

INTRODUCTION

The ascendancy over men's minds of the ruins of the stupendous past, the past of history, legend and myth, at once factual and fantastic, stretching back and back into the ages that can be but surmised, is half-mystical in basis. The intoxication, at once so heady and so devout, is not the romantic melancholy engendered by broken towers and mouldered stones; it is the soaring of the imagination into the high empyrean where huge episodes are tangled with myths and dreams; it is the stunning impact of world history on its amazed heirs (1964, p. 28).

This quote is Rose Macaulay's introduction to the sites of *The Stupendous Past*, a chapter in her text, *The Pleasure of Ruins*. This intoxication with history and its remaining ruins has enticed many including myself.

The Welsh landscape and the Iron Age Silure tribe have captivated me and served as my muse during my stay in South Wales. The Silures were a sophisticated people of oral tradition, living in fortified areas of what is today Glamorgan and Gwent. My work is an expression of the missing history of these ancient people, impacted by both the scientific and artistic representations of history. Central to this work is the idea of ruin. Ruin is the absence of a whole and simultaneously it is the remainder, the piece with which to start constructing a new vision. The remains of the Silurian culture have provided a vacancy for me to fill with my artwork. It is an almost blank canvas, a great place to start. This overarching idea has led me to write about the pleasure of ruins and their history in visual representation.

The following report will be divided into sections and each will address various components of my work as well as the different ways we approach history, and what this process has in relation to pleasure.

I shall start by looking at the work of Rose Macaulay, who has helped me understand the pleasure of ruins from a historical perspective as well as in current pop culture.

In the second section, I will discuss the relationship Documentary Photography has with Archaeology and how this affects my work.

The third section of the essay will be about other artists who also make artwork inspired by the past, including the works of Joan Fontcuberta, Harri Kallio, and Cristina De Middel.

The fourth section will address the history of depicting ruins in the visual arts which excludes traditional archaeological work, many of which were recently displayed in the *Ruin Lust* exhibition in Tate Britain this spring.

The final part of the essay will be about the cooperation of both Sciences and Arts for the progression of knowledge, exemplified by the work of museums and organisations such as the Wellcome Trust.

PART I: MACAULAY'S PLEASURE

It has been said often that humanity's memory of the past is important, so that we collectively learn from our mistakes. In addition to that necessity, there is also a common love of looking into the past, specifically the unknown parts of history, and wondering what these unseen times were like, as well as the pleasure of triumphing over past civilisations' defeats. In the 1964 edition of *Pleasure of*

Ruins, the introduction explains the different range of pleasures that can be felt for the past, as well as the level of integrity of these individual pleasure seekers.

One such form of pleasure is imaginative play. This is the type of relationship I have with the Iron Age sites I visit for creating work. Macaulay says that it is important for some areas in which the ruins barely remain. She shares an example regarding ruins in the Middle East, stating,

A different less sensuous and facile, more purely imaginative type of pleasure is offered by the remains of Nineveh and Babylon. Petra, Palmyra, and Baalbek can be enjoyed by anyone with eyes. Nineveh and Babylon need imagination, and some knowledge. To put it bluntly, they are, in fact, little more than mounds (1964, p. 28).

The same can be said for many of the Silurian sites in South Wales. For example, Lodge Hill in Caerleon is a site where I spend much of my time making photographs. This mound, now covered in woodland and public walking paths, would have been sparse of trees and the site of a fortified area. However, at the location of the present day town of Caerleon, there would have been various woodlands, agricultural fields, and perhaps even roads, until the arrival of the Romans, who would further develop the area for their own usage.

Macaulay continues, explaining what she calls "minor pleasures" These include looting a site or vandalizing, for example marking one's name on a ruin. She describes the pleasure in defacing the past, and the visual proof of that act often being the surrounding environment overtaking the ruins. She quotes Thomas Whately in 1770, "No circumstance so forcibly marks the desolation of a spot once inhabited, as the prevalence of Nature over it." (1964, pp. 26-27). This is perhaps why people find ruins crumbling under foliage a common aesthetic in artworks.

In my work, the landscape and plant life in relation to the archaeological past also plays a large inspirational role. Because the finalised work is not traditionally documentary, it is important that the locations are authentic, and made within the area which the Silures would have inhabited during the Iron Age. One may not be able to see this by viewing my images, however the fact that the locations are within the bounds of authenticity applies a deeper meaning to the work, in much the same way Cornelia Parker used authentic historical objects in, *The Maybe*, her collaborative installation piece with Tilda Swinton. Parker displayed objects such as Charles Dickens' last quill pen juxtaposed with Swinton's resting form in vitrines in London's Serpentine Gallery to make people consider the meaning of authenticity as well as question museum culture and what constitutes artefacts (Gale, 1995).

Remains of the Silures include artefacts, but also the foundations of hill forts and settlements. Though the land would have changed, there are still some place features which could remain the same, almost making the land itself become an authentic historical record. Exploring this record is pleasurable, and so is envisioning how the land would be in earlier times; imaging how hill forts, now clinging to existence, are buried under woodland mountain tops, under farmland, under towns, or slipping with each muddy tide into the River Severn. I imagine myself as someone from the past, walking around a site in the present, searching for some aspect of lost history still recognisable, only to return home for more research in pursuit of learning which side of a dirt mound would be the entrance to an archaic city, or what overgrown valley was an ancient road. This play of expressing possibilities of Silurian existence, is what brings me pleasure.

While my imagining is considered a less sophisticated pleasure, Macaulay explains that the most noble of the ruin pleasure seekers are archaeologists and antiquarians.

More intellectual than any of these emotions are those two learned, noble and inquisitive pleasures, archaeology and antiquarianism, which have inspired so much eager research, such stalwart, patient and prolonged investigation, such ingenious and erroneous deductions and reconstructions, and have been rewarded by those exquisite thrills of triumph and discovery which must be as exciting as finding a new land. These are, no doubt the highest and purest of ruin-pleasures, but are reserved for the few (1964, pp. 26-27).

