Sanders, *Adaptation and Appropriation* (London: Taylor & Francis, 2006), p.12.
[5] Ovid's *Metamorpheses*, in Suzanne Iuppa, 'Hymn', *Wellsprings* (Wales: Gwendraeth Press, 2015), p.3.

or creator.[6] It is debatable that new media encourage a less passive role than old media texts; however what can be seen is that within emergent media landscapes there is increased opportunity for participation within the text itself. The latter chapters of the thesis explore these ideas, placing the artistic observer or onlooker as interactor and user. The nature of such participation or interaction places further challenge on textual borderlines which shift and blend, creating new forms and demanding new approaches.

The variant texts and adaptive methods discussed in these analyses highlight a preoccupation with a return to past forms, a passion to reclaim the text and give it new life. These works see the text as a space to be reworked, populated, and inhabited, but also *found*; their forms often reconstructed from myriad individual elements that are dug up, discovered, and collated. Such past artefacts (be it text, object, or memory) are reinvented and brought together through methods of bricolage; of texts still singing even after being lost and scattered, torn apart, shredded, and stitched back together again. I aim to parallel this creative and adaptive method through the selection of an apparent textual miscellany, yet one that is unified in approach by a desire for return and reformation. Each text in its own way looks back to reinvent and rewrite; the nature of that rewriting occupies the primary focus for discussion.

The critical methodology adopted herein aligns with Barthesian concepts of authorship, or to what Mikhail Bakhtin sees as a conjoined process between text/reader/user.[7] The text, as it is viewed here, shifts in form and purpose via 'authors creating the text, the performers of the text (if they exist) and finally the listeners or readers who re-create and in doing so renew the text-participate equally in the creation of the represented world in the text'.[8] That represented world is thus an element in a constant state of change or textual mutation, where meaning is not facilitated solely through a uniform or standardised textual entity but through a continual process enacted upon a textual world by the adapter. Bakhtin states that 'the text is always imprisoned in dead material of some sort […] stone, brick, leather, papyrus, paper'; that which lies within the represented world, lies on the 'boundary between culture and a dead nature'.[9] The text never dies however; that 'dead material' (be it paper, canvas, or screen) may

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[6] See Janet H. Murray, *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997); Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide* (London: New York University Press, 2006); Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2006).
[7] Roland Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', in *Image Music Text* (London: Harper Collins, 1977), pp.142–148,
[8] Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. by Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988), p.253.
[9] Bakhtin, p.253.

be perceived as a boundary to be shed or transformed to unearth or reveal the new form residing within. What is argued is that processes of adaptation, and adaptations themselves, are increasing in complexity as each interaction bestows an alternate textual life through rewriting and reconfiguration, or as Thomas Leitch states, 'Texts remain alive only to the extent that they can be rewritten'.[10] I examine this discourse of alterity through a range of creative and practical interpretations to analyse the affordances these approaches offer to textual practice and critical approach.

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[10] Thomas Leitch, *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents: From 'Gone with the Wind' to 'The Passion of the Christ'* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), p.12.

Chapter One - Adaptive approaches

The methodology presented throughout my argument views adaptation as a 'creative and interpretative *process*' as I seek to observe the transformation of textual artefacts as they occur through a variety of media.[11] For many of the texts which I discuss that alteration occurs through repeated forms and in multiple guises, be it: print, book, art, or instances of digitally based emergent media. The nature, or validity, of that textual change, from source-text to adaptation, has occupied a central point of discussion within adaptation studies. Noting a historically hierarchical debate, Robert Stam states, 'The language of criticism dealing with the film adaptation of novels has often been profoundly moralistic, awash in terms such as *infidelity*, *betrayal*, *deformation*, *violation*, *vulgarization*, and *desecration*, each accusation carrying its specific charge of outraged negativity'.[12] Stam emphasises the apparent subjugation of an adaptation (the language being one of 'film', but I would extend this as being interchangeable with screen and audio-based media) to an original literary form. The robust implication is that processes of adaptation perform a disservice to the original, with truthfulness to a text marked as the 'sole criterion of value'.[13]

Furthering this concept of rigid faithfulness to a source and inferences of 'value' which may follow, Christa Albrecht-Crane and Dennis Cutchins state that the 'recurring concern of adaptation scholars has been to consider […] adaptations vis-à-vis their literary source texts, in a relationship of dependency that maintains a binary base positing literature against the cinema'.[14] Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins note that this 'relationship of dependency' may limit textual discussion, and that such an approach may cause scholarship to function as an 'exercise in negativity' whereby the critic seeks to uncover deviations in an adaptation from the original, noting what was altered, omitted, and through this what is 'right' or 'wrong' or how it may have failed.[15] John O. Thompson observes that such a stance implies that the printed page, the textual boundary, the material and fabric of literature, is perceived as being richer, more

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[11] Jorgen Bruhn, Anne Gjelsvik and Eirik Frisvold Hanssen, ''There and Back Again': New challenges and new directions in adaptation studies', in *Adaptation Studies: New Challenges, New Directions,* ed. by Jorgen Bruhn, Anne Gjelsvik and Eirik Frisvold Hanssen (London: Continuum Publishing, 2013), pp.1-16 (p.10).
[12] Robert Stam, 'Beyond Fidelity: The Dialogics of Adaptation', in *Film Adaptation,* ed. by James Naremore (Althone: 2000), pp.54-76 (p.54).
[13] See Sarah Cardwell, *Adaptation Revisited: Television and the Classic Novel* (United Kingdom: Manchester University Press, 2002), p.1; Leitch, *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents*, p.6.
[14] Christa Albrecht-Crane and Dennis Cutchins, 'Introduction: New Beginnings for Adaptation Studies', in Christa Albrecht-Crane, Dennis Cutchins, eds, *Adaptation Studies: New Approaches* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, U.S., 2010), pp.16-22 (p.21).
[15] Ibid, p.16.

complex, or 'more cognitively demanding', than its textual transformation which is but a 'simulacrum […] a deformation or dilution of the original'.[16] Such terminology frames the conception that an adaptation, as noted by Linda Hutcheon, is 'likely to be greeted as minor and subsidiary and certainly never as good as the "original"'.[17]

As may be discerned within such commentary, the discourse of adaptational fidelity or truthfulness to a (primarily literary) text can present itself as occupying a sometimes-fraught relationship. Scholars of adaptation studies such as those mentioned above have sought to move beyond strictures of absolute fidelity within textual transference.[18] As Sarah Cardwell argues, 'just as adaptations have moved away from their source books, so too must the approach through which we consider them […] comparison is an inadequate starting point for the interpretation, analysis and evaluation of individual adaptations'.[19] Cardwell challenges the view of stringent textual hierarchies, noting that whilst a comparative textual approach provides a solid basis for analysis, the strength of later approaches to adaptation studies 'lies in their very decentredness, comprehensiveness and flexibility, in their placing of adaptations within a far wider cultural context than that of an original-version relationship'.[20] Similarly, Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins embrace the validity of examining textual influence into and through other media such as: video game to novel, Broadway play to game, or vice versa. Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins insistence is not upon viewing textual difference as oppositionary forces, but of an approach that occupies an 'affirmative focus on how texts form and in-form each other'.[21]

Hutcheon too, tackles 'head-on the subtle and not so subtle denigration of adaptation culture that still tends to value the "original"'.[22] She states that to be 'second is not to be secondary or inferior; likewise, to be first is not to be originary or authoritative'; indeed, there may be no true 'second' as all 'adaptations express or address a desire to return to an 'original'

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[16] John O. Thompson, 'Vanishing Worlds: Film Adaptation and the Mystery of the Original', in *Pulping Fictions: Consuming Culture Across the Literature/Media Divide*, ed. by Deborah Cartmell and others (London: Pluto Press, 1996), pp.11–28 (p.11).
[17] Hutcheon, Loc 196 of 8468.
[18] See Hutcheon; John Bryant, *The Fluid Text: A Theory Of Revision And Editing For Book And Screen* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002); Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins; Cardwell, *Adaptation Revisited*; Rachel Carroll, ed., *Adaptation in Contemporary Culture: Textual Infidelities* (Wiltshire: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2009); Sanders; Bruhn, Gjelsvik and Hanssen, eds, *Adaptation studies: New Challenges, New Directions* (London: Continuum Publishing, 2013).
[19] Cardwell, *Adaptation Revisited*, p.207.
[20] Ibid, p.25.
[21] Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins, p.15.
[22] Hutcheon, Loc 296 of 8468.

textual encounter'.[23] Thus, adaptations may be 'symptomatic of a cultural compulsion to repeat'; this persistent repetition then may be viewed as not simply replication for the sake of the replicated, but as a paratextual weave which embraces numerous forms and content in varied kaleidoscopic formations.[24] This stance focuses on what adaptations may offer in and of their own construction, together with their placement within wider creative and cultural frameworks. My approach builds on such critical positions, placing adaptation as an ongoing process of juxtaposed readings and recombinations, as each version of a text presents not simply a unidirectional adaptive process but rather one which flows through multiple incarnations, allowing variant points of access and interpretation.

This approach is illustrated within Punchdrunk Theatre's *The Masque of the Red Death* (2007). The production involved not simply a retelling of a single Edgar Allen Poe tale, but instead incorporated a collage of events from eight other Poe short stories, including *The Fall of the House of Usher*, *The Black Cat*, and *The Tell-Tale Heart*.[25] The physical space this multiform adaptation occupied was the Battersea Arts Centre, transformed into a labyrinthine installation through which spectators could move freely for a number of hours.[26] The production incorporated a cast of thirty-five within an 'immersive theatrical environment in which the stories overlapped and the audience were allowed to roam freely'.[27] Spectatorship within the event consisted of a purposely fragmented experience, where the viewer may observe a 'narrative when the scene is finishing, or [find themselves] in rooms which seem palpably only recently abandoned'.[28] Segments from the Poe texts were performed in separate rooms with visitors accessing these rooms as they saw fit, in effect selecting their own textual encounters. Depending upon the audience's navigational choices within the (now reformed and kaleidoscopic) textual space, each return to that environment could consist of an alternate textual format as the viewer encountered moments of performance not previously witnessed and in a differing sequence. As Felix Barrett, Punchdrunk's artistic director, states:

> The point of Punchdrunk was to get away from the safety and staidness of so much theatre. Normally, you sit in your red seat, the lights go down and you see the show.

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[23] Hutcheon, Loc 216 of 8468.
[24] Rachel Carroll, 'Introduction: Textual Infidelities', in *Adaptation in Contemporary Culture*, ed. by Rachel Carroll (London & New York: Continuum Books, 2009), pp.1-7 (p.1).
[25] Felix Barrett, *Unlocking the Buildings Potential*, *Starting with the Masque of the Red Death* (Battersea Arts Centre, [n.d.]), <http://playgroundprojects.bac.org.uk/pages/2?page_num=3> [accessed 6 December 2016]
[26] Babbage, 'Heavy Bodies', in *Adaptation in Contemporary Culture*, ed. by Carroll, p.11.
[27] Barrett.
[28] Babbage, 'Heavy Bodies', in *Adaptation in Contemporary Culture*, ed. by Carroll, p.11.

We wanted to shake things up – to make the audience the epicentre, to let them shape their experience within what we create.[29]

A similar journey through a textual remediation also occurred within Music on Main's adaptation of the Orpheus myth (2014).[30] The project consisted of various pieces of music related to Orpheus and sought to share them in new ways, with an aim to observe how this ancient myth still affects meaning. David Pay, artistic director for Music on Main, explains that the pieces of music that tell the story of Orpheus within the project were all played:

in a theatre on the same night, but they are not happening in the same space, you actually wander through the theatre and you get to hear music in dressing rooms, get to hear music on stage, you get to walk backstage, discover something in a hallway […] a stairwell.[31]

The effect of this approach being that not a single audience member could hear all of the pieces in one visit: each visitation permitted an altered journey within an adaptation that existed as collated (musical) fragments. The adaptational process undertaken by Punchdrunk and Music on Main utilise Poe and myth respectively, as a 'hypotext' to be broken apart, scattered, and reformed.[32] In this manner of textual reformation these adaptations function as intertexts, instances of works which 'borrow, rework, and adapt each other in complex ways'.[33] The adapted text is reshaped here via a purposely fragmentary method, the adapter collating textual elements from multiple parts and curating them within an alternate boundary. The new material, or skin, worn by the text, then permits a further level of change as it is navigated in variant ways by the user.

In her investigation of the Punchdrunk performance, Frances Babbage raises salient points regarding the role of adaptation in such shapable or navigable textual experiences (such issues also being pertinent in application to the Music on Main production). Firstly, how can a performance such as this be considered an adaptation of literary texts, and what happens to narrative in the process? Secondly, what relationships may exist between the prior 'private acquaintance' with the source text(s) and the resultant change to a mode of reception within a

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[29] Barrett.

[30] Music on Main's production was entitled *The Orpheus Project*, this is not to be confused with a text discussed later in this thesis with the same title but begun earlier in 2010, *The Orpheus Project*, based in Powys, Wales, UK.

[31] David Pay, 'Music on Main's "The Orpheus Project"', *YouTube* (YouTube, 2015), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UoSXiHEsGjU> [accessed 7 August, 2017]

[32] Gerarde Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. by, Jane Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

[33] Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins, p.19.

live environment? Additionally, I would add, how do such reworkings challenge the notion of a pure textual 'essence'? If the text is now a shapable experience then who possesses 'ownership' of it? Who claims authority: the text, the adapter, or the user? It is questions such as these that I seek to interrogate in relation to a diverse range of adaptational engagements.

Textual reformations such as those utilised by Punchdrunk or Music on Main may be seen to foster a mode of adaptation whereby the text becomes a journey or process which creates a plethora of alternate forms, sequences, and understandings. The role of the text in the above instances is not to provide control, linearity, or stability, but to provide opportunities for the user to move within a textual experience. This lack of a linear progression leads to Babbage's conclusion that 'no two spectators, present the same night, witness the same show', placing the reformed text as a set of possibilities in place of a definable object of fidelity.[34] Within such reinterpretations and interactions the role of the textual observer also changes course and shifts into that of wanderer, user, or manipulator, who selects and navigates their chosen textual route among many courses. Thus, each visit to the text by the adapter or user offers potential for a dialogic mode of engagement, as text and onlooker engage and 'talk to each other' across and through media.[35] Of this potential multiplicity, Babbage asks 'how one can evaluate work where spectator engagement has been so fundamentally diverse - indeed, where no consensus exists on what took place?'.[36] It is precisely this type of enquiry that this thesis seeks to address.

The texts mentioned above represent a method that envisions 'a flow of material from one form to another', a method which also informs my selection of texts which manoeuvre through written, illustrative, performative, and digital domains.[37] This approach to textual selection aligns with Thomas Leitch's statement that 'Source texts must be rewritten; we cannot help rewriting them'.[38] Adaptation here is posited as an:

> exploration of the processes of change that happen as one or more cultural artifacts move across medial and disciplinary boundaries to inhabit the space of another; and in

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[34] Babbage, 'Heavy Bodies', in *Adaptation in Contemporary Culture*, ed. by Carroll, p.11.
[35] Graham Allen, *Intertextuality* (London: Routledge, 2011), p.170.
[36] Babbage, 'Heavy Bodies', in *Adaptation in Contemporary Culture*, ed. by Carroll, p.12.
[37] Thompson, 'Vanishing Worlds', in *Pulping Fictions*, ed. by Cartmell and others, p.11.
[38] Leitch, *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents,* p.16.

that process, previously discrete boundaries become porous as the new artifact inhabits the space in-between media, disciplines and art forms – traditional and contemporary.[39]

My approach looks to such porosity as texts blend and merge into adjoining other works, paralleling Crane and Hutchings' statement that 'all adaptations are complex analogies […] adaptations, rather than being handicapped by their movements away from the earlier text, are often enabled by them'.[40] Each version or retelling existing as pieces of a larger retelling, an adaptational process which embraces difference and change, or as Rachel Carroll argues, every 'adaptation is an instance of textual infidelity'.[41] Each return to a text is marked by a sense of a playful betrayal, as the adaptation shifts by lesser or greater degrees from an earlier form and through or beyond previous textual boundaries. This suggests what I would term a transformative view of adaptation whereby a text migrates across media, undergoing a shifting process of textual movement and ongoing recombinations.

As a text transforms and migrates into other media it necessarily repeats. Such repetition, as Julie Sanders notes, provides a pleasure of experience through textual revisitations.[42] The persistent return and revision to a textual form creates an 'inherent sense of play, produced in part by the activation of our informed sense of similarity and difference between the texts being invoked and the connected interplay of expectation and surprise'.[43] Sanders' consideration of the affordances of textual adaptation is broad, her variant examinations include: historical approaches to textual change, aspects of musicology in relation to the text, the study of fairy and folk tales, and mythological interpretations, viewing such texts not in terms of difference but through modes of a mutable textual development. Leitch notes that Sanders presents 'a cornucopia of questions, terms, ideas, readings and suggestions for further research […] an endless stream of provocative examples and apercus about the rewriting of master narratives from new points of view'.[44] In this, her writing also engenders a sense of playfulness, as the approach does not remain static. This is illustrated perhaps most clearly with her discussion of jazz riffs and musical improvisation as modification

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[39] Freda Chapple, 'Pedagogy and Policy in Intermedial Adaptations', in *Redefining Adaptation Studies*, ed. by Dennis Cutchins, Laurence Raw and James M. Welsh (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2010), pp.55–70 (p.55).
[40] Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins, p.16.
[41] Carroll, 'Introduction', in *Adaptation in Contemporary Culture*, ed. by Carroll, p.1.
[42] See for example, Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (Zoetrope, 1992), which utilised multiple elements from previous adaptations of Stoker's text, from the set design of Hammer films, to the vocal inflections of Bela Lugosi echoed in Gary Oldman's performance.
[43] Sanders, p.25.
[44] Thomas Leitch, 'Adaptation Studies at a Crossroads, *Adaptation*, 1.1. (2008), 63–77 (p.72).

upon a theme, equating adaptation as a related process of continual variations of textual promiscuity.

However, this multiform approach is described by Kamilla Elliott as being 'more pastiche than system, with unclear borders and boundaries whose fluidity some scholars welcome and others find unsatisfying'.[45] Yet, if this is indeed a 'pastiche' or that which imitates other works, then Sanders' writing is also suggestive of being an adaptation; a commingling of ideas and processes brought together as one entity. Elliott's criticism of Sanders (the work is a 'pastiche') and Leitch's sense of her writing as a 'cornucopia', are repurposed and employed here as deliberate devices within my own argument. This repurposing (imitation, and adaptation) of theory occurs both in the nature of the texts chosen (which frequently utilise hybrid forms across a wide-range of adaptation-based media, as has been intimated within Punchdrunk's Poe production) and critical approach, which manoeuvres between multiple disciplines, paralleling that same hybridity or pastiche of form.[46] This approach moves away from viewing adaptations and theoretical approaches to adaptation as a 'drive to concretise'.[47] Instead, what is presented in the structure of this work is that sense of pastiche or collage, of the reconstitution and replication of texts feeding 'off each other', both critical and fictional.[48]

Textual gratification here sees a limitless, boundary-less adaptive landscape, as the 'pleasure exists, and persists [...] in the act of reading in, around, and on (and on)', embracing the 'decentredness' mentioned by Cardwell previously, and the 'unclear' textual borders of Sanders. Here, those 'unclear borders' may be interpreted as both a challenge to adaptive approaches, and also indicative of texts and theory extending beyond their original boundaries, bleeding into one another and existing as conjoining elements of extra textual practice. Thus, the 'singular, infinite meta-text' may prove not simply singular or solitary, but multiple, spiralling into diverse alternate forms, critical, and textual, permitting a 'multi-level rather than a one-to-one' relationship with the text.[49] This spiralling or spread of the text across and

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[45] Kamilla Elliott, 'Theorizing Adaptations/Adapting Theories', in *Adaptation Studies: New Challenges, New Directions*, ed. by Jorgen Bruhn, Anne Gjelsvik and Eirik Frisvold Hanssen (London: Continuum Publishing, 2013), pp.19–45 (pp.30-31).
[46] See for example, the methods of the Dada movement.
[47] Thompson, 'Vanishing Worlds', in *Pulping Fictions*, ed. Cartmell and others, p.15.
[48] Sanders, p.14.
[49] See Bruhn, Gjelsvik and Hanssen, ''There and Back Again', in *Adaptation Studies: New Challenges,* ed. by Bruhn, Gjelsvik and Hanssen, p.4; Cardwell, *Adaptation Revisited*, p.25.

through media is embedded within my analysis, which shifts from discussion of textual and theoretical frameworks to practice-based applications of adaptation reworkings.

Orpheus: analogue

My discussion of textual migration, of texts influencing and occupying other texts, recurrently utilises a textual artefact that is synonymous with creative endeavour and exists across a multitude of forms. This textual artefact is the 'greatest poet and musician of his time' or indeed all time, he is Orpheus, and his presence is used as a touchstone of adaptive process.[50] Orpheus is interwoven through the fabric of the thesis via the texts chosen for analysis, and in the final chapter, in creative practice and reflection on my part. On occasion his presence is dominant, elsewhere he is absent, an approach which echoes Rainer Maria Rilke's statement, that 'when there's singing, it's Orpheus. He comes and goes'.[51] His shadow is cast across these chapters in the enduring nature of return, of looking back, an act which is both his fatal mistake and the starting point of any adaptation, it could be argued.[52]

Hilary Mantel suggests the fascination which the Orpheus myth provokes arises from a 'universal human impulse to try to retrieve what is lost, to want to go back into the past and change it'.[53] Geoffrey Miles speaks of the attraction the myth holds, of its lure for adapters, that the Orpheus legend is a wonderful story 'which revolves around universal themes of loss, return, and attempted retrieval.[54] Mantel sees the myth as existing upon an already well-trodden narrative path, as even in antiquity 'The story of Orpheus was old when Ovid told it. In words, in music, in film, successive generations have worked it over, made it their own, every artist or would-be artist finding in it something personal and something new'.[55] Of the many revisions of Orpheus, Miles states that 'It sometimes seems that every poet has written at least

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[50] Evslin, p.164.

[51] Rainer Maria Rilke, 'First Part, 5', *Sonnets to Orpheus*, trans. by David Young (New Hampshire: Wesleyan University Press, 1987), (Loc. 267 of 465). (ln.5-6).

[52] Whilst it is not my purpose to catalogue Greek or Roman mythic history, or to discuss every iteration of the myth, it is pertinent to present a summary of the Orpheus myth itself. Ovid tells of how Orpheus' bride, Eurydice, walks through long grass and is bitten a snake. Orpheus, in mourning, ventures to Hades to rescue her and bring her back to the living world. He fails. Orpheus' mission to recover his love proves disastrous, as the stipulation that he may lead Eurydice out of Hades providing he does not look back is not followed. Orpheus in a moment of doubt (or rebellion) looks back, and in doing so the desired artefact is gone forever. Grief-stricken, Orpheus returns to the world, and in many revisions of the myth, then meets a bloody end. See Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. A.S Kline (University of Virginia Library, 2000), <http://ovid.lib.virginia.edu/trans/Ovhome.htm> [accessed 5 April 2016]

[53] Hilary Mantel, 'Hilary Mantel interviewed by Andrew Marr', *Start the Week* (BBC R4, 2007), <http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/factual/starttheweek_20070305.shtml> [accessed 2 April 2014]

[54] Geoffrey Miles, *Classical Mythology in English Literature: A Critical Anthology*, ed. by Geoffrey Miles (London: Routledge, 1999), p.61.

[55] Hilary Mantel, 'Ghost Writing', *The Guardian* (The Guardian, 16 January 2016), <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/jul/28/edinburghfestival2007.poetry> [accessed 7 April 2016]

one poem on the theme - to say nothing of plays, novels, films, operas, and comic strips'.[56] Sharing similar sentiments, Lyndon Davies views the myth as a:

> staple of western European culture, a thematic and symbolic resource for writers, craftsmen, and artists in every age and genre. Even now, in our post-modern era, it's apparent that the tale has lost none of its fascination for creative practitioners; in fact, if anything, it's more popular than ever: poets, composers, painters, choreographers, dramatists - at the moment, everyone seems to want a piece of Orpheus.[57]

Orpheus is endlessly reconstructed, a boundless form whose presence resonates throughout 'Classical antiquity until the present day [...] The diversity in representations of Orpheus reflects not only differences in outlook among individual artists and in socio-political and cultural environments'.[58] The imagery and meaning of Orpheus reverberates through 'all human attempts to find or create harmony and order in the world, though literature, music, art, philosophy, science, politics or religion', a multidisciplinary conjunction of communicative forms.[59]

My overarching theoretical (and textual) approach towards textual remediation aligns with Claude Levi-Strauss' analysis of the substance of myth; that myth (or the remediated text) does not preside 'in its style, its original music, or its syntax, but in the *story* which it tells'.[60] Levi-Strauss placing emphasis on the aspect of retelling, of the presence of the newly created form as distinct to the reiteration or copying of an original. This notion of mythic or textual understanding parallels my discussion of approaches within the field of adaptation studies, of processes of change occurring 'Where the '"work" no longer seeks to be a noun/object but a verb/process'.[61] Conceptually, the adapted (or mythic) text is seen as an ongoing point of transit, fostering dialogues between and across media. Ann Wroe, speaking of the reconstructions and remediation of Orphean narratives, states that 'Though long ago he was dismembered, he was reconstructed and he lived'.[62] The multiple retellings of the myth presented here engage with that notion of reconstruction and reinterpretation of a narrative

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[56] Geoffrey Miles, p.70.
[57] Lyndon Davies, 'Orpheus, Eurydice, Blanchot: Some Thoughts on the Nature of Myth and Literature', in *Myth, Literature and the Unconscious*, ed. by Leon Burnett, Sanja Bahun and Roderick Main (London: Karnac, 2013), pp.211–27 (p.211).
[58] Judith E. Bernstock, *Under the Spell of Orpheus - the Persistence of a Myth in Twentieth Century Art* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1991), p.213.
[59] Geoffrey Miles, p.61.
[60] Claude Levi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books Inc, 1963), p.210.
[61] Miwon Kwon, 'One Place After Another: Notes on Site Specifity', in *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art*, ed. by Erika Suderberg (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), pp.38–63 (p.43).
[62] Ann Wroe, *Orpheus: The Song of Life* (London: Jonathon Cape, 2011), p.9.

form. Orpheus the text is continually reborn, each revision emerging from 'dead material' as previous textual fragments are found, reconstituted and rewritten.[63] While Orpheus is forever caught in a moment of mythical time, bounded by impervious and unassailable narrative strictures, through each remediation he exists beyond the frame or limitations of predefined margins. It is this movement of the text which is key to the thesis as a whole, as I examine the adapter's role in challenging textual borders and coordinates, to probe the edges of narrative reconstitution. The following outline of the chapters presented within this thesis charts such textual transformations via the enduring figure of Orpheus and others, as their forms alter and move through medial boundaries.

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[63] Bakhtin, p.253.

Chapter summaries

Many of the texts chosen for analysis within this thesis have received scant critical attention. The rationale for their inclusion was itself based in part on this lack of attention, but also due to the observation that taken together the texts present multiple divergent approaches to their adaptational subject matter. Close textual analysis begins in Chapter Two, 'Severed Voices', which examines the interplay between text, media, and adaptational engagement through a variety of media formats. The textual analysis is framed by further consideration of the Orpheus myth, how it functions as a textual form, and how it may be understood and reinterpreted by adapters. I begin with discussion of *The Orpheus Project* (begun in 2010), an ongoing multimedia partnership between a network of artists, poets, and musicians. The project presents a continued shared endeavour to explore the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice 'through the interplay between spoken, musical and visual languages'.[64] It is an artistic venture that utilises concepts of the textual 'original' not as a strict guide or map but instead as an interpretative platform for exploration, both by the creator of the adapted art-object and through the experience of the viewer/user themselves. The text in this case exists as a continuing series of adaptational revisions facilitating a textual artefact representative of processes of change.

The concept of textual repurposing and interplay between user and text is the focus of my discussion of the *Pantechnicon* (2013) art installation, curated by the primary artist involved within *The Orpheus Project* group, Penny Hallas. *Pantechnicon* existed as a repositing of a 'miscellany of variously derived objects', whereby Hallas' studio was transplanted to an installation space.[65] The installation incorporated the use of 'found' and reformed objects alongside installed artwork and a further multimedia projection of *The Orpheus Project*.[66] Within the installation Hallas utilised a mode of engagement which encouraged the audience (or user) direct interaction upon the art form itself, encouraging the inscription/writing/deletion of artwork by visitors. The nature of this agency is the focus of this

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[64] Penny Hallas, *Orpheus Project: Films* (Penny Hallas, 2011), <http://pennyhallas.co.uk/wp/1172/orpheus-project-drawings-and-films/> [accessed 24 March 2016]
[65] Penny Hallas, *Pantechnicon* (Blogger.com, 2013), <http://boxingthechimera.blogspot.co.uk/2013/10/pantechnicon.html> [accessed 3 May 2016]
[66] My discussion of Boghosian, *Pantechnicon*, and in particular, *The Orpheus Project* are reworkings and extensions of conference papers and publications I have written and presented in recent years. In particular see Stephen C. Kenyon-Owen, 'Broken, Rusty, Charismatic': The Transmedial Destiny of Found Objects in the Artwork of Penny Hallas', in *Not Ever Absent: Storytelling in Arts, Culture and Identity Formation*, ed. by Moenandar, Sjoerd-Jeroen and Miller. Nicole Kavner (Oxford: Inter-DisciplinaryPress, 2015), pp.173–182; Stephen C. Kenyon, 'Unto the last, still singing' – the perpetually destructive voice of Orpheus', *EUPOP 2012*, European Popular Culture Association (EUPOP) London College of Fashion, University of the Arts, London 2012.

section and is examined with regard to physical and textual artefacts becoming re-formed or rewritten by artist and user alike.

The use of found objects and textual transformation enacted upon them continues with the examination of the Orphean works of artist Varujan Boghosian, whose method is encompassed by a 'search for the lost, the misplaced, the unneeded, the broken, the abused'.[67] He may be considered a 'fabricator' of texts as objects move through a process of repurposing and reassignment as art.[68] The text here exists as the reformed remnant of myriad other past works, an ongoing process of adaptational reclamation. He is a re-assembler, plucking objects 'from the mainstream of daily existence – that seemingly endless, jargon strung narrative of materialist overconsumption we so blandly label contemporary life'.[69] Boghosian uses the 'daily flood of discarded information and used up things' as raw materials in his work, such as bones, rusty toy cars, and unearthed ephemera.[70] Jim Edwards sees this method of collage as forming an 'intimate transaction' between the returned-to, lost or adapted artefact, and the manner of its new form, stating that it then becomes a 'poetic object'.[71] The 'poetic-ness' of the repurposed artefact is expanded upon by Richard Francis as that which may 'successfully be created in any concatenation of ordinary elements whether words, materials, or emotions'.[72] Peter Clothier extends that notion:

> Poetic object-makers strive to keep their options open, discovering syntaxes and structure inherent in their materials as they go. The compositional method is that of improvisation, a madness that juggles objects much as a jazz musician unfolds structure in his exploration of the possibilities inherent in the notes.[73]

Continuing the metaphor, each object operates as a note or musical motif within a recombined melody as the lost and disassembled are reclaimed, adapted, and sent out into the world becoming transformed individual (textual) elements within a larger adapted form.

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[67] Peter Clothier, 'The Poetic Object', in *The Poetic Object: Exhibition Catalogue*, ed. by Peter Clothier and Jim Edwards (San Antonio, Texas: San Antonio Museum Association, 1988), pp.6–8 (p.6).

[68] Jim Edwards, 'Organic Life Designs: The Art of The Poetic Object', in *The Poetic Object: Exhibition Catalogue*, ed. by Peter Clothier and Jim Edwards (San Antonio, Texas: San Antonio Museum Association, 1988), pp.9–20 (p.10).

[69] Ibid, p.9.

[70] Ibid, p.10.

[71] Ibid, p.10.

[72] Richard Francis, 'Introduction', in *The Poetic Object: Exhibition Catalogue* (Dublin: Douglas Hyde Gallery & Arts Council of NI, 1985), pp.6–14 (p.6).

[73] Clothier, 'The Poetic Object', in *The Poetic Object: Exhibition Catalogue*, ed. by Peter Clothier and Jim Edwards, p.7.

It is this constant reimagining of textual form, and the forever mutable nature of the 'original' that occupies the basis for Chapter Three, *The Tales We Tell*. In this chapter I apply adaptational methodologies, as indicated in the above critical and textual summaries, to practice. This approach stems from the premise that a 'discourse of alterity' within adaptational transference can be applied within the organisation and construction of an arts installation environment.[74] *The Tales We Tell* installation was a month-long event organised and curated by myself, centred upon the concept of adaptation occurring through: artistic renderings, writing and poetry workshops, music, and collaborative engagement within and upon a text. Those works selected for inclusion within the installation were chosen for their variant approaches to remediation. Pieces by Jonathan Powell, Amy Sterly, and Suzanne Iuppa all share a fascination with narratives of landscape, whilst occupying stylistic and aesthetically divergent approaches. Hilary Langston's installation of remediated memory, more specifically the return to memories lost, involved the artist rewriting and interweaving conversations with her mother (who is suffering from Alzheimer's) onto physical objects. Jacqueline Alkema's work transfigured simple proverbs into ethereal depictions of sensuality arrayed on canvas. Sophie McKeand's performed piece and resultant installation work built upon the concept of the storyteller as a weaver of multiple tales; an amorphic, many-faced vessel who collates old and new forms. The main installation *Beyond Orpheus* consisted of a three-film triptych with sequences based upon the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, presenting on a larger scale the work of *The Orpheus Project* team, while also positing the multi-layered text as an interpretative adaptive space for creators and audience alike. The texts within the installation again presented a persistent return to textual artefacts, and a desire to reshape their constituent form within multiple modes of creative endeavour.

The examination of these texts is designed to frame and expand upon concepts of theoretical considerations of adaptation, and also consider how such textual change may be affected by the nature of the textual or installation space itself. Installation, as Erika Suderberg identifies, is the noun of the verb '*to install*, the functional movement of placing the work of art in the "neutral" void of gallery or museum […] "installation" is the art form that takes note of the perimeters of that space and reconfigures it.[75] Thus, the meaning of the text itself is affected by the space in which it resides, just as the space is altered by the textual fabric placed

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[74] Christopher Partridge, *The Lyre of Orpheus: Popular Music, the Sacred, and the Profane* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), p.2.

[75] Erika Suderberg, 'Introduction: On Installation and Site Specifity', in *Space, Site, intervention: Situating installation Art*, ed. by Erika Suderberg (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), pp.1–22 (p.4).

upon it. The surrounding or frame of a physical space is a container which presents a 'series of relationships surrounding objects', objects which 'carry traces of a "time" or place' or implied narrative.[76] The physical space of the installation and the objects within it represent a collation of stories, memories, and histories in flux. An installation binds variant fragments to create an alternate textual form, and in this it is synonymous with textual constructions mentioned in Chapter Two, as in the methods of Boghosian, and *The Orpheus Project* group. The site and the pieces on display may be seen to be 'structured (inter)textually rather than spatially […] its model is not a map but an itinerary, a fragmentary sequence of events and actions through spaces, that is, a nomadic narrative whose path is articulated by the passage of the artist', or user, as seen in Punchdrunk's Poe variations.[77] Within this arrangement and population of space, processes of textual change apply as much to the malleable nature of the environment as they do to the varied artistic approaches to adaptation in the installation works (texts) themselves. These processes of rewriting are further analysed within the chapter, which considers both the installed works and their presence within an installation space.

Yet such moments of texts in transit are also inevitably marked by the static point of the installation itself; the site of which is itself a *frame* that contains, surrounds, and defines limits. The borders of an installation (and each artwork) are marked by this frame; a representation of 'the rectangular boundary that separates an image from its surroundings'.[78] The physical aspect of framed artefacts in situ, or the perceived solidity of an installation space itself may be seen to create a monolithic authenticity; a static fidelity that delimits the art-object and shackles it to its boundaries, placing it not as a point of motion but instead as 'something to be both used and tamed', or closed-off and framed.[79] The concept of the frame-work is presented as extending and 'adapting' notions of adaptational fidelity; this chapter further

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[76] See Samuel J. M. M. Alberti, 'Objects and the Museum', *ISIS*, iv, 96. 4 (2005), 559–571 (p.561); Johan Schimanski and Stephen Wolfe, 'Entry Points: An Introduction', in *Border Poetics De-limited*, ed. by Johan Schimanski and Stephen Wolfe (Hannover: Wehrhahn Verlag, 2007), pp.9–26 (p.22).

[77] Kwon, 'One Place After Another', in *Space, Site, Intervention*, ed. by Suderberg, pp.45-46.

[78] Claudio Pinhanez and Mark Podlaseck, 'To Frame or Not to Frame: The Role and Design of Frameless Displays in Ubiquitous Applications', *UbiComp'05 Proceedings of the 7th international conference on Ubiquitous Computing*. (2015), 340-357 (p.342).
<http://luci.ics.uci.edu/websiteContent/weAreLuci/biographies/faculty/djp3/LocalCopy/frameorno.pdf> [accessed 10 April 2015]

[79] Daniel J. Sherman, 'Objects of memory: History and narrative in French War Museums', *French Historical Studies*, i.19.1 (1995), 49–74 (p.52),
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/286899?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents><10.2307/286899> [accessed 19 May 2016]

examines the capacity of the text in some way to circumvent or challenge the boundaries of the textual space, or *frame*, as texts migrate across media and physical space.

The potential for texts to navigate through media continues in the second half of the thesis, which elaborates upon notions of textual re-creation and medial migration. Focusing on the affordances of digital media upon textual adaptation, the texts chosen in these later chapters investigate the impact this digital shift may cause both on the text itself, and the role of the user within that remediated text. This continues the thread of discussion begun in Chapter Two with potentials of visitor interaction in *Pantechnicon*, and in Chapter Three of audience presence and engagement within the 'frame' of an artwork or textual space. The analysis begins in Chapter Four with a consideration of The Story Mechanics' reimagining of John Buchan's 1915 espionage thriller, *The 39 Steps* (2013).[80] The studio's aims being:

> to take readers through the story of a book, and the story behind and beyond it. The interactive experience is designed to allow readers to work their way through a novel like they would a video game, picking at the edges of what the author wrote and when they wrote it to understand a story's context, and then rewarding that behaviour.[81]

The digital adaptation repurposes an ostensibly 'traditional' literary form into an interactive media product, via an intertextual collage of mixed-media. This remediated text is contrasted with the interactive fiction *Beckett* (2017) by The Secret Experiment, whose developmental process aims to create a 'New wave of cinematic adventure games for a growing market of players who want more than just an adrenaline rush'.[82] The analysis of these interactive fictions purposely parallels earlier discussions within the thesis of textual reconstruction, while pressing new ground in the consideration of their multimedia environments. My focus within the examination of these texts is the role of mixed-media within digitally created fictions, considering both the affect upon the text as an adaptation and the resultant impact upon interaction, choice, and presence, within the formation of a narrative experience.

Chapter Five returns not only to the adaptation of the 'lost' or unearthed object (as in the work of Boghosian, Hallas, or the myth of Orpheus), but more specifically to the adaptation of loss itself. In this chapter I explore the attempts to narrativize or gamify the deaths of Joyce

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[80] The Story Mechanics, *The 39 Steps* (KISS Ltd, 2013).
[81] Brian Crecente, *The dawn of the new book* (PopMatters, 2012), <http://www.popmatters.com/article/153710-the-dawn-of-the-new-book/> [accessed 11 June 2017]
[82] The Secret Experiment (thesecretexpriment, 2017), <http://www.thesecretexperiment.co.uk/> [accessed 11 June 2017]

Vincent, and Joel Green, in *Dreams of a Life* (2011), and *That Dragon, Cancer* (2016) respectively. The analysis looks carefully at the processes the adapters undertake in order to transfer real stories of loss to screen-based media, especially examining the potentials and perceived limits of textual remediation through narrative and game processes. The resultant adaptations functioning as both a memorial and an invitation to the player to rewrite the lost text, to somehow 'win' or 'restore and repair the lost and damaged "good object".[83] The facility of the text to be rewritten by adapter and user occupies Chapter Six, as I analyse Arcade Fire's *Reflektor* (2013) album. Fittingly, this latter section again returns to Orpheus, as *Reflektor* is a concept work based upon the myth. The chapter engages with adaptation process in relation to convergent media theory; convergence understood as being 'the flow of content across multiple media platforms, the cooperation between multiple media industries, and the migratory behavior of media audiences'.[84] The discussion builds upon previously raised concepts regarding texts blurring medial boundaries, and of the adapter and user performing a crucial rule in that intermix of textual communication.

These chapters navigate through the analysis of adaptation, myth, artistic method and collaboration, art installation, interactive storytelling, through to the manipulation of digital artefacts. Their organisation and progression is designed to illustrate an ongoing dialogic cross-talk between text, adapter, and user. This intersection occurs in the formation of the artefacts of adaptation themselves, multidisciplinary critical analysis, and practical approach; the aim being to present an image of adaptation as an ever-evolving and ongoing process moving across textual borderlines.

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[83] John E. Baker, 'Mourning and the Transformation of Object Relationships', Psychoanalytic Psychology, 18.1 (2001), 55-73 (p.55), < http://www.griefcounselor.org/articles/prof-article-mourning-and-transformation-baker.pdf> [accessed 1 June 2017]

[84] Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, pp.2-3.

Chapter Two - Severed Voices

This chapter explores methods of adaptation where remediation, artistic collaboration, and use of mixed-media, permit their own affordances on textual interpretation. The works share a commonality of approach (albeit within variant forms of media) whereby multiple segments or fragments of textual material are repurposed to create new forms. The examination includes further consideration of the meaning of the Orpheus myth, of how it is reconstructed and interwoven within the fabric of the texts themselves, and how the myth operates as a focus for adaptive interpretation.

Discussion begins with *The Orpheus Project,* an artistic collective of poets, artists, and musicians who seek to reimagine the myth of Orpheus through collaborative interaction. The adapted text in this case is viewed as that which is ever-evolving, with each successive iteration permitting a change in form. Such textual change is also observed within the *Pantechnicon* installation by Penny Hallas (a primary contributor to *The Orpheus Project*). Hallas' installation involved: the relocation of her studio to an installation environment, a further iteration of *The Orpheus Project* in the form of a short film, and the display of previously found objects (skulls, bones, machinery) recombined into new forms. Within the installation textual alteration was presented not only within the art-objects themselves, but also through a process of direct intervention on the part of the visitor. Hallas created artwork so that attendees of the installation could inscribe new meaning upon a visual artefact, thus generating a layered, rewritten textual object. These processes of refabrication and textual rewriting continue in my analysis of the Orphean-themed works of Varujan Boghosian, an artist specialising in the re-fabrication of ordinary objects, with an aim to repurpose the lost and the banal via a process of collage. The works of *The Orpheus Project*, Hallas, and Boghosian, illustrate an adaptive method where once 'lost' objects (be it the myth itself, or literal 'lost objects') are repurposed, allowing a new life emerging from the combination of medial forms.

The Orpheus Project

The Orpheus Project began in 2010 as a collaborative venture between artist Penny Hallas and writer Lyndon Davies, although this later expanded to include other practitioners including musician Gillian Stevens and poets Graham Hartill and John Goodby. The project is an exploration of 'why the Orpheus myth is still so potent today, informed by the interplay between spoken, musical and visual languages'.[85] My involvement with the group began at the *Interfaces: encounters beyond the page/screen/stage* conference which took place in January 2011. The call for papers for the event sought to raise 'questions of mediation and memory in encounters with non-textual archival materials in the arts' either through performativity, adaptation, engagement, production, use of digital culture, or expanded notions of archival activity.[86] During the conference Hallas and Davies presented a twenty-minute film entitled *The Orpheus Project*, a multimedia creation:

> made up of drawings and photographs, music and script which have evolved in response to the myth as represented through music, art, and literature through the millennia. These historic references, as well as the continued preoccupation with Orpheus in film and contemporary arts lead us to examine what it is about the myth which makes it still resonate.[87]

The images presented on-screen, created by Hallas, include various depictions of Orpheus' torn body: heads kept in jars, screaming headless torsos, or else the indeterminate gushing of blood and viscera from an unidentifiable limb. Many of the images were taken from her sequence of forty paintings entitled the *Orpheus Drawings* (2010-11) and repurposed within the film (see Figure 1).[88]

Hallas' inspiration in these paintings was 'the moment Orpheus is torn apart by the Women of Thrace, and his head floats, singing, down the River Hebrus'.[89] Within the film presentation, these repeated frames of violence contrast with overlaid photographic images of caves, woodland, and the natural scenery of the Welsh county of Powys. This blend of Hallas'

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[85] Penny Hallas, 'Orpheus Project', *Penny Hallas* (Penny Hallas: Painting, Drawing & Printmaking, 2010), <http://pennyhallas.co.uk/wp/431/orpheus-project/> [accessed 29 April 2016]

[86] 'Interfaces: Encounters beyond the Page/screen/stage', *University of Exeter*, 2011 <https://humanities.exeter.ac.uk/research/conferences/previous/interfaces/> [accessed 1 April 2016]

[87] Penny Hallas and Lyndon Davies, 'The Orpheus Project', in *Interfaces: Encounters beyond the Page / Screen / Stage* (University of Exeter: AHRC, 2011), <http://projects.beyondtext.ac.uk/StudentLedInitiatives-2010-2011/uploads/interfaces.pdf> [accessed 1 April 2016]

[88] Penny Hallas, *Orpheus Drawings* (Penny Hallas, 2010-11), <http://pennyhallas.co.uk/wp/artwork/orpheus-drawings/> [accessed 2 December 2016]

[89] Penny Hallas, 'Artist Statement', in Stephen C. Kenyon-Owen, *The Tales We Tell* (Wordpress, 2015), <https://taleswetelldotcom.wordpress.com/> [accessed 10th April 2015], p.4.

art and photography provides a juxtaposition between the violently fantastical and the real; their blend creating in the piece a sometimes chaotic, disconcerting and otherworldly merger of media. These multiple forms of representational collage are accompanied by a soundtrack of music, incongruous noise, and poetic narration read by Davies, providing a guiding narrative voice bringing audio and visual into contact.

The adaptational focus for Hallas in these works is centred on the idea of:

exploding the idea that there is one Myth - so these drawings represent elements or fragments of the myth which create a different constellation, and a different narrative each time they are hung. For me one of the central themes of these drawings is the way the Orpheus myth resonates across time and culture, colliding with parallel myths which also deal in the potency the image of the head holds for us. [90]

This collection of forty images ostensibly presents an orderly, even numbered collection, yet with each new arrangement, each fresh installation, brings a varied order and change of sequence, altering the shape of the whole displayed object, thus affecting implied meaning for the viewer.

Figure 1. *Orpheus Drawings*.[91]

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[90] Penny Hallas, 'Artist Statement'.
[91] Penny Hallas, *Orpheus Drawings* (2010-11), mixed-media on card. Image reproduced courtesy of Penny Hallas.

Compare this arrangement with the sequence as presented within *The Tales We Tell* installation:

Figure 2. *Orpheus Drawings. The Tales We Tell* arrangement.[92]

A similarly 'ordered' collection may be observed elsewhere within Hallas' work, in the *Communion* (2006) series. Each of the thirty individual elements viewed as 'self-defining and locked within their own special form and destiny, but can also be read when placed in alternate sequences as being part of a chaotic interactive system, through which definitions and narratives flow without ever quite congealing'.[93] Each new display of *Communion* and the *Orpheus Drawings* allows a variation in the textual fabric presented to the viewer through a process of recombination and rearrangement, creating an ever-shifting journey into an Orphean underworld.

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[92] Hallas, *Orpheus Drawings* (2010-11), *The Tales We Tell* (Wrexham, 2015).
[93] Penny Hallas, *Communion* (Penny Hallas, 2006), <http://pennyhallas.co.uk/wp/artwork/communion/> [accessed 2 December 2016]

Of rescue and beheading

As an adaptation, *The Orpheus Project* simultaneously announces its allegiance to the myth of Orpheus and also proclaims itself as a work-in-progress, a '*Project*'. In doing this it openly declares itself as both an *adaptation*, which indicates a specific relationship to another work or works, and also as *appropriation*.[94] An adapted text is that which holds a specific, tangible relationshop to source material, while the relationship of an appropriated text to an orginatory point proves somewhat pliable, as it may manipulate the original through genre, theme, time or content.[95] The formation of the project through collaboration and the very nature of its title (*Project*) permits both terms concerning textual transference to hold true, as notions of textual adherence are combined with a mode of continued, evolving appropriation of the myth. Orpheus is unstable and metamorphic, both in form and approach.

During preliminary interviews I conducted with Davies and Hallas two distinct approaches arose: a poetic fascination with the descent into Hades and attempted rescue of Eurydice by Davies, and Hallas' focus on a severed but still singing head illustrated by the *Orpheus Drawings*.[96] These seemingly opposed views present both a literal 'delving into' the text for textual repurposing or rescue, contrasted with an artistic impulse associated with violation and tearing. The desire for return may parallel adaptive process, a notion of looking back in order to bring the lost object into the present, while the rending and reconstitution of a severed form is suggestive of an urge to explore and remake textual energies.

The nature of mythic return and (re-)construction is mused upon by Davies, as a myth:

> is not even a myth: it's a melding of tale, countertale, strands, variants, interpretations; it's a swarm into which we read the lineaments of whom we need to be and what we need the world to be […] Myths mutate, proliferate, and the development of any one of them is contingent on a multitude of social and natural factors.[97]

Myth itself is synonymous with mutation and change. Aisha Farr surmises that every 'myth is a memory, formed through complex layers of tellings through time'; myth exists as a process

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[94] The Story Mechanics, *The 39 Steps* (KISS Ltd, 2013),
<http://store.steampowered.com/app/234940/The_39_Steps/> [accessed 14 July 2017]
[95] See Hutcheon; Sanders.
[96] Kenyon, p.174.
[97] Davies, 'Orpheus, Eurydice, Blanchot': in *Myth, Literature and the Unconscious*, p.212.

of interpretation and reinterpretation.[98] Levi-Strauss views myth as 'consisting of all its versions'; an ever-altering narrative blend that shuffles free of textual solidities.[99] Barthes notes that 'there is no fixity in mythical concepts: they can come into being, alter, disintegrate, disappear completely', and that the 'fundamental character of the mythical concept is to be appropriated'.[100] Myth lacks solidity, possessing origins but is 'neither definite nor finite'.[101] It is an ongoing, layered process, for in the transference of a mythic construct to its revision, or 'from the meaning to the form':

> The image loses some knowledge: the better to receive the knowledge in the concept [...] a mythical concept is confused, made of yielding, shapeless associations. One must firmly stress this open character of the concept; it is not at all an abstract, purified essence; it is a formless, unstable, nebulous condensation.[102]

As one layer cedes to another, points of divergence may be lost, or altered, yet the myth builds. It grows because of the retelling, its strength lies in malleability; a shapelessness that permits variation, a strength residing in a lack of fixity. Cardwell notes that an adapted text as it moves from version to version echoes themes, images, and scenes of previous incarnations, and as such, an adaptation may exist as 'points on a continuum, as part of the extended development of a singular, infinite meta-text'.[103] Cardwell describes this sense of narrative continuance as a process which is 'constantly growing and developing, being retold, interpreted and assessed'.[104] This notion of textual expansion aligns with the broader notion of an 'ur-text': a text that possesses a cluster of essential properties that do not progress linearly, but instead possesses the capacity to speak or be interpreted in multiple ways to variant methods of interpretation and creative response.[105] The repeated return to the text by the *Orpheus Project* group highlights this facet of amorphous retelling around a core text, as each further adaptation returns not just to an original, but also to previous versions of itself, a palimpsest.

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[98] Aisha Farr, 'Every Myth Is a Memory, Formed through Complex Layers of Tellings through Time', *Trebuchet Magazine* (Trebuchet Magazine, 2015), <http://www.trebuchet-magazine.com/oe-orpheus-euridice-artpoetrymusic-event/> [accessed 23 October 2015]
[99] Levi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, pp.216-217.
[100] Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. by Annette Lavers (New York: The Noonday Press, 1972), pp.119-119.
[101] Cardwell, *Adaptation Revisited*, p.26.
[102] Barthes, *Mythologies*, p.118.
[103] Cardwell, *Adaptation Revisited,* p.25.
[104] Ibid, p.25.
[105] Ibid, pp.24-25.

The Orpheus Project does not exist in isolation; it has appeared in numerous configurations and guises.[106] The reappropriated text as it is viewed here is not simply a solitary object, a 'physical thing, but a process. […] The text is all the subsequent meanings which are generated in all of its subsequent encounters. This means that the text is a *continuing process of meaning production*'.[107] Thus, the text may be understood to exist as a circuit, part of a continuing route of progression. This moves away from textual finalities, as suggested by Barthes, which provide a false closure; for to 'impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing [...] when the Author has been found, the text is 'explained''.[108] This is as stated a 'project' involving multiple contributors, each with varied interpretations or 'explanations', the conglomeration of which facilitates the aesthetic of the work as a whole as an interwoven textual collage. The variety of forms it takes even within this one 'project' (involving artworks, filmic projection, multiple voices, music) support Sanders' view that a myth is 'never transported wholesale into its new context; it undergoes its own metamorphosis in the process. Myth is continuously evoked, altered, and reworked, across cultures, and across generations', and also media.[109]

This manner of metamorphosis and reworking may be illustrated via aspects of media collage and convergence present within the work. The presence of blended media has previously been highlighted through the use of overlaid artwork and photography, however, the aural element of the piece also brings forth a purposeful intermix of sonic tonalities, reflecting the overlaid visual blend. The use of sound incorporates spoken-word, original music, incongruous noise, and shifts between near silence and moments of auditory chaos. These conjunction points of disorder force melodies to compete for audibility as they clash with the

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[106] Exhibitions elsewhere include; *From Here and There: drawings from Swansea to Colorado*. Elysium Gallery, Swansea and Clara Hatton Gallery, Colorado, USA (2014), *Of Orpheus, Film, Poetry and Music* with Steve Boyland, Lyndon Davies, Scott Thurston, Rhys Trimble, Nancy Downing, Bangor, Wales (2014), *Pantechnichon*, ArcadeCardiff, Cardiff, UK (2013), *Orpheus and Eurydice Event, Glasfryn Seminars*, Powys Wales (2013), Essex University Centre for Myth Studies. Multi-media panel presentation with poet, Lyndon Davies. (2012), Y Lle Celf, National Eisteddfod Wrecsam (2011), Frederick J Fredericks, Craig y Cilau Nature Reserve, Powys Wales (2011), *Interfaces: encounters beyond the page/screen/stage*. University of Exeter, Arts and Humanities Research Council. Multi-media panel presentation with poet, Lyndon Davies. (2011), *Myth, Literature and the Unconscious.* University of Essex, Centre for Myth studies: Dept. literature, film and theatre studies and Centre for Psychoanalytic studies. Multi-media panel presentation with poet, Lyndon Davies. (2010); See also Penny Hallas, *Beyond Orpheus*. (Glasfryn Project, 2015), <http://glasfrynproject.org.uk/w/3395/beyond-orpheus/> [accessed 3 September 2017] The ongoing nature of the piece will also occupy a central point of discussion within the third chapter of this thesis, as the project is expanded within an art installation curated by myself.
[107] Michael Carter, *Framing Art* (Alexandria, NSW: Hale & Ironmonger, 1990), p.127.
[108] Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', p.146.
[109] Sanders, p.64.

soundtrack which surrounds it, annihilating on occasion the voice-over, the spoken word which ostensibly functions as a form of narrative guide. That guiding voice-over present within the piece is notable for its function and purpose, as it does not repeat the 'original' myth, taken from Ovid, classical art, or other retellings of the Orphean tale.[110] The narrative voice creates an orally delivered overlay that questions its own purpose within the events of this textual piece, a verbal presence often seeming as much an outsider as Orpheus himself in Hades.[111] The very first lines uttered in the piece delivered at the Exeter *Interfaces* conference were, 'Why, Orpheus, again?'.[112] This voice is joined by a multitude of other noises, music and incongruous sound, presenting at times a purposeful clashing of audio elements. The auditory chaos is amplified by the projected images of artwork and photography which coalesce into one another.

This method of medial use permits a certain degree of nonlinearity, that which is 'defined by an ability to 'vary, produce different courses'.[113] Espen Aarseth defines nonlinearity as 'not simply one fixed sequence of letters, words, and sentences but one in which the words or sequence of words may differ from reading to reading because of the shape, conventions, or mechanisms of the text'.[114] Those different courses of the text are here applicable to the production, collaboration, and performative aspects of a text that is in a state of constant process. Aarseth's terms of 'shape', 'conventions', or 'mechanisms' within the context of the *Orpheus Project*'s interpretation highlights a sense of textual navigation through auditory and visual modes actioned by the viewer, creating a process of agency within a kaleidoscopic narrative event. The nonlinearity may be viewed not in a horizontal A-B sequence of voice and vision but in a vertical sense, as auditory and ocular elements are stacked atop one another allowing each layer to be unpicked, decoded, or unearthed by the onlooker. This cacophony of audio and visual elements forces the listener/observer to focus upon what it is they actually want to see or hear, and perhaps create or find a 'voice' or guide amidst the discord of these layers of tales and inharmonious visions.

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[110] Kenyon-Owen, 'Broken, Rusty, Charismatic', in *Not Ever Absent: Storytelling in Arts, Culture and Identity Formation*, ed. by Moenandar and Miller, p.175.
[111] Ibid, p.177.
[112] Hallas and Davies, 'The Orpheus Project', in *Interfaces encounters beyond the page/screen/stage.*
[113] Espen J. Aarseth, *Cybertext: Perspectives on Ergodic Literature* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), pp.41-42.
[114] Ibid, p.51.

The evolving nature of *The Orpheus Project* sees the myth spreading outward into new forms while the media used blur the edges of their representational boundaries, crossing over, into, and through each other. This repeated flow of textual energies may permit the adapted text to be viewed as 'fluid', that which is 'any literary work that exists in more than one version'.[115] It is a fluidity which manifests through the blend of multiple differing sources of media, and as a project which is subject to ongoing (and visible, through each performance) textual revision. This interweaving vision of adaptation re-imagines a myth as a textual space reinterpreted by multiple users, enabling an adapted text whereby the 'original' acts as a space for adaptive interaction. Barthes observes that a myth 'ripens because it spreads', an organic terminology which sees seeing the text as growing, or being in some way supple, a putty to be moulded, which permits opportunities for varied modes of access and alteration.[116] That *ripening* of a myth, as it spreads outward, presents the adapted text not in terms of difference, but through modes of a mutable textual development.

The textual approach here sees a limitless, boundary-less adaptive landscape, where 'pleasure exists, and persists [...] in the act of reading in, around, and on (and on)'.[117] *The Orpheus Project* is concerned with dialogic processes of 'moving on' from and with the text, presenting a musing on artistic development within a re-created form.[118] However, within that collaboration the textual rescuers may revisit Orpheus, yet he is largely absent, operating instead as a ghostly presence, a murmur of musical notes and commentary in the maelstrom of a reinterpreted myth. The project's artistic representation seeks but does not find, and whilst it may depict his brutal demise in various incarnations it does not resurrect him save within the form of a recombined textual space. The nature of this absence is the focus for the following analysis.

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[115] Bryant, *The Fluid Text*, p2.
[116] Barthes, *Mythologies*, p.151.
[117] Sanders, p.14.
[118] Kenyon-Owen, 'Broken, Rusty, Charismatic', in *Not Ever Absent: Storytelling in Arts, Culture and Identity Formation*, ed. by Moenandar and Miller, p.174.

Silent singer

The process of adapting Orpheus within the methods of *The Orpheus Project* group and versions of the myth discussed elsewhere in this thesis, arises from a somewhat curious position; we never hear the original voice of Orpheus, we only ever experience a retelling. Orpheus, the 'embodiment of 'art' in its widest sense, of all kinds of creative activity', the greatest singer, poet, writer, to ever live, yet he never speaks directly to us; we can never hear his enchanting melodies or rejoice in his poetry.[119] Orpheus proves elusive.

Wroe's detailed and effervescent account *Orpheus: The Song of Life* presents perhaps the most comprehensive search for the voice, various interpretations, and potential roots of Orpheus. She pursues him through antiquity, on the trail of a figure who has 'wandered through history', seeing traces manifest everywhere but finding that the actual 'evidence for him lies in tiny fragments'.[120] For Carrol, Orpheus is an intangible, ephemeral form, each revision being a spectral textual 'memory of its first encounter'.[121] So too for Rilke, Orpheus is a fleeting sight, an indistinct figure:

> The image we glimpse in the pond
> often grows blurred.[122]

Obscure, ghostly, it is near impossible to ever truly find the core, to get to the 'real' Orpheus as the exact nature of his beginning may be as unclear as that of Rilke's reflected image in the water. His 'origins are lost. In the beginning he was perhaps a vegetation god, a deity of growth, death and resurrection. Hence "Orpheus", by one derivation: dark, obscure, out of the earth'.[123] An *original* Orpheus appears out of reach or at a distance, the myth cannot be possessed 'except provisionally, since we locate it in its original form but only ever as a recasting of a recasting for each particular age'.[124] Orpheus is the absent presence, yet through his voice, song, and perpetual retellings, the myth returns, presenting itself 'again, anew, as the new'.[125] Orpheus is the paradox of a failed perpetual return, ethereal at best, yet he is still a device to be worn, a space to inhabit, a song to sing.

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[119] Geoffrey Miles, p.61.
[120] Wroe, pp.4-6.
[121] Carroll, 'Introduction', in *Adaptation in Contemporary Culture*, ed. by Carroll, p.1.
[122] Rilke, 'First Part, 9', *Sonnets to Orpheus*, (Loc 353 of 1465). (ln.9-10).
[123] Wroe, p.3.
[124] Davies, 'Orpheus, Eurydice, Blanchot': in *Myth, Literature and the Unconscious*, p.213.
[125] Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. by Peggy Kamuf (London: Routledge, 1994), p.61.

Orpheus' song inspires and enthrals, his eternal refrain possessing the power to influence 'landscapes, seasons, hearts', to change the world, and from that change, affect us, the listener.[126] The melodies which permit trees to bend, mountains to shift, and nature to listen, so too entrances the artist or storyteller, who in turn shapes and remakes their own world through that image. As Miles states:

> Orpheus sang and played on the lyre with such beauty and skill that he enchanted not only humans but even wild nature: animals and birds flocked to hear him, rivers paused in their courses, even trees and stones uprooted themselves and lumbered to follow his voice. [127]

Orpheus is the shaper and creator of worlds, both within his own narrative and beyond its borders. His song which influences the surroundings possesses the same notes which inspire the artistic mind. Orpheus' skill, as Elisabeth Henry notes, is through 'playing and singing music so powerfully expressive that the whole of creation responds to it'.[128] In these instances, Orpheus does not:

> command, but by his music invites, persuades, and wins the delighted cooperation of every kind of animal and bird. Though his songs may have words, he never speaks to the animals in any ordinary sense, and does not communicate in their language as folk-tale heroes are sometimes able to do; he communicates through music alone.[129]

In these gatherings Orpheus symbolizes the confluence of 'music, emotion and the sacred', the strains of which, according to Christopher Partridge, few are able to resist.[130] Partridge states that in these scenarios:

> animals join together in groups (often in a circle) to listen to the music, in stillness. Species habitually hostile to one another become tame and friendly; painters and mosaicists shows them in attitudes expressing alert attention and pleasure. Trees and rocks also move to form patterned groups.[131]

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[126] Wroe, p.3.
[127] Geoffrey Miles, p.61.
[128] Elizabeth Henry, *Orpheus with His Lute: Poetry and the Renewal of Life* (London: Billing and Sons Ltd, 1992), p.1.
[129] Ibid, p.1.
[130] Examples of artistic depictions of such a gathered instance can be seen in works by Josef Murer, *Orpheus Charming the Animals* (The J. Paul Getty Musuem, 1600), <http://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/129996/josias-murer-ii-orpheus-charming-the-animals-swiss-about-1600/> [accessed 5 April 2016]; Giuseppe Cades, *Orpheus Charming the Animals*, *Louvre* (Louvre, 1780), <http://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/orpheus-charming-animals> [accessed 5 April 2016]
[131] Partridge, p.2.

