

Residency Review

Proposal Reflection

We proposed to engage in a focused period of collaborative practice. During this residency we immersed ourselves in the environment through walks, engaging unconventionally with the landscape through photography, video, sound & performance.

We initially proposed making extensive use of the studio space; however, we found ourselves extending our definition of studio practice by using the landscape as a studio and the accommodation as a studio.

We maintained our methodology of an open and non-output-focused practice throughout the residency, aiming to break down barriers between life & practice, and expanding our use of conversation and thought as a potential medium.

In our proposal we stated our interest in engaging in cross disciplinary conversations with scientists & researchers at the hatchery. On arrival we were made aware that we could not engage with scientists' work and therefore, decided to focus on other aspects of the proposal.

We proposed to push work beyond gallery conventions. We made a temporary performance installation in the Egg Room, which brought elements of the landscape into the gallery and which then re-informed how we in turn engaged with the landscape again. As well as this, walks, conversation, and daily routine became ripe with possibility for being work and vehicles for work.

This residency experience and environment has opened new directions and ideas for us as is further discussed in relation to the key works (see below).

Evaluation & Reflective Statement

During the two week period of this residency we developed new ways of engaging with landscape and gained a clearer understanding of our studio practice and how it operates. Many new threads for further investigation were revealed - such as contemporary understandings of landscape, conversation as medium, examining boundaries between art, non-art, and life. These threads and paths will be instrumental in developing our practice going forward.

What worked?

- Our favourite part of the residency (and the most impactful) was the incredible natural landscape of Connemara, which we engaged with daily in different and experimental ways. We connected really well with the environment, and it informed most of what we made during the residency.
- While maintaining an open and non-output focused practice, the amount of work we generated was prolific. We have now amassed a rich and plentiful body of work which will really support and inform our practice going forward. The work we made was also very fresh, new, and exciting - opening many possible further avenues for exploration.

What didn't work?

- We learned that conventional studio space and structures were not what the work required. It was useful to identify this so that we can apply this to our practice moving forward.

Key Works

This is a collection of the most pivotal and important works that we made during the 2-week residency at Interface, and a short accompanying text in dialogue with the works made. The work ranges from still photographic images, film, performance, sound, conversation, and writing.



The canon of the landscape in both art history and the contemporary art scape has been widely explored. We were interested in pursuing new frontiers of what landscape in contemporary art can be and how this can interact with what we understand as contemporary art.

We prioritised engagement with the natural world, conducting long and thoughtful periods of observation. This process of engagement was also informed by Anna Glynn & Peter Dalmazza and their work at Interface about tadpole metamorphosis - which was ideal as we found lots of frogspawn on our walks during the residency.



Markings found on the side of tanks at the hatchery evoked thoughts on the Silueta works of Ana Mendieta. While she left her own human mark on the landscape, we found a similar accidental gesture also as a result of human activity in nature - which also related visually to the frogspawn and activated our interest in relative proportion.



By investigating such microcosms found in the landscape we acknowledge their part in the wider, epic vision of nature. This allows us to place ourselves in this large complexity of life and recognise the oneness of all things.

Through the process of making and observing, the structure of the 'oneness' of the universe revealed itself again and again. This became clear as we were treating all things in the landscape with impartiality, whether it was fauna, flora, or found items. The work became about observation, ego annihilation, and deep acceptance of the world. We have been thinking about how we can hold things around us in equal regard and try to approach the work making with this openness.



