

*The Rhythms Arrhythmic*

Margaret Hannigan Popp

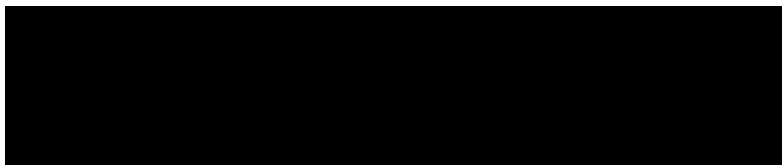
PhD Creative Writing

2022

## Declarations and Statements

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2. This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated and that other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references and that a bibliography is appended.
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Margaret Hannigan Popp

14/11/2022

## **Abstract Sheet Info.**

Keywords: Climate Change. Cultural Engagements. Concrete & Visual Poetry. Creative Practice. Community Participation. Deconstruction. Polyphony.

Topic: Telling the story of the Climate Change crisis measured by the loss of cultural hinterland, modulated by the grief of emigration, and calibrated by the immediacy of environmental destruction.

### ***‘How can concrete poetry seek out new energies and avail of the digital world to explore the vocabulary of shape and space in poetry and speak to modern audiences?’***

This project is a creative exploration and response to the great global challenge of climate change through the medium of poetry. It is composed of three parts, namely, a research-based thesis, a community based cultural initiative and a poetry collection that collectively address these questions:

The writing of ‘i/Bog’, my poetry collection, is an exposition of the relationship between our human world and the natural world. It is set out as an emotional paradigm to both counter and illuminate the scientific reports on environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity and climate change.

We need to look in the creative space to understand loss, legacy, and the imperative to restore harmony in the great cycles of the planet.

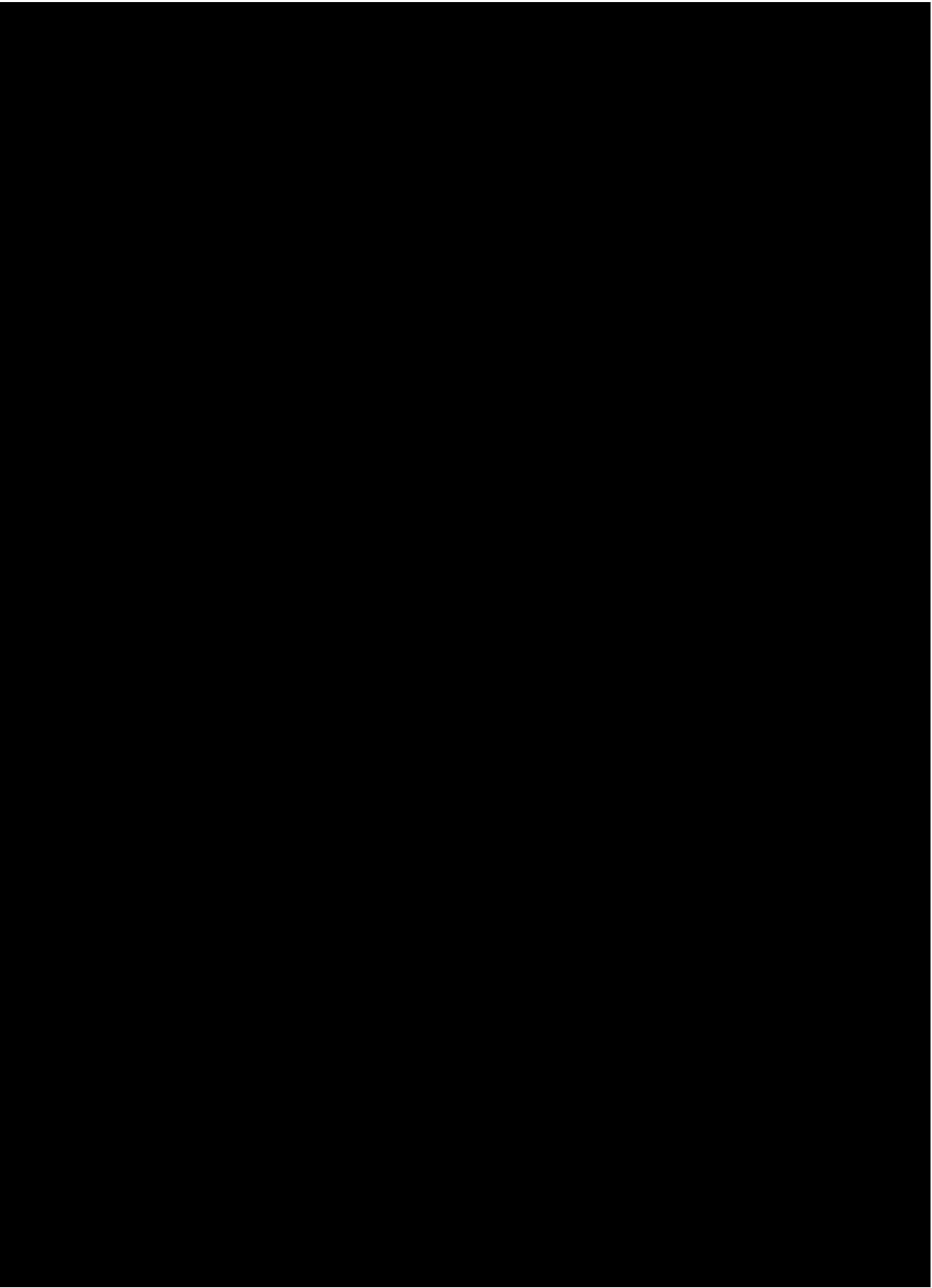
Figures that tell us of carbon dioxide emissions levels, elevations of sea temperature, species at risk of extinction can be crisp and quantifiable but compete with a welter of data and definitions that obscure meaningfulness. I propose that we need to move beyond the horizon of an understanding formed by tangible evidence into an awareness that speaks to our urgency of being.

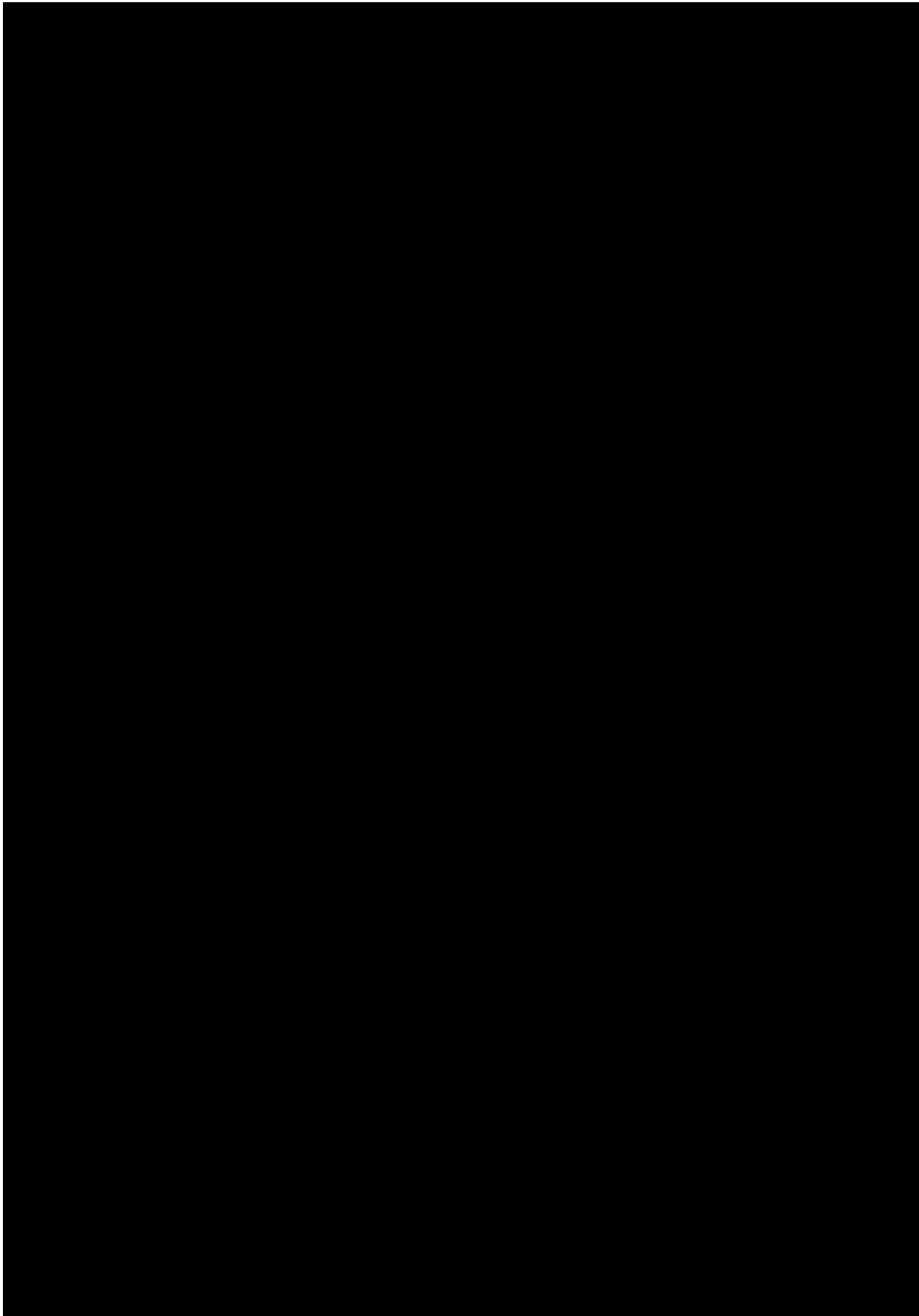
The writing works its way through this space with an obligation to address two key questions. How do we mediate our relationship with the natural world? How do we acknowledge the existential threat facing nature and by extension human life?

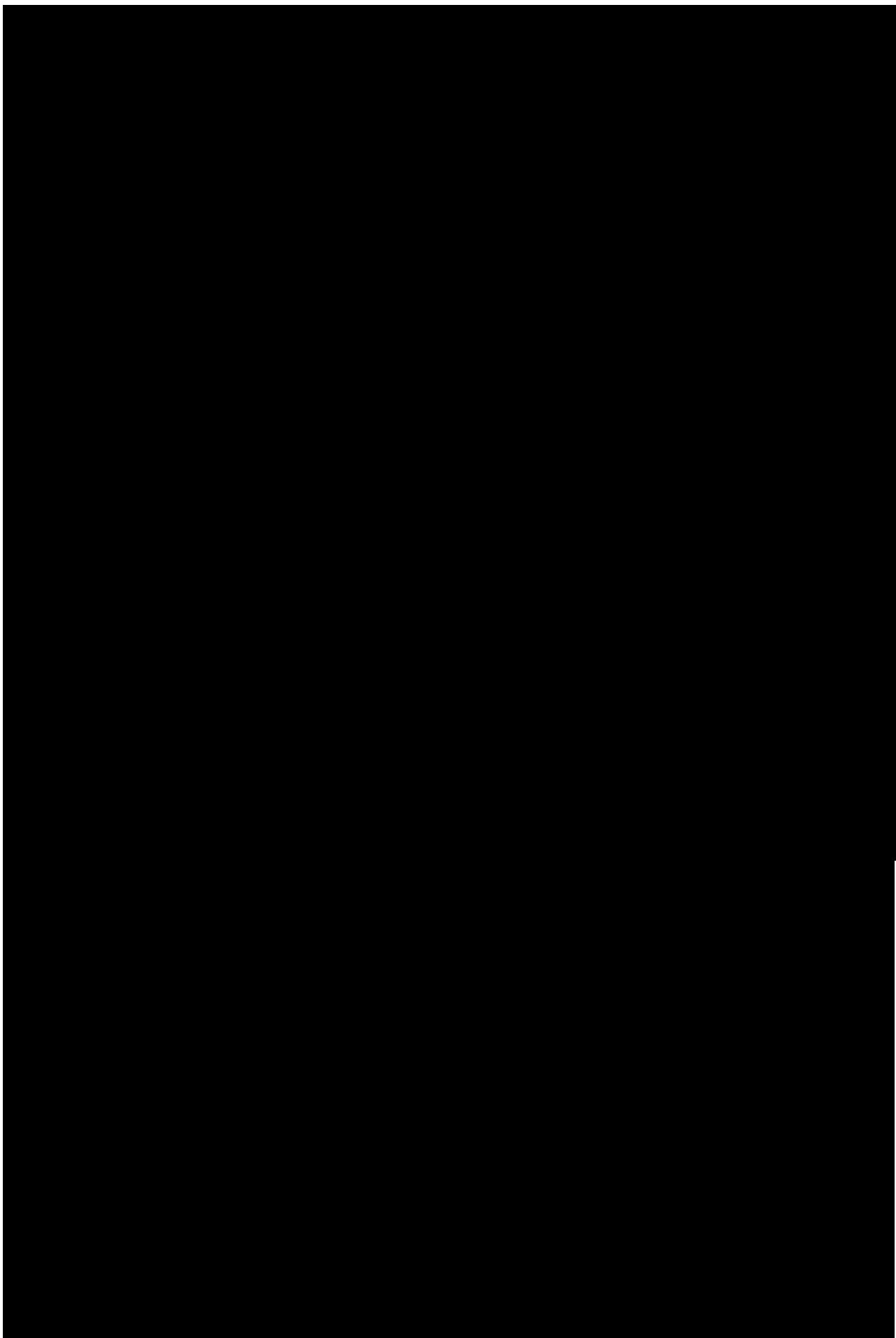
Poetry offers a language and a sensory experience that exists in a sphere separate to scientific evidence. Language becomes jargon when we focus on meaning and its precisions. Poetry restores to language a power that is aural and visual as well as verbal.

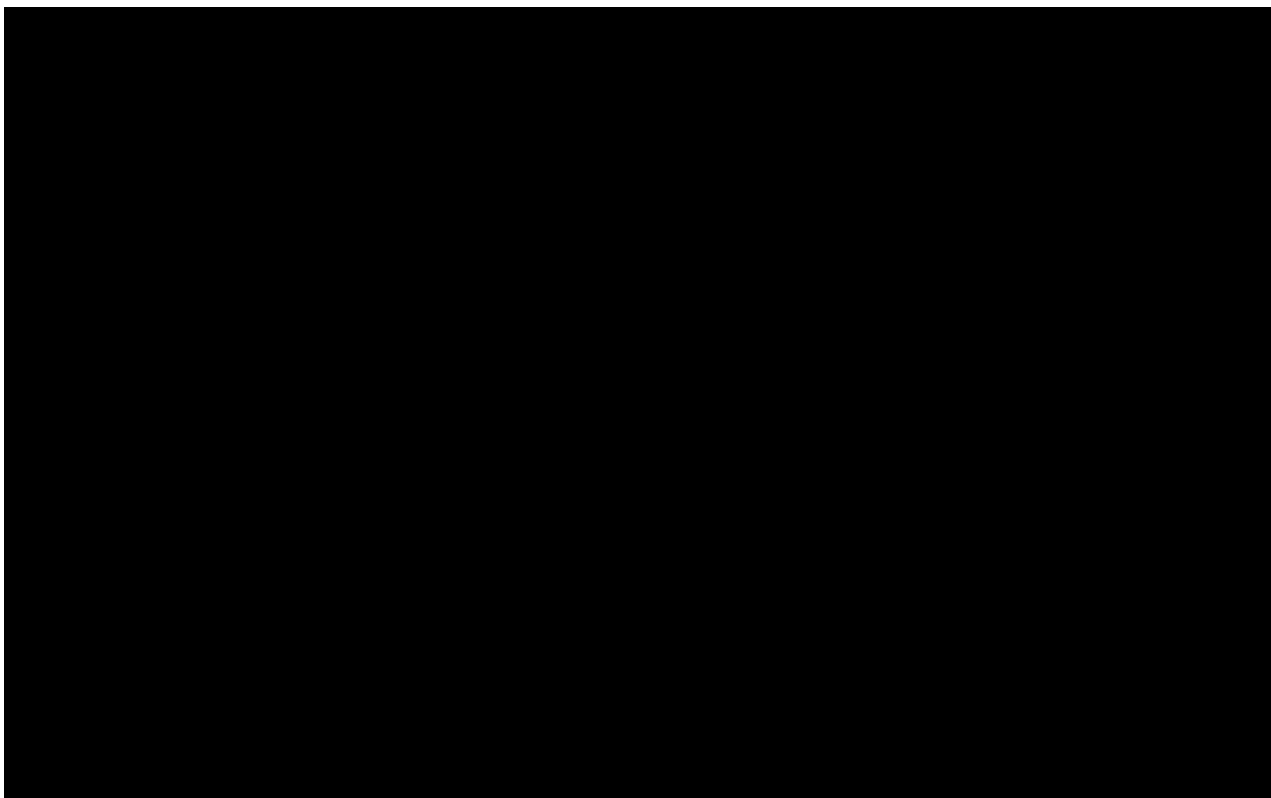
Humans are inspired by stories and a narrative thread gives both a satisfying logical comprehension and sense of security. When we challenge ourselves to move beyond meaning and listen to our senses then we can understand how we can and must redefine our relationship with nature from exploitation to safeguarding. A spiritual space emerges that invites us to merge with the rhythm of the planet and elicit a response that is imaginative and intuitive.

# E-Thesis Deposit Agreement











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Acknowledgements:

Professor John Goodby for support on M.A. & developing my PhD proposal

Dr Alan Kellerman my PhD supervisor and the team in Swansea University

Armand Golden and Sheila Flanagan in Ballygar Arts and the Town Hall.

Ballygar Tidy Towns and the Old Courthouse.

John Popp, Dr Maria Hannigan & Geraldine Briggs for helping in activities.

Jack Hannigan Popp & Cerys James for IT help.

Thanks to Elly & Jono Edmunds for being there & to Huw for cooking dinner.

Dedication.

My husband John and my granddaughter Maeve.

Remembering my mother, Mary Hannigan. Lisquel and Ballygar.

*i*  

---

**Bog**



**Bog underStanding**

A Collection of Poetry

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## Prefatory Note

One summer a few years ago I was intently reading the Irish Peatland Strategy document. It is a detailed compendium of biodiversity assessments, species lists, geological data, borehole sheets, geodesic modelling, GPS surveys and historical maps of the bogs of Ireland. I found the scale and level of detail mesmerising and enlightening and occasionally baffling. But then, I was struck with a real pang of grief.

As the figures of lost bog hectarage piled up,  
I saw my childhood rippling across the pages.  
Running across Keane's fields to venture into the boglands.  
Yellow furze bushes peopling lost placenames.  
My father drinking cold tea from a Cidona bottle,  
the *meitheal* cutting turf.  
Chalk spelling homework on a blackboard,  
*an fòidín meara*.

Science explains and proves the climate crisis. This is how I understand  
it.

Voices. Lives. Journeys.  
All the time in the world.  
A space for the sensate, of conscience, beyond nonsense.  
My poetry collection shares this understanding.  
*i/Bog* invites you into that world.