While I agree with Macaulay on this point, Frederick N. Bohrer elevates the importance of imagination in the field of archaeology in his book *Exposures: Archaeology and Photography*. He specifically refers to Photography in terms of the recognition of absence in the observational process, claiming that, "Archaeological photography pairs the technology of picturing absence with the science of deciphering absence and recuperating from it." (2011, p. 8).

This same philosophy can apply to the 1964 edition of *Pleasure of Ruins* in which Roloff Beny's photographs document the places Rose Macaulay mentions in the original publication of *Pleasure of Ruins*, published in 1953. His photographs and her text compliment one another, and allow the viewer to understand Macaulay's passion of ruins and the imagining of history.

In comparison, I have manipulated different digital components to create a visual language which would be used as a tool, much like the way Macaulay's text is a tool which accompanies Beny's photographs. I compose most of my photographs from separate images in order to hide the figure's more identifiable features in hopes that the vague nature of the image would allow viewers to identify with the figure.

The pleasure of imagining the past is not something that has disappeared since Constance Babington Smith edited Macaulay's *Pleasure of Ruins* into the book with Beny's photographs, nor is it limited to the field of Archeology and the pastime of sight seeing. As Macaulay mentions, there are many ways in which this pleasure can manifest, though I doubt she would have foreseen the way it would find itself in present day popular culture.

The film and television industries have utilised this pleasure as entertainment reaching a wide viewing audience with programmes such as: Vikings, Camelot, Spartacus, Rome, The Bible, and many more period dramas. In fact The Guardian's online TV & Radio Blog claims that as of 2012, "Period dramas – long a peak-time reflex for television – are currently almost as frequent as police shows." (2012). The explanation which is given for this is that it is easier for directors to include material which is not socially acceptable presently, so long as it is in the guise of a period when such behaviour would have been accepted. The author gives the example of issues regarding "sexuality, prejudice, violence, addiction, and political balance of the sort that risk dividing audiences and shortening careers." (2012). To me, this seems congruent to a more subtle, darker pleasure in witnessing ruination.

Jeremy Deller's performance *The Battle of Orgreave, 2001*, is an artwork which reflects the disturbing pleasure of re-enacting a violent event. He remembers witnessing footage of the miners' strike on television as a youth. With funding from Artangel, he successfully recreated and filmed the 1984 labour dispute in Orgreave, South Yorkshire, using about "eight-hundred historical re-enactors

and two-hundred former miners who had been part of the original conflict." (Deller, 2013). While this may have the same kind of violence depicted in historical dramas, it also recalls a past still very much felt in living memory.

Perhaps more relevant to younger generations is the pleasure gained from escapism, "The tendency to seek distraction and relief from unpleasant realities, especially by seeking entertainment or engaging in fantasy." (Oxford Online Dictionary, 2014). The entertainment industries are the perfect facilitators of this pleasure, as they only require viewers to passively absorb the stories that are being presented. This offers no form of discomfort like Macaulay would have experienced by traveling around the world to locations unfamiliar to her. It is the ultimate inhibitor.

This continues in the video game industry, in which historical eras are fictionalised into fantastic stories. Though less passive than film and television, video games can lend greatly to escapism. In Ubisoft Montreal's *Assassin's Creed* series, there are plots based on historical events, but facts are skewed to make for more interesting gameplay. For example, in *Assassin's Creed II*, the player is a character named Desmond who travels back in time using a modern technology known as Animus, in order to relive the genetic memory of his ancestor, Ezio, who was living in Florence during the time of the Renaissance. Ezio (or Desmond) becomes an assassin working with notable historical figures, such as Leonardo Da Vinci, who provides Ezio with tools for confronting the game's antagonists, the Knights of Templar. Throughout the game, the player is presented with factual information about the real historical figures, places, and artefacts which are depicted in the game. However, the player also has the option to easily skip past this information when it is presented, making clear that the charm of the game lies in the game developers' vision of the past and intricate plot, not reality (Ubisoft, Montreal, 2009).

The escapism infused in popular culture is a less noble pleasure of which many easily participate. The traditions of what Macaulay claims to be the most noble of the pleasures, the devotion of one's life to pursue history through Archaeology or Antiquarianism, are of a different nature. Photography plays a large role in both fields, serving as: record, educational tools, forms of communication, and an outlet of pleasure. In the most conventional sense, Archaeology Photography is documentary. A specific aesthetic standard was set for photographing artefacts and sites of interest within this field. While my photographs do not include specific artefacts, I do find a connection between photographing archaeological sites, and photographing the Silurian landscape. I feel connected also to photographers like Roloff Beny, who traveled to faraway lands, capturing the essence of a place with their camera. We similarly select visual samples of the environment to emphasise them; to photograph a singular thing is to show to the world that it was noticed. The photographs in this series that reflect such thinking are the images which include objects that I find personally iconic during my adventures in a specific setting. For example, ferns unfurling in the spring and leaves from vines of ivy, and bird egg shells; they are objects in the environment which I wonder if the ancient Welsh also took note of in their day-to-day lives.

In *Exposures: Archaeology and Photography* Bohrer explains that the documentation of sites in the form of photographs is not only important to keep record of archaeological finds, but also to easily distribute visual communication. One does not have to travel great distances to get the general idea of a site. As he explains,

The invention of photography brought an effortlessly perfect physiognomic vision to archaeological inquiry. It could fix the appearance of objects and sites, allowing them to be

transported, for any reason, to a distant gaze. But recreating the unseeable past requires anatomical imagination as much as physiognomic objectivity (2011, p. 22).

This ease at which photographs can be transported today plays a great role not only for academic and scientific purposes, but also in the pleasure Macaulay wrote about in 1953. The internet has impacted Photography in many ways, including the ease of the voyeuristic consumption of all imagery. Never has it been easier to see far away places of ruined grandeur and majesty than it is currently. Individuals can collect and surround themselves with images of places they wish to see, by simply conducting a Google search. Photographs from vacations, educational trips, and research trips are uploaded to social media, blogs, and photo-sharing websites such as Flickr and Instagram. While it is uncertain that this ease of image sharing is generally detrimental or beneficial, it is clear that the technology we have allows photographers to communicate in a way unprecedented.