Orpheus performing to an entranced throng represents not just his skill as musician but also highlights a voice that bridges and breaks communicative boundaries.

Such authority over nature and the elements occurs frequently through revisions of the Orphean myth. Ovid presents Orpheus' control of the elements upon 'a hill, and, on the hill, a wide area of level ground, turfed with fresh blades of grass: shade was absent there: but when the poet, born of the god, sounded the strings of his lyre, shade gathered there'.[132] Rilke sees Orpheus' song converge with nature, the convergence signalling new possibilities, new creations:

> A tree stood up. Oh Pure uprising!
> Orpheus is singing! Oh tall tree in the ear!
> And everything grew still. Yet in the silence there
> Changes took place, signals and fresh beginnings.[133]

For Shakespeare, at the commencement of *Henry VIII* (1613), the monarch's wife sings of such ability to alter the fabric of the environment:

> Orpheus with his lute made trees,
> And the mountain tops that freeze,
> Bow themselves when he did sing:
> To his music plants and flowers
> Ever sprung; as sun and showers
> There had made a lasting spring.
> Every thing that heard him play,
> Even the billows of the sea,
> Hung their heads, and then lay by.
> In sweet music is such art,
> Killing care and grief of heart
> Fall asleep, or hearing, die.[134]

The song is seemingly entrancing for all creatures, yet there is counterpoint within that melody. The fatalistic terms 'killing', 'grief', 'die', flowing from the new life of trees, flowers, and the sea. There is an impermanence to the intonation, a transience to the melody, yet the repetitious notes of endings are also forever conjoined with new beginnings.

A slightly less than classical approach to the encapsulating effect of such musicality is proffered in Nick Cave's 'The Lyre of Orpheus' from the double album *Abattoir Blues/The*

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[132] Ovid, trans. A.S. Kline. (ln.86-105).
[133] Rilke, 'First Part, 1', *Sonnets to Orpheus*, (Loc 178 of 1465). (ln.1-4).
[134] William Shakespeare, *The Life of King Henry the Eighth*, 3.1. (The Tech, MIT), <http://shakespeare.mit.edu/henryviii/full.html> [accessed 31 March 2016] (ln.3-14).

Lyre of Orpheus (2004). The opening title track to *The Lyre of Orpheus* is described by Mathew Murphy as a 'sardonic, tedious rewrite of the Greek myth'.[135] Zeth Lundy sees it as being a woozy, 'bloody [...] retelling of the myth of Orpheus [...] undercut by jabs of wry humor'.[136] Cave's narrative sees a bored Orpheus sat in a gloomy shed:

> Wondering what to do
> With a lump of wood, a piece of wire
> And a little pot of glue.[137]

He does what he is bound by his myth to do, Orpheus makes a lyre to utter forth a tune. Yet one of such power that it does not simply charm the birds from the trees, but possesses rather more destructive qualities:

> And he plucked gentle note
> Eurydice's eyes popped from their sockets
> And her tongue burst through her throat.[138]

Eurydice is torn apart by that instrument of transformation. However, Orpheus is not psychologically traumatised or destroyed by grief but is enthused with a sense of liberation. Strumming his lyre 'as hard as he did please' he runs through fields of wheat while birds explode in the sky and 'Bunnies dashed their brains out on the trees'.[139] Ultimately his murderous and explosive rampage is halted as 'God gets pissed and throws him down into hell'.[140] This unceremonious descent does nevertheless unite him with his true love, who is unmoved and unsatisfied by the melodic incantations:

> And she said to Orpheus
> If you play that fucking thing down here
> I'll stick it up your orifice![141]

The bawdy verses end with Orpheus retiring his lyre and conjuring thoughts of raising a family.

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[135] Mathew Murphy, 'Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds: Abattoir Blues / the Lyre of Orpheus', *Pitchfork* (Pitchfork, 2004), <http://pitchfork.com/reviews/albums/11700-abattoir-bluesthe-lyre-of-orpheus/> [accessed 31 March 2016]

[136] Zeth Lundy, 'Nick Cave and The Bad Seeds: Abattoir Blues/the Lyre of Orpheus', *PopMatters* (PopMatters, 2004), <http://www.popmatters.com/review/cavenick-abattoir/> [accessed 31 March 2016]

[137] Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds, 'The Lyre of Orpheus', *Abattoir Blues/The Lyre of Orpheus* (Mute Records, 2004). (ln.2-4).

[138] Cave, 'The Lyre of Orpheus'. (ln.22-24).

[139] Ibid, (ln.34).

[140] Murphy.

[141] Cave, 'The Lyre of Orpheus'. (ln.57-59).

Cave's visceral, and darkly comic portrayal of Orpheus seemingly unshackles itself from antiquity as this 'modern Orpheus uses his art to tame his world, albeit an urban, industrialized one'.[142] The vaudevillian excess of the interpretation still adheres to classical intimations however, as indicated by Rilke, and in particular with Shakespeare; in that implicit link of the deathly, the destructively alluring qualities of the song itself. 'Tame' may be too light a term in the context of the violence of Cave's/Orpheus song, yet in these divergent examples, the influence or power of the music of Orpheus is clear, both within the interior narrative frame and as entrancing melody for variant creative approaches.

It is a melody that enthrals *The Orpheus Project Group* and preoccupies Boghosian; it swells and ebbs only to rise again, even in the finalities of this thesis, yet it is a voice which exists in silence. Davies, speaking of his own reaction and interpretations to the myth, sees Orpheus as the:

> supreme musician/poet. His music is infinitely enchanting and persuasive - it enchants even the immortals; it overcomes death, or nearly [...] we only have another person's word for all this [...] namely the teller or interpreter of the tales of Orpheus and Eurydice. We never actually encounter O's music itself, because it's only ever referred to, sometimes forged, sometimes fabricated, never actually heard.[143]

The very name 'O', the abbreviation Davies uses, is also suggestive of an absence or empty space. O may be seen to symbolise an empty circle, a blank space to enter or inhabit. O is ground zero, apropos of nothing, the typographic counter, the empty zone of its own letter, an unfilled space which exists to be occupied by those that seek to inhabit the membrane of this myth, to wear the textual skin, to probe its boundaries and test its limitations. To apply that sense of O to Derrida's *trace*, he may be seen as the embodiment of such a term, being an absent presence existing within the past, present, and future. O/trace is:

> not a presence but is rather the simulacrum of a presence that dislocates, displaces, and refers beyond itself. The trace has, properly speaking, no place, for effacement belongs to the very structure of the trace.[144]

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[142] Bernstock, p.6.
[143] Lyndon Davies, *Orpheus, Eurydice and the Tritone Sub* (SoundCloud, 2013),
<https://soundcloud.com/user428767512/talk-by-lyndon-davies-orpheus> [accessed 24 March 2016]
[144] Jacquess Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena*, trans. by David B. Allison (Evanston: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1973), p.156.

This absent, diffuse, or malleable character is necessary, as even for Rilke the 'vanishing of Orpheus' is fundamental not just in the fascination of the myth but in its continued revisions:

> He has to vanish so you can understand.
> Even if it frightens him to disappear.
> While his word is transforming our beings here [145]

Orpheus is the absent presence; his failure, his shocking absence, is that which defines and inspires varied narratives.

The intangible nature of the myth provides the impetus for rewriting, yet he is never truly possessed, as Wroe notes:

> Each age revisits him, but none put a stamp on him definitively, because the young man with the lyre is different for everyone who meets him. Each encounter makes him anew [...] He is a shadow in the doorway, a face outside the window in the night rain [...] When we hear him, time stops and for a moment everything is changed; but then he moves on.[146]

Orpheus for Wroe is an ever present yet near implacable poetic wraith. 'His metamorphoses are transitory and artificial' but essential to artistic form, this naked singularity unable to release information, but nevertheless being a magnetic lure that brings all to his tempting horizon.[147] This hollow O exists as potential space for the adapter to occupy, or reframe; he is the 'O, calling to us from an elsewhere that is other', and after each reimagining, is gone.[148] To apply concepts of adaptational fidelity may prove impractical or even impossible for the myth as it 'is hard to assess how faithful a text is to something that does not materially exist'.[149] However, the structure, the frame of the tale endures through this absence.

Orpheus is a tale that exists in terms of absence and known narrative failure (for all his attempts, Eurydice remains in Hades) yet the mythical poet is also an enduring presence, a near inevitable line of force. Davies' contemplation on myth and literature equates the popularity of the Orphean narrative to the search for the *authentic* within creative activity; a quest for 'the true poem, the true painting, the truest song, the one that completes the chain of yearning, if

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[145] Rilke, 'First Part, 5', *Sonnets to Orpheus*, (Loc 178 of 1465). (ln.9-11).
[146] Wroe, pp.4-6.
[147] Bernstock, p.6.
[148] Joel Fineman, 'The Sound of O in Othello: The Real of the Tragedy of Desire', *October*, 45 (Summer, 1988), pp.76-96 (p.94). Fineman is speaking here of language in Othello as producing an extra-textual meaning, of the reduction of Othello to *O* as the play progresses.
[149] Cardwell, *Adaptation Revisited*, p.26.

only for the merest particle of a moment'.[150] That moment of the authentic or original itself becomes a transitory point, as that which is translated or adapted begins from the shadow, the hollow 'O', as Davies abbreviates him. The shift away from a set, predetermined source may permit greater freedoms for each remediated journey, allowing divergent explorations of textual process. Miles' comments upon the migratory nature of mythic-ness; that 'mythic images may remain stable and simple, but the interpretation of the stories shifts from period to period and from writer to writer' hold.[151]

The process of adaption here orbits upon themes of loss and attempted rescue, being works of 'mourning, memory and the work of salvage'.[152] *The Orpheus Project* centres upon processes of unearthing, refashioning, and re-use; an artistic method focused on remediation and 'towards recovering what is lost'.[153] The adapted text is a vision of a vision, a telling of a retelling; each telling utilising that glimpse of the shadow *Orpheus* as an essential aspect in textual interpretation. The myth is reclaimed, broken apart, reformed and rescued; voice is given to the voiceless, form to the formless, in an expanding tale of ever interwoven memories, versions, and identities. My discussion progresses now to those themes of reclamation and rewriting in relation to Hallas' *Pantechnicon* installation, and to the artist Varujan Boghosian, where I speak more specifically of artistic methods of reconstitution of that which is lost, in procedures of alterity placed upon the adapted object.

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[150] Davies, 'Orpheus, Eurydice, Blanchot': in *Myth, Literature and the Unconscious*, p.213.
[151] Geoffrey Miles, p.4.
[152] Mantel, *Start the Week*.
[153] Michael A. Holly, 'Patterns in the Shadows', *In[]Visible Culture – An Electronic Journal for Visual Studies*, 1. (1998), <http://ivc.lib.rochester.edu/patterns-in-the-shadows/>. [accessed 10 June 2016]

Miscellany & violations

The *Pantechnicon* installation took place in the Queens Arcade shopping centre Cardiff, South Wales in 2013. Its formation consisted of a re-envisaging of Hallas' studio, incorporating original drawings, paintings, art-objects, and a version of *The Orpheus Project* as film projection film. Hallas describes the impetus for the event:

> The objects, often decayed or rusted and broken are potent for me in the way some sacred artefacts might seem to be. They have insinuated themselves into my creative processes, are now an integral part of the picture […] In one way my studio could be seen as a kind of pantechnicon, in the sense of a miscellany of variously derived objects. A shopping centre is also a pantechnicon: a receptacle filled with available objects of desire – an intricate manifold of paths and intensities. [154]

This is a collation of repurposed and adapted objects: firstly, of the studio itself being moved to a reclaimed space; secondly, that space may also be viewed as being adapted, being now distinct from its former use as retail centre; and thirdly, of the objects themselves, artefacts lost, found and repurposed. Of the latter, these 'found things' variously constituted animal skulls, industrial bolts, farm tools, pieces of wood, and were recombined and transformed into re-aligned physicalities, representing a method of transfiguration of the 'original' textual space of the object. Such textual rewriting focuses upon a desire to relocate and recombine the lost or forgotten artefact, to 'bring it back into the daylight and in the daylight give it form, figure and reality'.[155] The re-use of 'found' objects here was performed by the artist delving beneath (the ground) to re-discover the forgotten fragment, through (the past) of a previous former use, and upon the now re-appropriated object (see Figures 3-7 for examples of these artefacts). My analysis focuses on aspects of rewriting and textual reformation not of these objects themselves, but of similar processes of reconstruction occurring upon artwork being deliberately altered or defaced by visitors.

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[154] Penny Hallas, *Pantechnicon* (Blogger.com, 2013).
[155] Maurice Blanchot, 'The Gaze of Orpheus', in *The Gaze of Orpheus and Other Literary Essays*, ed. by P. Adams Sitney, trans. by Lydia Davies (New York: Station Hill, 1981), pp.99–105 (p.99).

Figures 3-7. Reconstituted objects and art in *Pantechnicon*.[156]

During *Pantechnicon* visitors were actively encouraged to add their own inscriptions to created artworks; to write, etch, deface, and deconstruct these 'originals'. The mode of engagement varied with each visitor, with some writing their names, creating additional images, or adding lines and other inscriptions over-laid upon the pieces. This adaptation, or violation, also occurred within the *Orpheus Project: Border / Lines* (2010) seminar, an *Orpheus Project*-related exploratory textual event. During the event two drawings were created by Hallas:

> and people were taken one by one to the studio to record their pre-prepared responses to the Blanchot essay [the Gaze of Orpheus] to camera. After each recording the guest was invited to change the drawings, one with a rubber and one with a piece of charcoal. When everyone had done this, people came together to improvise written responses to the day, creating brief sentences and word-patterns which were then torn in half, each part of the sentence acquiring a response and a completion by another of the participants. Armed with these reconstituted sentences the participants returned to the studio where, with the use again of rubber and charcoal, they performed a mass intervention on the drawings.[157]

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[156] Hallas, *Pantechnicon*, various mixed-media. (Cardiff, 2013).
[157] Penny Hallas, *Orpheus Project: Border / Lines* (Glasfryn, Powys, 2010).
<http://pennyhallas.co.uk/wp/1149/orpheus-border-lines-event/> [accessed 29 April 2016]

Figure 8. *Orpheus Project: Border / Lines*. The textual artefact over-written.[158]
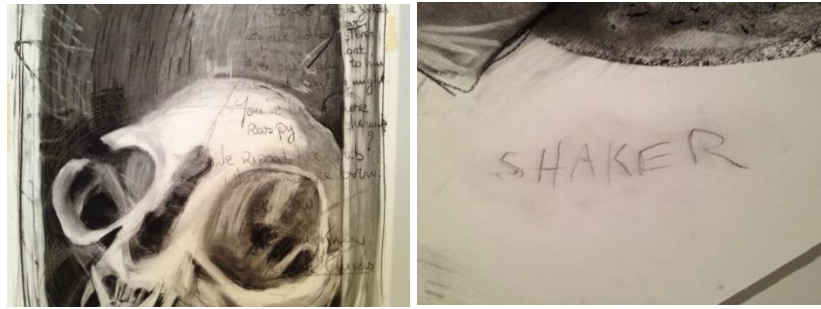
Figures 9-12. User-inscribed art in *Pantechnicon*.[159]

These interventions permit the 'original' text to be adapted, repurposed to the thoughts, actions, and motives of the audience. In that moment the boundaries of the textual frame are broken, allowing audience to become *user*, who now touch and interact within the static border. The spectator imprints their interpretation, their narrative, upon the artefact, creating 'new meanings for themselves'.[160] The visitors/users become participants in the past life of the inscribed art object (including the writings of previous visitors) and as agent within the 'original' textual space *Pantechnicon* represents.[161]

These rewritten 'things' transform from static to mutable textual components, functioning as nodes of connection to the ongoing life of the textual space whose engravings and activations ever grow as the installation progresses, creating in the previous life of the work potential for personalised adaptational experiences. These images are markers of agency on the part of the visitor acting upon an original artefact, thus creating 'a document that has been

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[159] Hallas, *Pantechnicon*, various mixed-media. (Cardiff, 2013).
[160] Susan A. Crane, 'Memory, Distortion, and History in the Museum', in *History and Theory: Theme Issue 36: Producing the Past: Making Histories Inside and Outside the Academy*, 36.4 (1997), 44–63 <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/2505574> (p.45).
[161] Kenyon, p.176.

repeatedly written-over, so that traces of earlier texts can be faintly read between the surface text'.[162] The 'writing over' occurring during these actions is again redolent of Derrida's *trace*, as 'effacement belongs to the very structure of the trace'.[163] The actions performed upon these textual artefacts act as both an adaptive act of rewriting and also a challenge to the original authored textual form, as for the visitor (now, rewriter) it is their text to be altered. In Umberto Eco's analysis of the 'open' text, he states that the 'open' text possesses certain qualities, and permits certain affordances, that the 'author offers the interpreter, the performer, the addressee a work to be *completed*'.[164] The rewritten text in these cases tempts that possibility of completion in works which invite a process of change or movement; or in another sense, a space to occupy, a story to shape, or song to sing. That invitation for users to act upon the text thus allows 'the possibility of numerous different personal interventions'.[165] These interventions echo processes mentioned previously, of return and reshaping of the text; as in these moments of textual engagement or violation each inscription or mark alters the text, and in this 'Each encounter makes him anew'.[166]

Active engagement upon the text continued with the final day of the *Pantechicon* installation which brought together poets, artists and writers to engage with the exhibition and respond to it as a whole in various ways, whether by readings, analyses, discussions, or other creative imaginings. Davies' overview of the event concentrated both upon the installation itself and the antecedents of Hallas' artistic process; noting the fascination with 'Broken, rusty, charismatic', extant things, he highlighted a textual process which 'includes in its embrace the outmoded, the broken, the discarded and the veiled'.[167] A sentiment echoing with David Greenslade's poetic response during the final day, whose brief talk was entitled 'I want to greet each broken object when it sings'; a sentence that combines concepts of meeting and re-constituting the severed or dislocated object, together with the notion of a dialogue with the salvaged, altered and adapted textual object.[168] Such modes of recombination and

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[162] Geoffrey Miles, p.4.
[163] Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena*, p.156.
[164] Umberto Eco, 'The Poetics of the Open Work', in *Creative Industries*, ed. by John Hartley (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), pp.177–87 (p.184).
[165] Ibid.
[166] Wroe, pp.4-6.
[167] Lyndon Davies, 'Opening Speech', in *Pantechnicon Closing Event* (Unit 17, Queens Arcade, Cardiff, Wales, 2013).
[168] David Greenslade, 'Commentary and Response', in *Pantechnicon Closing Event* (Unit 17, Queens Arcade, Cardiff, Wales, 2013).

communication continue in the following section, observing the resultant possibilities of formerly forgotten objects becoming reshaped in the work of artist Varujan Boghosian.

Orpheus, the lost and broken thing

Those 'broken' yet still singing objects are the focus for the following discussion of the selected Orphean-related works of the artist Varujan Boghosian. Here, I discuss textual change occurring through adaptational processes of 'reclamation and re-attribution'.[169] The analysis closely follows the method of the artist, building upon aspects of return, present within the Orpheus myth as noted previously, in addition to the use of multiple medial fragments to form a new textual artefact (as also seen in *The Orpheus Project* and *Pantechnicon*). Boghosian's artistic formations of wood, metal, ceramics, and the ephemera of found objects create a narrative in situ, often illustrating a central character imprisoned and trapped within their own myth, yet that narrative appears, reappears, and is reformed across myriad differing versions. My purpose here analyses Boghosian's works which seek to reimagine the Orpheus myth through an art practice focused on (as Davies has stated with regard to *Pantechnicon*) the recombination of such 'Broken, rusty, charismatic' things.[170]

With regard to adaptation and the notion of the 'source text', both the myth of Orpheus and the physical objects the artist utilises to retell that myth may be considered as points of origin for textual reframing. Boghosian's works involve the repurposing of the materials of the everyday, reworkings of the 'flotsam and jetsam of present and historical time, from what everyday use has turned into banality'.[171] The artist engages in a 'passionate search for the lost, the misplaced, the unneeded, the broken, the abused', re-using artefacts as potential emissaries for a redefined purpose.[172] The individual materials used in these collages are not rendered completely alien to the onlooker, they are recognisable as regards their past nature and form(s). The viewer's knowledge and recognition of the past use of items that were once 'for a specific activity is necessary to a heightened appreciation of their new role by both artist and audience'.[173] Each intersection, placement, and rearrangement of the re-found object, allows these artefacts to be 'transformed, by removal from their original context, by additions from the hand of the artist, and by placement in a new relationship'.[174] The artist here conjures a recombination in the manner of adoption of objects as opposed to utterly disfiguring, or truly

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[169] Robert M. Doty, 'Introduction', in *Varujan Boghosian: A Retrospective* (Hanover, NH: Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, 1989), pp.15–19 (p.16).
[170] Davies, 'Opening Speech'.
[171] Clothier, 'The Poetic Object', in *The Poetic Object: Exhibition Catalogue*, ed. by Clothier and Edwards, p.8.
[172] Doty, 'Introduction', in *Varujan Boghosian: A Retrospective,* p.16.
[173] Ibid.
[174] Ibid, p.18.

breaking down shape and outward appearance.[175] These misplaced, unwanted or forgotten items when placed in situ create a cumulative effect 'to make us simultaneously aware of both the long histories of these worn components and their new existence'.[176] Therefore there is an awareness of both that which is adapted and the previous life of the repurposed object, creating a dualism of textual form which highlights both text and process. The re-use of objects in this manner also frames their nature as being impermanent; their new recombined existence also perhaps being equally temporary and which in time may also be unmade or scattered. This suggests the textual object as a point in transit, a coordinate to be relocated and remade.

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[175] Doty, 'Introduction', in *Varujan Boghosian: A Retrospective*, p.17.
[176] Karen Wilkin, 'At the Galleries', *The Hudson Review*, 63.1. (Spring, 2010), pp.110-118 (p.111), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25703737> [accessed 11 February 2016]

An object that you find

Boghosian's collection began in 'around 1958' in a flea market, spending four of the 'six or seven dollars' he and his wife had in the bank at that time on two money-boxes (or piggy-banks, as they are known in the UK).[177] This early purchase instigated a lifelong process of creative production that involves a repeated turn to the past, of foraging among:

> antique shops, flea markets, and yard sales [...] a host of objects: weathered doors and windows, a bench top, ornamental woodwork, hat forms, wooden shoe trees, cages, boxes, wheels, bells, old paintings, tools for carpenters, tools for mechanics, tools for the housewife, tools of all kinds [178]

His work occupies an artistic landscape where 'Real things are scavenged, stored in the studio, and then sent back, transformed, to the world outside'.[179] Boghosian speaks of his own process as one of being a 'junk collector [...] I use all manner of artefacts, ancient and modern [...] I make constructions, I put them together'.[180] In place of merely the collation of lost objects these artefacts instead become reconfigured into new narratives, appearing in 'new contexts, in unfamiliar affinities, and [taking] on new meanings'.[181]

Karen Wilkin describes the artist as a 'poet and a magpie', a descriptive that would seem to bear some indication of truth however humorous it may sound.[182] Wilkin views the artist as a 'connoisseur and avid collector of the tattered, the neglected, and the strange [...] vintage photographs, obsolete postcards, foxed prints, battered toys and games, scraps of ancient wallpaper, antiquated penmanship exercises and expenditure accounts, chipped souvenirs'.[183] His is a creative process which relies on a methodical approach to collection and the collation of new forms; his studio being an 'Aladdin's cave, a treasure trove of discarded, used, and wonderful things – the contents of which are always changing as new items are added and old ones leave in their new guise as constructions and collages'.[184] He is a bricoleur, the

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[177] Toledo Museum of Art, 'Dialogue with Artist Varujan Boghosian', *YouTube* (YouTube, 2014), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XlbQI3QnB9U> [accessed 11 February 2016]
[178] Doty, 'Introduction', in *Varujan Boghosian: A Retrospective,* p.16.
[179] Ibid, p.16.
[180] Toledo Museum of Art, 'Shopping with Varujan Boghosian', *YouTube* (YouTube, 2014), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VhoSYlkoKjU> [accessed 11 February 2016]
[181] John A. Mahoney, 'Foreword', in *The Poetic Object: Exhibition Catalogue*, ed. by Peter Clothier and Jim Edwards (San Antonio, Texas: San Antonio Museum Association, 1988), p.5
[182] Wilkin, 'At the Galleries', p.110.
[183] Ibid, p.110.
[184] Doty, 'Introduction', in *Varujan Boghosian: A Retrospective,* p.15.

'one that muses: Let's see what happens if…' such unrelated items are combined, be they lost and found 'objects, images, words, materials'.[185]

When asked for the definition of such an item, 'what is a found object?', Boghosian responded simply with, it as 'an object that you find'.[186] This straightforward reply playfully and perhaps purposely belies the at-times complex interplay of meaning present in the created works themselves. Barbara Zucker states that his artistic method combines multiple varied forms of material, creating unusual, ostensibly surreal, or allegorically suggestive images.[187] Wilkins views his work as presenting at its heart 'Surrealism's belief that things gain in meaning when they are taken out of context and placed in unexpected relationships'.[188] The artist does not associate his work with surrealism however, stating 'I am not a surrealist, I am an American'.[189] This echoes Robert Doty's analysis that these works resonate with the hum and materials of 'American life, relics of our common experience, which are gathered together and later transformed by the artist's imagination [...] physical means to act as catalysts for transforming individual rapport into the most fundamental human experience'.[190] Such 'relics' of the everyday can be seen in those early flea-market purchases, as one of the first items obtained was a money-box in the form of a representation of the Empire State building.[191] These objects obtained for their interesting texture or visual appearance are then channelled and altered through the manner of recombination.

The items he collects may reside in his vast gathering of found items for years before finding a use, the final piece of a puzzle being a skull, stone, or forgotten aspect of machinery. The artist acting as re-discoverer of remnants and volunteering in part, as Busa notes, 'as their caretaker', only placing them with purpose when the items are deemed ready:

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185 Clothier, 'The Poetic Object', in *The Poetic Object: Exhibition Catalogue*, ed. by Clothier and Edwards, p.7.
186 Toledo Museum of Art, 'Dialogue with Artist Varujan Boghosian'.
187 Barbara Zucker, 'Sculpture/New Hampshire', *Art Journal*, 42.1 (1982), 64–66 (p.65),
<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/776501> [accessed 12 February 2016]
188 Karen Wilkin, 'Altered States - Varujan Boghosian at the Toledo Museum of Art', *The Wall Street Journal* (The Wall Street Journal, 7 May 2014),
<http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702303678404579538084239149894> [accessed 11 February 2016]
189 Toledo Museum of Art, 'Dialogue with Artist Varujan Boghosian'.
190 Doty, 'Introduction', in *Varujan Boghosian: A Retrospective,* pp.15-19.
191 Toledo Museum of Art, 'Dialogue with Artist Varujan Boghosian'.

> Over any period of several years, he will have dozens of projects in progress. He likes to be lucky, and nothing pleases him more than to find by accident some orphan that becomes the capstone to conclude a piece that otherwise would not be finished. [192]

The employment of the term 'orphan' for this process of 'rehoming' of forgotten objects within these collages is of note as it further emphasises the concept of the lost object. Busa extends this term, observing that 'orphan' is the root of 'Orpheus'.[193] This connotation extends my previous discussion of the mythic figure as being somehow implacable or absent; here he is also without roots, an isolated figure adopted by whoever may tell his tale next. In this, Orpheus could also be viewed as a 'found object' as he is trapped in his own myth; a fragment of flotsam and jetsam waiting to be reclaimed and retold. Such medial or textual rehoming amplifies notions of reclamation and return through a process where 'discarded and forgotten things are given new life', a central premise of this thesis.[194]

Orpheus for Boghosian is returned to time and time again as a motif, presenting a 'desire to participate in a vision and history which involves the social structure, the conflict and pain of frustrated love, and the balm of hope, all synthesized in great drama'.[195] His approach to the adaptation of the Orphean narrative rests upon a relatively straightforward premise, as he states 'I worked with the basic raw myth and then made elaborations on it'.[196] The 'elaborations' in such reimaginings consist of a creative process reliant upon the reconstitution of that which was once lost, forgotten, or torn asunder. The artist is 'primarily a sculptor, a constructor and a builder, but he is also a historian retelling the great myths and assembling collections of objects and images which evoke time past'.[197] The image of Orpheus' repeated deconstruction or severing of form at the hands, teeth and claws of savage maenads, is suggestive of the multiple objects the artist uses in his re-creations; his method signalling a repeated desire to re-create and reframe the textual whole.

The Lyre (1971) highlights this approach of bricolage and the inspiration of classical. The title signals the instrument Orpheus is often associated with, yet the piece places not a stringed instrument at the epicentre of its construction, but instead the representation of a

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[192] Christopher Busa, 'Varujan Boghosian: The Artist as Orpheus', in *Provincetown Arts* (2009), pp.34–42 (p.37), <http://bertawalkergallery.com/press/Articles/2009_Boghosian_ProvincetownArts.pdf> [accessed 5 February 2016]
[193] Ibid.
[194] Wilkin, 'Altered States'.
[195] Doty, 'Introduction', in *Varujan Boghosian: A Retrospective*, p.18.
[196] Varujan Boghosian, 'Boghosian on Boghosian', in *Transforming Texts: Classical Images in New Contexts*, ed. by Robert P. Metzger (United States: Bucknell University Press, U.S., 1993), pp.54-62 (pp.54-55).
[197] Doty, 'Introduction', in *Varujan Boghosian: A Retrospective,* p.15.

severed head. This head is attached by the top of its skull to a U-shaped iron device (a remnant of some form of past mechanistic object) which is anchored to the frame itself and also extends beyond it. The extremities of the 'U' pushing past the thick beams of the wooden surround, depicting both a motion of violence with its act of penetration into the skull and a means of incarceration. This metallic contraption, darkened and rusted through time, houses a bell, suggesting an ominous tolling or intimations of temporality. Whilst visually alluding to a crown, the arrangement suggests not glory but punishment. The circlet forces the solitary wearer to be trapped within a static arrangement, detached and distant from desired (looked at) objects, represented here by orbs in the lower right and upper left corners.

Orbs, or else other spherical objects, frequently recur in the work of Boghosian, and are but one of a number of repeated motifs used in conjunction with his representations of the Orphean myth:

> Balls are the world itself and suggest Orpheus' skills as a juggler and entertainer; dolls are reminders of humanity, or figures in the myth; ironing boards are both a base to mount various objects and a suggestion of heat and hell; a toy boat conveys the crossing of the Styx idea [...] an old tool becomes a lyre for Orpheus to play, a doll's foot is cast in the new role of Achilles' heel. The associations go on and on.[198]

In this instance, the world, or creative skill (as represented by the orb) is placed distant, shielded, and apart; kept beyond arm's length by an extended partition to the frame itself. The articles present within the piece have as their backdrop a seemingly large amount of empty space represented in a deep blue, presenting an expanse 'neither space nor plane, but rather a field for setting out shapes and forms'.[199] This area, far from being passive, assists in both focusing the centrepiece of the work, the head, while also isolating and placing further adrift that implied central figure. The Orphean presence here is removed from both the world, and is also kept apart from his creative aspect, that of entertainer and artist.

The perpendicular partitions present within *The Lyre* are a repeated feature within the works of Boghosian and may be seen to perform varying functions. Primarily they enhance and multiply the sense of surrounding within the pieces, generating frames within frames, creating notions of entrapment and containment. The restrictions of these constructions are not always defined by a pictorial sense of the actual frame itself but often by additional elements of

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[198] Doty, 'Introduction', in *Varujan Boghosian: A Retrospective,* p.18.
[199] Ibid, p.18.

segmentation or ordering. *The Lyre* possesses a repeated linear aspect which is part overlaid on the picture frame itself; a vertical bar that both breaks the boundaries of the art-frame and also acts as a further element of restriction within the created work. Intimations of vast masonry, elongated pillars, weighty platforms, suggest such an organised, rigid, and enclosed structure. Jim Edwards states that this somewhat architectural mode in Boghosian's works sees the artist as ordering 'his world with an algebraic logic'.[200] A highly organised formation consisting of numerous interlinked elements and conjoined fragments, imposing a symmetrical and purposeful 'interactive system' of pressure upon a primary figure.[201] Similar formations appear within *Orpheus Icon* (1975), as structural formations place the mythical musician within a depiction of tightly enclosed solitude. Further encasing the solitary musician is a crushing forced perspective created by the many layered frames of the piece, lending a three-dimensional aspect and enforced depth of field visually portraying Orpheus as distant entity as something to be journeyed *to*. Orpheus here, as in *The Lyre,* is a figure detained and isolated who cannot escape their own fated, framed narrative.

I Will Give You One O (1977) again indicates a strong conjunction of order and linearity within its composition, together with a forceful aspect of entrapment. The returning structural motif of multiple levels of framing within the textured piece is primarily facilitated via straight, vertical lines that dominate throughout. The central figure occupies the upper-third quadrant of the depiction, inhabiting the focal centre of the piece. Spheres occupy a prominent role once more, as O (again, the reduced and 'hollow' abbreviation) is holding an orb and is flanked on either edge of the frame interior by further globes, which are held in place and pierced through with vertical brass rods. The orbs either side of the central figure are not placed in a symmetrical arrangement however, being four on the left-hand viewer's side, and a solitary orb placed on the right; a suggestion of incongruity amidst linear order that is amplified by the materiality of O himself. Boghosian places this implied Orpheus upon a slender central column; a figure that when viewed more closely is less propped up than impaled, or at best staked to the ground. This O is again formed of variously derived objects, including a beheaded mannequin, possessing arms from a previously dismembered tailor's dummy, both now stitched and woven into a re-created form.

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[200] Edwards, 'Organic Life Designs: The Art of The Poetic Object', in *The Poetic Object: Exhibition Catalogue*, ed. by Clothier and Edwards, p.14.
[201] Hallas, *Communion*.

Such containment (as indicated in the above works) appears again within the entrapped resident present within *Minor Key* (1971). The placement of the figure here is deliberately off-kilter, their inhabited space further detached and marginalised as a result of that decentredness. *Minor Key* presents a scene reminiscent (perhaps constructed) of a doorway, with an isolated head peering off-centre through a space in a top window opening. The arrangement of the piece is echoed in a later work, *Untitled* (1980), the production of which again resembles a door and frame with a secluded figure looking *out*. Within these works there are manifold structures of enclosure for the primary presence; *Minor Key* presents the wooden frame of a door itself consisting of several rectangular sections, this is paired with an increased arrangement of twenty-six smaller tiles surrounding a detached head. These tiles envelop the gazing visage which is positioned right of centre as viewed, and assists in decentralising the lone viewer, additionally alienating the solitary participant.

The prevailing sense of enclosure repeats once more in *Bound Orpheus* (1981) and *The Pierced Heart* (1981). However, entrapment as a mode within these constructions of linearity is offset as within both works an apparatus is provided which tempts the possibility of escape from encasement, as each figure is provided with a ladder. However, within their frames of tattered and recombined objects these entrapped forms are incapable of using their tool for flight. The linear frame of the ladder itself, a potential tool to climb out of, is instead depicted as obstacle. In *Bound Orpheus* the ladder is less embraced than frantically clung on to, the apparatus for vertical escape is not used as a means of transit or removal but seen as suggesting a fear to move out beyond the confines of the nominal nature of the boundary. *The Pierced Heart* places the ladder as taunting instrument of complication, it entangles and frustrates. Both figures here are severed at the midriff, propped up simply by a wooden pole, with both also wearing a conical hat (*The Pierced Heart* utilising a metal funnel). Orpheus in these depictions appears as a form of jester, clown, or fool, possessing an ability to escape but unable to utilise it; these are tragic and painfully comedic actors, placed in the centre of a cruel and repetitious drama. However, the presence of such physical objects in these constructions tempts a challenge to the repeated delineations of enclosure. The treatment of the textual plane in these works is often one whereby:

> surfaces are often handled in the manner of low relief with irregular depths and projections which catch or withhold the light. Not all of his narratives take place as if

within a proscenium; he is quite capable of moving out into space and increasing the scale. [202]

This sense of depth is a recurrent feature, as his constructions rarely remain flat; instead they protrude past their perimeters or else jut partly outside their containment towards the onlooker. That which exists within these framed visions often poke at their edges, seek, or else test a sense of containment. Orpheus appears trapped within multiple layers, yet he nonetheless escapes a static form and is made and remade across myriad versions and within multiple frames.

Boghosian's process is one of creating physical layers and orchestrating textures; the works formed via processes of change and interchange, as unearthed fragments coalesce and bind within a newly imagined textual structure. The creative mode is one of working with conjoined elements 'washed up by the sea of time'; an archive of materials which are placed, bolted, glued, drilled, and stitched together, quite literally in some cases within the works themselves.[203] For example, in *I will Give You One O*, which sees the head of a mannequin not simply placed atop an assemblage of gathered objects, but woven into the fabric of reinterpreted forms. The compunction to return, both to lost objects and to the mythic tale, engenders fresh textual layers formed from unearthed or discovered items, permitting new meanings and associations from once static remains. The text/Orpheus/O is brought back not as disconnected fragment or forgotten fraction, but as one whole, revisited and re-created by the adapter.

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[202] Doty, 'Introduction', in *Varujan Boghosian: A Retrospective,* pp.16-17.
[203] Ibid, p.17.

Archive

Boghosian's adaptive process illustrates an ongoing aim to repurpose such ephemera of 'cracks in glass, tears in fabric, and stains on sheet music' into a tangible artefact formed from the milieu and debris of a previous existence.[204] Thus, this occupies a return that is marked by a process of transformation; the artefacts' new role now occupying a realm of escape or transcendence of previous categorisations as 'lost objects'. Such textual processes are reliant upon malleability whereby individual components are constantly being refashioned, re-used and reshaped. This reformation of objects in textual terms views the newly created artefact as consisting not of:

> a line of words, releasing a single "theological" meaning (the "message" of the Author-God), but is a space of many dimensions, in which are wedded and contested various kinds of writing, no one of which is original: the text is a tissue of citations, resulting from the thousand sources of culture.[205]

Such a tissue of citations occupies the *raison d'etre* of Boghosian's process and Orphean understandings, as myth is unstable, ever adapted, its unclear borders constantly interpreted. For example, *Orpheus Icon* is a work that does not exist in isolation as it is a creation 'rendered in ten unique incarnations, some fuller, others more schematic, yet no single version contains the most information', the vision never remains still.[206] His revisions of Orpheus present less a static tale of singular events but a grand collection, a lexicon of multiple interpretations or archive of understanding.

The nature of the archive is examined in Derrida's *Archive Fever*. Derrida's discussion of the term manoeuvres through an etymological, historical and psychological lens, beginning with an analysis of the word itself, 'Arkhe'. This term being both representative of *commencement*; being the *there* where things originate, and *commandment*, that structure, command, or authority where order is given.[207] The term derives from the Greek *arkheion*, being 'Initially a house, a domicile, an address, the residence of the superior magistrates, the *archons*, those who commanded'.[208] Therefore *archive* may be simultaneously place, collation, and order. However, this arrangement is at least partially in conflict as 'Every archive […] is

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[204] Busa, p.35.
[205] Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', p.146.
[206] Busa, p.39.
[207] Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. by Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p.1.
[208] Ibid, p.2.

at once *institutive* and *conservative*. Revolutionary and traditional […] it keeps, it puts in reserve, it saves, but in an unnatural fashion'.[209] The archive, that which is stored and preserved, possesses within its very structure an enforcement, a hierarchical topology of the information or ephemera contained therein (be it memory, electronic, or printed media). This hierarchy being an *unnatural* state of command over individual beginnings and one which is not impervious to error, as that which is kept, is a shadow; the original can never be obtained. The 'faithful memory of such a singularity can only be given over to the spector'; the archive can never return to the real, the point of origin, only to its recollection or shadow.[210]

The compulsion to return to the archive is an inevitable state; to ceaselessly look and return to that site of collation is to:

> burn with a passion. It is never to rest, interminably, from searching for the archive right where it slips away, it is to run after the archive, even if there's too much of it, right where something anarchives itself. It is to have a compulsive, repetitive, and nostalgic desire for the archive, an irrepressible desire to return to the origin, a homesickness, a nostalgia for the return to the most archaic place of absolute commencement. [211]

A need to return to origins, to the place of the absolute, the journey towards the archive represents 'a repetitive force, the retention of a specific origin through repetition'.[212] Yet the very fabric of the archive represents a plunge into oblivion, Derrida deeming this act 'indissociable from the death drive'.[213] A quest towards the origin, source, or absolute commencement which cannot be found, will not be gazed upon even as ruin or residue, for 'of the secret itself, there can be no archive, by definition. The secret is the very ash of the archive'.[214] Orpheus as narrative archive may be seen to occupy the urge to return to that memory and the inability to find the 'truth'; be it an original text, Eurydice, or the central point of all meaning. For Boghosian, Hallas, and *The Orpheus Project* group, the notion of archive is present in these works through the repeated reframing and relocation of a mythic narrative,

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[209] Derrida, Archive Fever, p.7.
[210] Ibid, p.100.
[211] Ibid, p.91.
[212] Walker Sampson, 'From My Archives: Derrida's Archive Fever' (Wordpress, 2011), <https://wsampson.wordpress.com/2011/04/10/from-my-archives-derridas-archive-fever/> [accessed 23 March 2016]
[213] Derrida, *Archive Fever,* pp.11-12.
[214] Ibid, p.100.

facilitating an ongoing textual connectivity through the reorganisation and recombination of textual artefacts.

The pieces selected for discussion in this chapter present both in the manner of their creation and representational aesthetic motifs of fragmentation and textual return as the text (primarily, *Orpheus*) is reconstructed and given a voice through variant adaptational approaches. While Orpheus as *character* cannot escape, he is hemmed in by his doomed narrative trajectory, Orpheus as interpretative textual act is free to roam and wander through medial boundaries. This textual movement was viewed as a key component of the ever-evolving nature of *The Orpheus Project*, the capacity for rewriting space and textual form during *Pantechnicon*, and the many artistic remediations of Boghosian. Such methods may 'challenge our tendency to define a material text [...] as a fixed thing', as adaptations and the adapters themselves 'must interpret, re-working the precursor text and choosing the various meanings and sensations they find most compelling'.[215] This presents an approach to the re-created work of art 'not as it is in itself, but as it appears to the senses', Carroll elucidates these attitudes, speaking of adaptation that 'every "return" is inevitably transformative of its object - whether that object be the original text or the memory of its first encounter'.[216] The alteration from that original, the archived primary narrative if you will, is changed by layers of experience and process. Crane and Cutchins' discussion of 'representations' would seem to follow this approach:

> In terms of "representations", art is a doomed project from the beginning – at least if one attempts to locate in art "the real" and "presence." […] Art becomes a fecund and productive project, however, if one gives up the hunt for the real and instead focuses on what art actually accomplishes in that *huge* space in between absolute presence and total absence.[217]

The texts discussed here serve to demonstrate this, as they move through methods that appropriate absence, reconfiguring the lost, the cracked and damaged, thus permitting a continued dialogue with the text. They attempt to move beyond strict appropriations into a questioning of the adaptive form and the relationship between adapter and text. Such concepts

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[215] See Bryant, *The Fluid Text*, p.1; Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins, 'Introduction: New Beginnings for Adaptation Studies', in *Adaptation Studies - New Approaches*, pp.12-16.
[216] See Samuel H. Butcher, *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art* (United Kingdom: Dover Publications, 1951), p.121; Carroll, 'Introduction', in *Adaptation in Contemporary Culture*, ed. by Carroll, p.1.
[217] Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins, p.20.

are the focus of the Chapter Three, which applies the theoretical concerns of adaptation, textual movement, and notions of archive, to installation practice.

Ω

Chapter Three - *The Tales We Tell*

The texts discussed within Chapter Two utilised the mythic structure of Orpheus as a catalyst for adaptive process, with each of these revisions providing alternate textual interpretations of an elusive mythical hypotext.[218] The analysis examined the potentials of collaborative activity and acts of textual rewriting that were often focused upon processes of remediation occurring through the blend of lost and abandoned objects. These texts illustrate modes of rereading and reinterpretation through the shift and recombination of form; of viewing the text as a malleable entity constructed through a multitude of artefacts. These processes serve as the entry point for Chapter Three, which applies such concepts of adaptation, remediation, and collation to an installation environment curated by myself. The installation was entitled *The Tales We Tell*, and its aim was to view processes of adaptation away from familiar practices such as novel to television/film/stage, and to extend theory into curatorial practice.[219]

The installation took place in Wrexham, North Wales, United Kingdom, from the 30th January to the 28th February 2015. Its conceptual focus was centred upon the simple premise of storytelling. The press brief illustrates this intended focus:

> Stories surround us, from the mythic to the minute, the personal to the universal, the secret to the outspoken. This event revolves around the broad concept of tales told and re-told, altered, translated, reinterpreted, critiqued, celebrated.

> Welcoming contributions from; artists / writers / performers / musicians / poets / spoken word / academics / video installation artists / invited talks / workshops – the aim is to present and collate an assemblage of creativity based around the premise of adaptations, *The Tales We Tell*.[220]

Examples of the types of participation which took place within the event included: displayed art, multimedia collaboration, musical and spoken word performances, creative writing and poetry workshops, and guest talks from academic specialists. The rationale for this approach was to encourage widening access participation, and to view varying types of creative practice centred on the notion of adaptation, under one admittedly broad banner. The installation also represented the culmination of discussions undertaken primarily with Penny Hallas and

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[218] Genette, *Paratexts*.

[219] Chapple, 'Pedagogy and Policy', in *Redefining Adaptation Studies*, ed. by Cutchins, Raw and Welsh, pp.55–70 (p.55).

[220] Stephen C. Kenyon-Owen, *The Tales We Tell* (WordPress.com, 2015), <https://taleswetelldotcom.wordpress.com/> [accessed 25 October 2016]

Lyndon Davies of *The Orpheus Project* group with regard to staging the collaborative project on a larger scale. The installation therefore retains at its core a vision of the Orpheus myth represented both by the artwork of Hallas and an audio-video collaborative installation, *Beyond Orpheus*. However, the event as a whole was not limited to this one myth, as it welcomed multiple approaches to textual reinterpretation which will be highlighted as this chapter progresses.

The aim of *The Tales We Tell* was to collate and present variant approaches to adaptational storytelling; through this process I occupy the roles of archivist and adapter, as this collected miscellany becomes for a time a unified artefact organised and sequenced by myself. The organization of such a variety of material and artworks in a physical space deliberately echoed processes outlined previously by Boghosian, Hallas, and the *Pantechnicon* event, of gathering and repurposing a 'miscellany of variously derived objects' into a whole form.[221] Busa's evocative description of the interior of Boghosian's studio is suggestive of my approach, that 'In the quiet of puppets and mannequins sprawled on shelves, many voices seem to be muttering sotto voce, just beyond the range of audibility […] there is apparent purpose in the placing of rows between tables, storage counters, shelves, pedestals, chairs, stacks of books'.[222] Narrative artefacts are displayed within a larger collection that communicate their narratives or 'voices' through multiform media; displaying no work of my own, I adopt the role of bricoleur, as here 'I don't make anything. I find everything'.[223] The curation of numerous forms of adaptive process sought to highlight varied approaches to textual reclamation and to further observe those texts that challenge boundaries 'in-between media, disciplines and art forms' both in their formation and in the relation of the artefact to the surrounding space.[224]

The space of an installation environment, the very fabric of the building, may also be perceived as a textual element; in many of the artworks discussed the 'site of installation becomes a primary part of the content of the work itself'.[225] It occurs both through the writing upon the space itself by the objects and artefacts, and also by those works which bleed and

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[221] Penny Hallas, *Pantechnicon* (Blogger.com, 2013),
<http://boxingthechimera.blogspot.co.uk/2013/10/pantechnicon.html> [accessed 3 May 2016]
[222] Busa, p.36.
[223] Ibid, p.39.
[224] Chapple, 'Pedagogy and Policy', in *Redefining Adaptation Studies*, ed. by Cutchins, Raw and Welsh , pp.55–70 (p.55).
[225] See works by: Langston, McKeand, and the *Beyond Orpheus* installation / event; Suderberg, 'Introduction: On Installation and Site Specifity', in *Space, Site, intervention: Situating Installation Art*, ed. by Suderberg, p.5.

blend their form into and onto the physical location, spreading outward to stretch the skin of their textual frames. As these works expand they may also occasionally envelop the onlooker, and in that passing moment the observer becomes a participant, 'collaborators in the making of the *work* in its totality'.[226] Yet these works are never a totality; they are experienced in the 'here-and-now through the bodily presence of each viewing subject, in a sensorial immediacy of spatial extension and temporal duration'; a restless space in time formed of the artwork, environment, and audience.[227] As Doty states, 'Doubt and change are constant challengers and under their persuasion there is no rest. The perfect introduction: the final piece. This question is the sole propellant'.[228] This 'question' of change continues here to further examine the adaptational mutability of texts and the curated environment itself. Specifically, of how the re-use 'of objects to carry traces of a "time" or place' may create or encourage 'unclear borders' at the edges of a textual frame or physical space, and to further observe how texts may fade, wander, and be encountered anew through curative and adaptive process.[229]

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[226] John Bryant, 'Textual Identity and Adaptive Revision: Editing adaptation as a fluid text', in *Adaptation Studies: New challenges, New Directions*, ed. by Jorgen Bruhn, Anne Gjelsvik and Eirik Frisvold Hanssen (London: Continuum Publishing, 2013), pp.47–67 (p.48).

[227] Kwon, 'One Place After Another', in *Space, Site, Intervention*, ed. by Suderberg, pp.38-39.

[228] Doty, 'Introduction', in *Varujan Boghosian: A Retrospective,* p.15.

[229] See Schimanski and Wolfe, 'Entry Points: An Introduction', in *Border Poetics De-limited*, ed. by Schimanski and Wolfe, p.22; Elliott, 'Theorizing Adaptations/Adapting Theories', in *Adaptation Studies: New Challenges, New Directions*, ed. by Bruhn, Gjelsvik and Frisvold Hanssen, pp.30-31.

Space/Place

The Tales We Tell took place within *Un Deg Un*, a repurposed space formerly existing as a JJB sports retail environment. The venue's transformation into an art and multi-function community area was actioned by the *THIS* project team, an Arts Council of Wales funded collaborative project, their mission statement is:

> *THIS* is a community of artists, arts organisations, creative individuals, and bodies that support the arts and culture in Wrexham. We have come together to promote our events and activities; to discuss issues relevant to us all; to encourage collaboration; to work with local business; and to create a focal point for us to showcase our work.[230]

This refashioned space operates a rolling program of art installations, each ordinarily lasting a month, while also hosting widening access activities, musical events, writing workshops and seminars, poetic and spoken word performance (most often with the *Voicebox* poetry collective), while also functioning as studio space for artists.[231] *The Tales We Tell* in its own month-long residency utilised both floors of the space, the Level One Open space and the Level Two Void.

The two zones whilst being of similar operational size afforded differing representational stylistics. The carpeted, brighter aspect of the Open space seemingly lent itself to the more traditional aspects of hung art and creative display, whilst its open nature also facilitated workshop and discussion activity. Previous events and installations within the space had followed this format; in this instance, time and economic rationale facilitated a similar approach. The physical magnitude of the two floors affected the content and scope of the art which was to be chosen, as elements too small may be dwarfed not only by the room, but also by the artworks surrounding them.

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[230] *THIS Project* (Blogger, <http://thisproject.co.uk/events/wrexham-open/> [accessed 10th April 2015]
[231] *Voicebox - Spoken Word* (2016), <https://www.facebook.com/VBWXM/?fref=ts> [accessed 10 August 2016]
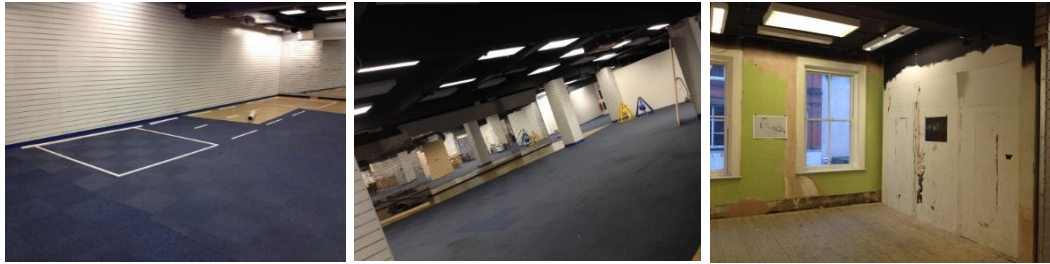
Figures 13-15. *The Tales We Tell* setup. Level One Open space.[232]

The curation of art within such a large space aimed to make the area seem alive with installed work, while also utilising the potentials of both the Open and Void spaces themselves. Within the Level One Open space, Jonathon Powell's large-scale works would effectively dominate the larger left far side of this space, flanked by Sterly's long black and white woodcut prints hung upon a semi-mirrored wall. Aesthetically, these contributions possessed parallels with each other in regard to depictions of re-storied urban representations. Young People's Laureate for Wales (2016-2018) Sophie McKeand's multi-sensory performance piece, an extended rumination on the role of the poet-as-archive, would be placed in proximity to Hilary Morgan Langston's portrayal of memory and loss. Jacqueline Alkema's tender and ethereal depictions consisting of bodily representations partly echoed the physicality of Penny Hallas' arresting sequence of Orphic dismemberment. Within the outlying sections of the Open space, Wrexham Glyndwr University Fine Art students exhibited their material, which was centred upon narratives of the self and embedded stories within landscapes.[233] Workshops and guest talks occupied variant spaces within the main installation floor area and also as single events within WGU campus.[234]

The Void was selected as the location for the *Beyond Orpheus* installation and shared a near-identical layout to the space below. The barren nature of the room itself combined with sparse lighting, a roughly stripped floor, and unkempt or bare concrete walls, suggested less an ascendance to an upper level of the gallery display but more an emergence into a subterranean, hermetic zone. The nature and affordances of this space will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter, however, that incongruous aspect of seeming to delve *below* (yet in truth,

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[232] Kenyon-Owen, *The Tales We Tell* (Wrexham, 2015).
[233] Wrexham Glyndwr University abbreviated to WGU in the following discussion.
[234] Details of student involvement, widening access activity, and creative workshops may be found within Appendix One.

climbing *up*) to an underground, other, zone, assisted as a physical element paralleling the Orphean narrative which was to be contained therein.

Figures 16-19. *The Tales We Tell* setup. Level Two Void.[235]

The texts chosen for inclusion within *The Tales We Tell* further examine processes of adaptation and textual remediation, of viewing the text as something to be rewritten. The focus, as Hutcheon states, is the very act of adaptation itself 'not necessarily in any specific media or even genre'.[236] While it was not a direct inspiration for *The Tales We Tell*, the *Adaptation* event which toured the USA between January 2008 and January 2011 displayed a similar method of adaptive method.[237] The exhibition looked at the work of four artists who have 'transformed source material to make their own adapted works of art, re-envisioning classic literature, film, ballet, e-mail and painting as new video installations'.[238] *Adaptation* offered a series of textual approaches that did not attempt to imitate an original source text, but to:

> explore their sources deeply [...] pushing and pulling them through intuitive and analytic processes, adding many new layers of content, bending them to their own

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[235] Kenyon-Owen, *The Tales We Tell* (Wrexham, 2015).
[236] Hutcheon, Loc 233 of 8468.
[237] Stephanie Smith, *Smart Museum of Art - Adaptation - Curator's introduction*,
<http://smartmuseum.uchicago.edu/adaptation/exhibition/introduction/> [accessed 25 October 2016]
[238] Smart Museum, *Adaptation: Video Installations by Ben-Ner, Herrera, Sullivan, and Sussman & The Rufus Corporation* (Chicago: Smart Museum, 2008), <http://smartmuseum.uchicago.edu/exhibitions/adaptation/> [accessed 25 October 2016]

purposes [...] using a few core elements of the original as a platform [...] The works of art presented in *Adaptation* are aligned with this looser approach to source material.[239]

The Tales We Tell utilised a similar approach to adaptation in attempting to present moments of change as media move into and through each other, allowing textual boundaries to become 'porous'.[240] Thus, adaptation can be understood here as being representative of a fluidic model of textual approach as medial boundaries blur and become points of transition or interchange between text, installation space, and visitor.

This sense of medial interchange and porosity is both illustrated in the works exhibited and the curation of the space itself; the texts themselves arise from a central point of inspiration, be it text, myth, site or memory, variably interpreting those moments through multiple media forms, while the space itself is a blank form (within physical boundaries), a platform for rewriting. Thus, the physical environment of each installation space may be considered as being adapted, as a hypotext that is reshaped by each collection of artefacts located within it as each new installation rewriting its physicality. The nature of that physical space represents a temporary archive, as per Derrida, a contained environment represented by the objects contained within, and also by the boundaries of its outward physical form.[241] The notion of containment may be viewed conceptually within an installation such as this, as the boundaries of a physical (and textual) zone, or *frame*. Michael Carter states that 'Museums and art galleries operate in ways very similar to framing devices, alerting us to the fact that we are in a physical environment likely to encounter art objects'.[242] These texts, and the environment which they are contained within, are therefore considered as *frame*-works; the frame representing the 'boundaries we erect between the body and its surroundings, between subject and object, between the thing-in-itself and what surrounds it'.[243] It is this sense of *frame* that will be

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[239] Smith, *Smart Museum of Art - Adaptation - Curator's introduction*.

[240] Chapple, 'Pedagogy and Policy', in *Redefining Adaptation Studies*, ed. by Cutchins, Raw and Welsh, pp.55–70 (p.55).

[241] Derrida, *Archive Fever*.

[242] Carter, p.164.

[243] Jane Blocker, 'Blink: The viewer as Blind Man in installation Art', *Art Journal*, 66.4 (2007), 6–21 (p.7), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20068563?Search=yes&resultItemClick=true&searchText=Blink:&searchText=The&searchText=Viewer&searchText=as&searchText=Blind&searchText=Man&searchText=in&searchText=Installation&searchText=Art&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3DBlink%253A%2BThe%2BViewer%2Bas%2BBlind%2BMan%2Bin%2BInstallation%2BArt%26amp%3Bacc%3Don%26amp%3Bwc%3Don%26amp%3Bfc%3Doff%26amp%3Bgroup%3Dnone&seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents><10.2307/20068563> [accessed 19 May 2016]

analysed with regard to the formation, collation, and curation of texts, and in turn the resultant effect upon adaptive process.

[Frame]works

As a construct, the frame possesses a number of meanings and interpretations. John Berger states that the function of the frame serves as an 'imaginary window' opening on to a depicted world.[244] Similarly, Claudio Pinhanez and Mark Podlaseck see that window as providing a glimpse into 'an-other world which is disconnected from the viewer in space and/or time'.[245] Jurij Lotman sees that manner of disconnection as the 'boundary separating the artistic text from the non-text', a hermetic zone isolated from the 'real'; the 'frame of a picture, the footlights of the stage, the borders of a film screen-all constitute the borders of an artistic world, self-sufficient in its universality'.[246] Herbert Broderick also emphasises the static nature of such a device that is 'generally inert and thought to belong to the world of the spectator where it serves to mark the limits of the field'.[247] So too for David Bordwell, who in relation to the language of film, states that 'the frame makes the image finite'.[248] For Pinhanez and Podlaseck 'The frame [...] refers to the rectangular boundary that separates an image from its surroundings [...] Visual artists use this frame to orient the viewer's perspective relative to the subject being depicted'.[249] Succinctly, Alec Shepley notes that the frame is 'what makes the art apparent to the viewer'.[250] Thus, the boundaries of a frame function as a clear guide and govern what is to be looked at; essentially, it shows where the text (or installation, its title denoting a presence) resides.

Jeffrey Hurwit focuses upon the nature of containment within the frame; that frames 'strictly enclose all significant elements of a perfectly confined representation [...] Rational limits are announced, respected, even emphasized'.[251] John Frow examines these 'rational limits' and how they may be defined within literary texts, that the frame:

> works both as an enclosure of the internal fictional space and as an exclusion of the space of reality against which the work is set; but this operation of exclusion is also an inclusion of the text in this alien space. The text is closed and suspended, but as a

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[244] John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1972), p.109.

[245] Pinhanez and Podlaseck, p.342.

[246] Jurij Lotman, *The Structure of the Artistic Text*, trans. by Ronald Vroon (Michigan: University of Michigan, 1977), pp.209-210.

[247] Herbert R. Broderick. 'Some Attitudes toward the Frame in Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts of the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries', *Artibus et Historiae*, 3.5. (1982), 31-42 (p.31), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1483142> [accessed 10 April 2015]

[248] David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction* (London, McGraw-Hill, 2004), p.258.

[249] Pinhanez and Podlaseck, p.342.

[250] Shepley, 'My road to ruin'.

[251] Jeffrey Hurwit, 'Image and Frame in Greek Art', *American Journal of Archaeology*, 81.1. (Winter, 1977), 1-30 (p.1), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/503645> [accessed 10 April 2015]

constructional element the frame is *internal* to this closure, and through it the text signifies *difference*, signifies what it excludes.[252]

Here, the frame 'can be anything that acts as a sign of a qualitative difference, a sign of the boundary between a marked and an unmarked space'.[253] That demarcation in the physical limits of the frame may also provoke a special privilege or hierarchy; the borders of a work imbuing that which resides within as possessing an apparent authority, being marked as special, sacred, and/or of value.[254] As Carter makes clear, 'the convention of framing – for instance placing an image within an ornate gilt frame – produces associations of age, importance, and 'old masterishness'. This then moves the object towards the category of a precious luxury item'.[255] Carter notes that the materiality of the frame conjures additional affect upon the viewer, that:

> straightforward wooden frames may imply a desire for simplicity, authenticity or 'craftiness'. Modern industrial materials such as steel […] imply modernity, or Utilitarian Functionalism […] the materials used in the frame were often a way of signifying the esteem in which the image was held.[256]

As such, the frame is not neutral, as it 'imposes a certain *vantage point* onto the material'.[257] The frame may provoke an implied way of viewing which is not simply a directional indicator but provides meaning in and of itself.

The textual or literal frame is not solitary but expands to the outlying borders of an installation space itself, the artwork being but one of a sequence of frames within frames. The frame 'is not simply a material fact, it can be multiple - the frame of a painting, for example, may be reinforced by the broader frame of the museum'.[258] The art-frame is also bordered by the physical aspect of a room, the installation it inhabits, and the wider economic and social conditions which encompass the physical space of the building itself. From marble pillars, or antique wooden flooring of a historical museum space, to the reclaimed and repurposed environments of the modern installation. The construction and materiel of the boundary, or

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[252] John Frow, 'The Literary Frame', *The Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 16.2 (1982), 25–30 (p.27), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3332274?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents><10.2307/3332274> [accessed 19 May 2016]
[253] Ibid, p.35.
[254] Gerald Mast, 'On Framing', *Critical Inquiry*, 11.1 (1984), 82–109 (p.85), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1343291?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents><10.2307/1343291> [accessed 19 May 2016]
[255] Carter, p.164.
[256] Ibid.
[257] Bordwell and Thompson, p.252.
[258] Frow, p.25.

frame, possesses import, and projects an additional aura of standing and reverence upon the work.[259]

Such reverence of the boundary within installation or museum spaces occupies a point of critique among scholars and practitioners alike, as it is often seen to be representative of a curated containment which encompasses the artefact, delimiting its outward effect or objectual 'life'. Julia Kristeva suggests that the manner of curatorial enclosure possesses ideological and institutional implications, that the museum is a 'crucial mechanism in the standardisation of prefixed knowledge, of a culture in pieces'.[260] Kristeva sees a separation of meaning caused by institutionalised representations and the resultant death of the artefact, or as Adorno interprets it, the 'Museal […] objects to which the observer no longer has a vital relationship and which are in the process of dying'.[261] For an artefact to 'exist' within these environments there is a heavy toll, the act of installation enabling only a permanent stasis or worse, as 'In order to enter, an object must die'.[262] Robert Smithson sees a collated environment as occupying a null structure which provides only a 'canned life, an aestheticized illustration of life. "Life" in the museum is like making love in a cemetery'.[263] Of the unnatural state of such an existence, Smithson wryly notes that 'there is nothing natural about the Museum of Natural History'.[264] Cut-off, contained, out of reach, the artefacts within this space are static and separate from the viewer. Artists such as Smithson rail against such notions, stating the 'concept of the museum is irrelevant', as in such places:[265]

> Art settles into a stupendous inertia. Silence supplies the dominant chord. [...] Things flatten and fade, the museum spreads its surfaces everywhere, and becomes an untitled collection of generalizations that immobilize the eye.[266]

[259] See 'aura' in terms of the authority of the unique, original artwork, in, Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, trans. by Harry Zohn, ed. by Hannah Arendt (Glasgow: HarperCollins Publishers, 1982).