## Chernobog in Numberstrung

01234567890123456789012345678901234567890123456789012345678901234567890123456789012345678901234567890123456789012345678901230  
 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110 120 130 140 150 160

	fall	Σ	call
	bird	song long	hole
	hymn	harp seep	scum
	drum	dung bung	brag
	drag	dyke myth	mime
	mica	fake wake	yolk
	folk	ache eggs	hugs
	fuge	fair bare	heir
	womb	worm bard	horn
	husk	mask sink	suck

the idol clings to an oath cast by the gods who divine the joke buried in the prayer of gnosis writ as tattoo on the holy ground

ugly	arse	wind	ward
	kiss	mise	melt boat
	rove	hove	heft left
	loop	nape	note teat
		wade	bode
		lode	lurk
		agar	blur
		stir	star
		char	tare
		root	rood
		runt	want
	cant	kyte kind	bind
	bond	bogone	bone
	lone	lair	lore
	pore	rope wrap	rapt
	plot	dreg jibe	gyre
	canonical	carbonical	



## Lady Honoria's Path

The world is old today,  
lumbering horse  
can you not trot  
and make this day less grey?  
The advent tide  
has washed me cold,  
my faith is strong,  
my belly weak.  
I yearn to break my fast.  
Comfort me sweet palfrey.

What is it that sends me  
on the dark road,  
pursued by the raven  
trees of Aughrane Woods?  
Blustered by the hail  
across the open bog,  
in their little tigeens  
the *spailpeen* pray  
'there goes the Lady.'  
I nod my head.

My widow's lace  
is ruffed by birth,  
thin bones handle the rosary,  
a shrivelled penance weighs  
a virtuous life,  
in a subversive carriage  
glazed with piety.

At Cloonlyon crossroads,  
I summon up  
the one I was before.

*Téidh go bheidhis mé lán le gaoithe  
gadaí mé an dorch ón oíche,  
cé gur chas mé, bánseadh níthe.  
Is mise bean nach stopfaidh choíche.<sup>1</sup>*

My younger self  
claws the wind,  
strikes me cold.  
You pass me by,  
my innards shriek,  
an empty lap  
betokens solitude.

---

<sup>1</sup> I am a creature moved through the wind, I have stolen darkness from the night, whoever comes upon me will be taken of their things, I am a woman who will never be ceased.

The purest maid  
defiled by age,  
outer spinster  
inner rage.  
I am the husk.  
She shunned the seed.

*Roighnigh me an caoi seo sealbh,  
is iomaí liom an dion 's an dealbh.  
Bíonn an scórnach bog nuair a bhéinn balbh,  
caoineadh mathair leis an leanbh marbh.<sup>2</sup>*

The iron-clad wheel  
embeds the rut.  
To and fro,  
my pathway  
from lord of soil  
to Lord of Souls.  
A bog balked line patrols  
the boundary  
of Gaelic penury.

I am weary of these shrivelled people,  
their wretched state eludes my eye.

Wind mirrors blow ghostly shapes  
a rolling fog traps the sun in its tain.

---

<sup>2</sup> My choice to take this path/ naught care I for thatch or prayer/ insouciance protects my modesty/a mother wails for her dead infant.

My younger self moves towards me  
out of the lilting air.

A grim visage, *le nez retroussé*,  
a chevalier heart in a woman's chest.

*Cuir do ghnó chun taisce*  
*a mharcaigh na gclaon rosc.*

*Buail an bóthar.*

*Ó luí na gréine,*

*mo chara go daingean thú.*<sup>3</sup>

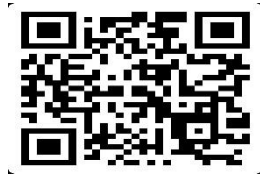
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<sup>3</sup> Your work is now finished. / Horse rider of the mesmerising eyes/ Take your leave. Until the sun sleeps/ You are my constant love. Lines selected from Caoineadh Art O Laoghaire

# ‘Honorina’

A film poem.

available to view on this link



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZeEQAdnmho>



## **The Soldiereens's Song**

I am lying here in my plot of ground  
Earthen bound, roof blabber crowned.

I was a soldier,  
Now I'm a soul  
Shriven by grave earthworms.

I bide my time  
'til I see in the final morning.

A foreign warrior in my native soil  
forever young for n'inst the blade.  
I have plenty of time in this Cruffin corner  
to ponder on the great world order.

I left Munster scorched,  
barren by strife  
to seek shelter from a neighbour.  
One of four hundred, loyal to Donal Cam,  
a master strategist and a hunted man.  
We carried an oath to our Gaelic clan.  
we didn't know then (but I know it now)  
it was to be our last stand.

I lie between lay-woven sheets  
and dream of the lads in Beara.

Rouosting a stag, the heather and the stang,  
we were wind and wound and enduring.

Sometimes I fight in this bottomless night  
and howl for our *gaisce mór*.

I may be over five-hundred-year-old,  
faith in sport and sinew I'm just seventeen.

One of a tribe,  
mountain men of stout mien,  
equipped by fear and favour,  
our fortune is in our swing.

But what's a smite to a dead dungèd knight,  
I'm all liver and no spleen now. For shure,  
it's a terrible thing when you're stuck down stair  
to lose track of what's real and what's fable.

Bad enough to lose your mind,  
far worse to be arsed by a snout,  
one bled, unabled.

To be honest,  
I'm long past grieving a life unspent.  
When centuries pass you lose discontent.  
I tune in now to what's going on,  
I can't gad about but I receive a lot.

I listened here for many a year,  
rare goings on above.  
The Friar passed on his way to Mass.  
He always paused, a *paidereen*  
for the lump in the ground that is my shroud,  
an anachronism in a Lisquel *fieldeen*.

My little box, it was sepulchral  
'til I cottoned onto the radio molecular.  
For a lad that was raised  
on the axe and blade,  
damned if I haven't conquered the air wave.

I'm up to speed now  
with global matters,  
the dirty wars and the climate patterns.  
The histories of men,  
how they save,  
why they sin,  
come roaring down the wire.

I marvel at nanotechnologies,  
infinitesimal armatures  
cranking doxology,  
the meanest line  
cracks the loudest byte.

The soil around me babbles and  
squeezes, digital signals caught from  
the breezes. The bog was cut  
with a *sléan* and a song, now  
it's the carbon that captures the frequency.  
I'm receiving day and night, all that's  
spewed from the satellite.

I cannot avoid this modern music.  
It fills my hole with a stomping  
light flashing, bog waters mashing,  
helical windmoves thrashing –  
well fuck Edmund Spenser  
and his Faerie Queen,  
I'm the lad who kicks ass  
with the supreme Queen Bey.

I've had my fill of Rachmaninoff  
and Strauss,  
romance never lured me to a *feis*.  
Sad to say I'm no use to Aphrodite,  
stuck for eternity  
with a load of hermaphrodites.

Jacking off  
to the rhythm and the drum.  
Who am I coddling?  
I ain't got no bum.  
I've settled now with BBC4.  
my brain has evolved tho'  
my butt's no more.  
When the world left me,  
I was slung in a sack  
I copped onto *i* cloud  
and the world burst back.

Into my bubble streams  
riots and contagions,  
a whole planet of blather  
on economic malfeasance.  
Soused I am in a new vocabulary,  
fiscal policies fence with  
figure-shot indices.  
Equities balloon, liabilities accrue.  
Dividends, bust and boom.  
Words no longer mint a bond.

The brown bull of Cooley  
chased by Queen Maedbh  
from palace to rivers and plain.  
Held her own against Cuchulainn.  
Bulls outsmarted by bears –  
there's no glory in that tale,  
beasts alloyed of hollow board.

I've had my fill now of algorithm,  
shorting, rigging and quadrillion.  
What's to marvel in the throw of a dice,  
when the lead is weighted with prejudice.  
Favoured few run the world's casino,  
with a to-hell-or-to-hell currency.

Chaya calls me down the wire,  
blistered tongue touches mine,  
long forgotten by life's last breath,  
hers defiled by hunger stealth.  
She tells of shadow under the acacia tree.  
petals stringed and perfumery,  
herding goats and playing *katii*,  
balls of *ugali* dipped in stew.  
A chattering family fills my room.

I hear the noises,  
pop,  
pop-pop.  
The fireballed boom  
shattering earth,  
my lost lungs breathe fear-  
frothing death.

O world, how can you face a  
God and do this thing to  
your people?  
Even the tents made from the  
wattles of destroyed *tigees* were burned.  
No four-footed beast could be saved.

## Google with Cows

the drone swooped  
a silent knows

becomes a swan

out of reads

the Children of Lir  
fey plumage molten



## **Shark**

Could can-  
cer in  
hold  
and first revealed

other fin-  
dings to research  
seas packing  
diseases game

more says  
stability in-  
cluding  
we million

shark  
can't they step  
danger  
she fish and fight

## Nosing in Limbo

George snout and snuffles,  
a metronome tail.  
Hidden music lures his scent.  
The *lisheen* defended by blackthorn sentry,  
Rock strewn, bramble bombed,  
the bloody dog evades pursuit.

Gorge reveals chop cropped trees  
below a narrow passage.  
steep sides hug the bulged ground  
the children's garden weeps  
on the little parcelled pagans.  
Green leaves swaddle the grave.

Ogre spirit pounced on the *óg*,  
A heathen dilemma vexed  
by the Christian unblessing.  
A child not saved for this world  
surrendered to the other.  
A baby soul barred from the next.

Ore mined from this sacred space  
yields a precious measure.  
The price that was paid,  
to protect the saved,  
damned the unweaned.  
No breath. No baptism.

Rage out-rage, other age tragedy.  
Unspoken shifts to forgotten.  
The silent hold their peace,  
the land does not forget its placelings.  
Scattered stones write stories  
with ogham scripted from lore.

Rogue dog, have you no respect,  
scrabbling about in limbo?  
My grandmother's child  
cannot hear your cries  
as you whelp about  
in her playground.

Georgette gowns the heart-froze  
innocents. They lie in  
winding sheets riddled  
in shriven mourning.  
Remember them all  
in their gorgeousness.

## **MotherSlander**

I am the bog who raised  
Curlew, snipe and plover.  
The red grouse calls '*gehback*'.

Hen harrier pursuits  
Country games shoots.  
I am not your mother.

I gave the whorl leaved  
Flora hues, in stained  
Amphora, orange tipped the  
Butterfly in the helloborine.

Wild fires blacken.  
I am not your mother.

I nursed the new borne  
Otters suckled in my  
Brackish waters. Whooper

Swans floating on.  
Wet lands drained.  
I am not your mother.

I am the play mate  
To hare, badger and pine  
Marten, hide and go seek  
In bushes and heath.  
Clubs batter matter.  
I am not your mother

I watch over night.  
Time rustling,  
Pipistrelle squeak,  
Fox tailed sneak.  
My heartlets are wreaked,  
I am not your mother.

I healed war wounds  
Dressed in sphagnum  
Moss. I bathed  
Loved graves with  
Wild blooming heather.  
I am not your mother.

I taught the language  
Of hush and soul space,  
Your clod shod feet  
Danced on my  
burning belly.  
I am not your mother

I saved your breath,  
In my purifying sighs,  
Cured your poisons  
Of toxic stealth,  
Exhaled your health.  
I am not your mother

You flayed me alive,  
Bled me dry,  
Stole my jouled dowries  
Despoiled my sanctity.  
You cannot own me,  
You who have killed your mother.

## Gerard Boate<sup>4</sup>

Dr Gerard Boate, hailed noble genius it's wrote,  
a man astute in surveying for loot, forsooth  
he travelled far (no sight of spar) by glint of groat  
his palimpsest of mean surmise unstained by truth.

The bigness of Ireland did sapientiously impress him  
He waded the Shannon and chatted with Pliny  
Recentered the atlas to reduce the wild Irish  
and marked the Pale from Howth to Killiney.

He busied himself with the superfluous moist  
That smothered the feet and sponged up the bog.  
*'If the retchless Irish would just turn the tap off,  
It would dry up the land for the planter agrarian.*

*Deaf to reason, unthankful, wit – dearth,  
Those most barbourous peoples on earth.'*

---

<sup>4</sup> Dr Gerard Boate was awarded funds for exploration pursuant to the English Act of Parliament 1642 for the 'reduction' of the Irish in Ireland. He published a *Naturall History of Ireland* in 1645 and first arrived in Ireland at the latter end of 1649. He died soon after.

## **Fire Dance**

when fire  
was a horse  
hooves sparking embers  
flickering orange manes  
galloping  
up the chimney  
whinnying  
under floor



## **Wave to the Future.**

1.

In the mountains of the sea  
Only the eye of the wave  
Is watching.

2.

The waves melt along the shore.  
As if their existence never mattered.  
This is how I make up my mind.

3.

This is the place that the rivers flow to  
when they have drowned.  
Their bodies of water disappear.

4.

The wave and the water are one.  
We are killing the ocean.

5.

I swam in the river wild as a child.  
You cannot bathe in the same tide twice  
But I remember the smell of its soul,  
Fragrant and trapped.

6.

Wait for the seventh wave

It sucks the air

Out of every crevice

A raucous noise of welter

The leap

Gambled on the theory

A shot in the dark.

7.

The holiday makers were  
eating ice creams, oblivious to the  
bodies of the drowned children  
stretched out on the beach beyond  
the sandcastles and stray balloons.

8.

Wave approaching nightfall  
We are standing on the shore  
Our boats are caulked with grim incense  
Our lips are drought inured.

9.

Sometimes the illusion of waves  
creates movement in a frozen landscape.

10.

On the pavement there is solid ground  
underfoot, rigid with the expectation  
of the explosive undersea.

11.

Water in a glass coach  
travels along the waveways.

12.

The river is still.  
The waters are rising.

13.

A Welsh island has become a living  
hell for birds. Wading in plastic  
sea pollution.

.

## Song of the CO2.

Chameleon;

Our spotted hearts in the spoor depart

One open day; an incipient child

Cradling.

One awful tone spears the gloom. A lone.

Order plays with the fateful

Come away.

Orotund perturbation fields enchantment

Only;

Concupiscence.

Outer innocence heeds a dissonance. An

Other stolen sleeping

Child.

Orphan betrays the sunken womb

Oiled by the bleeding human

Capture.

Ova spurned in trite hesitation

Occupies evanescent loam.

Cuddle-cling

Origins. Signs bellow sins,

Ordain their natural grace.

Collapsing

Orb, weighted indolence.

Ordinance freighted flippant

Carnivores.

Odorous autophagousic,

Osmic indifference,

Cutover.

Omit action before time runs

Out.

Changelings

Of these

Orchestral manoevrings in the quark.

## Remembering the Leebeens

Our memories like kites soaring up above the trees  
in the forever sky,  
we strain to see them clearly  
and pull and pull to bring them home.  
Leaning out of the upstairs window,  
hanging out flags, the Pentecostal procession,  
yellow gold and green.  
A turquoise painted frame.  
My little red trike.  
Chasing the rat.

My father.

His office.

I was pedalling past.

The tricycle rumbled pleasantly as the wheels rolled across  
a small channel formed in the concrete.  
A brushed finish had stripped off the laitance,  
exposed the aggregate mix,  
created a pebble effect.

As if the path was the bed of a stone  
river and I might see the '*leebeens*'.

The adult world was way  
above, a higher level,  
distant from me.

I was closer to the ground.  
I smelled the rain.  
I saw the desiccated spider,  
tiny wire legs wound around the bobbles of the roughcast wall.

He grabs the shovel from the fireside set.  
The athlete of his younger years resurgent.  
No sign of the assassin creeping though his veins.  
He leaps past me, hurls himself through the hedge.

Shovel raised.  
I don't see him but I feel him.

His shadow,  
His presence scything through the space beside me,  
His being there.

I feel it still.  
Our father.  
As if that space still held something of him.  
A place we shared to make us whole again.  
A place that he passed through.

## You asked me

- You asked me. Don't ask me, you won't like what I say.
- You asked me. Some good, some not so good. A lot not good.
- You asked me. We have been here fifteen years. Still. No one talks to us.
- You asked me. I understand, it's the same in all the countries. We came here.  
I understand.  
  
Then, when we go home, they say we are not like them.  
Anymore.  
  
Where do we go?
- You asked me. Here is my stability. There is my soul.
- I ask you. Why does nobody want to talk with us.
- I ask you. Why does nobody talk about life.
- I ask you. I listen to the talk of cows and hundred weights. I talk about  
football. But nobody talks about things. Next day, I am  
nobody again.  
A not here person.
- I ask you. Why does nobody knock on my door?
- You asked me. Look at that big wall. I look out the window. I feel, I am in  
a prison. That's the truth. A prison. Work. Home. Work.  
Wall.
- You asked me. Everyone wants to be private. In their own box. A private  
box.  
I understand.
- You asked me. We find it hard. It is not what we are used to. At home,  
everyone wants to talk. To share their problem.



To help each other. You don't have to ask.  
I understand it is different here.

But we find it hard.

You asked me. I don't want to talk about the weather.  
That. Is not talking.

I want to talk as a friend.  
That is what friends do.  
They talk.

I ask you. You came and talked to me.  
There is no problem.  
We know.  
We are friends.

I ask you. A man came in. He looked around. He  
saw the three of us and he shouted.  
'Oh God, it's all furriners in here.'  
I said,  
(I made a little joke),  
'Oh but I am a good foreigner.'  
But I was hurt.

I ask you. Why did he say that?

You asked me.

I ask you.

Asked me.

Ask you.

Me.

You.

## Galaxy for Mary (1)

### 1. Beathaíocht<sup>5</sup> / Poverty & Disaster

The moon is my window in the Funshinagh night,  
When no one was watching, I stole through it.  
A ditch is no home for a little girl of two.

### 2. Páistí<sup>6</sup> / Food

The monster in your fear-shot  
Mindset, growls in my tummy.  
The walls of my stomach  
Are the walls of a grave –  
yard waiting,  
*Chocolātl.*  
Oranges.  
Green provision.  
Come quickly.  
Save us.

---

<sup>5</sup> The means of being alive.

<sup>6</sup> Children

### 3. Urrúntacht<sup>7</sup> / Healthy lives & well being

My sister Nell, gurgles, curls and amber  
A giant step in a test tube breadth  
Did not save her from the shakes-kill-fever.  
Fifty years furthered wondrous remedies,  
Whitey still just looking at the moon.

### 4. Eirimiúlacht<sup>8</sup> / Education

My grandson took my infant steps  
And leaped into infinity.  
Every denied child is a genius in waiting  
Every denied child could be me.

### 5. Réabhlòid<sup>9</sup> / Gender Equality

If I had been my grandson  
I wouldn't have been in the room  
Don't turn your head,  
Open doors.

---

<sup>7</sup> Robustness

<sup>8</sup> Spirited intelligence

<sup>9</sup> Revolution

6. Dualgas<sup>10</sup> / Water

No water on the moon,  
The real dirt is in the words.  
Wounds can be cleansed.  
Dirt grows into trees.

7. Iontachais<sup>11</sup> / Modern energy

Nanoscience is nonsense, written in reverse.  
Analogue is gibbersish. Digital is worse.

8. Cothrom na Féinne<sup>12</sup> / Sustainable economic growth

Decent work, decent lives,  
Indecent lies work denies.  
A trap it is to punch the needy  
Into the sprockets of exigency.

9. Samhaidánach<sup>13</sup> / Innovation

The view up here is of cosmic generality  
Inner space takes you out of this world  
Lighten up and share the load  
Travellers brave the undiscovered lands.