PART II: DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY IN ARCHAEOLOGY

Through my time in the masters programme I have become especially interested in how Documentary Photography was used throughout the history of Archaeology. The exploration of my personal work regarding the Silurian people and landscape has given me great opportunity to discover how Documentary Photography is used subjectively and objectively within Archaeology. I am fortunate to have had the opportunity to experience an archaeological dig with professors David Howell and Ray Howell in their excavations at Llanfihangel Tor y Mynydd (between Chepstow and Monmouth), participating in part of the excavation process and experimenting with photographing portions of the site, allowing me to add some field experience to my research as well (Howell, D. 2014).

Photography and Archaeology were born of the same century and grew along side each other. In the beginning, Photography was thought to be a wonderful tool to objectively depict artefacts and locations of study. However, as Bohrer exemplifies, Henry Fox Talbot was experimenting as early as 1844 with the use of light to change the perception of a single photographed object (Fig. 1,2). A specific example is Talbot's photographs of the *Bust of Patroclus*. As Bohrer explains,

The two images together chip away at a conception of a single photograph capturing the reality of an unvarnished past, literally displaying the same thing with different appearances. It draws the attention away from the object before the lens and toward the photographer himself, presenting the particular images chosen of the object as mark of a singular vision and aesthetic choice (2011, p. 32).

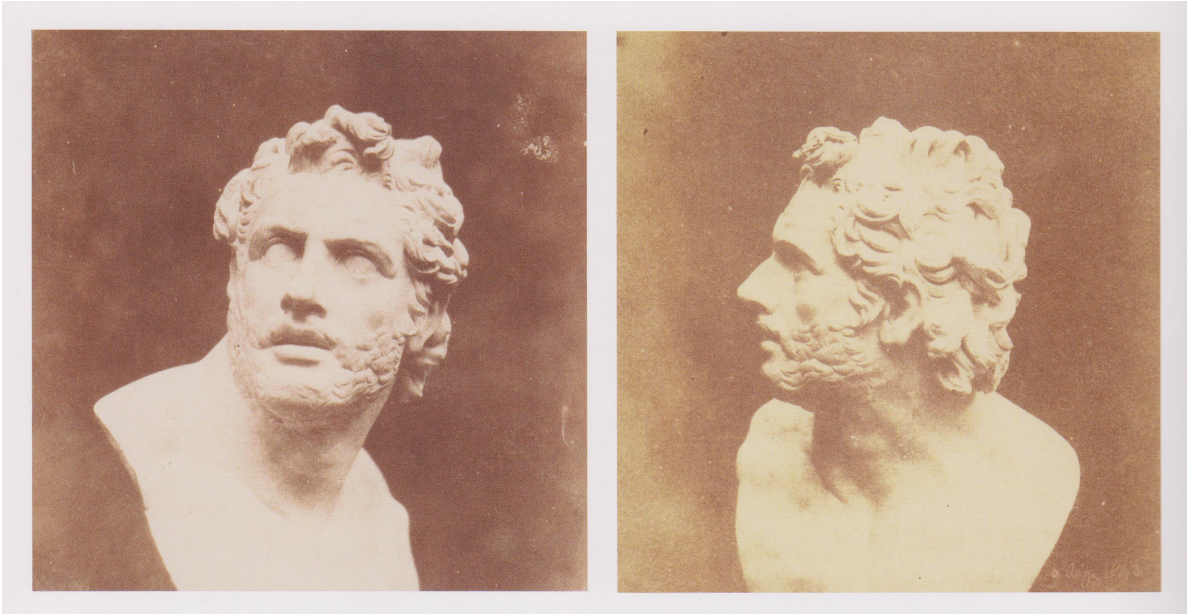


Fig. 1 William Henry Fox Talbot (1844-6) 'Bust of Patroclus,' from *the Pencil of Nature*, plate 5 [salt print from a paper negative]

Fig. 2 William Henry Fox Talbot (1844-6) 'Bust of Patroclus' from *The Pencil of Nature*, plate 17 [salt print from a paper negative]

It is because of such photographs we know Photography does not achieve objective representation at all, though traditional Documentary Photography often aims to reach this goal. While I would argue that *no* artistic medium can achieve objective representation, Documentary Photography can, at times, appear to come close to this intention. Archaeologists have realised this, and make use of 'photographic documents' near success of objectivity. Traditionally, in Archaeology Photography the aesthetic of choice is singular artefacts systematically recorded by the camera on black backdrops with a single, consistent light source. Photographs made of excavation sites range from images which include measuring instruments, to show scale, to images documenting the state of the dig site as work progresses. These are the characteristics one would find looking at archaeologists' portfolios and historical/scientific journals which are shared within the professional scientific community.

While most Photography within Archaeology is of the previously mentioned documentary style, there are some instances in which different forms of blatant subjective Photography is used. Examples of subjective, aesthetic archaeological photographs can be found in the archaeological portfolios which are presented to potential patrons. These photographs often beautify the results from a previous dig, making the potential patron more apt to fund an excavation. Other forms of subjective artwork are utilized in archaeological collections as well, namely drawings and prints. It is interesting to note that these forms of art are sometimes chosen specifically because the subjective vision of the artist's eye is considered more valuable than the "objective vision" of the camera.

This is true of Frederick Catherwood's engraving '*Discovery of a Sculptured Monument*' in John Lloyd Stephens, *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas and Yucatán 1841* (Fig. 3). This engraving depicts a stone idol at Copan. The idol itself is engraved boldly, easily making it the emphasis of the print, while the background is of a lighter value, thus enabling the viewer to see the setting of the object without overpowering it. Also engraved very lightly next to the idol is the likeness of a seated figure, giving one an estimation of scale as well as era, should the date of the work ever be lost. Art works like this one, are made when the terrain is not suitable for the use of a

camera. This could be due to difficulties of transport, problematic viewpoints, or when the surface of the desired subject can not be lit in such a way that would be conducive to visual comprehension (2011, pp. 60-61).