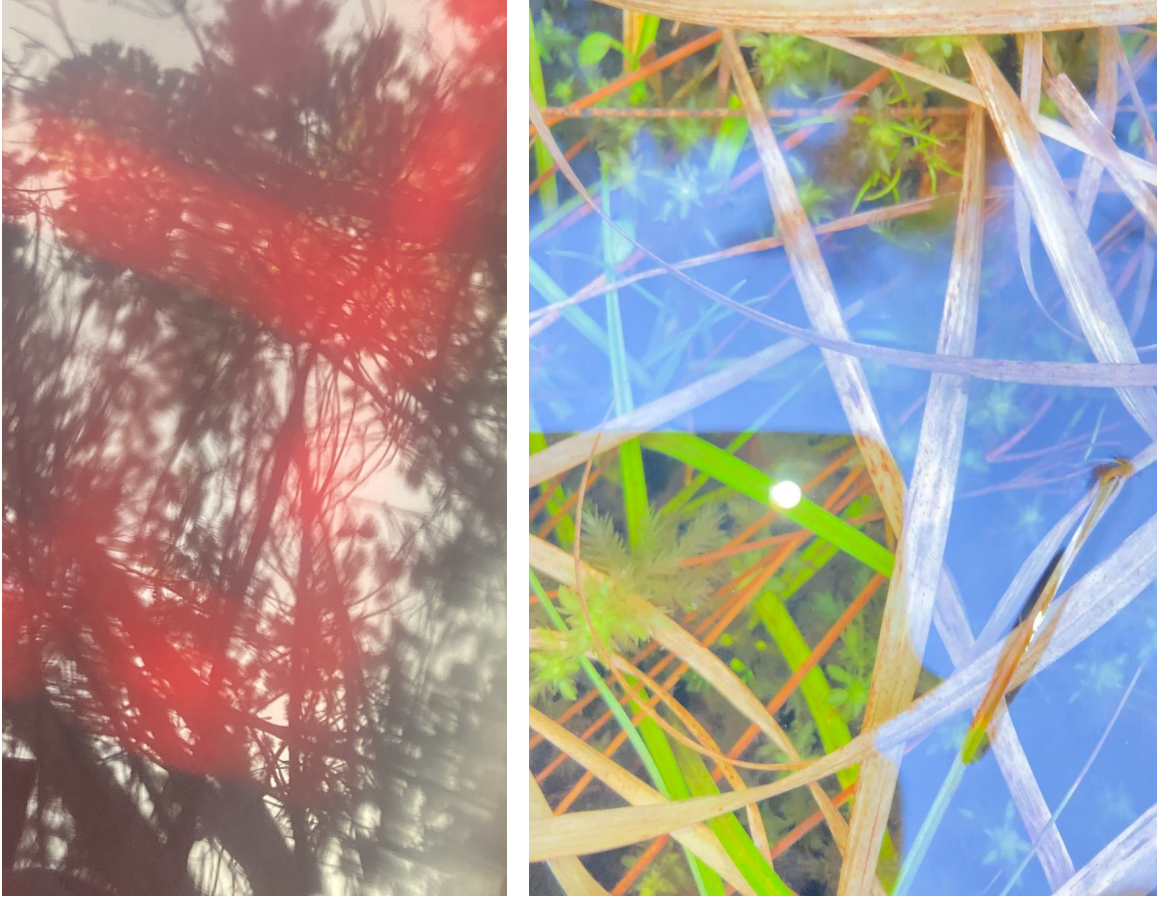
The work of previous resident Jasmin Märker was also influential aesthetically and thematically in her images of petri dishes and her resistance to false dichotomies of human and non-human.

This was a particularly interesting development in the work, as we have been very interested in Posthumanism prior to the residency. Posthumanist theory claims to offer a new epistemology that is not anthropocentric and therefore not centred in Cartesian dualism. It seeks to undermine the traditional boundaries between the human, the animal, and the technological.

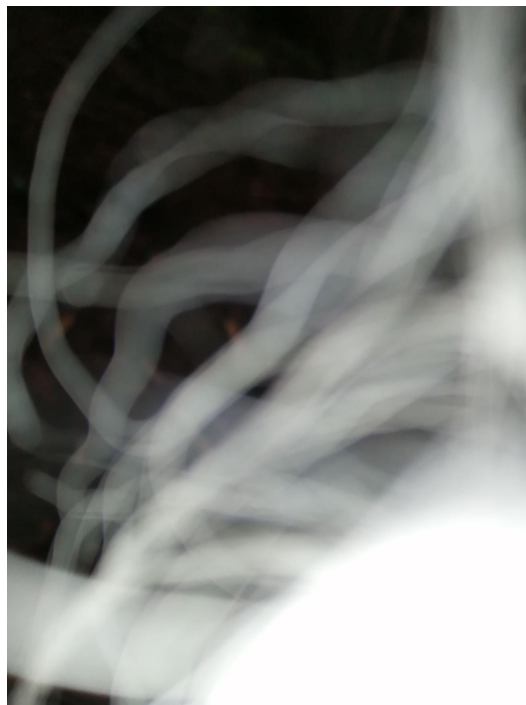


Often treated reverentially, the approach we took to photographing the landscape was to treat it as an equal rather than sacred. In 'Useology', Stephen Wright outlines his theories for usership over spectatorship - and this is how we approached the landscape.





Elements of the landscape along with photographic manipulation such as over exposure can make interesting photographic interventions. These works treat the medium of photography more as abstracted light than faithful representation.