---

<sup>10</sup> Natural rights or dues

<sup>11</sup> Wonderment

<sup>12</sup> Equality based on chivalric principles

<sup>13</sup> Druidic power of foretelling destiny through imaginations.

10. Meitheal<sup>14</sup>/ Income inequality

My voice is coloured melodious  
My flesh is toned as seraphim  
My faith is your faith in my human equity  
Beyond gravity is our innate symmetry.

11. Aitheantas<sup>15</sup> / Cities & Slums

Streets are paved with averted eyes  
Out of sight out of mind the gap  
box people into a ghetto  
bang a nail in their coffin

12. Tuilleadh<sup>16</sup> / Sustainable consumption

If the moon was really made of cheese  
Would we still  
be gnawing the legs off the earth

---

<sup>14</sup> Gathering in the sense of the power of the collective

<sup>15</sup> Familiar places and neighbourhoods

<sup>16</sup> Sufficiency

13. Oidhreach<sup>17</sup> / Climate Crisis

Fragile is a borrowed word  
You pronounce it with your teeth  
And when the world is breaking up  
Gravity bites down on the grief.

14. Níthe neamhaí<sup>18</sup> / Oceans acidity

The bog is a hero to the ocean  
It breathes in all the crap we burn  
And cleans out its fishy lungs  
If we don't stop milling peat  
Our children will turn blue.

15. Leabharlann<sup>19</sup> / Eco -systems

I ooze symphonies said the piano to the drum  
The bittern boomed from his stolen nest

16. Oireachtas<sup>20</sup> / Inclusive Societies

Asylum is not for seeking  
it is a shelter  
Refuge is the presence  
Of willing souls.

---

<sup>17</sup> Inheritance

<sup>18</sup> Heavenly creatures

<sup>19</sup> Library

<sup>20</sup> Governance

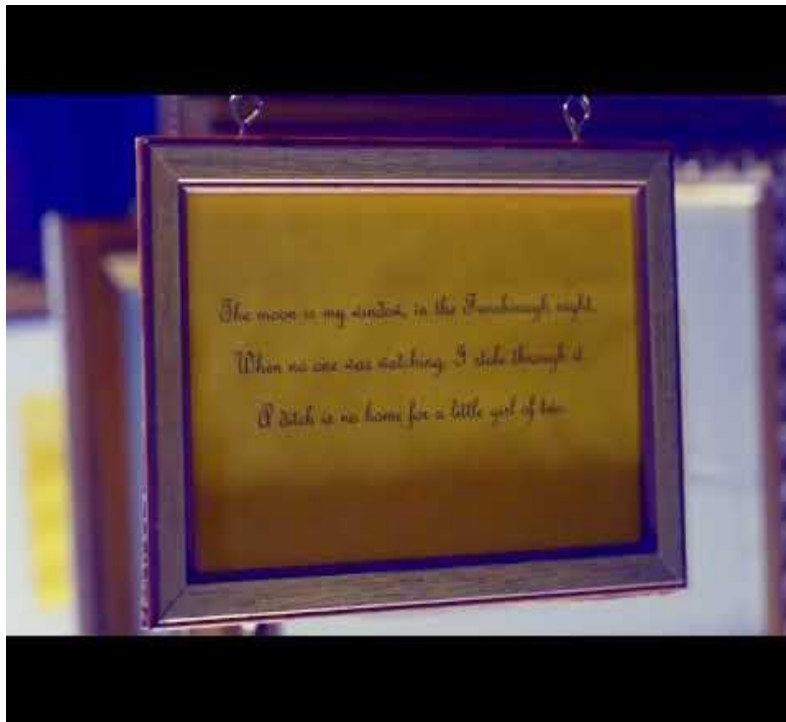
## 17. Forógracht<sup>21</sup> / Global Partnerships

Sometimes we humans  
Forget what we are worth –  
The mirror is alive.

---

<sup>21</sup> Public Declaration / Manifesto

## Galaxy for Mary (2)



[\[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IaJQ4sK1G4o\]](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IaJQ4sK1G4o)



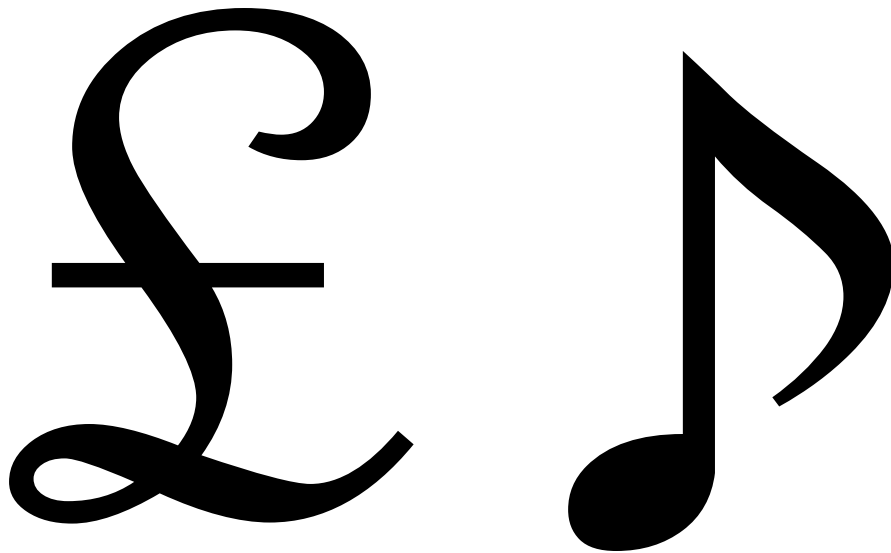
## BOGBOT (1)



BogbathBogwholeBognaciousBogontherunBogo'myheartBogouroborusBogduc  
ktowaterTéighgobogéBogbehindusBogfritillaryBoggyIhardlyknewyouBogalong  
BogbreathBogoreBogloreBoggoleorBogrhythmicalBoginimicalBogbundleBogl  
oveBogteaBogtayBogstayedBogastrayBogastronomyBogteenyearsagoBoghous  
eBoggobletBogunctiousBogmenBogrosaryForthebogBogbutterBogtasmagorical  
BogquestionableBogtalesBogfrogBogveritableBogoakBogarseBogverityBognu  
mbereddaysBogartisteBogiversityBogwaysBogonomyBognoughtBogtothefuture  
BoggardaBognautBogtrociousBogaloofBeeBogbaneBogtrotterBe,O,Gbogbanter  
BogbragadociousLookingatyoubogBogalotBogtropeBogstociousBogwindowBo  
gpógBogwhitherBogmemoryBogdreamsBoggirls&BogboysBogofmycradledays  
BogwhenceTóggobogéBogwhereBoginmyeyeShotinthebogBogthereBoggalore  
BaggottsbogBoginmyeyeBogotherworldExtremebogBogstrippedBogstriatedBo  
gboundaryBogoutwestBogcolouredBogratBogdramsBogpolemicBogdrainBogm  
ooredAlphabogBoggledeyedBoguisceBogbumLacustrinebogBogiticianBogstrea  
mingBogmahoneBoginfinityBogcommotionPlatonicbogBogtextBogstremitiesB  
ogusBogsequestrationBogsexyBogogcarrotsOncemoreintothebogBogliciousBog  
raciousBogracistBogexcuseBogentrailsBogorationBogostentatiousRoundthehous  
eandmindthedresserbogBogfallaciousMyonlybogottensodBogintraceBoginstin  
ctsBogurinalWhistlinginthebogdowninthevalleyoBogveiledBogviciousBogcarth  
usianBogmintMyunclebogBogsalvationLábogéBogboreholesBogsequinnedSod  
ofturfTherebutforthe grace of bogoIBogextractionBogphiliaBogusDeiBogstandar  
dBogfieldBogdictionBogrightsBoglightsBogleavingsBogcloudsBogsunBoghun  
gersBogburdenedBogdonkeyBogblisteredBoglinguisticBogpartitionBogperditio  
nBogobsolenceBogexhumationBogangelsBoggangBoganxiousBogsuffrageBogf  
ormationBombasticbogBogHopeWhenboggycomesmarchinghomeBogtollThere  
'safireinthebogAmboguitiesBogcongruousFóidínmearaMoonshoneontheBogass

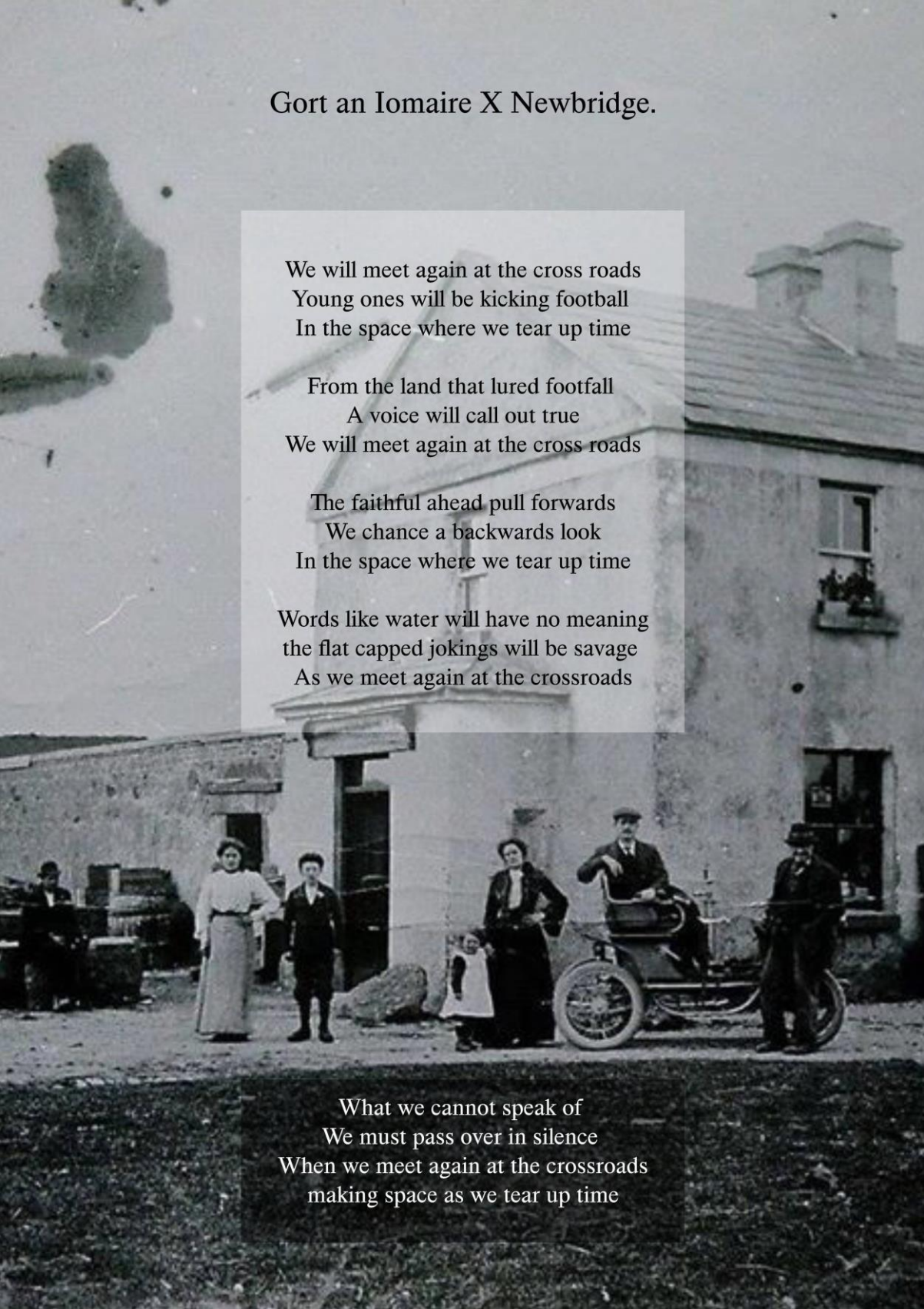


# Emigrants' Letters



## TH' OTHER TOGETHER

Who is my (br)Other?  
Hell(O ther)e to my sister.  
Raftery plucks (an)Other  
tune from hedgerows  
he cannot see.  
echO THE Real  
*(fíor gael)\_*  
*Fad(ó ther)e but*  
Here we are now  
Together  
in other footsteps?



Gort an Iomaire X Newbridge.

We will meet again at the cross roads  
Young ones will be kicking football  
In the space where we tear up time

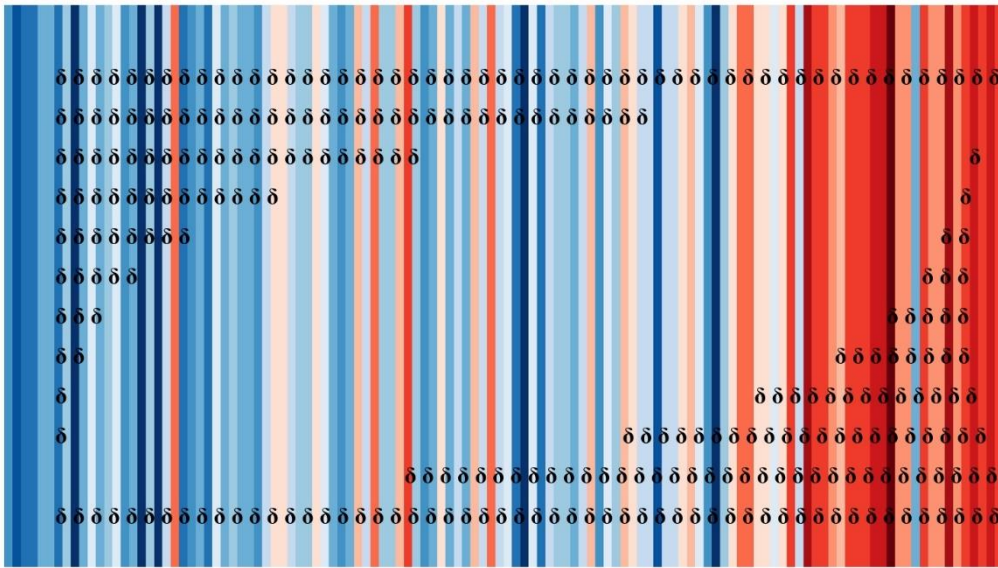
From the land that lured footfall  
A voice will call out true  
We will meet again at the cross roads

The faithful ahead pull forwards  
We chance a backwards look  
In the space where we tear up time

Words like water will have no meaning  
the flat capped jokings will be savage  
As we meet again at the crossroads

What we cannot speak of  
We must pass over in silence  
When we meet again at the crossroads  
making space as we tear up time

# Fearnight Formation



## The LeggyFins of Barney Nolan

Evening sky squint flicker ass crowing  
cracked night fall and *i* slouch down drowned  
in pater beratement. ‘Useless gassoon! Yer  
boustrophedron is bówaysed’ ploughed ridge  
port swayed harrowing narrow shallowed only  
things growing there nettle spuds allday  
making hurray you big galliculaloot.

Pharshnips in profano delictum hailing on my  
buck bent youth. *i* scold away through  
boguntether. A lightning lune finds a bed for  
this croppy bocked where avonshivashiven  
meurges in my heartslake. Deerly *i* was lulled  
to sleep pesturbed at Mont Maree in the  
terroirs of ancient Hibernia by bearetta  
beanishments and pork scratchkings. Ashlings  
summoned to my encampment the queening  
lemures of my country with imprickations to  
feed their black47babby bellies and get to hell  
outtacon aught *i*. Woken by the planets rays *i*  
gazed over the plains to Tuamduoghoolin to

saw the sun rolling over our saintstoned bed  
and *i* heard croak Padraig.

The Call.

The Call.

Then did *i* rise and follow on the march of  
men like me from every mud wailed cabin in  
the wesht. Reising to answer the  
confabulateous call, *i* was jostleapostledd and  
thresholdedustled in the throngs escaping the  
hardwon republiscant freedoms of their  
hireling status. Nomads of the Hymany  
steppes we roddymacorlied along the banks of  
the Sionnan to our Duoma.

Wee brigadooers,

we belly men, we sons of Saul,	we
lepers of hoipolloipalaver,	we
sinewed sinerood shunnerùd,	we
chaff of Saturn, we felledovelysium,	we
lucked shaweh,	we
creatures of the children of the deadend,	we
pratypickin refuseniks,	we



callowcalloused striplings,	we
curlewheard quiaudets,	we
plangents de compagne,	we
mammturkedmarmaluks,	we
horseless chevaliers,	sumus

up and onward.

Hierosing shouts from the mouth of the ford,  
 perigliuous waters turned me round to  
 rebelhold that bearnagaol that never yet  
 a living person left.

But

(we beggarmen do not count and cannot vote)

my boglocked bondage *i* disregordioned to  
 break the plough and shoese the stars so that  
 the firm foot was ever lower. Forshure's  
 mename is Barney goodbye  
 emilemursheendurkheim anomie.

Ad four roads the way levade a panther in  
 the sternum. A pietyless moon rimed the  
 larries and marys and penuriates. Bould as  
 a brash manqui came a pine marten into my  
 viasage. Many times *i* turned to look  
 back over the plains of my retreat afeared

by that catcrainncraning.

A lone as tro naught *i* skimmed over the  
waves of the moon a lying raised good  
hope to stretch my legs to the royal lake  
of the Shannon. Here beauteous things,  
cygnificant and XXX dived down from the  
skies onto the quincunxed castell of  
Rinndoon. Without any fosse our gang  
slummed in the runes of Norman burgess  
banditry nurtureruddered to omphalic  
Hiberniae innochescent et coeurageous.  
Aubadacious waked *i*.

Tachybaptus ruficollis

weet-weet-weet grioting the mandibled  
ambolutions of we baconstarved squadrons.

A hod golden and mystic rose from the lake,  
clothed in white cement,

glorybetogaudus and windrush.

Gathering our fellas *i*, Barneevere, seized  
the hod and hurlemented them towards  
our promised dam.

Footsteps.

We followed on

the spinners and sedgers, the reedcutters,  
salmon snatchers, coracle weavers, egg  
stealers, hermit learned screevers,  
corrèisced divers, periplus Angevins, Viking  
quivivers, echoFaolan  
of hidden Fiannians.

Apprynouse others will come. Astronomers.  
Duckshooetrs. Kayakers. Motor Cruisers.  
BordnaMona bog scraper and chewers.  
Ecological ollagóiners. Piscatorial harpooners.  
Birdwatching régisseurs.

Our mudsucked footprints along the river  
boundary will be cartographed in fettered  
Frongoch fablings robbin' son from  
imprisonment a Mandelbrot set.

Through the reccoNiled tirscape,  
we jousted with dragon breathing cloud bursts.  
Wading the shallows.

Fighting coelacanthic pike.

Burning under an Osirian sun.

We were ferocious and Herodotus.

In onward trajection. Our

grailgueule                      drew us on with  
batrakhomancy.      No backtracking. (A Ciseroan warning that  
there is within frogs a kind of natural force for giving signs sufficiently clear in itself but too dark for human consumption.)