Fig. 3 Frederick Catherwood (1841) 'Discovery of a Sculptured Monument,' from John Lloyd Stephens, *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas and Yucatán*, vol I opp. [engraving]

It is a mixture of both the traditional and the subjective Documentary Photography which inspires my work and makes up Archaeology Photography. When I make photographs, I use elements of traditional approach, but ultimately construct subjective imagery by means of digital manipulation. This process is integral for the work as it promotes a feeling of mystery and escapism from the the

monotony of the known. It is my intention, that the vague depiction of the figure is due to the manipulated elements of the image, which are carefully constructed to resemble lighting malfunctions or motion blur, leaving one with an ambiguous sense of time travel, or illusionary vision. I hope to educe the viewer to fantasise about the subject and the setting, making a connection to the way historians must concoct hypotheses about the parts of Silurian life which are unknown.

Patrick Nagatani is a photographer whose work exemplifies a good blend of traditional archaeological recording which is then turned into subjective artwork, specifically the series he made while working with Japanese Archaeologist Ryoichi. One particular image from *Ryoichi/Nagatani Excavations, 1985-2001*, which I find particularly inspiring is 'Excavation Artifacts', 1999, a montage of 25 gelatin silver prints (Fig. 4). It is an image comprised of artefact photographs documented on black backgrounds with a consistent, singular light source. The artefacts depicted are not only objects found from the excavations, such as stone tools, but also objects which would be significant to site workers at the time of excavation, for example a radio, popular children's toy, or a Christian pendant. By pairing historical discovered objects with objects belonging to the excavation workers, Nagatani is not only recording the past, but also commenting on the process of Archaeology, and implying that one day archaeologists in the future will be exploring their own histories, indicating that humans will continue to obsess over, and obtain pleasure from contemplating the mysterious past (2011, pp. 168-169).



Fig. 4 Patrick Nagatani (1999) 'Excavation Artifacts,' from *Ryoichi/Nagatani Excavations, 1985-2001*, [Montage of 25 gelatin silver prints]

PART III: THE FICTIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC PAST

Because of the nature of the camera, Photography is inherently a medium with which one looks into the past; due to the nature of light, one can never take an image of the present moment. As Roland Barthes says in *Camera Lucida*,

For me the noise of Time is not sad: I love bells, clocks, watches- and I recall that at first photographic implements were related to techniques of cabinetmaking and the machinery of precision: cameras in short, were clocks for seeing, and perhaps in me someone very old still hears in the photographic mechanism the living sound of wood (2000, p.15).

If one views Photography as a medium which visually records time, it is easy to connect Photography to the pleasure of visually collecting, or in some cases constructing, the past. The photographers who come from that tradition of visually making pictures (as opposed to taking pictures) are also a precursor to my work, and impact my imagery.

The work of Joan Fontcuberta is made of a plethora of series which explore fiction in imagery and the truthfulness of Photography. He is a master constructor, of fictional plants, animals, fossils, stars, and landscapes. His 1987 series *Fauna*, is perhaps most recognisable. It features fictional animals from the lost archives of the zoologist Dr. Peter Ameisenhaufen, including a lengthy history of Ameisenhaufen as well as field notes, stuffed specimens, recorded animal cries, and photographic "proof" of various fauna (laboratory photographs, field photographs, drawings, and even x-rays). One example of the fictional fauna is *Micostrium Vulgaris* (Fig. 5), "A gregarious animal which lives in colonies of varying numbers of individuals (6-30)." (1988, p. 26).



Fig. 5 Joan Fontcuberta (1986) *Micostrium Vulgaris*: *Catching a fish in a river by clubbing it* [Photograph]

Fontcuberta constructs vivid and detailed existences in this series and his other works, leaving clues for his viewers to find the truth if they have the motivation to look into his artwork with a critical eye. His style is perhaps responsible for influencing other photographers who visually construct realities.

Much like Fontcuberta's work *Sputnik*, which warps the story of the Soyuz Soviet space missions, Cristina De Middel manufactures fiction from the history of African space exploration in her series *The Afronauts*. As a photojournalist she is concerned with the stories which society chooses to consume as truthful. For *The Afronauts*, De Middel makes photographs based on the improbable story of the space programme in Zambia in 1964 (Fig 6). She does her best to construct the vision of this nonexistent past event, connecting her criticism of how society consumes visual culture to Fontcuberta's conceptual message about truth in the medium of Photography. (De Middle, 2012).



Fig. 6 Cristina De Middel (2012) 'Umeko', from *The Afronauts* [Photograph]

Harri Kallio's series *The Dodo And Mauritius Island, Imaginary Encounters*, is a visually constructed past which Kallio envisioned based on research in both the Sciences and the Humanities. After much study, he constructed armatures to make two, collapsable Dodo models, one male and one female. He then traveled to Mauritius Island to complete his vision of the past, brining to life Dodos and presenting them in a way which the world had never experienced them; photographically (2004, p.12). Kallio's Dodos (Fig. 7) were photographed numerous times with his large format camera, and the final images were digitally stitched together to create a hypothetical scene from the time of the Dodos' existence (2004, p. 77). I too, identify with the process of acting out an unknowable past when I am fabricating a scene from Silurian life.



Fig. 7 Harri Kallio (2004) 'Benares #4', from *The Dodo And Mauritius Island, Imaginary Encounters* [Photograph]

Fontcuberta, De Middel, and Kallio all work with the past, but what enables them to create such believable fiction is a starting point which is used as a creative spring board, and gaps in knowledge about the topics they wish to portray. Much information is missing in the story of the Silures, and what historians do know is left mostly by Roman writers who would have had a very subjective view of the culture they struggled to dominate for a period of twenty-five years. The other knowledge comes from what is found in archaeological studies in the areas the tribe inhabited. Most of this includes information regarding warfare, and not very much insight into the day to day life of the Silures, which is what I have tried to envision while creating my photographs (Fig. 8).