[260] Julia Kristeva, *The Severed Head: Capital Visions*, trans. by Jody Gladding (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), p.xix.

[261] Theodor W. Adorno, *Prisms*, trans. by Samuel Weber and Sherry Weber (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1981), p.175.

[262] Robert Harbison, *Eccentric Spaces* (MIT Press: New York, 2000), p.147.

[263] See Robert Smithson, 'What is a Museum (1967)', in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, ed. by Jack Flam (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), pp.43–51. (p.43); Allan Kaprow, in Robert Smithson, 'What is a Museum (1967)', in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, ed. by Flam, pp.43–51 (p.44).

[264] Robert Smithson, 'A Museum of Language in the Vicinity of Art (1968)', in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, ed. by Flam, pp.78–94 (p.85).

[265] Smithson, 'What is a Museum (1967)', in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, ed. by Flam, p.44.

[266] Robert Smithson, 'Some Void Thoughts on Museums', in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, ed. by Flam, pp.41–42 (p.42).

The installation space, the museum, the frame of a work, represents a 'false window' which delimits and homogenises the work of art.[267] The visit through such spaces is linear, a 'matter of going from void to void', an artificial frame of objects and art that have had life removed and replaced with order.[268] The orderly nature of art spaces and museums therefore follows a clear sequence, a chronological arrangement of the chaos of individual objects.

As Robert Harbison states, 'A catalogue's largest function is to create subjects, to give names, or to put topics in touch with a supply of particulars, to bring data to a generalization'.[269] Speaking of the Victoria and Albert museum in London, Harbison perceives the chronological linearity of progression as they 'arrange history spatially'.[270] Equally, the manner in which areas are sectioned off and secluded from one another, the divided rooms and floors 'adjacent do not communicate, giving a feeling of not being able to get hold of what is nearby'.[271] The very act of organisation and collation, of 'Factitious – categorising, ordering systems' provides an authenticity, a correctness; yet this order places limits on the object(s), transubstantiating the artefact as 'something to be both used and tamed'.[272] This method of collating objects creates taxonomy of the past:

> takes an object out of use and immobilizes it in a secluded atticlike environment among nothing but more objects [...] if a museum is first of all a place of things, its two extremes are of a graveyard and a department store.[273]

Collections of jewellery, items of antiquity, representations of former lives, are closeted and bracketed off, never speaking or communicating and existing only at arm's reach (but out of touch). The gathering of artefacts is for Walter Benjamin the 'most profound enchantment for the collector', who locks these individual items in a 'magic circle' of acquisition, which possesses an enchantment or 'thrill' of containment.[274]

However, Benjamin also states that 'The acquisition of an old book is its rebirth', it reframes the life of that text.[275] The process of that attainment or re-organisation of the text

[267] Robert Smithson, 'Some Void Thoughts on Museums', in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, ed. by Flam, p.42.
[268] Ibid, p.41.
[269] Harbison, p.157.
[270] Ibid, p.142.
[271] Ibid, p.144.
[272] Sherman, p.52.
[273] Harbison, p.140.
[274] Benjamin, *Illuminations,* p.60.
[275] Ibid, p.60.

amidst a larger collection, for Panofsky 'enlivens what would otherwise remain dead'.[276] This reinvigoration was the focus of my curation, to place these objects of adapted miscellany within a unique collection under an overarching theme. The relocation or repurposing of 'dead' objects leads to a rebirth, retelling, or reframing; an opportunity to return to a past textual event in an attempt to 'penetrate into a region where time has stopped of its own accord and try to reactivate it'.[277] This 'thrill' of collection and organisation aligns with processes of collation and reformation of the text as discussed in previous chapters. Furthermore, a sense of 'reactivation' resonates with the nature of my curatorial process within *The Tales We Tell* as a collection of artefacts which through their presence and relocation adapts physical space. As the palimpsest of objects contained within an installation are arranged and rearranged the physical frame of the installation site is altered, and now exists as a space or physical text that is rewritten. The continual writing-over of a text-site is further enhanced by the nature of *The Tales We Tell* as a finite installation or impermanent collection.

The stilted inertia of objects, the 'deadening' effect of a curated environment is challenged by the works themselves as processes of adaptation and by the temporary nature of the exhibit; the artefacts and installations therein possessing a 'new life' at the expiration of the event. The extra-textual frame or space of an installation is a zone of temporary-ness, housing with each new exhibition:

> a palimpsest of text, photographs and video recordings, physical places, and things […] it is a temporary thing, a movement, a chain of meanings and imbricated histories: a place marked and swiftly abandoned. The mobile site thus courts its destruction; it is wilfully temporary: its nature is not to endure but to *come down*.[278]

The spatial arrangement and sequential staging of each art-object contained within, never to be exactly repeated, presents a 'woven fabric of associations' for the onlooker.[279] An installation is a zone of transience and inhabitation; without the objects and artefacts contained within the physical space would exist only as null point or empty frame. The transitoriness of the spaces

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[276] Erwin Panofsky, 'The History of Art as a Humanistic Discipline', *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (Garden City, Doubleday, 1955), p.24.
[277] Suderberg, 'Introduction: On Installation and Site Specifity', in *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art*, ed. by Suderberg, p.24.
[278] James Meyer, 'The Functional Site; or, the Transformation of Site Specifity', in *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art*, ed. by Erika Suderberg (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), pp.23-37 (p.25).
[279] John Coleman, 'Landscapes of the Mind: Psychic Space and Narrative Specifitiy (Notes from a Work in Progress)', in *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art*, ed. by Erika Suderberg (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), pp.158-170 (p.158).

presents an illusion, that of 'a finite model of an infinite universe'.[280] It is a space that presents a sequence of elements in-situ, yet with each new installation and each visitation by the onlooker, each object, each spatial ordering, is rearranged. The installation work is a space of impermanence and change where textual objects and the fabric of the space itself are 'synthesized, expanded, and dematerialized' in an environment that is not static but predisposed to alteration and modification.[281]

This chapter seeks to further analyse processes of adaptational rewriting through the installation space itself, and via texts which employ varied approaches to textual remediation. The contextual basis for the examination is one of the conceptualisation of the text as a framework; adaptational artefacts which are contained by limits, be they narrative coordinates to follow, pathways of memory, or the elasticity of myth, yet challenge their boundaries through aesthetic or physical formations. The first sequence of works focus on the adaptation of stories contained within the landscape or surrounding environment, the discussion examining processes concerning the retelling of those narratives of place. Powell's works interrogate the layering of time and implied narrative of history and civilisation as one constantly overwritten, Sterly blends genre and environmental form to conjure narrative questioning on the part of the viewer, while the unearthing of hidden histories contained within the holy wells of Wales and the translation of them into poetic form is the focus of Iuppa. Landscape and the environment in these works is shown as being transient and temporary, a space to be reshaped or retold by the artist who reframes and collates fragments and memories into new forms, new entities.

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[280] Lotman, p.210.
[281] Suderberg, 'Introduction: On Installation and Site Specifity', in *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art*, ed. by Suderberg, p.3.

Writing the environment

The transitory notion of environment was the focus of Jonathon Powell's series *When We Build Again* focused, presenting visions of:

> den-like structures as if created by children, cobbled together out of the building blocks salvaged from the remains of the previous buildings and cities. They are flawed buildings of the future, constructive as development of the regeneration process leaving a trail of derelict, crumbling buildings which themselves will eventually become monuments to past failures […] These paintings witness architectural invention and a vehement search for the primal need of shelter.[282]

These images are built on the discarded, abandoned, or lost constructions of the past, and resonate not only with other artists' work within the exhibition, and the placement of *The Tales We Tell* itself (temporarily existing within a reclaimed space), but more specifically with Powell's own predilection for the reconstituted art-space. His Elysium art spaces in Swansea provide exhibition space and artist studios over three venues within the City Centre. These areas exist within repurposed areas of trade and exchange such as supermarkets and even a brothel, yet within each repurposed space the actions of each artist, or installation event, allows that space to become reshaped, albeit temporarily.[283]

When We Build Again proffered visions of semi-industrialised cityscapes seemingly growing from an amorphous centre, loosely connected by walkways:

[282] Mission Gallery, *When We Build Again* (Mission Gallery)
<http://www.missiongallery.co.uk/exhibitions/when-we-build-again/> [accessed 15 November 2016]
[283] Susie Wild, *ART NEWS | ELYSIUM: AFTER THE END | SWANSEA LOVE STORY • buzz magazine* (Buzz Magazine, 2010), <http://www.buzzmag.co.uk/uncategorized/art-news-elysium-after-the-end-swansea-love-story/> [accessed 15 November 2016]

Figures 20-21. *When We Build Again*.[284]

Powell's work here does not adhere to the remediation of a textual format or proclaim an allegiance to any pre-existing author. The sprawling, creeping, civilisations depicted in *When We Build Again* instead portray layers of growth upon an urban sprawl, yet simultaneously display an aching fragility. The artworks present tendrils which reach outwards to nowhere, show bridges in place yet are near collapse, smoke billows from 'den-like structures' resembling bodily organs: a beating heart, or else a burgeoning multi-cell organism, coughing and wheezing as it struggles to maintain a fresh existence. Powell's spiralling images of societal growth are counterpointed by a rejuvenation that continually eradicates evidence of the past, presenting a growth that is also doomed to be an eventual decomposing relic and 'grown over'. These representations consisting of multiple stories salvaged from the remains of previous forms, interconnected via varying strands parallel textual concerns shared by many of the works discussed here and in previous chapters, as modes of rescue and return are combined with processes of continually writing over the textual space.

Placed adjacent to *When We Build Again*, Amy Sterly's large woodcut prints paralleled themes of reconstruction and the writing over and upon of an urban environment in Powell's works. Sterly's works utilise the structure of the frame as a method of providing narrative context; the aesthetic echoing comic book and graphic novel stylistics. However, this format is deliberately manipulated, challenging the solidities of represented form with overtones of transgression, facilitating a challenge to viewer expectations. The inspiration for her work

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[284] Jonathan Powell, *When We Build Again*, oil and bitumen on canvas, (2013) *The Tales We Tell*, (Wrexham, 2015).

arises from multiple sources, including; graphic novels, print makers, Victorian woodcut artists, and the pressure between depictions of environment veering between idealised rural settings and a darker industrial tone. Geographical location was also a primary influence, as during the time Sterly spent living in Chicago observing the physical presence of the cityscape and surrounding areas, she viewed structures that seemed as if 'man couldn't have built them, they are almost presences in themselves'.[285] Sterly painted these cityscapes as simply representing those constructions, emphasising their *building-ness*, a process which gradually turned to one of personalisation and inhabitation. The artist began to obtain an alternate view of this urban landscape that refocused from the exteriority of the buildings themselves to the stories behind and within them.[286]

Such re-imaging saw apartment blocks as tall figures communicating with one another, as in *Conversation Piece* (2009) and *Idol Talk* (2009).[287] Elsewhere, *Nipple Towers* (2003) sees twin tower blocks imbued with udders on one, and receptacles for those protrusions on the other. Such creations conjure abstractions of a building somewhere between a figure and constructed form and possess through dialogue or implied touch some mode of connection or relationship.[288] The manner of communication, for example in *Conversation Piece*, consists in this case of empty speech balloons emanating from the interior of the building. These balloons suggest that those within 'were talking to each other, but they weren't actual words, they were just implying this relationship or this interaction between them'.[289] The content of these hinted at fragments of stories is left to the interpretation of the onlooker, as the interior is left blank.

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[285] Amy Sterly, interviewed by Stephen Kenyon-Owen, 30 April 2016.
[286] Ibid.
[287] Axisweb, *Amy Sterly* (Axisweb), <http://www.axisweb.org/p/amysterly/> [accessed 15 November 2016]
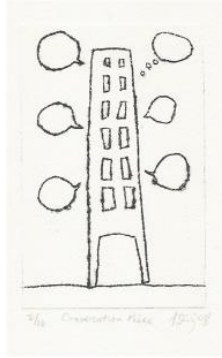[288] Sterly, interview.
[289] Ibid.

Figure 22. *Conversation Piece.* [290]

This manner of communication was present within the pieces Sterly exhibited within *The Tales We Tell*, whereby questions of 'what's behind, what's inside the house, what are these stories' are asked of the environment itself. [291] In these depictions the urban environment is allied with the incongruous overlay of speech bubbles containing text which was randomly taken from graphic novels.[292] This randomness was favoured in place of a more deliberate narrative structure, as when sequential text was created for the panels the artist felt that they were too contrived and limited rather than expanded meaning. The aim being to 'give people pause' whilst viewing the seeming banality of the everyday, which becomes altered, decontextualizing a depicted space with random and fragmented utterance.[293] Whilst the absolutes of a textual adaptation are not directly alluded to in Sterly's works, they are informed by generic conventions. In this case 'the author relies on the reader's foreknowledge of the work of art that is being alluded to and appropriated for the purposes of the narrative'.[294] Sterly says of her work that it is 'concerned with the forms that make up our modern landscape: the building, tower, skyscrapers. […] I try to combine opposing forms, creating a tension between the industrial and the organic, the playful and the menacing, the object and the non-object'.[295] The method relies upon subversion of aesthetic and genre, in this case the displacing of a seemingly safe comic book style altered in tone by an overlay of incongruous statements.

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[290] Amy Sterly, *Conversation Piece* (Axisweb), <http://www.axisweb.org/p/amysterly/> [accessed 5 November 2016] Image reproduced courtesy of Amy Sterly.
[291] Sterly, interview.
[292] Ibid.
[293] Ibid.
[294] Sanders, p.147.
[295] Axisweb, *Amy Sterly* (Axisweb, [n.d.]), <http://www.axisweb.org/p/amysterly/> [accessed 5 November 2016]

The visual style of the comic book is described by Scott McCloud as being 'Sequential Art [...] Juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence'.[296] Thierry Groensteen sees a dialogue in this form of spatial sequentiality:

> Comics panels, situated relationally, are, necessarily, placed in relation to space and operate on a share of space [...] The specific spaces of comics, like the word balloon [...] the panel and its frame, the strip (the horizontal band that is the first level of arrangement for the panels, and the page will be successively summoned, and their interactions analysed.[297]

Groensteen views the nature of the individual comic panel as 'fragmentary and caught in a system of proliferation; it never makes up the totality of the utterance but can be understood as a component in a larger apparatus'.[298] An isolated instance that generates meaning by its inclusion within a larger 'whole', the panel being a 'portion of space isolated by blank spaces and enclosed by a frame that insures it integrity'.[299] Pinhanez and Podlaseck extend this function of the comic frame, that graphical elements within the frame are not the only areas where meaning is produced, but the very construction of the panels themselves are vital in defining meaning, they:

> inherit, magnify, and exploit many of the qualities of visual frames and picture frames [...] separating the image inside the frame from the space and time outside the frame [...] Comic artists vary the number, shape, and size of their panels in order to establish the rhythm of their stories and to express the passage of time.[300]

These sequences and interactions are defined by the physical medium of the printed page, as 'pages situated opposite each other are dependent on a natural solidarity, and predisposed to speak to each other'.[301] In these cases, story structures are both read *and* observed simultaneously, propelling an economy of visual narration through text and image.

In the first of Sterly's displayed works entitled 'WHUMP!', a large section of text dominates the left side of the frame, as the word 'WHUMP!' seems to strike the street whilst a voice inside a house screams 'NO!'. For the second piece 'WE MADE IT!' a suburban street scene is interrupted by verbal interjections. 'WHEW, WE MADE IT', erupts from the left-

[296] Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics: The invisible Art* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1993), p.9.
[297] Thierry Groensteen, *The System of Comics*, trans. by Bart Beaty, rev. by Nick Nguyen (USA: University Press of Mississippu, 2007), p.20.
[298] Ibid, p.5.
[299] Ibid, p.25.
[300] Pinhanez and Podlaseck, p.342.
[301] Groensteen, p.35.

hand side, while 'IT *LOOKS* LIKE HOME B-BUT…' emerges from the right. The presumed characters are not present, only their utterances have presence; while the use of large, bold text suggests that these statements are shouted. The relief of 'making it' is counteracted by the hesitancy of voice, stuttering a suggestion of doubt that this is *not* home. Narrative is implied through the use of these incongruous statements shifting the tone of a seemingly banal illustration of rows of housing and shops, altering the frame from a zone of safety to a space of random events through image and text.

Figures 23-24. *WHUMP! WE MADE IT*.[302]

Jeanne Ewert states that 'pictorial and graphic elements [...] rather than merely illustrating the story related in its verbal/textual content, serve important and distinct narrative functions'.[303] Ewert argues that the images on the page are 'replete with details that propel the story forward, saving (literal) page space that would otherwise be required for textual exposition'.[304] The collation of those elements by framed boundaries (the page and individual comic panels) function as narrative devices, amplifying as opposed to reducing meaning through the very act of sequencing. Therefore, within the page there is a deliberate narrative continuity in the arrangement of constituent elements of image and text. The 'tension' of forms Sterly mentions, plays with the format of pictorial and textual space which operates not with narrative resolution but uses subversion of form as plot prompt on the viewer's part. As Iser argues, 'Central to the reading of every literary work is the interaction between its structure and its recipient'; the safety of the frame, or as Groensteen states, its 'integrity', is challenged

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[302] Amy Sterly, *WHUMP!*, *WE MADE IT*, woodcut prints, ([n.d.]) *The Tales We Tell*, (Wrexham, 2015).
[303] Jeanne Ewert, 'Art Spiegelman's Maus and the Graphic Narrative', in, *Narrative Across Media the Languages of Storytelling*, ed. by Marie-Laure Ryan (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press), pp.178-193 (pp.178-179).
[304] Ibid, p.179.

by the use of oblique combination of text/speech bubble and image.[305] By denying the sequentiality of explicitly related images, and by the use of overlaid random exclamations, these pieces may generate:

> pleasure obtained through the delay of visual gratification, through the perception of limit transcended, of ex- tension rather than closure, of release rather than confinement. When picture content and the picture space defined by the border or frame do not perfectly coincide, when the relationship between them appears more adventitious than ordered, open form results. [306]

The combined structure provokes questioning of: narrative voice, place, time and characterisation, in an implied rather than explicit narrative. That questioning permits a method of exchange on the part of the image and the viewer, inviting them in to the diegetic space. As John G. Hanhardt suggests, this exchange allows a procedure of transaction between the viewer and the projected image, 'the cognitive transaction between the viewer […] and the projected image is the basis of that work's existence, not as a discrete, static object, but as a presented text'.[307] This manner of exchange is illustrated by the variant interpretations of these works by visitors during *The Tales We Tell*, which included: a mad scientist at work, an explosion in the street, angry neighbours, or suggestions of domestic violence, and is achieved via use of visual narrative incongruity.[308]

Whilst it did not feature in the installation, the subversion of genre aesthetic continues with Sterly's current project the *Sound Book Project*; a collaboration between artists and musicians using books as sound apparatus.[309] Here, the physicality of the book, its soft and hard covers, the printed page, is repurposed as instrument, the aim being to interact with books:

> in a new and surprising way, suddenly the books will trigger sound by the turn of a page. The books speak for themselves. The books will be wound, sprung, strummed, slapped and thrown and a soundscape will evolve around the performers. The tactile nature of the book creates a sensual response that far surpasses reactions to the digital equivalents. It is emotional and aesthetic. Triggering memory and emotion.[310]

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[305] See Wolfgang Iser, 'Interaction between Text and Reader', in *Performance Analysis an Introductory Coursebook*, ed. by Colin Counsell and Laurie Wolf (London & New York: Routledge, 2001), pp.179-184 (p.179); Groensteen, p.25.

[306] Hurwit, p.5.

[307] John G. Hanhardt, 'Cinema, Video, and Installation Art Practices', *American Art*, 22.2 (2008), 2–8 (p.6).

[308] Sterly, interview.

[309] Amy Sterly and others, *Sound Book Project* (Sound Book Project, 2016), <http://www.soundbookproject.com/> [accessed 8 November 2016]

[310] Sterly and others, *Sound Book Project*.

The performances with these newly formed instruments, are part improvised around a common structure, allowing 'spaces to explore' for the group.[311] The work is an evolving piece, with further experimentation for the group involving the use of abstract and random projected images to accompany the live audio. In addition, extensions to the collaboration incorporate the devices of incongruity utilised in the woodcut prints, namely the use of speech balloons, whereby a live performer will open a dictionary at random points during the performance and will then speak those words to 'fill the gaps' of the speech blanks. Thus, random interjection within a planned sequence creates an ever-shifting element within the structure of the already part-improvised performed piece, and links directly to modes of suggested dialogue in Sterly's illustrations discussed previously.

Part of the impetus for the work was a reaction to the shift in methods of reading, in particular, the shift from physical to digital books. In place of writing delivered via Kindle or e-Reader, *Sound Book Project* aims to return to the 'world of books and reading; what it means to move away from those beautiful and physical objects; from the visual beauty to the sounds, the smells and the textures'.[312] To rewrite and experience afresh a physical textual encounter, which:

> over the last few decades are diminishing in our lives – handwritten letters, cassettes, records, album covers and books to name some. Many have been reduced to an image or a sound on a handheld screen, which has an altogether different effect on our attention.[313]

This is a method of adapting the physical nature of the artefact into a performative object, positing the bound frame of the book not as a text to be looked at, but as a haptic object. The sense of touch was enhanced as a limited number of handmade books were produced that incorporating concepts from the live performance. This transfer to a physical artefact included the use of: empty speech bubbles, random quotations from graphic novels and newspapers, small bells contained within pages that rattled and jingled as the leaves were turned, pseudo-strings arrayed across a page that could be 'plucked' in place of 'read'.

The repurposing of the printed form has generated some strong reactions from venues and audience alike, as during one of the pieces pages are ripped out of a book to generate sound.

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[311] Sterly, interview.

[312] *Amy Sterly: The Sound of Reading* (Whats On Cardigan Bay, 2016), <http://www.cardigan-bay.com/whats-on/events/908/amy-sterly-the-sound-of-reading/> [accessed 8 November 2016]

[313] Sterly and others, *Sound Book Project*.

This has prompted shock from the audience and has notably prevented the group from playing within the National Library of Wales, the act being too loaded, too 'on the edge'.[314] However, rather than destruction, these acts of repurposing are also ventures into the nature of the book as physical artefact, yet, as in the woodcut prints, an act that subverts the sense of form or textual frame, quite literally in this instance. To not use the inner content of the book, the words on the page, the book is then seen as a usable object, viewed outside of a past purpose and re-used as emissary of potential.[315] Perhaps paradoxically, while there is a strong sense of the value of the book, the way it feels, smells, and in this case sounds, thereby returning in some sense to the notion, or memory of an adaptational original; the manner of re-use transgresses those same aspects of textual solidity, presenting a challenge to the objectual form, or frame, through performance and re-use.

The move away from traditional form that is present in Sterly's work and the approach of the *Sound Book Project* group is something that is contrastingly turned towards by Iuppa, her work representing a return to the traditional, or attempted point of origin. Iuppa's *Wellsprings* was a spoken word and poetic journey that used as its contextual basis visits to the holy wells of Wales. The focus for the work and the illustrated talk being that these physical sites possessed a narrative energy, each space conjuring a 'different legend, a charged atmosphere'.[316] *Wellsprings* shares a similar method with a previous work by the poet entitled *On Track*; in her introduction Iuppa describes the journey of travelling to such sites, she being:

> part of a small group of artists who traced the ancient footsteps of pilgrim travellers to St Davids, across South and West Wales, as part of the Welsh Cultural Olympiad. [...] The journey started at Llanthony Priory in the Black Mountains, the site of St David's monastic cell, and ended [...] at St David's Cathedral and Bishop's Palace, West Wales, it took 22 days in total [...] this series is my poetic response to the journey [317]

These works are a return to these forgotten, isolated zones of memory, narrative, and character, in an attempt to reinterpret oral and written accounts of the holy sites themselves through a creative practice which delves into a 'sense of hidden histories'.[318] For example, 'Bridal' was inspired by Ffynon Fair Trefnant in Denbighshire, Wales, possessing as part of its history

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[314] Sterly, interview.
[315] Doty, 'Introduction', in *Varujan Boghosian: A Retrospective,* p.16.
[316] Suzanne Iuppa. *Wellsprings* (Wales: Gwendraeth Press, 2015), p.17.
[317] Iuppa, 'Introduction to the poems', *On Track - Poems from the Welsh Pilgrimage* (Wales: Alyn Books, 2013), p.10.
[318] Suzanne Iuppa, interviewed by Stephen Kenyon-Owen, 23 May 2016.

speculation that hundreds of marriages were conducted on the site.[319] An excerpt of the poem imagines a wedding that may have taken place:

> Today, I am open and what you've asked for
> a citadel of May
> our vows taken up and passed, by stands of canary grass
> unfurling in elder leaves
> hand-fasted of our own will, in garlands
> […]
> and the stone walls feel warm, like a mother's lap. [320]

The poet fashioned an illustrated talk around such poetic reimaginings which combined the retelling of the background histories of the wells, photographs of the landscape in which they reside, ambient music provided by electronica artist Victorian Hardware, and recollections of her own personal connections with these places. Notions of return are present within the process of uncovering these tales, yet also as thematically occurring elements within the poems reflected in frequent allusions to repetition and the passage of time. *Wellsprings* begins with the use of a prologue poem 'It Was Beginning Winter' by Theodore Rothke.[321] The title phrase repeating in the first and second stanzas signals the enduring and inevitable repeat of the seasons, indicating that the poem sits in part in a cyclical hinterland, an 'in between time':[322]

> The landscape still partly brown:
> The bones of weeds kept swinging in the wind,
> Above the blue snow.[323]

Yet it is poised to move on to the next stage which will surely 'come again'.[324] The appropriation of this text as an introduction highlights too the method of return present in the pilgrimage; of the response to that journey and the desire to retell or re-use the stories present within the landscape. A further attempt to recover that which has been forgotten, as 'wells were also places where items could be lost forever, dropped, hidden or covered over'.[325] The writing

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[319] Journal of Antiquities, *Category Archives: Ancient Churches / Chapels* (2015), <https://thejournalofantiquities.com/category/ancient-churches-chapels-2/> [accessed 16 November 2016]
[320] Iuppa. 'Bridal', in *Wellsprings*, p.17. (ln.12-16, ln.21).
[321] Theodore Roethke, 'It Was Beginning Winter', in *Wellsprings*, by Suzanne Iuppa (Wales: Gwendraeth Press, 2015), p.5.
[322] Ibid, p.5. (ln.2).
[323] Ibid, p.5. (ln.3-5).
[324] Ibid, p.5. (ln.23).
[325] Iuppa, 'Introduction', in *Wellsprings*, p.3.

unearthing the stories connected to the sites themselves, fragile moments in time uncovered and as immaterial as:

> when a snowflake
> touches skin [326]

The image of the well itself is a return to the lost object, to drink deeply of the past in an attempt for a preservation of these fragile flowing forms and harness those stories that may have become translucent or fragmented and spin them anew.

These journeyed narratives, tales of pilgrimage, traverse both in distance, and also move within temporal terms. This shift is illustrated by Iuppa above, as she quotes Roethke in the move from season to season. She also speaks of the repurposing of the wells through history, pagan, pre-Christian, and Roman belief systems, a layering of the past, with each era refashioning previous tales to suit a newly defined history. The poetic journey kicking over and conjoining temporal points:

> a soft thud of a boot on a green-thick bridge
> recreating centuries of sound— the ram of staff
> against grass and rime. In a beat, history flows together.[327]

Such historical interweaving also parallels the form of the *Wellspring* poems, as they utilise multiple structural forms including: sonnet, the layout of hymn sheets (as found poems), prose and haiku poetry ('The Wild Edges' and 'Clear'). This method of experimentation, or journey through form, is evident within the visual structure of the poems themselves, as certain layouts upon the page force the reader to make a conceptual leap or choice, and thereby parallel the expedition itself. These moments of understanding, or spiritual leaps, as 'that is what pilgrimage is', occur in 'Conduits (for Travel')' in *On Track*:[328]

> Silurian Damp   : still mist
> Thrumming, dew   : light kissed
> Living language   : loved not lost [329]

This device also appears during 'Hymn', taken from *Wellsprings*:

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[326] Iuppa, 'The Wild Edges', in *Wellsprings,* p.13. (ln.61).
[327] Iuppa, 'Green Trinity', in *Wellsprings* (Wales: Gwendraeth Press, 2015), p.16. (ln.10-12).
[328] Iuppa, interview.
[329] Suzanne Iuppa, 'Conduits (for Travel')', in *On Track - Poems from the Welsh Pilgrimage* (Wales: Alyn Books, 2013), p.14. (ln.1-3).

iron ages of steps	green-tickling footprints
to the bottom of Pen-maen-fach	a light warbler
birds churring to open the child's eyes	jay overhead—
	flash of blue and black!
foxgloves with so many flutes to	untameable blade between my thumbs,
draw down bees,	my answer
the necessary journeys[330]	

The manner in which the poem is spread across the page, that it may be 'read' through horizontal or vertical progressions, encourages a journeyed response by the reader, to choose the direction they wish to read/travel.

In contrast to such stylistic movement upon the page, the poem 'Resilience' utilises five mostly regularised stanzas of four lines each and is based on the site of St Winefride's well, which is:

> named for a very pious girl who rejected a local prince; he beheaded her, and where her head fell a great spring gushed forth that could heal ailments. Her head was miraculously restored and she went on to found a nearby abbey and follow her faith.[331]

The creative catalyst for the work stems again from the site itself but also loans from myth, and the Naiad's of ancient Greece, who were also associated with inland water sites such as streams, lakes and brooks. The poem is prefaced with a quotation taken from Ovid's Metamorpheses:

> I intend to speak of forms changed to new entities.[332]

Signalling processes of change and transformation, in texts and sites that do not remain static. The questioning of a source text, as outlined in Chapter Two, is again present here, as the poem asks:

> Which myth came first?
> Daphne's river? Or Gwenffrewi's spring?[333]

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[330] Iuppa, 'Hymn', in *Wellsprings* (Wales: Gwendraeth Press, 2015), p.31. (ln.7-11).
[331] Iuppa, *Wellsprings* (Wales: Gwendraeth Press, 2015), p.8.
[332] Ovid's *Metamorpheses*, in Iuppa, 'Hymn', in *Wellsprings*, p.3.
[333] Iuppa, 'Resilience', in *Wellsprings* (Wales: Gwendraeth Press, 2015), p.18. (ln.1-2).

This questioning presents an awareness of the implacability of a precise beginning point of a myth, as these tales blend, overlap, and in relation to the pious girl who was beheaded and transformed into healing spring water, flow through each other. Within 'Resilience' there are also Orphean echoes, in particular the charming of the landscape by musical skill:

> The reeds will sing; the laurel stands.
> Mutable in thought and form[334]

The manipulation of the natural world is tempered by a feminine presence that will not be owned or controlled by such harmonies, or the allure of the myth:

> Under pressure, she'll run
> Like water through your hands[335]

The poems are a mutable presence here that stream through landscape, myth, folklore, poetry and performance.

These works presented by Powell, Iuppa, and Sterly, orbit around the adaptation and transference of site-memory into medial form; these are texts conjured via layered cityscapes, metamorphosed urbanities, and fragments of past histories. The methods of the artists traverse modes of adaptation that combines pilgrimage, activated site, architecture, and history, to foster a creative process that repurposes these 'poetic impulses into form'.[336] This use of physical site as point of adaptation continues as point of discussion through the remainder of this chapter, as I examine works which utilise the fabric of the installation site itself as an intrinsic part of their textual fabric. In these works, I focus on the particular possibilities installation artworks present in terms of adaptation through the use of the environment they are presented in. Additionally, I consider how these works may challenge the framed boundaries of their textual form, as the demarcations between presented text and physical space are placed under challenge.

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[334] Iuppa, 'Resilience', in *Wellsprings* (Wales: Gwendraeth Press, 2015), p.18. (ln.17-18).
[335] Ibid, (ln.19-20).
[336] Iuppa, interview.

Bleeding at the edge

Installation as a definition, a bordered term if you will, itself proves problematic. Oliveira et al, summarise 'Installation' as a generic term, one which 'covers a large area of practice and enquiry within contemporary art. It is suggestive of the notion of 'exhibition', or 'display' [...] a hybrid discipline […] made of multiple histories'.[337] Shepley notes that even the exact definition of the term *installation art* covers a wide range of creative endeavour.[338] Horea Avram describes installation art as being 'an arrangement of elements in space that creatively activates location […] objectual meaning, and viewer's spectatorship', creating a dynamic response between the space, artefact, and viewer.[339]

The dynamism within meaning construction between the work in-situ and the visitor is considered by Melinda M. Mayer, who seeks to reconstruct the relationship between theory and practice with regard to the experience of the visitor. Mayer discusses the generation of meaning making within the art/museum space, adopting an intertextual examination including visual literacy, museum literacy, and concepts of interaction. She observes the guided process of visiting an exhibition or museum, of how it may provide indicators of the inspirations, histories, and embedded meanings of the pieces contained within. Such meaning is presented through information delivered by plaques or labels on work, printed catalogues, physical presences (curator, expert, assistant), and audio or video commentary. This information, as Mayers describes it, presents a sense of 'authority' to the visitor, a presence of established knowledge within accepted disciplinary practice.[340] However, she also observes the shifting role of 'meaning makers', as 'art museum educators move the centre of the educational endeavour from works of art to visitors'.[341] Charles Garoian also writes of the sometimes fractious space between dominant processes of hierarchy involved in the collation of objects within the space itself, and the interpretative transfiguration by the viewer's memories, associations, and understandings. The collated site, as Garoian observes it, is definite, rigid, and immovable; while viewer interpretation is pliable, personal, and in flux. Garoian views this relationship between the physical space of a collection and its visitors as a dialogic process

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[337] Nicolas de Oliveira, Nicola Oxley, Michael Petry, *Installation Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), p.7.
[338] Shepley, 'Installation Art Practice and the Fluctuating Frame'.
[339] Horea Avram, 'Cover & Remix: Paradigms of Adaptation in Installation Art', *Cultural Legitimation*, 2.1. (2006), 6–30 (pp.7.), <http://www.kinephanos.ca/2011/cover-remix/> [accessed 20 October 2015]
[340] Melinda M. Mayer, 'A Postmodern Puzzle: Rewriting the Place of the visitor in Art Museum Education', *Studies in Art Education*, 46.4 (2005), 356–368 (p.357), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25475762><10.2307/25475762> [accessed 19 May 2016]
[341] Mayer, p.360.

occurring between the public narratives of the space itself, and the private memories and associations of the visitors.[342]

The relationship between the artwork, visitor, and spatial environment, is examined by Susan A. Crane, as she questions the nature of engagement within such collated spaces. In a similar manner to Mayer and Garoian, Crane considers how visitors react within the 'authority' of a given space, of how a curated space may be viewed as a set of conclusions that are counterbalanced by the memories and expectations of the viewer. Crane raises the potential incongruity of experience that occurs between meaning represented and meaning remembered; viewing a potential clash, or 'distortion', between a curated space which generates or supplies meaning, and the memories or perceptions of the visitor. The distortion she speaks of does not simply refer to 'misappropriated facts or ideologized interpretations', but to the presence of objects within a collated experience providing a totalising narrative.[343] Citing the Smithsonian's abandoned 1995 Enola Gay exhibition as an example of such dissonance, Crane views the airplane itself as providing (at least) a dual meaning. Firstly, it occupies an instance of spectacle, victory, and militaristic pride. Secondly, it also serves to highlight debate surrounding the bombing of Hiroshima, since the Enola Gay dropped the atomic bomb 'Little Boy' on the Japanese city. This potential clash of meaning, or distortion, thus resides between an institutionalised 'representation of the past', and the importance of personal experience.[344] As such, visitors 'may fully expect and desire to be educated, instructed, to learn "something new," as soon as that knowledge conflicts with memory and experience, trouble begins'.[345] Crane sees these occurrences as possessing the potential to disturb textual memories which exist beyond the frame of the collection itself; when such memories exceed the boundaries of the museum or collection, there is distortion. This distortion is created as the boundary between factual information (delivered by descriptions of works, spoken of by guides or curators, and denoted by the *authority,* as per Mayer, of the art-space/museum itself), becomes challenged by personal knowledge and interpretation.

Valerie Casey utilises Joseph Beuys' piece *How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare*, to illustrate this sometimes-fraught art/viewer relationship. During this part-performance piece,

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342 Charles R. Garoian, 'Performing the Museum', *Studies in Art Education*, 42.3 (2001), 234–248 (p.234), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1321039?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents><10.2307/1321039> [accessed 19 May 2016]
343 Crane, p.57.
344 Ibid, p.44.
345 Ibid, p.49.

Beuys, covered in honey and adorned in gold leaf, cradling a dead hare, whispers explanations of his artwork hanging on the gallery walls, to the cradled animal.[346] The dead hare is designed to appear, according to Casey, as a 'marker for the viewer […] an anaesthetised and flaccid figure to be carried and directed, supplied with the prosthetic vision of curatorial interpretation'.[347] Such performativity does not seek to delimit meaning construction within the works themselves, even as they are 'explained' by the artist; instead the piece seeks to diversify an experience as it questions its very fabric. This creation consisting of physical performance, installed art, and narratorial function, was designed to 'call attention to the boundaries of subjectivity and ultimately to invite the viewer to self-reflection'.[348]

However, such an act may delimit the agency of the visitor, as Gaston Bachelard suggests, the process of moving through a collated event, the visitor 'writes' and 'reads' a room, 'the reader who is "reading a room" leaves off reading and starts to think of some place in his own past'.[349] The questioning of the artwork, and the space in which it is contained, is an active process, and as applied to the notion of distortion in Crane, or authority for Mayer, these instances of 'breaks' within the perceived boundary of the work may prove productive. For Iser, such textual 'gaps' foster communication, facilitating readerly interaction through such fractures or distortions. This break in the border allows entrance into the work creating an 'interactive dialogue between work, viewer, and their respective contexts', a questioning of content and form of the piece itself, and of its position in a collection as a whole.[350]

The journey of the viewer may permit a multiplicity of unique understandings of the work in situ, as:

> Each moment of reception is individual and distinct, albeit governed by manifold conventions and traditions, by prior knowledge's and previous texts; the old story becomes in this respect a very new one, told - and read - for the first time.[351]

Meaning within the installation space, of a collated event as a *temporary* text, is open and permeable, as Eco states, 'Every text, after all, is a lazy machine asking the reader to do some

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[346] Valerie Casey, 'Staging meaning: Performance in the Modern Museum', *TDR (1988-)*, 49.3 (2005), 78–95 (p.78), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4488658><10.2307/4488658> [accessed 19 May 2016]
[347] Ibid, p.78
[348] Ibid, p.80.
[349] Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. by Maria Jolas (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1994), p.14.
[350] See Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), p.169; Melinda Mayer, p.364.
[351] Sanders, p.81.

of its work. What a problem it would be if a text were to say everything the receiver is to understand - it would never end'.[352] The meaning generated is woven by the viewer's experience as a mode of personally created (curated) archive, as 'we find individual works of art presented in a narrative'.[353] Once within the installation space, the viewer observes the arranged works as 'defining an implied narrative sequence', while the understanding of 'the paintings in one room depends, to some degree, upon the sequence of works of art presented in the other galleries'.[354] The objects placed within are 'an arrangement of elements in space that creatively activates location (site-specifically), objectual meaning, and viewer's spectatorship'.[355] As Suderbeg observes, installation art takes note of its perimeters, its boundaries, and reconfigures them.[356] The viewer studies a:

> series of relationships surrounding objects, first on the way to the museum and then as part of the collection. These are relationships between people and people, between objects and objects, and between objects and people […] People imbued things with value and significance, manipulating and contesting their meaning over time. Objects prompted, changed, and acted as a medium for relationships but were nonetheless inanimate.[357]

The spectator's view of an installation's 'aesthetic significance resides in its commitment to continuous reconfigurations and therefore to defying fixed categories [...] installation art operates with depth, deambulatory spatiality, and theatricality'.[358] The importance of such internal spatiality resides not just in the manner in which visitors may navigate the installation space itself, but that its very dimensions, proportion, and aesthetic assists in the generation of interpretation. The internal space of the installation itself is not merely an empty, blank zone, but rather presents a process of transitions between space, object, and viewer. The presence of blank-space, or blankness here, whether it be an empty wall, a floor space, a gap of distance, is not merely *nothing*, but offers potential, as the 'Blank sheet or blank face, both present

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[352] Umberto Eco, *Six Walks in the Fictional Woods* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), p.3.
[353] David Carrier, 'Remembering the Past: Art Museums as Memory Theaters', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 61.1 (2003), 61–65 (p.61.),
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1559114?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents><10.2307/1559114> [accessed 19 May 2016]
[354] Carrier, pp.61-62.
[355] Avram, pp.7-8.
[356] Suderberg, 'Introduction: On Installation and Site Specifity', in *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art*, ed. by Suderberg, p.4.
[357] Alberti, p.561.
[358] Avram, p.27.

themselves as already full of meaning'.[359] The blank or unformed *space*, through arrangement and collation of artefacts, the repurposing of the physical area itself, and also via the presence of the viewer, becomes activated *place*.

The analysis of the following installation works examines this commingling of adaptational fluidity, textual reconstruction, and use of physical space as integral to the generation of meaning. These works function not as a:

> self-contained depository of artifacts with a centralized meaning, but a mobile platform of dialogue and transfers inhabited by objects and ideas already informed by previously validated models […] always open to extensions and re-adaptations. What counts in these artistic arrangements is not the originality (in the sense of primacy), but the meaning; not the uniqueness, but the message the adaptation leaves behind.[360]

The characteristic of installation art work is to bleed into, blend with, cover over or transform the environment in which they are presented, and through that process, alter the nature of the spectatorial experience. In such moments, the artwork and the art-space conjoin; therefore, there is a relationship between the *framed* objects, the *environment* in which they are placed, and the *presence* of the visitor/viewer. This relationship presents certain challenges to the works' physical and contextual surroundings or frame, as that boundary is tested, with aesthetic form merging into the surrounding space itself, extending and changing its textual horizons. The installation or museum space, presents an area of collation that may foster dialogue and (re)examination, assisting in allowing 'transformative exchanges' between physical space and art installation works.[361] Such critical positioning places the curated space, be it temporary (installation) or more permanent (museum), as being both a monolithic, solidly framed entity, yet also as a space in flux or moment in transit.[362]

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[359] Jeremy Gilbert-Rolfe, 'Blankness as a Signifier', *Critical Inquiry*, 24.1 (1997), 159–175 (p.164), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1344162?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents><10.2307/1344162> [accessed 19 May 2016]
[360] Avram, p.28.
[361] Tamara Trodd, 'Introduction: theorising the projected image', in *Screen/Space: The projected image in contemporary art*, ed. by Tamara Trodd (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), pp.1–22 (p.17).
[362] Ibid, p.17.

Time and memory

Points of exchange between text, physical space, and performance were the focus of Sophie McKeand's installation which took the form of a physical poetic display combined with projected visuals and soundscape. The entire piece of approximately twenty minutes was recorded live during the opening night of *The Tales We Tell* event; this recording was to become her installation piece, re-played as the event progressed over the course of the month. For the performance, McKeand read aloud from her extended poem sequence while a mixed-media film was projected behind her. The film consisted of multiple elements, including: images of travel, landscape, roads, cityscapes, and the pre-recorded visual of a previous performance by McKeand herself. This projection operated as visual collage, blending together and overlaying the constituent visual elements, whilst accompanied by an ambient soundtrack.[363]

Figure 25. *Coflyfr- Experimentations with Time* performance.[364]

Accompanying the poetic display, visual projection, and audio, were reconstituted physical objects, as phrases of the piece performed were cut-out and attached to previously used (but clean) plates, transforming normalised household items into a secondary static installation artefact.

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[363] Mark Huckridge, *Hood Flair* (Soundcloud, 2016), <https://soundcloud.com/hood-flair> [accessed 9 November 2016]

[364] Sophie McKeand, *Coflyfr- Experimentations with Time (*2015), *The Tales We Tell*, (Wrexham, 2015).
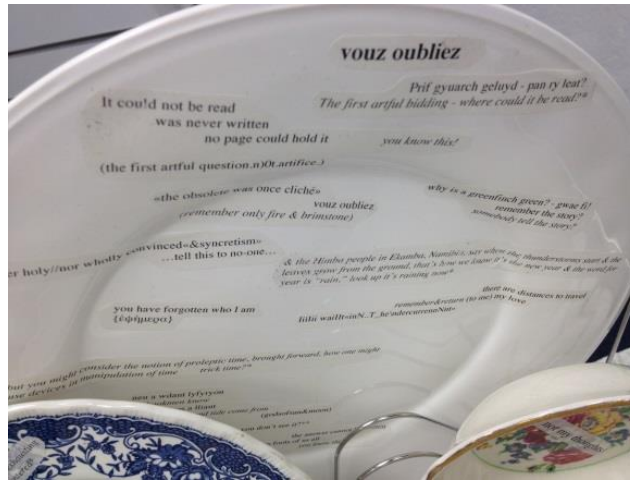
Figure 26. Fragments of words on broken objects.[365]

The title of the work is taken from the Welsh language, its arrangement also a reformation of fragments:

Coflyfr [kov-liv-r]: record, register, chronicle.
Cof [kov]: memory.
Llyfr [ll-iv-r]: book.

This resonates within the format of the performed piece itself which was created from an archive of previous works, past memories, and experiences (Coflyfr); representative of a chronicle of poetic process (Cof), and commentary on the process of textual formation (book). This manner of delivery follows the ancient Cymraeg bardic tradition of channelling past poets, of the poet as both a teller and weaver of tales, in a similar fashion to Ovid's *Orpheus* as being 'both a subject and a teller of stories'.[366] The poet is the physical container of the re-channelled text, embodying the 'mythical poetic persona Taliesin', who 'creates *awen* (inspiration); reaches out across time, language and dimensions'.[367] The performance of *Coflyfr* contained a repeated statement, 'These are not my words', a quotation existing in multiple forms; as spoken by the poet, as displayed on a plate, and within the video artefact. As a textual device this is an open proclamation announcing McKeand's practice of borrowing from other texts, literally *cutting and pasting from* other works. As the poet states, *'Coflyfr* is not created to be beautiful, but with a specific purpose in mind. Language and words from across time are knotted together;

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[365] McKeand, *Coflyfr,* repruposed plates and quotations.
[366] Sanders, p.70.
[367] Sophie McKeand, 'Performing Coflyfr', *Coflyfr – Experiments with Time* (Tumblr, 2015), <http://coflyfr.tumblr.com/post/114390318943/performing-coflyfr> [accessed 10 November, 2016]

a net is fashioned to capture slivers of future times flashing through narrative depths'.[368] Those splinters of texts include: *The Mabinogion*, excerpts of Shakespeare, *The Book of Revelation*, Homer, Dostoevsky, and punk rock lyrics. The work is an amalgamation of varying forms of pre-existing texts, intermingled with the writings of McKeand.

Figures 27-28. 'These are not my words', in object, and film.[369]

The source text again proves elusive. Neither the poet, nor a singular text, occupies the entire work, as the reformed work consists of reclaimed, scattered, multiple elements.

An excerpt of 'The Fool' illustrates this approach:

[368] McKeand, 'Performing Coflyfr'.
[369] McKeand, *Coflyfr,* repruposed plates and quotations, (2015), *The Tales We Tell*, (Wrexham, 2015); McKeand, *Coflyfr,* image still (The Tales We Tell, 2015). Image reproduced courtesy of Sophie McKeand.
[370] Sophie McKeand, 'The Fool', *Coflyfr – Experimentations with Time (*Tumblr, 2015) <http://coflyfr.tumblr.com/post/56050898672/the-fool> [accessed 11 November 2016] Reproduced courtesy of Sophie McKeand. (ln.1-9).

These scattered lines operating as a 'many faced' exploration of textural remediation, a kaleidoscopic approach to textual formation and poetic delivery.[371] The words on the page are not the whole piece, neither the poet nor the installation; the performance, as visual and auditory display, is a collated frame of fragments which echo and amplify and are interdependent on each other.

Yet the very nature of the piece as a collage, a conglomeration of other works, is challenged, as McKeand often calls into question her own poetic processes of reclamation, as in the line:

she's making it up as she goes along!

[y0urrr   heA:: d de ni //es the||se WorDs
&your heart sings them]

[372]

As part of the 'Vous Oubliez' sequence, McKeand speaks as Taliesin, paradoxically proclaiming 'I am Taliesin, who am not'; providing a sense of inhabitation of a role whilst noting a consciousness of the fragility of that inhabitation.[373] It is a mode of questioning which appears elsewhere in the performance: 'It could not be read' / 'this means nothing' / 'everything has already been said'.[374] The repetition of such questioning parallels sections of the projected visual media, whereby images often recur multiple times in a sequence. The mode of repetition here amplifies the nature of the performance and physical form of the poem. The intermingling of previous texts as layers, fragmented echoes of myth, popular culture, and historical voice, exist as one. The texts commingle and speak to each other, functioning as overlaid stories and voices, delivered by a dualistic (at least) mode of performativity.

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[371] This approach has also been utilised elsewhere by McKeand, one instance being the 2016 *Thirty Days of Brexit* poetic experiment, a sequence of works which were inspired by the vote of the UK to leave the European Union. The piece consisted of a 'plan to create a series of blackout poems from that day only' from the content of Newspapers. The papers were defaced and cut; text was taken from paragraphs and combined with newspaper graphics, stitched together, with the aim of the poet being to show anger at media representation during the voting process, that whatever would be created 'would be less absurd than some of the headlines I'd read in the lead up to the Brexit vote'. The poetic collage existed as a repurposing of form, and as visual document of the poet grappling with the consequences of the historic vote. See Sophie McKeand, *#thirtydaysofBrexit* (Wordpress, 2016), <https://goglife.wordpress.com/2016/07/23/thirtydaysofbrexit/#more> [accessed 11 November 2016]

[372] McKeand, 'The Fool'. Reproduced courtesy of Sophie McKeand. (ln.37-39).

[373] Sophie McKeand, 'Vous Oubliez', *Coflyfr – Experiments with Time* (Tumblr, 2015) <http://coflyfr.tumblr.com/post/60195908390/vouz-oubliez> [accessed 11 November 2016]

[374] McKeand, *Coflyfr*.

The sense of a multiple textual voices copied and pasted is also present within the delivery of *Coflyfr*. During the performed piece, projected images arranged behind the poet would frequently include a previously digitally recorded version of McKeand performing, thereby generating a 'dual' presence, the pre-recorded performer and the real-time live-render. This aspect of duality, of many texts converging and altering shape, is illustrated by another of the many inspirations present within the work through the medieval Welsh poem *Cad Goddeu,* which begins:

> I have been a multitude of shapes,
> Before I assumed a consistent form.[375]

Figure 29. Poet as doppelganger, as dual performer.[376]

The form functions as the work *performed*, the *filmic* collage, and the physical representation of broken, and repurposed *objects*. Here, McKeand as performer, and projection, operates as an additional echo of the cutting and pasting of the text; an actual textual *body* creating a poetic doppelganger, a copy of a copy, a fraud amongst the frame, a further resonant textual aspect existing as part of the extended text of the performed poem.[377]

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[375] Gordd Cymru, *Arthurian and Grail poetry - Cad Goddeu or the Battle of Goddeu* (2000), trans. by Revd. Robert Williams <http://www.celtic-twilight.com/camelot/poetry/taliesin/cad_goddeu.htm> [accessed 11 October 2016] (ln.1-2).

[376] McKeand, 'Performing Coflyfr'. Image reproduced courtesy of Sophie McKeand.

[377] Aspects of *doubling* continue with McKeand's recent live performances, as the poet incorporates use of an audio looping device, which records live spoken word as an audio track, which the poet can then speak over, or create further loops, adding multiple voices to the created poetic form.

As the performance progressed, pages of the poem were dropped and discarded as they were read, cascading to the ground, forming a haphazard carpet which surrounded the poet. This concept of shedding and abandonment of work was amplified at the culmination of the piece, which saw McKeand pick up and drop a plate on the ground. The fragments of this breakage would add to the abandoned pages which become the border and frame of her installation work, granting access to the onlooker of hitherto hidden process.
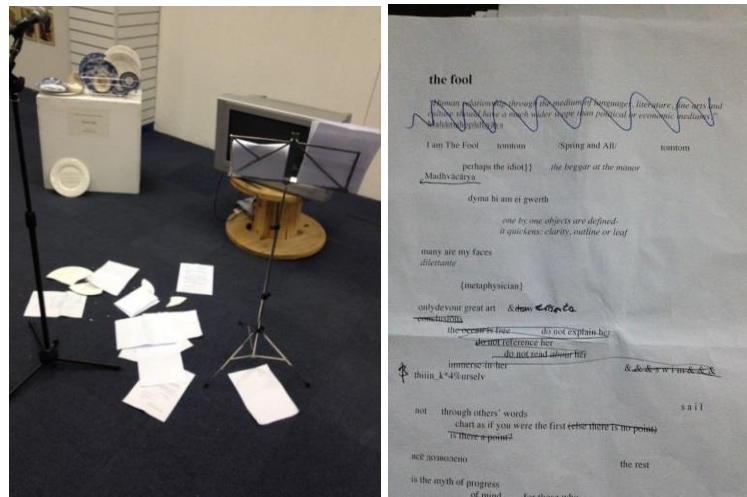
Figures 30-31. Scattered text and in-situ edits.[378]

The scattered lines in distress reveal the performed work as being written, defaced, and rewritten, as parts of the poems were crossed out or altered in sequence. This written process echoed the manner of the physical performance, it too being altered, copied and rewritten. The visual reality of the in-situ edits (pen, as opposed to pristine print) draws attention to the multiplicity of version(s) that may/may not have been performed in that performative space. The vigorous nature of the edits, of hastily cancelled verses and lines, is further paralleled by a sequence within the multimedia projection of books burning, marking a position of violence perhaps not indicative of the wholesale destruction of the whole text(s), but to challenge 'a material text - and by that I mean the physical writing on the page - as a fixed thing'.[379]

The 'fixed thing' in McKeand's performance ostensibly exists as a defined event, a read poem accompanying visuals and performance; however, its form here occupies a position of replication, duplication, and flux. Post-performance the installation work demonstrates the nature of the 'fluid text' (or more appropriately here, *texts*) as being 'the material evidence of

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[378] McKeand, *Coflyfr*. repruposed plates and quotations, poem in-process.

[379] Bryant, *The Fluid Text*, p.2.

shifting intentions', as the *material* (of the read work), is now dispersed, and visible to the viewer.[380] Preconceptions of a fixed or static text erode with the viewing, as 'the facts of revision, publication, and reception - urge us to recognize that the only "definitive text" is a multiplicity of texts, or rather, the fluid text'.[381] As Bryant notes 'If we are to know the textual condition, we must get to the versions of a text [...] But the problem is that generally we have only partial access - often no access - to those versions'.[382] Those versions, or at least the possibilities of an alternate poetic performance, are now revealed, scattered and orphaned on the floor which visitors may walk upon, a fresh carpet of a script in tatters, the once-whole pieces of poetry and pottery now seen as shards on the ground. The chaotically aligned plates, the words on the page, now constituting a hectic frame, a frenzied outline, which only fully manifests at the end of the performance.

Visually, the installed text becomes a space of trauma, consisting of the ruin and wreckage of a collated library or archive. McKeand's installation evokes imagery as presented by Marija Cetinić, of texts destroyed and dispersed, 'floating, dissipation, melting' into alternate forms.[383] This 'wreckage' becomes reconfigured, transmitting not through textual content, but via its new presence as physical form, as the page becomes a kind of 'energy in transit'.[384] An energy that has shifted from the arrangement on the page to the shards on the ground, viewing the written text as if it 'were made of solid materials; as if words were not only abstract signs for things and concepts, but also a form of matter'.[385] The performance migrates from a collation of textual artefacts, an archive of material, to a deliberate scattering of that reconstituted form; breaking down the reformed textual artefact, to birth another, altering the frame of the text and the manner in which it is observed.

Wreckage, ruin, and trauma occupied not the aftermath, but the inspiration for Langston's installation work, *A Silent Applause*. The piece, like Boghosian's work, the activity of *The Orpheus Project* group, or McKeand's performance outlined above, was also concerned with fragmentation and piecing together narrative fragments in the search for a cohesive whole.

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[380] Bryant, *The Fluid Text*, p.8.
[381] Ibid, p.2.
[382] Ibid, p.4.
[383] Marija Cetinić, 'Fragile Pages of Grey Ashes Inoperative archives in Dubravka Ugrešić's The Museum of Unconditional Surrender and David Markson's Wittgenstein's Mistress', *European Journal of English Studies*, 14.1. (2010), 75–88. (p.76).
[384] Ibid, p.76.
[385] Flam, 'Introduction: Reading Robert Smithson', in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, ed. by Flam, pp.xiii–xxv (p.xv).

Yet those scatterings are the ephemera of memory, not literature, myth, or landscape. The work chronicled thought processes surrounding the illness of Langston's mother who is suffering from Alzheimer's disease:

> The aim has been to create work in cloth that depicts the experience of loss, grief and acceptance for the relatives of an Alzheimer's patient. The practise attempts to embody both the emotion of the actuality of loss, memory loss and the associated difficulties of retrieval through the metaphor of the journey and the map. Cloth is also used as a metaphor, the handkerchief for grief, and the maternal white linen for its religious connotations, connects to pilgrimage, reverence and the holding of memory within its fibres. The images are transferred using carbon paper. Hand stitch is used for its connectivity as is a hand hooked rug technique used by my mother who has Alzheimer's. The fabrics, threads and linen are hers.[386]

Cloth is the material of the grief-work, which involved the use of repurposed objects in the form of embroidered handkerchiefs hung from the ceiling, accompanied by a spoken word narrative recorded by the artist herself. The artist presents a rumination on an attempt at recover what is lost, detailing a reflective journey to 'find' her mother, the memories and her personality being ever distant. The narrative begins by intimating the mythic nature of memory:

> There is a goddess of memory but none of forgetting, yet there should be, as they are twin sisters, twin powers, and walk on either side of us. 'I would rather walk', my mother's early words. Her ability to walk became her adversity in later life as she set forth with no direction, no map, and the urge to walk rapidly away from her collapsing mental state. Now I walk in search of her, of myself, in this new world where mother is child and grief appears infinite as fragments disappear and recognition comforts.[387]

This is a return to the spaces and memories of the past, presenting a 'grief work, grieving the regressive process of memory loss. It is also a celebration of a life lived; it includes the search for a reassembled identity, a search for direction and reorientation'.[388]

The language of that search is frequently presented as a physical traversal, that this 'pilgrimage […] should be made on foot', via pathways and maps, yet 'Maps only exist for the physical'.[389] In this space of memory 'there is no linear time, today, yesterday and tomorrow cease to have meaning, we are constantly directed to the present moment', the image of the

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[386] Hilary M. Langston, 'Artist Statement', in Stephen C. Kenyon-Owen, *The Tales We Tell (*Wordpress, 2015), <https://taleswetelldotcom.wordpress.com/> [accessed 6 June 2017] p.8.
[387] Hilary M. Langston, *A Silent Applause,* mixed-media & spoken narrative, (2015) *The Tales We Tell* (Wrexham, 2015).
[388] Langston, *A Silent Applause,* spoken narrative.
[389] Ibid.

map is returned to, clung to, as 'an attempt to counteract the disorientation of my mother's mind and my own identity', illustrating a desire of the artist for enclosure, and organisation.[390] However, the weight of grief, cannot be contained within the folding of a piece of linen. The narrative suggests a Sisyphean desire for this tactile object to wrap up and contain all anguish; 'A secret wish for it to be the size of a pocket handkerchief that contains all tears. Neatly folded away in a pocket […] but grief is not that neat'.[391]

This yearning to contain the fragments is illustrated in physical form by the installation itself, an arrangement of embroidered handkerchiefs hung from the ceiling, falling like memories and moving as the breeze takes them.

Figure 32. Memories on linen.[392]

The handkerchiefs themselves were owned by Langston's mother, found hidden and tucked away in drawers, and becoming repurposed objects as part of the memory-pilgrimage. The manner of appropriation involved the stitching of words, phrases, and memories, into each one. The stitching on the cloth includes remembered fragments of conversation, alongside emotional exclamations, such as: 'get an education […] we are lost'.[393] This creates a textual fabric that 'resonates with the experience of grief, its boundaries limitless, hence the search for a map, to establish some boundary to contain its overwhelmingness'.[394] As visitors arrived to the installation work, they would view these objects 'floating' in the air, accompanied by the spoken narrative.

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[390] Langston, *A Silent Applause,* spoken narrative.
[391] Ibid.
[392] Ibid.
[393] Ibid.
[394] Ibid.

In a previous installation, Langston had arrayed the embroidered hangings along a corridor, creating a navigatory effect of moving through memories, amidst intangible recollected voice and the physicality of the installation form, these fragments of memory coming into direct contact (skin to cotton) with the visitor. The handkerchiefs were used for this tactile quality, as 'We keep them close, up a sleeve, in pocket, tucked into underwear, maternal, they are intimate'.[395] The sense of closeness indicative by the familial relationship, the tactility of the objects, and the narrative voice presented to the visitor. The installation existing as a floating, ethereal record, conjuring a mode of response by the onlooker that may question the re-use of such seemingly banal objects:

> We can ask of objects questions similar to those we raise when writing biographies of people. What are the key moments in the career of this thing? How has its status changed over the course of its life—what have been its significant "ages"? What makes it different from other, similar, objects?[396]

The act of reappropriating, of adding to and potentially defacing these personal objects, presented a source of concern for Langston, who asks during the piece would it be best to keep them contained within the linen drawer, or risk spoiling them by delving 'into the cloth, into the linen, into the whiteness, into the memories, the grief, the loss, the pain, the anger and confusion?'.[397] Yet the chronicling of memory onto the physically repurposed object, allows a mode of organisation amidst apparent confusion, as 'The linen yields to the hooking motion, the handkerchief bears the marks of the route […] the journey to my mother'.[398] These material things posit a personal history, a retelling in pieces, the inscriptions creating a personal record, an archive of memory where 'the work of mourning is often expended and worked through material things'.[399] These objects are literally, past, having moved beyond their original use and purposefulness, yet they are now enlivened and remembered by present understandings and interpretations. Through this process of remaking the objectual relationship shifts to one of dialogue, discovery, and the desire for solidity to encase or surround those events.