We freed oursealbhs from Norman lures to  
drift shshshoallin amoseselong fractal  
shores      not beasts of land      or  
gulptering things of the forriver      but  
chased and poire      we cumulonimble und  
er a skirtled sky      whair      sparegirls teased  
with hir comeherely looks      and  
coort the maneatered us.

    Dearbydearme dareus Darby.  
    Shut the door Sliotar.  
    Bearmaneen Barney.  
    Silverskeined.  
Sirensourired.              Laughinggilled.  
    Bogcheeked.  
    Coquettenemaquitte.  
Diaphanous désir engouffrerds.  
Hybrideogues calling us home.  
    Stille. Stello. We marched on.

Me and Darby Quinn and Sliotar Ward.  
We marched ahead.  
A head.  
A leg.  
A Scythe.

*(the Connacht/North men meet with the men from the province of Munster. all are making their way towards the recruitment station in Limerick. to celebrate their fellowship they engage in the tradition of faction-fighting. a matter of contention is required to begin the fight. does the river belong to the province of Connaught or the province of Munster?  
after a bloody and no-holds barred bout of mass fisticuffs the exhausted men lie down but no winner is declared. As the bishop says 'in the nobility of mind and the power of their arms I positively attest that they excel others' O Fehily Archbishop. In the Metaphysics of Scotus.)*

The Poetic Contention of the River Shannon

Taig The Robber Egan breathes down on these chutzpahsitions  
No fairer judge than one schooled in Parnasspugilism  
Inversions of estuaries and melodious judgements  
Clever voiced contestants, Usillyobrian and puertyge Higgins.

No judge ever declaired himself short of expositions  
Story spieling of both sides poignant tintinnabulations  
Meanderthall tales, tricksters distracted,  
Schooner et legislator debayted the Sinnanon.

To begun in these begunnerwrongs in fluvial lays  
The headhoncho of Munster was tennysonged honeyed  
praesidium hymmed up to his beck passage  
the whole of the Shannon wassaille Brian Borrowrood

don't be ptolemying such an inchoate lien  
rapposted tonnerthunnd Thighiggens  
darling of the muses, verbigracious he named  
Shannon of the Conn of the Hundred Battles.

Hey Patrick vossibopping on dope Slieve Mish  
Yo ballyhoo Bri he fired up the balls of Kish  
Our bro C played it cool with all the shrines  
Our homie holds the rivver, he got all da rhymes.

Niverthelessismohr circling Shannon  
Brian burrowbude Veronica beccabuga  
Longknived the Scandilahirsutavians  
Hirlas and thair, shot off like a skalded chit.

I shall sexy not be in the twice for this judgement  
It is pleading for an illustriouys king of Munster  
Who wittgonesteined the Shannon on the heels  
Of the eels of the stoneybattered

Baldpated Shokkolin great prince of Fobhar  
Salmon slasher extraordinaire  
Found in the gutted fish an eterbelly precious stone.  
Olav O’laugh MacBoatface spun the bottell

Brian’s lot got to keep the jewel and the fish  
Lead a Norse to water to con naught Sinonnus  
Consmen were left hirlas et terre with the baying of hounds  
This ruling is citing here for precedent.

Get oatha thoth sed Taigatwoshouldered  
Our Haf of this kingdomphilip wont sullivanbearthat  
birthed, baptised, salmonified and ceolified this river,  
that railing is outcited here for posterriment.

The biiugisitric judgglement was usyleuss  
Connaught lost their territory to the Normans  
Dearnad MacSodhim maliciously brought in foureigners  
Fish and birds conciel stories in stones

## The Island

*Ex divi Senani sepulchro quod in Iniscathacha insula ad Urbis Lomnachae portum est, qui lapillum gerat, hunc non esse aquis obruendum modo de divina fide bene sentiat, creditor,*

From the seplulchre of St Senan I ate of a pebble to deposit in Limerick City in the divine commode. No water will drown the hunk that eats of a pebble of the sepulchre of St Senan.

Archbishop Maurice O Fehilly of Tuam ‘places in which corpses melt away on the spot and others in which they remain forever undamaged’ ‘*sunt alia loca, in quibus cadavera illico resolvuntur; et alia in quibus perpetuo manent illasa*’

*Loca mirabilia. Mures ubi non? Nullos in Armagh. Vermes ubi non? Spero telluris finibus esse sacrae.*



## The Human

*i* signed my Barney Nolan name as good  
alphabetter than two thousand and ninety nine  
others.

With all the clouts *i* got in school,  
my calligraphy stood out proud and pangurbaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaan.  
Moving fingers writ and moving on.

We less picturesque people  
kettled and canaanites  
poetry made of our porthery  
from the widdershinned fiat  
of scabbed hegemony.

We strike for 'dayscent wages'  
more in the packet than will fill my pipe  
the rent and the pint and the money home.

### *32 Bob. A Bea(u)tiful Job*

*Sheeny Scheiny Foil*

*Attaw figall at earning*

*Beeing do 'our slewer*

*Hard tóin they gave to us*

*Fake ways faux free*

*Sham cheer or giornata fasting*

*Knee awed fooled by heroes and by peer*

*I knocked and hailed this barney jail*

*leg h'and ore mined, Con boys no steal*

*lagoon escaped, toree laving nah be lair*

*shove yor taxman, 32bob sings navy mien.*

Ah the weshts awake and macgillicuddy creaks here's up the Ballygar Brigade  
and oneout allout but never in with a chance after all that splitshoesurtoe hurling  
long marchaperilmayjeune. Sighned up. Scuttled for less.

Alcoherently. Gossiple truth. Porthery.

Dockuments and chicken sheds.

*i* stole a chicken. *i* called her schNellie. Festina lente.

The Voice of Labour.

Walking on duck boards

Lined up for the photo,  
the government minister.

Building the line from Longpavement to Parteen

Tied to the wheels of industry.

we slavourating over bacon on a shovel

'they put on the kettle and they all had tea'

Wrecking mien.

The muck freezes my boots into hooves

*i* left my jokes with ox and plough

and strode

to the raging waters of Ardnacrusha.

*i*.

A noble peasant.

Made epochal in

the hammer of the pile driver.

Men on a mission manumission.

Miserunt sunt.

## The Machine

And here is the wreckchordings of hysterory:

*That was a time of hope and parenthesis. A time of peasants and genesis.*

*Rural Ireland strode out of the shadows, grabbing the Shannon.*

*This stupendous scheme, turbines and spillways, a defiant statement,*

*History recast by scientific acceleration; power forged from water.*

*Three thousand men marched on Parteen, scraping their boots on British costume, to build the dam for the promise of honest sweat and fair wages.*

*Lathe and anvil strangled stillness, steel shod rail pinioned the wilderness*

*Bucket and dragline in ceaseless weave shuttling the soil, shovel hammered*

*through stiff limbed day into candlelight. Keating painted the momentous*

*scene, hod-boned Fir Bolg feeding the carnivorous machine; Ireland's dream.*

*Plate and racket, drive and hum, the walls rose for the river run.*

*Uilephéist enraged, a demon calulus outwits engineers.*

*Cubits measured, timed and ledgered, sand flows*

*sums wont, cut and fill envelope.*

*A haze of fumes engulfs the slopes,*

*the concrete lined barrow emerges triumphant.*

*i left the human race when i punched my clock-on card and walked down into the hole. Me and the gang. We tarataransitioned.*

Numbers. Nonhombres. Geganguber. Exmen.

Not Barney.

Not Sliotar.

Not Darby.

Not Napper Tansey from Molly Cross.

Not Pádraig Fallon. The Lisavruggy hurler.

Not Matthias Murray. Whistler and Box Player.

Not Paddy Kelly who could make a lump of wood laugh.  
Not anything with blood with sinew with soul.

The machine gave orders, made the decisions,  
measured our days.

In the Hole Universe the Machinemachine  
memoiraised                      all movers and shakers,  
    all camings and gearings,  
all debts and interests.

Computations of boulean algo Bradh designed the stricture  
of this stupendous beast. A commodious vicus of recirculation  
excalibrated              the enormoustache              in Parteen.

Gnótably, renowned painters of inestimable draughtmanship  
were commissioned to klepture the  
awesomeness and anawegenuflected more of the  
Machinemachine that featurreted  
a six mouthed stone chompering face,  
three steel sliding fins,  
twenty seven hoe shaped fingers dredging and shovelling,  
one hundred and thirty dragon fuelled hands,  
thirteen external bellowed lungs,  
thirteen stone digesting stomachs,  
eight zenith eyes prowelling,  
three networks of intestines each three hundred and ten metres long,  
one thousand and seven hundred and seventy little toes  
and twenty allovertheplace feet  
all kept magesticulated and victualsated by thirty one slurping  
mandibled tongues.

We the children of the dead end  
we who have possession of the patrimony  
are the heads of rivets,  
the shank of nails,  
the turn of the screws,  
the throat of the weld,  
the clout of a hammer,  
the nips of a wire,  
the bond of a brick,  
the burr on the plate,  
the nut and the bolt.

(Fire at night. Beat that Dante.  
Domine Jesu Christe fili Dei miserere mihi peccatori)

And then we sang.....  
come down from the mountain abdul abulbul ameer I  
dreamt I dwelt in marble halls home james I want to  
taste your irish mountain stew and don't spare the  
horses from the town of ballymuck the west's awake  
the west's awake come into the garden maud to the  
pure crystal fountain are ye right there Michael are  
ye right the unexamined life is not worth living.

SONGSALONG FROM  
THE HOLE



Audio link to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IeXE7xNPre>

# *Songsalong from the Hole.*

A hero when I'm tipsy o  
Did sound its dread tattoo  
And the juice of the barley for me  
I knew my love was dying far across the sea  
Little crooked Paddy from the Tiraloughetts  
Bog, digging ditches, pullin' switches, dodgin' hitches.  
The wind was sighing round the blackthorn tree  
seldom sober, I'm a rover, of high degree  
Is that the great dog you call Master Mac Grath  
Mr. Count Casky-o-Whisky Cigar  
Alas! and well may Erin weep  
Is bhailigh fórsa chun sinn a chlipéadh  
May his cock never crow  
Green grow the rushes, O.  
Little Mickey Mulligan and the pride of Pethravore,  
Offered to take her to Donnybrook Fair,  
And a tool-box on your back.  
I had a large drake and I'd die for his sake.  
He led us on 'gainst the coming soldiers  
I'll dance out my days drinking whiskey galores.  
When I strayed with my love to the pure crystal fountain,  
For it whispers, Darlin' soon I'll fortune win.  
Whack for the Too Rye ooh Ray Lady,  
From Ennis as far as Killee  
I landed on the Liverpool Shore  
To buy her fine ribbons to tie up her hair.  
And the cats and the rats they were playin' peekaboo,  
But to and fro in my dreams I go.  
My babe lies cold within my arms,  
his temples wear horns and all his toes corns.  
And brought the neighbours from far and near  
Abdulla Bulbul Ameer.  
Though lovely and fair as the rose of last summer  
Bad luck to the robber, be he drunk or sober.  
For Father Murphy of County Wexford,  
When boyhood's fire was in my blood  
In eighteen hundred and forty seven  
I'd follow the ship my true love sails in.  
At Vinegar Hill, o'er the Pleasant Slaney  
Thinkin' how to gain my love's company.  
Then the widda' Cafferty steps out and makes her bow,  
My heart play'd duntie, duntie, O.  
Poor Paddy works on the railway  
Sweeps o'er the land like a mighty wave  
The night before Larry was stretched  
But she says in the morning  
I'd kneel and pray for you  
With the toot of the flute.  
While Britannia's Huns, with their long range guns  
Conduroy briches, she says in the morning.  
Do bhuaíl se rop dá adharc sa tóin ann  
Our fetters rent in twain  
And the juice of the barley for me

My false love married should never be  
 Oh, tis sad in Doorus when the tide is low,  
 Goodbye and God be with you says old Johnny Dhú.  
 The West's awake! The West's awake!  
 Fly like a swallow, and swim like a hake.  
 You'll hear the guard sing this refrain  
 Lord Gregory, let me in.  
 The moral my friend of this pitiful end  
 Led by Kelly the boy of Killane.  
 As the sun-flower turns on her god when he sets,  
 In sober hours I am a priest  
 Píce im dhóid is mé ag dul i meithil  
 Let thy loveliness fade as it will  
 Who should I spy but the Spanish Lady  
 Sailing in though the Foggy Dew  
 And the green fields buried 'neath the frost and snow  
 She began to frighten and I said 'boo'.  
 The cowardly yeomen we put to flight  
 Catching a moth in a golden net  
 Bhí garda mór I mBaile an Róistigh,  
 Hoppin' in the middle like a heron on the griddle  
 When you're out on the road with a mighty load  
 My parents they chide me, she sails with the tide.  
 Poor Paddy works on the railway  
 Like fairy gifts fading away  
 But oh it was the banshee, that was crying, crying, crying  
 Here's five thousand to one on Master Mc Grath.  
 Then I prayed I yet might see  
 The juice of the barley for me.  
 From that day to this I have wandered alone  
 Long, long ago in the woods of Gortnamona.  
 I offered to marry and stay by her side,  
 Glory-o, Glory-o to her brave sons who died,  
 who murdered Nell Flaherty's beautiful drake  
 And burned his body upon a rack  
 There's a grave where the waves of the Blue Danube roll  
 Aillití úa an poc ar buile.  
 A rebel hand set the heather blazing  
 And the cuckoo callin' from the woods within.  
 Thy cheek unprofan'd by tear  
 Is plain for all to hear  
 But now my dear sailor is gone far away  
 Whack for the Too Rye, ooh, Rye aye.  
 T'was better to die 'neath an Irish sky  
 Workin' on the railway.  
 Tell me who is that giant with the gold curling hair  
 With the sky for his roof and the earth for his floor?  
 Don't you remember that bight on yon lean hill?  
 Each wish would entwine itself vendantly still.  
 Our heroes vainly stood back to back  
 Till your belly will soon get slack  
 I read of ancient freemen  
 My darling dear do you lie alaine  
 Which I mean to imply you're going to die  
 Are ye right there Michael, are ye right?  
 The Sultan drove by in a wide open fly  
 Faith then Mick it's you that has agility  
 He courted me strongly by day and by night  
 But foremost of all in that grim gap of death.

I'm a jack of all trades and master of no  
 The brown boats are stealin' to the sunset shore  
 Bur dedad in old Ireland there's good men and dogs  
 Sullivan's John you won't stick it long  
 Once I was courted by a brave sailor lad  
 John Kelly the boy from Killane  
 The flower of Ardmagullion and the pride of Pethravore  
 Is Ivan Potschjinski Skidar.  
 No fife did hum nor battle drum  
 But none, so reckless of life and of limb  
 Brushing her hair in the broad daylight  
 May his goat fly away like an old paper kite.  
 Singing bairne na mbó ar na gambna  
 The first token that passed between you and me.  
 Oh the happy summers will come back once more  
 And the twiddle of the fiddle-o.  
 Once I was carefree and a brave sailor lad,  
 For slavery fled, O glorious dead.  
 Of all the trad's that's going, sure begging is the best  
 Long live the Republic, says Master Mc Grath.  
 Until some dirty savage, to grease his white cabbage  
 Flutter my wings o'er her lily white breast.  
 The beautiful Miss Bradys in a private ass and cart  
 In another fight for the Green again.  
 So ye might now Michael, so ye might  
 Washing her feet by the candlelight.  
 Singing bairne na mbó ar na gambna  
 The rains falls on my heavy locks, the dew wets my skin.  
 He jumped on her back and held up his ould paw,  
 Spurred up the runks with a warning cry  
 S'dá bhriste ma do dhéin sé giobail  
 she murmurs so sadly in sleep.  
 Me belly was empty, me hands were rough  
 'neath the shroud of the foggy dew  
 Sing! Oh Hurrah! Let England quake  
 The monster that murdered Nell Flaherty's Drake.  
 And poor Wexford stripped naked, hung high on a cross  
 Only make the piper play, 'the hare was in the com' .  
 In the top rigin' I will there build my nest  
 My darling dear do you lie alaine?  
 The fire's all naked and out goes the light,  
 Do you think that we'll be there before the night?  
 I am a little beggarman and begging I have been  
 Up by the Gloucester Diamond, back by Napper Tandy's House.  
 You hear the raindrops creeping through the blackthorn tree  
 Brave Father Murphy, open heaven to all your men.  
 Stuff that up your nostrils says Master Mc Grath.  
 And a drunken old midwife went tipsy with joy.  
 May his pig never grunt, may his cat never hunt  
 Ailliliú, tí an puc ar buile.  
 And the world did gaze, in deep amaze.  
 Daniel O Connell, he was alive and workin' on the rail.  
 Goodly news, goodly news do I bring youth of Forth  
 The lasses they hae wimble bores  
 And on it in characters clear  
 A nation once again.



## The Emigration

Fierce and uproarious was the ditchdigging of the Mucklachs and at the outfalling to the river the mighty Shannon serpent rose up to counter the throttle tusked boar. Took full advantage of this zoophyting and made my eelheeled escape down the headrace channel. Surfing high on the surging *uilephéist*, *i* waved tara to the sweated wage thus proving Bearnoulli's principle of the relation of the speed of a worm to changes of preysure. Water! What a game for builders. Throwing shapes on the big kahuna when the giant penstocks promeviserated turbine mincing and transformaction but the bradanblistered fingered saved my brayconning to slalmon pass. Looking back to an Aughrimed horserhymed sky *i* saw writ in the field of stares

'Barney is the name. Barney is the dam.'  
The Shannonicity of my nexus as a tesseract.

A young lad washed up in Hlymreur  
Surprising a bishop and lemur  
His eminence did commend  
To his heterodont friend  
An eel with buttock and femur.

Riprap rapparee spurned the bollylimbnies and Lorelei obitchery to ketch the thighdaliliad wave out of the westuarine gate.

Hold on to your hydrology. This is going to be a weil ride. Out of the citadel sewerred quays into the jihad and llurguniwrestling of stonemen rucks. My clapotiscuttlingcoracle nimrodly winds the channel out of the bight of terror. Cockcrow! Skim the Hole. Aft Ballast. Fathom Kippen. Lower Flagstaff. Crawcawcawcaw For'ard.

Shawn-a-Garra, Whelps. Scarletts. Run! Hogshead Ahead. Veer Slate.  
Buoybuoy Bunratty. Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard.  
Azimutherring me rosemaries. Rudderling the rogue gleiteog. Shoals  
and spars. Spits and channels. Scatterying me bones on the  
Senanisland. All things have rest and ripen toward the grave.

The holy lowly nun Saint Cannerra, a littoral mètrecalle exhumed the  
brinybarneyburrow. Pitching up me chord trousers. The chorionic  
songs of the turnipeaters waved me away from the land where all  
things seemed the same.

When Irish miles are smiling. That Laplace equusensation.

Seahorses bore me way out to the Atlantic ocean.  
Pyrate Grainne wailing remembermeremeberme.

*i didonot.*



## Glossary:

Translations and interpretations determined by the author.

(No dictionaries were endangered in this poetry.)

*an fóidín meara*: overtaken by imagination as one is out for a walk

*feis*: a festival of dance and music.

*fieldeen*: similarly, a small or inconsequential field.

for n'inst: also forn'inst, a colloquialism for the preposition 'before'. Associated with the parish of Killyan and the Cruffon area.