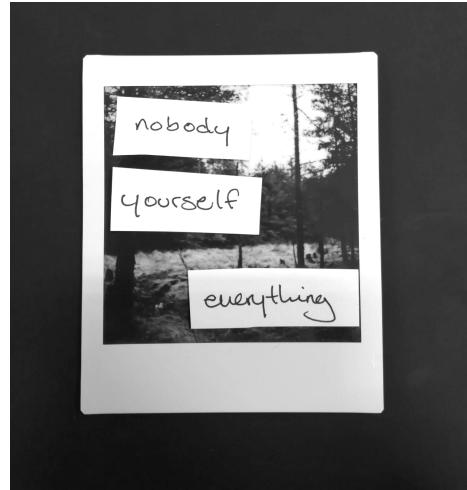




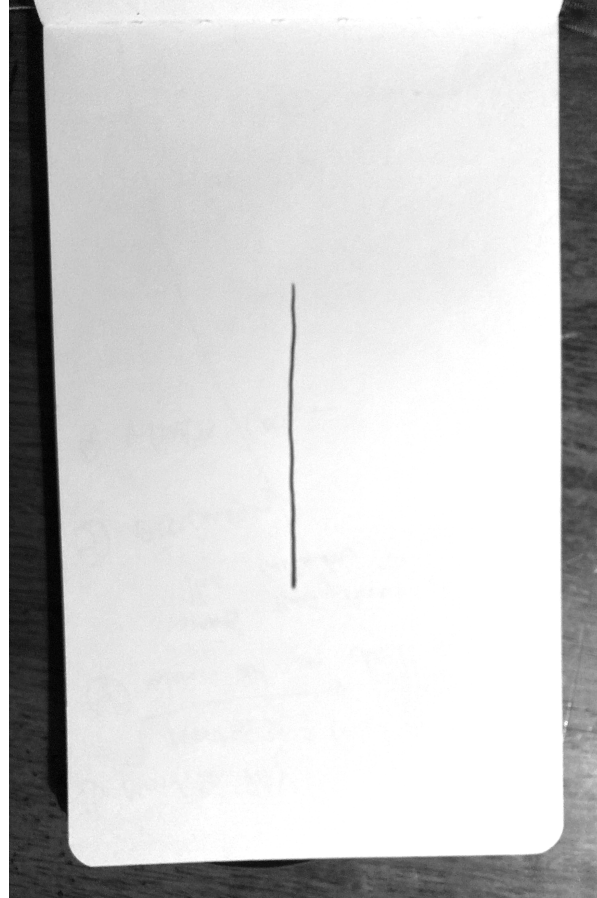
We found that our ability to use a phone camera could shape our relationship with the environment. Unlike the film camera, instant camera and even the DSLR, there is no lag or disjoint between what we see on the screen and what the picture turns out like. This "pre(view) mode" activates a 'shared looking' and extends our exploration of communication, conversation and conventions of authorship. We are also able to view any landscape only through the screen as well if we wish, which changes how we can see and interact with what's around us. This can be positively viewed as a mode of usership or possibility of usership.



Much as we wanted to open and expand photography, we expanded our definition of installation, bringing it beyond gallery walls through interventions in the landscape. The work was attempting to break barriers between outside and inside, and talk about what 'should' be there & what *is* there in the form of temporary responses. Some work was particularly formally concerned, pushing materials by engaging them in the landscape and bringing both documentation and materials back into a gallery space to create new works, images, and conversation again.