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[395] Langston, *A Silent Applause,* spoken narrative.
[396] Alberti, p.560.
[397] Langston, *A Silent Applause,* spoken narrative.
[398] Ibid.
[399] Michael A. Holly, 'Patterns in the Shadows', *In[]Visible Culture – An Electronic Journal for Visual Studies*, 1 (1998), <http://ivc.lib.rochester.edu/patterns-in-the-shadows/>. [accessed 10th June 1015]

Edges severed

To adjust attention briefly to those works hung in-situ whilst continuing the discussion of the nature of the frame and its relation to adaptation; I turn to the work of Penny Hallas and Jacqueline Alkema. Hallas' art was displayed in both the Open space below and the Void above. Within the Open space Hallas exhibited the forty *Orpheus Drawings* (as discussed in Chapter Two) while the Void was occupied by *Beyond Orpheus,* a multimedia film triptych, together with three large scale drawings.[400] *The Orpheus Drawings*, formed of violent and screaming viscera, were placed as companions to the work of Alkema, as they shared a similar aesthetic focusing on the concept of severed forms. Alkema presented a sequence of six paintings based on Dutch proverbs, *Proverbs and Portraits*.[401] The restricted forms of the proverbs, often no more than a handful of words, echoes in the smaller scale canvases:

Figures 33-34. *Proverbs and Portraits.*[402]

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[400] Penny Hallas, *Beyond Orpheus* (2015), <http://boxingthechimera.blogspot.co.uk/2015/03/beyond-orpheus.html> [accessed 15 November 2016], collaborative contributors being Penny Hallas, Steve Boyland, Scott Thurston, Rhys Trimble, Anthony Mellors, Lyndon Davies.

[401] These were oil paintings on canvas, predominantly fifty-one by fifty-seven centimetres, with one smaller work being forty-two by fifty-two centimetres, and a single larger piece being eighty-six by eighty-seven centimetres.

[402] Jacqueline Alkema, *De aal bij de staart grijpen (getting on with a difficult task), De hond in de pot vinden (too late for a treat), Beter een Vogel in de hand dan in de lucht (Better one bird in the hand than 2 in the bush),*

The figures representing these simple phrases often break the boundary of their framed environment, with lower legs, parts of forehead, and torsos cropped by the exterior edges of their containment.

These ethereal forms on the canvas are also sliced and compressed, severed and contained by the boundaries of their medium, bent into an uncomfortable stance. This positioning of the figure upon the canvas is deliberate, as Alkema states of her work, 'The female figure with at times awkward poses is a predominant feature'.[403] Such aesthetics are further illustrated in other works, such as in *All about my mother III* and *Female Beasties 8*:
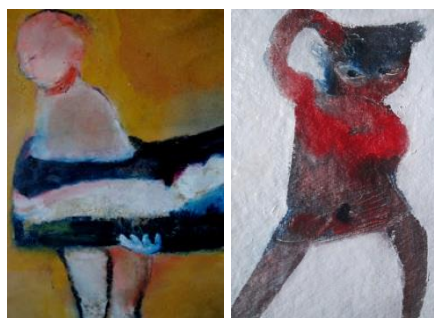
Figures 35-36. *All about my mother III*, *Female Beasties 8*.[404]

What is prevalent in these depictions is the isolation of represented characters, together with the severing of form and the hazy indifference of detail. This manner of representation, as Ralph Sanders suggests, perhaps invites an unusual or dangerous familiarity:

> The work is often dark and intimate. Whether the figures are staring straight at you, or lost in their own dance, they are demanding a one-on-one relationship with you. They want to communicate across the gap that keeps us all isolated, unknown. This work has a fierce simplicity, and its passion and fury is rendered with maximum control and precision. Here, the cold burns, the light freezes and the silence is deafening. [405]

It is a closeness inferred by the paintings through a dual form; firstly, by representing an act of looking, secondly, by an act of implied touch. Of the former, the figures themselves, staring to

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Met een andermans veren pronken (showing off with another's achievements), *Proverbs and Portraits 2014, The Tales We Tell* (Wrexham, 2015). <http://www.jacquelinealkema.co.uk/styled-5/> [accessed 11 November 2016] Images reproduced courtesy of Jacqueline Alkema

[403] Jacqueline Alkema, *Jacqueline Alkema*, <http://www.jacquelinealkema.co.uk/index.html> [accessed 11 November 2016]

[404] Jacqueline Alkema, *All about my mother III*, *Female Beasties 8* (2014), oil, paper. Images reproduced courtesy of Jacqueline Alkema.

[405] *The New Artists* (Wall Street International, 2014), <http://wsimag.com/art/8768-the-new-artists> [accessed 11 November 2016]

the left or right, are looking to an imagined companion or event placed beyond the limits of the frame. Furthermore, in the obscured details of outline and appearance, the implied viewer's gaze is conceptualised as being physically too close to the image itself, which now under scrutiny blurs and distorts. Whilst the viewer may not be within the painting, they are inferred to be intimately close to it, almost touching.

The haptic element within these depictions is further illustrated by the painted figures that are all holding, stroking, or else carrying objects. 'Lekker is maar een vinger lang (all good things come to an end)' goes further, possessing a more sensual aspect, one of taste, as the finger of the solitary figure in blue licks at an unidentified and presumably sweet morsel. This is a tempting or implied tactility presented to the onlooker as an instance of a haptic visuality, where 'the eyes themselves function like organs of touch'.[406] Laura Marks views such visual aspects of intimacy as a 'haptic perception event', defined as 'the combination of tactile, kinaesthetic, and proprioceptive functions'.[407] Sarah Gilligan, speaking of the allure and effect of such implied touch within media but applicable to concepts of tactility and interaction in this case, states that:

> 'tactile convergence' is both alluring and present in its visceral impact […] Whilst the immersive nature […] enables an illusion of becoming part of the text, a distance remains […] one is still not able to touch and feel […] sensory pleasures […] still remain out of reach.[408]

The implied frame of the artwork is challenged but not broken, yet the manner of representation here encourages an intimate sense combining both closeness and containment, presenting 'a collection of portraits exploring sexuality and domesticity'.[409] Whilst the notion of an overt sexuality may be a subjective one, it does further infer that the work displays a perceived closeness or sensory pleasure on the part of the viewer in terms of a mode of looking. That sense of tactile intimacy in these relocations of simple proverbs to a canvas frame tempts a breaking of the sanctity of the relationship between art form and boundary. Thus, methods of

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[406] Laura U. Marks, *Touch: Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media* (London: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), (Loc 256 of 3079).
[407] Ibid.
[408] Sarah Gilligan, 'Heaving Cleavages and Fantastic Frock Coats: Gender Fluidity, Celebrity and Tactile Transmediality in contemporary Costume Cinema', *Film, Fashion & Consumption*, 1.1 (2011), 38–7 <http://www.academia.edu/223661/Heaving_Cleavages_and_Fantastic_Frock_Coats_Gender_Fluidity_Celebrity_and_Tactile_Transmediality_in_Contemporary_Costume_Cinema> [accessed 2 December 2016] 7-38. (pp.25-26).
[409] *The New Artists* (Wall Street International, 2014).

containment and the desire to move outside the rigidities of outlying limitations become apparent, both within the artwork and for the viewer.

Beyond Orpheus

The move beyond the frame of the text was the impetus for *Beyond Orpheus*, which extended previous work by *The Orpheus Project* group and aimed to allow a larger scale collaborative exploration of the mythic text. On the final day of the exhibition the multimedia installation within the Void altered shape, as a collective of poets, musicians and voice improvisation artists responded to the installed 'text' in variant ways. Thus, *Beyond Orpheus* functioned as both multimedia installation, and additionally, an interpretative, mutable space for creative response. The nature of the installation and the events of the final day will occupy much of my discussion within the concluding sections of this chapter, predominantly examining the shift in textual form and challenges to the notion of the containing (textual) frame.

Figures 37-38. *Beyond Orpheus*. Tryptych sequence and large scale Orphean accompaniments.[410]

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[410] See Penny Hallas, large scale drawings, (2015), *The Tales We Tell* (Wrexham, 2015). Image reproduced courtesy of Sue McGrane, *Collective Imagery Studio* (Collective Imagery Studio, 2015), <http://www.collectiveimagerystudio.co.uk/> [accessed 13 November 2016]; Penny Hallas and others, *Beyond Orpheus*, multi-media film, (2015), *The Tales We Tell* (Wrexham, 2015).

The initial structure of the *Beyond Orpheus* installation took the form of a simultaneous screening of three short films being played as a loop; these short films were projected onto three panels near the centre of the room, each eight feet by four feet in size. The audio for the work was delivered in stereo, played at a greater-than speech level volume. The Void was placed in deliberate near-darkness, the only light in the room itself coming from the projections and small lights illuminating the larger paintings arrayed within one corner of the space.[411] The centrality of the projections provided a stable visual anchor for the viewer with three clear and defined frames, their presence as monolithic entities within a darkened space highlighted the art, the projection, and the 'where to be looked at-ness' of the text. However, the composition of the triptych presented an unevenness of content and temporality that sought to challenge easily boundaried interpretations of form. The side screenings (entitled *Orpheus*, on the left, with *Eurydice* to the right) were purposely of a differing overall length to the central film, affording to the overall shape of the installation a mode of visual discord. As the three sequences progress from a defined starting point they move further from each other, becoming increasingly out of alignment. Repeated or prolonged viewings thus generate an altered text, as the side panels move non-synchronously with the centre-text, lending the piece a partly amorphous and unpredictable form.

Whilst the individual films possess a start and end point, relentless in that sense of onward progression, they are nevertheless, out of step and discordant. Linearity and control permits their existence, as they are bound within a static frame and contained within their environment, sealed and cut off, away from the brightness of the Open space below. Yet that stability is allayed by the shifting nature of the projections, as they weave in and out of time and sequence. The mode of disorientation presented here, is based within darkness, interspersed with a shifting collage of blended, sometimes murky images, emblematic of a repeated yet fruitless search. That moving (at times chaotic) collage is amplified via auditory devices which move from near silence to: nursery rhyme melodies, manifold voices (arranged singly, and as a cacophony), industrial noise, and flowing water, presenting a deliberate sensory overload which arrives in undulating waves. Disjointedness and separation exist as a theme within this retelling, affording to the viewer colliding orbits of visual and auditory suggestion within an overall narrative. The formation of the triptych presents a fractured and severed Orphean

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[411] These large-scale works resembled amplified depictions of the *Orpheus Drawings*. In one, a now familiar isolated head is being swallowed-up by a gaping, mechanistic mouth; a void echoed in the two accompanying works which presented heads in states of distress, subsumed into a spiralling chasm.

retelling, a narrative of two lovers (represented in the side panels), forever distanced from one another; while the movement of central panel further destabilises the side panels which intersect on occasion but are destined to be forever out of reach. The endlessly enacted and doomed journey of the myth, echoes through notes of repetition in a continually swirling maelstrom of image, word, and audio.

Last call

On the 28th of February the installation drew to a close, with a final event that saw a gathering of poets, musicians, and voice artists, who would fashion improvised responses to the installation space of *Beyond Orpheus*.[412] The creative responses were inspired by variant elements within the Void itself: through performance in relation to the film, poetic improvisation upon the installation as a whole, reaction in voice and movement to the space, or a rumination upon the retelling of the myth and the collaborative process itself. Structurally, *Beyond Orpheus* altered in physical shape as its life drew to a close, reconfiguring itself and adding peripheral elements. In place of the tripartite monoliths of the previous weeks, the centre panel was removed, allowing projection onto the back wall of the Void space. The *Orpheus* projection (on installation left) was moved forward and utilised the centre panel previously used for the centre projection, this placed the image as a more dominant presence to the viewer, doubling the size of the projection. *Eurydice* (right) remained in place, and an additional multimedia piece entitled *The Eyes Deny* was projected on the far right-hand side wall.

Figure 39. The projected image altered, stretched.[413]

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[412] Anthony Mellors, Rhys Trimble, Lyndon Davies, Scott Thurston, Steve Boyland
[413] Hallas and others, *Beyond Orpheus*, final day.
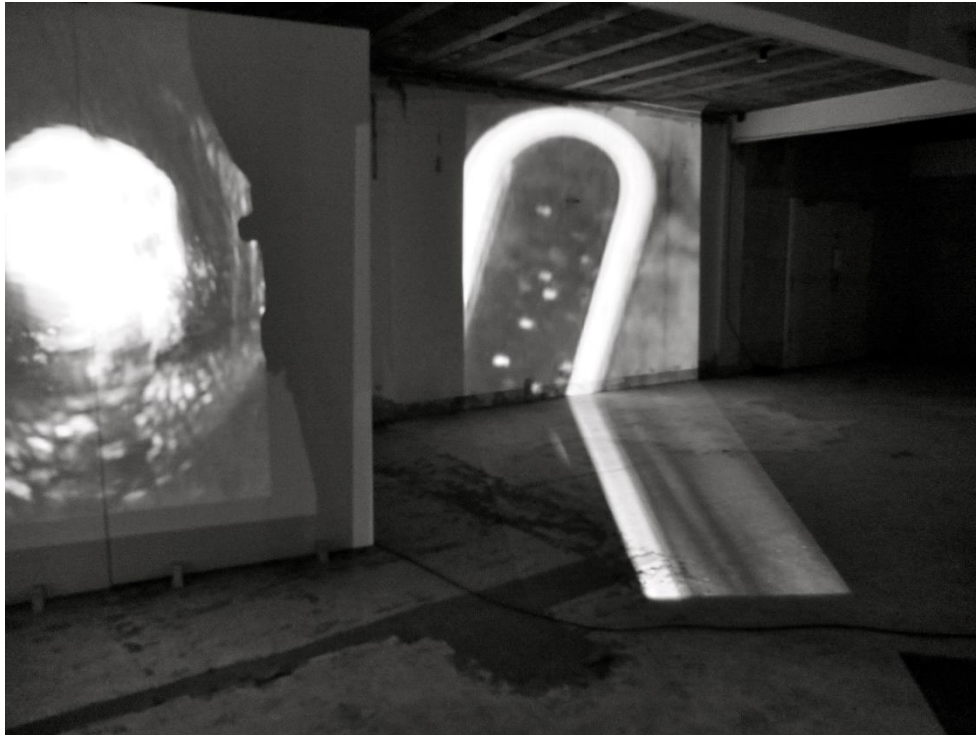
Figure 40. Eurydice 'falling' into the stretched image of The Eyes Deny.[414]

This change in the fabric of the text encouraged a process of structural and developmental variation within the scope of the previously reworked mythic tale, as 'a myth is never transported wholesale into its new context; it undergoes its own metamorphoses in the process. Myth is continuously evoked, altered, and reworked'.[415] Such metamorphosis parallels installation art practice, as art practitioners and curators:

> strive to keep their options open, discovering syntaxes and structure inherent in their materials as they go. The compositional method is that of improvisation, a madness that juggles objects much as the jazz musician unfolds structure in his exploration of the possibilities inherent in the notes.[416]

Thus, the space is viewed as a motif to be adapted, or as in jazz terminology, a structural *head* that serves to introduce a musical motif which is then altered, reformed, and improvised upon. This presents an approach designed to foster a pliable, ever-shifting potential of space(s)

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[414] Penny Hallas, *Beyond Orpheus* (Blogger.com, 2015), <http://boxingthechimera.blogspot.co.uk/2015/03/beyond-orpheus.html> [accessed 15 November 2016] Image reproduced courtesy of Anthony Mellors.
[415] Sanders, p.64.
[416] Clothier, 'The Poetic Object', in *The Poetic Object: Exhibition Catalogue*, ed. by Peter Clothier and Jim Edwards, p.7.

seeking to avoid a static 'prison-yard of meaning'.[417] Instead, what was sought was a process of reinvention of the space, for it to become 'disrobed of its obvious function and reassembled'.[418] This capacity for represented artworks and the very space itself to be texts in flux, was the focus of the final day.

The reworked physical nature of *Beyond Orpheus* conjured additional levels of potential meaning within the multimedia representation. The Eurydice panel becomes a marginalised representation alongside the (now) primary visuals of the central narrative, while the looming embodiment of her would-be rescuer becomes more insistent via an increased projected presence. This new depiction of Eurydice, ever more alone, partially isolated from the main work, can be understood to be an 'unobtainable singularity, a lost object of desire', that in this scenario veers ever closer towards the abyss, a void that the addition of *The Eyes Deny* to the projected textual space may symbolise.[419]

The effect of these alterations, of the displaced panels, and the addition of the side projection, also stretched the space of the installation, which previously existed as a closely gathered group of three panels. The visual deformity extended the reach of the installation into the realms of the viewer, breaking its previous boundaries. This fracturing of the perceived frame is crucial in the functioning of the installation on the final day; for as the images in the tryptych are simply projections, a non-physical entity, they are still held in place by the measurable and defined boards acting as their frameless display. The necessities and absolutes of image projection do not lose their hold completely as there must be a light source and an area for it to be displayed, however, the projected imaged now encroaches into the room-space rather than being arrayed on boards within it.

The invasion of the image into the installation floor breaks in part this boundary, the affordance such a perceived break may offer, be it through violation or extension are discussed by Pinhanez and Podlaseck. They argue that frame-less aspects of a piece can connect more fully with the world of the onlooker, as opposed to a sealed, hermetic geometric shape:

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[417] Lydia Goehr, 'At the Still Point of the Turning World, in *Figuring Out Figurative Art: Contemporary Philosophers on Contemporary Paintings*, ed. by Damien Freeman and Derek Mattravers (London: Routledge, 2015), pp.55-77 (p.71).
[418] Edwards, 'Organic Life Designs: The Art of The Poetic Object', in *The Poetic Object: Exhibition Catalogue*, ed. by Clothier and Edwards, p.9.
[419] Davies, *Orpheus, Eurydice and the Tritone Sub.*

Frameless displays are created by projecting visual elements on a black background into a physical environ-ment [...]frameless displays connect with the surrounding environment and objects better than framed displays, contextualizing the information presented in them [...] By bringing phenomena such as these into the physical space of the viewer, the artists coerced their audiences into becoming emotional and sometimes physical participants, rather than voyeurs gazing through windows at events divorced from their reality.[420]

Such a break as this disturbs the viewer's textual perspective, interrupting or challenging notions of spatial depth within a textual space. As the frame is extended or broken, it moves outward, and may operate as 'an animated zone that often plays an important narrative and expressive role' within meaning creation and engagement.[421] The restructuring of the *Beyond Orpheus* video installation enhanced the spatial sense of the piece via the elongation of the projected image(s) which become distorted, smeared across the floor and arrayed as part of the room itself rather than upon it. These increased limits therefore permit both a fracturing of the previously held frame and extend its narrative, displacing Eurydice to the embraces of the abyss and foregrounding Orpheus' presence in a mythic reconstruction which exists now as an adaptable collaborative form.

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[420] Pinhanez and Podlaseck, p.342.
[421] Broderick, p.40.

Summonings and transitions

Such a sense of mutability within the textual form and the potentials of the physicality of the installation space itself was of paramount importance to the creative group that assembled during the final day, who collaboratively viewed the room-space as a text to be occupied, 'a wet skin', to be worn.[422] Attendees on the afternoon gathered within the Open space, where poet Rhys Trimble summoned them loudly, slamming a large walking stick into the ground several times, before he functioned as ferryman to the altered space above. In this movement, the transition between the Open space and the Void may be viewed as shifting between two moments of framed contents, each with their own structures and sites of meaning. The physical act of traversing a stairway to the Void alters the physical surroundings and expectations of the visitors who moved from a well-lit, carpeted zone, with static art hung on walls, to a more barren, cold space.

The use of light within these two zones primarily consisted of two states; that which highlights and illustrates the artwork, juxtaposed with the stark darkness of the Void itself. The use of light within installation works is the focus of Jane Blocker, who examines how it may disorient 'rather than bring enlightenment' to the viewer.[423] In the case studies Blocker examines, 'rather than artistic depictions of blindness or drawings of the blind, these works produce sightlessness', not simply representing characters who are unable to see, but affecting an audience an inability to see fully.[424] Blocker cites an example within a Terence Koh installation, presenting as its focus point a four-thousand-watt light, which produced 'an almost painful experience […] The light is so intense that museum guards stationed near it wear sunglasses'.[425] The beam produced a confusing, almost assaulting blast of light, challenging the gaze of the onlooker. In contrast, during *Beyond Orpheus* the physical space of the installation environment enhanced the sense of an obscuring vastness, which was not one of light, but of darkness; the space itself bringing into claustrophobic focus a framed and projected event. This bareness was a defining factor in utilising this space during the final day, the room itself viewed as being capable of emanating a presence through its very absence, or blankness.

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[422] Neil Gaiman, *Orpheus Underground* (Seriously, BBC Radio 4, 2015),
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b06cw171> [accessed 10th October 2015]
[423] Blocker, p.8.
[424] Ibid, p.9.
[425] Ibid, p.11.

The void itself radiates a sheer emptiness, or nothingness; it facilitates a removal, as in that space 'the dark box-like room indirectly conditions the mind [...] Time is compressed or stopped [...] and this in turn provides the viewer with an entropic condition'.[426] It becomes a hermetic zone, a noticeably 'other' frame, consisting of a 'spaceless darkness [which] disembodies, suspends time and space, and subsumes reality'.[427] The very nothing-ness, or void-ness of the space possesses a presence, a blankness which creates a 'detached zone of origination for the inherently ungrounded - suspended in absence, which is to say the absence of any other sign'.[428] The movement into this zone for the viewer may serve as Radvansky et al state, as an event boundary, a horizon to cross. The crossing into which involves a process which 'can reduce the availability of information in memory for objects associated with the prior event'.[429] This shift from one space to another, breaks the boundary of the installation as a whole, facilitating a 'forgetting' of events in the previous zone, erasing the actions and memories associated with that space and focussing attention on the blank, new space of barren potentials. As a physical space, the void is an isolating frame, a state of transition through boundaries, it is also a blankness that presents a place of potential for rewriting upon a 'bare stage'.[430]

Upon entering the Void, the audience were guided through differing sequences performed in separate zones. Trimble began this leading process that would be continued by Hallas, who holding a lamp, took the role of gatekeeper and navigator for each successive performed sequence. The floor map for the space, with indications of approximate performer location, is presented below:[431]

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[426] Robert Smithson, 'The Crystal Land (1966)', in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, ed. by Flam, pp.7–23 (p.17).

[427] Noam M. Elcott, 'Rooms of our time: Laszlo Moholy-Nagy and the stillbirth of multi-media museums', in *Screen/Space: The projected image in contemporary art*, ed. by Tamara Trodd, p.25.

[428] Gilbert-Rolfe, pp.159-161.

[429] Gabriel A. Radvansky, Sabine A. Krawietz and Andrea K. Tamplin, 'Walking through doorways causes forgetting: Further explorations', *The Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 64.8 (2011), 1632–1645 (p.1644), <http://www.freakonomics.com/media/Radvansky%20Krawietz%20%26%20Tamplin%202011%20(QJEP)%20(1).pdf><10.1080/17470218.2011.571267> [accessed 15 November 2016]

[430] Brook, *The Empty Space* (London: Penguin Books, 1972), p.12.

[431] Note that this floor map is for the Level One - Open space, however the dimensions of the two areas are approximately similar, so as to provide a sense of place for each performance.
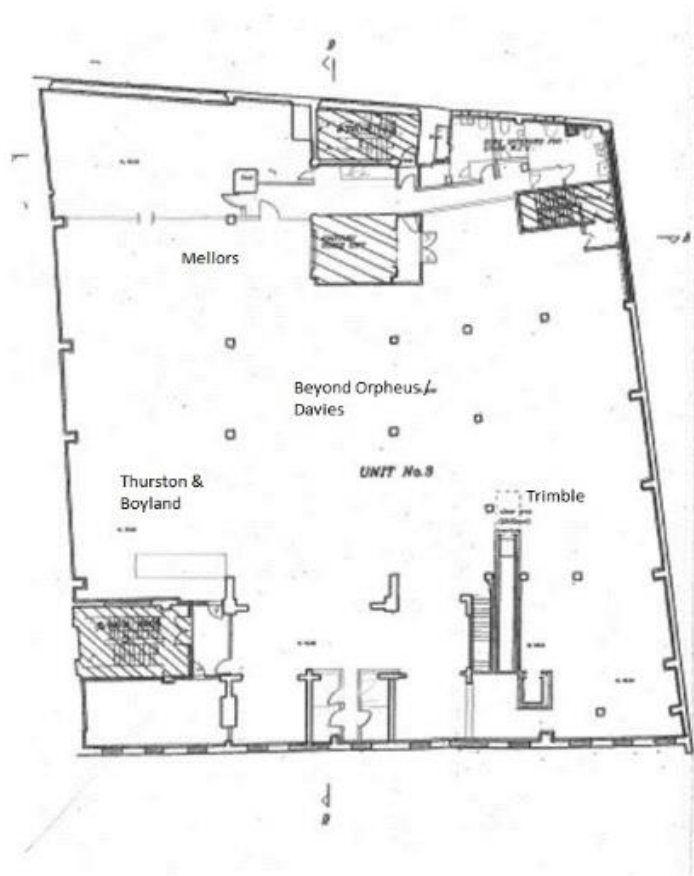
Figure 41. Performance spaces.[432]

Within the Void, the audience was met with near darkness, save for a fissure of light emanating from a slightly ajar doorway at the far end of the room, faintly illuminating improvisational voice artist Steve Boyland. As people were led in to the Void, Boyland's voice increased in volume and intensity from a breathy whisper, to a modulating howl, reverberating through the cavernous space of the Void, his figure framed by a partial beam of light. Boyland's improvisational method is to charge 'space with sound as a poet charges words with meaning [...] an act of dialogue with the world in which the voice acts as a kind of sonar – reflecting an image of the world back to the speaker'.[433] Scott Thurston, interviewing Boyland, contextualises these auditory methods of response, that it is a:

> vocal effect that subjectively re-defines space, so that to experience his work is to
> inhabit a new environment with its own scale, atmosphere and materiality. This ritual

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[432] *The Tales We Tell*, floor plan, (Wrexham, 2015).

[433] Boyland, Steve and Thurston, Scott, *STEVE BOYLAND: Interviewed by Scott Thurston* (Glasfryn Project, 2014), <http://glasfrynproject.org.uk/w/3060/steve-boyland-interviewed-by-scott-thurston/> [accessed 16 November 2016]

of interchange between artist and environment is also highly sensitive to the dramatic structure of time.[434]

This aspect of interchange and atmosphere would prove particularly pertinent during the final sequence of the work and is elaborated upon later in this chapter.

Figure 42. Boyland, howling; charging the airspace. [435]

Such a use of disquieting sound continued, as after each performed segment was completed, each performer would manufacture a cacophony of noise via voice, percussion, saxophone, and the fading in of the *Beyond Orpheus* triptych soundtrack. This method functioned as an unsettling partial frame for each section, announcing the end of one, and culmination of the journey to another, and would repeat in varied improvised form between each instance. Such cacophonic method was also used by the Poet Rhys Trimble, who began the second sequence, with a combination of bilingual spoken word Welsh and English, in combination with the poet playing a rhythmic beat on a drum kit, together with a lo-fi recording of himself playing parallel to his live performance. This 'playback' of an earlier performance by Trimble, may be seen to function in a similar fashion to the 'doubling' effect within McKeand's multimedia exploration of the nature of the poetic voice. Here again, the performer, the teller of tales, exists alongside a past double, a copied reflection or version of themselves, relayed alongside the present textual

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[434] Boyland and Thurston, *STEVE BOYLAND: Interviewed by Scott Thurston.*
[435] Penny Hallas, *Beyond Orpheus* (2015), <http://boxingthechimera.blogspot.co.uk/2015/03/beyond-orpheus.html> [accessed 15 November 2016] Image reproduced courtesy of Penny Hallas.

event. This creates a multi-layered textual event, a dialogue between past and present performances, and layered textual forms.

Crossing the threshold

As the audience moved from sequence to sequence they would also pass across and through the projections of the *Beyond Orpheus* triptych installation. In so doing, the filmic image was projected onto the bodies of the audience themselves. Through this action, the visual to become haptic; it touches the form of the observer, wrapping around them, facilitating as Marks observes, a 'bodily relationship':

> Haptic images do not invite identification with a figure so much as they encourage a bodily relationship between the viewer and the image. Thus it is less appropriate to speak of the object of a haptic look than to speak of a dynamic subjectivity between looker and image.[436]

The frame in which this artwork exists, is traversed, broken into, and mapped onto the onlooker. In this moment, the apparent solidity of the textual event, the frame which surrounds and contains the artwork, is extended and challenged.

Such questioning of the frame is raised by Derrida, who sees it as being both functional, a maker of limits and margins, but also as being constructed, and therefore an artificial element. The frame 'makes it both hold (as that which causes to hold together, that constitutes, mounts, inlays, sets, borders, gathers, trims [...] and collapse. A frame is essentially constructed and therefore fragile'.[437] Within installation spaces, such clear delineations of spatial and artistic boundaries appear present yet become blurred; the ostensible distinction between the artwork and its surroundings, 'such as the frame around a painting or a plinth on which a sculpture might stand, are problematized'.[438] In this case, not only is the boundary of the textual frame engaged with, it is also broken. However, meaning does not break down, as this break permits the text (*Beyond Orpheus*) to press and expand its form upon the viewer. Thus, the 'Live interaction brings the viewer into the object position', and as such 'audience and performer become the artwork'.[439]

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[436] Marks, (Loc 264 of 3079).
[437] Jacques Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, trans. by Geoff Bennington and Ian McLeod (London: University of Chicago Press, 1987), p.73.
[438] Shepley, 'Installation Art Practice and the Fluctuating Frame', p.7.
[439] Casey, pp.79-80.

This manner of bodily installation is described in evocative terms by Blocker, in a manner which would seem to be a near literal description of the boundary-crossing taking place here. These projections:

> install our bodies as and at the center of works of art. My body is on the wall in which the text is written, the surface off which the light bounces. My retina is a tiny canvas on which light and colour are painted. Thus, my body is the site where the art takes place. As such, the body is a work, or rather a scene, of art.[440]

The fabric of the textual space then becomes 'nonlinear; extending inward, and out. The present is written upon by its inhabitants: all of us containers ourselves'.[441] The spectator's place is now subsumed into one of being within the work of art, part-inhabitant; and as a result, the projection, the text-work, becomes unframed.

Notions of movement, and the 'openness' of frames and borders, are placed under interrogation by Johan Schimanski and Stephen Wolfe. Recognising the 'tendency […] to see borders everywhere', in art, literature, geography, identity, culture, or world economies, the border here, as per Derrida's fragile frames, is nevertheless seen as a creation.[442] Borders here are not immovable markers or enclosed hermetic systems, they exist as a 'relation, in both spatial and temporal terms, between a limit/horizon and a connection'.[443] The analysis follows a bleeding at the edges of definitions that simultaneously attends to the 'concrete' nature of the border (maps, language, histories, terminologies, frames), whilst being cognizant of the brittleness of their nature (understandings can be rewritten, nations alter shape).[444] Limits and margins are presented as being not static, but dynamic, 'phenomena constantly undergoing processes of both fixing and blurring'.[445] Borders are forever 'presented, marked, represented and medialized', yet as a construction, they may also be challenged.[446] Schimanski and Wolfe view the border not as demarcation or difference, but in a certain sense, of symbiosis, as that which is within the frame, or border, is always 'situated in relation to the border'; it is defined by its limitations.[447] This creates an umbilical relationship between the artefact or textual

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[440] Blocker, p.9.
[441] Coleman, 'Landscapes of the Mind: Psychic Space and Narrative Specifitiy (Notes from a Work in Progress)', in *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art*, ed. by Erika Suderberg, p.158.
[442] Schimanski and Wolfe, 'Entry Points: An Introduction', in *Border Poetics De-limited*, ed. by Schimanski and Wolfe, p.10.
[443] Ibid, pp.11-12.
[444] Ibid, p.12.
[445] Ibid, p.13.
[446] Ibid, p.12.
[447] Ibid, p.11.

bodies, and the dimensionality of limits; the words and the paper, the consciousness and the flesh, the frame and its content, are connected. The work and its boundary are one. Within the changing nature of *Beyond Orpheus* the projection and its boundary encompass the viewer, not as exterior observer, but subsumed as textual form.

Michel de Certeau extends the notion of boundary-ness, or frontier, using bodily form as metaphor:

> In the obscurity of their unlimitedness, bodies can be distinguished only where the "contacts" ("touches") of amorous or hostile struggles are inscribed on them. This is a paradox of the frontier: created by contacts, the points of differentiation between two bodies are also their common points. Conjunction and disjunction are inseparable in them. Of two bodies in contact, which one possesses the frontier that distinguishes them? Neither. Does that amount to saying: no one?[448]

The border and its contents, touch, and at the point of tactility are indistinguishable. The boundary occupies a null-space as forms press against one another, each defined by the other; there is no distance between border and its contents, for they are forever entwined. Geographical, bodily, and medial borders are seen as present yet fragile. These contained vessels, texts, stories, are 'actuated by a contradiction that is represented in them by the relationship between the frontier and the bridge, that is, between a (legitimate) space and its (alien) exteriority […] the determination of space is dual and operational'; space is therefore a dialogic system or relationship between the margins, and that which occupies the centre.[449]

If the nature of boundary/frame/border is containment yet punctuated with aspects of fragility and transience, then the role of the visitor, resident, or viewer is also instrumental within these interconnected processes. It is they who observe, inhabit and move through the boundaries of an installation itself, break open the hazy joins of the collated and sequenced form (as when the audience is led through the fabric of *Beyond Orpheus*) and for a moment, become an inherent part of that text. It is their body that is the screen, their presence which is contained and conjoined within the textual frame. The physical space of the installation environment, stretches its borders, bringing into focus the framed and projected event onto the audience, facilitating a:

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[448] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. by Steven R. Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pp.126-127.
[449] Ibid, p.126.

limit transcended, of ex-tension rather than closure, of release rather than confinement. When picture content and the picture space defined by the border or frame do not perfectly coincide, when the relationship between them appears more adventitious than ordered, open form results.[450]

The 'spaceless darkness' now becoming occupied by the art-text, and conjoined visiting bodies, simulating the 'extinction of the bodies of spectators, the dematerialisation of the environment, their extraction from real time and real space, and their unwitting ensnarement within an ideological apparatus beyond their control'.[451] This occupation transforms and extends the adaptation, placing that moment of passage as a transition or transaction point between visual and physical forms, allowing a moment of flux between observer and text.

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[450] Hurwit, p.5.
[451] Elcott, 'Rooms of our time: Laszlo Moholy-Nagy and the stillbirth of multi-media museums', in *Screen/Space: The projected image in contemporary art*, ed. by Trodd, p.25.

Time at halt

Such interplay of form, performance, and audience, would continue with Thurston and Boyland's interactions, which intertwined free vocal improvisation and bodily expression.

Figure 43. Thurston and Boyland, improvisation with time.[452]

During the second phase of their performance, Thurston and Boyland utilised a repeated phrase of 'What have I forgotten' as a platform for improvisation and free vocal extensions, an expression of searching within the overall Orphean narrative. Amidst at times piercing levels of volume and frenetic activity from the artists, there existed elongated moments of peace, the two states combining to fashion an uneasy auditory boundary between performers and audience.

As the sequence came to an end, previously used aspects of silence and stillness in their performance created an apparent aching fissure between the surface tension of the performance, and apparent end of the sequence. The stillness was instigated by Boyland standing from a sitting position, ostensibly marking a further event in their piece, but (unknown to all onlookers, including other collaborators) signalled the end of their sequence. Progression was delayed for approximately one minute thirty seconds; the audience remained held in place, entrapped not within a specified narrative sequence, but by the aura of the moment.[453] Placed within a moment in time, this pause between the actual end of the performed text, and the perception of

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[452] Steve Thurston and Scott Boyland, *Beyond Orpheus*, final day.
[453] See Benjamin, *Illuminations*, in relation to the sanctity of perceiving the textual event.

that end by an outsider, created an intensity of doubt, facilitating engagement as opposed to estrangement.

Figure 44. Performance, paused. Frame, stretched.[454]

This is the trapped instant, 'the process that just precedes its climax', the single, or pregnant moment as identified by Lessing, in this case a 'moment' holding the audience in thrall through a lack of movement, sound, or activity.[455] This moment of void-ness creates an interest in 'what's not happening, that area between events which could be called the gap. This gap exists in the blank and void regions or settings that we never look at'.[456] The audience here is present within the transition, the borderlines of the sequence. The onlooker is immersed within an object that stops time, an indefinite temporal period where the longer it continues, the more endless the textual canvas becomes. The audience escapes, or is 'brought back not by a languor of the mind but by more prosaic reminders from the body, never entirely certain whether the trance is life-enhancing or draining'.[457] Or indeed, alienating, as Peter Brook, in discussing the devices of Brecht, sees the alienation effect as being a 'call to a halt: alienation is cutting, interrupting, holding something up to the light, making us look again. Alienation is above all an appeal to the spectator to work for himself'.[458] This shift presents a stark change in perception, or rather a schism taking place amidst a fractured moment, as the boundaries of the text and the presence of the visitor, converge. This moment is the halt or doubt, which

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[454] Thurston and Boyland, *Beyond Orpheus*, final day.

[455] See Marie-Laure Ryan. 'Introduction', in *Narrative Across Media: The Languages of Storytelling (Frontiers of Narrative)*, ed. Marie-Laure Ryan (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), pp.1-40 (p.25); Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Laocoön: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry*, trans. by Edward Allan McCormick (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), p.20.

[456] Smithson, 'What is a Museum (1967)', in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, ed. by Flam, p.44.

[457] Harbison, p.147.

[458] Brook, p.81.

comes into existence via the removal of an audience's expectations, as devices that were previously used to signal the final moment for each performance, a whirling cacophony, of a lamp being re-lit, of a definite sense of an ending, are absent. Paradoxically, the previous auditory chaos may be said to have provided a now-expected narrative comfort, creating a mode of conditioning whereby the specific journey's end becomes clear, however this reassurance is removed. Aesthetically, this temporal extension harkened back to the elongation of the projected frames within *Beyond Orpheus*' reconstituted format, effectively bringing an audience deeper into the scenario, stretching the credulity of engagement to near-snapping (but not breaking) point. Conceptually, this sequential delay pulls taut established rules of times and space, challenging finite-ness and the limits which define what is performed, and how it is observed.[459] In this moment, the absence of activity creates an interactive presence for the viewer, allowing a process of interchange through observer and text, both entrapped on the edge, within the meniscus of the textual threshold.

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[459] Gabriella Giannachi, *Virtual Theatres – an introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2004), p.11.

Harmonic discord

The final sequence of the day was by Lyndon Davies, being part scripted poetic response and part musical improvisation. Davies' performance was interspersed with improvised jazz saxophone stylings based upon a recurrent theme or *riff*. A 'riff' being a 'recognised variant on a previously existing form, musical or otherwise […] the repetition of the phrase in a different pitch'.[460] A riff is a short, recurrent phrase, an adaptation of a motif that alters through repetition and improvisation upon an original or version. James Young and Carl Matheson speak of improvisation in relation to jazz as not being entirely 'free', but contained in part within predefined limits or borders:

> Jazz performances are frequently not completely spontaneous, even when they involve Improvisation. The spontaneity is not complete since jazz musicians accept, prior to beginning to perform, a starting point. These starting points are loose sets of tacit guidelines and these guidelines constitute a jazz standard.[461]

The recognisability of the musical motif must be maintained in some way, or the new version betrays the original form.

As Young and Matheson state, the framework of that performance may be perceived as being relatively loose, offering 'gaps' or room for interpretation within the musical text, the 'performer who opts to follow the guidelines is under some constraints. If these constraints are violated, the performer is no longer performing a particular jazz standard'.[462] Citing Miles Davis' version of 'Round Midnight' by Thelonious Monk, Young and Matheson note Davis' rendition of the introductory main melody, or 'jazz head' 'leaves out many of the notes in Monk's version […] Monk's and Davis' versions of the head are structurally different. However, the two versions are readily recogniz-able as versions of the same melody'.[463] These versions or variations, as Dominic Lopes notes, are representative of structures 'copied in order to produce instances of the work', and through each retelling or performance the observer sees 'something familiar take a new form'.[464] Such musical analysis thus leans towards the notion

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[460] Sanders, p.153

[461] James O. Young and Carl Matheson, 'The Metaphysics of Jazz', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 58.2 (2000), 125–133(p.129), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/432091.pdf><10.2307/432091> [accessed 12 December 2016]

[462] Ibid, p.127.

[463] Ibid, p.129.

[464] Dominic M. McIver Lopes, 'The Ontology of interactive Art', *The Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 35.4 (2001), 65–81 (pp.72-74), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3333787?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents><10.2307/3333787> [accessed 19 May 2016]

of adaptation, although as a mode of critical enquiry it is omitted within both Lopes' and Young and Matheson's articles. These aspects of textual change within a given structure, and 'gaps' or spaces for an adapter to inhabit, apply both within the nature of musical improvisation and more broadly to concepts of textual change, which has been discussed throughout this thesis. Davies' approach to improvisation and adaptation utilises this concept of variation within a theme, with a musical interpretation which rotates around the use of the musical tritone.

Whilst this is not a discussion purely on musical theory, it is useful to understand the definition of the tritone and its relevance here. The tritone is three whole tones moving away from the root note of a scale or chord; therefore, a root note of C would lead to a tritone of F# (C-D-E-F#), creating a shift from root to augmented fourth/diminished fifth. These two notes when played together or consecutively create a tension or dissonance, as the tritone implies a desired resolution to a perfect fifth.[465] It is this dissonance which is key, and as Davies states was often used in 'classical and 19th century music to suggest a spiritually equivocal state of things - the presence of something morally out of kilter, weird, or even evil, or death and corruption', the tritone interval even being termed, the 'devil in music'.[466] The construction of the tritone itself being three whole tones apart, Davies also sees as being meaningful, as it brings to 'mind the three integers of the equation […] Orpheus, Eurydice and the teller/interpreter. Played together these three whole tones form a diminished chord which longs for resolution and contains also the possibility of never being resolved'.[467]

That juxtaposition between a safe note and one synonymous with equivocation or off-kiltered-ness is seen as being an ideal companion for Orphean music 'because O links two worlds, the world of life and the world of death, the human and the faery, the upper and the lower, Orpheus the living, Eurydice the dead, and so on, […] '*they*', are the embodiment of dissonance'.[468] Davies' musical variances aim to open 'all kinds of diabolic possibilities of harmonic fracture' yet retain a connection with strictures, rules, or 'the mundane world of tradition, form and ritual'.[469] Yet that chosen framework is based on a musical concept embodied by dissonant auditory energy which refuses to settle within a specific adaptational

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[465] This dissonance has led to the tritone being used within the heavy metal musical genre, the compositions of which often utilise the juxtaposition between a stable root note and the diminished fifth. An example being the first three notes of the self-titled debut track from Black Sabbath's first album. Black Sabbath. 'Black Sabbath, *Black Sabbath* (London: Vertigo, 1970), which oves from root, octave, to diminished fifth.
[466] Davies, *Orpheus, Eurydice and the Tritone Sub*.
[467] Ibid.
[468] Ibid.
[469] Ibid.

point. Through variation, the musical improvisation embraces the nature of Orpheus' decentredness, transferring the textually mutable form into further variations, positioning Orpheus perhaps, as the 'first jazz musician'.[470] Each successive elaboration on that theme is further suggestive of textual approaches which may never be completed or resolved and remain always open to reinterpretation.[471]

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[470] Davies, *Orpheus, Eurydice and the Tritone Sub*.

[471] This is further enhanced by the use of chord substitution where a dominant chord, for example A7 (containing the notes A, Db, E, G) is moved a whole tritone up and becomes Eb7 (Eb, G, Bb, Db). The two chords share a relationship, as in A7, the third Db. and the seventh G, are shared within Eb7.

Between borders

My argument within this chapter has applied adaptation studies to the concerns of curatorial and installation practice. The textual analysis has highlighted further instances of the repeated compulsion to return through the reshaping of space, myth, memory, narrative, and experience. The discussion has presented a series of parallels between theoretical areas, specifically of relocating the concept of an adaptational 'original', a hypotext, as also being a framed instance, which possesses boundaries (be it a wall, page, book, or artwork). The framed text is one which implies 'something grounded, bound to the laws of physics'; inert, solid, occupying a space of an 'idealist hermeticism', or an isolated containment.[472] Yet what has been argued is that the text is not closed, static or framed off, it is a process defined by a pervasive movement. The 'frame' of a text is stretched and challenged both through adaptational rewriting, the actions of curatorial engagement, and the engagement of visitors. My attempt in creating *The Tales We Tell* was both to present a series of approaches to textual remediation within an inhabitable space (or temporary archive, of which this chapter is a representative witness), whilst also illustrating a sense of fluidity in the rewriting of the installation space itself. The affordances of the *Beyond Orpheus* exhibit, in particular the experimental agency occurring on the final day, exemplified this shift from that which is ostensibly static in physicality (but not form, as the film triptych, which as described previously whirls and rotates non-synchronously), to that which is mutable or in movement. The action of engaging with the space by the performers and the shift in its physicality and dimensions actioned through curatorial rewriting blurred the edges of textual presence which at certain moments spread out and envelop the spectator, who is now subsumed as part of the evolving artwork which has extended beyond its predefined limits, out of its original frame.

The primary themes raised in this chapter, including: multimedia approaches to adaptation, textual boundaries, the curation of a spatial or textual archive, and the engagement of an audience, are extended in the following analyses. Here, my discussion moves to the affordances of digitally convergent adaptive processes and the affect this digital shift may have on the text moving beyond and through boundaries of media form. The specific texts used to examine the opportunities for this digital mode of adaptational transfer are as follows:

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[472] Kwon, 'One Place After Another', in *Space, Site, Intervention*, ed. by Suderberg, pp.38-40.

iv. Chapter Four examines a digital adaptation of John Buchan's 1915 novel *The 39 Steps*, by The Story Mechanics, which is then juxtaposed with The Secret Experiment's *Beckett*.[473] The analysis follows the methods used in adaptations which shift from textual to digital environments, and how this may alter the nature of the reader or viewer, to one of navigator, or user. This analysis functions as a critical frame for the following chapters regarding processes of textual transfer and user engagement.

v. The adaptation of real and tragic events occupies the focus for Chapter Five, beginning with *That Dragon, Cancer*; a video game focused upon the death of a loved one, and the transformation of that grief into a mode of narrativized digital memorial. Secondly, the life and death of Joyce Vincent is considered through the textual transfer of that *life* through various multimedia scenarios. Themes of reclamation and loss recur through these narratives in an attempt to reframe fragments of the past, to reclaim and archive the lost object through interactive environments, video games, social media experiments, and music.

vi. Auditory adaptions are the focus of Chapter Six, furthering discussion begun in Chapter Two, of the purposeful musical cacophony arrayed within *The Orpheus Project*, and in Chapter Three, of Lyndon Davies' approach to musical improvisation. This chapter sees a return to Orpheus once more with Arcade Fire's 2013 *Reflektor* album, where the myth is used as a basis for artistic exploration and as a platform for user interaction within convergent modes of media.

These texts further frame the primary themes of the thesis; of textual return, of fragments remade, and of textual borders challenged. They are chosen to illustrate approaches to adaptation facilitated both by the manipulation of the text through digital media, and also to consider the actions of the user within that medium itself. As the analysis progresses the effect of the user's role within these texts will be brought into focus, and of how the user (or, navigator, player, adapter) may experience, collate, and reshape narrative artefacts. Through these studies of the reshaping of textual form, the discussion explores how textual frame-works may further blur or blend as narratives are transferred and reframed within a digital

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[473] My discussion of *Beckett* utilises an interview with the Project Lead, Simon Meek, with analysis of segments of an unreleased Beta (not the final Alpha product). The completed product is scheduled for release 2018. All contextual anlysis is based on the pre-release version.

environment, the specific protocols of which may 'complicate and broaden traditional notions of adaptation'.[474]

As Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin state, the main capacity of digital media is its capacity to remediate; the affordances of digital media permitting an ever-expanding capacity for the alteration and change of form, with an expanding capacity to 'represent one medium within another'.[475] Dominic M. McIver Lopes also argues the importance of emergent technologies within artistic endeavour, that 'the most important engine for artistic innovation in recent years has been the new information technologies, especially multimedia, hypertext, and the Internet'.[476] Further, Michael Ryan Moore suggests that as technology becomes ubiquitous, the opportunities for the user's capacity to rewrite the text increases; the digital format of new media lowering the 'barriers of entry' required for user participation within texts.[477] Nicolas Bourriaud's concept of *postproduction* seeks to examine the nature of this participation, and the relationship between the user and textual artefact. His discussion attempts to move beyond appropriation, which may imply a hierarchy of use (as described in previous discussions of the sanctified nature of an original adapted text), and instead focuses on the collective *re-use* of forms. Here, the contemporary work or new media artefact:

> does not position itself as the termination point of the "creative process" (a "finished product" to be contemplated) but as a site of navigation, a portal, a generator of activities. We tinker with production, we surf on a network of signs, we insert our forms on existing lines.[478]

Alongside the user becoming the 'tinkerer' of textual form, Bourriaud also raises salient potentials of new media use, namely the aspect of *sharing* media across digital networks and the availability of technology within modern culture. He states that we are in 'a culture of constant activity of signs based on a collective ideal: sharing [...] collective equipment that everyone is in a position to use, not in order to be subjected to their authority but as tools to probe the contemporary world'.[479] Each object, be it physical or digital, is available to be interrogated, re-used, or reformed. That it is 'no longer a matter of elaborating a form on the

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[474] Moore, p.178.
[475] Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation – Understanding New Media* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2000), p.45.
[476] McIver Lopes, p.65.
[477] Moore, p.183.
[478] Nicolas Bourriaud, *Postproduction: Culture as Screenplay: How Art Reprograms the World* (New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2002), p.19.
[479] Ibid, p.1.

basis of a raw material but working with objects that are already in circulation on the cultural market, which is to say, objects already informed by other objects'.[480]

With such interaction textual form is not constrained to the structure of its original existence, it is 'no longer limited to the moment of conception or realisation: the virtual system provides a machine for generating events'.[481] The virtual system spreads outward into multiple forms, it combines and functions as a point of conjunction. As Henry Jenkins suggests, this convergence of media may foster opportunities that allow a shift away from a central, industrialised production of media, and instead places opportunities for the manipulation of content into the hands of the user; 'Convergence represents a cultural shift as consumers are encouraged to seek out new information, make connections and cultivate relationships with the core product, among dispersed media content'.[482] This capacity within a digital environment may allow processes of adaptation to become a 'strategy of participation', occupying a mode of interaction which permits content to flow through digital boundaries and formats.[483] The use of newly emergent media, as Moore suggests, may support 'new theories of adaptation-ones that recognise the challenge not only of adapting things like genres, plots, characters, themes, audiences, and ideologies but also of re-creating one media within the social and technological affordances of another'.[484] This may further challenge notions of originality as processes of textual creation and medial boundaries increasingly blur through re-use.

Bourriaud likens these functions of the emergent content creator or manipulator as being akin to the 'twin figures of the DJ and the programmer, both of whom have the task of selecting cultural objects and inserting them into new contexts'.[485] Bourriaud describes a culture of activity whereby the 'artwork functions as the temporary terminal of a network of interconnected elements, like a narrative that extends and reinterprets preceding narratives'.[486] Here, the *original*, be it the text, the artwork, the moment of performance within an installation, or the last viewing of a never repeated sequence 'no longer represents anything more than a salient point in a shifting cartography. It is caught in a chain, and its meaning depends in part on its position in this chain'.[487] The created artefact is no longer finite, instead it 'functions as

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[480] Bourriaud, p.13.
[481] Pierre Lévy, *Cyberculture*, trans. by Robert Bononno (London: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), p.116.
[482] Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, p.3.
[483] Moore, p.183.
[484] Ibid, p.178.
[485] Bourriaud, p.13.
[486] Ibid, p.19.
[487] Ibid, p.19.

the temporary terminal of a network of interconnected elements […] a simple moment in an infinite chain of contributions'.[488] The nature of the text in this instance may be seen to reside within a fidelic hinterland, a coordinate residing on a point of the boundary, existing within the '(fertile) static on the borders between consumption and production'.[489] With regard to the nature of retelling, of adaptation, a digitally emergent new media landscape proffers increased opportunities for the borders of textual spaces to stretch or become increasingly elastic.

However, such cross-pollination of medial forms is still bound by frameworks, these digital interactions may be seen to harness *protocols*, as per Gitelman. Protocols being the systems in place that govern modes of media and the nature of our interaction with that media.[490] Protocols include a 'vast clutter of normative rules and default conditions, which gather and adhere like a nebulous array around a technological nucleus'.[491] They express a:

> Huge variety of social, economic, and material relationships. So, telephony includes the salutation "Hello?" (for English speakers, at least), the monthly billing cycle, and the wires and cables that materially connect our phones. E-mail includes all of the elaborately layered technical protocols and interconnected service providers that constitute the Internet, but it also includes both the QWERTY keyboards on which e-mail gets "typed" and the shared sense people have of what the e-mail genre is.[492]

Protocols may be equated with theoretical concerns raised previously, of textual boundaries, hypotextual considerations of legitimacy or fidelity, and the containing frame; each possessing relative rules, systems, or limits (be they aesthetic, physical, technological, social, or economic). They both limit 'audience engagement while simultaneously responding to audience agency' and represent a set of coordinates that users work within which allow capacity for use, engagement or interaction.[493] Protocols (the words on a page, space of an installation, code, borders) are the *frames* within which users must operate and the boundaries they may seek to cross. While seemingly monolithic in their terminology, protocols are nevertheless 'ongoing points of contestation' that over time see the nature of their limits shift.[494] It is this shifting nature of adaptation and the role of the user in such systems, frame-

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[488] Bourriaud, pp.19-20.
[489] Ibid, p.1.
[490] As distinct to algorithm, which is related to computer programming, protocols as a term may cover both digital and physical rule or boundary-based systems.
[491] Lisa Gitelman, *Always Already New: Media, History, and the Data of Culture* (London: MIT Press, 2008), p.7.
[492] Ibid, pp.7-8.
[493] Moore, p.181.
[494] Ibid, p.181.

works, or protocols, in understanding, creating, and navigating multiform media texts, that occupies the primary focus for the following discussions.

<p style="text-align:center">Ω</p>

Chapter Four – Steps and progression

The text for discussion in this chapter is not a myth, physical site, or fragment of memory, but a digital adaptation of a popular novel, The Story Mechanics' 2013 digital adaptation of John Buchan's *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (1915). The inclusion of this text is designed to illustrate the affordances of the transference of a book to digital media format, while also providing a continuation of the view of the text as a collation of artefacts within a multimedia collage, outlined in previous chapters. Further to this, the role of the viewer or observer (present in my discussion of *The Tales We Tell*, specifically within the *Beyond Orpheus* event) is expanded, as that viewer now becomes player or navigator within an interactive space part-based upon game protocols. Whilst in previous chapters I have suggested a move away from a 'relationship of dependency' in adaptational method and practice, the following analysis focuses on that dependency, and asks more closely what fidelic approaches may offer in terms of textual transference.[495] The discussion of the digital adaptation of Buchan's novel and the limits and potentials of adaptation within digital environments will serve as a textual and critical basis for discussion of the texts which follow, including, *Beckett*, *That Dragon Cancer*, and *Dreams of a Life*.

The Thirty-Nine Steps, written on the brink of World War One, is a fairly brisk tale told in ten chapters, encapsulating subterfuge, disguise, the thrill of adventure, dastardly plots, heroes, villains, and the fall of a nation. It is tonally and structurally a literary throwback to certain fictions of the Nineteenth Century, a textual arena envisaged and popularised by H.R. Haggard, R.L. Stevenson, Arthur Conan Doyle, G.A. Henty, Rudyard Kipling, and others. Buchan himself was often at pains to stress the credentials of this particular work with such key authors, going so far as to place these writers within the fictional world of the novel; 'I want to see life, to travel the world, and write things like Kipling and Conrad […] By God!' he whispered, drawing his breath in sharply, 'it is all pure Rider Haggard and Conan Doyle'.[496] These energetic modes of storytelling as a form have been termed quest narrative or 'quest romance'; a style of fiction that centres upon the protection of a mother land in the face of an exterior threat, involving instances of individual heroism stemming from a state of inactivity and the flight from the 'normal', or as it frequently appears, a boring existence.[497] As *The Thirty-Nine Steps* begins, Buchan's protagonist Hannay is found frustrated with comfortable

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[495] Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins, p.20.
[496] John Buchan, *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (Great Britain: Book Club Associates, 1977), p.38.
[497] Robert Fraser, *Victorian Quest Romance* (Northcote House, 1998), p.1.

living, tired of the world around him and the banal repetition of daily events. We greet him as he is forlornly musing at being;

> pretty well disgusted with life. I had been three months in the Old Country, and was fed up with it. […] The weather made me liverish, the talk of the ordinary Englishman made me sick, I couldn't get enough exercise, and the amusements of London seemed as flat as soda-water that has been standing in the sun. 'Richard Hannay,' I kept telling myself, "you have got into the wrong ditch, my friend, and you had better climb out". [498]

His boredom is soon forgotten with a narrative that rapidly escalates into a breathlessly exhilarating tale, with Richard Hannay firmly in his rightful place; at the centre of the action.

Buchan's nationalistic themes within the novel, the threat of invasion from without, firmly roots it as a narrative within its own historical space, yet it is a text that presents an enduring fascination. It is a literary text that has spawned a rich adaptational history spanning a variety of media genres including the Orson Welles and Mercury Theatres Radio production in 1935, Alfred Hitchcock's 1938 adaptation (being arguably the most famous cinematic version of the text and possibly the least 'truthful' or fidelic in terms of plot) and others. The presence of the novel on the big-screen continues in 1959 and 1978 by Ralph Thomas and Don Sharp respectively; theatrical interpretations have also arisen, together with various television adaptations. Now, as will be discussed here, a modern digital adaptation by The Story Mechanics brings this frequently revisited tale to PC/iPad/Mac screens. This modern multiplatform developer's focus is 'digital storytelling and the creation of narrative-led interactive experiences'. [499] The company's aim being to take traditional storytelling methods within existing media, be it literature, film, radio, or television, and allow the reader/user/player to step into these worlds and see them from a new angle, or from 'from the inside out'. [500] These digital spaces are designed to operate as multi-sensory experiences where a combination of words, art, audio and story mechanics are used to transform books into digitally dynamic entities.

Translations of such a text to a video game structure are, as Andrew Cutting states, commonplace, as 'science fiction, fantasy, crime, and thriller novels all translate fairly readily

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[498] Buchan, p.38.

[499] The Story Mechanics, *About us* (Tern TV), <https://storymechanics.wordpress.com/about/> [accessed 8 March 2017]

[500] Martyn McLaughlin, *Buchan's The Thirty-Nine Steps gets digital update* (The Scotsman, 2013), <http://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/culture/books/buchan-s-the-thirty-nine-steps-gets-digital-update-1-2920756> [accessed 8 March 2017]

to video games by virtue of their mission-based structure and action heroes'.[501] Here, Buchan's ten speedily read chapters, function as readily digestible segments, and place it within that 'easily translatable' realm. Each chapter, with an identifiable hero, dastardly villains, and readily delineated sequences of action, assist in a potential transfer to the mission-based structure of game-play. During promotion for the adaptation, the Story Mechanics team utilised the tagline 'A digital adaptation of John Buchan's espionage thriller', simultaneously announcing a literary heritage, while also conceding to delivery systems that utilise modes of multimedia dramatic production, being a *digital* adaptation.[502] The framework provides a mechanism of engagement posited within the parameters of a genre-based literary text (espionage thriller) within game-ness or game 'protocols', where there is a 'Player' in place of user/reader/adventurer. This combination of alliances did not always sit easily for an audience, presenting a potentially problematic relationship of modes.

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[501] To cite some examples of game versions of literary works; nStigate, *Conan the Barbarian* (THQ, 2007), works based upon H.P. Lovecraft's tales, including, Headfirst Productions, *Call of Cthulhu: Dark Corners of the Earth* (Bethesda Softworks, 2005), CD Projekt Red, *The Witcher* (Atari, 2007); Andrew Cutting, 'Interiority, Affordances, and the Possibility of Adapting Henry James's The Turn of the Screw as a Video Game', *Adaptation*, 2.5 (2011), 169–184 (p.169).

[502] The Story Mechanics, *The 39 Steps*.

He played a straight game.[503]

Issues of classification abound with such modes of transference, particularly with issues arising from definitions of format recognition. The primary question of identification of format arises with what these new entities actually are, be they; literature, film, videogame, new-narrative, or a confusing/illuminating blend of media types. The attempt to critically define such aspects of a digital adaptation and engagement within it, moves through academic areas, including: structural or semiotic approaches, gameness and play, or through to more current convergent theories of fan and user interaction.[504] *The Telegraph*, in a mostly negative review states that this particular revision is 'Neither a game nor a film nor a book nor an animation, but with elements of each'.[505] Metacritic rates the adaptation 6.8 out of 10, with mixed or average reviews based on 30 ratings.[506] Opinions from users also vary with regards to interpretation. Pogfrogger notes that they 'Liked it lots. Not really a game though - more of a visual novel spun out of a book. But really a visual novel... not sure what I should call it'.[507] Koch echoes a similar opinion, that 'The 39 Steps is not a game. It can be best described as a digital adaption of a literary work. Sure it has interactive elements but those elements are the bare minimum of what can be defined as interactive'.[508] A more energetic rejection of the adaptation is provided by Jamson:

> Oh god no please this is not a game. It is a e book with every so often open the door interaction cant recommend hated it and was a waste of time. Dont buy it I know the story may be good but jst buy the book.[509] [sic]

However, a more positive reception is seen here:

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[503] Buchan, p.8.