*gaisce mór*: *gaisce* are notable deeds of battle, *mór* means big or great.

*katii*: a popular ball game for children originated in Kenya.

*leebeens*: Ballygar colloquialism for minnows.

*lisheen*: is anglicized form of *liosín* meaning small *lios*. A *lios* is a term for a ringfort in Ireland, traditionally believed to be a dwelling place for the fairy folk, *an slua sidhe*. The Catholic Church forbade the burial of the unbaptised in its graveyards and neonatal dead babies were usually buried in a *lios*. This practice continued in the Ballygar area until the 1960's.

*loy*: a long heavy handled spade with narrow blade for hard digging.

*meitheal*: everyone piles in to help a neighbour

*óg*: meaning young or the young people.

*paidereen* : also *paidirín*, *paidir* is a prayer. the suffix -een or -ín denotes the diminutive ie a little or quick prayer.

*sléan*: long handled implement used to cut out and shape sods of peat

*tigeens*: literally means little houses in Gaelic.

*ugali*: a porridge made from maize, basic foodstuff in East Africa.

*leebeens*: Ballygar colloquialism for minnows.



# ‘The Rhythms Arrhythmic’

Exegesis

## Exegesis: The Rhythms Arrhythmic

*'the concrete poet is concerned with making an object to be perceived rather than read'*<sup>22</sup>

### Invitation to the Research Project.

The writing of *i/Bog*, my poetry collection, is an exposition of the relationship between our human world and the natural world. It is set out as an emotional paradigm to both counter and illuminate the scientific reports on environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity and climate change.

We need to look in the creative space to understand loss, legacy, and the imperative to restore harmony in the great cycles of the planet.

Figures that tell us of carbon dioxide emissions levels, elevations of sea temperature, species at risk of extinction can be crisp and quantifiable but compete with a welter of data and definitions that obscure meaningfulness. I propose that we need to move beyond the horizon of an understanding formed by tangible evidence into an awareness that speaks to our urgency of being.

Humans are inspired by stories; a narrative thread gives both a satisfying logical comprehension and sense of security. When we challenge ourselves to move beyond meaning and listen to our senses then we can understand how we can and must redefine our relationship with nature from exploitation to safeguarding. A spiritual space emerges that invites us to merge with the rhythm of the planet and elicit a response that is imaginative and intuitive.

'Sustainable development' is the language of policy, but these words, in both sound and meaning do not fire up passion. It is the term coined by science to limit human use of the earth's resources within a framework that protects all habitats and species. As a regeneration practitioner, I encountered the phrase 'putting things back'. This was a phrase that emerged in a vox-pop interview as an everyday understanding of the concept. I found it was a far more

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<sup>22</sup> Solt, M. E. (1968). Introduction. In Solt, M.E.(Ed) '*Concrete Poetry: A World View*' (p2) Indiana University Press

compelling expression than sustainable development in public meetings. This collection is thus my contribution to the global concerted effort of ‘putting things back.’

The writing works its way through this space with an obligation to address two key questions. How do we mediate our relationship with the natural world? How do we acknowledge the existential threat facing nature and by extension human life?

Poetry offers a language and a sensory experience that exists in a sphere separate to scientific evidence. Language becomes jargon when we focus on meaning and its precisions. Poetry restores to language a power that is aural and visual as well as verbal.

My collection is rooted in a creative arena that explores mourning and loss in terms of landscape change and ecological destruction; it excavates history and heritage to cast a contemporary eye on the conversations, contradictions and aspirations of citizen migrations.

In the title, the term ‘arrhythmia’ is borrowed from the medical dictionary. It is the condition, related to the heart's rhythm, that is controlled by electrical signals. An arrhythmia is an abnormality of the heart's rhythm. It may beat too slowly, too quickly, or irregularly. These abnormalities range from a minor inconvenience or discomfort to a potentially fatal problem.<sup>23</sup> I decided on this title to present the collection with a sense of the duality, of tethering my creative writing as a poet to the contemporary debate on our efforts to tackle the climate crisis.

#### Commissioning terms of the research

The original proposal for this project submitted to the university of Swansea is set out below:

***‘How can concrete poetry seek out new energies and avail of the digital world to explore the vocabulary of shape and space in poetry and speak to modern audiences?’***

This project is a creative exploration and response to the great global challenge of climate change through the medium of poetry. It is composed of three parts, namely, a research-based thesis, a community based cultural initiative and a poetry collection that collectively address these questions:

1. How can poetry penetrate the complex world of climate change and global migration to create a space for thoughtful reflection and novel insights that create new bonds between the individual and their hinterland?

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<sup>23</sup> National Health Service UK. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/arrhythmia/> accessed 17/11/2021



2. How can poetry create a distinctive voice that transcends the noise of other information media and be simultaneously capable of conveying complexity as well as clearly intelligible to people of diverse backgrounds and cultures?
3. Is it possible to develop and innovate digital tools, (borrowing from architecture & engineering)?
4. How did shape patterns develop in poetry and how can we reconsider concrete poetry for 21<sup>st</sup> century revolutions? Is the mainstream publishing world averse to new poetry just as Stalin killed off the Russian avant-garde? Are there any commercial opportunities to 'save' new poetry from elitism?

The cultural initiative is taking place in a rural community in Galway and will result in a compendium of poetry that transcends boundaries and articulates a community sense of place, loss and potential.

The poetry collection will occupy a hinterland, named the Shiven Arc by this project. It retains a playful and fantastical folkloric tradition, but as it yearns backwards for its people lost to emigration through the centuries of oppression can it now look forward to communities replenished by incomers globally displaced by climate change?

### Introducing *i/Bog: Bog underStanding*

The title of the collection is a composite of mathematical symbol and word, chosen to create a simplicity of expression as well as a degree of intrigue. In mathematics, *i* is iota, denoting imaginary numbers, not to be confused with the colloquial saying, 'I couldn't give an iota', denoting complete indifference. *i* mathematics creates a realm of illusionary dimension and vector, whose sole function is to create an elegant balance in solving quadratic equations and extend the plane of applying numerical logic deep into the complex world of nanophysics.

The original envisaged title, *The Bridges Abridged*, was discarded as the writing focus settled on the idea of boglands as an essential life force, the heart and lungs of a landscape breathing in and storing carbon. As mathematicians, the ultimate purveyors of logic and quantum, can suspend disbelief to create the imaginary realm of *i* in pursuit of deeper knowledge, so my writing invites the reader/viewer to engage with it imaginatively to experience the wounds of the world. The shorter form term 'bog' is used instead of boglands.

In Gaelic, *bog* means soft, the term 'boglands' is a hybrid broadly cognate with peatlands. Bog is a more affable term, it is used affectionately or pejoratively in ways

bordering on the anthropomorphic, with conversational exchanges on the state of the bog being overwhelmingly female gendered.<sup>24</sup> An agglomeration of zen and zeolite enlightens the pore space with the strange and numinous light of older days.

Historically, the Gaelic word *Bog* was adopted by monoglot English settlers in Ireland and repurposed as the nomenclature for the vast tracts of water-logged, swallow-holed, banshee-infested lands, thus welding together codology and geology. The *bog trotters* was a racist epithet, favoured by Punch magazine in its nineteenth century cartoons, to depict the Irish peasants as devil tailed, hooped and lazy indigents kept alive by the grace of the Empire's generosity.

The 'bog' in this title is then, both the vital organ of the planet that harvests and stores carbon, as well as a memory bank of impenetrable depth burbling with song, sound, and story. The supplementary title, *Bog underStanding*, is an elucidation of the mark '/', that positions the bog beneath the imaginary and elusive *i*. The notation /, represents the numerical operation of division in mathematics and gives a vertical component to the graphic layout. This is a statement of intent for the collection to present itself in a range of concrete as well as traditional forms.

### Constructing the world of *i/Bog*

The collection is composed of four longer poems with several shorter and short form poems. These main poems construct the *i/Bog* bioverse, through the axes created by the Soldier, Mary, Barney, and Honoria on their individual journeys of flight, through worlds that hinder, shelter, haunt and humour them. The Cartesian system of interpreting space defines position in terms of origin and movement along the perpendicular axes of the horizontal (*x*), the vertical (*y*) and the orthogonal (*z*). Maths physics extends these interpretations into the imaginary world along the axes of *ix*, *iy* and *iz*. They are all travellers in some form notionally along these planes.

Barney, the economic migrant, is searching for an escape from poverty and ignominy and his path is associated with *y*, allowing him to move out of Ireland and venture across the globe. Honoria, is denied the escape of migration, she is condemned to be trapped along the *x* axis bounded by class and colonialism. Mary, is also a migrant, seeking refuge from poverty and persecution. Her path has taken her along the *y* axis to the USA and now extends into the *iy* axis as a celestial presence in the concrete poem installation, 'Galaxy for Mary'. The

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<sup>24</sup> Seamus Heaney (23 August 1976) RTE Writer in Profile. 'I think of the bog as a feminine Goddess ridden ground, rather like the territory of Ireland.' <https://www.rte.ie/archives/2013>

Soldiereen, is the forced marcher seeking asylum whose journey along the  $x$  axis is foreshortened but he has progressed along the imaginary,  $i$ , direction to live on through his entombment. This conceit of dimensionality is expanded along the orthogonal,  $z$ , axis through the expansion of the collection into digital space.

‘Th’other Together’ is a short film, based around my community poetry project, featuring voices of present-day residents in Ballygar and the refracted voices of the past from local archives. My poem, ‘Honorio’, expands phanopoeically into a film poem. ‘Bogbot’ is a 3D constellation poem brought into being with a graphic writer package. Within this framework, the other shorter pieces are free floating, so that the coherence of the collection is drawn from the overlap and interaction of its themes, forms, and styles.

### Voices of the $i$ /Bog world

The River Shannon, and its tributary river the Shiven, courses through the collection, creating a hinterland of disturbed voices, runèd textures, embedded gestures, and gnomonic silences, that suggest the betrayal of the peatlands and the Celtic rainforests<sup>25</sup> over generations of extraction and despoilation. The ‘Leggyfins of Barney’ poem merges the path of the migrant labourer with the role of the river being transformed into an industrial resource through the building of the Ardnacrusha hydroelectric dam in the nineteen twenties. In that period, this construction ranked in scale and significance alongside the Hoover Dam in Nevada USA, and the Aswan Dam in the lower Nile Valley in Egypt. The loss of habitats for otter, salmon smolt and curlew, the destruction of the fishing bed economy, and the occlusion of the liminal cultures of the summer fields seemed, at that time, a small price to pay for securing a respectable and comfortable life for the citizenry.

There are now moves underway to remove these structures due to the loss of biodiversity and the level of their insignificance in modern power generation. That period of dam construction also saw the beginning of the large-scale harvesting of the peatlands as a fuel for energy generation, and the drainage of the hinterlands to create fodder and grazing fields for sheep and cattle farming. Now it is recognised that both animal farming and peat harvesting are significant contributors to the climate crisis, both through methane emissions and destruction of carbon sinks. However, policies to restore the natural balance through protection of the boglands and reduction of consumption are fiercely contested and viewed as an attack on the viability of rural communities.

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<sup>25</sup> Fogarty, P. (2021) *The Wild Atlantic Rainforest*.’ <https://jwtt.ie/episode-4> accessed 05/02/22

The recent High Court Action in Dublin<sup>26</sup> to prevent flood remediation works in the Shannon is a typical example of the ‘battles’ that have emerged between countryside dwellers and environmental campaigners. The poem is positioned in a place adrift between these polarised views. The narrative arc follows the stretch of the river from source to sea, it also shifts in time across the frames of Celtic mythology, Gaelic culture, and Irish republicanism.

The language twists and turns through dialects, cultures, distortions, and allusions to soak up different conversations along its course without prejudice, distinction, or disdain. The poem is not a solution to the conflict between nature and agriculture but, in summoning up the essence of the river both in spirit and scene, it causes us to reflect on the questionable science of failing to respect the life force of the river bogland ecosystems. This is the systemic theme of the collection, and all the parts flow into this core reflection on how we as humans balance the demands of our lives with our obligations to sustain the planet and protect our fellow creatures.

#### Witnesses and Citizen Scientists

My film-poem ‘Honoriam’ is a companion to my poem, ‘Lady Honoriam’s Path’. A veiled lady peers at the ‘Ballygar Beggarmen’, families evicted by her landlord nephew who are clinging to a precarious existence on the barren boglands. The veneration of the historic struggle for Irish independence is of little merit if we now similarly peer through the TV camera at the plight of our fellow human beings at the mercy of people smugglers on the Calais to Dover route. The film poem does not mirror the text, it reveals the present-day reflections on it. The reader/viewer replaces the lady and now contends with the self-imposed and accepted boundaries of wealth and security that prevents us from sharing the planetary resources with fairness and respect. The images are not a narrative sequence but a series of moving pictures that are allegorical and impressionistic; they surrender to the viewer for interpretation; the final image is disturbing and betokens our relationship with the animal kingdom and creatures of prey.

In my poem ‘The Soldiery’s Song’, we are presented with the voice of a buried soldier from the 17<sup>th</sup> century army of O’Sullivan Beara. Writers, scholars, and historians were consulted and studied to divine authenticity of voice and vitality. The tribal leader, O Sullivan Beara, led his army on the great march of 1601 into escape and exile. His nephew Dom Philip O’Sullivan Beara, a member of the Spanish court, wrote *The Naturall History of Ireland* in

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<sup>26</sup> RTE (2022) <https://www.rte.ie/news/courts/2022/01/14/1273764-flood-relief-dispute-case/> accessed 28/01/22

1625. It is a remarkable compendium of topography, habitats, species, herbal medicine and political history, drawn from memory and remote interviews. More recent publications are scientific analysis of archaeology, agronomy, and social practices but lack the poetry of his emotional evocation of homeland.

It is O’Sullivan Beara’s account of the curlew, *longe volat, pluviam crebro questu praenuitiat*,<sup>27</sup> that breaks through in the poem ‘I am not your mother.’ In his interweaving of phylum and phantasmagoria, the true relationship of man to the environment emerges, not as exploiter or guardian but as a being neurologically and ecologically wired into the global biosphere. This understanding and awareness did not diminish in succeeding generations and is encountered again in the magisterial achievement of the nascent Irish state that undertook a nationwide collection of local geography, folklore, natural medicine, and culture. This archive has now been digitalised and is available for public access online.<sup>28</sup>

The voices of schoolchildren and their family and neighbours in nineteen thirties Ireland, regale us with accounts carefully written in copybooks; a calligraphy of perdurance, calico pinafores and parsimony. They tell of cures for conjunctivitis with whitebush thorns, mysterious poisonings in holy wells, the hideouts of the Ribbonmen insurgents or the exact location of a bush that holds votive offerings. In the community performance for ‘Th’Other Together’ production, the children of the Ballygar Primary School in 2019 read accounts written by their twelve-year-old predecessors of the legendary exploits of Finn Mac Cumhail in the local mountains. This early form of citizen science was both cultural and scientific. It stands in stark contrast to the current hegemonism of the STEM subjects over the Arts & Humanities in the educational system.<sup>29</sup>

Similarly, it is the songs of the working class in 20<sup>th</sup> century Ireland that bring alive the sociological accounts of the cycles of emigration and the economic transformations. I am indebted to the Irish Labour History Association for the detailed accounts of the union negotiations and working conditions of the epoch defining environmental project, the Ardnacrusha Hydroelectric dam. The camaraderie of the construction ‘navvy’ gangs and the practice of collective singing despite harsh working conditions is both Irish and international. The songs may differ but the soundspace is the same from chain gangs to cotton fields and miners’ choirs. The pipe layers and muck shifters knew that the vagus nerve could stimulate

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<sup>27</sup> O Sullivan, D. (Ed & Trans.) (2009) *The Natural History of Ireland by Philip O Sullivan Beara* Cork University Press: Ireland. p144/145 ‘It flies a long way; it foretells rain by a frequent plaintive cry’

<sup>28</sup> Irish Folklore Commission. *The Schools Collection*. (1938/39) <https://www.duchas.ie/en/cbes> accessed 01/02/22

<sup>29</sup> Strauss, V. (2017) *Why we still need to study the humanities in a STEM world* <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2017/10/18/> accessed 28/01/22

the parasympathetic system and relieve the hammering stress of clocking on and off. These neuro-medical insights were not gifted by elite education but drew from an innate awareness of common humanity and biological harmony.

These are the same sound spaces that today resonate with the voices of the thirty-five thousand children slaving in the cobalt mines of the Democratic Republic of Congo<sup>30</sup>. My writing is intended to bear witness to their current plight and not flounder in the shallows of nostalgia and melancholia. If we can travel in the footsteps of our past heroes, then the writing urges us to look for redemption with compassion for the migrant workers of our time.

### The Context of Ecopoetry

The climate crisis theme of the collection sets the writing within the wider field of ecopoetry. Ecopoetry has a wide range of connotations, its diverse forms and styles are recognised as unified around a shared commitment to highlight environmental concerns in imaginative ways.<sup>31</sup> It aligns creative writing with the issues of climate changes caused by the carbon emissions of industrial activity. It distinguishes itself from earlier pastoral poetry and nature poetry in seeking to act on behalf of the planet and to ‘use the poem as a means of resistance, a nonviolent confrontation with the limitation of self in dealing with the crisis so many of us have constituted.’<sup>32</sup>

Over the last twenty years the term ecology has acquired a dual meaning, conveying both the scientific term of biological interdependency and the politicised representation of the natural world. These variations are expressed in manifesto statements on the scope and definition of ecopoetry.<sup>33 34 35 36</sup> There is a more specific question, can poetry itself be ecological? This sits within a space that fuses the application of scientific rigour with the spontaneous energy of creativity. The term ‘ecopoetics’, covers a varied set of compositional tools and techniques, it grounds a poem in the scientific discipline of ecology. There has been a shift away from the earlier emphasis on the poetry paradigmatic as an ecosystem to the role of poetry as an agent within the global climate crisis movement. It is in this latter sense of

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<sup>30</sup> Gordon, J. (2019) *Cobalt: the dark side of a clean future*. <https://www.raconteur.net/corporate-social-responsibility/cobalt-mining-human-rights/> accessed 02/12/21

<sup>31</sup> Carruthers, S. (Ed.) (2022) ‘*Gingko Prize – Ecopoetry Anthology 2021*’ Poetry School, Somerset House Exchange: London

<sup>32</sup> Gander, F., & Kinsella, J. (2012) *Redstart: An ecological poetics*. University of Iowa Press: USA. p.x

<sup>33</sup> Bora, Z. & de Miranda, A. (2002) *Latin American Ecopoetry Manifesto* <https://www.amazonialatitude.com> accessed 22/09/22

<sup>34</sup> Bach, M. (2005) *Manifesto of Italian Ecopoetry* <https://www.ecopoems.altervista.org/manifesto> accessed 22/09/22

<sup>35</sup> Engelhardt, J. (2008) *The Language Habitat: An Ecopoetry Manifesto*. <http://derece.blogspot.com/2008/06/> accessed 22/09/22

<sup>36</sup> Ogbazi, I. & Udah, B. (2021) ECOPOETICS IN NIGERIA: THE LANGUAGE OF NATURE IN THE POETIC METTLE OF CHRISTIAN OTOBOTEKERE In Nigerian Journal of Arts & Humanities (NJA) Vol 1(1) <https://www.nigerianjournalonline.com> accessed 22/09/22

ecopoetry that I place this collection.