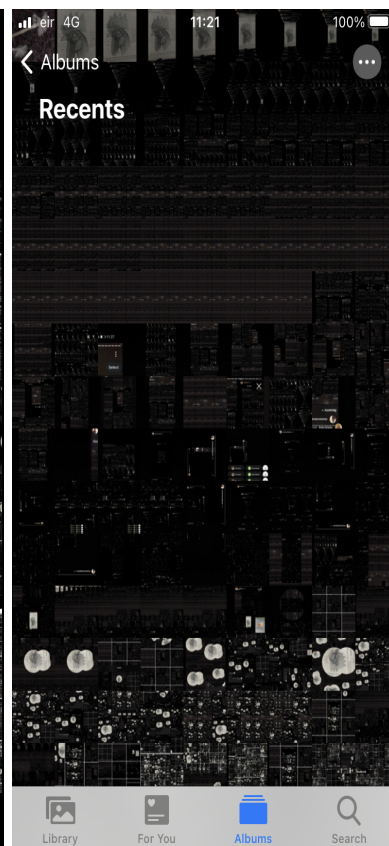
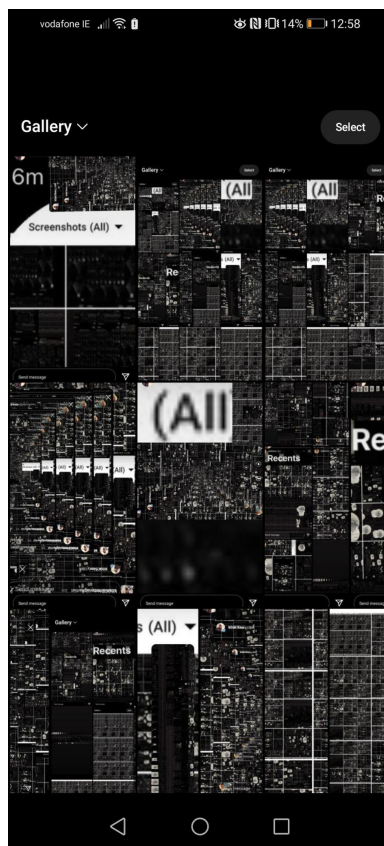
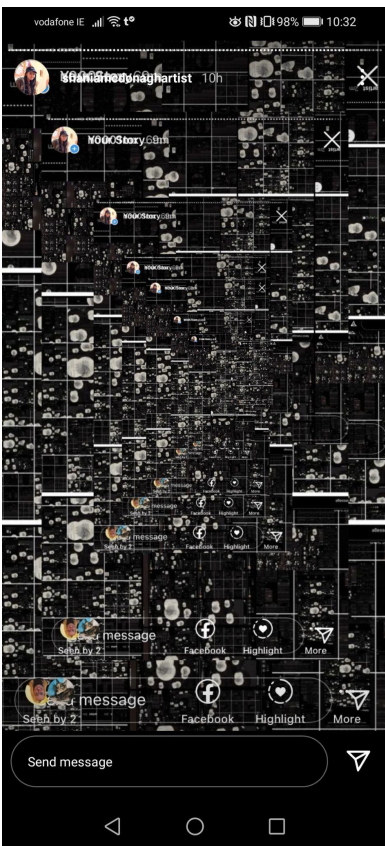
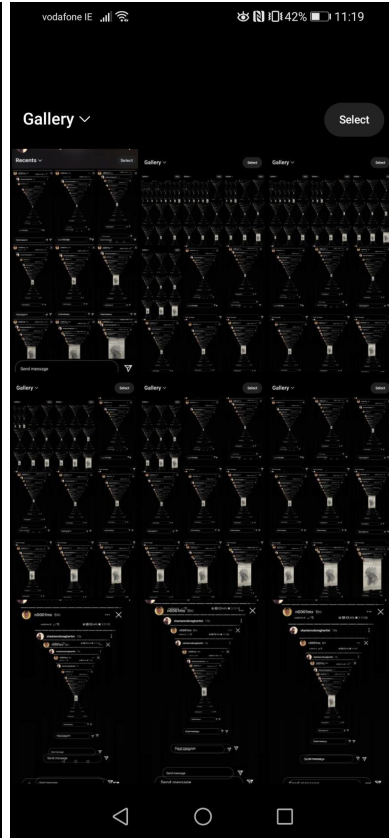
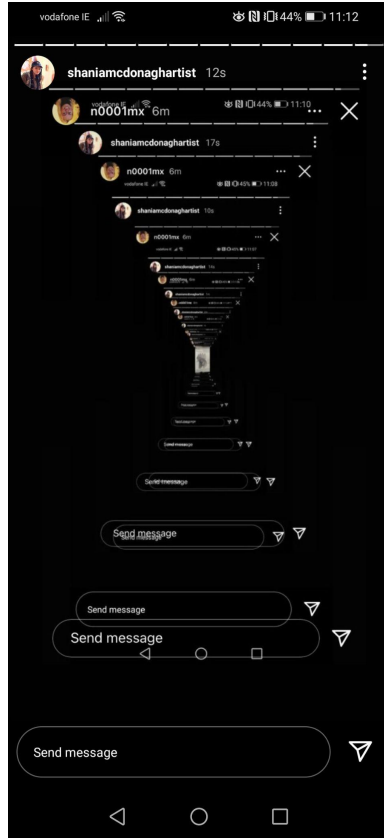
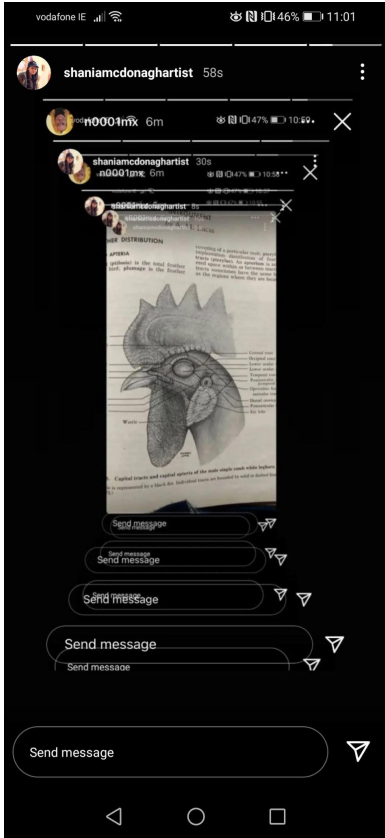