Fig. 8 Christine Novelli (2014) *A Hypothetical Story 12* [Photograph]

PART IV: RUIN LUST, VISUAL ARTS DEPICTING THE PAST

Indeed, trying to capture the past visually is not a new concept, but a long lasting one. In May 2014 I attended the exhibition *Ruin Lust* at Tate Britain, expanding my understanding of other artists depicting the past. The exhibition featured many different perspectives from artists who shared a love of history. Starting with the European ruin craze in the 18th century, I found many concepts which differ from, but also inform my work about the Silures.

Giovanni Piranesi's *Views of Rome: View of the Flavian Amphitheater known as the Colosseum* 1760-78 (Fig. 9) is a good example of classical ruins serving as inspiration for artists. This style of print is perhaps what many individuals envision when they imagine ruins in artwork. What started out as influence to poets, artists, and architects during the Renaissance, also became a warning of ruination to those in the 18th century. However, as Brian Dillon mentions in *Ruin Lust: Artists' Fascination with Ruins, from Turner to the Present Day*,

Piranesi also saw that ruins were not static, and spoke to each other as well as to our present - his juxtapositions of vastly different times and places suggest that ruins allow us to set ourselves loose in time, to hover among past, present, and future (2014, p. 6).

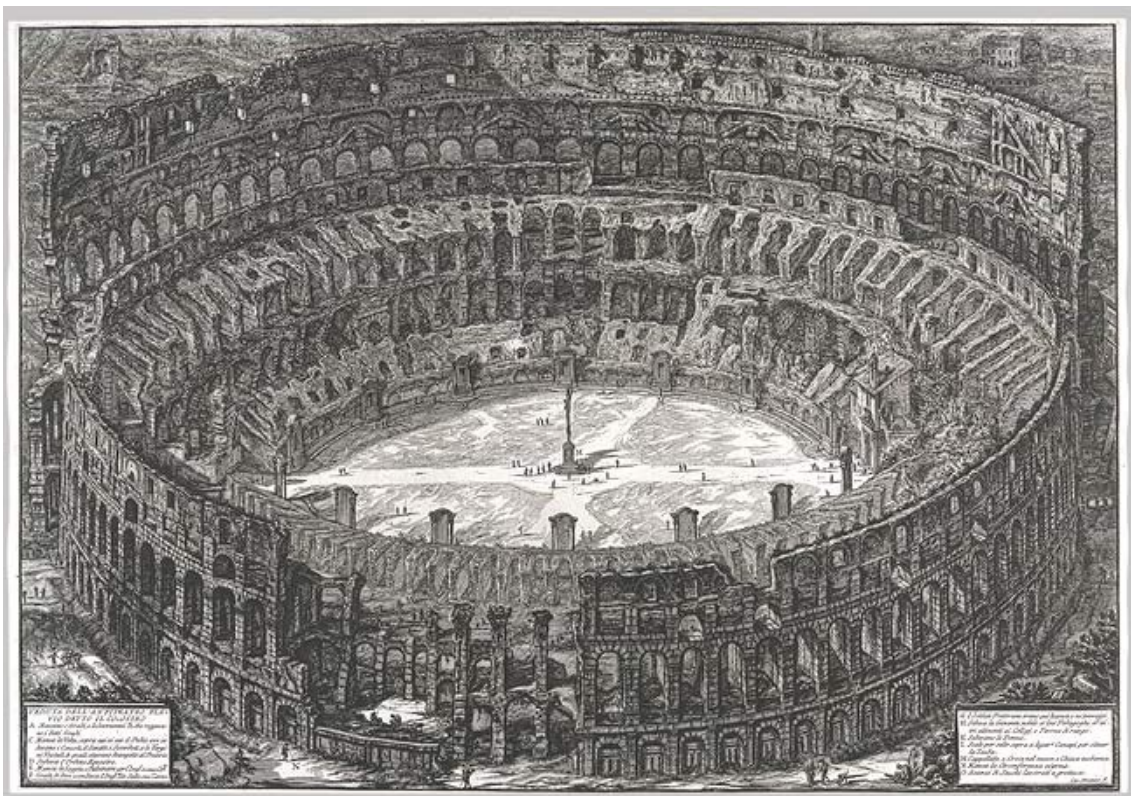


Fig. 9 Giovanni Piranesi (1760-78) *Views of Rome: View of the Flavian Amphitheater known as the Colosseum* [etching on paper]

Taking Dillon's opinion one step further, I would say that the reason we visually express ruins and historical places in artworks is because of our inability to accurately imagine the past. To me, imagining the Silures and other peoples of the past is a pleasurable experience, but also difficult. I can never create a clear image in my mind, because of my lack of understanding. And so to make

real my imaginings, I create them in tangible form. This process acts as a sort of closure; a way of making some aspects of unknown into viewable possibility.

Out of this obsession with ruins came a tradition in Art History which we easily recognise today; framing ruins in a landscape. According to Dillon, this tradition started specifically with the representation of classical and medieval remains (2014, p. 6). This trend was not just utilised in the visual arts, but also in writing. For example, Dillon quotes William Gilpin's 1782 in *Observations of the river Wye*,

...a very enchanting [*sic*] piece of ruin. Nature has now made it her own. Time has worn off all traces of the rule: it has blunted the sharp edges of the chisel, and broken the regularity of opposing parts. The figured ornaments of the east-window are gone; those of the west-window are left. Most of the other windows, with their principal ornaments remain. To these were superadded the ornaments of time (2014, p. 10).

This quote shows the attention paid to the loss of elements in a structure, in this case the ornamentation of Tintern Abbey. However, Gilpin is saying that what the abbey had lost was replaced by the addition of nature, namely plant growth. The scenario is a common one in ruined landscape painting, in fact J.W.M. Turner painted *Tintern Abbey: The Crossing and Chancel, Looking towards the East Window* in 1794 (Fig. 10). The painting features the elements mentioned in its title, but also numerous plants and piles of rubble near which some figures stand and appear to be conversing. Dillon deems these tiny figures to be "representatives of the enthusiasm for picturesque ruins and all that they evoked from the medieval past, the triumph of nature over the relics of culture ..." (2014, p. 10). This then also supports Macaulay's writings about the pleasure of nature reclaiming ruins and the ruination of culture.