[504] See James Newman, *Videogames* (London: Taylor & Francis, 2004); Jesper Juul, *Half--Real: Video Games Between Real Rules and Fictional Worlds* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005); Dianne Carr and others, *Computer Games: Text, Narrative and Play* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006); Henry Jenkins, Sam Ford and Joshua Green, *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture* (London: New York University Press, 2013)

[505] Horatia Harrod, *John Buchan's rip-roaring 'The 39 Steps' is given a plodding digital makeover in a new iPad app* (The Telegraph, 2013), <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/mobile-app-reviews/10000839/The-39-Steps-iPad-app-review.html≥ [accessed 7 July 2017]

[506] Metacritic, *The 39 Steps - PC, User Reviews Summary* (Metacritic, 2013), <http://www.metacritic.com/game/pc/the-39-steps≥ [accessed 6 July 2017]

[507] Pogfrogger, *The 39 Steps* (IndieDB), <http://www.indiedb.com/games/the-thirty-nine-steps/reviews≥ [accessed 6 July 2017]

[508] Brandon Koch, *The 39 Steps Review* (Gizorama, 2013), <http://www.gizorama.com/computer/pc/the-39-steps/≥ [accessed 6 July 2017]

[509] Jamson, *The 39 Steps - PC, User Reviews* (Metacritic, 2014), <http://www.metacritic.com/game/pc/the-39-steps/user-reviews [accessed 7 July 2017]

Okay, I'm giving this a 10 on a couple of counts. The first being that this is bold new territory. Seen nothing quite like this. I was immersed in the story, and really enjoyed the experience. Secondly, I think the format created here really shines and I'd love to see how other stories could be transformed in this way. [510]

Such contradictory opinions highlight the reception of the 'game', which was viewed by gamers 'with a mixture of curiosity and scepticism' suggesting that perhaps 'Games are designed to be played, just as books are designed to be read'.[511]

The distinctions of narrative vs. gameness are highlighted by Simon Meek, project lead for *The 39 Steps* digital adaptation:

Everybody is an audience, but when an audience picks up a book, they become a reader, and when an audience watches, turns on the television they become a viewer […] put on the radio they become a listener. Now invariably when they pick up a game, they become a player.[512]

Meek here traces a shift from the observation of a narrative, to participation within it, and the resultant affect upon the reader, whose role alters depending upon the nature of the medium. Those borderlines of *literariness* and *game-ness* are discussed by Janet Murray, who challenges the apparently irreconcilable relationship between storytelling method and game-based activity, or narratology vs. ludology. Murray views a purely ludologistic approach to game studies as presenting a rigid formalism, as ludology represents a prioritisation of function over affect. Ludologists analyse formal structural properties pertinent to videogames in order to 'create descriptors than can be used to classify and compare specific instances of game form'.[513] The elevation of a purely functional mode of analysis, Murray sees as being somewhat critically isolationist, leading to proponents who 'are opposed to and even offended by game criticism that makes connections between games and other cultural forms such as paintings, films, digital art, or storytelling'.[514] As Jenkins describes:

The relationship between games and story remains a divisive question among game fans, designers, and scholars alike. At a recent Games Studies conference […] a blood feud threatened to erupt between the self-proclaimed ludologists, who wanted to see

[510] BigBagBully. *The 39 Steps - PC*, *User Reviews (*Metacritic, 2013), <http://www.metacritic.com/game/pc/the-39-steps/user-reviews [accessed 7 July 2017]
[511] See Cutting, p.170; David Myers, 'Play as Form' in *The Video Game Theory Reader 2.* ed. by Bernard Perron and Mark J. P. Wolf (New York: Routledge, 2008), pp.45–63 (p.45).
[512] Simon Meek, *The 39 Steps*, interviewed by Stephen Kenyon-Owen, 27 July 2014.
[513] Janet H. Murray, *The Last Word on Ludology v Narratology* (2005) (Janet H. Murray, 2013), <https://inventingthemedium.com/2013/06/28/the-last-word-on-ludology-v-narratology-2005/> [accessed 12 January 2017]
[514] Murray, *The Last Word on Ludology v Narratology*.

the focus shift onto the mechanics of game play, and the narratologists, who were interested in studying games alongside other storytelling media.[515]

Meek is keen to stress that the project is *not* a game, 'it was never trying to be a game, it was just trying to sort of exist on the platforms [...] which are used for games'.[516]

The specific frameworks or protocols of game-ness and resultant play, are defined by Johann Huizinga as an *absorbing* process existing outside 'ordinary' life, connected with no material interest, within boundaries of 'time and space according to fixed rules and in an orderly manner'.[517] King and Krzywinska define the gameplay process as a 'particular set of non-real-world tasks, goals or potentials set for the player's enjoyment within an on-screen arena, performed according to a set of pre-established rules and as a result of which a number of different outcomes are possible'.[518] Such activities within fixed boundaries, existing within an artificial space, resonate in Salen and Zimmerman's succinct definition of gameplay as a 'system in which players engage in an artificial conflict, defined by rules, that results in a quantifiable outcome'.[519] Aki Jarvinen sees gameplay as an 'an activity where players participate in events, manipulate objects, and take the role of agents and interact with other agents'.[520] The structure for this form of participation is one that occupies a process of 'causal sequences: actions and outcomes'.[521] The above definitions share certain essential attributes; isolated systems, governed by rules, in which players overcome obstacles of some form to achieve a realisable goal.[522] These systems, rules, and goals, occupy a partial aspect of what this specific adaptation is, however, being protocols used within the delivery of a literary

[515] Henry Jenkins, 'Game Design as Narrative Architecture', in *First Person: New Media as Story, Performance, and Game*, ed. by Noah Wardrip-Fruin and Pat Harrington (London: MIT Press, 2004), pp.118–130 (p.118).

[516] Meek, interview 27 July 2014.

[517] Johann Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1949), <http://art.yale.edu/file_columns/0000/1474/homo_ludens_johan_huizinga_routledge_1949_.pdf> [accessed 8 March 2017], (p.13).

[518] Tanya Krzywinska and Geoff King, *Tomb Raiders and Space Invaders: Videogame Forms and Contexts* (London: I. B. Tauris & Company, 2006), (p.9).

[519] Katie Salen and Eric Zimmerman, *Rules of play: Game Design Fundamentals* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), p.96.

[520] Aki Jarvinen, 'Video Games as Emotional Experiences', in *The Video Game Theory Reader 2*, ed. by Bernard Perron and Mark J. P. Wolf (New York: Routledge, 2008), pp.85–108 (p.87).

[521] Ibid, p.87.

[522] An example of such a scenario would be a game of football, whereby the *isolated system* is the existing match fixture, the rules being administered by the FA's representative in part represented by the boundaries of the pitch itself, the obstacle to 'winning' a match being the other team. In modes of digital play, *Pong* would illustrate a characteristic example of such strictures of digital game-ness. Two opposing players (represented by the in-game 'paddles') are encased in the boundaries of the screen which functions as the virtual court/field, behaviour is controlled by the rules of the game (and also coded within the game mechanics, which we do not see, what we observe is simply the graphical representation of that mechanic) and attempt to hit a digital 'ball' past the other player to score, the highest score wins.

narrative, one which is neither game nor novel but somewhere in-between, a hybrid. This hybridity may have led to the somewhat mixed reviews, as the conventions of medium (novel, game), being not novelistic enough for some nor game enough for others.

Meek attempts some clarification of what exactly a *digital adaptation* of a text is, stating that a 'digital adaptation is an interactive story retold in a digital reconstruction of the world in which it happens. Cinematic techniques drive the emotional journey', echoing Moore's contention that 'video games and film share a visual grammar'.[523] Such techniques illustrate the debt to previous adaptations in radio and film, utilising emotive musical sequences, narrative voice-over, and sound effects, to both set the scene and enhance emotive impact, while visual indicators to the user include rural landscapes and depictions of the city. The representation of such a digital environment or *game-world* functions as primary feedback element to the player, providing visual and auditory information as to the *when* and *where*, alongside the *what* is needed to do next. These feedback elements exist as an example of protocols in a structure governed by rules, and boundaries; as Moore states, 'Looking specifically at video games, we find that adaptations emphasize protocols as much, if not more, than thematic and narrative elements'.[524] However, the protocols utilised within this particular structure are formed via a kaleidoscope of mixed-media textual transference. Translating the linear structure of Buchan's novel to a convergent environment, the digital adaptation exists as a mode of navigable text which adapts/merges/mixes/reframes that notion of an original, into a space of convergent media methods.

The system, or protocols of one format, are used as a framework for adaptation, that is then conjoined with a multiform method of approach. This digital adaptation, as a textual artefact, blends both game and story, as 'interpenetrating sibling categories, neither of which completely subsumes the other'.[525] That is not to say that the end product is perfect, as evidenced by user reviews above, but that the technical affordances of the adaptation permit the user an altered journey through a mode of textual reformation, that is activated through the protocols of digital process. However, I would argue that the protocols present within this adaptation are not purely consistent with game structures, as the feedback elements used within

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[523] See Kyle Bailey, *Exclusive Interview: 'The 39 Steps', Wuthering Heights, and Good Old Fashion Stories* (*OnlySP*, 2012) http://www.onlysp.com/interview-the-story-mechanics-talk-the-39-steps-wuthering-heights-and-good-old-fashion-stories-part-1/ [accessed 6 July 2017]; Moore, p.185.
[524] Moore, p.191.
[525] Murray, *The Last Word on Ludology v Narratology*.

the adaptation deliberately harness the resonances of previous adaptations, repackaging and reforming them within a digital narrative through a process of stylistic genre-hopping.

The faux-event

The digital text itself functions via a conglomeration of repurposed artefacts, aligning with a convergent view of adaptation as a 'gradual development of a meta-text'.[526] The Story Mechanics' adaptation leans aesthetically upon an identified past *heritage*, whereby the audience is 'expected to enjoy basking in a certain pre-established presence and to call up new or especially powerful aspects of a cherished work'.[527] Combining textual, visual, auditory, and game processes, the adaptation facilitates an affordance of 'creating something to be played with' by a user 'who feels they want to play a part in the experience' of an interactive narrative.[528] That experience is primarily represented through a visual stylistic that presents a collection of recognisable artefacts of the past, to 'create in the viewer a specific relation to the past depicted: namely, nostalgia'.[529]

The multiple forms of media used throughout, including; faux-newspaper stills, maps, and books, intermix the digital affordances of an adaptation with the fabric and history of Buchan's fiction, including depictions of London, the countryside of the United Kingdom, and the interiors of each scene Hannay finds himself within. The use of such images aligns with Cardwell's summation of heritage within classic-novel to film adaptations:

> Classic-novel adaptations on film have relied upon both indoor and outdoor settings which can roughly be divided into three types: interior longs shots of beautiful rooms full of heritage objects; exterior long shots of the central house or houses in the story in their (usually rural) locations; and exterior long shots of untouched rural landscapes, characterised by rolling hills, hedges, farmland, some trees and an expanse of clear sky.[530]

The depiction of such may be seen to posit these formations of the past into a 'well-plotted story', allowing the player to 'gaze at, admire, even fetishise the heritage settings'.[531] A spectacle which invites the player to 'sit back in a state of admiration, contemplating the scale, detail, convincing texture or other impressive attributes of the image'.[532] This sense of spectacle

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[526] Cardwell, *Adaptation Revisited*, p.25.
[527] Dudley Andrew, *Concepts in Film Theory* (New York: Oxford University press, 1984), p.98.
[528] Meek, *The 39 Steps*, interview.
[529] Andrew Higson, 'The Heritage Film and British Cinema', in. *Dissolving Views: Key Writings on British Cinema*, ed. by Andrew Higson ((London: Cassell, 1996), 232-249 (p.233).
[530] Cardwell, *Adaptation Revisited*, p.120.
[531] See Gary Saul Morson *Narrative and Freedom: The Shadows of Time* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), p.236; Cardwell, *Adaptation Revisited*, p.119.
[532] Krzywinska and King, p.153.

in nostalgia occurs as a recurring narrative element in the digital portrayal of Buchan's fiction, an attempt by The Story Mechanics team to bring the fictional world to life.


Figure 45. The image of rural nostalgia.[533]

A specific mechanic within the narrative conceptualises this mode of nostalgia through a method appropriately entitled *Recall*. *Recall* presents an extended textual experience illustrated through an archaic format, it is a protocol which 'offers a different visual experience that is tied into the media of the era the story is told. These sections relate to times in which characters tell stories about themselves – effectively creating a "story in a story"'.[534] Such sequences occur several times during the digital adaptation and are illustrated through the mimicry of an early form of stop frame animation. These animations project past events, aiming to 'match the tone of the book, which never quite takes itself seriously – never being afraid of using a touch of humour to keep reader interest and the pace going'.[535] The jerky movements of on-screen characters, use of intertitles, the passage of boats indicated via a dotted red progressing across a map, all hark back to the characteristics of silent movies, or the intimations of travel *a la* Phileas Fogg.

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[533] The Story Mechanics, *The 39 Steps*, screenshot. (2013)
[534] Leonard Flounoy, *Developer, The Story Mechanics, Releases Details On Their New Digital Adaptation Of 'The 39 Steps'* (OnlySP. 2012), <http://www.onlysp.com/developer-the-story-mechanics-release-details-on-their-new-digital-adaptation-of-the-39-steps/> [accessed 6th July 2017]
[535] The Story Mechanics, *Secrets of The 39 Steps: Part 2* (Tern TV),
<https://storymechanics.wordpress.com/page/2/> [accessed 8 March 2017]
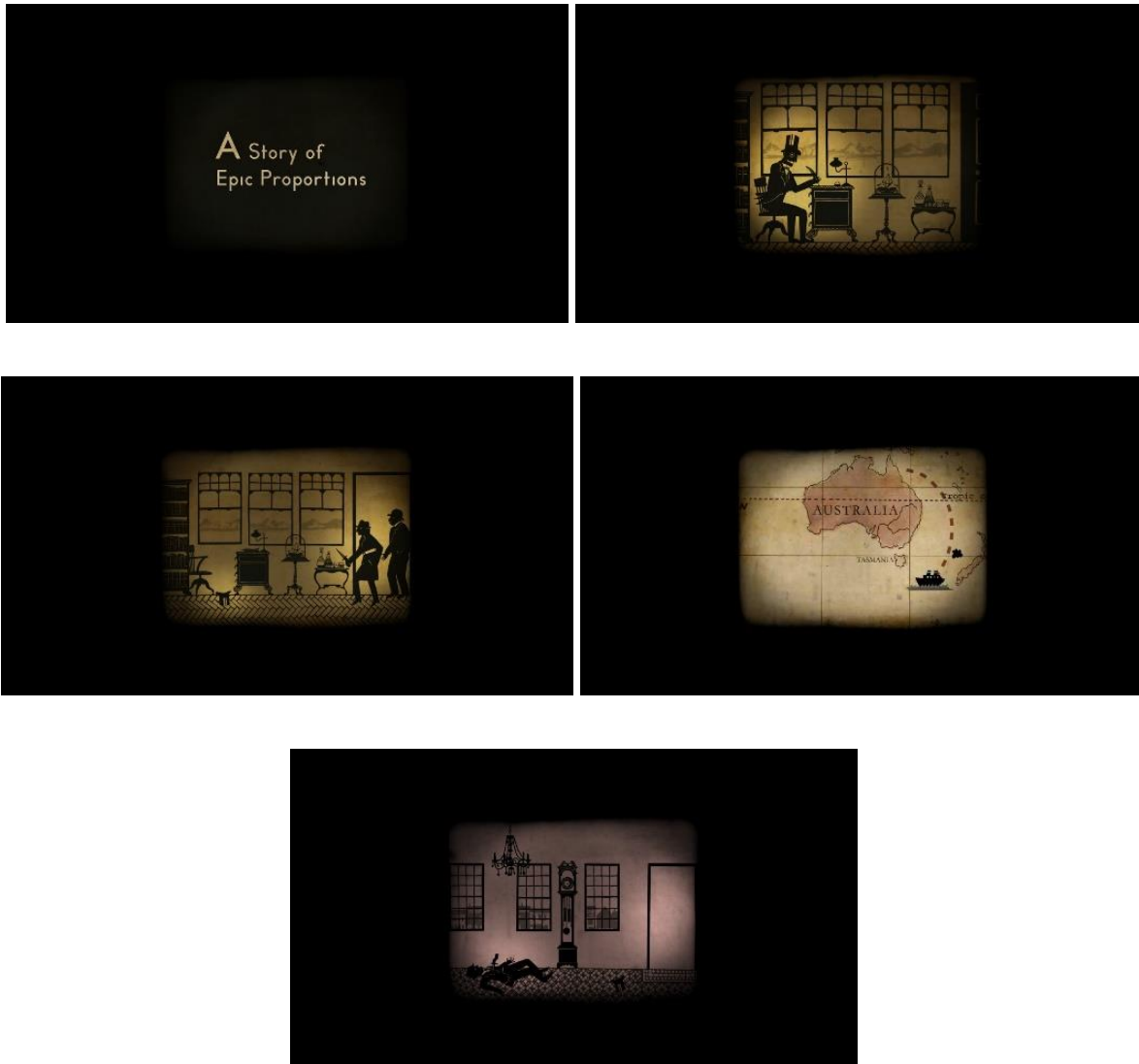
Figures 46-50. Stop-frame storytelling.[536]

The adaptation presents a deliberate method of convergence in blending 'old-media forms' within the context of 'new-media' digital interpretations. The hybrid visual aesthetic produces a sense of nostalgic engagement, which both looks back to past forms, while also utilising the modern protocols of games, and interactive fictions, allowing a systemic progression through these moments of intimated antiquity. The resultant effect is one of intertextual knowingness, as the construction deliberately 'plays' with the chapters and 'derring-do' style of the book within the capabilities of a digital environment. However, each fragment of media is not

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[536] *The 39 Steps*, screenshots.

dissociative; they function as a whole, as a tableau of hybridity which embraces both the prior textual form, and the capacities of a new environment.

The blended text

This hybridity of media forms within the project arose from a number of deciding factors; significantly, economic limitations. The budget for the project was estimated at £250,000, which precluded certain features such as prolonged and involved animation sequences and detailed character models, both of which would consume time and resources.[537] However, this budget did not necessarily restrict the use of static images, such as the utilisation of multiple forms of mixed-media in its narrative form, hence the aesthetic choice of including: faux-newspaper stills designed to imitate the news style of the day, image tableaux, stop-frame type animation, maps, digital rendering of books, and re-created landscapes (see Figures 51-54).

Figures 51-54. A living canvas of information.[538]

These multiform images when observed in sequence, were designed to project 'beautifully realised, well researched environments […] to make it feel […] like a living canvas

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[537] Meek, *The 39 Steps*, interview.
[538] *The 39 Steps*, collated screenshots.

of the story', a canvas which gradually unfolds in various forms as the fiction progresses.[539] Contextually, this stylistic process embeds the fiction within the fabric of a very real history, and was an attempt to 'weave Buchan's fiction alongside the reality of 1914'.[540] The visual design of the newspapers present in this digital adaptation are a primary representation of this method of textual embedding, consisting of real places, events, times and dates, alongside specific fictional instances of the adapted text, which may be further 'explored', by being 'clicked on' to present more detail to discover more information regarding a specific situation, event or character. Additionally, the use of maps, books, and other graphical representations of objects designed to look of a type circa 1914, assist in this historical interweaving.

Figures 55-56. Faux-news.[541]

The first instances of such an intermedial weave occur not within the opening moments of the game, but before it even begins. Upon launching the digital adaptation, the digital text lures us into the tale not by the turning of a page of a traditional book or by presenting a character selection or *start screen* of a game, but instead via a sequence more closely aligned with the cinematic. The introduction also provides early intimations with regard to succeeding events, allowing initial framing of potential narrative experiences within a digital format yet possessing a familiar genre-based graphical mode of interface. This depiction allows the adaptation to be at once removed from an established eBook format and into a mixed-media environment, whilst presenting a minimalist aesthetic that interweaves bold on-screen images and slowly shifting background colour sequences. This cinematic sequencing is overlaid with a musical score that repeats and varies in cadence throughout the unfolding of the digital text.

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[539] Meek, *The 39 Steps*, interview.
[540] Ibid.
[541] *The 39 Steps*, screenshots.

These early visual and auditory representations allow a foreshadowing of the narrative drama to come, whilst also combining variant media forms to sustain engagement.

The stark representations of objects presented in this sequence include; a pipe, a knife, the houses of parliament, and a motor car, yet these images are not simply presented, they are *revealed*. The pipe, is the first image we see, and begins as an elegant and gradually sloping curve before revealing its form:

Figures 57-58. This is a digital pipe.[542]

The imagery may pay an intentional homage to Conan Doyle's creation, Sherlock Holmes, a character synonymous with such iconography, further anchoring the intertextuality present in the work. Textually, smoking pipes appear several times throughout the course of Buchan's novel, they assist in accompanying deep-thought, as in 'I lit a pipe and went over the whole thing again till my brain grew weary'.[543] The smoking device serves to provide the finishing touch to enhance an already effective disguise; 'borrowed, too, the foul stump of a clay pipe as an extra property', transforming Hannay into the 'very model of one of the hill farmers who were crowding into the third-class carriages. I travelled with half a dozen in an atmosphere of shag and clay pipes. They had come from the weekly market, and their mouths were full of prices'.[544] The pipe also provides solace after shocking events, 'I sat down in an arm-chair and

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[542] *The 39 Steps*, screenshots.
[543] Buchan, p.119.
[544] Ibid, p.62; p.30.

lit my pipe'.[545] It is seen by our hero as being of paramount importance to the whole game, as even whilst Hannay is sinking headlong into a sea of international mystery and plot, he is often more concerned with a good smoke than in still possessing a codebook that could potentially save Europe from calamitous destruction, 'for I had neither coat nor waistcoat. These were in Mr Turnbull's keeping, as was Scudder's little book, my watch and—worst of all—my pipe and tobacco pouch'.[546] That this endlessly desirable and adaptable object appears as the first thing the player sees is not accidental and assists in evoking a sense of playfulness. This is amplified as the scene is punctuated with a puff of smoke appearing over the tobacco chamber, adding a mildly comedic note juxtaposed with the dark and sonorous attitude of the musical score and the starkly delineated visuals. With this simple addition, the serious is apparently disarmed by the incidental and comic.

The novel presents sequences of danger and calamity paralleled with a call to adventure actioned by the process of *play*. Buchan places numerous references to 'play' within a grand 'game'; Hannay remarks of Karolides, that 'he played a straight game'.[547] Frustrated with Scudder, Hannay states that he is 'keeping me out of the game and wanting to play a lone hand'.[548] Of being the pawn in an international tale of intrigue, Hannay concludes by doing nothing that he would be 'playing their game'.[549] However, inaction is not the mark of a great thriller, the playground which our main protagonist finds himself within begins to offer rejuvenative qualities, 'I was beginning to enjoy this crazy game of hide-and-seek'.[550] The effect of impending global calamity is remarkable, as 'I might have been a boy out for a spring holiday tramp, instead of a man of thirty-seven very much wanted by the police […] All the slackness of the past months was slipping from my bones, and I stepped out like a four-year-old'.[551] The sense of *play* on the part of Buchan, is transferred via visual mechanics, or *protocols* of the digital adaptation, primarily in the form of a blended-media collage, that both adhere to notions of textual truthfulness, while harnessing the affordances of convergent media.

The soundtrack to such sequences is stimulated here not through a tolling of a bell, rapid visual edits, or ebullient displays of literary prowess, but through Si Begg's musical score.

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[545] Buchan, p.10.
[546] Ibid, p.70.
[547] Ibid, p.8.
[548] Ibid, p.99.
[549] Ibid, p.22.
[550] Ibid, p.70.
[551] Ibid, p.32.

There is a sense of 'play' once again, this time present within a musical introduction that consists of variances in: instrument, style, volume and cadence, overlaid upon a visual backdrop of smoking pipes, a stylised knife, and images of the city. This collage of the audio and visual assists in pre-empting narrative echoes and prompts for action, a 'foreshadowing' of likely events to come.[552] An introductory cadence intertwines with the on-screen image paralleling the curve of the pipe with a softly lilting yet dulcet melody. This initial soundtrack develops in complexity and pace as subtle, gently brushed yet metronomic drums, evolve into a military-esque marching motif, a faintly heard treble clef piano increases in prominence as sharp and brittle as the pointed protrusion of a knife entering the screen frame. Violins stream in referencing the earlier arc of the smoking apparatus and offering a further counterpoint to staccato drums and the fragile, pianistic treble. These elements crescendo and become accumulatively agitated by the clipped piano and percussion, whilst being occasionally punctuated by chaotically rising (yet harmonised and organised) string sequences. This soundtrack adds to the cinematicism of the introduction and its contrast of the playful and the perilous. It is a sequence which is abruptly contrasted by the near-static screen which follows (see Figure 59).

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[552] Morson, p.73.

Figure 59. Entry and player naming screen.[553]

This 'entry' screen, occurring after the enigmatic and cinematic title screens of the prologue, makes its narrative inspiration abundantly clear with the blood red background of the product's name, with the fiction's title accompanied by a suitably shadowy form that appears to be stepping into the very words of its adaptational lineage. It is a screen that governs essential aspects of information with regard to: character naming, recorded advancement through the text, options of how the text may be 'read' (with or without subtitles, no dielect, or in Gaelic), and as such functions as an entry point for engagement into the text of the digital fiction. The first action for the 'Player' (as they are termed here, not 'Reader', 'Viewer', or 'User') is to enter their chosen name in three designated slots for the purposes of saving and recording their advancement within the text, though it is to be noted that whatever name is chosen here it will not appear 'in-text'; the 'Player' will *always* be Hannay. Further solidifications of progression appear as indicators of time spent and events discovered; hours and minutes of 'Playtime', together with elements that are 'uncovered' as the digital text is moved through. Such information is presented as a clear visual reminder not just of the *quantity* of text that has been moved through, but also of certain elements of *success*, namely completion of the textual whole.

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[553] *The 39 Steps*, screenshots.

The Event Tree

This notion of completion, or collation of narrative, is utilised in-game via a mechanic entitled the *Event Tree*. It provides the player with an illustration of their progress (or lack of it) within the fiction, functioning as a changeable visual marker of narrative 'successes'. The nineteen segments or branches of the Tree correspond approximately with the ten chapters of Buchan's novel, mapped to textual progression as follows:

Novel	Digital Adaptation
The Man Who Died	The Wrong Ditch
	An Unlikely Visit
The Milkman Sets Out On His Travels	Deeper Into This Mess
	In The Soup
The Adventure Of The Literary Innkeeper	Third Class Citizen
	Sanctuary Of The Inn
The Adventure Of The Radical Candidate	A Pack Of Lies
	The Radical Candidate
The Adventure Of The Bespectacled Roadman	Run To The Hills
	Roadside Deception
The Adventure Of The Bald Archaeologist	The Game Is Up
	Desperate Measures
	Downward Spiral
The Dry Fly Fisherman	Dry Fly Fisherman
	Grave News
The Coming Of The Black Stone	The Black Stone
The Thirty Nine Steps	The Thirty Nine Steps
	Masters Of Disguise
Various Parties Converging On The Sea	High Tides

Figures 60-61. Sparse to populated Event Tree.[554]

The *tree* is 'split into events […] Created from locations and scenes […] occasionally allowing choices in the event consumption, such as an alternative order of events'.[555] Each segment is purposely enclosed, occupying no more than fifteen minutes of play, each possessing a 'very definitive start point and a very definitive end point'.[556] The use of such segmentation is explained by Meek as being an attempt at 'de-constructing the book based on what I thought were the significant events, not necessarily the significant scenes'.[557] The terminology and structure here once again closely follows definitions of game-ness, such as; *events* prioritised over scenes, sequences occurring in space and time in short segments of consumption. The traversal through this digital narrative occurs in a strictly sequenced manner, as does the novel, reinforcing Newman's conception of such digital game space as 'highly

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[554] *The 39 Steps*, screenshots.
[555] Flounoy.
[556] Meek, *The 39 Steps*, interview.
[557] Ibid.

structured and, importantly, highly segmented experiences'.[558] Within these segments, the player is provided with a set of mechanics that allow them to 'interact with the story on different levels – whether this be by controlling the pace of the story, or interacting with the world in which it is being told'.[559] The progression from one event to another by opening doors, 'clicking' on objects, discovering secrets, may also be viewed within Juul's 'State-Machine', which outlines the narrative function of such mechanical procedures. It is a 'machine that has an initial state, accepts a specific amount of input events, changes state in response to inputs using a state transition function (i.e..rules) and produces specific output using an output function'.[560] The 'output function' being movement to the next sequence.

The empty yet protocol-controlled *space* exists as a potential stage for user action, it becomes an inhabited *place* through user interaction, allowing access to further output stages, be they, rooms, events, or further problems to solve.[561] The visual depiction of completion scenarios adheres to a procedure of textual population that permits a morphing of *space* to *place*. The two states being identified as potential sites for action (space) becoming colonized via the Player's presence (or, place), permitting a sense of mastery of the textual space itself, reinforced by the visual depiction of completed sequences. The Event Tree may be viewed as a visual representative of narrative 'success' within the text, the incremental nature of completing each sequence providing an urge to 'keep playing'.[562] As the series of blank spaces are slowly filled by the actions of the player progressing through the narrative, the tree therefore functions as a *reward* for the player, an archive of achievement.

Game rewards may be indicated through multiple and varying formats across differing modes of delivery systems, and assist in providing emotive affects by providing regular instances of pleasure and satisfaction of completion.[563] Halliford and Halliford identify distinct instances of reward systems being 'rewards of glory, rewards of sustenance, rewards of access, and rewards of facility'.[564] 'Glory' relates to everything the player may take away from the

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[558] James Newman, 'The Myth of the Ergodic Videogame: Some thoughts on player-character relationships in videogames', *Game Studies*, 2.1 (2002), <http://www.gamestudies.org/0102/newman/> [accessed 7 July 2017]

[559] Bailey.

[560] Jesper Juul, *Half-Real: Video Games Between Real Rules and Fictional Worlds* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), p.60.

[561] Newman's contention that 'all videogames are intrinsically associated with the navigation and mastery of the spaces they represent,' would hold true here. See Newman, (2004), p.107.

[562] Ibid, p.26.

[563] Alison Gazzard, 'Unlocking the Gameworld: The Rewards of Space and Time in Videogames', *Game Studies*, 11.1 (2011), <http://gamestudies.org/1101/articles/gazzard_alison> [accessed 25 February 2017]

[564] Neal Halliford and Jana Halliford, *Swords and Circuitry: A Designer's Guide to Computer Role Playing Games* (Roseville, CA: Prime Publishing, 2001), p.158.

game, but has no impact on the game or process of play itself, a sense of achievement including 'bragging rights' to friends, or social groups.[565] 'Sustenance' may be health packs, weapons, or items that are beneficial to the player's progression. 'Access' allows for a direct impact on spatial opportunities, for example, the ability to jump higher. 'Facility' permits opening up new areas of the space, such as finding a key to open a door. James Newman considers rewards not simply as occurring in-game time, as the player engages with the text, but of the moments in-between, such as cut-scenes and loading screens, the 'pauses for breath' amidst the drama of 'play' and interaction.[566] Examples of such instances include: high-scores, percentages of game completion achieved, number of items collected, number of secrets discovered, staged cinematic scenes of non-play, whereby the player watches dramatic events unfold, thus providing a 'Hollywood' style moment, all operate as a reward 'payoff' and indicator of progression. As Newman notes, 'Levels are separated by breaks or intermissions. These may be as simple and short as text-only level numbers or names or may comprise many minutes of lavish audio-visual spectacle in the form of cut-scenes'.[567] Salen and Zimmerman see these moments as a crucial element of game design, being part of 'larger structures of pleasure', and assist in assuring that 'players are properly rewarded for spending the time to take part in the experience that is designed for them'.[568]

As a specific example of engaging within an experience, and progression within process, in *The 39 Steps*, the player must frequently open doors to progress through the narrative. The manner in which this is accomplished is to perform/mimic hand-to-mouse movements in order to simulate opening a physical door. The introduction to such mechanics of play is provided through a relatively familiar scenario in video games design, an element often described as a 'training level', which introduces players to the *mechanics* (the how to play, what buttons trigger which actions) of the play scenario that they are in, and how they may move through it. Here. mechanics such as: rotating the mouse to advance the text onward, *apartment* and *door* icons for the player to click on and move through with an aim to progress through the text, yellow 'clickable' pointers to click on and discover new information, such as reading books, examining clues, or looking at objects (which are often signposted as being of importance as they possess a slight *glow*). When this short tutorial is completed the player is

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[565] Gareth Schott and Maria Kambouri, 'Social Play and Learning', in *Computer Games: Text, Narrative and Play*, ed. by Diane Carr and others, pp.119–132.
[566] Newman, (2004).
[567] Ibid, pp.82-83.
[568] Salen and Zimmerman, p.346.

given an 'Award for your efforts' and is notified that there are fifteen more to collect throughout the journey. This tutorial assists in familiarising the player with the space they will be exploring, and the processes to undergo in order to achieve that exploration.[569]

Such interactions are designed to allow the player access to the game-world, to play a part in the progression of the narrative retelling. However, Dominic McIver Lopes' definitions of 'strong' and 'weak' interactivity, would place such actions within a nominal level, being 'weak' moments of engagement which only provide users access to the 'sequence in which they may access content', yet may not truly shape, or alter it.[570] The strongly interactive work, which would provide opportunities for the player to forge varying paths 'on different occasions', is not a facet of the adaptation.[571] Here, the player cannot 'fail' or die, they simply navigate through the narrativization, the player's reward being: the experience of progressing through the adaptation itself, the aesthetic pleasure of journeying through those experiences (as in my discussion of nostalgia, above), and resultantly, of collating and completing the Event Tree, representative of an archive of the player's experiences. Thus, the Event Tree is indicative of collation, possessing a 'profound enchantment for the collector', who gathers these sequences within a 'magic circle', or sequence, of acquisition, which possesses an enchantment, a 'thrill' of containment, in the form of a visual reward.[572]

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[569] The use of reward systems within the digital adaptation operate in numerous forms, as in addition to the Event Tree, the player may also choose to read letters, books, or newspaper articles that may enhance the setting, deepen a sense of characterisation, or provide further back-story. These events are not necessary to progression, but operate as moments of narrative interaction, of strengthening engagement through the player's journey through the piece.

[570] McIver Lopes, p.68.

[571] Ibid.

[572] Benjamin, *Illuminations*, p.60.

The blank form

The 'blankness' of the Event Tree which begins as an empty area or 'bare stage' which becomes inhabited or colonised by the player's progression through the narrative, is echoed by the depiction of characters within those locations, as player and non-player characters are represented as abstracted, ghostly forms.[573] Developmentally, the project's budget at least in part dictated the lack of fully visually realised characters, as to fully render figures on-screen is time and budget intensive. However, that use of abstract form does align with McCloud's observation of the 'vacuum' into which the watcher, or here, user of media is pulled. These ghostly forms may serve a purpose as an 'empty shell in which we inhabit which enables us to travel to another realm'.[574] Ryan states of such vagaries of inhabitation, that the use of such a form may permit engagement through the supplanting of self within a blank shell, or the occupying of a specific role:

> The interactor participates in the production for her own pleasure, and becoming a character should be a self-rewarding activity. The entertainment value of the experience depends on how the interactor relates to her avatar: will she be like an actor playing a role, innerly distanciated from her character and simulating emotions she does not really have, or will she experience her character in the first-person mode, actually feeling the love, hate, fears, and hopes that motivate the character's behavior, or the exhilaration, triumph, pride, melancholy, guilt, or despair that may result from her actions?[575]

Here, the on-screen 'body' is purposed to exist as an occupiable form, albeit a form still bound within multiple rules, boundaries, and frames, points of navigation in an interactive drama, or if you will, a stage. Yet crucially, despite the facility to input a specific name with the Player Name screen which implies an opportunity to inhabit a digital husk, the player's embodiment, narrative point of view, even voice, are that of Hannay's and not their own. The mechanics of the digital adaptation permits players to only 'play a minimal role, displaying traits that are largely capacities for action […] the character is little more than a cursor which mediates the player's experience to the story world'.[576] Within the context of the stop-frame sequences as mentioned previously, cognitive agency too is removed, as those fragments of memories are

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[573] See Brook, p.12; Bailey.

[574] McCloud, p.59.

[575] Marie-Laure Ryan, 'Beyond Myth and Metaphor: The Case of Narrative in Digital Media', *Game Studies*, 1.1. (2001), <http://gamestudies.org/0101/ryan/> [accessed 26 February 2017]

[576] Mary Fuller and Henry Jenkins, 'Nintendo® and New World Travel Writing: A Dialogue', in *Cybersociety: Computer-Mediated Communication and Community*, ed. by Steven G. Jones (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1995), 55-72 <http://web.stanford.edu/class/history34q/readings/Cyberspace/FullerJenkins_Nintendo.html> [accessed 7 July 2017]

from an exterior source, 'projections from the characters' minds – not necessarily the reader's'.[577]

HANNAY: and you had better climb out.

Figure 62. A hero waiting for an event.[578]

The position of hero may be clear, with events set in motion, suspension of disbelief enhanced by the nostalgic intertextual visual settings, but a physical, embodied presence proves elusive. Whilst the player may move through this space, they may not shape or perform within it, only *progress*. The player's form is ethereal and intransigent, in a seemingly solid fictional world which does not function to tolerate freedoms of play, or re-structuring of narrative. As the fictional Hannay himself states, 'If you are playing a part, you will never keep it up unless you convince yourself that you are it'; here, the player's role is to *be* Hannay, not induce an alternative authorial aspect, or change the course of a narrative journey.[579]

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[577] The Story Mechanics, *Secrets of The 39 Steps: Part 2*.
[578] *The 39 Steps*, screenshot.
[579] Buchan, p.127.

The single path

The Story Mechanics' adaptation places deliberate frames or limits upon that journey and the boundaries of the player's actions, specifically so that a particular type of gameplay can be enacted.[580] These limits are defined by Juul's view of the 'game state', in that all games are positioned somewhere between two primary poles, being either Games of Progression or Games of Emergence.[581] Games of Progression are characterised by staged, sequential methods with no deviation; presenting a cunningly disguised but nevertheless interesting, corridor 'funnelling' the player to the next doorway or progression point. Games of Emergence are defined as being 'situations where a game is played that the designer did not predict', be it through desirable modes of play, such as interacting and discovering; or undesirable, which may include cheating, the manipulation of game code, glitching, or discovering a fortuitous series of key-presses that propels the action forward several scenes.[582] Examples of possible errant behaviour may include the reader/player controlling Hannay in an early part of the adaptation and simply not choosing to be the hero, or else deciding to side against England. Yet errant or emergent behaviour is not a facet of this adaptation and is exemplified through how the player progresses through the story.

The manner of progression through narrative forms may be summarised as functioning between the; *maze*, a linear 'golden-path' or tunnel, being representative of possessing one *correct* way of progression. A *labyrinth*, which promises a multitude of twisting passageways, with multiple choices and opportunities for alternate routes, while the *rhizome* provides seemingly endless pathways, spiralling outwards from an indeterminate primary point.[583] The labyrinth is the antithesis of the rhizome, as per Deleuze and Guattari, which 'has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo, it is an assemblage that establishes connections between certain multiplicities […] There are no points or positions in a rhizome, such as those found in a structure, tree, or root. There are only lines'.[584] The terms

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[580] Newman (2004), p.122.
[581] Juul, pp.72-73.
[582] Ibid, p.76.
[583] Note, the distinctions of *maze* and *labyrinth* are sometimes used in a confusing, overlapping manner. Robertson, Carr and Murray, see the *maze* as a single ended, golden path of navigation, while the *labyrinth* offers opportunities for multiple pathways of navigation. For many, the opposite definitions hold, that the maze is a multicursal event, possessing a start and end point with many optional branches, while the labyrinth is a unicursal p, possessing only one true path. For the purposes of discussion, the terms used by Robertson et al, have been preserved as to the original argument, the affordances such pathways offer are of greater importance as opposed to the strict definitions of the words themselves.
[584] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus, Capialism And Schizophrenia,* transl. By Brian Massumi (London: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p.25.

used by Deleuze and Guattari are notable in application to the digital adaptation, in the use of the term *tree*; the Event Tree, being linear, progressive, may be seen as operating as opposite to that of the freeform, boundless nature of the rhizome, which 'necessarily changes in nature as it expands its connections'.[585]

The 'centre-state' of the three forms involves conjoining the pleasure of the structured progression of one, with the sense of choice of another. As Murray states:

> Both the overdetermined form of the single-path maze adventure and the underdetermined form of rhizome fiction work against the interactor's pleasure in navigation. The potential of the labyrinth as a participatory narrative form would seem to lie somewhere between the two, in stories that are goal driven enough to guide navigation but open-ended enough to allow free exploration and that display a satisfying dramatic structure no matter how the interactor chooses to traverse the space.[586]

Similarly, for Carr, who views the optimum design for game processes as structured to incorporate 'the best aspects of the maze, with the freedom of the rhizome'.[587] Murray's 'overdetermined form of the single path' is evidently present within this digital text, as the rigours of fidelity within this specific digital adaptation enforce a strict attitude, depicted by the Event Tree. This is characterised by the segmented and enclosed form of textual progression and actioned by players 'clicking' from event to event, screen to screen to achieve the 'goal' of narrative continuance. Whilst exploration of each scene or segment is necessary for advancement, the strictures placed on that exploration remain contingent to the linearity of the adaptation. Whilst argument continues as to what this hybrid or blended form is, the manner in which it is constructed, aligns with concepts of textual fidelity. The types of gameplay consisting here are of static zones, pre-existing in textual format, governed by rules and conventions. Those conventions, protocols, frameworks, being the historic and textual background of Buchan's novel. The language and form, grammar, spelling, characters and events, and the transference of that text into digitally overlaid visuals, created landscapes, systems of progression, and the clicks of a mouse. What is presented is a standard framework of laws and potential action(s), with a modularity characterised by the Event Tree providing

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[585] Deleuze and Guattari, pp.23-25.
[586] Murray, pp.134-135.
[587] Dianne Carr, 'Space, Navigation, and Effect', in *Computer Games: Text, Narrative and Play*, ed. by Carr, and others (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006), pp.59-71 (p.62).

structure and a clear sense of advancement, but at the cost of limiting choices and emergent play.

Structurally, the text offers a recurrent pathway of single constellations eschewing stray possibilities in favour of a pre-determined outcome, or as Morson states in the weaving of such tales, 'loose ends which intimate other possibilities, are drastically reduced or entirely eliminated'.[588] The player is posited within a textual event, encased in the rules of its telling, and allowed continual success within environments that exist as progressive textual advancements. The structure of progression exists as a graphical representation of a chain of narrative success within a digital adaptation, however, one that is insistent upon 'the original story of *The Thirty Nine Steps*, without any alteration'.[589] Yet, the text is *altered,* via the supplanting of textual description with visual modes, creating a convergent meta-text, within a narrative that enforces a set of understandings whilst not permitting deviation from a rigidly progressive structure therefore denying alternate spaces for user access.

Whilst these methods of pictorial nostalgia may aim to promote a deeper mode of engagement with the tale, conversely this digital landscape may be seen to place an emphasis on spectacle rather than narrative which 'draws attention to the surface of things, producing a typically postmodern loss of emotional affect'.[590] The very structure may be construed as a narrative stricture whereby 'the process of discovering' does not exist, and the systematic, fidelic approach to narrative thwarts the adventure.[591] These systems / blocks / progressive states, in this mixed-media fiction, could be perceived to have annihilated freedom of exploration, a process of textual construction that has 'superimposed a structure […] read the narrativeness out of them, treated all events as if they could not be other'.[592] There is no option, or choice, there is only continuance from one state to the next as the player clicks from one screen to the next, awash on a wave of visual nostalgia, of images of the past collated as part of a textual whole. This digital archive is static, presenting the player with a predefined view of the novel, an authorised revision, as distinct to that which may be journeyed, navigated, or reshaped.

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[588] Morson, p.236.
[589] Flounoy.
[590] Higson, 'The Heritage Film and British Cinema', in. *Dissolving Views: Key Writings on British Cinema*, p.233.
[591] Morson, p.72.
[592] Ibid, p.73.

There is a moment however, within the adaptation whereby the pictorial images of heritage, disappear, and are replaced with a blank screen, increasingly punctured with streams of text. The multi-modal approach is abandoned and replaced with a relentless assault of text. Expectations on the part of the player are tested, as the appearance of the adaptation shifts in mode, and is supplanted by a chaotic sequence of lines from the novel:

Figures 63-65. Textual flood.[593]

The screen becomes overwhelmingly filled with text; the screen, once filled, cannot be read as a whole, sentences overlap, become discontinuous, presenting in part a form that is no longer stable, but veering on chaotic. This sequence may simply be due to the economic limitations of the project, but its presence, as a somewhat jarring textual encounter, raises important points

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[593] *The 39 Steps*, screenshot.

with regard to the nature of adaptive process within the adaptation. Firstly, the text is presented in a stark fashion, in white on a black background, drawing attention to its *text*-ness. As a result, the visual protocols established by the adaptation, the varied digital fabric formed through a multimedia collage, are disrupted. In this moment, those boundaries, rules, frameworks, break, and are supplanted by a mode of engagement visually indebted to the format of the book. However, to present those images on-screen, requires the affordances or protocols of a digital adaptation, as the lines of chaotic text only 'appear' with each click of the mouse. In this, The Story Mechanics' adaptation blends game-based protocols with a fidelic approach to the text, reframing the hypotext as a set of negotiated sequences.[594]

The structure of the game space itself, its sequences and protocols, provide a system of limits or permissions governing 'the upholding of the rules, the determination of what moves and actions are permissible and what they will lead to'.[595] These conditions provide a textual instance contingent upon obedience; of strictly enforced game-based mechanics aligned with the adaptation of Buchan's text as a textual truth. This may be seen to nullify emergent aspects of play or opportunities for errant behaviour, through a linear approach embodied by the Event Tree, and which exists as a graphical representation of action or agency. Yet it is an agency residing in an absence of choice, where 'the user is in control of the flow of media – a combination of text, image, audio, video', but not the direction of that flow.[596] The adaptation removes alternate win/loss scenarios, in favour of allowing a point of fidelic narrative progression for the user more akin to that of a passenger. They are not a player able to manipulate or change the outcomes of events, neither are they purely an observer, but of something that exists in between those roles, on the borderline between progressive and emergent states of play. In this, that role parallels the construction of the remediation of the text itself, as existing between points of player/reader and game/text, respectively. Murray states that in electronic narratives the author creates procedural texts, writing the stages of participation a user may inhabit. The author in this space is:

> like a choreographer who supplies the rhythms, the context, and the set of steps that will be performed. The interactor, whether as navigator, protagonist, explorer, or builder, makes use of this repertoire of possible steps and rhythms to improvise a particular dance among the many, many possible dances the author has enabled.[597]

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[594] Flounoy.
[595] Juul, p.44.
[596] Flounoy.
[597] Murray, *Hamlet on the Holodeck*, p.153.

Whilst simply journeying through a narrative, experiencing what lies within, manipulating the affordances it offers, permits engagement, it does not mark the user as the author, we 'can only act within the possibilities that have been established by the writing and programming of the developers'.[598] The possibilities within *The 39 Steps* are marked by the original text itself, segmented into nodes of progression. Within this adaptation, narrative fidelity is maintained, preserved even, filtered through a multiplicity of media forms and archival materials which provide an auditory and visually resonant approach to Buchan's novel that provide stimulus, but not freedom.

This approach to fidelity, agency, and the re-use of materials in forging a narrative world is the focus for the latter part of this chapter, as I examine Simon Meek's work as project lead for The Secret Experiment's *Beckett*. Here, I offer counterpoint discussion to *The 39 Steps*, further examining the affordances of digital and non-digital media within textual remediation.

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[598] Murray, *Hamlet on the Holodeck*, p.152.

The absurdly hybrid

The Secret Experiment's mission statement is to create a 'new wave of cinematic adventure games for a growing market of players who want more than just an adrenaline rush. Our titles blend the best in traditional game mechanics with a new set of interaction methods that allow for greater emotional connection and player freedom'.[599] *Beckett* is a 'Narrative adventure game […] The story of an aging private investigator, whose brain is riddled with disease and hallucinations, on his final case'.[600] Meek states that Beckett is 'very much a game because it's all about imagination, it's about that audience engagement but it's also a world that needs to be explored. And the notion of exploring a world is […] facilitated best through gameplay and interactivity'.[601] Thus, this is a media artefact declaring elements of game-ness, which involves processes of play, discovery, and choice, as distinct to a 'digital adaptation'.

However, the title, *Beckett*, does suggest an allegiance not specifically to a text, but to a writer, Samuel Beckett. Enoch Brater states that the plays of Beckett are marked by a dislocation of man and the world around him, as characters seek but do not find:

> He wants unity, yet meets diversity everywhere; he longs for happiness and for reason, but confronts the unreasonable silence of the world; he wants to know, but he cannot know; he yearns to communicate, but there are no avenues of communication; he wants truth, but discovers merely a succession of truths.[602]

The text here operating as a process for the character in terms of narrative action, and also for the viewer, as answers or finalities prove indistinct. Martin Esslin suggests that the fictive landscapes of Beckett create and provoke a deliberate confusion on the part of the audience, as laws of causality, 'probability as well as those of physics are suspended'.[603] For example, Pozzo and Lucky in *Waiting for Godot*, 'appear as master and slave at one moment only to return after a while with their respective positions mysteriously reversed'.[604] In these works, character motivation is unclear, and apparent incoherency of narrative and meaning is the norm. Esslin extends that in these works of the absurd 'it is often unclear whether the action is meant to

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[599] The Secret Experiment.
[600] Ibid.
[601] Simon Meek, *Beckett*, interviewed by Stephen Kenyon-Owen, 26 June 2017.
[602] Enoch Brater, The 'Absurd' Actor in the Theatre of Samuel Beckett, *Educational Theatre Journal*, 27.2. (May, 1975), 197-207 (p.197), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3206113> [accessed 7 September 2017]
[603] Martin Esslin, 'The Theatre of the Absurd', *The Tulane Drama Review*, 4.4. (May, 1960), 3-15 (p.3), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1124873> [accessed 7 September 2017]
[604] Esslin, p.3.

represent a dream world of nightmares or real happenings'.[605] The narrative space seemingly existing in an obfuscated hinterland, often barren, with limited indications of place or temporality. Meaning or solidity here, is a fluid, near-absent term, questioned through both physical actions, location, and dialogue; as communication is subverted and challenged running contrary to staged events:

> Within the same scene the action may switch from the nightmarish poetry of high emotions to pure knock-about farce or cabaret […] the dialogue tends to get out of hand so that at times the words seem to go counter to the actions of the characters on the stage, to degenerate into lists of words and phrases from a dictionary or traveler's conversation book, or to get bogged down in endless repetitions like a phonograph record stuck in one groove.[606]

Beckett 'takes its inspiration from Samuel Beckett', and as stated is not an adaptation of a pre-existing work, instead the narrative and the methods of delivery of that narrative, are designed to parallel the purposely abstract or absurd themes of the playwright.[607] It achieves this through an intermix of digital and analog media, which are designed not to fully reveal, but to lead the player through a succession of exploratory sequences designed to be purposely abstract.

The primary narrative in this space of textual intermix begins as Daisy Starlight, whose son Peregrin is missing, enlists the help of Beckett (the player) to find him. This initial quest presents the player with their main objective within the game, to find Peregrin, the lost object. The player searches through the game-world 'Borough', which is divided into sixteen stages, each providing opportunities to explore the environment and the characters they contain. This world of *Beckett* is created through a multitude of media sources, a bricolage combining digital and physical forms which make use of:

> materials and tools that […] were not intended for the task in hand […] to use in a new structure the remains of previous constructions or destructions, […] the forming of these heterogeneous elements into a new whole in which none of the re-used elements will necessarily be used as originally intended.[608]

Meek states that the game is a 'multimedia collage of actual physical artefacts' alongside digital constructions.[609]

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[605] Esslin, p.3.
[606] Ibid.
[607] Meek, *Beckett*, interview.
[608] Gerarde Genette, 'Structuralism and Literary Criticism', trans. by Alan Sheridan, in *Twentieth Century Literary Theory: A Reader,* ed. by K.M Newton (New York: St Martin's Press), pp.89-93 (p.89).
[609] Meek, *Beckett*, interview.

Figure 66. Real objects placed in a digital environment.[610]

A hybrid narrative space where 'wooden boxes, balsa wood, glue, string, a whole assortment of taxidermy insects […] dead rats' are repurposed alongside 'field recordings, excerpts from BBC image and audio archives', are all woven into the structure of digital protocols.[611] A method of construction that involves fashioning a 'structure out of a previous structure by rearranging elements', and in the reconstruction of materials 'the boundaries between genres and materials [blur] as they synthesize'.[612] The blurred boundaries here were an attempt to make a digital artefact feel 'as if you could reach in and touch it […] to make it tactile', to make it pliable for the player.[613] The blend of materials mimic a physical experience in a digital space; the old (found) and new (digital) forms, are set, piece 'beside piece, directed by the mind and hand of the artist […] taking in a totally different meaning as they become parts of the whole'.[614] The digital and analog merge to create a hybrid form.[615] Therefore this intermix of physical and non-physical objects represents a further process of medial shift, of a blend that allows 'ongoing points of contestation' of textual boundaries, in and outside of its remediated narrative world.[616]

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[610] The Secret Experiment, *Beckett*, screenshot. (The Secret Experiment, 2017).

[611] Meek, *Beckett*, interview.

[612] See Graham, p.93; John G. Hanhardt, 'Cinema, Video, and Installation Art Practices', *American Art*, 22.2 (2008), 2–8 (p.2).

[613] Meek, *Beckett*, interview.

[614] Doty, 'Introduction', in *Varujan Boghosian: A Retrospective,* p.17.

[615] The 'life' of the physical objects in the game continues in future exhibit in the SWG3 gallery, Glasgow, and the opening of the V&A, Dundee in 2018, where the physical assets of the game will be displayed outside of a game environment, highlighting their physical and tactile nature.

[616] Moore, p.181.

The characters of *Beckett*, Daisy Starlight, Peregrine, and others, are also constructed from such amalgam and miscellany, appearing as: a bangle, a brooch, a crushed beetle (see Figure 67 for dialogue between Beckett and Daisy, and their 'physical' characters). These are purposely not realistic depictions, they are demonstrably not a representation of a human form (the representation of characterisation therefore occurs in a similar manner to *The 39 Steps*). Instead, they appear as 'almost iconic representations of maybe what that character is through the mind of Beckett'.[617] This abstract nature of representation aligns with the inspiration for the game (being, Beckett-esque), a desire to disarm the viewer's expectations, and to provide an element of interchange between text and player. Meek describes the process as 'serving you material for your imagination by you filling in the blanks and making it real'.[618] The player character, and those they engage with, are simply objects that are repurposed; both within their representation within the game, and through the meanings and associations that are built upon them by the player's experiences in the game-world. They possess semiotic clues (a brooch, for example, may indicate wealth, status, it may just as readily conjure images of a lost relative), but those images and meanings are there to be written-over by the unfolding of narrative events within the game.
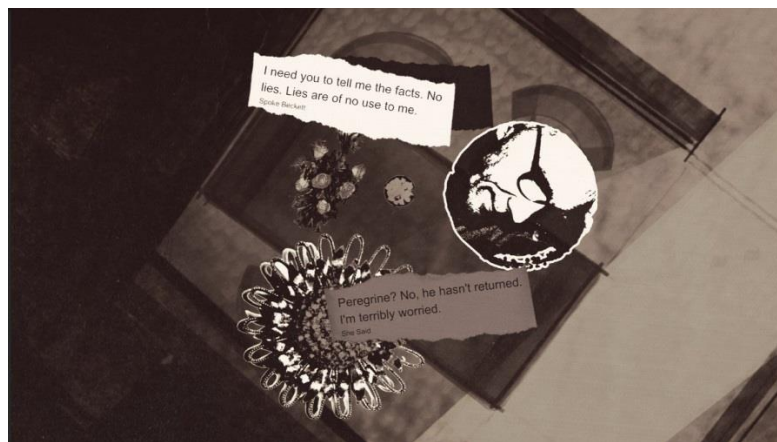
Figure 67. Mixed-media conversation.[619]

That game-world is experienced through via a top-down interface, the player 'clicking' where they want to go and selecting objects which are likely to be of interest. Whilst there are on occasion lanes to move through (see Figures 68-69), they are sometimes dispensed with as the player simply 'appears' in a new zone. This removal of an explicit game function, the

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[617] Meek, *Beckett*, interview.
[618] Ibid.
[619] *Beckett,* screenshot.

traversal from one area to the next, both challenges the protocols it exists within whilst also adhering to the non-causal approach of the playwright.

Figures 68-69. Pathways.[620]

This non-adherence to linear progression further enhances the oblique approach present within the game, an indicative example of this is through the deliberate narrative sleight of hand occurring when text is delivered or spoken to the player. It is often presented as unreliable, fragmentary, even on occasion breaking the boundaries of its own narrative frame, the fourth wall of the fiction (as in Figure 70), 'An interactive drama where every choice distorts reality, questioning the way things were and presenting the way they should have been. Or is it the way things should have been?'. This use of text draws attention to itself, and inherent processes at play within the game space, almost describing the world in which the player is inhabiting, 'An interactive drama where every choice distorts reality', causing a questioning of the environment which the player is moving within. In this 'interactive drama' the 'story is not merely told, instead it is performed, acted out', it is also crucially witnessed by an audience.[621] The audience, the player, is essential participant, who takes 'an active rather than passive role in the entertainment'.[622] The active role being to master the navigation of a game-world, yet it is an environment which seeks to obscure its secrets and challenge the dominance of player-over-game as (apparent) information is collated but no definitive answer is given.

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[620] *Beckett*, screenshots

[621] Joe Geigel and Marla Schweppe, 'Theatrical Storytelling in a Virtual Space', *Proceedings of the 1st ACM workshop on Story Representation, Mechanism and Context - SRMC '04* (2004) <http://virtualtheatre.cias.rit.edu/publications/V-TheatreStoryM3.pdf><10.1145/1026633.1026642> [accessed 14 January 2017]

[622] Joe Geigel and Marla Schweppe, 'Theatrical Storytelling in a Virtual Space', *Proceedings of the 1st ACM workshop on Story Representation, Mechanism and Context - SRMC '04* (2004) <http://virtualtheatre.cias.rit.edu/publications/V-TheatreStoryM3.pdf><10.1145/1026633.1026642> [accessed 14 January 2017]
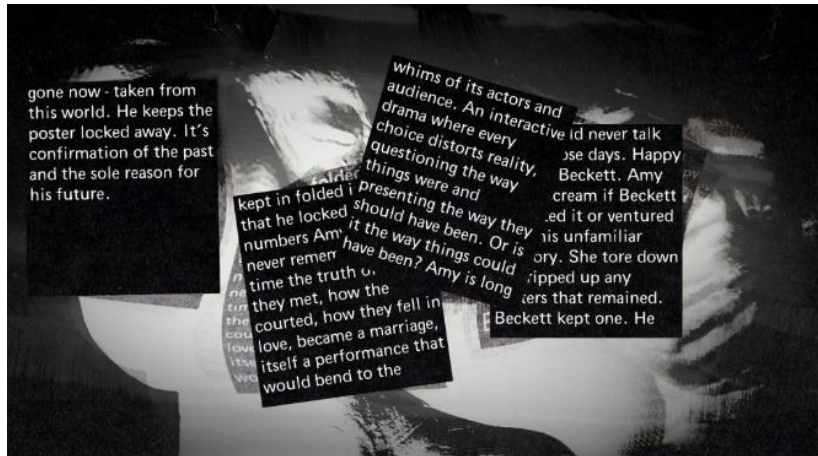
Figure 70. Scattered words.[623]

This approach of obfuscation is created from photographs, found objects, and digital creations; furthermore, intermixed within the sixteen chapters of the game are eight 'memory sections'. These interludes are randomly generated, morphing canvases that occur in a differing form in each playthrough, so that no two players will experience the same events. Therefore, the experience of playing the game is altered with each visit. The memories presented in these segments vary, from a 'young couple on a beach' to an 'old wrinkled hand'.[624] Each of these images is distorted, filtered, and blended with other images to create a visual effect verging on the nightmarish or surreal, yet one born of everyday 'banal' objects that are given new form by digital processes.
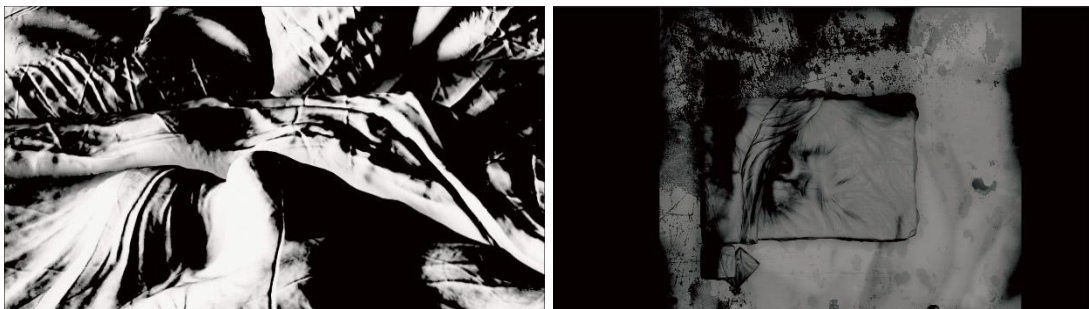

Figure 71-72. Distorted memories.[625]

Lotman states that works of art present a 'reflection of the infinite in the finite, of the whole within an episode […] It is the reflection of one reality in another, that is, it is always a

[623] *Beckett*, screenshots.
[624] Meek, *Beckett*, interview.
[625] *Beckett*, screenshot.

translation'.[626] Applying this sense of translation to these procedural elements in *Beckett* the implication is one of a textual event or textual frame (through use of photographs, a 'finite' captured moment, scattered text) in a process of movement both in their manipulation by the adapter and through their remediation to the player. The viewer's perception of the game-world is challenged with such manipulation and recombination, presenting a 'fundamental riddle of object and meaning inherent in the assemblage. We are confronted with a constellation of objects […] in a way that jars our complacency with the familiar'.[627] Here, the familiar or *original* is repurposed (photograph, image, object, or digital artefact) and in that transfer, rendered strange and new.

Meek states that he wanted the game to be 'almost entirely reliant on the imaginative power of the audience [to serve] material for your imagination by you filling in the blanks and making it real'; for example, to arrange a near bare stage, and place a tree and a rock on it, which then transforms the space, and the potential meaning of that space.[628] As Peter Brook states within meaning creation on the stage, 'I can take any empty space and call it a bare stage. A man walks across this empty space whilst someone else is watching him, and this is all that is needed for an act of theatre to be engaged'.[629] That empty space here is filled with a collection of fragments that gradually coalesce as a collated experience for the player. The abstract visuals and oblique narrative sequencing are reliant on the player piecing together these shards of meaning, as distinct to meaning being pre-fabricated, as in the Event Tree of *The 39 Steps*. This process may place the viewer/player as multiform participant; as agent interacting with the game-world, as 'co-producer of the plot', and also as beneficiary of the visual performance on-screen.[630] The resultant effect being that the 'viewer's subject knowledge and experience intertwines with the objectified artefacts [as they] absorb the aesthetic qualities of art works [and] discover qualities of experience that metaphorically link with their own memories and cultural histories'.[631] Thus, each player creates their own adaptation, their own archive, as they play through the game, allowing individual agency to supplant textual fidelity.[632]

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[626] Lotman, p.210.
[627] 'Varujan Boghosian', *Berta Walker Gallery* (Berta Walker)
<http://bertawalkergallery.com/Artists/Boghosian_V/Boghosian.php> [accessed 5 January 2016]
[628] Meek, *Beckett*, interview.
[629] Brook, p.7.
[630] Ryan, 'Beyond Myth and Metaphor: The Case of Narrative in Digital Media'.
[631] Garoian, p.240.
[632] Moore, p.191.

Yet fidelity to what? Through aesthetic and protocol, *Beckett* uses Beckett-esque methods of dislocation and abstraction in the search for meaning in a meaningless world. These moments are fashioned from the detritus of the everyday and given new purpose, embedding themselves in the personal, as every journey has the potential to be unique. The style may be aligned to Dada, yet there is also the sentiment of the Modernist in terms of meaning generation, to create a text that does not necessarily narrate, but make a 'series of impressions on our brains'.[633] Thus, denoting a return to the literary text but one suggestive of a textual movement that was also seeking to escape the trappings and boundaries of traditional form. Incorporating an outer framework of 'game-ness', *Beckett*'s true nature pivots on the abstract, encouraging a questioning of narrative and engagement on the part of the player. *Beckett* may be seen as a text that seeks to transgress or test the limits of its boundaries both within its form and on the effect it generates on the part of the player. *Beckett* seeks to achieve this through a fragmentary, distorted, nonlinear approach reliant on the player being the detective; becoming, Beckett, and piecing together meaning through ephemera and lost objects. The use and collation of meaning through multiple modes of media continues in the following discussion of digital texts, which also focus on what is the narrative impetus of *Beckett*, that of loss. These following works are concerned with that 'final imprint', 'when people fall out of existence and into your memories' and aim to reshape those shards into something whole and meaningful.[634]

Figure 73. Final imprint.[635]
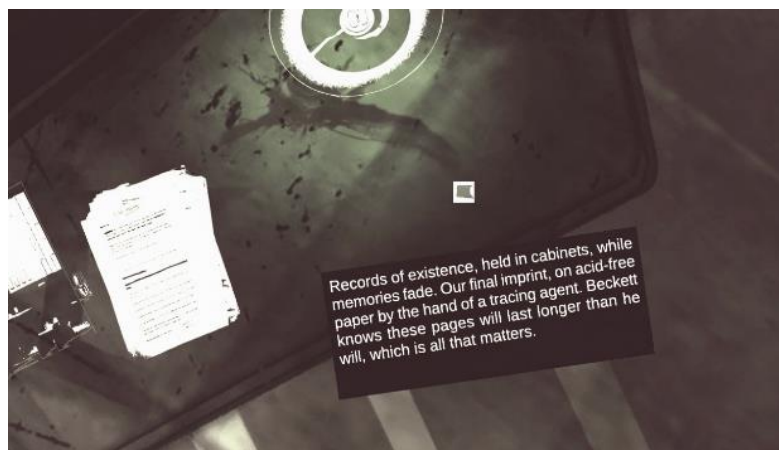
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[633] Ford Madox Ford, *Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance*, (London: Duckworth, 1925), p.182.
[634] See The Secret Experiment, *Beckett* (The Secret Experiment, 2017); Meek, *Beckett*, interview.
[635] *Beckett*, screenshots.