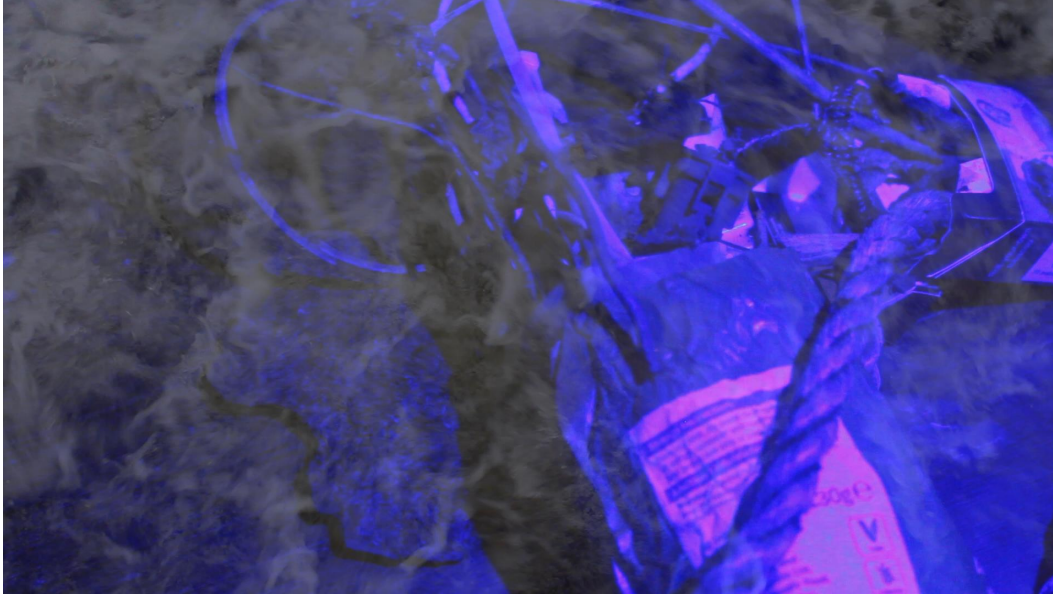
Furthermore in our practice of opening, we were interested in investigating the potential of Conversation as a medium for work. We developed this further throughout the residency through games and generating discourse both organically and in prescribed activities and 'group crit' sessions. The remnants/artefacts of these activities can then be investigated as works in their own right. The work of Eileen Norwell Ryan was relevant to this exploration, in her plexiglass installation/performance 'A Conversation Piece' which thinks about the marks made by words and contextualises conversation as something that can be tangible.



Following engagement with veterinary books left by Dr. Michael Geddis to Interface, we developed an online site specific temporary conversation installation via Instagram, which talked about digital space as a forum for communication and work making - the digital studio. Reflecting Geddis' interest in the visual ambiguity between micro & macro structures, the screen shots from this digital conversation resemble constellations, scientific graphs, maps, charts, and other similar documents.

This was also in conversation with the work of a previous Interface resident Ian Wiczorek, who is interested in the biologically aligned nature of digital decay and digital compression. Our digital conversation "new" was about the aesthetic possibilities of digital compression and the digital artefacts of Instagram UX and mobile OS.





In another film work, we layered ways of looking and being in the landscape, challenging the expectations of profound landscape experiences through a digital medium. Within both the initial generation of imagery and post production, we explored space, perception and movement; seeing one thing in another and through another in a digital landscape - and how this talks back to our contemporary role in the landscape.



Writing as a reflective process plays a crucial role in our practice and we regularly engage with shared digital documents as part of our collaborative conversation. Working collectively on this document has allowed us to process the work and research. It acts as a vehicle for conversations about and around the work allowing us to get a clear sense of what the work means to us and what new directions were found.

Our residency at Interface has allowed us to expand the ongoing installation of thought that is our practice. We are leaving with an accumulation of possibilities.



sitting under the
trees & I think
I'm knowing GOD.
wind rustle trees friends
humans it's noon
bleached day
sky light flat &
uncorrupted undiscerning
mounds moss ferns
rhythmic beating
nowhere is fully silent.

-Frog.