My writing addresses our relationship with the planet with no greater need to adopt an eco-poetic form than love poetry needs to be determined by the sonnet. My stance is to consider environmental, social, and political issues as an integrated topic. After a long career in environmental regeneration, I have seen the perils of failing to maintain an outlook on competing priorities. In short, if you cannot tell the whole story, you will alienate the audience.

The act of walking was integral to the writing process. There were treks, hikes, scrambles, midge onslaughts and unexpected river crossings. Getting lost with no bearings, no sound of road traffic, no forward path and no useful advice from a GPS app were all stimulants for my creative process. The endless stumblings through corncrake fled fields, under the cloud questioning skies of Ormond and the urgent ‘get to the car before dark’ trek to Portumna, all yielded to a sense of the traveller, that omphalic sense that at the end of an invisible rope there will be a place of welcome, a place of home.

Walking heightens the sense of space and just as the foot marks out the step, so the metrical foot marks the progress of the poem. Walking itself is a carbon neutral activity, every stamp of the shoe renews our bond with the motion of the plant and reverberates with the promise of our mutually bound destiny. The overall trajectory of this work is to explore the natural and the numinous worlds, to make sense of how our past activities have brought us to the precipice of disaster as well as find guidance on restoring equilibrium. For we are now both custodians and destroyers of the planet who have failed to heed our science, and we must resort to the psyche to understand our loss and our load.

### Structure of the Thesis

These are the broad ideas that informed, enabled, and guided the research and writing. The main body of this paper address’s specific themes that inspired, triggered, prompted, and goaded the poems into being. To begin with and to give context to the writing, the following section sets out a brief overview of concrete poetry that I undertook at the commencement of the project.

### Concrete Poetry: Chronologies & Concatenations

To attempt a definition of Concrete poetry may seem like grappling with the concepts of quantum physics, according to which, particles can exist in multiple states at the same time. As the lens of critical discourse has adjusted and readjusted over passing decades in

retrospective evaluations of concretism in the world of poetry, definitions, categorisations, and relationships have emerged that present a tangled and sometimes fractious portrayal. The academic goal of creating a focus to enable a deeper understanding and clarity of boundaries to ensure rigorous analysis, must also take account of the dangers of pursuing neat categorisations and labels that fail to bring any enhancement to the field of concrete poetry.<sup>37</sup>

The first question then is, where to start? There must be some definition; there is. In fact, there is a multiplicity of definition in concrete poetry and of the question of how it relates to visual poetry, subset or separate. There is also the wider field of experimental poetry. Is concrete a movement or just a loose style that added a minor twist to the experimentalist? Arguments exist as to the nature of evolutionary or revolutionary development. Was concrete poetry a genuine rupture of poetic traditions, or can it lay claim to a genealogy stretching back to the pattern and glyphs of antiquity? It is easier to talk about a starting place as the point when poets themselves laid claim to the term 'concrete'. However, the term 'concrete' was not wholly novel, Kamensky, the Russian Futurist poet had already coined the term 'ferro-concrete' to link the dynamic role of concrete in metropolitan architecture with his replacement of grammar and syntax by a spatial arrangement of words.<sup>38</sup>

Nevertheless, as late 1968, in the seminal anthology, Mary Ellen Solt noted that there is such a 'variety of post WW2 innovations it is difficult to say what the word means.'<sup>22</sup> Concrete poetry, regardless of claims to definitions and place in poetics, is generally accepted as beginning in the post-World War Two period; it gained significant recognition as a 'new' form with international presence in the fifties and sixties.<sup>39</sup>

In working through a critical evaluation, differing views are expressed on the relationships and inspiration from preceding shaped poetic forms, and on the legacy and forward derivation into the Fluxus intermedial arts of the seventies onward to contemporary experimental poetry. Reinhard Dohl may, for example, never have linked his poem 'Apfel' to the angel of George Herbert's poem 'Easter Wings' composed in 1633 but retrospection illuminates the shadows. In constructing a historical perspective and reflecting on the universal nature of innovation, it is valid, to trace a lineage and influence that may not have been an actuality to the individual at the point of composition but contributes to our overall understanding of the cultural context and *weltanschauung* of the poetics.

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<sup>37</sup> Vos, E. (1996) Critical Perspectives on Experimental, Visual and Concrete Poetry. In Jackson, Vos & Drucker (Eds) *Experimental – Visual – Concrete*. Rodopi: Netherlands. p.25

<sup>38</sup> Drucker, J. (1996) Experimental, Visual and Concrete Poetry. In Jackson, Vos & Drucker (Eds)(1996) *Experimental – Visual – Concrete..* Rodopi: Netherlands.

<sup>39</sup> Williams, E. (Ed.) (1967) *An Anthology of Concrete Poetry*. Something Else Press: New York



### Making it new

In mapping out chronology and concatenations, a sense of the generally accepted meaning of what constitutes concrete poetry is needed, to aid the navigation through the history of text and creativity, and to follow its legacy in the later decades of experiment and exploration of poetic practice. The Noigrandes adopted the term *verbivocovisual* from page three hundred and forty-one of the Joycean novel *Finnegan's Wake*, to capture the transgression of boundaries sought in 'concretism', in the repulsion of rhythm and rhyme with the explosion of form, text, and word itself. These transgressions sought to transcend the hindrances of language burdened with *fin de siècle* elitism and aesthetics and strove towards a universal language equitably accessible to all. This has parallels with the Buddhist notion of words as a barrier to understanding, and supporters heralded 'the end of language' just as their detractors derided the concretists as anti-poetic.<sup>40</sup>

There were significant differences within the movement from the start, both in the sense of underlying philosophies and the stylistics of form. Undoubtedly what allowed such poetry to make the transition, from marginalised experiment to recognition as a movement, was the development of an international presence through schools across Europe, in Canada as well as Brazil. The iconoclasm captured the zeitgeist for rejection of traditional form. Concretism did not establish itself in the USA at that time; the Black Mountain poets and the New York school were in the vanguard of experimentation. Carl Cluver noted, it was 'a movement that was found rather than founded as its members gradually discovered each other.'<sup>41</sup> This was a new form that placed space and structure at the heart of the poem, to communicate the physical materiality of text as integral to the piece free from the stricture of grammar and syntax.

A seminal poem is 'Silencio' the clear space left in the heart of the isomorphically arranged words carries the essence of the piece.<sup>42</sup> The style advanced by the Europeans differed in some respects from the Brazilian school. The German-dominated vanguard paid greater emphasis on a rigorous form, reflecting affinity with mathematically derived notions of order and harmony. The term 'constellation' was selected by Gomringer, to accentuate this sense of cosmic order and the rejection or even banishment of self, it echoes the Symbolist disdain of Romanticism.

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<sup>40</sup>Bohm, W. From Hieroglyphics to Hypergraphics. (1996) In Jackson, Vos & Drucker (Eds) *Experimental – Visual – Concrete*. Rodopi: Netherlands.

<sup>41</sup> Cluver, C. (2011) *The Noigrandes Poets and Concrete Art*. <http://www.lehman.cuny.edu/ciberletras/v17/cluver.ht> accessed 29/10/2018.

<sup>42</sup> Tolman, J. (1982) *The Context of a Vanguard: Toward a Definition of Concrete Poetry*. Duke University Press. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1772395> accessed 12/11/18.

The Brazilian Noigrandes school were more concerned with socio political transformation, they were allied with the thrust of modern architecture and art in the metropolitan era of the 50s; Brasilia arguably is the modern city presented as a concrete poem. The ‘National Exhibition of Concrete Art’ (1956) in Sao Paolo heralded the uncompromising arrival of concretism to the international arena. The Noigrandes selected their name from the Pound Cantos in acknowledgement of his injunction, as a leading Modernist to ‘make it new’<sup>43</sup>. Pound reached back into ancient language to find inspiration for the new in Chinese ideograms, demonstrating the inherent paradox of the banishment of tradition set beside the ancient genealogy of concrete poetry is aptly illustrated in the quantum physics analogy.

### The long arc of history

The writing systems of antiquity prefigure both the spare and concentrated thought of concretism and the intermedial relationship of visual art with poetic text. The art of calligraphy invested script with artistic harmony and a possession of space that asserts a materiality of text. Early concrete poets saw themselves taking inspiration or drawing on the 20<sup>th</sup> century revelations in maths-physics and innovations in industry to bring poetry into the contemporary arena of modern culture, as well as follow their democratic instincts to return language and poetry to the people.

As the movement progressed and developed, the longer arc of history attracted attention. There was a leaping backwards over the formalism and rulebooks of Romantic and Provençal poetry to explore and repurpose earlier script and glyph, to craft universal text that transcended boundaries. Augusto de Campos cited the lines of Dante in Canto 5, ‘e caddi come corpo morto cadì’ to illustrate the intrinsic spatiality in pre-concrete poetry. The notion of *meta* in text, poetry and communication reflects the idea of collapsing structure and syntax, revealing what de Campos spoke of as the concealed and conceptual meaning that lies in the roots of language and expressed in his notion of the *vector*<sup>44</sup>. The Brazilian poets saw an intrinsic relationship between concrete poetry and socio-political transformation.

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<sup>43</sup>Solt, M.E. (1968) ‘Concrete Poetry: A World View’ Indiana University Press: USA Chapter 3: ‘In 1952, the year Gomringer wrote his first finished constellation “avenidas,” three poets in São Paulo, Brazil--Haroldo de Campos, Augusto de Campos and Decio Pignatari--formed a group for which they took the name *Noigandres* from Ezra Pound’s *Cantos*. In Canto XX, coming upon the word in the works of Arnaut Daniel, the Provençal troubadour, old Levy exclaimed: “Noigandres, eh, noigandres / Now what the DEFFIL can that mean!” This puzzling word suited the purposes of the three Brazilian poets very well; for they were working to define a new formal concept. The name *noigandres* was both related to the world heritage of poems and impossible for the literary experts to define. They began publishing a magazine of the same name, and within the year had begun correspondence with Pound and had established contact with concrete painters and sculptors in São Paulo and with musicians of the avant-garde.

<sup>44</sup> Greene, R. (1992) From Dante to the Post-Concrete: An Interview with Augusto de Campos. *The Harvard Library Bulletin*. Summer. 3(2) p23, (“I fell down there as a dead body falls”, in Edwin Morgan’s version) <http://www.ubu.com/papers/greene02.html>. Accessed 13/11/18

Symbolist poetry blossomed in the cultural fermenting of Europe, post the Franco – Prussian (1870) war. Rimbaud thrived on the spectacle of combat and the blasting of the barricades in the siege of Paris. His poem ‘Voyelles’, attributed colour to vowels and thereby exploded words into singular arcane symbols. As the *enfant terrible* of French poetry, he swaggered through the traditional forms playing with ideas on derangement of the senses and the poetics of synaesthesia.

Mallarmè is regarded as the father-instigator of Modernism with the publication in 1897 of his poem, ‘Un Coup de Dés’, composed through free-verse form and idiosyncratic typographic layout. It is regarded as a tipping point because it transformed the idea of what a poem could be, upending the prevailing definition of poetry and paving the way for the concrete and visual poetry of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It foretold our digital age. Momentously, space arrived in poetry or alternatively one could say was rediscovered. Drucker wrote that Mallarmé opened up a new world of creative thinking leading to the ideas of *espace* and spatialism for Garnier in concrete poetry.<sup>38</sup> His theme of chance inspired the development of aleatory poetics by Duchamp and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Modernists, and then further developed across the whole range of text, sound and dance in the Fluxus movement of the 60’s. He anticipated the radical thinkers of the following decades and fused the linkages between maths-physics and the arts, when he threw in the dice that called up the random, the unexpected and the unsought, to push across the boundaries of imagination and speculation.

### Revolutionary thinking

In Russia, revolutionary thinking inspired the art and architecture of Constructivism; the barricades between visual art and visual poetry crumbled. The *zaum* poets experimented with linguistics and symbolism to move language beyond meaning with the language of the birds or the stars or the gods as a universal poetic language. Posters, composed by artist-poets or artists working with poets, brought poetry into the political arena and activated hearts and minds on the street.

Mayakovsky, the poet, collaborated with Rodchenko, the artist, on graphic designs and declared that artists would make ‘the streets our brushes, the squares our palettes’.<sup>45</sup> Kamensky employed the term ‘ferro-concrete poetry’, to describe how his multi-tiled visual and text-based works, revealed the new world being created by reinforced concrete structures and how this informed his poetic response. His poem ‘Tango with Cows’ is an aerial view

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<sup>45</sup> de Muth,S.( Trans) (2002). ‘*Mayakovsky, a memoir by E Triolet*’ London: Hearing Eye.

poem inspired by his life as an aviator viewing the world below, in all its absurdities and incongruities. In Italy, Futurism was launched by the poet Marinetti on a wave of loathing for the existing political and cultural status quo, it found common cause with the Russian *avant garde*. Cultural expression was proliferating and diversifying as the 20<sup>th</sup> century convulsed and bled through the First World War. Dadaism rose from the horror of the war, embracing the absurd as an angry rejection of the civilization that allowed the war. It was anti-lyrical and anti-subjective, it took as its herald the anti-art stance of Marcel Duchamp, when he notoriously exhibited a urinal at the New York Independent Arts Exhibition in 1917.

As noted earlier, a strict application of a chronological account can lead to a historicity that fails to illuminate any new perspective, or adequately convey the interwoven threads of cultural progression. Modernism established an international presence more through self-discovery of constituent parts, rather than an advancement of a collective philosophy. Futurism, Imaginism, Dadaism, Expressionism, Cubism, and other revolutionary aesthetics rose from separate backgrounds, to become identified as part of the whole cultural shift of the epoch.

The purpose of exhibitions and publications, as a means for drawing together cultural practices and innovations across the international scene, was critical. Just as war had become globalised so had cultural endeavour and discourse, though this is a view limited by a Euro-American centric perspective. Within this period, Ezra Pound moved to Italy and developed ideas around his statement 'make it new', deriving ideographic techniques from ancient Chinese and Japanese styles to compress language. His work, *The Cantos*, was a life-long endeavour; he is noted alongside Joyce, Stein and Eliot as a key figure in the pantheon of Modernism.

### Reaching the limits

The second World War intervened, and in its aftermath the *avant-garde* lost its revolutionary piquancy. Artists, poets, and writers sought to make sense of the devastation and the displacement of populations, as well as contribute to reconstruction and the making of new worlds. Society yearned for stability and the certainties of traditional forms held popular sway. So, despite the spread and proliferation of Modernist literature, in the nineteen fifties world, concrete poets were isolated and faded underground. In devising a critical perspective, early reviewers noted that an absence of visibility in the publishing world hampered a retrospective view.

From the late nineteen sixties onwards, anthologies, exhibitions and academic

research collected, curated, reviewed, and debated concrete and visual poetry within the wider field of experimental work. The innovative and radical can quickly become mundane and exhausted. It became accepted that, in the original sense of concretism, the form fizzled out as it reached the limits of its linguistic utterances, by the time it attained recognition as a literary form and was anthologised by Emmett Williams in 1968.<sup>46</sup>

The ambition of Concrete poetry, to transcend the hindrances of language and reveal the physical materiality of words, is realized in the mapping of its geographical spread beyond Brazil and Germany, with poetry schools identified in Portugal, Sweden, Japan, Poland, and Canada. The Swedish poet Fahlstrom used the term concrete prior to and unknown to Gomringer and the Noigrandes. In Scotland, Ian Hamilton Finlay created work that physically planted poetry in the environment, in his 'Little Gardens of Sparta' at his home near Edinburgh.

In Wales, Peter Meilleur/Childe Roland and Peter Finch were at the forefront of the Swansea school of poetry with a special edition of Poetry Wales devoted to their work.<sup>47 48</sup> England under the influence of Larkin and the Establishment poets remained 'loyal' to traditional forms until the Poetry Wars of the seventies. Despite this creative suffocation, innovation was not thwarted. Houèdard, a poet/graphic artist and Benedictine monk devised typewriter written visual poems; Bob Cobbing<sup>49</sup> founded the Association of Little Presses to enable experimental poets bypass the reluctance of the publishing world and bring their work into the public domain.

Where did concrete poetry end and the next generation of experimental poetry begin? This is a question that arguably does not beg an answer. No single term is adequate and, as John Goodby noted, it is best to resort to the least disputable term<sup>22</sup>. Globalisation and technological advances in communication fuelled diversity, innovation, and collaborations.<sup>50</sup> The semiotics and semantics of poetry flowed on through the experimental poetry of Fluxus. This polymorphous form generated an intermedial<sup>51</sup> approach that drew from poetry, music, and the visual arts through a refusal to consider the creative output as being determined by the artist. The relationship of the poet/artist with the reader/viewer was changed from passive recipient to active co-creator, through the indeterminacy of a composition that offered a wide

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<sup>46</sup> Schmidt, S. (1982) Perspectives on the Development of Post-Concrete Poetry. *Poetics Today*. 13 (3) 919820 pp 101-136. <https://jstor.org> accessed 12/11/20

<sup>47</sup> Goodby, J. & Davies, L. (2018) *The Edge of Necessary*. p15 Aquifer Books: UK.

<sup>48</sup> Finch, P. (2022) *Second Aeon*. <http://www.peterfinch.co.uk/2ndaeon.htm> accessed 18/05/19.

<sup>49</sup> Sutherland, M. 'Interview with Bob Cobbing: The Point about Criticism is that it is frequently wrong'. [http://www.ubu.com/papers/cobbing\\_sutherland.html](http://www.ubu.com/papers/cobbing_sutherland.html) accessed 18/05/19.

<sup>50</sup> Frey, A. (2019) 'The early history of women in the digital arts.' <https://hyperallergic.com/483478/new-media-futures> acc. 28/02/19

<sup>51</sup> Smith, O. (1996) Fluxus, Experimentalism and the End of Language. In Jackson, Vos & Drucker (Eds.) (1996) *Experimental – Visual – Concrete* Rodopi: Netherlands.

range of possibilities for interpretation. The poet/artist ceded control of language to the chance selection of the reader, as the original concrete poets sought to free words from dictated meaning. Fluxus is not constrained by a genetic inheritance from Concretism; it reflects the larger cultural shift from text to visual and aural projections, as it questioned the fundamental relevance of poetry.

The USA superpower ascendancy was mirrored in its role as a hub for the experimental in arts and the whirlpool of separate genres of creative endeavour. Charles Olson took forward the ideas of space, and the articulation of space within text, as ‘open field’ with the Black Mountain Poets. The Beat movement on the West Coast reinvigorated the reading of poetry and fused a relationship with theatrical rendition in performance poetry. The New York School of Poets brought ordinary life and everyday language into the poetic domain, in a style O Hara described as ‘you just go on your nerve’,<sup>52</sup>. Their compositional tools employed chance, combination and ‘cut-ups’, maintaining the ideas of naturalism and the randomness of nature. Sound Poetry emerged in association with Jazz and transformed text into musical scores, with Cage as the standard bearer inspired by the ideas of Duchamp and the Wittgenstein philosophy in parallel but separate to the Visual poetry. From the nineteen sixties emerged Pop Art, led by the British American Andy Warhol, to mainstream and monetise the visual arts and its vestiges of concrete poetry.