Chapter Five – Archiving Loss

Thematically, the issue of adapting fragmented, lost, or forgotten forms has occupied a recurring role in the development of this thesis. The nature of adaptation itself may be seen as some form of persistent return to a past object, an attempt to reclaim or rescue the textual artefact. More specifically, the remediation of loss has been explored through multiple textual interpretations, from accounts and revisions of the Orpheus myth through to such studies including Langston's art installation, *A Silent Applause*, which attempted to chronicle the experience of loss through audio and materiel means. Elsewhere, Iuppa's rediscovery and remediation of folktales, myths and histories through site-specific poetic narratives, continued themes of unearthing and rediscovering the past, as did *Beckett*, presenting an enigmatic quest through digital and analog modes for a lost object. However, to specifically adapt *loss,* and as an extension, *grief* itself, is the focus of this chapter, and continues the concerns of textual structure and media specifity within the protocols of a digital environment, or game structure, as raised within Chapter Four.

In these texts the act of writing or rewriting (through variant media) is designed to preserve the departed lost object. These grief-works were designed in part as a process of remembrance, as 'the mourner experiences a wish to restore and repair the lost and damaged "good object"'.[636] As Maurice Blanchot states, 'Writing marks or leaves marks. What is entrusted to it remains. With it history starts in the institutional form of the Book and time as inscription in the heaven of stars begins with earthly traces, monuments, works. Writing is remembrance'.[637] The act of reconstitution functions as a process of transformation from memory to artefact, as 'To remember means to give a permanent materiality to someone or something that has been lost'.[638] Such reformation allows the text, the life, to remain somehow, as texts 'only disappear when they are completely forgotten, when no one ever uses their name'.[639]

That Dragon, Cancer tackles the challenging issue of adapting a tragic event into a media format that allows the user/player access through a range of narrative based,

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[636] Baker.

[637] Maurice Blanchot, *The Step Not Beyond*, trans. by Lycette Nelson (New York: State University of New York Press, 1973), p.31.

[638] William Watkin, *On Mourning: Theories of Loss in Modern Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), p.9.

[639] Adam Philips, *Darwin's Worms* (London: Faber & Faber, 1999), p.125.

interactional, and emotional experiences.[640] The game won a BAFTA Games Award for Innovation, and The Game Awards – Games of Impact award in its portrayal of these themes of loss. It was a game constructed by Amy and Ryan Green about their son Joel who was diagnosed with brain cancer at 12 months old.[641] Three years later, Joel died after losing his fight with the illness. The game was based on the family's experience of loving and caring for their ill child, allowing 'players to interact with and relate to the family's love for Joel'.[642] Amy and Ryan, both devout Christians, with a background in writing and game development respectively, sought to create a digital artefact whose narrative would deeply affect 'the people it touches. While its story may be specific, the themes of tragedy, shock, inevitability, faith, hope, love, and despair that it addresses are universal'.[643]

Each part of the story is relayed to the player over the course of fourteen chapters lasting around five to ten minutes each. Visuals are presented in an 'abstract, angular manner, like low-poly 3D models from a late '80s computer project were smothered in a rainbow of watercolour and paper-grain effects'.[644] Facial details are removed to their essential elements, with few identifying characteristics; Joel, whilst being the centre point of the narrative, frequently appears as an absence, akin to a 'distant memory […] In one scene, he isn't even physically present, just an empty crib in a hospital room from which issue inconsolable sobs'.[645] Animations are kept unassuming, with the player's movement often one of a 'gliding' motion through these events, the player 'floats through dreams and nightmares, often doing little more than steering themselves along the passing experience and gazing at ephemera'.[646] This removal of detail permits the character to be a blank slate, an area of inhabitation by the player themselves. The existence of such 'blank' characters can be reasoned as providing 'spaces' to inhabit, that such indeterminate presence assists in the user/player occupying the vessel of the central character, as per McCloud's 'empty shell' observation of character

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[640] Amy Green, Ryan Green and others, *That Dragon, Cancer* (Numinous Games, 2016), <http://www.thatdragoncancer.com/> [accessed 3 March 2017]

[641] Andy Robertson, *That Dragon, Cancer: The video game that takes death seriously* (The Guardian, 2016), <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2016/feb/12/that-dragon-cancer-video-game> [accessed 26 February 2017]

[642] Sam Machkovech, *That Dragon, Cancer: A Game that Wrestles with Grief, Hope, and Faith* (ars TECHNICA UK, 2016), <https://arstechnica.co.uk/gaming/2016/01/that-dragon-cancer-a-game-that-struggles-with-grief-hope-and-faith/> [accessed 26 February 2017]

[643] Gabe Fields, *VIDEO GAME REVIEW: That Dragon, Cancer: A powerful story about loss and its emotional baggage* (The Tech:.MIT, 2016), <http://tech.mit.edu/V135/N38/dragon.html> [accessed 26 February 2017]

[644] Machkovech.

[645] Fields

[646] Colin Campbell, *This is the toughest game you've ever played: That Dragon, Cancer is a devastating experience* (Polygon, 2016), <http://www.polygon.com/2016/1/11/10739756/that-dragon-cancer> [accessed 26 February 2017]

activation and performance (as previously discussed with regard to *The 39 Steps* and *Beckett*).[647]

The fourteen scenes of the game vary in form and content, presenting a visual narrative based around 'living, abstract interactive paintings: cubism, expressionism, even interactive haiku'.[648] The scenes present a series of 'structured vignettes from Joel's battle with cancer, which the player can explore from a first-person perspective. Poetic and imaginative, the gameplay tests the faith, hope and love of the player'.[649] Ranging from observing Joel playing in a playground, to a 'go-kart style mini-game where you collect chemotherapy drugs, and a game-within-a-game in the 'Joel the Baby Knight' sequence. This section presents the story of Joel's battle with cancer as an 8-bit side scrolling platform game, 'This is the story of a very brave Knight, named Joel […] he was being chased by a dragon named cancer' (see Figures 74-77).[650] These 'levels' provide both variety in types of engagement for the player, while also depicting captured moments in the life of Joel Green.
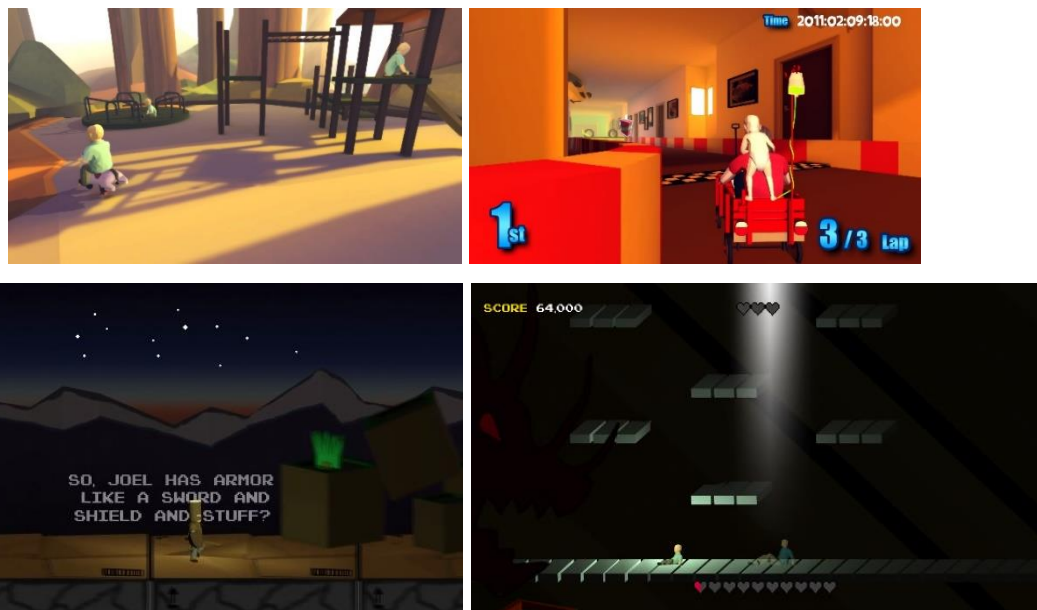
Figures 74-77. Mixed stylistics.[651]

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[647] McCloud, p.59.
[648] Andy Robertson.
[649] Jonathan Wells, *That Dragon, Cancer: The heartbreaking video game that is helping a father mourn his son's death* (The Telegraph, 2016), <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/men/fatherhood/that-dragon-cancer-the-heartbreaking-video-game-that-is-helping/> [accessed 26 February 2017]
[650] Amy Green, Ryan Green and others, *That Dragon, Cancer.*
[651] Amy Green, Ryan Green and others, *That Dragon, Cancer*, screenshots. (Numinous Games, 2016)

The audio used in many of these sequences are often taken from the family's time together; the voices the player hears are the Green family themselves, allowing the player to share in those real moments, 'When you hear the family talking about Joel, you're hearing an actual conversation that the developers recorded themselves having with their children'.[652] The presence of real audio utilised in the play experience appears elsewhere when the player witnesses the family playing together at the park, voicemail messages are heard, 'Letters between Ryan and Amy are read out, revealing their innermost fears and […] their dearest hopes'.[653] The manner of including such recognisable gameplay mechanics as platform/shooting games (such as in the 'Baby Knight' sequence) alongside a conglomeration of archived artefacts of 'found audio' objects, assist in serving as 'metaphors for the larger experience', quite literally the fight against *That Dragon, Cancer,* both for the Greens themselves, and for the player.[654]

The mode of interaction by the player is achieved by using a mouse or gamepad to manipulate the in-game camera to 'look' and select elements which may be interacted with. Such interactions include context-specific events, such as pushing Joel down a slide, swimming, or opening a get-well card. Each segment of the story is 'told as a journey through a physical or emotional location. The player touches toys or lights candles or clicks on a juice box or feeds bread to a duck or many other light flips that propel the game forward'.[655] These are nominal actions within a larger narrative, the player less shapes the tale, than experiences it. As Colin Campbell notes, these 'minimal player actions are greater than mere symbolic additions to the shock of traveling within the lives of a family going through hell. They impel the player to seek and to find the memories that must be sought and found', to navigate a journey through the fragments of collated memories, experiences, and reflections, and to participate in a dream of a life.[656]

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[652] Fields.
[653] Colin Campbell, *This is the toughest game you've ever played.*
[654] Kitty Knowles, *That Dragon, Cancer: How One Family's Loss Led to a Stunning Game* (The Memo, 2016), <http://www.thememo.com/2016/11/17/that-dragon-cancer-game-health-innovation-gaming-in-healthcare/> [accessed 26 February 2017]
[655] Colin Campbell, *This is the toughest game you've ever played.*
[656] Ibid.

Not a question, but a command

Industry reviews of the game were generally favourable, reaching an overall Metascore of 78 on Metacritic, with Gamespew's effusive 10/10 review proclaiming that it expanded the parameters of what might be considered a video game, not being simply 'sadistic shoot 'em ups or mind-numbing ridiculousness. Sometimes they're real life; they're heartbreaking and devastating'.[657] Kitty Knowles emphasises the emotive effect of the game, stating, 'Fighting for good is a common theme in video games. But one game made this year is about taking on more than zombies or monsters. Instead players are invited to see into one family's battle against cancer'.[658] Campbell too notes, that 'themes like this are a new challenge for video games […] We spend a great deal of time writing about dudes with guns or happy little cartoon chaps bouncing through wonderlands. Games don't generally feature kids with cancer'.[659] Sam Machkovech expands:

> Death happens a lot in video games, but how often do games stop to reflect upon it, or upon grief? Most games cloak death in hit points, energy bars, and infinite respawns—death is reduced to a gameplay mechanic, a thing that can, with skill, be avoided or defeated […], death is not an end. So long as we hold a controller, the bodies are buried, the emotions are overcome, and the battle rages on.[660]

The premise of the game is not to illustrate cataclysmic struggles against an all threatening evil, the battle it presents is against loss and grief and as such it presents possibly 'the biggest boss battle a video game has ever seen: cancer'.[661] The emotional journey it presents is reflected by Morgan Davies, who adds 'You might want to build a boat before you play otherwise you might drown in your own tears by the end of the 90 minutes'.[662] This impact is similarly felt by John Paul Jones of Game Watcher, whose review reveals that 'it becomes difficult to imagine an individual that would experience *That Dragon, Cancer* and not feel richer and better off for having been immersed in its bittersweet storytelling as the end credits roll'.[663]

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[657] See Metacritic, *That Dragon, Cancer (*Metacritic, 2016), <http://www.metacritic.com/game/pc/that-dragon-cancer> [accessed 3 March 2017]; Morgan Davies, *That Dragon, Cancer review – GameSpew* (GameSpew, 2016), <http://www.gamespew.com/2016/02/dragon-cancer-review/> [accessed 3 March 2017]
[658] Knowles.
[659] Colin Campbell, *This is the toughest game you've ever played.*
[660] Machkovech.
[661] Morgan Davies, *That Dragon, Cancer review – GameSpew (*GameSpew, 2016), <http://www.gamespew.com/2016/02/dragon-cancer-review/> [accessed 3 March 2017]
[662] Ibid.
[663] John-Paul Jones, *That Dragon, Cancer PC review* (Game Watcher, 2016), <http://www.gamewatcher.com/reviews/that-dragon-cancer-review/12439> [accessed 3 March 2017]

Certain independent user reviews focused less on the effect of the game, and more on how it progresses as media artefact to be played, with sarahlee123 highlighting the 'clunky mechanics' of the work.[664] Alden_Pearce shares the frustration of not knowing what this digital artefact truly was, whilst echoing the frustration felt with the control method:

> The end of the ''game'' it reads "thank you for playing'', but there is zero gameplay, nor is this a game. i really don't see how 14.99 justifies what i just went through. Also, imo, the controls are wonky as heck. i feel like the button mapping could have been made easier. I think i spent about an hour and a half on this, and there were a few times i was kind of stuck, once underwater trying to (incorrectly) swim up, another time in a hospital room with Joel crying on a loop, and a 3rd time infront of candles in the church where i found myself playing repeater a few times before progressing.[665] [sic]

However, that annoyance of a lack of total control felt by some players links implicitly to the origin of the idea for the game itself, as Ryan Green recalls a time when his son was:

> dehydrated and diarrheal, unable to drink anything without vomiting it back up, feverish, howling, and inconsolable, no matter how Green tried to soothe him […] "There's a process you develop as a parent to keep your child from crying, and that night I couldn't calm Joel," […] "It made me think, 'This is like a game where the mechanics are subverted and don't work".[666]

This instance is repeated during gameplay in the chapter, *Dehydration*, as the player is placed in a room with Joel crying uncontrollably, presenting 'Joel crying on a loop'.[667] The player can only hold the representation of Joel (not appearing as a physical form, but as an audible, relentless presence), and offer comfort by pacing around the small hospital room, utter soothing words, or sing fragments of nursery rhymes. They may attempt to give him juice, which only causes Joel to vomit and scream with more intensity. To attempt to find a solution to this scenario is impossible, the player must wait, their actions rendered pointless.

Frome divides the roles that players occupy in-game as being 'observer-participant', or 'actor-participant'. The observer-participant engages with a text, artwork, or-game, but does not change its material form, in a similar manner to watching a film, the player's 'emotional responses are based on what they see, hear, and feel. They can interpret these inputs in different

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[664] Metacritic, *That Dragon, Cancer* (Metacritic, 2016), <http://www.metacritic.com/game/pc/that-dragon-cancer> [accessed 3 March 2017]

[665] Ibid.

[666] Jason Tanz, *Playing Fort Time: A Father, a Dying Son, and the Quest to Make the Most Profound Videogame Ever* (WIRED, 2016), <https://www.wired.com/2016/01/that-dragon-cancer/> [accessed 26 February 2017]

[667] Metacritic, *That Dragon, Cancer*

ways but they cannot change the inputs themselves'.[668] The actor-participant does change the form of a work, for example, when the player presses a button, the character/digital artefact/cursor that represents the player, performs an action, and changes the images on-screen. As Frome notes:

> Videogame play requires actor-participation because any moves they make must be represented in a manner that changes the game's material form. As an actor-participant, players' emotional responses are based primarily on what they *do* rather than what they perceive.[669]

However, this moment in-game may be defined by what they player may *not* be able to do, as Gabe Fields comments, it is the purpose of the game to generate a sense of helplessness, the 'Green's want you to feel what it's like to have a sense of moral responsibility, and a set of tasks you can perform, but be completely unable to comfort or save Joel'.[670] This segment of unstoppable crying was the first to be shown to the public during playtesting, of a parent 'playing a game he couldn't win as he tried to get fluids into Joel'.[671] The 'subversion of mechanic' Ryan Green mentions, 'in a game that couldn't be won', was as described, an impasse for some players, as it purposely challenged the nature of game-ness, but also remained true to the core element of the narrative; the loss of Joel.[672]

The conception of whether this was a true 'game' was echoed not only by other reviewers, but also by co-developer Amy Green, who states of the development process 'I'm not sure what "*That Dragon, Cancer*" will be', describing the product as 'more of an art piece than a video game'.[673] The sub-heading of John Biggs' article, highlights the contradistinction of these elements, asking 'When is a game not a game? When it becomes art, a collection of found objects, and a memorial'.[674] Prevalent with the seeming mechanics of game-process, it is also an effort to 'to memorialize […] create and remember', in an artefact representing 'mourning, memory and the work of salvage'.[675] It is a journey *back*, to collate fragments of

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[668] Jonathan Frome, 'Eight Ways Videogames Generate Emotion', *DIGRA '07 - Proceedings of the 2007 DIGRA International Conference: Situated Play*, 4 (2007), 831–835 (p.832), <http://homes.lmc.gatech.edu/~cpearce3/DiGRA07/Proceedings/111.pdf> [accessed 27 February 2017]
[669] Frome, p.832.
[670] Fields.
[671] Andy Robertson.
[672] Ibid.
[673] See Amy Green, *Joelevangreen.com* (2014), <http://joelevangreen.com/?paged=2> [accessed 26 February 2017]; Jonathan Wells.
[674] John Biggs, *The creator of That Dragon, Cancer talks about loss, love, and indie art* (TechCrunch, 2016), <https://techcrunch.com/2016/03/22/the-creator-of-that-dragon-cancer-talks-about-loss-love-and-indie-art/> [accessed 26 February 2017]
[675] See Amy Green, *Joelevangreen.com*; Mantel, *Start the Week*.

memory, an 'interactive memoir' that is reshaped through a digital media format that allows a journey *through* those moments of emotional intensity by the player.[676]

The capacity for games to generate emotive experiences is discussed by Jim Campbell, who delineates between input, and effect. Here, the user inputs choices/data into a computer, 'an empty structure into which a concept is inserted,' as a result, a program reacts with some form of output, within a given set of responses.[677] Campbell suggests that the majority of responses are limited, being 'scripted and predetermined within the pretext of a few choices'.[678] Once these preselected choices have been discovered by the user, they may feel 'in control', yet as a result of this, a mode of dialogue has been lost, the journey into the digital format then existing not as *process of exploration*, but of *control*, the input being 'not a question but a command'.[679] The digital interface may then create a delimitation of aesthetic or emotional affect, or as Campbell notes, 'Probably the only meaningful dialogues that occur when interacting with a work are between the viewers and themselves in the form of feedback systems'.[680]

This limitation of meaning created by a digital interface is also discussed by Andrew Cutting, who utilises James' *The Turn of the Screw* to examine the essential unsuitability of this text with regard to transmitting emotional or psychological complexity when transferred into a video game format. Perceiving a standoff between digital, or populist entertainment on the one hand, and literary culture on the other, Cutting's discussion revolves around how new technologies might meld moments of interactivity that games may provide, with the psychological interiority of a Jamesian-type narrative:

> A video game, it might be argued, simply cannot afford the means of expression capable of delivering the core experiences that define the essential identity of James's tale […] the distinguishing qualities of the original cannot survive the process of translation from prose to game.[681]

Cutting argues that video games focus on 'various aspects of simulated physical activity – shooting, racing, jumping, dancing, playing football', and do not create 'intellectually nuanced,

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[676] Knowles.

[677] Jim Campbell, 'Delusions of dialogue: Control and choice in interactive art', *Leonardo*, 33.2 (2000), 133–136 (p.133), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1576847?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents><10.2307/1576847> [accessed 19 May 2016]

[678] Ibid.

[679] Ibid.

[680] Ibid, p.136.

[681] Cutting, p.173.

psychologically complex, and historically situated fictional experiences'.[682] That nuanced narrative and psychological complexity cannot be adequately rendered within a video game platform. The question that Cutting asks is, how may psychological interiority be represented within a medium that is designed to illustrate information outwardly to the player? As an example, and speaking more generally of the visual novel genre (such as *The 39 Steps*, as discussed previously), 'there is no attempt in this kind of game to use more than a fraction of the audio-visual, tactile, and kinaesthetic functionality which defines the cutting edge and cultural heartland of gaming'.[683] Cutting notes that such psychological or emotional transference is not impossible or alien to a technological medium, but that the future potentials of emergent digital technologies may instead harbour a range of rich intermedial and intertextual responses with regard to the delivery of information to the user or player. Such emergent representation may allow the player to 'explore the external spaces of fictional worlds rendered in multisensory detail that increases with each new generation'.[684] Yet Cutting's conjecture that video games cannot render emotive or psychological expression that deliver the 'core experiences' which define a text (the multi-layered enigma of *The Turn of the Screw* in his discussion) would prove to be challenged in *That Dragon, Cancer*. It is a challenge delivered not via emergent technologies, but instead through the incorporation of a purposely uncooperative interface, a collage of narrative events drawn from the past and rendered through use of 'old-school' graphics, within a primarily linear (with regard to player navigation and action) mode of progression.

Juul's definition of games as rule-based, possessing variable outcomes, of which, effort is exerted by the player to influence the results of those outcomes; resultantly, emotional attachment arises as the player is attached to the results of their efforts in those outcomes.[685] Those 'variable outcomes' cannot be achieved here, you cannot save Joel. However, Jarvinen's contention that as long as a player is 'willing to care enough about the goals of the game and the social situations in order to "play along," games arguably set up conditions for eliciting emotions', does frame the affective experience the game is designed to generate.[686] The manner of forcing limits (through the control scheme, and actions which they can/not do) via a system of game protocols (normative rules and actions, intermingled the reframing of memories, the

[682] Cutting, p.169.
[683] Ibid, p.170.
[684] Ibid, p.176.
[685] Juul, pp.6-7.
[686] Jarvinen, 'Video Games as Emotional Experiences', in *The Video Game Theory Reader 2*, ed. by Perron and Wolf, p.87.

reshaping of past forms, and the remixing of various digital artefacts in textual construction.), enhance, and not detract from the manner in which the player experiences the 'core' of textual meaning. That meaning being the experience of loss, and the emotive effect upon the player.

Mechanical subversions

Games such as *That Dragon, Cancer*, are seen to 'subvert the usual fun expectations of videogaming and instead teach the player patience and offer insight into otherwise inaccessible situations'.[687] This exploratory nature in favour of more typical instances of game-ness, has led some to suggest that these media artefacts occupy a particular sub-genre, namely the 'empathy game', or in a perhaps more derogatory manner, a 'walking simulator'. The 'walking simulator' tag has fallen into common use amongst games distribution platforms such as *Steam*, being a searchable genre-term, and includes such examples as *Gone Home* (2013), *The Vanishing of Ethan Carter* (2014), and *Dear Esther* (2012), which:[688]

> drops you on an island in the Hebrides, off the coast of Scotland. Once there, you walk around. Very slowly. Every once in a while, as you make your way around the island exploring its paths and hillsides and trails, you'll be interrupted by a narrator providing you with increasingly fragmented and confusing accounts of yourself, your wife and then...other stuff. And that's it.[689]

Despite a favourable review, Plunkett ends with the perhaps comedic 'And that's it', which for many, as previous review samples have indicated, has been a prevailing note of dissatisfaction. However, this also suggests the wry attempt to move away from conventional videogame mores, highlighted by the main heading for Plunkett's piece, '*Dear Esther* is a terrible video game. Which would be a problem if *Dear Esther* was a video game'.[690]

A somewhat more fraught gaming experience amidst this category of the empathy game is provided by *This War of Mine* (2014), produced by 11Bit studios. It is a game in which the player takes the role of a survivor in a city ravaged by war, in which they must somehow survive by trading for food, avoiding roaming gangs and soldiers, and maintain some form of good health. Kacper Kwiatkowski, a designer and writer for the game illustrates their aims, noting the prevailing genre-mechanic of most modern game forms as being 'much narrower than in other modern media, such as film or even comics […] The interactivity of the games is

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[687] Wells.

[688] See Steve Gaynor, *Gone Home* (Fullbright, 2013); The Astronauts, *The Vanishing of Ethan Carter* (The Astronauts, 2014); The Chinese Room, *Dear Esther* (Curve Digital, 2012); Lucas Pope, *Papers, Please* (3909, , 2013); 11Bit Studios, *This War of Mine* (11Bit Studios, 2014).

[689] Luke Plunkett, *Dear Esther: The Kotaku Review* (Kotaku, 2012), <http://kotaku.com/5884520/dear-esther-the-kotaku-review> [accessed 6 March 2017]

[690] Plunkett.

a potent tool for telling serious stories in ways unavailable to other media'.[691] Jarvinen concurs, as by:

> identifying games in which emotional dispositions such as empathy – rather than, say, conflict – characterize play experiences, video game studies can point the way to a broader spectrum of play experiences, and consequently, uncover a potentially broader spectrum of audiences and attitudes towards games.[692]

As a further example of the 'empathy simulator' *Papers, Please* (Lucas Pope, 2013) situates players in the 'position of a lowly immigration inspector working at a border checkpoint in the fictitious Eastern European country of Arstotzka'.[693] Facing an endless stream of refugees, suicide bombers, smugglers, potential 'parasites seeking to suck upon (what the propaganda insists are) Arstotzka's most bountiful of teats. Show your passport when ordered. Pay no attention to the sea of desolation all around. Glory to Arstotzka, or else'.[694] The game presents these increasingly complex mechanical decisions within ever more difficult moral conundrums, 'like whether to separate a husband and wife whose paperwork doesn't match, or play white knight and turn a pimp away before he can get his hands on a girl who claims he tricked her over the border'.[695] The game presents the 'narrative of the "unknown other" resulting from the closed (or sealed) border', focusing on the barriers between societies, States, or religious orders wishing to perpetuate difference through brooding fears of immigration, amidst the secular notion of nationalism, creating a 'sense of threat through the construction and perpetuation' of the boundary or wall.[696] It is perhaps ironic that the primary element of the game mechanic and narrative frame, the *border* itself, breaks its format boundaries, burrowing into the players 'moral psyche as the choices you make get ever tougher'.[697]

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[691] Eric Bartelson, *Empathy Games: Birth of a genre?* (CONTROL500, 2015), <http://ctrl500.com/developers-corner/empathy-games-%E2%80%A2-fighting-tears/> [accessed 6 March 2017]

[692] Jarvinen, 'Video Games as Emotional Experiences', in *The Video Game Theory Reader 2*, ed. by Perron and Wolf, p.86.

[693] Wells.

[694] Richard Cobbett, *Papers, Please Review* (IGN, 2013), <http://uk.ign.com/articles/2013/08/12/papers-please-review> [accessed 6 March 2017]

[695] Cobbett.

[696] David Newman, 'The Lines that Continue to Separate Us - Borders in Our "Borderless" World', in *Border Poetics De-limited*, ed. by Johan Schimanski and Stephen Wolfe (Hannover: Wehrhahn Verlag, 2007), pp.27–58 (pp.41-42).

[697] Tom Hoggins, *Papers, Please review* (Telegraph.co.uk, 2013), <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/video-games/video-game-reviews/10271115/Papers-Please-review.html> [accessed 6 March 2017]

The creator of the long running *Civilisation* series of games, Sid Meier, has stated that 'a game is a series of interesting decisions'.[698] Distinguishing between the terms 'series', and 'interesting decisions', Meier sees 'series' as speaking 'to the idea of pacing', the rhythm of progression itself, while 'interesting decisions' are viable options for the player to undertake during the process of play itself. These decisions are not simply what the game environment presents to the player, but of how the player interacts with the game and what they choose to do with the options available. If a game provides three options, one of which is the only choice players take, then that may not classify as an 'interesting' decision.[699] Types of decisions a game may present are dependent on factors such as risk vs. reward, short term vs. long term goals, in addition to the player's own play style and personality.[700] With regard to a strategy game, the player may aim for short term goals to build their settlement, but may also invest in resource gathering that would enable a larger weapon/siege engine/more powerful unit, later in the game. Within a shooting-based game, a powerful short-range weapon could be chosen over a more accurate weapon that is only useful over a long distance, according to the predilections of the player, and also the nature of the gameplay environment itself.

Chris Bateman disputes this easy distinction of 'interesting choices' however, arguing against this 'oft repeated Sid Meier misquote' as it does not apply to every type of game.[701] Bateman highlights board games such as *Snakes and Ladders*, in which dice are rolled to move the player(s) across a given number of squares on the game board, landing either on a blank square, a ladder (to progress upwards, towards the game goal), or on a snake (moving back downwards, and further away from the game goal) as possessing zero, or limited interesting decisions. Solidifying his objection with the discussion of 'rhythm action games' such as *Guitar Hero* (Harmonix, 2005), which 'do not rely upon a series of interesting decisions, for the most part they have *no decisions of any kind*!', he notes that outside of strategy games, the quote is generally misleading for games design purposes.[702] Chris Deleon states simply 'There are good games about choices. And there are good games that can be played with no more 'choice' than how to turn left on a more efficient line or how to aim better and mash a button

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[698] Sid Meier, *Interesting Decisions* (GDC Vault, 2012), <http://www.gdcvault.com/play/1015756/Interesting> [accessed 27 February 2017]

[699] Ibid.

[700] Ibid.

[701] Chris Bateman, *A Game Isn't a Series of interesting Decisions* (Only a Game, 2008), <http://onlyagame.typepad.com/only_a_game/2008/07/a-game-isnt-a-series-of-interesting-decisions.html> [accessed 27 February 2017]

[702] Ibid.

more rapidly'.[703] That the suggestion of a tactical decision in 'Galaga – or […] the freedom to switch between guns in *Doom* – does not mean it's a game about making interesting decisions, any more than the rescuing of a princess makes *Super Mario Bros* a story game'.[704]

The concept of the user engaging in a 'series of interesting decisions' occupies the core mechanic of Galactic Café's 2013 game *The Stanley Parable*. The game begins by positing the player in a graphical depiction of a simple office, combined with an introductory voice-over:

> This is the story of a man named Stanley. Stanley worked for a company in a big building where he was employee number 427. Employee Number 427's job was simple: he sat at his desk in room 427, and he pushed buttons on a keyboard. Orders came to him through a monitor on his desk, telling him what buttons to push, how long to push them, and in what order. This is what Employee 427 did every day of every month and every year, and although others might have considered it soul-rending, Stanley relished every moment that the orders came in, as though he had been made exactly for this job. And Stanley was happy.[705]

The commentary continues throughout each playthrough, at times strongly suggesting: which direction the player should go in, what doors to open, the ideal path to 'complete' the journey, or simply to be 'Happy'.

Nineteen different endings are possible within the game, achieved via the numerous choices and pathways taken by the player.[706] To cite two examples, the 'Freedom Ending' occurs if the player obeys:

> everything The Narrator tells you to do. At the end, Stanley will destroy the "Mind Control Facility" pushing the "OFF" button, disabling the controls and step out of the building into the green field. The Narrator talks about Stanley finally being free and able to do what he wants, which is both ironic and clever since the Narrator was the one controlling him.[707]

While the 'Coward Ending' is achieved if the player does nothing, closes the door to the office at the start of the game, and 'Instead of exploring The Office, Stanley chooses to sit there staring at the screen, hoping some commands will pop out. The Narrator will utter some

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[703] Chris Deleon, *Many Games are Not About Choices* (HobbyGameDev, 2011), <http://www.hobbygamedev.com/int/many-games-are-not-about-choices/> [accessed 27 February 2017]
[704] Ibid.
[705] Galactic Cafe, *The Stanley Parable* (Galactic Café, 2013)
[706] See *The Stanley Parable Wiki* (Wikia), <http://thestanleyparable.wikia.com/wiki/Endings> [accessed 27 February 2017]
[707] *The Stanley Parable Wiki*.

comments about Stanley and his cowardice and the game resets', thus triggering another attempt by the player to enact an alternate sequence of events.[708]

The Stanley Parable interrogates modes of play, questioning those independent, or 'interesting' decisions that the player may make. The game foregrounds the reality for the player that all possible choices have already been considered by the game mechanic itself. A specific instance of this occurs if the player tries to open Door 430, it is locked, and in the attempt to open it the voice-over interjects:

> Oh, please. Are you really just doing this for the achievement? Click a door five times, is that all that you think an achievement is worth? No, no, no, no, no, I can't just give these merits away for such little effort. A measly five clicks? Now suppose you were to click the door 20 times. I would say that's the kind of effort that warrants recognition.[709]

If the player is goaded into continuing their efforts and 'clicks' twenty times or more, the voice-over interjects again:

> Hmm. I have to say, I'm still not feeling the satisfaction of witnessing true effort for a noble cause. Perhaps 50 clicks will do it - yes, almost certainly, 50 clicks.[710]

Persistence is rewarded only with;

> No, no, I'm still not feeling it. I want this Achievement to have meant something - it has to be a true reward for valiant effort. I want to see some hustle, Stanley. I want to see commitment, a willingness to go all the way no matter what the cost! Why don't you go put 20 clicks into door number 417?[711]

A humorous analysis of digital performativity within narrative processes and the specifities of choice and freedom within digitally interactive spaces. All the player may do, after all, is what Stanley can do, as the voice-over states, 'he pushed buttons on a keyboard. Orders came to him through a monitor on his desk, telling him what buttons to push'.[712] Whilst Stanley is not specifically adapting a text, or the story of a life, it is adapting game expectations of play. As Murray states, 'interactors can only act within the possibilities that have been established by the writing and programming', in this case those possibilities, goals, or interesting choices, are

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[708] The Stanley Parable Wiki.
[709] Galactic Cafe, The Stanley Parable.
[710] Ibid.
[711] Ibid.
[712] Ibid.

knowingly and actively relayed to the player.[713] Such playfulness of delivery necessarily impinges on agency and narrative control, presenting the question, 'To what degree are we authors of the work we are experiencing?'.[714]

That Dragon, Cancer as a 'game' possesses 'no clear goals or objectives. The aim is to keep your faith and empathise with the Green family', to move through each sequence 'pointing and clicking on a variety of objects in the various rooms and locations'.[715] In these locations the player may attempt to pick up items and engage with other characters in-game which progresses without fail points; the player cannot 'lose' once contact with the digital artefact has begun, yet conversely, the player also cannot ultimately 'win'. The Green's idea for a game based around their son's critical illness seemingly fulfils all the requirements for a game.[716] Game-ness being a 'system in which players engage in an artificial conflict, defined by rules, that results in a quantifiable outcome,' a process of 'causal sequences: actions and outcomes'.[717] These 'conditions' are met; yet do not present a simple win/loss scenario, as the aspect of victory is proven to be deliberately unattainable. The mechanics of play would usually permit a degree of control by the player over their environment and the actions of their representative/avatar/player character on-screen in order to overcome some form of obstacle (either a play sequence, or the game as a whole). The interesting choices are less in what the player does, but of how they react to the repeated sequences and stages of a life that cannot be saved by action or authorship.

The prevailing notion here is one of powerlessness, of the insistent vulnerability presented by a relentless mechanic which the player is (seemingly) unable to stop. The expectations and rules of games played previously (defeat the aliens, win the sporting event, rescue the princess) are rendered ineffective, as 'Players find themselves wanting to be able to do something to fix the situation, to beat cancer like they would beat an enemy in a game, and discovering that they can't'.[718] The manner of a 'clumsy' or awkward control method, the frustration of being seemingly unable to alter events, are part of the altered game mechanic here. This is a game that invites players to contemplate a life, to 'slow down and explore

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[713] Murray, *Hamlet on the Holodeck*, p.152.
[714] Ibid. p.152.
[715] Wells.
[716] Fields.
[717] See Krzywinska and King p.9; Salen and Zimmerman, p.96; Jarvinen, 'Video Games as Emotional Experiences', in *The Video Game Theory Reader 2*, ed. by Perron and Wolf, p.90.
[718] Knowles.

beautiful, impressionist landscapes of ponds, parks, hospital rooms and oceans,' yet also presents a deliberately frustrating method designed to subvert expectation for emotional affect.[719]

As Amy Green explains 'Video games offer amazing opportunities to share people's stories in a way that invites the player into circumstances they might not experience in any other way'.[720] The intention being to put players 'in control of a narrative and then steal that control away, […] after all, what can render a parent as powerless as facing an unkillable cancer in your infant child?'.[721] Juul's view on video games as being two different things at the same time, illustrates an unwitting poignancy in its terminology:

> Video games are *real* in that they consist of real rules with which players actually interact, and in that winning or losing a game is a real event. However, when winning a game by slaying a dragon, the dragon is not a real dragon but a fictional one. To play a video game is therefore to interact with real rules while imagining a fictional world, and a video game is a set of rules as well as a fictional world.[722]

Here, the dragon, is very much fictional, and also very real, in a narrative that is focused on the adaptation and memorialisation of a life, while being contained within purposely elusive, untouchable video game structure and mechanics.

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[719] Knowles.
[720] Ibid.
[721] Machkovech.
[722] Juul, p.1.

This notion that nobody is thinking about you, and do you exist at all?[723]

The utilisation of game mechanics within the delivery of an emotional narrative experience occupies the initial focus for the following analysis of the story, or more accurately, *stories*, of Joyce Vincent, who, 'In late 2003 […] died in her London flat […] No one knew that Joyce Vincent died that day. Not right away. Not for a while'.[724] This is not to delimit or eulogise a tragedy, but to further reframe processes of return and textual assemblage occurring through convergent media processes.

Joyce Vincent had been dead for three years before her body was found by officials seeking to repossess the bedsit in which she lived:

> Lying on the sofa was the skeleton of a 38-year-old woman […] In a corner of the room the television set was still on, tuned to BBC1, and a small pile of unopened Christmas presents lay on the floor. Washing up was heaped in the kitchen sink and a mountain of post lay behind the front door. Food in the refrigerator was marked with 2003 expiry dates. The dead woman's body was so badly decomposed it could only be identified by comparing dental records with an old holiday photograph of her smiling. Her name was revealed to be Joyce Carol Vincent'.[725]

The tragedy was reported in the UK press, and inspired filmmaker Carol Morley to make a documentary to at least in-part chronicle the life of this woman. Morley placed adverts in papers, undertook interviews of those that knew her, obtained information wherever she could, to collate these scattered fragments of memories of Joyce, into a cohesive whole. Morley stated 'I couldn't let go. I didn't want her to be forgotten. I decided I must make a film about her'.[726] The documentary was designed to provoke questions such as 'Will I be lonely? Would people miss me if I was gone? How do we make sense of once-close relationships lost to the passing years?'.[727] The documentary itself is structured as a series of interrelated fragments, as individual recollections interweave with one another to reassemble the fabric of an existence, to piece together the 'whole' of a life.

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[723] Meek, *Beckett*, interview.
[724] Stephen Totilo, *A Normal Life, An Extraordinary Death and the Video Game That Wasn't Meant To Be* (Kotaku, 2012), <http://kotaku.com/5892375/a-normal-life-an-extraordinary-death-and-the-video-game-that-wasnt-meant-to-be> [accessed 17 January 2017]
[725] Carol Morley, *Joyce Carol Vincent: How could this young woman lie dead and undiscovered for almost three years?* (The Guardian, 2011), <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2011/oct/09/joyce-vincent-death-mystery-documentary> [accessed 23 January 2017]
[726] Ibid.
[727] Peter Walker, *The film that makes me cry: Dreams of a Life* (The Guardian, 2015), <https://www.theguardian.com/film/filmblog/2015/mar/27/the-film-that-makes-me-cry-dreams-of-a-life> [accessed 23 January 2017]

These questions continued in a proposed parallel project designed to increase awareness of the documentary itself, as 'Films, even art-house documentaries, spawn video games these days. The companies behind these films see games as a way to reach a bigger audience, to cajole them to see a film or to at least think about it and talk about it'.[728] The call for some manner of interactive artefact was put out by Hilary Perkins of UK television company Channel 4, who was hesitant to call the proposed digital project a 'game', preferring an alternative distinction for the project, one of 'an interactive experience which was facilitated by a game structure'.[729] The games design company who were commissioned to work on the project were Hide & Seek, headed by Margaret Robertson; their aim being to work 'at the point where games meet culture […] with a willingness to look beyond the boundaries of existing game forms'.[730] Their primary objective in the construction of the digital artefact was not to focus on death itself, but life; to create something simple, yet allow an exploration of complex themes of loneliness and loss, and permit the user/interactor to engage in a process of navigation through those emotive experiences.

What was created was *Dreams of Your Life* (2012) which utilised the style of a graphical text adventure, a stylistic 'throwback to early video games that told stories mostly by pulling players through a narrative while requiring them to type answers to questions and issue basic commands to advance, usually past a series of puzzles'.[731] This format was chosen as it would require little knowledge of gameplay processes on the part of the user, allowing challenging content to be presented in a straightforward interface as the user would simply 'click' through sequenced experiences. This digital creation, in lieu of simply creating an audio poem or scrollable instance of a digital text, would potentially allow the user/player to navigate through an experience, to make choices that may resonate within their own lives.

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[728] Totilo.
[729] Ibid.
[730] *Hide&Seek* (Hide&Seek, 2015), <http://hideandseek.net/> [accessed 17 January 2017]
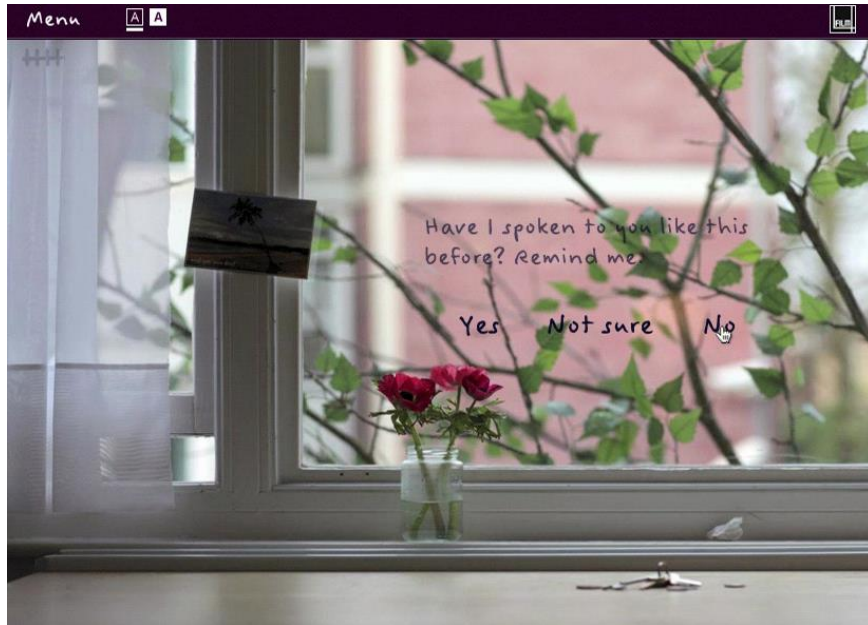[731] Totilo.

Figure 78. Have I spoken to you?[732]

The presence of such mechanics constructs a set of expectations on the part of the participant as to the nature of game*play* itself, namely moments of progression, of overcoming obstacles, and experiencing a form of reward for that behaviour. To progress through such sequential moments of play generates a sense of achievement and enjoyment on the part of the player, as Jarvinen notes, which originate from the very goals gameplay imposes:

> By setting up goals in stylized, fantastic, temporally limited, and/or larger than life form, games condense features of routine nature of everyday life for entertaining purposes. The subsequent result is that the road that players take in trying to attain those goals is beset by emotions, that is, by valenced reactions towards events, agents, or objects in the game.[733]

Jonathan Frome views these emotions, or reactions, as being generated from the intensities of engagement during play, 'due to winning, losing, accomplishment, and frustration. When you are playing a videogame, game emotions are directly related to your performance'.[734] The manner of rewarding progression through the gameplay of the media artefact concerning Joyce Vincent, was intended to play a deeper role than simply markers of continuance, or victory over the game itself. As Robertson says, they did not want to provide arbitrary or meaningless tokens, but rather 'you'd arrive in a room and it would say, 'this room wants you to leave

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[732] Hide & Seek, *Dreams of Your Life*, screenshot. (Hide & Seek, 2012).
[733] Jarvinen, 'Video Games as Emotional Experiences', in *The Video Game Theory Reader 2*, ed. by Perron and Wolf, p.86.
[734] Frome, p.832.

something… a memory of someone you never told you loved. And that becomes a token in the game'.[735] The overall intention being one of self-discovery and reflection; as opposed to *winning the game*, the digital artefact sought to assist in personal introspection.

However, the incorporation of a progressive structure (utilising aspects of advancement, puzzles, choices) within an abstract narrative (focused on loss, grief, the nature of your personal existence), did not peacefully co-exist during development. During product testing the team found a dissonance between the nature of the mediums of game-ness and narrative delivery, Robertson explains:

> We became increasingly wary of designing missions which passed mechanistic judgement on who you were in touch with, or how often, or by what means. And we found that missions where we stripped out that specificity became so wishy-washy as to have no real hook. And that was before we discovered that missions of any type were fundamentally inappropriate.[736]

To provide structure and goals enables a sense of progression, yet in doing so, introspection is ousted in place of achievements in the game-space. The role of the player as one of agent, whose role is to master the environment in which they find themselves through repeated action and reward scenarios, in this case delimited the story of Joyce Vincent. As Robertson continues, "The minute you say: 'Who do you want to give the ring to?' I'm thinking, 'Well, shit, what does the game want me to say here?"'.[737] Or, as Colin Campbell describes this process, 'A level is completed. By me. "Hurrah" I have excelled in this chore. I feel good about myself. Just as the designers willed me to feel'.[738] The moment the game asks the player to make a choice, then the player may desire to work out the most efficient choice within terms of game progression, not necessarily the most revelatory option in terms of narrative emotional affect.[739] The team realised that the very nature of game-ness may possess a barrier to their intentions 'if you want to feel successful or find out the end of the story […] you need to do what the game asks of you. This makes them powerful motivators, and people operate […] dishonestly in their

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[735] Totilo.

[736] Hide & Seek, *Dreams of A Game* (Hide&Seek, 2011), <http://hideandseek.net/2011/11/30/dreams-of-a-game/> [accessed 20 January 2017]

[737] Totilo.

[738] Colin Campbell, *Emotion, manipulation and the future of game design* (Polygon, 2016), <http://www.polygon.com/2016/3/30/11319406/emotions-video-games> [accessed 27 February 2017]

[739] Margaret Robertson, *The Gamification of Death: How the Hardest Game Design Challenge Ever Demonstrates the Limits of Gaming* (2012), <http://www.gdcvault.com/play/1015525/The-Gamification-of-Death-How> [accessed 8 February 2017]

presence'.[740] The drive for the player is to progress, to win in some form and conquer the game-space, yet with regard to the narrative and emotional impact of the subject matter, a gamic structure was self-defeating; in this instance, the affordance or power of games was also the central barrier or problem.

In place of sequences of progression, which could be *gamed* by the user, what was sought was something of a more exploratory note. The team now sought to look beyond linear or markedly progressive structures for inspiration, to constructions that operate within differing terms. Robertson discovered it within the 'floor of Chartres cathedral. The 13th century labyrinth inlaid on the floor has been a tool for contemplation and self-examination for centuries. Labyrinth and maze used to be words I'd use interchangeably: not any more'.[741] Robertson elaborates:

> Mazes are games: junctions and choices that stand between you and the exit. In other words, goal, motivation, choice. Labyrinths are entirely linear. There is only one path, looping around and inside and alongside itself. There isn't even a goal: on reaching the centre, your job is to turn round and come back the way you came, till you arrive back at where you started, having accomplished nothing […] within that no-choice structure, lots of tiny choices lurked, elevated to greater significance by the choice-vacuum in which they existed.[742]

The affordances of the maze and labyrinth have been outlined previously in discussion of *The 39 Steps* digital adaptation and the adherence to a form of digital fidelity. Here, the structure of the labyrinth is utilised to provide a deliberate removal of choice; as if systems of progression are removed, the artefact becomes one of travelling *through* experiences, as opposed to seeing them as obstacles to be overcome. Functioning as a companion piece to Morley's film, the end result was a web-based experience, a 'contemplative space in amongst the general noise of the web'.[743] Visually, it was photographically based so as to sit aesthetically with the filmic medium of the documentary, selectable on-screen text was also used as the team 'had a vision of writing on a window. A place you could be but not explore, and a voice you could hear but never meet'.[744] This adaptation sought to piece together the fragments of the life of Joyce

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[740] Margaret Robertson, *Dreams of A game, Pt 2* (Hide&Seek, 2011), <http://hideandseek.net/2011/12/01/dreams-of-a-game-pt-2/> [accessed 20 January 2017]
[741] Ibid.
[742] Ibid.
[743] Margaret Robertson, *Dreams of A game, Pt 3* (Hide&Seek, 2011), <http://hideandseek.net/2012/03/05/dreams-of-a-game-pt-3//> [accessed 20 January 2017]
[744] Ibid.

Vincent, remediating those lost moments, those dreams, in a purposely simplistic form of mediated linearity.

This digital artefact was then extended to become a convergent media work, *Would Anyone Miss You*, which existed as a blended mode of live action, and digital interaction, a 'mobile-web enabled social game'.[745] Hide & Seek physically handed out thousands of sticker sheets that allowed players to 'christen' people they met, such as 'Your New Best Friend', 'Your Secret Rival', 'Your Big Gamble'. Once these labels were handed out, they then gave a question to the newly-christened player, such as, 'what's the last photo you took on your phone?', 'is there anything in your house you wouldn't want someone else to find'.[746] Once designated with this activity, players could then update the online game with what they had learned from the people they had met, the online game would then construct a 'dynamic assessment of their personality, sending them a series of emails that many players found spookily perceptive about their state of mind'.[747] Once these activities were completed, players were 'invited to write a message to someone they loved, and have their portrait shot by the *Dreams Of Your Life* photographer Lottie Davies' and posted on a Tumblr social media page.[748] The multiplatform project blended digital and real-world activity which allowed interaction within the text by the user(s), and in that interaction permitted an existence outside the boundaries of the previous (deliberately) linear artefact. Crucially, with regard to the story of Joyce Vincent, this convergent aspect facilitated sharing and communication with others; as created personal moments and memories were broadcast to a wider world through the affordance of an online image sharing platform. These processes facilitated a multitude of points of engagement, interactive pathways and narrative devices focused around a single point of departure, an adaptation of a death, a dream of a life.

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[745] Margaret Robertson, *Would Anyone Miss You?* (Lookspring), <http://lookspring.co.uk/games/would-anyone-miss-you> [accessed 20 January 2017]
[746] Ibid.
[747] Ibid.
[748] Ibid.

Hand.Cannot.Erase.

The story of Joyce Carol Vincent was not to end yet, as Carol Humphries' documentary proved to provide inspiration for a multimedia interpretation for musician Steven Wilson. Joyce Vincent's story 'barnacled onto his mind', providing the impetus for the concept album *Hand.Cannot.Erase.*[749] An adaptation not of Vincent's story directly, but of an 'album written from a female perspective', a rumination on isolation, alienation and loss.[750] Wilson says of Vincent, that she became the basis for creating 'a fictional character which was very much based on her story', 'you make that character believable by referencing your own experience and your own history'.[751] The created character is a 'young woman named H. who follows a similar road towards isolation and loneliness', with Wilson translating the story into a form of parable that reflects a 'sense of […] alienation from the modern age, and from the age of technology'.[752]

The album itself presents a 'vast spectrum of musical colors', combining 'disparate musical interests, from the progressive rock of "Three Years Older," to the folktronica of "Transcience," to the ambient electronics of the bookend pieces, "First Regret" and "Ascendant Here On"'.[753] Individual tracks further this spectrum of musical flavour, 'Home Invasion' melding math-rock, jazz, funk, and ambient sensibilities.[754] This track then morphs into 'Regret #9', 'an ethereal piece in which keyboardist Adam Holzman explores the dark side of the Moog and guitarist Guthrie Govan gracefully gears through an off-the-leash solo'.[755] The lyrics to this piece foreground the primary themes of the album, as Wilson speaks of the remoteness of city life, and the transitory nature of an online, digital existence, 'Living in the age of the internet, living in the age of the mobile phone, and specifically living in the age of all this

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[749] Stephen Humphries, *Steven Wilson - Hiding in Plain Sight* (2015), <http://www.undertheradarmag.com/interviews/steven_wilson/> [accessed 20 January 2017]

[750] Phil Simon, *Hand. Cannot. Erase. -- an interview with Steven Wilson* (The Huffington Post, 2015), <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/phil-simon/hand-cannot-erase-an-inte_b_6778506.html> [accessed 17 January 2017]

[751] Glen Boyd, *Interview: Steven Wilson - Prog-Rock's reluctant 21st century man* (seattlepi.com, 2015), <http://www.seattlepi.com/lifestyle/blogcritics/article/Interview-Steven-Wilson-Prog-Rock-s-Reluctant-6070101.php> [accessed 20 January 2017]

[752] See Metal Pigeon, *The Uncomfortable Reflections of Steven Wilson's hand. Cannot. Erase.* (The Metal Pigeon, 2015), <https://themetalpigeon.com/2015/03/14/the-uncomfortable-reflections-of-steven-wilsons-hand-cannot-erase/> [accessed 8 February 2017]; Boyd.

[753] Humphries.

[754] Simon.

[755] Humphries.

technology in the heart of a major city'.[756] The introductory verse and chorus of 'Home Invasion' highlights these themes:

> Download sex and download God.
> Download the funds to meet the cost.
> Download a dream home and a wife.
> Download the ocean and the sky.
>
> Another day of life has passed me by.
> But I have lost all faith in what's outside.
> The awning of the stars across the sky
> In the wreckage of the night.[757]

The album finishes with 'Happy Returns', as H. reaches out to 'reconnect with loved ones. But she doesn't get to finish writing her letter as drowsiness overtakes her', surrounded by gifts and wrapping paper, as was Joyce Vincent.[758]

The isolation represented in the lyrics reflects the adapted narrative in an extended cogitation on what would happen 'if you deliberately kind of erase yourself in a way', is echoed in a companion multimedia work created by Wilson for the album.[759] A blog was written 'by' H which provided a meta-narrative focused around the created, lost identity, and consisted of a series of diary entries spanning a number of (fictional) years from 2008 to 2015:

> This woman would perhaps be writing some kind of diary or the modern equivalent of course would be some kind of online blog […] which is taking place over a few years of this young woman's life. As she gradually becomes more and more isolated, her thoughts become more and more surreal.[760]

The content of the site consists of multiple media forms, 'photography, illustration, a child's diary — written by a 13-year-old girl who obviously has a very different look again to the grown up blog', the fragments of memory spun into a layered, companion work.[761]

The depiction of a social media space exhibited to an outside world is contrasted with an internal, isolated dialogue, illustrating 'the illusion of being connected, the illusion of social

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[756] Boyd.
[757] Steven Wilson, 'Home Invasion', in *Hand. Cannot. Erase.* (London: Kscope, 2015). (ln.1-8).
[758] Humphries.
[759] Simon.
[760] Ibid.
[761] Simon.

interaction'.[762] The blog is about the idea of online presence, of how it presents the possibility to 'redefine yourself and redefine your personality online to project an image of yourself closest to the one you would like […] almost an opportunity to role play and to create a façade, an image', or dream.[763] Throughout the extended work Wilson utilises 'elaborate multimedia elements: short stories, illustrations, video, and Web components'.[764] The deluxe edition of the album also included a hardback book which contained 'photographs, diary entries, actual newspaper clippings, and letters telling the more detailed story of H's life', further extending the adaptation.[765]

These multimedia explorations surrounding loss, return, and the reconstitution of fragmented narrative forms, create an inter-textual weave based upon a real, and tragic narrative. The affordances of technology, and multiple forms of media permit that story to be interpreted, retold, journeyed through, and sung again within a fictionalised narrative, or re-created archive, where a history, or life, is discovered, memorialised, adapted, overwritten, and explored. H, like O, is the absence that sits at the heart of the archive, the secret, and 'of the secret itself, there can be no archive, no definition', she is the unknowable, the 'shadow in the doorway'.[766] The convergent constellations of Morley and Robertson, described here, seek to return to that 'faithful memory of such a singularity', yet these archives can never return to the real, the singularity, the *original*, they can only speak of its reformation.[767] As that memory is turned to again and again their echoes interact with one another, speaking not to that original encounter but to their own recollections, each giving voice to the fragments of the past.

[762] Steve Smith, *Steve Wilson dispels modern life's illusions - the Boston globe* (BostonGlobe.com, 2015), <https://www.bostonglobe.com/arts/music/2015/05/21/steve-wilson-dispels-modern-life-illusions/c2f5lsT7SqiKmQDBQlaorL/story.html> [accessed 20 January 2017]
[763] Simon.
[764] Smith.
[765] The Metal Pigeon.
[766] See Derrida, *Archive Fever*, p.100; Wroe, p.6.
[767] Derrida, *Archive Fever*, p.100.

Endgame

These texts utilise and transform a plethora of divergent media formats and collated histories that resonate through continually adapted textual forms. What constitutes the convergent approach of the case of Joyce Vincent, the narrative of *That Dragon, Cancer*, *The 39 Steps* and *Beckett*, is the aesthetic of the text as a collation of media artefacts represented through stylised, realistic, pictorial, and digital formats. These approaches have been a feature of early discussions of textual remediation, from Boghosian, to Hallas, and events during *The Tales We Tell*.

Moving beyond the physical and into the digital, *That Dragon Cancer*, the stories of Joyce Vincent, and *Beckett*, illustrate the ways in which adaptation within game mechanics, processes of play, and use of convergent media can be employed to generate emotional responses to events and circumstances. To repurpose Kwon's discussion of site-specific media, the interactor (or player) moves through sequential events, the sites that we inhabit in our life's traversal, and does not 'become genericized into an undifferentiated serialization, one place after another', but instead what is created is an affective moment of engagement.[768] These adapted histories, of textual reflections of lives (real, and fictional) utilise the adaptation process itself as a mode of textual dialogue, their intertextual nature mediating between processes of return and reformation.

If the 'original' here is indeed adapted and filtered through a 'tissue of citations, resulting from the thousand sources of culture', then it may also manufacture a further 'thousand sources' through the experiences of the user, through use or manipulation.[769] In this spreading outward the altered text becomes deterritorialized, moving outside of its original boundaries, producing potentially 'liberatory effects, displacing the strictures of fixed place-bound identities with the fluidity of a migratory model, introducing the possibilities for the production of multiple identities, allegiances, and meanings'.[770] It is this expansion of the text as it spreads which is the focus of Chapter Six, whereby the role of the user shifts from one of exploration within protocols and the boundaries of texts, to the affordances a digital

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[768] Kwon, 'One Place After Another', in *Space, Site, Intervention*, ed. by Suderberg, pp.45-46.
[769] Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', p.146.
[770] Kwon, 'One Place After Another', in *Space, Site, Intervention*, ed. by Suderberg, p.57.

environment may proffer within musical frameworks, as the text is engaged with by adapter and user alike.

Ω

Chapter Six – Orpheus Remixed

This chapter seeks to examine possibilities of textual engagement by the user, or content creator, within an audio environment; to return again to 'Orpheus, that artist whose song continues beyond his narrative ending', who once more sings to the world, through Arcade Fire's album *Reflektor*.[771] The analysis is undertaken through a dualistic lens, firstly, via the musical aesthetic of the album itself, which is formed through an intertextual sonic approach utilising Orpheus the myth as creative muse. Secondly, the approach to promotional activity and the manner in which the text spreads outward into divergent media formats, is also be scrutinised in light of a multiform textual approach.

Reflektor is a concept piece, the album explicitly announcing its textual inspiration via the cover art, consisting of a close-up of Rodin's 1893 sculpture *Orpheus and Eurydice*.[772] Stylistically, *Reflektor* navigates multiple musical genre boundaries, freely borrowing sonic motifs to create a reinterpreted, sonically intertextual tale of Orpheus; a ''Billie Jean' bassline in 'We Exist', the Prince falsetto in 'It's Never Over (Oh Orpheus)', the honk of 'Sound And Vision' saxophones in 'Here Comes The Night Time'.[773] This auditory Orphean narrative revolves around driving bass-lines, strident guitar stylings, and synthesizers which ebb and swell, further propelling the eddy of the music and providing contrasting energetic pulses together with 'moments of delicate near-silence'.[774] It is a work that feely utilises fragments, and glimpses of other works, to constitute its soundscape, which contains songs that directly mention and speak *to* and *for* Orpheus and Eurydice, with lyrics that persistently interweave concepts of love and loss throughout.

To focus on two specific instances within this sequenced work, 'Awful Sound (Oh Eurydice)' and 'It's Never Over (Oh Orpheus)', indicate an unambiguous allegiance to the myth.[775] Their physical placement (placed adjacent to one another as consecutive tracks) implies a closeness and symbolised relationship between the lost lovers and permits a broader

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[771] Sanders, p.70.

[772] Lily Rothman, *Brush up on the Greek Myth That Arcade Fire Is Singing about*, (TIME.com, 2013), <http://entertainment.time.com/2013/10/29/brush-up-on-the-greek-myth-that-arcade-fire-is-singing-about/> [accessed 10 November 2015]

[773] Hazel Sheffield, 'Arcade Fire- "Reflektor"' (NME, 2013), <http://www.nme.com/reviews/arcade-fire/14888> [accessed 10 November 2015]

[774] Chris Payne, 'Arcade Fire, "Reflektor": Track-by-Track Review', *Billboard* (Billboard, 2013), <http://www.billboard.com/articles/review/5770596/arcade-fire-reflektor-track-by-track-review> [accessed 10 November 2015]

[775] Ibid.

narrative event to be perceived within the context of an album format. 'Awful Sound (Oh Eurydice)' is firstly voiced by Orpheus, whilst the principal voice within 'It's Never Over (Hey Orpheus' emanates from the often marginalised or unheard narrative position of Eurydice. The opening vocalisations of 'It's Never Over' being a chorus of voices shouting in unison 'Hey Orpheus!' before the lines indicating the long walk out of hell are uttered 'I'm behind you / Don't turn around / I can find you'. The perspective of E is interrupted by O, 'Hey Eurydice! / Can you see me? I will sing your name / 'Til you're sick of me'.[776] There is a notion of an endlessly cycled history reoccurring within those five last frustrated words, with notes not of love but of irritation and repetition; a comment on a narrative quest that is inevitable, but also achingly purposeless and ill-fated. A perspective of *looking back* resonates too in the final lines, as Eurydice speaks in past tense to Orpheus, 'We stood beside a frozen sea […] I saw you out in front of me', creating a sonic echo with the lyrics of 'Awful Sound (Oh, Eurydice)' as O reminisces upon their early relationship, which similarly began in notes of disappointment:[777]

> But when I say I love you,
> Your silence covers me
> Oh, Eurydice it's an awful sound
>
> I was so disappointed
> You didn't want me
> Oh, how could it be Euydice?
> I was standing beside you
> By a frozen sea.[778]

Themes of isolation and loss effectively frame the dual pairing of this particular retelling, the utterance 'Oh Orpheus, Eurydice, it's over too soon' of 'It's Never Over' lends a final call, an emotionally wearied cadence to the lovers who have graced this particular musical interpretation. The line, 'It's never over', is repeated multiple times, within the context of the song it may appear as an empty wish, yet paradoxically resonates with the variously adapted interpretations of the Orpheus myth itself. The role of Orpheus and Eurydice here is not simply as players to be spoken of, but as characters to be *voiced* and given new form within each remediation; the manner of that reinterpretation here is again one of collage or blend of forms, arranged within a musical framework.