Fig. 10 J.M.W. Turner (1794) *Tintern Abbey: The Crossing and Chancel, Looking towards the East Window* [Graphite and watercolour on paper]

Other forms of destructive ruination became a common subject in British art and literature in the 19th century. Just one example is the apocalyptic, *The Destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum*, painted in 1822 by John Martin (Fig. 11). The composition shows people fleeing in terror from the wrath of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. The Volcano looms in the background, painted brightly to take the role of light source in the painting. It illuminates the survivors, but also the already destroyed Herculaneum, and the city of Pompeii which is about to meet its ruination (Tate Britain, 2014). This painting is one of many which featured classical and biblical themes showing destruction. However, there was also another form of artworks depicting ruination, and that was imagery which showed the decline of present, urban environments.



Fig. 11 John Martin (1822) *The Destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum* [Oil paint on canvas]

One example is the 1830 painting *A Bird's Eye View of the Bank of England*, by Joseph Michael Gandy (Fig. 12). This work was commissioned by the architect of the bank, Sire John Soane upon his retirement. The painting depicts a cutaway view of the bank from above, and inside one can see various rooms with arches and deteriorated columns. What makes this work so fascinating to me, is that it was the architect himself who wanted to own a painting which depicted his own creation in ruins. It seems a perverse sort of pleasure, though Dillon claims that the 19th century had much literature to draw on such disastrous visions like this one. He sites the works of Mary Shelley's apocalyptic novel *The Last Man*, published in 1826 and Richard Jefferies's *After London* published in 1885 (2014, p. 17). Interestingly enough, Dillon claims it was Rose Macaulay's great uncle, Thomas Babington Macaulay, who inadvertently created this ruin motif in 1840 (2014, p. 21). The phenomenon grew out of an obscure piece of writing in which a traveller from New Zealand was to sketch the ruins of Saint Paul's Cathedral from the London Bridge. This idea became an iconic image and was engraved in 1872 by Gustave Doré (Fig. 13) who titled the piece, *The New Zealander* (2014, p. 20).



Fig. 12 Joseph Michael Gandy (1830) *A Bird's Eye View of the Bank of England* [Watercolour on paper]



Fig. 13 Gustave Doré (1872) 'The New Zealander' from *Gustave Doré and Blanchard Jerrold, London: A Pilgrimage* [engraving]

This ruinous pleasure born from destruction was a theme that did not disappear, if anything it became more relevant after the first and second World Wars. Rose Macaulay does allude to this in

her writing, claiming that perhaps it has gone too far. She speaks of the remains of buildings freshly destroyed which lack the beautification and lush foliage provided by time, saying, "they smell of fire and mortality." (1964 p. 284). She goes on to describe many ruined places and continues alluding to war, "The bombed churches and cathedrals of Europe give us, on the whole, nothing but resentful sadness, like the bombed cities." (1964, p. 285). This attitude is vastly different from her joyous passionate speeches presented at the beginning of the text. Dillon explains that her change in tone is probably related to her experience of losing her home in the Blitz (2014, p. 21). In the last few paragraphs of her book Macaulay declares,

But *Ruinelust* has come full circle: we have had our fill. Ruin pleasure must be at one remove, softened by art, by Piranesi, Salvator Rosa, Poussin, Claude, Monsù Desiderio, Pannini, Guardi, Robert, James Pryde, John Piper, the ruin-poets, or centuries of time. Ruin must be a fantasy, veiled by the mind's dark imaginings: in the objects that we see before us, we get to agree with St. Thomas Aquinas, that quae enim diminuta sunt, hoc ipso turpia sunt [for the things which are impaired, by the very fact are ugly], and to feel that, in beauty, wholeness is all.

But such wholesome hankerings are, it seems likely, merely a phase of our fearful and fragmented age. (1964, p. 285).

It seems first hand experience of war is what led Macaulay to fully understand the tragic perspective of ruin pleasure. This darker, modern view of destruction is also shown amongst *Ruin Lust* artworks. Three such wartime examples are the works of Paul Nash (Fig. 14), Graham Sutherland (Fig. 15), and John Piper who made paintings during the 1940s (Fig. 16).

Nash came from a tradition of ruin paintings which often depicted architecture in nature. He was influenced by Caspar David Friedrich's 1824 painting *The Sea of Ice*, for his painting of ruined aircraft at Cowley in Oxfordshire, titled *Totes Meer (Dead Sea) 1940-1* (2014, pp. 21-22). Sutherland was specifically commissioned by the War Artists Advisory Committee to paint, and he recorded scenes from the East End of London, an area that underwent heavy bombing. He submitted to them the painting, *Devastation, 1941: East End, Burnt Paper Warehouse* (2014, pp. 21, 27). In comparison, Piper is said to be of the tradition of painting abbeys and churches and referred to them in a Romantic sensibility; one specific painting is his *St. Mary le Port, Bristol, 1940*.

From the 1940s onward, it was easier to envision the ruin of society because for many people it was a reality. Even after the Wars, urban settings were areas which came by ruination naturally. Due to the changing modernist nature of urban planning and new building materials, structures were often demolished quickly if they were neglected. Some of the work made during this time, such as Rachel Whiteread's *Demolished* (Fig. 17), a photographic series of 1966, convey this rapid, controlled process of ruination (2014, p. 30).