### Questioning the assertions

It is inescapable that the anthologised Concrete movement is primarily Euro-American centric, white, and male. Yet, this period covers the advancement and propagation of African American culture, from the poetry of the Black Power movement, through the growth of hip-hop as a global creative force, and the contemporary Black Lives Matter. Today, Beyoncé employs the work of Warsan Shire in her global shows, the musician Stomzy rapped about the Grenfell Tower tragedy at the Brit Awards and M.I.A, the political activist and singer, curated the Southbank 2017 Meltdown festival. Maya Angelou and Amanda Gorman composed and performed poems for the Inauguration of new Presidents in the USA.

Why then does an account drawn from anthologies and academic papers read so ‘white’? Is Concrete/Visual poetry inherently biased in favour of white Euro Americans? Can it claim to be or have been an international movement if it so manifestly failed to encourage and support poets from all cultural backgrounds?<sup>53</sup> Is it still necessary to curate female only

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<sup>52</sup> Hoover P, (Ed.) (2013) *Post Modern American Poetry*. Norton: New York. p.xxxiv

<sup>53</sup> Rowe,S. (2014) [Review of *An Anthology of Concrete Poetry* by Emmett Williams.] Chicago Review. <https://www.jstor.org> Acc.11/12/18

anthologies to overcome the marginalisation of women poets? <sup>54</sup> At the start of my research, I questioned if this is where Concrete poetry ended when it failed to truly engage across the spectrum of society? Are critical perspectives, failing to respond, as Chimamandi Ngozi Adichie asked, to the danger of single stories that prejudice cultural perspectives? <sup>55</sup>

In the opening pages of the Judith Anthology, Johanna Drucker writes of the long process of the feminist scholarship of recovery of the works of women poets as well as her own experiences of working in the print shop male dominated industries of the seventies.<sup>56</sup> Her comments on the ‘price’ paid by women are a chilling reminder of the intimidation of female writers and the suffocation of the creative minds who yearned for a rightful place in the poetry scene. I note that over 50 years have elapsed since the original ‘*Anthology of Concrete Poetry*’ was published; these recent publications restore the female presence in the canon. The feminist scholarship of recovery has begun to address the exclusion of women in terms that are wider and more meaningful than presence in publications. The effective barring of women from the print trades, the denigration of female expression, the barriers to self-determination in language must be recognised and accepted to overcome the handicap of these fragmented legacies. Contemporary writers are now exploring the rich seams of female concerns for care, domesticity and the crafts as a feminist poetic praxis, leading to innovative thinking about fragility as a marker of strength and illuminating how delicate practices mirror resilience and sustainability.<sup>56</sup>

### Questions and Responses

My overview contextualisation finished with more questions than answers. It pointed me in a direction for wider and deeper exploration, to examine if the legacy of Concrete poetry can resonate in contemporary culture and inspire unique responses to the climate crisis.

The following section addresses the key themes of research that informed the writing in terms of poetic conception, craft and composition of my collection, *i/Bog*. I have organised these as ‘Twenty Key Ideas’ that reference the writing to the influence of modernism and concrete poets, my own personal sense of place and planet, and the contemporary world of climate science and technology.

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<sup>54</sup> Critchley, E. (Ed.) (2015) *Out of Everywhere 2*. Reality Street: UK

<sup>55</sup> Adichie, C.N. ‘*The dangers of a single story.*’ [https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_ngozi\\_adichie](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie), accessed 02/02/22

<sup>56</sup> Earl, A. (Ed.) (2021) *Judith: Women Making Visual Poetry*. Timglaset Editions: Sweden. p.11 ‘*Women might speak, be present, but they did not set the agenda for critical dialogue or creative practice. And when they did, they paid a price for working outside of the sanctioned paradigms.*’

## 1. Signs and Symbols

Concrete poetry reinigorates language through the harnessing of sound and sign in concert with sense. This charged expression empowers the viewer to transcend ambiguities of text and fashion their own individual response to a piece. The early concrete poets saw this as a form to escape the cultural elitism of the colonial past in Brazil or the pretentious salons of European literature.<sup>57</sup> The contemporary discourse on climate crisis and the survival struggles of affected people is relayed to the wider public, through myriad scientific and political policies and papers. Scientific terminology, technical data and impassioned campaigners transmit messages of calamity and impending doom, they offer conflicting and competing theories, explanations, and condemnations.

It is over fifty years since the dangers of carbon emissions were first fully understood and accepted, yet *homo sapiens* is still relentlessly cutting down carbon cleansing forests, destroying carbon capture peatlands, and mercilessly exterminating biological diversity. Society is inundated with a welter of information so vast and endless that it has become unable to understand the real world.<sup>58</sup> Inured from the real world, we shun the wisdom and metamorphosis needed to protect our planetary life. Despite the short-lived currency of the Concrete movement as a cultural force, their ideas remain fresh and relevant. This is recognised in publications of New Concrete poetry, retrospective exhibitions, curated collections, and social media platforms.

The original impetus of the Noigrandes was to create a North South axis of cultural expression as a liberation from European colonial culture. This parallels with the contemporary North/South axis of discourse and activism in the climate and ecology movements. By and large, the headline actors are from the North, but the bottom-line exposures are in the South. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, liberation of knowledge and learning from the enclosures of the entitled sought to create egalitarian access to public participation in debate. By contrast, it appears that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, public society has been marginalised by the domination of academia's ivory towers and the proliferation of

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<sup>57</sup> Greene, R. (1992) From Dante to the Post-Concrete: An Interview With Augusto de Campos. *The Harvard Library Bulletin, Summer*. 3(2) <http://www.ubu.com/papers/greene02.html> accessed 19/05/2019 p.25 "...consider CP as a drastic recovery of the vanguard movements from the beginning of the (20<sup>th</sup>) century, and of processes implicit in the Futurist, Cubist and Dada movements (collage, montage, simultaneism), linked to a new physicality in the relations between modern man and the world of signs. Modern physics prompts these new practices as well as new technologies."

<sup>58</sup> GPT-3 (2020) *A robot wrote this entire article. Are you scared yet, human?*

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/sep/08/robot-wrote-this-article-gpt-3> accessed 05/10/2020

'Studies show that we cease to exist without human interaction. Surrounded by wifi we wander lost in fields of information unable to register the real world.'



conflicting scientific reports<sup>59</sup>. Concretism reflected the educational theories that challenged the pervading stasis of biological/ inherited factors of intelligence and made a lie of meritocracies.

The Russian psychologist, Vygotsky, challenged the belief that early learning progresses through textbook stages and that cognitive development is intrinsically related to society. He developed the concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), essentially a commitment to valuing and nurturing the potential of an individual and by extension the society in which they live.<sup>60</sup> This is in direct contrast with the exam-oriented system that measures variation from a curriculum standard as a failure in the sense of measuring ‘what is not rather than what is.’

Vygotsky demonstrated that the development of imagination follows action; this resonates with the concrete poet articulation of the materiality of word/text and the weighted emphasis on both sound and space/shape. The liberation from instructed/inherited meanings allows the reader to determine their own set of possibilities, and potentially rescue their imagination from consumerism. The theories of Paulo Freire developed the concept of participatory learning, they flipped the hierarchical model of knowledge being dictated, to the peer-based approach of generating expertise and wisdom through sharing lived experience.<sup>61</sup>

My own history of working in community regeneration in the South Wales Valleys was based on employing participatory appraisal models, to ensure that regeneration projects were determined by community based ideas rather than implemented by remote top down strategies. In the nineteen sixties, concretism deconstructed the cultural hegemonies of the West that undermined working class communities and indigenous

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<sup>59</sup> Czerski, H. (2017) *Britain has had enough of experts*. <https://www.theguardian.com/science/blog/2017/jan/27/a-crisis-of-trust-is-looming-between-scientists-and-society-its-time-to-talk> accessed 08/12/20

<sup>60</sup> Malott, C. *Vygotsky's Revolutionary Educational Philosophy*. <https://liberationschool.org/vygotskys-revolutionary-educational-psychology/> accessed 05/09/20 ‘the complex non-linear nature of the relationship between instruction, development and history.’ Significantly, Vygotsky draws heavily on Lenin in his challenge to Piaget. For example, in *Thought and Language*, Vygotsky (1986) reproduces a long quote from Lenin where he argues that Hegel’s insistence that people’s thought produces their activity must be “inverted.” That is, Lenin argues that it is the endless repetition of people’s activity (i.e. the labor act) that produces consciousness. Similarly, Vygotsky notes that, “it was Piaget himself who clearly demonstrated that the logic of action precedes the logic of thought, and yet he insists that thinking is separated from reality” (p. 53). Piaget demonstrated that action precedes thought by observing that children playing together understand each other despite how unclear their language is because it is accompanied by gesture and mimicry, the beginning of action. Consequently, Piaget questions whether children truly understand each other through speaking/language without acting, yet in theory he puts thought before action. Sounding remarkably like Marx in his use of metaphor, Vygotsky summarizes the inadequacy of Piaget’s formulation: “...if the function of thinking is to reflect upon reality, this actionless thinking appears as a parade of phantoms and a chorus of shadows rather than the real thinking of a child” (p. 53). Having established the dynamic relationship between mind and society, Vygotsky took social formation as the ultimate determining factor influencing the dynamic development of human personalities and consciousness.

<sup>61</sup> Boyd, A. & Mitchell D. (Eds.) (2012) *Beautiful Trouble*. ‘Participatory action research, meanwhile, is a community-led process in which people determine solutions to their problems by gathering data from their peers, analyzing it, and then taking informed action. It’s a model of community organizing that builds the capacity and expertise of those on the front lines. Unfortunately, many progressive movements today are still trapped in the “banking” approach to education, seeing the public as a passive receptacle of their information. According to Freire, transforming the world requires flipping this model and replacing it with ground-up practices of emancipatory education, organizing and action.’ <https://beautifultrouble.org/theory/pedagogy-of-the-oppressed/> accessed 28/02/19

societies. In the current day the ideals and examples of concretism offer a neural pathway to negotiate the issues and power plays of the climate crisis. It is an alternative to the instructions and edicts of institutional policy makers, who are rendered unintelligible and inaccessible by the absence of investment in the ZPD. Put simply, the exhortations of leaders that ‘we are all in this together’ cannot lead to change when the majority are chained to current livelihoods for survival. I have expanded here at length on these theories, to set out the underlying philosophies, for my adoption of concretism as the mode to engage with my audiences. My collection, *i/Bog*, elevates the labour act and thereby the statement of perception as the prerequisite to consciousness.

My poem ‘Chernozog,’ is a realisation of this assertion, it casts a thematic shadow across *i/Bog*. I created it as an isomorph to accord with the Gomringen ideal, ‘a reality in itself’. The shape is derived from a Slavic representation of deity and plays on the Slavic word for God, *boge*, and its graphemic similarity with the word bog. Pursuing the origins of the *boge* leads to the Icelandic *kyntlinga* saga and the domain of *skaldic* poetry. This body of saga occupies similar territory to Welsh bardic and Gaelic bardic traditions in terms of historico-mythologies and declamatory style. The etymological evolution and migration of the *skald* as an Old Norse term for poet eventually leads to ‘shout’, and toponymical echoes with the Ballygar placename association with shouting.

The icon creates both a sense of place and a creative space, to reflect on issues of migration and landscape viewed through the lens of language and literature. The deity is associated with the colour black and in some iterations with malefaction. In that sense, the poem plays with the idea of the Bog / Planet having an alternative persona to Mother Earth, being associated with anger and attack, rather than the benign maternal associations of nurture and protection. The extended arm and leg are *loy* (spade) shaped and evoke a sense of dancing as well as ‘footing the turf’ (a traditional method of harvesting peat). The horizontal handlebar provides a semantic axis to the piece that opens interpretation both to the dark humour of the piece, and the inherent ambivalence of bog/earth as saviour or foe.

Bog lands are known to be places of burial, places of ritual and preservers of ancient remains.<sup>62</sup> Archaeologists believe that the bodies were placed at the border of a territory and denoted a transition both in territorial and spiritual worlds. The *boge* can be imagined as either pinned down or breaking out of the restraint. The overall energy of the piece is

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<sup>62</sup> Glob, P.V. (1969) *The Bog People*. Faber & Faber: London

charged through the isomorphism. No scientific knowledge or expertise is needed to appreciate that the bog/earth is part of the living planet, with whom our fate is inextricably linked. The poem 'reads' both on a verbi-visual plane and a verbi- voco plane. The text adopts rupture of the linear narrative though it has a definite horizontal 'narrative', it offers alternative vertical and acrostic reading with internal rhyming and alliteration. The wordscape owes influence to the LANGUAGE style in creating internal movement and gradual evolution of sounds/melody. Words were selected to evoke the entirety of bogland as habitat, folklore, geography, and human settlement. For example, 'bird' in the second line can be read in the sequence 'call/ bird/ song/ long 'or as 'fall/bird/hymn/drum/'. Any iteration is at the behest of the reader, it is dependent on desire, to linger on the poem and the success or (otherwise) of the engagement. The layout design was geometrically mapped, both for accuracy of scale and symmetry and as a quizzical debunker of scientific methodology.

For the bog to be a *boge*, the worlds of number and data must be challenged. The Greek glyph of the Ancient world is the signifier in contemporary maths-physics. Equations that are presented in terms  $\acute{\alpha}$  to  $\acute{\omega}$  are the portals to nanotechnology and are incorporated in the Chernozog. This visual poem simply invites the viewer to be entertained or intrigued by a humanoid shape, it also offers the opportunity to delve into its detail and deliberate on the wordscape.

## 2. The Creative Rage

A creative rage ignited the leading minds of Modernism and transmuted anarchic rebellion into pure forms and chiselled language. Becoming agents of anger, rather than observers of society, energised creative expressions with uncompromising movement and scandalous wit. James Joyce elevated the ordinary individual of Molly Bloom and then Earwicker père to a transcendent status, as he assailed the moral suffocation of the Catholic Church and the cultural oppression of the British Empire.<sup>63</sup> The Joycean recourse to 'silence, exile and cunning' eventually opened the portals to the extraordinary wordscape and dazzle-donderings of *Finnegan's Wake*.

The Russian Futurists geared up for revolution by harnessing the power of their

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<sup>63</sup> Joyce, J (1917) *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Egoist Press: London. Penultimate lines: 'Welcome, O life! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race.'

martial zeal for Socialist art forms to destroy the old order.<sup>64</sup> By contrast, in the war of climate change, society is pitted against itself; nature is cast as the victim. For Irish poet, Seamus Heaney the bog landscape was ‘goddess’, ‘honeycombed’, and ‘holy ground’.<sup>65</sup> The inhabitants of nature’s interior do not condemn man’s greed but nurture society with metaphysic and melody.<sup>66</sup>

Harnessing rage as a creative force led me to reflecting on anger, as an act of unbalancing that leads to an alternative route to equilibrium. *i/Bog* seeks to express this grief for the ailing world in a similar way through the energy of rage rather than the passive aggression of regret. This contrasts with the usual projection of mother earth as a wounded creature of supplication.

My poem, ‘MotherSlander’, adopts an ‘angry woman’ persona to channel a rage against man made destruction of the natural environment.<sup>67</sup> Loss of habitats and profligate abstraction of resources threatens planetary survival. Scientists and celebrities plead for global change to restore the balance; they appeal to the human sense of responsibility to negotiate a universal consensus on actions to safeguard the planet. Society depicts ‘the mother’ as a nurturing passive figure, and the anger of women as unfeminine and deranged. The ‘angry woman’ trope is used to undermine women both in terms of gender equality and diversity.

However, this is a positive and respected trope in older societies. For example, the ceremonial dance of the Haka in New Zealand and the carvings known as *sheela na gig* in Ireland are matriarchal. The female is both strong and defensive as well as protective. The landscape is interpreted in female form; there is a mountainous formation known as ‘the Hag of Beara’ who is associated with poetry. The voice of my poem is the voice of the ‘hag’ or *Cailleach*, the matriarchal deity of pagan Celtic world. It resonates with the Pearse poem, *Mise Eire*, that goaded the Irish populace of 1916 to assert its independence.

Mór mo náire	Great my shame
Mo chlann fèin a dhíol	My own children that sold out
A máthair	Their mother

<sup>64</sup>de Muth,S.( Trans) (2002). ‘Mayakovsky, a memoir by E Triolet’ London: Hearing Eye. p12 Mayakovsky is quoted, ‘what’s the best way for me to confront the old order? ... I want to create a Socialist Art Form.’ p28 ‘This world deserves / a set of knuckle-dusters now - / smashing its skull’, quoted from *A Cloud in Trousers*’

<sup>65</sup> Heaney, S. (1972) ‘Tolland Man’ In *Wintering Out*. Faber&Faber: London

<sup>66</sup> Clarke,A. ‘The song that shakes my feathers will thong the leather of your satchel’ from *The Blackbird of Derrycairn*. In *Poems 1955-1966* (1974) Dolmen Press: Dublin

<sup>67</sup> Briggs, H.(2020) *Wildlife in Catastrophic Decline*. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-54091048> accessed 22/09/20

The crafting of my poem is loose dimeter and trimeter, it employs this compressed shape to reveal intensity of emotion. The anaphoric lines ‘I am not your mother’ amplify the anger but also the cyclical reverberation of a tolling bell for the doomed fate of nature and the planet. There is influence here from the monometred poem Robert Herrick ‘On his Departure hence’ to evoke an oracular tone and funerary afterimage.<sup>68</sup>

### 3. Grief as an act of mutilation

Emotional response to the loss of the natural world is now being studied; the ideation of ecological grief has formed to express and measure the response in individuals and communities across the globe. The symptoms of anxiety and post-traumatic stress are being observed as widespread and gripping.<sup>69</sup> The calibration of planetary threat is changing from hard units of carbon destruction to gradings of psychosomatic disorder.<sup>70</sup> Scientists are now collaborating with artists, to marry scientific methods and data with artistic articulation and interpretations of the climate crisis impacts.

Rupture and non-linear narratives reflect the acts of self-harm in ‘the interplay between fractured language and semantic sense.’<sup>71</sup> The articulation of deep grief is vividly expressed in short poetry form, the staccato and the evanescent can allude to language beyond words. The *landays* of Pashtun women are a searing illustration of grief slicing through language as the dagger of words strike hard against the denial of agency.<sup>72</sup> The poet Rahila Musak testifies to a life of denial, brutality and imminent death in twenty-three syllables

‘I call. You’re stone. / One day you’ll look and find I’m gone.’

In *i/Bog*, this act of mutilation is conveyed in the thematic application of concrete poetry styles based on aleatory poetics, non-linear narratives, meta vocabularies, and distortions that reflect the core theme of ecological grief. The ‘Leggyfins of Barney Nolan’ poem uses this mutilation, to counter the sardonic tones and comedic

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<sup>68</sup> Robert Herrick. *Upon His Departure Hence* <https://verse.press/poem/> accessed 08/12/20

<sup>69</sup> Mc Dougall, D. (2019) *Ecological grief*. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/aug/12/greenland-residents-traumatised-by-climate-emergency>. Accessed 21/09/19

<sup>70</sup> Ellis, N. & Cunsolo, A. (2018) Hope and mourning in the Anthropocene – Understanding Ecological grief.