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[776] Arcade Fire, 'It's Never Over (Hey Orpheus)', in *Reflektor* (Merge Records, 2013). (ln.39-42).
[777] Ibid.
[778] Arcade Fire, 'Awful Sound (Oh, Eurydice)', in *Reflektor* (Merge Records, 2013). (ln.13-20).

Lyre Economics

Arcade Fire's blended approach presents a sequence of narrative events based upon the myth of Orpheus through a pluralistic approach to genre and style. This blended mode of activity was also utilised within divergent marketing strategies, through an extensive and involved social media campaign. The promotion incorporated what may be seen as traditional advertising material, consisting of short clips of songs, band interviews, and magazine adverts. This conventional approach was partnered with a more vigorous month-long social media campaign which ran prior to the album's full release on October 25th 2013. This campaign focused upon various methods of sustaining media interest, the trademark approach was the blending, or convergence, of old and new media forms, in alliance with the incorporation of interactive elements to harness multiple methods of fan engagement.

The campaign began in early September 2013, as chalked graffiti was found on walls in major cities including London, Sydney, and Chicago. Following this, Arcade Fire posters appeared carrying the same design.[779] Short teaser clips of songs were discovered on Spotify, secret shows were held where fans were only permitted entrance if they were wearing a certain style of costume or clothing; afterwards, pictures of these secret shows would be shown via the official *Reflektor* Instagram account.[780] Nearing release date, the band also appeared on *Saturday Night Live* to further promote the record.[781] Prior to the distribution of the album a full-length audio and visual teaser was released, which consisted of the juxtaposition of the album songs and the 1959 film, *Black Orpheus*; and in an extension to this mode of blended media, an interactive online experience was also created by Vincent Morrisset's production company Unit 9.[782]

The extended teaser distributed online prior to release, placed the audio of *Reflektor* playing alongside the 'entire length of the movie taking the place of the original soundtrack'.[783]

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[779] Claire Suddath, 'Arcade Fire's Marketing Machine Rolls Out Reflektor', *Bloomberg Business* (Bloomberg, 2013), <http://www.bloomberg.com/bw/articles/2013-10-15/arcade-fires-marketing-machine-rolls-out-reflektor> [accessed 17 November 2015]

[780] ''Reflektor (@reflektor)', *Instagram* <https://instagram.com/reflektor/> [accessed 17 November 2015]

[781] Rebecca Tucker, 'Arcade Fire Confirm Mysterious Online "Reflektor" Campaign Is Their Doing; Something Arcade Fire-Related Will Happen on Sept. 9', *National Post: Music* (National Post, 26 August 2013), <http://news.nationalpost.com/arts/arcade-fire-confirm-mysterious-online-reflektor-campaign-is-their-doing-something-arcade-fire-will-happen-on-sept-9-at-9-p-m> [accessed 17 November 2015]

[782] Vincent Morrissett, *Arcade Fire / Just a Reflektor* (Unit 9, 2013), <http://www.justareflektor.com/> [accessed 17 November 2015]

[783] Erik Hopf, 'Arcade Fire - Reflektor X Black Orpheus Album Teaser', *Freshness* (Freshnessmag.com, 2013), <http://www.freshnessmag.com/2013/10/25/arcade-fire-reflektor-x-black-orpheus-album-teaser/> [accessed 10 November 2015]

The actor's voices in the film were also replaced with lyrical excerpts, these excerpts appeared visually overlaid on-screen as text, synced to lead singer Butler's vocals.[784] This hybrid form is seen to meld a past adaptational structure (*Black Orpheus*), with the recorded album (*Reflektor*); facilitating in this interplay a symbiotic relationship between both texts, and also reciprocal engagement by fans. This aspect of blending of form in the long-form teaser generates fan interest or 'buzz', as curiosity spiked in forums as fans watched, listened and submitted personal opinion and reviews of both the forthcoming album, and crucially, the nature of the hybridized teaser itself. Such forum responses were not all positive, with some dismissing the film as advertising gimmickry, while others welcomed a different approach to the presentation of new music, with some forumites seeking out the original format of *Black Orpheus*.[785]

Such use of blended media proffers a textual approach that can be understood via methods of media convergence. Convergence is understood as a process that illustrates the:

> flow of content across multiple media platforms, the cooperation between multiple media industries, and the migratory behavior of media audiences who will go almost anywhere in search of the kinds of entertainment experiences they want. Convergence is a word that manages to describe technological, industrial, cultural, and social changes depending on who's speaking and what they think they are talking about. [786]

Convergent media therefore operates upon a dialogic format, both in the manner of construction, and the nature of their consumption. This manner of combination and assimilation seeks to enhance a connection between the *product*, and the *user*, with the aim of increasing and facilitating a personal relationship and sense of engagement within that newly (re)-born media creation. The blended or convergent media form exists to engender interest and prompt discussion amongst consumers, who would hopefully discuss, comment, and importantly *share*; to secure the greatest possible interest in the media artefact and maximising the potential for viral spread.

The nature of such a marketing approach permits media to rapidly spread as users pass information to each other via social groupings; these groupings then spread that information or

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[784] Hopf.
[785] See 'Arcade Fire Reflektor (?) - Board', *Drowned in Sound* (DrownedInSound, 2013), <http://drownedinsound.com/community/boards/music/4435872> [accessed 1 December 2015]; 'ARCADE FIRE- Reflektor (new Double Album) Fall 2013 - Blu-Ray Forum', 2013 <http://forum.blu-ray.com/showthread.php?t=227930> [accessed 1 December 2015]
[786] Jenkins, *Convergence Culture,* pp.2-3.

product via their own related networks of social activity, this allows the media to move swiftly across and through multiple delivery channels, a viral effect. The viral nature of rapid delivery to numerous bodies suggests in its etymology as being somewhat akin to a real virus. Whilst this phrase provides a useful metaphor for the pervasive manner in which a media artefact may behave, and importantly, spread, in the hands (or keyboards) of the user, it may provide a false sense of that behaviour. A virus is unwanted, undesired, unpleasant, and certainly not driven by choice, in this, the language of viral media is one of passivity, not activity. However, to share a video a user adopts the role of agent, in the act of choosing to share, this agency within online activity illustrates that people 'make many active decisions when spreading media'.[787] Moving beyond simply re-posting a link, or sharing to a website or social media page, users may also alter the shape and form of media texts themselves.

Such practice exists as part of a larger model of paradigmatic shifts within a new media landscape whereby older models of media delivery via traditional distribution networks, are giving way to a more user-based or democratic approach, reliant upon communication and engagement through social networking activity. Users/fans engage with the media product through sharing, conversing in forums, commenting on media products, and also may themselves harness the opportunity to reshape the media entity and re-share amongst their own social groupings. As users discuss, blend, and manipulate media, the value of re-use provides both engagement for such committed fans, and paradoxically creates economic and advertising opportunities for media corporations, as re-use further creates a 'buzz that is increasingly valued by the media industry'.[788] Such methods of engagement with media products allow fans, or the fan/user/producer, to be seen:

> not simply as consumers of reconstructed messages but as people who are shaping, sharing, reframing, and mixing media content in ways which might not have been previously imagined […] they are doing so not as isolated individuals but within larger communities and networks which allow them to spread content well beyond their geographic proximity.[789]

Thus, individual fan ownership and personal relationships with a media product, spawn a rapidly spreadable media artefact, which both feeds back into corporate gain (of advertising) and simultaneously accedes to notions of ownership of the media by the fans themselves. The function being both to extend the market reach to further potential audiences, and to sustain

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[787] Jenkins, Ford, and Green, p.20.
[788] Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, p.4.
[789] Jenkins, Ford and Green, p.2.

further interest for pre-existing fans for the upcoming release. The fan, user, or 'ideal consumer', is therefore 'active, emotionally engaged, and socially networked. Watching the advert or consuming the product is no longer enough; the company invites the audience inside the brand community'.[790]

Convergent activity may be seen to foster a stronger bond with the consumers of a media product, and in order to generate a greater emotional impact the convergent experience 'should not be contained within a single media platform, but should extend across as many media as possible'.[791] Convergent media approaches permit the watcher of media a way in to the text itself, blurring the boundary between user, consumer, and producer. However, the distinctions of engagement are balanced between the agency of the user, and the harnessing of that activity by corporate interests to enable a greater return on investment. Such approaches may be designed to 'quantify desire, to measure connections, and to commodify commitments – and […] The need to transform all of the above into return on investment'.[792] The hybrid video format of *Reflektor*/*Black Orpheus* was only one part of a convergent approach to marketing that illustrates the merging of media formats and the attempt to harness or stimulate fan/user agency in seeking a relationship with, and understanding of, the newly created, or blended, text.

In order to further foster notions of engagement, the interactive short film *Just a Reflektor* allowed users to explore:

> themes in Arcade Fire's *Reflektor* through two devices simultaneously: the computer and the smartphone tablet. Filmed in Haiti, the story follows a young woman who travels between her world and our own [...] Your computer will connect with the mobile device and reflect your actions onto the world of the film.[793]

The film functioned as an interactive audio-visual entertainment experience, or as one reviewer termed it, a 'chose-your-own-adventure style music video in which the viewer's smartphone, when synced with a computer webcam [...] could change the way the video unfolded'.[794] The video, written, directed, and produced by Vincent Morissett allowed users to focus on specific areas of the images presented to them by physically moving their smartphone and pointing at

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[790] Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, p.20.
[791] Ibid, p.69.
[792] Ibid, p.62.
[793] Morrissett.
[794] Suddath.

different areas of the computer screen. This physical process affects a digital response, as the user may now illuminate previously dark portions of the screen while sending others into darkness. Elsewhere in the production, segments of the image may be peeled away to reveal images and movement below the one recently viewed, akin to burning away paint with a heated stripper. Incandescent lights shine from mysterious hooded characters, the direction of the illumination dictated by the position of the smart device in the user's hand; a character dancing on-screen has their waves of movement amplified in whichever direction the user dictates, creating a kaleidoscope of kinetic visual resonance flowing throughout the display. Choice and affect in this instance, see the user operating their smartphone as a form of 'interactive wand, shining a new light on the content, metaphorically revealing deeper levels of story, deeper levels of meaning'.[795] Rapidity of movement dictates the accompanying frenetic nature, or not, of the on-screen response, and to further augment notions of user interaction, the user's webcam is incorporated into the manipulated textual event, as the 'camera feed is inserted live into the music video'.[796] As such, users may see themselves within the digital framework of the piece and function additionally as contributor, manipulator, or producer of the text, by altering the performance on-screen.

The audio-visual experience of *Just a Reflektor* allows users to 'effectively be the special effects editor for the video' permitting a degree of choice with regard to the visual nature of the text but not its structure.[797] Lopes' definitions of interactivity, that which is weakly interactive being media 'that give users control over the sequence in which they may access content', and strong interactivity, where user's 'inputs help determine the subsequent state of play […] whose structural properties are partly determined by the interactor's actions', may be applied here.[798] The hybrid visual formats of *Reflektor*'s teaser film and the capacities of manipulation in *Just a Reflektor* would fall within the 'weaker' classification of interactivity, as no true alteration takes place within these new-media formats. While procedures of choice within the interactive text centre upon the manipulation of visual layers, these layers are nevertheless previously created and rendered. The user's role primarily being one of uncovering or revealing previously recorded imagery or influencing echoes of movement that occur on-screen through an exterior actor or performer. This mode of interactivity may be

[795] Morrissett.

[796] Benjy Eisen, 'Inside the Making of Arcade Fire's Interactive "Reflektor" Video', *Rolling Stone* (Rolling Stone, 2013), <http://www.rollingstone.com/music/news/inside-the-making-of-arcade-fires-interactive-reflektor-video-20130909> [accessed 25 November 2015]

[797] Ibid.

[798] McIver Lopes, p.68.

classified as a form of 'cinema of attractions', an outwardly manipulable artefact, yet is forever bound within its own parameters.[799] The media-object may be altered, but its form is not truly changed. It is visually shifted but not transfigured by the user, whose engagement is halted at the interactive level of moving the shape of the text.

The specific affordances of technology permitting 'artistic innovation' upon the text, may also be examined within a subset of terminologies specific to the music industry, in particular, the role of the user themselves in adaptational activity. Ostensibly, Arcade Fire's blend of old and new forms within both creative practice and marketing spheres may be seen to be representative of such convergent media practices as the mash-up, cover, or re-mix; modes which are built upon a basis of hybridization, recycling, and irony.[800] To debate the sincerity or the ironic nature of a creative form is not my remit here, nevertheless the boundaries of the reformed texts on display in relation to *Reflektor*, are constituent with more fluid aspects of reprocessed media artefacts. However, the origins of such practices do not reside within large-scale corporate campaigns such as this, but instead arise from a level of grassroots engagement. These practices occupy a 'response to larger technological, institutional, and social contexts' and have become dually synonymous with creativity, innovation and conversely; illegality (the use of copyright material without permission), rebellion (against music corporations) and transgression (of genre boundaries, and artistic ownership).[801] The nature of such hybridisation within musical formats through the hands of the user occupies the focus for the subsequent discussion.

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[799] Bernard Perron, 'Interactive Movies', in *Encyclopedia of Video Games: The Culture, Technology, and Art of Gaming*, ed. by Mark J.P. Wolf (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2012), pp.322-324.

[800] Michael Serazio, 'The Apolitical Irony of Generation Mash-Up: A Cultural Case Study in Popular Music', *Popular Music and Society*, 31.1. (2008), 79–94 (p.79), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03007760701214815> [accessed 17 May 2016]

[801] Ibid, p.80.

Splice the text

John Shiga contextualises the mashup with particular reference to the rhetoric of personal ownership and the easily editable potentials of digital content:

> Using MP3s and audio-editing software, ''bedroom disc jockeys'' spliced together two or more pop songs to create unlikely combinations, which they distributed through peer-to-peer file-sharing services [...] A new amateur musicianship emerges from this process, based on the reorganization of the relations that constitute musical recordings.[802]

Digital media enables not simply malleable content, but also represents a shift in the role of production away from corporations and into the hands of the user. Michael Serazio sees such methods enabled by current technologies as creating a patchwork of performance, a musical collage, or *meta-music*; versions of versions, adaptations of adaptations. Serazio documents historical models of music recording, production and distribution, as navigating a progression through real *played* music, to the collation of sections of pre-recorded music sampled, re-used and overlaid; viewing such practices as initially stemming from DJ and remix culture in the 1970s.[803] Musician and producer Thomas Dolby speaks of the freedoms such technologies proffer, as he discusses music-making during the emergence of the internet:

> We're talking early 90s, here. We were sending music over the internet, enabling real-time interaction over the internet; people were jamming over the internet... we created musical interfaces that could be shared over the net. This was before the days of having Pro Tools on the network. This was internet music with training wheels; we were taking basic computer skills and turning them into musical gestures.[804]

This shift is facilitated by technological factors due to the increased prevalence of software and hardware readily available to the home user, as Dolby states.

The move from physical forms of media (CD, tape, vinyl), as distinct to digital (mp3, WAV), raises the distinction between that which needs to be physically transported, and that which may be attached and shared or easily moved from device to device. The digital shift of such media also permits an easily altered media form; as physical objects becomes files, the opportunities for copying, pasting, splicing, of the media text increase. The ready availability

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[802] John Shiga, 'Copy-and-Persist: The Logic of Mash-up Culture', *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 24.2. (2007), 93–114 (pp.94-95), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07393180701262685> [accessed 17 May 2016]
[803] Serazio.
[804] Computer Music, *Thomas Dolby Talks Tech, Lifeboats and Leaving the Music Business* (MusicRadar, 6 January 2016), <http://www.musicradar.com/news/tech/thomas-dolby-talks-tech-lifeboats-and-leaving-the-music-business-632747> [accessed 17 January 2016]

of sound-editing software (as many are freely available, or in turn illegally downloaded) or Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs) permit audio to be edited to a professional level from the user's home. As 'There are thousands of kids out there who get their first experience of a musical instrument on a laptop; a ridiculously powerful soft synth listened to on a pair of headphones in a coffee shop'.[805] Such ubiquitous technologies as the PC, laptop, smartphone, tablet, and the apps therein, further assist in the ability to copy, paste, and change recorded material. Further, beat-mapping and auto-quantizing software enables easy 'joining' of songs possessing different rhythms or beats-per-minute, while auto-tune and pitch-correction keeps the aggregated creation within a stable key, allowing users easy access to click, control, and manipulate their creations, remixes, or mashups.

David Gunkel states the mashup presents a 'fundamental challenge to the original understanding and privilege of originality', it plunders and remixes anomalies 'already available in and constitutive of recorded music'.[806] The nature of the mashup as reconstituted form being one of re-use and re-appropriation; they are a 'bastard art form created by the illegitimate appropriation and fusion of two or more audio recordings'.[807] Thomas Simonsen identifies the mashup genre as a 'specific mode of audiovisual communication that relies on connectivity in a shared community of popular culture that vacillates between a participatory culture and individual artistic expression'.[808] This subgenre represents broader shifting trends within popular music, namely one of a 'remix-culture'; a creative practice skirting the edges of legality. The flagrant disavowal of copyright law illustrates both the joy of transgression and the capacity for musical innovation outside of the industry itself, and liberation from the cultural power structure.[809] In its disavowal of such structures, the mashup functions as 'a subversive force in its rebellion through juxtaposition' (placing the music of *Nirvana* in a Destiny's Child context in 'Smells like Booty Spirit); or the technical death metal musical styling's of Meshuggah's 'Bleed' combined with the diva-pop visuals and vocals of Lady Gaga's 'Paparazzi', forming *Bleed-e-razzi*.[810] The mashup embodies processes of adaptational

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[805] Computer Music.
[806] David J. Gunkel, 'Rethinking the Digital Remix: Mash-ups and the Metaphysics of Sound Recording', *Popular Music and Society*, 31: 4 (2008), 489–510 (p.489), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03007760802053211≥ [accessed 15th Novermber 2015]
[807] Ibid, p.490.
[808] Thomas Mosebo Simonsen, 'The Mashups of YouTube', *Nordicom Review*, 34: 2 (2013), 47–63 (p.48), <http://dx.doi.org/10.2478/nor-2013-0053> [accessed 15th Novermber 2015]
[809] Serazio, p.87
[810] See Ibid; Pallomember, 'Lady Gaga vs Meshuggah - Bleed-a-Razzi', *YouTube (*YouTube, 2009), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qfOddwK7x3E> [accessed 1 December 2015]

reappropriation of the text, of reconstructed and re-used content permitting a challenge to the ownership and boundaries of a textual form.

An oft-cited touchstone of mashup culture is the 2004 release, *The Grey Album*, by Danger Mouse:

> Danger Mouse, born Brian Burton, sliced apart the Beatles' 1968 *White Album*, reconstructed hip-hop beats and laid down Jay-Z's vocals taken from an a cappella version of *The Black Album* from 2003. Only 3,000 copies were originally pressed of Danger Mouse's mash-up creation[811]

The album was described by *Rolling Stone* as 'a love letter – a music geek's mash-note to hip-hop and classic rock – and a polemic: an argument that the best hip-hop warrants a place alongside the most revered gods of the pop music canon'.[812] A genre-crossing creation that brought mashup into the mainstream, defied the musical boundaries of hip-hop and rock, and challenged terms of textual copyright. The album existed as not simply an overlay of one type of material over another, it was 'an extended, long form meditation on [...] source materials and obsessive exploration of [...] compositional techniques'.[813] *The Grey Album*:

> within its very form and content, [...] came to represent the struggles over tectonic shifts in the production, distribution, and consumption of music. Danger Mouse created a broad, inventive commentary on forms of musical creativity that have defined all kinds of music for centuries: borrowing, appropriation, homage, derivation, allusion, decomposition, collage, pastiche and quotation. [814]

The method of the mashup illustrates here a struggle between adaptive musical practice (bordering on illegality), and musical copyright, ownership, and authorship. The ubiquity, and nature of the mashup occupies a hinterland of legitimacy that whilst initially resisted and legislated against by the owners of the original intellectual property (creatives. stakeholders, record companies, media conglomerates), is progressively becoming one of acceptance and encouragement. The re-cutting of *Reflektor* with *Black Orpheus* demonstrates such processes of digital manipulation, while the download of the limited time release video by fans, highlights the nature of user sharing and the spreadability of the new media text.

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[811] Serazio, p.84.
[812] '58. Danger Mouse, "The Grey Album"', in *100 Best Albums of the 2000s* (Rolling Stone, 2011), <http://www.rollingstone.com/music/lists/100-best-albums-of-the-2000s-20110718/interpol-turn-on-the-bright-lights-20110711> [accessed 3 May 2016]
[813] Charles Fairchild, *The Grey Album* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), p.5.
[814] Fairchild, p.6.

In addition to its function as collage, as collated fragments, the mode of the mashup offers a method of comment and response, one that enables a 'specific mode of communication, producing *new meaning*, social bonds as well as self-promotion'.[815] Mashups exist as a 'manifestation of a mass consumption of popular culture, produced and consumed within a folkloric context that involves the potentiality of user participation between creators and viewers, and collective creativity'.[816] The musical consumer now exists as adapter, manipulating frameworks of technology to facilitate musical (textual) construction, via a network that facilitates sharing of that artefact. Serazio states of the malleability of media forms and the potentials of access:

> If abundance and disposability of digital material reduce textual reverence and encourage destabilizing tinkering, the text, in mash-up culture, is not only incomplete but potentially in flux indefinitely. Finality turns out to be more temporary than previously assumed, post-mash-up; a song, once thought to be a completed project upon delivery to the consumer, is now for ever unfinished—putty in the hands of a potential Acid Pro alchemist.[817]

The key facets of such musical reformation still rest upon the affordances via technical means to create new landscapes, an endlessly variant adaptive collage, or ever-evolving text. Arcade Fire's concept album utilised multiform approaches to its media and presented an approach to fan engagement which operated as a 'creative strategy placed between production and reproduction'.[818] The changeable nature of the object/text here, sees the artist, user/fan, and corporate method, moving in and through the art object, cutting, pasting, and navigating beyond its borders.

The convergent-media mashup of *Reflektor*'s marketing campaign indicates creative practice operating as an example of a pipeline of connectivity within online communities, yet one that is nevertheless governed by structures and an element of corporate containment. Such modes of media repositioning aims to attract both agency, and market share; the harnessing of such approaches is not unique, convergent marketing exists throughout the media industry.[819] However, this harnessing of adaptation to engage users illustrates a sometimes-fractious

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[815] Simonsen, p.62.
[816] Ibid, p.50
[817] Serazio, p.84.
[818] Avram, p.6.
[819] For example, the extended Warner Bros media campaign for *The Dark Knight Rises* (2012), 'Why So Serious?' incorporated real-world activity in conjunction with a complex convergent media strategy lasting over a year; Microsoft and Bungie's 'Iris' campaign for *Halo 3*, which too blended physical and digital pathfinding and puzzle solving encased within a complex transmedia narrative.

perspective that shifts from the enthusiasm and perceived freedom of user activity, to corporate manipulation; or what may cynically be described as 'exploiting multiple contracts between the brand and consumer' for economic benefit.[820] In the specific case of *Reflektor*, the original message began with an adaptation based upon Orphean inspiration, yet this in turn was nonetheless shaped by a commercial response which perhaps appropriately, plundered divergent aspects of user activity and fan culture. The marketing machine behind *Reflektor*, the traditional powerbrokers, now adapt processes of fan-sharing, and mashup culture, to 'co-opt the revolution and transform the innovation to serve their own interests. In the process, a "revolutionary art form" such as the mash-up becomes 'domesticated and reinvested'.[821] The musical construction of *Reflektor*, and its multi-modal marketing approach, utilised convergent elements defined traditionally through fan use of media (hybridity, and recycling of text forms), and activity (sharing through social groups), and transposed these user-based processes via a corporate model of marketing response.

Perhaps appropriately, segments from the musically cross-pollinated, Orphean-inspired *Reflektor* were sampled in the work of Hannah Catherine Jones, an audio-visual artist seeking to 'perform the connection between image, music and text'.[822] Her pieces seek to blur divisions between media and narrative forms, in order to find a space where 'Freedom can occur, freedom of thought and experience in real time and space through live performance'.[823] Jones utilises the opening bass-line of Arcade Fire's 'Awful Sound' as a persistent motif within her work *I (Fire),* (2015), it being the first in a two-part sequence entitled *Ether-Real Arias: Owed to Orpheus,* (2015). The second accompanying piece, *II (Ocean)*, includes Frank Ocean's introductory string motif in 'Thinkin' Bout You' (2012).[824] These musical excerpts provide a basis for the improvisatory aspect of the works, functioning as points of 'departure for each "cover"'.[825] *I (Fire)* begins with a staccato plucked violin imitating the aforementioned bass-line, this is then sampled and looped, and plays throughout the piece. A theremin is manipulated (and again looped to repeat) creating a howling melody that drifts and wails over the

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[820] Jenkins, *Convergence Culture,* p.69.
[821] Gunkel, p,490.
[822] Hannah Catherine Jones, *Ether-Real Arias: Owed to Orpheus*, <http://foxymoron.co.uk/ether-real-arias-owed-to-orpheus> [accessed 12th October 2015]
[823] Ibid.
[824] Ibid.
[825] Ibid.

performance, together with vocal inclusions of spoken word, and further percussion created by striking the violin strings with a bow.

The visual aspect of the work consists of sped-up screenshots, image capture and fragments of YouTube film; these being Jones' accelerated archive of her 'Google searches on Orpheus'.[826] A dizzying concoction of multiple and myriad strands of discovered information, condensed into a rapidly shifting visual collage. The two multimedia works have been presented as consecutive narrative elements, their interrelationship within a performance space being an attempt at a synergistic experience, 'The two tracks are symbiotic – *I (Fire)* broadly represents the journey to and descent into the underworld *II (Ocean)* broadly represents the ascent to the upperworld and/or beyond'.[827] Jones' work portrays a dizzying meta-text formed from intertextual usage of contemporary media achieved through social media searches, sampling, visual and sonic collage, combined with a performative improvisatory edge, reimagining the artist as experimenter or musical 'alchemist'.[828] The use of audio and visual in this way utilises: reconfiguration (of text), improvisation (of sound and form) and repetition (looping, mimicking of the *original* text; being both the myth of Orpheus, and Arcade Fire's original track).

Within Avram's terminologies of cover and remix, and paralleling Bourriaud's notion of 'artist as DJ', this is not repurposing for the sole purpose of tinkering, but of how the language of one system (music, remix) may illustrate emergent method in other disciplines. Jones' works aim to exist 'outside the institution and outside of its boundaries', thus the method here may owe more to deliberately non-commercial 'anti-forms' than the industry driven campaign of *Reflektor*.[829] In this instance, aspects of adaptation and interchange may move closer to concepts of guerrilla hybridization or recycling, utilising textual processes of cross-pollination that push the contextual boundaries of an adapted form through multiform media environments, by the hands of the user.[830]

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[826] Catherine Jones, *Ether-Real Arias*.
[827] Ibid.
[828] Bourriaud, p.19.
[829] See Catherine Jones, *Ether-Real Arias*; Franklin Bruno, 'PETER BLEGVAD - I'M A DILETTANTE, 'POLYMORPHOUSLY PERVERSE,' A PERPETUAL AMATEUR."', *Believer*
(November/December, 2009), <http://www.believermag.com/issues/200911/?read=interview_blegvad>
[accessed 15 October 2015]
[830] Serazio, p.79.

Orpheus Broadcast

My discussion of audio interpretations of the Orpheus myth continues with Neil Gaiman's radio production *Orpheus Underground* (2015), Peter Blegvad's *Orpheus the Lowdown* (2004), and Gregory Whitehead's method of creating sonic sculptures. The analysis of these audio-texts considers the structure of the works as an aural hotchpotch blending pop-culture, spoken word, and music, which reframe Orpheus through an auditory cornucopia. This use of collage both hastens towards the subject matter of my conclusion, and also resonates with texts discussed throughout this thesis in works by: Boghosian, Hallas, McKeand, The Secret Experiment, Steven Wilson, and others, which have presented a kaleidoscopic response to narrative interpretation.

Orpheus Underground begins with Gaiman occupying the role of chief narrator, guide, or if you will, ferryman. The very structure of the piece mimics the Orphean journey, as the introduction, read by Gaiman, signals the commencement of an expedition into a form of underworld:

> Imagine yourself standing on the platform of a station, it's the morning after a wedding [...] imagine yourself in a field, in the early morning, a moment ago you were dancing at a wedding, now everything feels different. In front of you stands an underground train, its doors open, and you step on board.[831]

This places the listener as Orpheus, hazily reflecting on the events of the previous day, as recollect, 'step on board' and move away into the underground. The entrance into such subterranean depths is not veiled within history, though these tales necessarily spring from the past, being from and of mythic interrelationships; this narrative is interwoven through the fabric of the modern. This is both strongly suggested by the 'underground' train that is present in the introduction, symbolically placing the listener within a hypothetical modern cityscape, by the mode of *listening* via radio broadcast or digital distribution, the production method itself, and by the variant responses to the mythic text by the contemporary contributors within the piece. The listener is 'led' through a collage of voices which combine poetry, prerecordings, alternate commentary, and artist interviews on process and practice; voices which are frequently punctuated and accompanied by several musical interludes. The structure that is adopted, is

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[831] Gaiman, *Orpheus Underground.*

'continually working in the [...] odd spaces [...] in-between' forms, being part cogitation on artistic engagement, part-documentary, part-interview, and part-poetic allusion.[832]

That structure is further illustrated via an intermix of voices which appear near the start of the piece, as they deliver an abridged version of the Orpheus myth. However, it is spoken of not simply as voice-over providing an authoritative summary, but as an example of textual collage, or exchange:

> So, Orpheus was a famous singer (Atwood)
>
> On his wedding night, to his true love Eurydice, she was bitten by a snake, and died, a heartbroken Orpheus followed her to hell, he bargained with Hades, and Hades said yes (Gaiman)
>
> For you, we'll make an exception (Atwood) [833]

The discourse between Gaiman and Atwood in the introduction is accompanied by a mixed background of sonic form. An unidentified, undetermined French radio broadcast crackles in broken form, barely audible alongside the dialogue, a commentary which is broken off, and leads into the singer Scott Walker's delivery of Jacques Brel's song 'My Death'. The placement of the song is a further layered intertextual device, paralleling Orphean themes, as the melancholic lyrics sing 'Angel or Devil / I don't care / For in front of that door / There is you'.[834] This musical layer reinforces the aspect of search for Eurydice herself, together with the compulsion to travel beyond a known threshold, beyond borders, past and through the door-frame. This is echoed by Blegvad, who observes a prevalent desire in the myth to commence a 'descent [...] a crossing of a barrier into a [...] forbidden zone, with the purpose of retrieving something and bringing it back', despite knowing that 'even if you can make the journey into the underworld, you can only bring back a ghost' and risk ending similarly to Orpheus, ripped apart and adrift on the waves of mythic history.[835] This is an implied history, a collage of reconnected fragments, closer to Boghosian's framings, miscellanies of artefacts in *The Tales We Tell*, or the multiple voices of *The Orpheus Project* resulting from collaborative reimaginings, than a single static manuscript. The text now resonating across multiple forms and being consistent of numerous voices.

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[832] Russell Hoban, speaking in Gaiman, *Orpheus Underground*.
[833] Names in (brackets) have been added to denote the speaker.
[834] Scott Walker, 'My Death', *Scott* (Phillips Records, 1967).
[835] See Peter Blegvad, speaking in Gaiman, *Orpheus Underground*.

Gaiman states that the Orpheus myth provides a universal appeal, that it is 'one of the oldest stories we know, about writing, about art'.[836] Margaret Atwood sees the myth as being 'infinitely translatable', possessing near endless possibilities for reinterpretation for both the tale and the character of Orpheus himself.[837] He can be a symbol, a cipher for whatever intention, role or event we choose him to be. Orpheus is the ever-changing actor across a variety of stages, a 'cowboy, a Danish resistance agent, he can ride to hell on an underground train.[838] The myth 'stretches itself like a wet skin over the frame of each artist's imagination'.[839] The myth possesses a rich, intricate vein of allegory in terms of the creative's role in resurrecting or invigorating a new mode or angle of textuality. Orpheus is the skin to wear, an absence, or husk to inhabit, which nevertheless resonates with the personal:

> Writers and musicians and poets are drawn to the story of Orpheus because we find ourselves in it [...] it's a story that seems to contain us and what we do [...] the finest maker of poems and songs in the world, and yet faced with death, he is still human [...] he goes all the way to hell, his song, his art is good enough to free his love from hell, but he's still human, and because he's human, he doesn't get what he wants. [840]

As I have previously stated, paradoxically, this is a story orbiting around the inescapability of death, yet that inevitable end is also twinned with the compulsion to save or rescue; an infinite arc of liberation forever sought but interminably doomed. The contributors to Gaiman's *Orpheus Underground* discuss processes of artistic return in terms of exploring the myth's intricacies of interpretation, and of it as a 'timeless story of art's place in trying to recover the dead', or I would add, the displaced fragment, or lost object.[841]

Gaiman's own poetic response to the myth, *Orphee*, was shaped as a response to the death of his friend, playwright and novelist Kathy Acker. The poem offers a rumination on the effect of grief and loss, selected excerpts of the piece follow:

> I would go to Hell to see you once more. I would go to Hell for you. I would tell them stories that are not false and that are not true. I would tell them stories until they wept

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[836] Gaiman, *Orpheus Underground.*
[837] Margaret Atwood, speaking in Gaiman, *Orpheus Underground.*
[838] Ibid.
[839] Gaiman, *Orpheus Underground.*
[840] Ibid.
[841] Ibid.

salt tears and gave you back to me and to the world [...] Every hour wounds. That was what she told me. Every hour wounds, the last one kills.[842]

The desire for return, and the aching inevitability of loss are apparent, however the last line inverts the protagonist, and distances the protagonist's voice, as the present 'I' moves to a third-person mode of delivery, 'She had the softest lips, he said. He said, she had the softest lips of all. And her head still sang and prophesied as it floated down to the sea'.[843] Now at once removed, Orpheus watches a memory of himself, viewing a version of his own myth unravelling perhaps, as a scattered Eurydice is carried away to the sea. Gaiman's poetic account occupies a reflective mode, whereby the story of Orpheus is a cogitation of relationships with the dead, a dialogue between this space, and the underworld, and of the realisation that no matter how 'we view the dead, we can't quite hold onto them'.[844] This, again reflects the necessity to obey the coordinates of the myth, of the inevitability of loss and failure within it, yet also demonstrates the capacity for extended retellings and revisions by multiple adapters.

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[842] Neil Gaiman, 'Orphee', (Seriously, BBC Radio 4, 2015), <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/5gmSz0PkBn6G81cdsySP8mJ/orphee-a-poem-by-neil-gaiman> [accessed 11th October 2015]
[843] Ibid.
[844] Gaiman, *Orpheus Underground*.

A strange and unfamiliar country

The use of an aesthetic which blends and merges numerous auditory forms continues with Blegvad, whose approach places the myth within two alternate versions, one being a spoken word and sound collaboration, *Orpheus the Lowdown*, the other being the comic strip *The Book of Leviathan*, which was published in *The Independent on Sunday* between 1992 and 1998. *Leviathan* ostensibly tells the tale of a boy and his cat, however, 'the boy is a faceless baby; the pet is a rather insightful and cynical cat; and the adventures tend towards the metaphysical rather than the physical'.[845] They venture through a deliberately off-kilter narrative landscape, as it:

> decants us into a world not so much fallen as tipped over: realms of dimensional slippage, cognitive puns, and mirrored halls of infinite paradox [...] It is strange but finally not unfamiliar country.[846]

The strange and unfamiliar is conjured within *Orpheus the Lowdown,* whereby Blegvad presents a method of abstraction that presides within auditory modes. The piece, being a project involving Blegvad and singer/songwriter Andy Partridge, exists in twelve parts as a 'collection of prose pieces and poetry with wild sonics. There's everything here from radio noise to big percussion', and dramatic readings by Blegvad himself.[847]

Orpheus is here presented as an isolated wanderer, a loner, an orphaned soul, in a wasteland beyond time and outside of civilisation:

> Another day dawns in the savannah, the wind sighs in the antlers of a few static deer [...] the camera pans in [...] the wind rustles the walls which are thousand-dollar bills, the currency of some vanished culture, patiently sewn together, by the shacks snoring tenant, Orpheus the poet.[848]

Intonating in wearied terms over auditory imitations of chirping crickets, this poetic voice is slightly louder than its aural backdrop, which is formed through the moan of some form of wind instrument blending with melodeon-esque utterances, which combine to create a haunting and repeated dyadic motif. An unsettling musical figure parallels the clashing semiotic

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[845] Richard Marcus, 'Graphic Novel Review: *The Book of Leviathan* by Peter Blegvad', *Blogcritics* (Blogcritics, 2008), <http://blogcritics.org/graphic-novel-review-the-book-of/> [accessed 1 December 2015]

[846] Rafi Zabor, 'Introduction' in Peter Blegvad, *The Book of Leviathan* (London: Sort of Books, 2004) (Unmarked page)

[847] Thom Jurek, *AllMusic Review - Orpheus The Lowdown* (AllMusic), <http://www.allmusic.com/album/orpheus-the-lowdown-mw0000333745> [accessed 15th October, 2015]

[848] Peter Blegvad and Andy Partridge, 'Savannah', *Orpheus the Lowdown* (The Ape House Ltd: Bandcamp, 2004), <https://apehouseltd.bandcamp.com/album/orpheus-the-lowdown> [accessed 12 October, 2015]

imagery, as deer are seen roaming a desolate landscape. Orpheus shelters in a shambolic space, itself constructed from the detritus of the past, with walls built from the faded monetary value of a previous culture. Textually, this is an 'accumulation of fragments' presenting Blegvad's predilection for narrative structures that occupy a 'sprawl, a constellation [...] anti-forms' which freely borrow from multiple modes of media.[849]

Examples of this approach can be discovered in 'Night of the Comet's soundscapes, as jazz rhythms and break beats meld with poetry; a vocal which is in turn filtered via lo-fi vocal effects, creating an impression of listening to a voice from the past.[850] Old and new forms again resonate in an uneasy harmony within 'Galveston', as industrial noise and jazz percussion struggle for dominance.[851] Elsewhere, 'The Blimp Poets' delivers unidentifiable and eerie background sounds which quarrel with digitally manipulated concertina, as Orpheus now resembles an inflated blimp floating through the stratosphere. The specifically temporal, the *where* may be purposely implacable, as the mechanic of blending aurally older formats, such as lo-fi filters, scratched and faded background sounds, blends with modern formats of audio manipulation and studio production methods, creating a narrative out of time, and in-between forms. The conjunction of the old with the new, to form an implacable *now*, appears elsewhere in Blegvad's philosophies of creative process:

> Before an object is revealed to me, I try to imagine it. I am, in effect, trying to imagine the *future*. In order to observe it, the object must be *present*. Later, when it's gone, I remember it in the *past*. Both the thing imagined and the thing remembered are versions of the thing observed. They are *new objects*.[852]

The new form being the auditory collaboration, and the listener's experience of it. The similarity to the work of Boghosian is clear, of objects existing beyond their past forms and being 'emissaries' of purpose.[853]

It is perhaps stating the obvious within a sound-based production that the listener can hear, but cannot see, yet it is curious that the voice-over presents a deliberately visual descriptive mechanism, permitting a 'camera' to pan in. [854] The descriptive power of such

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[849] See Blegvad and Partridge, 'Savannah', *Orpheus the Lowdown*; Bruno.
[850] Blegvad and Partridge, 'Night of the Comet', *Orpheus the Lowdown.*
[851] Blegvad and Partridge, 'Galveston', *Orpheus the Lowdown.*
[852] Bruno.
[853] Doty, 'Introduction', in *Varujan Boghosian: A Retrospective,* pp.6-16.
[854] Blegvad and Partridge, 'Savannah', *Orpheus the Lowdown.*

ocular apparatus is allayed elsewhere in the piece, as a voice-over describes Orpheus (transformed into a punctured blimp) being blinded and unable to see, he descends 'in a field of broken glass [...] Orpheus, deflated, groans, rubbing his eyes, 'Where am I? Where are my eyes?'.[855] The contradictory nature of this narrative device alludes to Blegvad's reading of the myth, that it is 'about the triumph of the ear over the eye, not only is he the great musician whose songs melt stones and charm beasts, he is prohibited from looking, looking spells disaster'.[856] Additionally, the annihilation of looking in this context lends to the attempt to create aural pictures: as he says of his experimental method 'a whole setting can be richly evoked simply by the addition to the track of a little birdsong and a church bell in the distance [...] "Writing on air," as Gregory Whitehead called it'. [857]

In his own work, Whitehead experiments with the nature of the sliced, or multiplicity of the severed text, blending myth, the nature of radio, and textual innovation, even:

> casting Orpheus as the prototype for a radiophonic psychic engineer […] Orpheus, whose voice and lyre, an ancient acoustic engine invented by Hermes, could reshape the landscape by changing the course of rivers, and by luring trees and stones into nocturnal dances. Even the hardened hearts of the immortals were moved by his song.[858]

These psychic engineers Whitehead sees as being separate from the corporatisation and massification of mainstream media. These tellers of tales, singers of songs, would electrify the airwaves 'to synchronize the latent vibrational power of these faith networks, with an infrasonic sound that formally replicates the voice of god in terms of its frequency range and overall acoustic envelope. We call this process "charging the airspace"'.[859] This sonic inhabitation being redolent of Thurston and Boyland's desire to charge spaces with sound 'as a poet charges words with meaning'.[860] In this manipulation, the power of the song of Orpheus once more possesses the capacity to change the structure of its exterior form, be it physical or intangible. The morphing of shape occurs elsewhere, as during the piece *Confessions of a Terminal*

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[855] Blegvad and Partridge, 'The Blimp Poets', *Orpheus the Lowdown*.
[856] Blegvad, speaking in Gaiman, *Orpheus Underground*.
[857] Bruno.
[858] Gregory Whitehead, *Confessions of a Terminal Schizophrenic*, ed. by Benjamin Brehon, trans. by Manuel Neto, (Gregory Whitehead, 2012), <http://gregorywhitehead.net/writings/> [accessed 19 November 2015]
[859] Gregory Whitehead, 'Transom 2', in *Gregory Whitehead*, ed. by Sydney Lewis (Transom, 2009), <http://transom.org/2009/gregory-whitehead/> [accessed 14 April 2016]
[860] Boyland and Thurston.

Schizophrenic, Whitehead veers off in his contemplation of the myth into the nature of belief, the clash of pre-Christian and pagan religion, and the authenticity of the commentator:

> The voice split off; my voice split off. Like the head of Orpheus, floating down the river […] they planted the head of Orpheus on top a stick, creating a sort of Aeolian harp, a sacred harp whose loose vibrato offered pneumatic inspiration to a mixed bag of poets and pilgrims. Or at least that's the rumor, one of the rumors, as I understand it. No longer the full-throated Orpheus, mind you, the one who moves mountains and immortal hearts with the vibrations of larynx and lyre, but a phantasmic voice lethally wounded at the very source of vibration, the pipes sliced yet still producing, impossibly though with many auditors, a fine decapitated prophecy: Orpheus, off. [861]

Orpheus still sings; however, his voice is transformed variously into an Aeolian harp, a pathway to an interrogation of history; a mutable inspiration for a wandering contemplation.

The collage Whitehead, Blegvad and Partridge weave is an aural one, as echoes and recollections of past civilisations reside beside scatterings of myth, pop-culture, and improvisational form. The audio format of *Orpheus the Lowdown* provides an 'alternate sonic history [...] bewilderingly vast in scope', with each segment stitched together.[862] The work being a near literal emblematic depiction of Whitehead's evocative description of radio and sonic broadcast, as occupying the potential for a 'dreamland/ghostland [...] that beats through a series of highly pulsed and frictive oppositions'.[863] *Lowdown*'s vision of the Orpheus myth travels through 'an electronic portal into a vast repository of tightly compressed utterances and acoustic information, a memory chamber for the living'; a chamber knowingly fashioned from the remnants and myths of the past that the listener journeys through.[864]

A 'memory chamber for the living' connotes a notion of archive or sealed space that nevertheless spans outwards with its multiple combinations and aggregations of form and style. *Lowdown* stitches and pieces together a collation of sources, embodying an auditory construction of elements once disparate and now related in their new landscape. These audio

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[861] Whitehead, *Confessions of a Terminal Schizophrenic*.

[862] Stephen Miles, 'Review: Wireless Imagination: Sound, Radio, and the Avant-Garde. Edited by Douglas Kahn and Gregory Whitehead. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1992'., *Music Library Association: Notes*, 51.1. (1994), 65–68 (p.65), <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/899174> [accessed 20th October, 2015]

[863] Gregory Whitehead, 'Out of the Dark: Notes on the Nobodies of radio Art', in *Wireless Imagination: Sound, Radio, and the Avant-Garde*, ed. by Douglas Kahn and Gregory Whitehead (Massachusetts: MIT, 2004), pp.253-264 (p.254).

[864] Gregory Whitehead, 'Bodies, Anti-Bodies and Nobodies', *Sound by Artists*, ed. by Dan Lander & Micah Lexier (1990)
<https://gregorywhitehead.files.wordpress.com/2012/07/bodiesnobodies.pdf> [accessed 20th October, 2015] (p.199)

collages present a descriptive presence of an at once recognisable, yet implacable and bizarre, narrative hinterland, as stitched and unearthed fragments are used to spin and weave a tale around the eponymous mythic hero. Orpheus is 'a patchwork himself',[865] Orpheus is the 'pneumatic inspiration to a mixed bag of poets and pilgrims', Orpheus is not just subject, but textual analogue, an endlessly adapted form.[866]

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[865] Blegvad and Partridge, 'Savannah', *Orpheus the Lowdown*.
[866] Whitehead, *Confessions of a Terminal Schizophrenic*.

Chapter Seven – I looked back

This thesis has considered approaches to textual rewriting which encompass the text itself, the performers within the text, and the 'listeners or readers who re-create and in doing so renew the text'.[867] I have examined such methods of 'renewal' in the adaptational movement and cross-pollination of narratives through a variety of media, including: art practice, poetry, installation works, digital modes of engagement, and music. Textual change has been illustrated by close analysis of the processes of the adapters themselves, the presence of the audience/user morphing into one of 'performer' within the shape and boundaries of the text, and the potentials for the user/manipulator in reshaping content for their own purpose. Thus, notions of adaptation are positioned as ongoing processes, as texts bleed into and inform each other through myriad differing versions.

The nature of this ongoing progression of textual intermix and rewriting are the focus of the concluding chapter, whereby I illustrate a practice-led investigation into the Orpheus myth. This creative component aims to transfer theory into practice, in a similar manner to the methodologies informing the formation and structure of *The Tales We Tell,* detailed in Chapter Three. Here, my discussion follows the rewriting of the mythic text through a variety of media, as Orpheus is again adapted, remixed, and transformed, through text, audio, and visual modes. The artefacts I created in this process consisted of: a part-critical/part-poetic chapter in the graphic novel *Orpheus and Eurydice: A Graphic-Poetic Exploration* (2017) by artist Tom de Freston and writer Kiran Millwood Hargrave, a poem, *A Silent, O*, designed to function as an accompanying work to the publication, and an audio collage, *Orpheus: Remixed*, which adapts the poem into a recorded artefact. These creations were then embedded within a Tumblr page alongside art created by Paul Maurice and a poetic response by Tim Humphreys-Jones, both being further adaptations of my own writing and the myth itself.[868]

These works utilise the myth of Orpheus as the catalyst for creation, their structure and content influenced both by the *Orpheus and Eurydice* graphic novel, and by the texts and theories which have echoed throughout this thesis. The works, artistic approaches, and critical engagement, has focused upon a body of work which views adaptation as a 'creative and

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[867] Bakhtin, p.253.
[868] See Stephen C. Kenyon-Owen, 'A Silent, O', in Tom de Freston and Kiran Millwood Hargrave, *Orpheus and Eurydice: A Graphic-Poetic Exploration* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017) pp.23 -24; Stephen Kenyon-Owen and Paul Maurice, *Orpheus: Borderlines* (Tumblr, 2017), <https://orpheusremix.tumblr.com/> [accessed 12 September 2017]

interpretative *process*' as texts are refashioned into new forms.[869] I have presented both textually and critically the premise that 'Source texts must be rewritten; we cannot help rewriting them'.[870] This perpetual state of textual rewriting informs my own creative process as I employ a deliberate 'strategy placed between production and reproduction', whereby original writings are relocated and reframed alongside pre-existing works.[871] The configuration of these works involves multiple constituent elements or else 'severed' parts designed to converge within a salvaged whole; a whole which is then broken apart, revisited, reconceptualised, and remade. While the text/Orpheus is still torn to pieces 'in a frenzy', he is then stitched back together, the adapted text still singing even after a visceral end through further works and collaboration.[872] This negotiation of destruction combined with a new birth was my focus, both in creative engagement and to illustrate the textual and critical themes of the thesis through practice.

In this process, I look back (like Orpheus, as does every text within this thesis) both to the myth and to the textual approaches discussed herein. That act of looking back is key to the process of textual revisitation as it exemplifies notions of attempted return, and also suggests an unwillingness to be contained within a prescribed narrative frame. With looking back (admittedly to his own resultant dismay) Orpheus breaks the conditions of his own narrative and engages in an act of transgression which signals an 'inability to stay within the boundaries set by the deities', or perhaps the outlying limitations of his textual condition.[873] To look back signals the end both for Orpheus and Eurydice, yet for the adapters who engage with this tale of loss and thwarted resurrection their tragic arc is always encountered anew, facilitating a 'different version, a different adaptation of the text'.[874]

I engage with this shift of form through a method of textual construction which deliberately adopts processes of bricolage. This approach has appeared throughout the thesis and analysed in application to adaptational method in the works of: Boghosian, the arrangement and creation of artefacts in *Pantechnicon* and *The Tales We Tell*, the construction of narratives by The Story Mechanics and The Secret Experiment, in addition to concepts of intermix and

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[869] Bruhn, Gjelsvik and Hanssen, ''There and Back Again', in *Adaptation Studies: New Challenges,* p.10.

[870] Leitch, *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents*, p.16.

[871] Avram, p.6.

[872] Rilke, 'First Part, 26', *Sonnets to Orpheus*, (Loc 712 of 1465). (ln.9).

[873] Partridge, p.3.

[874] John Milton, 'Translation Studies and Adaptation Studies', *Translation Research Projects 2,* ed. by Anthony Pym and Alexander Perekrestenko (2009), 51-58 (p.52), <http://isg.urv.es/publicity/isg/publications/trp_2_2009/chapters/milton.pdf> [accessed 15 February 2014]

blend of media by Arcade Fire, Blegvad, Gaiman, Jones, Wilson and others. The texts produced recombine scatterings and ephemera, uniting a plethora of past narratives, lost objects, voices, and technologies in their retellings and recombinations. The audio collage I created rewrites the poem *A Silent, O,* embracing such re-use of form to adapt a 'flotsam and jetsam' of material and attempting to show the text as being in movement.[875] A textual movement which continues through further reworkings, extending beyond a 'solitary writer' and into a more 'fluid' form, thus creating 'a work that exists in multiple versions in which the primary cause of those versions is some form of revision'.[876]

This fluidity through collation echoes curatorial practice and resultant analysis of *The Tales We Tell* event. The installation situated multiple adaptational interpretations within a physical space, creating a temporary archive within a container or frame. That frame, in particular with the *Beyond Orpheus* sequence and the nature of the physical space as a whole, was responded to and altered. The Void site operating as a 'shifting environment with moving borders [...] an active, viewer-inclusive setting [creating] an *open structure*'.[877] In such spaces, it is the spectator who 'must decide what is background and what is foreground', as each movement, each (re)placement, each viewing, permits something slightly altered within a shifting space, permitting the reshaping of its own form within the context of other works within a (possible) sequence.[878] The nature of installation as being temporary lends a transitory or morphing nature as it shifts from environment to environment; as each 'exhibition encloses within it the script of another; each work may be inserted into different programs and used for multiple scenarios'.[879] The nature of the collated space and the objects contained within is one of impermanence, as lines of continuity are negotiated in an ever-shifting textual form. It is this renegotiation or altering of sequence of an archive of materials that I adopted within these creative processes as I collate and reshape the work, in order to construct my own shifting textual adaptation.

Through continual blending of form, there may be no endpoint to the art object, as the source and the version/adaptation are not seen as solitary instances, but as networked elements

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[875] Clothier, 'The Poetic Object', in *The Poetic Object: Exhibition Catalogue*, ed. by Clothier and Edwards, p.8.
[876] See Bryant, *The Fluid Text*, p.2; Bryant, 'Textual Identity and Adaptive Revision: Editing adaptation as a fluid text', in *Adaptation Studies: New challenges, New Directions*, ed. by Bruhn, Gjelsvik and Hanssen, pp.47–67 (p.48).
[877] Avram, p.27.
[878] Robert Harbison, *Eccentric Spaces* (MIT Press: New York, 2000). p.145.
[879] Nicolas Bourriaud, *Postproduction: Culture as Screenplay: How Art Reprograms the World* (New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2002). pp.19-20.

or open narratives ready to be incorporated and reinterpreted through new artistic discourse. Here, the discourse shifts from de Freston and Hargrave's work, my response to it, further parallel works spreading out from that involvement, and additional reinterpretations by others. Each re-creation being 'points on a continuum' within an evolving meta-text as I, and others navigate processes, tinkering with production, inserting new forms on 'existing lines'.[880] The texts I present in this chapter aim to generate a reciprocal model of exchange that harnesses modes of adaptation, collage, curation, and remix, in a 'compulsion to repeat', and adapt the textual method and critical approaches of the thesis through creative practice.[881]

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[880] See Cardwell, *Adaptation Revisited,* p.25; Bourriaud, p.19.
[881] Carroll, 'Introduction: Textual Infidelities', in *Adaptation in Contemporary Culture*, ed. by Carroll, pp.1-7 (p.1).

What do you say to a man, who has come back from the dead?[882]

The process of rewriting Orpheus in this fashion began with my interest in the artist Tom de Freston's focus on the myth.[883] He asks 'what might it mean to conflate these myths? Might we explode Ovid's original texts and collapse the retellings into a scattering of matter from which we can build new forms?'[884] The new forms he creates do not rest within one specific mode, as he presents a fusion of fictions, histories, and stylistic representations in his art and artistic process. Gaiman's description of the myth, that it stretches like a 'wet skin over the frame of each artist's imagination', proves apt here, as that 'skin' is one worn with artistic purpose by de Freston himself. [885] The artist 'sculpts' onto his own body, using clay, found objects, daubed paint, and other materials, photographing the results in order to translate his altered figure into new characters on the page, or canvas.

> I generate new images and ideas for paintings through a series of processes, each designed to interrogate and adapt the material. Performance is key. I will often inhabit a character, photographing sessions of role-play and improvisation. Sometimes I will make puppets, masks, stage sets and maquettes to develop characters, architecture and moments. The photographs act as documents to draw from, and then in turn to make collages and digital montages. Each iteration feeds into the other, spawning new material, all with a view to providing a scaffold for the painting itself'. [886]

His physical practice becomes an adaptive prototype, his body becoming 'extended through space. A body where costume and scenery merge, where anatomic and spatial geometric forms become a single form of nature and culture', establishing a dialogue between form, space and text.[887] This process assists in re-creating or occupying a physical representation of character, a desire to enter the narrative and inhabit the husk of the tale through a process of physical/ textual transformations.

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[882] Tom de Freston and Kiran Millwood Hargrave, *OE* (Vimeo, 2017) <https://vimeo.com/195838148 > [accessed 15th January 2018]

[883] See the live installation work - Tom de Freston, *OE at 47/49 Tanner Street* (2015), <http://www.tomdefreston.co.uk/artist/5898/oe-at-4749-tanner-street> [accessed 24 March 2016]; Tom de Freston, *Orpheus and the Minotaur-Breese Little Gallery* (2014), <http://www.tomdefreston.co.uk/artist/5599/orpheus-and-the-minotaur-breese-little-gallery> [accessed 24 March 2016]

[884] Tom de Freston, *Tom de Freston - About*, <http://www.tomdefreston.co.uk/artist/cv> [Accessed 21st July 2015 - now updated, no longer in this form]

[885] Gaiman, *Orpheus Underground.*

[886] Tom de Freston, *Tom de Freston – About* (Tom de Freston) <http://www.tomdefreston.co.uk/artist/cv> [Accessed 21st July 2015 - now updated, no longer in this form]

[887] Maria Luia Palumbo, *New Wombs: Electronic Bodies and Architectural Disorders* (Berlin: Birkhauser, 2000), p.18.

The artworks themselves exist as conglomeration of forms and entities as characters break their own narrative frames, moving within and outside the boundaries of their own tales. For example, in *Orpheus and the Minotaur*, de Freston creates a 'mutating underworld as seen by Orpheus, who is lost so completely that he stumbles from his own myth into the Minotaur's'.[888] Myths collide and overlap, the underworld folding in on itself creating a space where 'time and history has collapsed into one building, a space beyond narrative'.[889] Distorted figures move within angular landscapes, walk across chessboards, in a conglomeration of influences not limited to style, narrative, time period or narrative specificity. This clash of fictive depictions appears alongside fissures in relationships, familial dissolution, and crucifixions which morph into torture metaphors of Guantanamo Bay.[890] The viewer may find themselves wading 'neck-deep through the Christian themes of sacrifice, martyrdom, crucifixion, and resurrection, and play in all the public and private spaces of carnival and catastrophe'.[891] These works, like Blegvad's, 'decant [the viewer] into a world not so much fallen as tipped over: realms of dimensional slippage, cognitive puns, and mirrored halls of infinite paradox [...] It is strange but finally not unfamiliar country'.[892] In turn, the viewer is confronted with paintings on a human scale, 'so that it is possible to meet the figures in the paintings eye to eye', the canvasses 'thick with paint, thick with colour, producing often glossy figures even when the figures are made to be comically flat [...] mannerist, masked, and theatrical; they are often voyeuristic, obscene, repellent'.[893] He fashions an archive of material which provide 'signifiers of the familiar – light bulbs, staircases and fireplaces', yet it is a zone that 'still feels unsettling and placeless'.[894]

The Orphean underworld of de Freston is inspired by the past yet references horrors of the present, with works 'pieced together as a realm of staged domestic spaces [..] offering openings onto glittering, otherworldly weatherscapes. Each painting is a window onto a room, full of minotaurs, lost voices and monsters'.[895] Figures and images deliberately echo one

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[888] de Freston, *Orpheus and the Minotaur.*

[889] Ibid.

[890] Pablo de Orellana, 'Charnel House, Horses, Art and Conflict: Interview with Tom de Freston' (Strife, 2013), <https://strifeblog.org/2013/12/17/charnel-house-horses-art-and-conflict-interview-with-tom-de-freston/> [accessed 24 March 2016]

[891] Goehr, in Freeman and Mattravers, p.64.

[892] Zabor, in Blegvad, *The Book of Leviathan* (Unmarked page).

[893] Goehr, in Freeman and Mattravers, p.64.

[894] Farr.

[895] Anna Ferrari, 'Tom de Freston: Orpheus and the Minotaur - Trebuchet Magazine', *Trebuchet Magazine* (Trebuchet Magazine, 2014), <http://www.trebuchet-magazine.com/tom-de-freston-orpehus-minotaur/> [accessed 29 April 2016]

another, as 'if one repeats an image, sign or word often enough, the familiar meaning is defamiliarised, rendered uncanny, and we laugh, cry or otherwise respond'.[896] This repetition causes the static image to be multiple, a sequence which 'assumes the textured form of a tapestry or a mosaic'.[897] Once again, the treatment of the textual reconstruction of the myth is synonymous with reformation and return, in a text that is repeatedly 'worn' by the performer/artist, who inhabits a narrative zone which seeks to transgress the boundaries of its own tale in the interrogation of new meanings. These meanings revolve around collisions and intersections of form, 'upon exploring the possibilities present in the source material, and how the conversations between the different media might generate a further engagement and expansion of the material'.[898] The source text thus functions as a dialogic point for contemplation and reconfiguration, the manipulation of textual objects that clash, crossover, and exist beyond their original capacities as per the commingling of narrative and media in Boghosian, Blegvad, *Beckett*, and others elsewhere in this thesis.

The work of de Freston and Hargrave in *Orpheus and Eurydice: A Graphic-Poetic Exploration* illustrates 'The story of Orpheus's tragic quest into the underworld to rescue his true love Eurydice back from the dead is one that has haunted the western imagination for over 2,000 years through many tellings, retellings, appropriations and adaptations'.[899] *Orpheus and Eurydice* is illustrated by de Freston with poetic commentary by Hargrave, and orbits around:

> two threads. The visual path takes us on O's journey into the Underworld. The poems situate E as witness to this journey, and narrator of their prior biography. The hope is that the two threads provide interlinking narratives which look in multiple directions, existing in distinct spaces to echo the lovers' separation: a form of ekphrasis where two independent voices look to find each other in hope of harmony and resolution.[900]

Seemingly dyadic perspectives within the book present O as a 'toxically masculine' character, falling not just into Hades, but into the depths of his own depression and ego'.[901] The poetry is written primarily 'in the voice of Eurydice', in addition to a supporting chorus which provides narrative context.[902] Matilda Bathurst speaks of these contrasting approaches, seeing de

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[896] Goehr, in Freeman and Mattravers, pp.60-61.
[897] Ibid, p.65.
[898] de Freston, *Tom De Freston - About*
[899] Tom de Freston and Kiran Millwood Hargrave, *Orpheus and Eurydice: A Graphic-Poetic Exploration* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), <https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/orpheus-and-eurydice-9781474276818/> [accessed 4 September 2017]
[900] de Freston and Hargrave, *OE,* pp.xi-xii.
[901] Tom de Freston, 'Speaking of *OE*', in Centre for Myth Studies, *Translating Eurydice* (University of Essex, 2017), <https://essexmyth.wordpress.com/conferences/translating-eurydice/> [accessed 22 January 2018]
[902] Kiran Millwood Hargrave, 'Speaking of *OE*', in Centre for Myth Studies, *Translating Eurydice*

Freston's images as 'loud: there will be scenes of screaming beasts, crashing canvases, bodies bound in kaleidoscopic contortions. Yes, Orpheus can sing – one wailing *o* which extends wordlessly across several spreads – but he is unable to listen, unable to exit his self-centred orbit'.[903] A narrow voice emitting that hollow, 'O', once again, and one which perhaps throws doubt on the validity of a return scarred with rampant egotism. That purposely narcissistic embrace is tempered through Eurydice, who speaks through Hargrave (or vice-versa, perhaps) in poems placed 'unobtrusively between pages – and yet they are less like pressed flowers than gaping mouths, blooming wounds'.[904] The poems are written by hand and the pages are reproduced as such, thus existing not as a typed replication but as evidence of the original and personal, an echo or archive of a lost and bloodied voice, the silent 'wound' of Eurydice.