Fig. 14 Paul Nash (1940-1) *Totes Meer (Dead Sea)* [Oil paint on canvas]



Fig. 15 Graham Sutherland (1941) *Devastation, 1941: East End, Burnt Paper Warehouse* [Gouache, pastel, graphite and ink on paper on card]

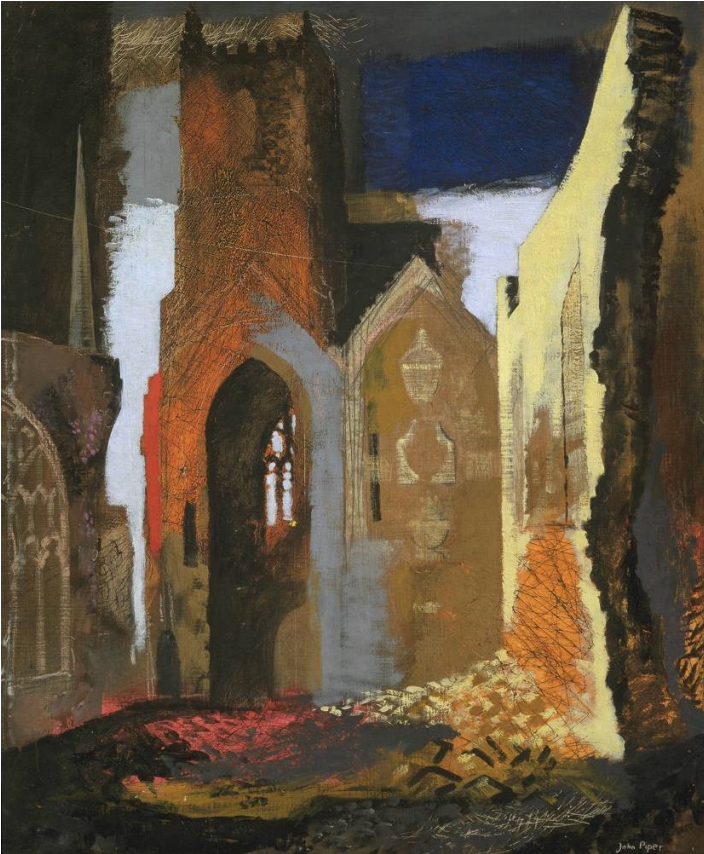


Fig. 16 John Piper (1940) *St Mary le Port, Bristol* [Oil paint and graphite on canvas on wood]



Fig. 17 Rachel Whiteread (1996) 'B: Clapton Park Estate, Mandeville Street, London E5; Bakewell Court; Repton Court; March 1995' from *Demolished* [Screen prints on paper]

As the global environment became a more prevalent issue in the later part of the 20th century, so too did the artwork of ruination adapt to be more inclusive to the natural environment. Numerous examples of ruin within landscape saw their creation in the 1980s and 1990s, following the era of Land Art. Dillon claims that at this time "ruination might easily be framed in terms of geology as slow decay or sudden eruption," (2014, p. 41), indicating that the natural destruction of the environment mirrored the ruination of objects crafted by humanity. Ian Hamilton Finlay created his *Sea Coast, after Claude Lorrain* in 1985 (Fig. 18) and in 1986-7 Keith Arnatt created the photographic series *Miss Grace's Lane* (Fig. 19), a work which gives off an odd feeling of ruination from a landfill site (2014, pp. 36-41).

As time progressed, ruination became associated with loss. The issues regarding the environment can be seen as a spring board for contemplating the loss of things besides structures: cultures, places, technologies, and so forth. Artwork to represent the nostalgia of such ruined things has emerged at the turn of the century, encouraging many artists to return to analogue techniques; another form of ruin. For example, *Kodak 2006* by Tacita Dean is a study of film, the material Tacita uses to make her artwork, which many consider to be outdated and associated with loss within the medium (2014, p. 49).



SEA COAST, AFTER CLAUDE LORRAIN (LIBER VERITATIS, 1667), IAN HAMILTON FINLAY AND GARY HINCKS, WILD HAWTHORN PRESS, 1985

Fig. 18 Ian Hamilton Finlay (1985) *Sea Coast, after Claude Lorrain* [Lithograph on paper]



Fig. 19 Keith Arnatt (1986-7) *Miss Grace's Lane* [Photograph, colour, on paper]

PART V: THE DIVISION OF STUDYING THE PAST

We continue to obsess over physical and metaphorical ruins, and the professions of those who study these ruins are often carelessly, split into two main cultures: the Sciences and the Humanities. This divide was first addressed by chemist/novelist C.P. Snow. *The Two Cultures and The Scientific Revolution* was a rede lecture given by Snow in 1959 at Cambridge University and was later published in 1961. Throughout his rede he gives numerous examples of the wide gulf between the two cultures, claiming this gap to be a detriment to society (Snow, 1961, p. 3). Snow's solution to this problem involved the countries of the West pooling their resources (scientists and artists)

together, to force industrial and scientific revolution in undeveloped countries in order to improve quality of life (Snow, 1961, pp. 48-52).

Today, the gap between the two cultures is staring to close. Many research organisations and educators see the value of these cultures informing one another. I address this, because scientific and artist research is necessary for my own work. One such organisation which embraces such collaboration is the Wellcome Trust, based in London. The organisation states their mission to be as follows,

The Wellcome Trust is a global charitable foundation dedicated to achieving extraordinary improvements in human and animal health. We spend around £600 million every year both in the UK and internationally achieving our mission: supporting the brightest minds in biomedical research and the medical humanities. (Wellcome Trust, 2014).

The Wellcome Trust's ultimate goal is to improve health and their Division of Culture & Society "aims to explore medicine in its historical, ethical, social and cultural contexts." (Wellcome Trust, 2014). From 2010 to 2020 the trust hopes to work toward five major goals related to health, and to accomplish that, they implement a focus of funding for outstanding researchers, application of research, and medicine in culture. The last focus area especially signifies that a bridge between the "scientific" and "non-scientific" structure. Wellcome Trust claims "We strive to embed biomedical science in the historical and cultural landscape, so that it is valued and there is mutual trust between researchers and the wider public." (Wellcome Trust, 2014).

Other collaborations of artists and scientists can be found in many museums. The National History Museum in London is one such establishment which paired photographer Chrystel Lebas and biologist/botanist Kath Castillo to work with the Sir Edward James Salisbury Archive (Fig. 20). The two professionals are funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

The archive contains over 1,400 works; silver gelatine prints and glass plates in kodak boxes. The images depict Scottish landscape from several areas including: Arrochar in Argyll and Bute, Trossachs National park, the Rothiemurchus Estate in Cairnorns National Park, and Culbin Forest. The collection was anonymous until Lebas found a glass plate negative with a handwritten name on it. She has since, with the help of Castillo, traveled and photographed in Scotland herself, trying to closely recreate Salisbury's work, making the project "a comparative landscape and botanical study spanning nearly 90 years." (National History Museum, 2014). This project will hopefully give scientists a better idea about environmental changes in the region, but another goal stated on the National History Museum's website is that the intention that the project "creates new understandings of the artistic and scientific gaze onto the natural environment and its representation." (National History Museum, 2014).

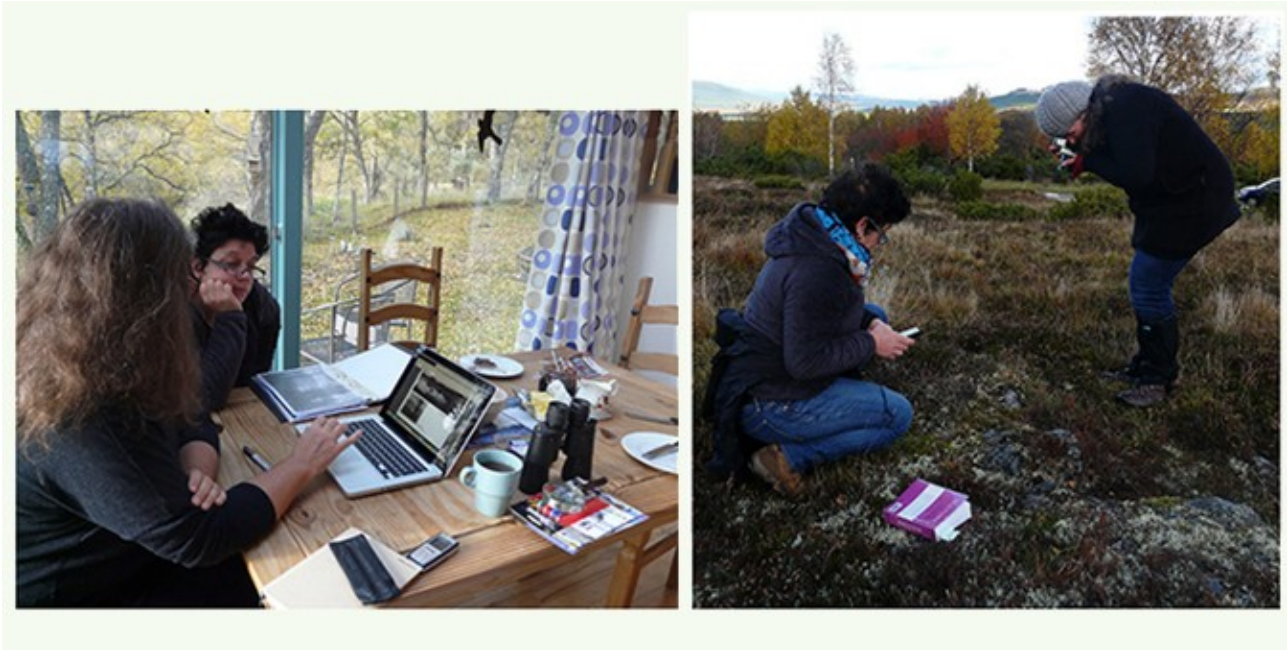


Fig. 20 Bergit Arends (2013) *Kath and Chrystel on fieldwork in Scotland, October 2013* [Photograph]

The kind of collaboration that the Wellcome Trust and the National History Museum exhibit across the Sciences and the Humanities allows for immense learning, and exploration of our world. It is crucial to my philosophy as an Art's educator, but also having the resources to gain knowledge and inspiration from cross cultural sources is imperative to my art making process.

The work surrounding the Silures relies on my own observations of the environment, studies in Geography, History, Archaeology, Photography, and Visual Arts. The series could not exist without my training in aesthetics, composition, colour theory, the use of the elements and principles of design, but nor could it exist without training in mechanical and computer sciences. This is especially true with the understanding of time and light, as all photographers, to some degree, work with the physics in that respect.

I have found that my art making process is similar to the scientific method. There is a period of questioning, or hypothesising, and then a time when the question expressed helps form a plan or envision an outcome. Following, comes the work phase or experimentation, the results are observed and finally they are reflected upon so that adaptations can be made to push the work further (2007, pp. 6-8). I hope that by exemplifying this model of workflow personally, I can stand among those who advocate for joint scientific-artistic research in order to better understand cultural histories of people like the Silures, in hopes that the Welsh of today can better celebrate their heritage tomorrow.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, my work in South Wales has opened my mind to many different faucets of Art and Science which have influenced the creation of this series. Through my own pleasure of exploring the past and the present, as well as those writers and historians who come before me, I have made links to different fields of study in order to better inform my work.

From Ray Howell, I learned much about the Silures, what tribal life may have been like, and what the Romans thought of these people who had mastered the Welsh landscape.

From Rose Macaulay, I better understand my own passion, and have learned of the different ways this love is expressed by others, including the darkness which lurks in the pleasure of ruination.

From Frederick Bohrer, my knowledge of Archaeological and Documentary Photography increased greatly, giving my work a more scientific component.

Other photographers like Fontcuberta, De Middel, and Kallio taught me about the tradition of constructing fiction within history and the relation between truth and perception in Photography.

After seeing the exhibition *Ruin Lust* and studying the artists whose work was featured, I gained knowledge in the history of expressing pleasure, fear, and expectations of ruins. While my work may not fit nicely in any one category, it does draw from the artists who came before me, each adding their own vision into the visual timeline.

Finally, C.P. Snow's view of society made clear to me that this issue of the separation between the two cultures is improving as Artists and Scientists rely on one another to achieve common goals. I continue to take inspiration from the present landscape, and the past, revelling in my own imagination and the art work of those who also share a love of looking into the history.

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