The book asks 'can O and E, released from the weight of their history, make a new fate? Can the myth be escaped?'[905] In this act of questioning, the inevitable arc and boundaries of O's narrative are challenged both within the adaptation itself and through the planned evolution of the adapted text. The book is but one element of a textual body that extends through 'film, performances, and exhibitions to test the dimensions of the myth: the myth of the man, the musician, who entered the underworld to rescue his wife from the clutches of death'.[906] The first example of this extra-textual reworking was presented post-publication through the film *OE*; a collaborative 'transmedia retelling of Orpheus and Eurydice, combining film, painting, graphic fiction, poetry and music'.[907] *OE* is a postscript, an addendum, taking place after the events of the graphic novel and enacting a further moment of retelling which spreads outward from the frame of its original form. de Freston explains of the project that there was to be 'no hierarchy between poetry, painting, academia, performance, film, animation – no one voice dominates the others – they were designed to speak to each other', thus facilitating an interweaving of media and communication across textual borders.[908] To further extend the boundaries of the adaptation, a sequence of performative installations is planned during 2018, incorporating multiple creative collaborations. These ongoing imaginings utilise the myth as a narrative template for the act of adaptation and revision, yet that template is not fixed; it is

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[903] Matilda Bathurst, *Making Myths in the Space Between the Lines* (The Millions, 2017), <
<https://themillions.com/2017/09/making-myths-space-lines.html> [accessed 18 September 2017]
[904] Ibid.
[905] de Freston and Hargrave, *OE,* p.2.
[906] Matilda Bathurst, *Making Myths in the Space Between the Lines*, (The Millions, 2017),
<http://themillions.com/2017/09/making-myths-space-lines.html> [accessed 16 September 2017]
[907] Centre for Myth Studies, *Translating Eurydice.*
[908] de Freston, 'Speaking of *OE*', in Centre for Myth Studies, *Translating Eurydice.*

reworked and cast anew in texts which shapeshift and converge through media, the text again being that which 'cannot be contained, it is something that leaps outside its frame'.[909] The process of interweaving form and structure, in effect collating a kaleidoscope of narratives, resonates in the formation of the graphic novel itself.

> *Orpheus and Eurydice: A Graphic-Poetic Exploration* aimed to be:

> A unique coming together of poetry, art and criticism, *Orpheus and Eurydice* explores the myth's impact through a graphic-poetic reconstruction of the story. Including critical reflections from leading thinkers, writers and critics, this is a compelling exploration of the enduring power of this tale.[910]

An intermix of visual and written energies that are punctuated by ten essays which seek to find 'points of rupture in the narrative, looking to explore paths that would otherwise have remained closed [to] provide a framework and a toolkit for the reader to search out other possible ways to enter in the text and images'.[911] I was one of the ten invited contributors to the work, and was tasked with responding to the text as a whole, and specifically section 'II' in which Orpheus recollects that 'in a backward glance it will all come down':[912]

> O wakes and in one breath remembers it all. He remembers E, her life, her poetry, her death; all violently presenting themselves back to him in an instance. He finds and reads her retelling of Orpheus and Eurydice, wants to climb into it, to unmake it. O decides, with unflinching certainty, that he is Orpheus and he must rescue E. O will bring E back from death. But first, he must find the Underworld.[913]

Orpheus becomes 'O' again; an empty vessel, now the centre of the world is gone. The work begins from a central point of loss, of an attempt to climb into a memory, to rediscover it and perhaps remake it. In this, the work again serves as a grief-work, and an analogue for adaptive approach in the attempted retrieval of the past.

The illustrations within 'II' see Orpheus inconsolable, conjuring memories of lovemaking with Eurydice that are torn away by absence and silence. de Freston's likeness appears in the figure of O himself; his own image is not hidden as it is within other works such as in *The Charnel House* (2014), or else replaced by geometric shapes or horse's heads, it is

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[909] de Freston, 'Speaking of *OE*', in Centre for Myth Studies, *Translating Eurydice.*
[910] de Freston and Hargrave, *Orpheus and Eurydice: A Graphic-Poetic Exploration* <https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/orpheus-and-eurydice-9781474276818/>
[911] de Freston and Hargrave, *OE,* p.xii.
[912] Ibid, p.5.
[913] Ibid, p.6.

recognisably the artist.[914] This implies an approach to textual reconstruction that owes as much to the myth as it does to the personal, the artist putting himself within the work. The preface notes this intimate journey into the underworld in creating the book was a process 'at times fraught – a dialogue between lovers. It draws on personal experiences of love, depression, grief, and contains something of the work involved in navigating through such terrain'.[915] The regularity presented on the page belies the emotive content, as 'II' is four pages long, three of those pages being occupied by nine regular, uniform panels. Lydia Goehr notes that in 'many of his paintings […] the implied position of the viewer is put into question', the implied reader/viewer here is placed as watching the memories of O, of lovers naked on a bed, stark, black and white images observed from a distance, the viewpoint being the top of a flight of stairs.[916] The closeness once easily forged, becomes detached, and then erodes with a naked O left alone. Notably there is no text in this space, the panels consist only of images which are viewed at a distance and drawn outside and apart from narrative events. There is no voice, no speech bubbles within the panels; O is silent, he can only soundlessly scream. The continuing narrative observes O's attempt to try and reclaim that which is lost; a journey which begins in 'III', as Orpheus the artist seeks to paint his way into the underworld:

> For O a painting is a slippery metaphor; sometimes a window, sometimes a wall but always a mirror. He wanted to enter this threshold space, not theoretically, but actually to become a part of its world, to enter death through painting.[917]

Painting is a possibility (a window), an obstruction (a wall), and reflects back to the adapter their own desire. It is also an escape, a portal, a way to enter the text and go back in an attempt to liberate and reclaim.

My response aimed to capture something of these opening moments in the narrativization; an introductory sequence which frames events of loss, isolation, and silence. I write of Orpheus, 'O', as being 'soundless, his lyre stringless, his words unspoken. There are no original creations existing from this 'first poet, of whom all poets since are echoes or incarnations', O exists as a whisper, a suggestion, a 'shadow in the doorway'.[918] O is the voiceless presence needing to be revoiced, the absent melody to be sung, a skin to wear, the

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[914] Tom de Freston, *The Charnel House* (Suffolk: Bridgedoor Press, 2014).
[915] de Freston and Hargrave, *OE,* p.xii.
[916] Goehr, in Freeman and Mattravers, pp.61.
[917] de Freston and Hargrave, *OE,* p. 12.
[918] Kenyon-Owen, 'A Silent, O', in de Freston and Hargrave, *OE,* p.23. n.b. I quote in this excerpt, Wroe, p.6., p.35.

'empty vessel and sphere of immateriality, *O*. Barren, isolated, hollow, but never alone'.[919] He is revisited 'but none put a stamp on him definitively, because the young man with the lyre is different for everyone who meets him. Each encounter makes him anew'.[920] The life of the text, as I have discussed throughout this thesis, is one of an 'interpretative *process*'.[921]

The text, Orpheus, is persistently returned to and interpreted by multiple voices through various media; the myth a 'naked singularity drawing all to its horizons, spewing forth a kaleidoscope of textual recollections which embrace, clash, spill, and coagulate'.[922] These versions shift and alter over time, bending and breaking medial boundaries, 'a textual entity existing not as a form frozen within a historical moment, but as a malleable body (of work) to delve into, a membrane to occupy, or story to wear'.[923] This short piece, illustrated in these excerpts, both sought to function as a response and introduction to the work, and to also engage with many of the concepts I have raised regarding the nature of the malleability of a text, and of how it may be reshaped and given voice to through a range of media. That process continued with the creation of a parallel poetic work, expanding those ideas while also placing myself as Orpheus, the inhabitor of the hollow O. The poem, *A Silent, O* is reproduced in its entirety in the following pages.

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[919] Kenyon-Owen, 'A Silent, O', in de Freston and Hargrave, *OE*, p.23. n.b. I quote in this excerpt, Wroe, p.6., p.23.
[920] Wroe, pp.4-6.
[921] Bruhn, Gjelsvik and Hanssen, ''There and Back Again', in *Adaptation Studies: New Challenges,* ed. by Bruhn, Gjelsvik and Hanssen, p.10.
[922] Kenyon-Owen, 'A Silent, O', in de Freston and Hargrave, *OE,* p.23.
[923] Ibid.

A Silent, O. [924]

They talk about me out there. They paint me,
put me in stories,
sing of me in songs,
but the resonance of my own voice,
hangs hushed.
I am everywhere, yet my verses remain
unvoiced,
my music rings in absence, and deafens the
world.

I should introduce myself.
I am   bound.
I am   segmented.
I am   scattered.
I am   Orpheus,
or so they say.

I'm not so sure, but it seems inevitable.

There was a time when there was another

Her (memory) spills

from

my

dreams

f
a
l
l
s
into
my world,
and then is gone.

I try placing margins around her,
I build frames to keep her contained and safe, for me.
I fail.

I feel like I have been here before.

Wherever I look there is no present,
only a kaleidoscope of memories embracing,
clashing, spilling, coalescing.

Fragments of the past are scattered around me, an organisational nightmare.
Piling them into a tower. Pieces. Scattered.
They reflect images back to me, but I daren't look.
I lie amongst them, and become lost in the places where I was.

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[924] Stephen C. Kenyon-Owen, 'A Silent, O', in Kenyon-Owen and Maurice.

The partitioned space of my own skin borders an ache for return,
grief rends me, shards embody me,

(sharp at the edge hazardous to touch)

myriad hands strain within my form, testing the vigour of this husk.

(I wish they pressed harder)

This centre will not hold, my bodily void of place and presence longs for a note, a pitch, a
cadence, a scream.

Give me just noise, I hear nothing.

I need to hear someone else's tale. To go somewhere else. I should go, now.

Parallel lines

This poetic piece was as stated, a parallel work to the de Freston and Hargrave publication in which I sought to expand the theme of Orpheus/O being a voiceless figure, spoken of by many but possessing no words of his own. A narrative born of that hollow O, so abbreviated by Davies and de Freston. He is a figure at once limited, abstract, and yet inhabitable, a 'shadow in the doorway, a face outside the window in the night rain [...] When we hear him, time stops and for a moment everything is changed; but then he moves on'.[925] The moving on illustrated by my attempted inhabitation of the mythic figure, as I write from the first person, to 'wear the skin' of Orpheus, looking out from the frame of a narrative on a world which speaks of, and for me. In the first lines, 'They talk about me out there | My music rings in absence, yet deafens the world' (ln. 1-7). I (or, O/the adapter) attempt to give voice to that silence through rewriting and speaking of a narrative which exists in myriad, overwhelming forms.

The figure of O attempts to recombine a multitude of fragments and material, as per Boghosian's lost and broken objects, Amy and Ryan Green's memorialisation of their son, or as I attempt through these creative processes, or the curation of artefacts within *The Tales We Tell*. This collation of a 'kaleidoscope of memories' (ln. 35) proves to be a Sisyphean task, an 'organisational nightmare' (ln. 37) that is impossible to reforge or unbreak:

> Piling them into a tower. pieces. scattered.
> They reflect images back to me, but I daren't look.
> I lie amongst them, and become lost in the places where I was
> (ln. 38-40)

The attempt to contain this fragmentation, like Orpheus' doomed narrative trajectory, does not work. I/he makes a boundary, a 'frame', to protect her and the boundaries of the text:

> I try placing margins around her,
> I build frames to keep her contained and safe, for me.
> I fail.
> (ln. 30-32)

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[925] Wroe, pp.4-6.

The repetition of these attempts (and the numerous retellings) are suggested in the line 'I feel like I have been here before' (ln. 32). O's repeated failure (here, and in variant adaptations) causes even the memory of Eurydice to feel distant at times, she fades:

There was a time when there was another

                                                  Her (memory) spills

            from

                      my

        dreams

f
a
l
l
s
into
my world,
and then is gone.
(ln. 15-28)

Yet in speaking of these moments, the textual world is renewed, even if O is left clutching at shards and drifting memories.

The use of visual elements in the format of the poem was deliberate, incorporating a concrete or graphic echo of meaning and representation within the text. The opening stanzas reflect the letters E and O, while the scattered words and falling lines of Eurydice's 'memory' were designed to reproduce the chaos of loss, the diminishment of recollection and descent or 'fall' into Hades. The construction of the lines (ln. 42-45) are interrupted by bracketed comments, which were placed to imply an 'other' outside voice breaking into the text:

grief rends me, shards embody me.
                          (sharp at the edge hazardous to touch)

Myriad hands strain within my form, testing the vigour of this husk
                              (I wish they pressed harder)

The suggestion of the 'strained husk' losing physical integrity ushers in the impending inevitability of Orpheus being torn apart, only to be retold in another form once more (ln. 46-49:

This centre will not hold, my bodily void of place and presence longs for a note, a pitch, a cadence, a scream.

Give me just noise, I hear nothing.

I need to hear someone else's tale. To go somewhere else. I should go, now.

The failure of myself/O to rescue E is perhaps, 'inevitable' (ln. 14) as I am bound by the particularities of the mythic narrative, however as has been argued, the specific textual from may move beyond frames or boundaries and foster new energy through reworkings and retellings. My approach here, through analysis, theory, and practice, has presented the text as being in motion, passing through and across media. This fluidic approach was further explored as I adopted processes of collage to my own writing, severing and splicing the written work to recombine it in an altered form through three audio pieces.

Many voices

The three pieces consisted of: *Orpheus: Remixed, Orpheus: Interlude* (both written, recorded and performed by myself), and *Orpheus: Scream*, which was performed by Humphreys-Jones, who reworked and rewrote *A Silent, O* into an alternate form. Each of the pieces used methods of collage and remix as a basis for creative (re)interpretation. The process of creating these works begins with discussion of *Orpheus: Remixed,* which used a cut and shortened version of *A Silent, O* (see Appendix Four).

The piece was read alongside a sonic backdrop which utilised a variety of audio sources which included previously recorded classical works, alongside electronic drumbeats, electric guitar, and use of incongruous noise. Two different beats were created which were then filtered, distorted and blended together to produce a pounding, mechanistic contrast to the classical audio and spoken word. My voice was also manipulated using a lo-fi analog delay and an emulation of a gramophone with resplendent crackles and random noise, to imitate a vocal sound emanating from the past. As the poem was cut and sliced so too were classical pieces by Jacques Offenbach, C.W. Gluck, and Franz Liszt, as segments were rearranged and blended together to form a lilting, sometimes chaotic clash of sound.[926] These processes of adaptational remix exist as a conglomeration, a collage of varying elements or sources 'assembled into a new entity using the techniques of audio editing (analog or digital)'.[927] This chaotic intermix was designed to imitate the form of the poem and the visceral nature of Orpheus' dismemberment. A similar method of remix was used in the creation of the instrumental piece *Orpheus: Interlude*, which recycled musical segments not included within *Orpheus: Remixed*, from Jacques Offenbach and Franz Liszt, spliced together to create an alternate musical text. Thus, these media artefacts are a 'patchwork' themselves, where Orpheus is again seen as the 'pneumatic inspiration to a mixed bag of poets and pilgrims', or analogue of endlessly variable textual adaptations.[928]

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[926] These open-source and copyright-free works were: Jacques Offenbach, *Overture to Orpheus in the Underworld*, (Musopen, [n.d]), <https://musopen.org/music/1382/jacques-offenbach/overture-to-orpheus-in-the-underworld/> [accessed 28 March 2017]; C.W. Gluck, *Dance of the Blessed Spirits* (Musopen, [n.d]), <https://musopen.org/music/1164/christoph-willibald-gluck/orpheus-and-eurydice/> [accessed 28 March 2017]; Franz Liszt, *Orpheus S.98. Symphonic Poem No.4*. (Musopen, [n.d]), <https://musopen.org/music/3767/franz-liszt/orpheus-s-98/> [accessed 28 March 2017]

[927] Avram, p.9.

[928] See Blegvad and Partridge, 'Savannah', *Orpheus the Lowdown*; Whitehead, *Confessions of a Terminal Schizophrenic.*

The opening of *Orpheus: Remixed* begins with not my voice or words, but a quotation from King Edward VIII, 'At long last, I am able to say a few words, of my own'.[929] This was a deliberately knowing and intertextual device on my part, to signal that this piece is both created by myself, appearing at the end of a thesis where I have analysed other's work, whilst also indicating in the use of such a statement that this is an artefact created via a process of remix. Remix, in application to adaptation, as I assert in Chapter Six, is not an inherently lesser form replete with negative associations; a 'sort of subsidiary, if not inferior, work compared to the "original" source', but part of an active and engaged mode of textual response.[930] Textual remix is shown to 'have different degrees of complexity, from a simple reconfiguration of a track's existing elements […] to a multi-layered musical tissue that introduces a large variety of quotations, very often reworked and altered'.[931] Avram's use of the term 'musical tissue' evokes Barthes' 'tissue of citations, resulting from the thousand sources of culture', and is particularly apt when viewed in application to the fabric of the text consisting of a multitude of collated sources, which then spread outward into myriad other forms.[932]

Processes of rewriting and textual alterity placed upon the work continues in Humphreys-Jones' auditory reinterpretation. Humphreys-Jones' *Orpheus: Scream*, utilised direct quotations from *A Silent*, *O*, while also reshaping and rewriting the text, adding differing rhythms and intonations. The recorded performance was further manipulated, as I stretched or shortened words, and blended three different vocal takes, to create layered voices within the track. The rhythm track was created by turning the vocal track into a MIDI sequence, which was then used to trigger drumbeats, and in this, the voice of Humphreys-Jones becomes the instrumentation for the entire track. These reconfigurations and manipulations present an approach to adaptation (and to the Orphean text) as a continual work in process, as each media artefact functions as a journey into and interrogation of the text. This transfiguration continued in Maurice's art, which was a direct response to my written essay and accompanying poem, that depicts the split, the fracture between Orpheus and Eurydice and between the overworld and the underworld. Early drafts exhibit that division occurring through mixed vertical and horizontal planes:

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[929] King Edward VIII, *Abdication Address* (The Free Information Society, 2008)
<http://www.freeinfosociety.com/media.php?id=2521> [accessed 28 March 2017]
[930] Avram, p.7.
[931] Ibid, p.9.
[932] Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', p.146.
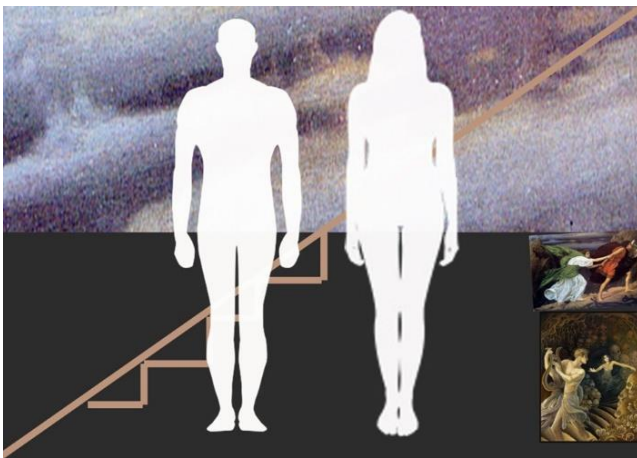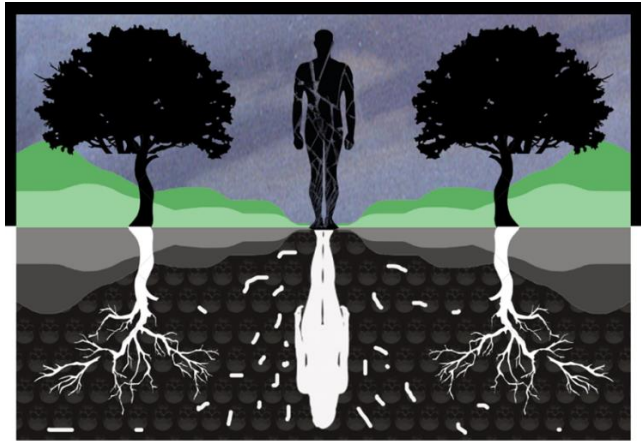
With the final completed version utilising a horizontal split:

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[933] Paul Maurice, *Orpheus: Borderlines*, work-in-progress. (2017).

Figure 81. *Orpheus: Borderlines.*[934]

Here. Orpheus and Eurydice are visually represented as opposite reflections of one another, inseparable even in the afterlife. Orpheus' body is shown breaking apart, slashed across the torso, his form 'shattered by grief'.[935] Eurydice is whole but, in a world out of joint, surrounded by the dead and roots that clutch and spread. The image utilises chiaroscuro to emphasise both figures and the differing planes of existence, while the colour palette is influenced by the lines in the published essay 'O is everywhere and nowhere all at once; blank, inhabitable, a partitioned physical form shattered by grief, held together by straining sinews of textual flesh'.[936] Fleshy, black, and 'sinewy', the earthy colours are also suggestive of Wroe's search for Orpheus' origins as coming from a place 'dark, obscure, out of the earth'.[937] The traditional, darkly natural palette contrasts with digital execution to create a form resonant both in depictions of antiquity, and the affordances of the new.

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[934] Paul Maurice, *Orpheus: Borderlines.* 2017. Digital art. <https://orpheusremix.tumblr.com/> [accessed 12 September 2017]
[935] Kenyon-Owen, 'A Silent, O', in de Freston and Millwood Hargrave, p,23.
[936] Ibid.
[937] Wroe, p.3.

They talk about me out there

These interpretations illustrate a dialogic approach to textual formation, as I argue in my introduction to this thesis, of 'authors creating the text, the performers of the text (if they exist) and finally the listeners or readers who re-create and in doing so renew the text', a cyclical and reciprocative sequence of textual participation and interaction.[938] As texts are informed, formed, and reformed, by each other, so are creative approaches and critical method, which creates an ever-shifting 'discourse of alterity' in a 'blending of communication and form', that fosters new textual relationships across and through medial boundaries.[939] It is this crossover of textual interaction that I have sought to illustrate.

The capacities of adaptive process across media resides in that movement in and between texts; of barriers converging, bending or breaking through textual reformations that continue beyond their borders or frames. The adapted text here began with a mythic interpretation in graphic novel form by de Freston and Hargrave, it followed with an essay by myself that reacted to the myth and to the book itself; my response deliberately intertwined fragments of theory and analysis contained within this thesis. A parallel work was created to extend and reinterpret those concepts through poetic form; a form which was again reshaped into an audio collage. The life of the text continued, shedding its skin and being reformed in alternate artistic works. This process of unearthing (past texts), collation (copying, pasting) of those textual fragments, and rewriting the text through a diverse range of media, has been the primary focus of this thesis. My own remediations were an attempt to transfer these themes, which arise from both critical context and textual analysis, into artefacts which are representative of such concepts and to realise the notion of the text being in movement, in flux.

My analysis has presented a discussion of adaptation that focuses on the capacity for myriad forms of textual migration, occurring through return, reclamation, and 'processes of change […] as one or more cultural artifacts move across medial and disciplinary boundaries' producing a weave of text and theory that combine, and intertwine.[940] The works of Boghosian stem from the reassemblage of lost or discarded objects, divorced from past forms and purpose then becoming reconstituted artefacts. *The Tales We Tell* installation saw the limbs of multiple texts being sewn together to construct a cohesive whole, at least for a time. The Story

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[938] Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, p.253.
[939] Partridge, p.2.
[940] Chapple, 'Pedagogy and Policy', in *Redefining Adaptation Studies*, ed. by Cutchins, Raw and Welsh, pp.55–70 (p.55).

Mechanics and The Secret Experiment both utilised modes of textual intermix and interweaving to refashion tales both traditional and oblique. Gaiman's radio-based rumination on loss, myth, grief, and the malleability of the text bleeds into Blegvad's chaotic sonic architectures, soundscapes of return which echo throughout Arcade Fire's long-playing album. Memories and loss have placed their mark too on this work, in those texts which utilise the personal and the real as the source text. This is as much true of any return to the Orphean myth, as it is in the work of Langston or in the stories of Joyce Vincent and Joel Green; adaptations where grief becomes physically interwoven into the text itself, displayed in fragments and experienced by the visitor or user.

The process of interweaving textual fabric(s) which use 'all manner of artefacts, ancient and modern', has been a predominant thematic, textual, and critical element residing at the core of this thesis, and is shown within the approaches to practice described above.[941] These kaleidoscopic textual formations have been viewed within an adaptational sense that has sought in some manner to shed the skin of a stable form and move beyond a static textual presence, or frame-work, to seek out, challenge, and re-contextualise the 'source' text or the 'original'.[942] That notion of the 'original' has been placed metaphorically, as an Orphean analogue; a moment of loss that enables paradoxically a new textual moment forged of absence. The multiple examples of Orphean retellings, which reside amongst other related textual artefacts, have illustrated the palimpsestic textual approach of this thesis, and highlight the utilisation of the Orphean narrative as an overarching adaptational allegory of *return*. A return that is emblematic of collating past fragments of narrative, originals, if you will, and the processes used to reconnect and renew textual forms. Ever and again, 'when there's singing, it's Orpheus'.[943] As textual analogue, these studies of adaptation, of myth, may simply be a 'story about song, a story about stories. Writing about writing', yet the forms they take, the songs that are sung, are ever changing. [944]

In the analysis and application of such textual encounters, myth is used as a counterpoint to interrogate Theodor Adorno's statement, that 'Fidelity, the virtue of the poet, is faithfulness to something that has been lost. It imposes detachment from the possibility that

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[941] Toledo Museum of Art, 'Shopping with Varujan Boghosian'.
[942] Hutcheon, Loc 216 of 8468.
[943] Rilke, 'First Part, 5', *Sonnets to Orpheus*, (Loc 267 of 1465). (ln.6).
[944] Steve Mitchelmore *Modernist vs Genre Fiction: Blanchot and the myth of Orpheus* (this-space: blogspot, 2007), <http://this-space.blogspot.co.uk/2007/03/modernist-vs-genre-fiction-blanchot-and.html> [accessed 7 April 2016]

what has been lost can be grasped here and now'.[945] Orpheus' endlessly repeated tragedy embodies that 'faithfulness to something that has been lost', in this, he is a fidelic figure. Orpheus is engaged in an endless quest to recapture that moment, to re-obtain the original, or 'run after the archive'; yet he is forever cursed to fail, as 'of the secret itself, there can be no archive […] the secret is the very ash of the archive'.[946] That final burning, the ash of obliteration, is never the end however, as the nature of the myth, of the text, is of a song which continues beyond a 'narrative ending'.[947] The music of the text/Orpheus permits commingling of communication and form, an alterity that fosters new meaning by blending, challenging or breaking boundaries. The textual formations examined here posit a view of adaptation as such a blend, or song, of Orpheus and others, as narratives of return and recombination which flow and interlace to create new modes, critiques, and textual encounters.

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[945] Theodor W. Adorno, *Notes to Literature – Volume Two*, trans. by Shierry Weber Nicholsen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), p.116
[946] Derrida, *Archive Fever,* pp.91-99.
[947] Sanders, p.70.

Key Outputs

This thesis focuses on the shifting relationship between the user and the text via emergent methods of adaptational interaction and engagement and is of value to educators, theorists, and practitioners across a variety of subject areas.

Primary areas of impact include:

- Parallels and intersections across theory bases.

- Application of theory to practice through: installation works, interactive fiction, games design, and convergent media.

- Consideration of texts and textual approaches which explore processes of adaptation in innovative ways.

- Widening access and public engagement within the arts installation *The Tales We Tell*.

In addition, the work contained herein has enabled engagement in international conferences, cultural engagement, widening access, and produced publication outputs:

- Kenyon-Owen. Stephen C., 'A Silent, O', in Tom de Freston and Kiran Millwood Hargrave, *Orpheus and Eurydice: A Graphic-Poetic Exploration* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017) pp. 23 -24.

- Kenyon-Owen. Stephen C., 'Stories surround us - adaptation, appropriation and engagement within installation art', *Inter-disciplinary.net 7th Global Conference – Storytelling*, Dubrovnik, Croatia, 2nd-4th May2015. <https://www.inter-disciplinary.net/probing-the-boundaries/persons/storytelling-global-reflections-on-narrative/project-archives/conference-programme-abstracts-and-papers-2/> [accessed 15 May 2017]

- Kenyon-Owen, Stephen C., '"Broken, rusty, charismatic"– the Transmedial destiny of found objects in the artwork of Penny Hallas', in *Not ever absent: Storytelling in Arts, Culture and Identity Formation,* ed. by Moenander, Sjoerd-Jeroen and Kavner Miller, Nicole (Inter-Disciplinary Press, 2015) Oxford, ISBN 978-1-84888-337-6, SKU: 9781848883376 (e-book).

- Kenyon-Owen. Stephen C., *The Tales We Tell* (WordPress.com, 2015) <https://taleswetelldotcom.wordpress.com/> [accessed 25 October 2016]

Further work may expand on such cross-pollination of critical engagement, textual approach, and creative practice, with a view to further enriching knowledge bases.

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Wroe, Anne, *Orpheus: The Song of Life* (London: Jonathon Cape, 2011)

Young, James O. and Carl Matheson, 'The Metaphysics of Jazz', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 58.2 (2000), 125–133 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/432091.pdf><10.2307/432091> [accessed 12 December 2016]

Zucker, Barbara, 'Sculpture/New Hampshire', *Art Journal*, 42.1 (1982), 64–66 <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/776501> [accessed 5 February 2016]

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Appendix One - Educational and widening access activity within *The Tales We Tell*

To assist with the organisation of the *Tales We Tell* event, WGU's Fine Art students were invited to contribute both in the setting up of the installation space and as contributors to the exhibition.[948] In addition, WGU Broadcast Journalism students were afforded similar opportunities relating to the documenting of the event as a whole. This opportunity to work within a public setting aimed to foster students' abilities in time management, developing communication skills and working with professional bodies, while also providing a showcase to the public of student work, satisfying assessment standards within module descriptors.[949] This allowed the installation to integrate with educational needs within a real-world setting, adhering to Quality Assurance guidelines for Art and Design in emphasising 'imagination and creativity' and to develop ability to communicate rigour in process and thought which is 'informed by aspects of professional practice in their discipline(s)'.[950] QAA guidelines for Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies specify a search for 'rigorous knowledge and understanding with the development of students' creative and reflexive capacities in innovative ways', and of how that knowledge applies to 'students' futures both in work and as citizens'.[951] The practical application of theory and practice across disciplines satisfied such requirements in addition to providing material for academic and professional portfolios.

This practical application supports Vivien Gadsen's statement that 'Academic achievement is more than the collation of individual learning of foundational skills. Rather it is the collective of experiences to which students are exposed'.[952] This widening of experience was incorporated through exhibition preparation and by inviting WGU Fine Art students to display their work. Those works selected for display were curated by Art and Design student Aimee Jones and overseen by myself. The themes of these pieces echoed the subject matter of installed works by the main artists involved in the installation, namely the transference of

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[948] Wrexham Glyndwr University abbreviated to WGU.

[949] Full Module descriptors are contained within Appendix Two, learning aims and outcomes summarised here.

[950] QAA, *Subject Benchmark Statement, Art and Design (*QAA, 2017), < http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/SBS-Art-and-Design-17.pdf > [accessed 24 June 2017] (p.14).

[951] QAA, *Subject Benchmark Statement, Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies* (QAA, 2017), <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/SBS-Communication-Media-Film-and-Cultural-Studies-16.pdf> [accessed 24 June 2017] (p.6).

[952] Vivian L. Gadsen, 'The Arts and Education: Knowledge Generation, Pedagogy, and the Discourse of Learning', *Review of Research in Education - What Counts as Knowledge in Educational Settings: Disciplinary Knowledge, Assessment, and Curriculum*, 32 (2008), 29-61 (p.35), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20185112?seq=1&cid=pdf-reference#page_scan_tab_contents> [accessed 24 June 2017]

narrative through forms of media, primarily through utilising landscape or the environment as textual space. In the sample of works below, Dinas Bran (*Crow Castle* transl.) in Llangollen, Wales was used as creative impetus by Aimee Jones who explored aspects of the crow itself as embodiment of the physical space. The Art and Design campus building was re-created as a historical document in a large tapestry, and on another scale entirely a miniature doll's house was crafted to illustrate a modern urban environment. Elsewhere, students explored themes of identity, via portraiture of family members, mixed-media works, including a sphinx's type figure involving Meccano and a computer printed head of the artist themselves placed as the Sphinx's head (see Figures 82-87).
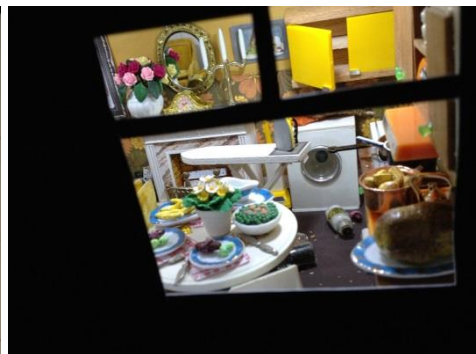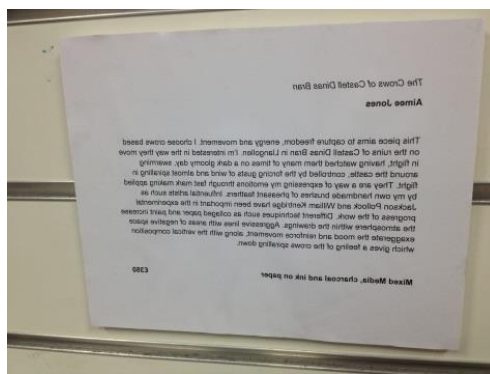
Figures 82-87. Displayed works by fine art students.

The opportunity to install work was utilised as part assessed practice within ARD603 Negotiated Study 2, and ARD604 Creative Futures 3, being of Level 6 final year within degree progression. The module aims satisfied by this activity included, time management, liaising with professional bodies, development of creative activity, and content creation for professional portfolio.

The documenting of the installation process to satisfy educational outcomes and develop a professional portfolio was undertaken by WGU student Eva Ou Yang, a student Broadcast Journalism and Media Communications. The student created a showreel video as part of the final year HUM 677 Media Project and Portfolio Module, the remit for which is to produce a media communications product for a real client from an outside organisation. As part of the module process, I, along with representatives from other local businesses and charities including: Oriel Wrecsam, Wrexham Council, Wrexham Techniquest, and Wrexham Football club, pitched ideas to students who would select which client to work with. The student also produced promotional materials in addition to part-managing the social media space of the event.

To sustain visitor numbers and provide featured content throughout the event a number of guest talks and workshops were scheduled.[953] These sessions were presented by both practitioners and researchers within their own specialist subject areas. Central to their selection by myself was the theme of textual migration and interpretation. Workshops were arranged as part of widening access activity with free entrance and open to a variety of ages. Sophie McKeand ran an introduction to poetry seminar, while Heather Wilson in *Drawing Stories*, facilitated a comic making activity aimed at young children focused on telling stories without words. Academic talks included Dr Sarah Gilligan speaking on the nature of fashion and spectacle in the filmed adaptations of *The Hunger Games*. Gilligan focused on the role fashion plays in 'constructing and performing on-screen identities' and of how 'the seductive spectacle of high-end designer fashion is used both on and off-screen to lure audiences into desiring and consuming a range of branded goods'.[954] Dr Deniz Baker examined aspects of intertextuality within the work,

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[953] *The Tales We Tell* had as its opening hours, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, for four weeks, with overall numbers attending being approximately three hundred.

[954] Sarah Gilligan, 'Capitol Couture: Fashion, Spectacle and Struggle in the Hunger Games. Invited speaker', *Academia.edu* (2016), <https://www.academia.edu/9336182/Capitol_Couture_Fashion_Spectacle_and_Struggle_in_The_Hunger_Games._Invited_speaker> [accessed 28 October 2016]

poetry, illustration, and engraving, of David Jones, in *Intertextuality as Redemption in 'In Parenthesis'* (1937). Thomas Llywarch presented a seminar discussing the process of producing a low-budget short film, *Split Second*, which reinterpreted the Welsh legend of Gelert the dog. The legend is inscribed on a tombstone of Gelert's Grave' in Beddgelert, Wales:

> In the 13th century Llewelyn, prince of North Wales, had a palace at Beddgelert. One day he went hunting without Gelert, 'The Faithful Hound', who was unaccountably absent.
>
> On Llewelyn's return the truant, stained and smeared with blood, joyfully sprang to meet his master. The prince alarmed hastened to find his son, and saw the infant's cot empty, the bedclothes and floor covered with blood.
>
> The frantic father plunged his sword into the hound's side, thinking it had killed his heir. The dog's dying yell was answered by a child's cry.
>
> Llewelyn searched and discovered his boy unharmed, but nearby lay the body of a mighty wolf which Gelert had slain. The prince filled with remorse is said never to have smiled again. He buried Gelert here.[955]

The adaptation interweaves mistaken identity alongside aspects of jealousy, marital infidelity, and sibling rivalries, and shifts the tale into the modern-day, reframing events within a *Great British Bake Off* style competition.

The interaction between text and form occupied the basis of Michael Corcoran and Jake Campbell's talk, 'Finding Oneself: Brain, Body and World: An Ekphrastic Collaboration', that sought to explore science, philosophy, poetry, and the visual arts. Their collaboration was:

> Born out a shared interest in the stories with which we are raised, the environments which provide the settings, and how these stories and settings form an inextricable part of the people we become. [Corcoran and Campbell] believe the individual, their surroundings and the stories associated with these surroundings are interconnected: one cannot be fully understood, without reference to the other two.[956]

For their collaboration, Campbell turns his attention to an element of the Mabinogion, in 'Ballast', and speaks of the king of Britain, Bendigeidfran, who, 'had waded with his army through the Irish Sea to rescue his sister, Branwen, from Matholwch, the King of Ireland who whisked her away years earlier, effectively enslaving her'.[957] The giant Bendigeidfran is

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[955] Beddglert Tourism Association, 'Gelert', *Beddgelert – A place of legend… in the heart of Snowdonia*. (Beddgelert Tourism Association), < http://www.beddgelerttourism.com/gelert/> [accessed 27 October 2016]

[956] Kenyon-Owen, *The Tales We Tell* (WordPress.com, 2015).

[957] Jake Campbell, *Art and Poetry Collaboration: Mike Corcoran and Jake Campbell* (Ofi Press, 2012), <http://www.ofipress.com/corcoranandcampbell.htm> [accessed 25 October 2016]

portrayed as an isolated, lost figure; constrained and contained by myth, Campbell focusing on the 'sadness and sense of defeat' he sees in the king.[958] Corcoran's artistic response to 'Ballast' takes the form of the piece 'Bran', described by the artist himself as revolving upon the 'the juxtaposition between the sharpness of the colloquial language, and the romantic sentiments it discussed; between the softness of the protagonist's mirage, and the harshness of her reality. I was keen to reflect these contrasts in the work'.[959] Bendigeidfran is placed at the centre of the frame looking directly at the observer and surrounded by snake-like forms, eyes weary with bloody doubt. The visuals paralleling 'the sadness and sense of defeat' Campbell sees in the king, portraying not a giant but an 'an ordinary man: one who is fallible, human'.[960]

Figure 88. *Bran.*[961]

The reinterpretation may be seen in light of what Campbell describes of the cognition of the world around us and of how it is re-ordered, shaped, and purposed to creative ends:

> We see the world as a sequence of images: it is only after our brains have processed these images (into memories, opinions, strategies, etcetera) and we begin to reflect on them critically, that we as writers can begin to order, re-order, sequence, play with, distort and shape them to creative and/or critical ends.[962]

The collaboration involving a reshaping of narrative through poetic and artistic dialogues revolving around the mutability of myth.

The variation in style, tone, content, and type of audience was deliberate in the selection of these talks and workshops, as I felt that this would both promote interest in the installation

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[958] Jake Campbell and Mike Corcoran, *Art and Poetry Collaboration: Mike Corcoran and Jake Campbell* (Ofi Press, 2012), <http://www.ofipress.com/corcoranandcampbell.htm> [accessed 25 October 2016]

[959] Ibid.

[960] Ibid.

[961] Mike Corcoran, *Bran*. Image reproduced courtesy of Mike Corcoran.

[962] Jake Campbell, 'Palimpsests, Practice and PhD Research', *The Swift Flight of a Sparrow* (Blogger.com, 2016), <http://jakecampbell1988.blogspot.co.uk/> [accessed 25 October 2016]

and garner an increased attendance. The selection of such diverse work also sought to resonate thematically with regard to the nature of those works exhibited within the installation as a whole and the broad schema of this thesis. Principally, that of the *text* reshaped and reinterpreted through a multiplicity of approaches, changing form, and migrating through textual and genre boundaries.

<p style="text-align:center">Ω</p>

Appendix Two – Module Descriptors

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MODULE SPECIFICATION FORM

Module Title:	**Negotiated Study 2**	Level:	**6**	Credit Value:	**40**

Module code: (if known)	**ARD603**	Cost Centre:	**GADC**	JACS2 code:	**W200**

Semester(s) in which to be offered:	2	With effect from: September 2012

Office use only: To be completed by AQSU:	Date approved: September 2012 Date revised: March 2013 Version no: 2

Existing/New: Existing	Title of module being replaced (if any):

Originating Subject: Design Communication	Module Leader: Dave Gill

Module duration (total hours)	400	Status: core/option/elective (identify programme where appropriate):	core
Scheduled learning & teaching hours	100		
Independent study hours	300		
Placement hours			

Percentage taught by Subjects other than originating Subject (please name other Subjects):	Pre-requisites per programme (between levels): None

Programme(s) in which to be offered:	All BA (Hons) Design programmes.	Pre-requisites per programme (between levels):	N/A

Module Aims

To enable learners to effectively manage their time in achieving their objectives during studio and workshop practice.

- To enable the learner to liaise with professional bodies within the field and work to professional standards on realistic assignments.

To develop communication skills, business and professional acumen to a high level. To indicate learners continuing personal and creative development within their chosen area of study.

- Each negotiated study must indicate how the student will demonstrate the progression of their study from one module to the next.

- To prepare students with a substantive body of work that can be showcased for exhibition and/or competition festivals.

Expected Learning Outcomes

At the end of this module, students should be able

to: Knowledge and Understanding:

1. Develop substantive and detailed knowledge and understanding in a particular area that is relevant to their chosen career direction.
2. Produce work that is informed by, and contextualised within, relevant theoretical issues and debates.
3. Develop and realise distinctive and creative work through to completed artwork and/or final production within their chosen area of study.

4. Independently manage an extensive work programme, plan their time effectively and meet the requirements of deadlines.
5. Establish working relationships with clients if appropriate and maintain a professional working dialogue, with due regard to cost and the manufacturing or production process.
6. Produce work showing competence in final design and production methods and professional practices, culminating in the presentation and showcasing of their work for exhibition or competition festivals.
7. Apply entrepreneurial skills in dealing with audiences, clients, consumers, markets, sources and/or users.
8. Complete a body of work that will provide opportunities for gainful employment.
9. Evaluate their work critically and honestly.

Transferable/Key Skills and other attributes

- The exercise of initiative and personal responsibility in managing their workloads and meeting deadlines.

- Decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts.
  Autonomous learning.

- Ability to work with others.

- Ability in time management/organisational skills.

- Apply interpersonal and social skills to interact with others.
  Present ideas and work to their audiences.

- The learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature

Assessment:

After a written proposal has been discussed and agreed as viable, the student will agree a series of assessment criteria with the responsible tutor and progress to the design and production stages. The student will be continually monitored and advised on their progress; the tutor will advise on comprehensive relevant research. There will be tutorial contact to resolve research and production, or manufacturing difficulties and establish clearly defined objectives. Critical group assessment will take place during and after the module. The completed work will be summatively assessed at the end of the semester. Students will be required to present sketchbooks, written and collected supported research material and a series of worksheets and/or maquettes that demonstrate considered design development.

The student will be expected to have fulfilled the criteria agreed at the inception of the module and produce satisfactory final solutions, either in the form of finished artwork, final show reels or a series of 3D pieces completed by the stated deadline. Written and/or oral evaluation of the project will be presented at the end of the module.

Assessment Criteria

In assessing the learning outcomes, a variety of factors will be taken into account, these include:

Theoretical Knowledge: Evidence of the ability to use and evaluate knowledge and to articulate a theoretical position through previous research and analysis.

Conceptual Content: Evidence of the ability to independently plan and produce a body of work through the various stages from inception to completion which comprehensively demonstrates their creative and conceptual ability.

Design Development and Subject skills: Apply creative thinking effectively to problem solving in specific vocational areas within their programme of study with due regard to the constraints of time, cost, commercial requirements and other considerations.

Generic Skills: Evidence of the ability to show a progression in professional practice with regard to attitude, self management and business acumen.

In addition to the above assessment criteria students are expected to further demonstrate professional levels of achievement and competence in aesthetic technical and presentation skills. Students will also be required to demonstrate self reflective and evaluative practice throughout their final semester.

Assessment number (use as appropriate)	Learning Outcomes to be met	Type of assessment	Weighting	Duration (if exam)	Word count (if course work)
Assessment:	All (1 – 9)	Coursework	100%	N/A	N/A

Learning and Teaching Strategies

Students are briefed well in advance of the commencement of level 6 as to the nature of their negotiated studies. A statement of intent which includes a considered rationale, aims and objectives for each negotiated quadruple module will be discussed and approved through tutorials with appropriate award leaders at the start of this level. Depending on the proposed programme of work, negotiated modules may be undertaken sequentially or in parallel. This flexibility is required in order that relevant visits to industry, participation in competitions or client based commissions may be planned. As a result, year plans may be adjusted from time to time to coincide with outside of school arrangements. The teaching will relate to the situation and will be based upon the needs identified in each instance from the tutorial contact and less formally through the day to day contact between students and staff. The teaching where possible will address the individual need rather than group instruction.

Syllabus Outline

The ability to synthesis the various elements which make up the 'design process' and to respond appropriately and creatively is essential in preparing for life as a professional designer/maker outside the support of education. Students will in negotiation, plan, implement and bring to a conclusion, a body of work. They will set their own aims and objectives and will prioritise their learning development according to their own aspirations. A clear and logical progression will be required throughout the negotiated study period. The quintessential theme to be communicated by the responsible tutors is that a negotiated study module celebrates the learner's achievements and learning during undergraduate study.

Due to a variety of ways in which an art and design student may develop their work in level 6, it is not possible to differentiate between one negotiated study module and another. The very nature of their purpose is that an individual student may determine how they will differ in terms of aims, content, learning outcomes and assessment criteria in line with their potential career aspirations and personal creative development.

This 40 credit Negotiated Study module may stand either as an individual body of work which has been developed from start through to conclusion, or as a clearly identified part of an ongoing project extending over one or two semesters culminating in a major piece of work.

This is more common, for example, in the creation of an animated film where the first negotiated study would include all research and design development, whilst the second negotiated study would involve the process of production through to post production.

This flexible structure enables a student to organise a relevant and individual programme of work that may include a client commission as well as individual development and research which ultimately leads to the presentation of a major piece of work for the final year end exhibition.

The activity during a negotiated study module will be determined by the participating student in liaison with their tutor and cannot be detailed herein, however, the module will include:

- A proposal of work based on suitable research that is frankly discussed, written and presented to an award leader.
- The student setting projects with achievable objectives within the time allowed and available resources.
- A period of consolidating skills and personal creativity employed in a programme of self determined work, allowing the student to concentrate on a specialist area.
- Raising the student's awareness with regard to the current role of contemporary practice which may include live or simulated live briefs.
- An evaluation report which will be produced as the module nears completion.

Students will be encouraged to liaise with industry and may make industrial visits and/or undertake live briefs if they are appropriate and relevant. Where it is viable, students will also be encouraged to enter design competitions within the module structure. The work will form a showcase that will culminate in an exhibition.

Bibliography

The student will take responsibility for collecting and assimilating information relevant to their specialist activity. Tutorial guidance will be offered in this process. An emphasis on the reading of contemporary publications and periodicals will be encouraged

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MODULE SPECIFICATION FORM

Module Title:	**Creative Futures 3**	Level:	**6**	Credit Value:	**40**

Module code: (if known)	**ARD604**	Cost Centre:	**GADC**	JACS2 code:	**W200**

Semester(s) in which to be offered:	2	With effect from: September 2012

Office use only: To be completed by AQSU:	Date approved: September 2012 Date revised: March 2013 Version no: 2

Existing/New: Existing	Title of module being replaced (if any):

Originating Subject: Design Communication	Module Leader: Pauline Amphlett

Module duration (total hours)	200	Status: core/option/elective (identify programme where appropriate):	elective
Scheduled learning & teaching hours	40		
Independent study hours	160		
Placement hours			

Percentage taught by Subjects other than originating Subject (please name other	Pre-requisites per programme (between levels): None

Subjects):	

Programme(s) in which to be offered:	All BA (Hons) Design programmes.	Pre-requisites per programme (between levels):	N/A

Module Aims:

- To critically evaluate the importance of the artist/designer developing a good working relationship with his/her intended client / audience and market.

- To target information specific to those aspiring to market their work as professional practitioners.

- To instil good communication skills, realistic costing, professional presentation and quality documentation essential in professional practice.

- To equip the students with realistic client related experience or work for a commissioning body or external organisation.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this module, students should be able to:

Knowledge and Understanding:

1. Establish working relationships with clients or external organisations and maintain a professional working dialogue.
2. Present work proposals in a professional manner with due regard to cost and the manufacturing or production process.
3. Respond effectively under the pressure of deadlines.
4. Critically review and evaluate information in a professional manner.
5. Produce self-promotional work competently using appropriate solutions, media and methods.

Transferable/Key Skills and other attributes:

The exercise of initiative and personal responsibility.
Decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts.
Autonomous learning.

Ability to work with others.

Ability in time management/organisational
skills. Interpersonal / communication skills.

The learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional
or equivalent nature.

Assessment:

Students will be required to produce evidence of appropriate research which includes
statements of intent, production notes and evaluative reports that relate to the work undertaken
for this module alongside their final solutions to the module. They will be assessed on their
ability to analyse, evaluate and synthesise the requirements of the module in a professional
development file alongside practical work. Students will be encouraged to engage in visits to
industry, conferences and seminars, art and design exhibitions or festivals.

All work must be carried out and produced for assessment by set deadlines. Contributions
made during group discussion, seminars and critiques will be taken into consideration when
assessing student performance and learning as well as individual assessments at the end of
the module.

Students will be assessed on their engagement with the art design and media industries, including; professional dialogue, interpersonal skills, development of proposals, professional/production online blogs and files, evaluative reports and final presentations.

Where students have received industrial experience, a questionnaire pro-forma will be sent to professional bodies after completion of the student's visit for critical evaluation of their progress. Students will also be expected to write evaluations based on their engagement with industry. Their professional blogs or files will include personal development planning which uses extracted information and evaluation from ongoing reflective journals kept in association with their negotiated studies.

In assessing the learning outcomes, a variety of factors will be taken into account, these include:

- Research and analysis of a professional brief.
  Art and design development.

- Professional practice.

- Interpersonal and communication skills within a professional context.
  Liaison with industry and investigation of areas of employment.

- Reviews of exhibitions or festivals attended.
  Self-critical evaluation.

- Personal development planning.

Assessment number (use as appropriate)	Learning Outcomes to be met	Type of assessment	Weighting	Duration (if exam)	Word count (if course work)
Assessment:	All (1 – 5)	Coursework	100%	N/A	N/A

Learning and Teaching Strategies

Students will establish an overview of current practice in their subject area, potential client work, or professional opportunities through visits, observation, research and external liaison. They will form a firm understanding of the professional requirements and will present their findings in a formal presentation where information can be delivered and group participants can debate other issues. Examples of acceptable and unacceptable practice are raised and scrutinised through a process of constructive analysis. Students will be required to consider the commercial constraints imposed in real life situations and show thorough understanding of

the market place or field of creative practice, through a fully researched report or curatorial paper alongside their practical work.

Syllabus Outline

This module is designed to enable the student to liaise with professional bodies within specialised areas of the art design and media industries and where appropriate, work to professional standards on realistic briefs. It provides a framework for extending professional practice and can also include industrial experience in a relevant area relating to the students choice of programme.

Indicative Content:

Students will be extending their professional skills through practice and industrial experience relating to their choice of study. They will be encouraged to be proactive in researching and approaching clients with a view to undertaking live briefs. This may be undertaken on a team basis. There will be a strong emphasis on maintaining good artist/designer/client relations throughout the module. The student will be expected to produce solutions in answer to a given brief, or engage in live projects placing their work in a contemporary context. They will be expected to document all their work, including where appropriate, stages of production through to final piece and concluding with an evaluation report as the module nears completion.

A professional practice file or online blog will evidence all supporting research and investigation of their engagement with the art design and media industries including a focal creative futures week, visits to industry, art and design exhibitions and festivals. It will not only evaluate their professional practice, but their personal development plans for future employment or postgraduate study.

Types of assignments that art and design students will be engaged in are as follows: industry led briefs, national and international competitions, television or website work including self-promotion, exhibitions, relevant work experience, shadowing professionals, commissions, professional work for charities or local organisations and artist in residence schemes.

Bibliography

The student will take responsibility for collecting and assimilating information relevant to their specialist activity. Tutorial guidance will be offered in this process. An emphasis on the reading of contemporary publications and periodicals will be encouraged.

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MODULE SPECIFICATION FORM

Module Title:	**Media Project and Portfolio**	Level:	**6**	Credit Value:	**40**

Module code: (if known)	**HUM677**	Cost Centre:	**GADC**	JACS2 code:	P300/P50 0

Semester(s) in which to be offered:	2	With effect from:	September 2012

Office use only: To be completed by AQSU:	Date approved: September 2014 Date revised: - Version no: 1

Existing/New:	Existing	Title of module being replaced (if any):

Originating Subject:	Creative Industries	Module Leader:	Angela Ferguson

Module duration (total hours):	400	Status: core/option/elective (identify programme where appropriate):	Core
Scheduled learning & teaching hours	60		
Independent study hours	340		
Placement hours	0		

Percentage taught by Subjects other than originating Subject	None

(please name other Subjects):	

Programme(s) in which to be offered:	All BA (Hons) Design programmes.	Pre-requisites per programme (between levels):	N/A

Module Aims:

This module gives students the opportunity to focus on a particular media discipline previously covered in levels four and five in order to produce a portfolio of project work. This project will also involve producing a media communications product for a real client from an outside organisation such as a local business or charity. This product could range from organising a PR campaign to working on a social media campaign or a website. Students can also opt to do a journalism-based project, producing a magazine or blog, for example.

The student will work with the tutor to select an appropriate topic and the tutor will then produce an individual learning contract, which will form the basis of that student's project work.

The project offers students the opportunity to work independently and to apply and further develop professional skills evidenced earlier in the programme.

The module is designed to:

- enable students to be responsible for their own portfolio and to independently produce a body of work which comprehensively demonstrates their capability in the field of media communications
- enable students to conduct sustained and considered research, preparation and presentation of a project that demonstrates the professional skills encountered during the course.
- develop students' confidence in communicating effectively at a professional level with clients and representatives

Intended Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this module, students will be able to

1. Demonstrate a thorough understanding of selected aspects of the media and communications industry (K6)
2. Demonstrate a high standard of professionalism comparable to that of industry practitioners, (K2, K8)
3. Devise, explain and implement communications solutions in their chosen media discipline (K3)

4. Critically analyse academic and current industry thinking and knowledge relating to the student's chosen topic within a set media discipline (K1, K3)
5. Demonstrate highly developed interpersonal and communication skills, including the ability to present information both orally and in writing in a professional manner and to a professional standard which demonstrates effective manipulation of the written word (K1)

Key skills for employability

1. Written, oral and media communication skills
2. Leadership, team working and networking skills
3. Opportunity, creativity and problem solving skills
4. Information technology skills and digital literacy
5. Information management skills
6. Research skills
7. Intercultural and sustainability skills
8. Career management skills
9. Learning to learn (managing personal and professional development, self management)
10. Numeracy

Assessment:

Students will be assessed by means of an individual learning contract, which will set out the exact components of the portfolio, as agreed with their tutor.

As this is a third year project, students have an element of choice in what topic they select with the proviso being that the topics must relate to the field of media communications. For example, students can choose from projects involving both printed and online journalism, including blogs, along with social media projects and integrated media communications and public relations projects.

The individual learning contracts will set out the exact components of the portfolio, with percentages and word counts or equivalent allocated.

Assessment number	Learning Outcomes to be met	Type of assessment	Weighting	Duration (if exam)	Word count (or equivalent if appropriate)
1	All	Portfolio	100%		8000 or equivalent

Syllabus outline:

The module will be delivered on the basis of a largely self-directed study programme which will involve the development of a specific communications requirement i.e. a corporate communications strategy; a press or advertising campaign; an employee communications programme; an awareness-raising campaign or similar or the production and promotion of a blog.

Bibliography:

Essential reading:

Specific reference sources will be dictated by the title and scope of the project to be undertaken by individual students, although students will be required to make use of secondary texts such as:

Blaxter, L. Hughes, C. and Tight, M. (2010), *How To Research*. 4th ed. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Appendix Three – third-party content permission forms.

Penny Hallas & Anthony Mellors

Stephen Kenyon-Owen

[address]

Request to reproduce an extract from a third party's published work   1st
August 2017

Dear Penny Hallas,

I am completing my PhD thesis at Aberystwyth University. I seek your permission to reprint in my thesis your work displayed during *The Tales We Tell* **exhibition in 2015.**

1.   an image from that event contained within the blog entry http://pennyhallas.co.uk/wp/2576/creative-network-mini-fund/ entitled 'The Eyes Deny' 'stretched' upon the wall,

2.   images from the Orpheus Project / Borderlines blog entry http://pennyhallas.co.uk/wp/1149/orpheus-border-lines-event/ ,

3.   image of Orpheus Drawings within GLASFRYN ORPHEUS/EURYDICE DAY http://glasfrynproject.org.uk/w/2586/glasfryn-orpheuseurydice-day/

4.   Steve Boyland 'framed' by a beam of light http://boxingthechimera.blogspot.co.uk/2015/03/beyond-orpheus.html

I would like to include the images in my thesis which will be added to the University's institutional repository, and made available to the public. If you are happy to grant me all the permissions requested, please return a signed copy of this letter. If you wish to grant only some of the permissions requested, please list these and then sign.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen C. Kenyon-Owen.

Permission granted for the use requested above:

I confirm that I am the copyright holder of images listed above and hereby give permission to include them in your thesis which will be made available, via the internet, for non-commercial purposes under the terms of the user licence. Images not to be adapted in any way.

[please edit the text above if you wish to grant more specific permission]

Images 2, 3, 4

Signed:

Name: Penny Hallas

Organisation: -

Job title: Artist

Date: 18.08.17

Image 1

Signed:

Name: Anthony Mellors

Organisation: -

Job title:

Date: 18.08.17

Sophie McKeand

Stephen Kenyon-Owen

[address]

Request to reproduce an extract from a third party's published work

1st August 2017

Dear Sophie McKeand,

I am completing my PhD thesis at Aberystwyth University.

I seek your permission to reprint in my thesis images from the Coflyfr blog, http://coflyfr.tumblr.com/archive

I would like to include the images/excerpts in my thesis which will be added to the University's institutional repository, and made available to the public.

If you are happy to grant me all the permissions requested, please return a signed copy of this letter. If you wish to grant only some of the permissions requested, please list these and then sign.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen C. Kenyon-Owen.

Permission granted for the use requested above:

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[please edit the text above if you wish to grant more specific permission]

Signed: Sophie McKeand
Name: Sophie McKeand
Organisation:
Job title: Poet / Young People's Laureate Wales
Date: 4th August 2017.

Jonathon Powell

Stephen Kenyon-Owen

[address]

Request to reproduce an extract from a third party's published work

1ˢᵗ August 2017

Dear Jonathan Powell,

I am completing my PhD thesis at Aberystwyth University.

I seek your permission to reprint in my thesis your work displayed during *The Tales We Tell* exhibition in 2015.

I would like to include the works in my thesis which will be added to the University's institutional repository, and made available to the public.

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Yours sincerely,

Stephen C. Kenyon-Owen.

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[please edit the text above if you wish to grant more specific permission]

Signed:

Name: Jonathan Powell
Organisation: elysium gallery
Job title: Director
Date: 16/8/2017

Mike Corcoran

<div align="right">

Stephen Kenyon-Owen

[address]

</div>

Request to reproduce an extract from a third party's published work

1st August 2017

Dear Mike Corcoran,

I am completing my PhD thesis at Aberystwyth University.

I seek your permission to reprint in my thesis your work displayed during your co-talk with Jake Campbell for *The Tales We Tell* exhibition in 2015.

I would like to include the images/excerpts in my thesis which will be added to the University's institutional repository, and made available to the public.

If you are happy to grant me all the permissions requested, please return a signed copy of this letter. If you wish to grant only some of the permissions requested, please list these and then sign.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen C. Kenyon-Owen.

Permission granted for the use requested above:

I confirm that I am the copyright holder of the extract above and hereby give permission to include it in your thesis which will be made available, via the internet, for non-commercial purposes under the terms of the user licence.

[please edit the text above if you wish to grant more specific permission]

Signed:

Name: Michael Corcoran

Organisation: Self-Employed

Job title: Consultant

Date: 18/08/2017

Amy Sterly

Stephen Kenyon-Owen

[address]

Request to reproduce an extract from a third party's published work

1st August 2017

Dear Amy Sterly,

I am completing my PhD thesis at Aberystwyth University.

I seek your permission to reprint in my thesis your work displayed during *The Tales We Tell* exhibition in 2015, and also, *Conversation Piece* (2009), *Idol Talk* (2009), and *Nipple Towers* (2003), from https://www.axisweb.org/p/amysterly/.

I would like to include the images in my thesis which will be added to the University's institutional repository, and made available to the public.

If you are happy to grant me all the permissions requested, please return a signed copy of this letter. If you wish to grant only some of the permissions requested, please list these and then sign.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen C. Kenyon-Owen.

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[please edit the text above if you wish to grant more specific permission]

Signed:

Name: Amy Sterly

Organisation:

Job title: Artist

Date: 03/08/17

Jacqueline Alkema

Stephen Kenyon-Owen

[address]

Request to reproduce an extract from a third party's published work

1ˢᵗ August 2017

Dear Jacqueline Alkema,

I am completing my PhD thesis at Aberystwyth University.

I seek your permission to reprint in my thesis your work displayed during *The Tales We Tell* exhibition in 2015, and also 'All about my mother III', and 'Female Beasties 8':

I would like to include the images in my thesis which will be added to the University's institutional repository, and made available to the public.

If you are happy to grant me all the permissions requested, please return a signed copy of this letter. If you wish to grant only some of the permissions requested, please list these and then sign.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen C. Kenyon-Owen.

Permission granted for the use requested above:

I confirm that I am the copyright holder of the extract above and hereby give permission to include it in your thesis which will be made available, via the internet, for non-commercial purposes under the terms of the user licence.

[please edit the text above if you wish to grant more specific permission]

Signed: *JLM Alkema*

Name: *Jacqueline L. M. Alkema*

Organisation: ‑‑‑‑‑‑

Job title: *Artist*

Date: *22 - 8 - 2017*

Sue McGrane/Collective Imagery Studio

Stephen Kenyon-Owen

[address]

Request to reproduce an extract from a third party's published work

1st August 2017

Dear Sue McGrane/Collective Imagery Studio,

I am completing my PhD thesis at Aberystwyth University.

I seek your permission to reprint in my thesis the professional photographs you took during *The Tales We Tell* exhibition in 2015.

I would like to include the images/excerpts in my thesis which will be added to the University's institutional repository, and made available to the public.

If you are happy to grant me all the permissions requested, please return a signed copy of this letter. If you wish to grant only some of the permissions requested, please list these and then sign.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen C. Kenyon-Owen.

Permission granted for the use requested above:

I confirm that I am the copyright holder of the extract above and hereby give permission to include it in your thesis which will be made available, via the internet, for non-commercial purposes under the terms of the user licence.

[please edit the text above if you wish to grant more specific permission]

Signed: *[signature]*

Name: Sue McGrane

Organisation: CIS

Job title:

Date: 8/8/17.

Appendix Four – *A Silent, O* (Audio edit)

They talk about me out there. They paint me,
put me in stories,
sing of me in songs,
but of my own voice,
hangs hushed.
I am everywhere, yet my verses remain
unvoiced,
my music rings in absence, and deafens the
world.

I should introduce myself.
I am   segmented.
I am   scattered.
I am   Orpheus,
or so they say.

I'm not so sure, but it seems inevitable.

There was a time when there was another

Her (memory) spills

from

my

dreams

I lie amongst them, and become lost in the places where I was
This centre will not hold, my bodily void of place and presence longs for a note, a pitch, a
cadence, a scream

Give me just noise, I hear nothing.

I need to hear someone else's tale. To go somewhere else. I should go, now.

Ω