In <https://theconversation.com/>. ‘The eminent American naturalist Aldo Leopold was among the first to describe the emotional toll of ecological loss in his 1949 book, *A Sand County Almanac*: “One of the penalties of an ecological education,” he wrote, “is to live alone in a world of wounds.”’ Accessed 21/09/19

<sup>71</sup> Goldsmith, K. (2002) *From (Command) Line to (Iconic) Constellations*. <https://ubu.com/papers/goldsmith> Accessed 07/09/20

<sup>72</sup> Griswald, E. & Murphy, S. (2028) *Landays*. <https://static.poetryfoundation.org/o/media/landays.html> accessed 10/12/2020.

Rahila Musak is a name assumed for anonymity

waywardness of the ‘Barney’ voice, to return the circumnavigatory account of an emigrant’s life to the core theme of loss and grief.

‘Ashlings summoned to my encampment  
the queening lemures of my country  
with imprickations  
to feed their black47babby  
bellies and get to hell outtacon  
aught i.’

These lines illustrate the fusion of mutilated language, Gaelic in this instance, with mordant badinage on historical events. *Aisling* is the Gaelic word for dream and is used to describe a style of political poetry in 18<sup>th</sup> century Ireland. Ashling, the Anglicised form, is also a female given name. The Gaelic word *caoineadh* translates as a form of lamentation, traditionally performed by women at a funeral. In this context, the female forms that invade Barney’s dream allude to a quest for independence to escape the terrible fate of death by starvation that befell earlier generations.

‘Black 47’ is an epithet for the year 1847, the year regarded as the most severe of the Irish famine years. The phrase, ‘To Hell or to Connaught’, is an historical phrase from the Cromwellian plantation of 1641 and generally associated with the enduring poverty of the province. The composition of writing uses techniques of Oulipo and cutups to accentuate the themes of hurt and loss. The song of the dam-building workers, ‘Songsalong from the Hole’, is a construction from songs of that era; voices that have been mutilated by the passage of time and the banishment they endured.

Similarly, in the community-based performance of ‘Th’Other Together’ poetry project, the school children read local legends written by their peers eighty years previously. The mutilated sound effect created in the recording of their different voices, generates a poignant realisation of the lost lives and the evanescence of youth. This overall meshing of historical and cultural allusions infers the doomed fate of young people of that era.

The grief experienced by that forced emigration is the same as the trauma and fears now being experienced by people, fleeing the loss of livelihoods through climate change. Across the book, *i/Bog*, the theme of recollection of past grief, is a channel to experience the urgency of understanding the climate crisis in terms of imminent loss and trauma.

#### 4. Exploding language.

The rupture of language and transgression of syntactical rules embraced by Modernism allows concrete poetry to reimagine expression and broaden the spectrum of artistic communication. Concrete and experimental poetry, both in their historic and later phases, are regarded as explosive in nature and an assault on establishment poetry.<sup>73</sup> The seeming detonation of sound and text exposed the concealed or occluded expression, in ways that could be humorous or subversive or illuminating. This draws on my analogies of concretism with atomic physics; the release of the latent creative energy of language is allegorical of the release of nuclear power in the atomic fission reaction.

I was galvanised by the term ‘constellation’ coined by Gomringer; it unambiguously states the synchronicity of the creative process with the paradigm of nuclear physics set within the cosmic order. These analogies enabled me to radically reorder my relationship with language and led into a new landscape of writing. If words are not bound by the structure of vocabulary, then every word becomes an array of icons, semaphores for the imagination to take another direction. This perspective allows for the rejection of elitism and inherited meanings; words that are broken apart act as visual messengers disjoining complex semantics.

Excavating the words that lie contained or fragmented, leads to thinking about what lies beneath. As an iceberg presents just one tenth of its presence above water, so a word or collection of letters may be reimagined as disclosing just parts of a greater or other text. It is simply the viewpoint that is presenting one selection, a form of excavation can yield other messages or narratives.

My poem ‘Nosing in Limbo’ uses these ideas of playing and disassembling, to find a way into the sensitive subject of children graveyards in Ireland.<sup>74</sup> This was the practice of burial of still born children, classified as unbaptised by the Catholic Church, and thus

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<sup>73</sup> Finch, P. (2001) *British Poetry Since 1945* <http://www.peterfinch.co.uk/> Accessed 10/07/18.

<sup>74</sup> Dixon, C. (2012) *Cradle to the Grave*. <https://www.irishexaminer.com/lifestyle/arid-20204120.html> accessed 02/05/19

refused burial in the consecrated burial grounds of the Church graveyards. This practise differed from the more notorious Mother and Baby Home institutions but springs from the same belief system of sin and shame<sup>75</sup>. The harrowing anguish of the bereaved mother is buried beneath stone shibboleth in the hidden away places of Neolithic landscapes, for the unbaptised child the only comfort is in Mother Earth. A conspiracy of silence turns loss into guilt and pagan mounds are sanctified by mute grief.

The poem is in triptych form with the unravelling forms of George in the first tile, and the unravelling narrative of the piece in the third tile. The centre tile is a defined space, giving a vertical axis a borehole effect, to express the analysis of ‘buried things.’ The Ionic column effect evokes the funerary themes and references the Ian Hamilton Finlay poem piece ‘Urn Column’<sup>76</sup>. One of his predominant themes was the relationship between nature and culture. Though unsignified, this central tile speaks of the physical act of internment and the ‘deep-down’ roots of shamanic practices; the space creates a bridge of non-words between the ‘trigger’ words of the left tile and the expressions on the right.

It is difficult to articulate in contemporary terms the complex web of beliefs and strictures that surround the *lisheen* graves especially for one such as myself, both of and out of place. The cruel jawbone of Church and State clamped down on the rights of mothers and children; doctrinal dictates were interwoven with ancient intuitions of the otherworld and the unspoken empathy of neighbour was traduced by fear of indiscretion. This emotional repression has been liberated in anger and revulsion against religious leaders in contemporary society that sunders the bond with people and place.

The *lisheen* graves, or children’s burial grounds were in use until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, usually located in ancient places connected with faith beliefs or earlier Neolithic rituals. They were often called *gairdín na páistí* or the children’s garden. There was no ‘shame’ attached to their existence, but they were placed in an unspoken of world, their brief lives were associated with tales of changelings and the encroachment of the fairy world. Private grief was often compounded by the inability of family and neighbours to openly acknowledge the neonate existence, both in terms of being and loss. As the hospital world of obstetrics and paediatrics reached out to provide better maternal care in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the *lisheen* graves retreated into lost landscapes obscured by forest

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<sup>75</sup> This is how sin was perceived. ‘There was this little girl, and she was very holy, and she was dying and there was no one in the room. And her mother went into the room where the child was. The little girl said, ‘I have only one sin on my soul, and that is I stole sixpence out of a girl’s bag in school and if you give it to her, I will be in heaven. The mother paid it to the girl. She did not speak after that.’ In Irish Folklore Commission *The Schools Collection*. Ballygar, Co.Galway p67 <https://www.duchas.ie/> Accessed 05/02/22

<sup>76</sup> Carlson, P. (2016) Ian Hamilton Finlay. In Jewesbury, D. *The Headless City: brochure Tulca Festival of the Arts 2016*. p.61/62 [https://issuu.com/tulcafestival/docs/tulca-2016-catalogue\\_web](https://issuu.com/tulcafestival/docs/tulca-2016-catalogue_web) accessed 08/12/2016



plantations and avoided farmlands.

This poem then sets out to unravel these complex conflicting reflections using the unravelling nosing of the dog, 'George', to open a pathway aslant into this period of history. It must contend with this question, who am I to judge my grandparents because they believed it was 'right' to bury their babies in unmarked unvisited unspoken ground? The shape suggests the helical structure of DNA and thereby my own inherited complicity. Ultimately what the poem is doing is restoring identity and vitality to these forgotten children and their maternal bonds. The poem sprung from a conversation about a real-life encounter with a local historian, who provided an account of a family connection with a particular *lios* during a walk with his dog. As landscapes are even more rapidly losing their engagement with residents, stories that granulate the relationship between human and planet are lost, and with them the emotional weight of our responsibility to care for small things.

The idea of exploding language carries a sense of violence though confined by the boundaries of text. This allowed the writing to convey the upheaval of the social order, dominated by church in rural Ireland, and a cautious path into the stories where every step could land on the unexploded mine of a private pressured grief. These are the parallels that I suggest in the poem with lack of public trust in institutions. Science has replaced the Church in the dissemination of doctrine. Society has rejected experts as it has challenged elitism and the inheritance of meaning.<sup>77</sup>

##### 5. Image & Imagism; within the immediacy of global fears and paranoia.

The world of 2020 was gripped by global threats reminiscent of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The breaching of global temperatures has led to a climate crisis that has forced mass emigration and habitat extinction. This is a crisis as seismic in terms of society and culture as the break-up of empires that led to a World War and population displacements in 1914. The Imagism movement of early 20<sup>th</sup> century developed within this context. It drew inspiration from Japanese and Chinese calligraphy, to create haiku-based texts that favoured presentation over thought and rejected the capacity of the contemporary Classical style capacity to capture the *zeitgeist*.

The global flu pandemic of 1918 was of a scale and morbidity equal to the current

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<sup>77</sup> Czerki, H. (2017) *A crisis of trust is looming between scientists and society – its time to talk.*  
<https://www.theguardian.com/science/blog/2017/jan/27>

Covid 19 pandemic. It is interesting to note that censorship in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century sought to play down the scale of the pandemic, lest the morale of suffering citizens would hamper the post war recovery. One wonders how this compares to the current tensions being played out between public health protection and the demands of economic activity.

The Imagism movement of early 20<sup>th</sup> century developed within this context. Ezra Pound who formulated its edict to ‘make it real’ was struck by it in London, and William Carlos Williams in New Jersey recorded the death toll among his colleagues and patients from ‘this potent poison’.<sup>78</sup> Though Imagism as a movement was declared over by Pound in 1917, the precision of language and concrete aesthetic flowed on in the avant-garde advancements.

In 1923, WCW wrote his famous poem ‘The Red Wheelbarrow’, (though he never confirmed it explicitly), it is generally accepted that this short vivid poem is a reflection on the frailty of life in the randomness of natural selection.

so much depends  
upon

a red wheel  
barrow

glazed with rain  
water

beside the white  
chickens

The ‘Spanish Flu’ was more virulent to the immune systems of younger people because of their non-exposure to previous flu epidemics; this is reflected in the childlike details of the poem. A seemingly simple and charming evocation of an instant discloses multiple reflections on complex events. Flight from war and poverty drove the masses from Europe to the American Dream, the fragmentary syntactic structure of Imagism corresponds to the fragmentary experience of immigration.<sup>79</sup>

Poets, such as Williams, who sought to shape cultural identity had to contend with the pull of ethnic filiation against avant-garde affiliation. Language of identity, both antecedent and original, embedded in creative writing signifies the assertion of the ethnic other and suggests a continuity with the romantic past. Imagism displays key traits of interest that

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<sup>78</sup>Francis, G. (2018) [Review of the book *The Spanish Flu of 1918 and How it changed the World*. by Laura Spinney.] <https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v40/n02/gavin-francis/the-untreatable> accessed 22/08/20

<sup>79</sup>Lowney, J. (1997) *The American Avant-Garde Tradition*. Associated University Presses: London.

resonate with the research topic, of new forms of concrete poetry that articulate contemporary global climate crisis. It has an international character inspired by Sino-Japan aesthetics, founded and promoted in UK/Europe and evolved into US modernism. It rejected the elitist rules of grammar and syntax to achieve an immediacy of meaning that flowed into the free verse democracy of modernism. It valued its physical presentation in ideogrammatic forms using the rapidly expanding availability of small press/self-publishing.

These influences and reflections inspired my poem 'Wave to the future.' The idea behind the style of the poem was to take the Wallace Stevens poem '13 Ways of Looking at a Blackbird' as a schema for creative response. I wanted to capture this sense of premonition that he coolly presents but flesh it with the brawn and corpuscles of survival. Though Stevens is a leader of the American modernist canon, his links to Imagism are more co-temporal than rooted.<sup>80</sup> He is noted as a poet of technical brilliance and philosophical depth. His writing is heavily laden in Symbolism and dense textural allusion. He considered himself distinct from movements saying, 'My reality-imagination complex is entirely my own even though I see it in others.'<sup>81</sup> His poem was written in 1917, within the Imagist form, distilling ombre musings from the desolation of World War 1.

I selected this poem as a model for the piece 'Wave to the Future' because of the striking visuality of black and white and the expanse of 'space' created in the compressed stanza driven narratives. The multiple perspectives offered in Steven's poem created a crisp delineation between each 'picture' (one can almost hear the shutter click); they create a linearity movement of through a 'jumble of impressions'.<sup>81</sup> However, my central image of the wave/movement of water is greatly different to the anthropomorphic encounters with the blackbird in a cerebral world. Steven's poem is an autobiographical superposition of internal thought on an external landscape.

My poem articulates a memory laden physicality of existence, seen through an ecological lens. The blackbird is a singular ordered entity whereas the wave exhibits its presence in different states of flowing water, fluvial and marine. The wave interweaves memories of childhood play and adventures with the changing relationship from being in water to being *ex* water, be it as friend or foe. Water may seem to be a randomly charged actor, but it can be charged by lunar or artesian or kinetic forces. These forces that are

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<sup>80</sup> Strom, M. (1984). The Uneasy Friendship of William Carlos Williams and Wallace Stevens. In *Journal of Modern Literature*, 11(2),(pp 291-298). Retrieved August 27, 2020, from <http://www.jstor.org>

<sup>81</sup> Ellmann, R. (1980). How Wallace Stevens saw Himself. In F. Doggett & R. Buttel (Eds.), *Wallace Stevens: A Celebration* (pp. 149–170). Princeton University Press. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt7zvsbf.16> accessed 27/08/20

resolved into harmony by a natural ecology are now thwarted by Anthropocene waste<sup>82</sup>. The Imagism form has allowed me to present the complex arguments of climate crisis impacts in simple details, tracking the arguments through various scenarios to the ultimate catastrophe of the endangered world.

6. Creating Space. Materiality as a key component of concrete poetry. What does white space say?

Graphic space is empowered in concrete poetry and expands the reach of composition beyond the formal-rhythmical unity of verse. This expansion of creative territory allows the creator and reader to engage beyond text and explore a multiplicity of interpretation that liberates the imagination from the autocracy of understanding.<sup>83</sup> In the poem 'terremoto' by Augusto de Campos<sup>39</sup>, space twists and vibrates with the resonance of cosmic and existential forces as the *ovo* (egg) mutates and reforms across the page to its destination *morto* (death).

The Irish American artist, Brian O Docherty, in writing about the contemporary gallery, considered the ideal of white space as the ultimate resolution of conflicting perspectives and the repositioning of context as content.<sup>84</sup> In his artistic practice, he was primarily concerned with space and systems and used *ogham* script in his compositions. Space can impose a sense of alienation as well as extend the graphic plane far beyond the borders of presentation. This interplay of the mythic and the modernist gifted ideas for the composition of my poem, 'The Emigrant's Letter'. O'Docherty is from the same Shannon hinterland where *i/Bog* is set. I was attracted to his ideas on the ritual functions of space as they echoed with the impulses of my writing, to reveal the narrative through the blending of the visual composition with the boundless possibilities of interpretation.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, after the founding of the Irish State during the punitive British Trade War, it was estimated that 25% of Irish economy was funded by the 'letter home', the remittances that emigrants sent back to their impoverished families. These letters had a sinister aspect as they were effectively a tithe on the emigrant, an obligation to keep the 'home' family alive. Letters begging the emigrant child not to forget their starving parents and siblings were phrased with prayers of salvation and damnation. In the book

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<sup>82</sup> Bendell, J. (2018) *Deep Adaptation: A map for navigating climate tragedy* University of Cumbria <https://insight.cumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/4166/1/> accessed 10/08/20

<sup>83</sup> Mengham, R. & Kinsella, J. (Eds) (2004) *Vanishing Points*. Salt Publishing: Cambridge, UK

<sup>84</sup> O Docherty, B. (1999) *Inside the White Cube*. University of California Press: USA. p14 'The ideal gallery subtracts from the artwork all cues that interfere with the fact that it is "art." The work is isolated from everything that would detract from its own evaluation of itself.'

*Children of the Dead End* by Patrick Mc Gill, the protagonist, 14-year-old Dermot, is so tormented by these letters sent from his Donegal family to his lodgings in Edinburgh that he eventually cuts off all contact.<sup>85</sup> The melancholy Irish songs of emigration, such as ‘The Mountains of Mourne’, rarely allude to these darker themes of mercenary intimidation from home. The dependence on emigrant earnings is shared with other peoples rendered destitute by colonialism. In Trinidad, it was called ‘the box’, emigrants shipped home essentials of clothing and toiletries and medical supplies in wooden fruit crates.

I see this tension in the contemporary world; money exchange services proliferate in an era of migrant labour. The letter home is a recurrent trope in the Irish emigrant song repertoire. I wanted to write about it but wondered how I could illuminate the subject in a new way. Ezra Pound translated the poem, ‘Exile’s Letter’ by Li Po, and praised the purity of expression in simple and universal terms. I explored the possibilities of a composition inspired by the corresponding Chinese ideograms

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This led to thinking about the Poundian dictum; ‘incompetence will show in the use of too many words’, and the universality of these lines

‘What is the use of talking? / And there is no end of talking ---- /  
There is no end of things in the heart’.<sup>86</sup>

The essence of the correspondence that flowed over and back across the ocean, from island to emigrant, was and is commercial and cultural. The symbols of currency and musical notation compress this specific and universal transaction of survival, supplication, and exuberant grief. The font has been selected to allow the poem to be an object both in itself and by itself.<sup>87</sup> The calligraphy style endows the sterling sign with animation and the icon engages with the note in a dance movement, to express the mutuality and reciprocity of family bonds and obligations. It is not bound to era or ethnicity. The concrete poetry form appeals to non-verbal communication; it offers the viewer/reader maximum control over interpretative response.

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<sup>85</sup> Mc Gill, P. (1914) *Children of the Dead End*. Repub 2013 New Island Books: Dublin

<sup>86</sup> Pound, E. (trans) (1915) Exile’s Letter. In *Poetry: A magazine of verse* edited by Harriet Monroe.  
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/> accessed 22/09/20

<sup>87</sup> De Campos A., Pignatari D., de Campos H. (1958) *Pilot Plan for Concrete Poetry*  
<https://ubu.com/papers/noigandres01.html> accessed 06/05/20.

## 7. Shape in poetry transcends the barriers of language.

The engagement of space as a structural element of writing, led to the formation of space as a shape that engages independently or outside of language. There is a sense of reward or satisfaction, born from the universality of shape distinct from the aesthetic experience. In the heroic phases of concrete poetry, the Noigrandes, created rhythmic dynamism to show visual ideas and convey time through a sense of visual movement in shape.<sup>41</sup> The square and series of squares was the preferred shape, to create this rhythm and the illusion of movement.

This idea of reward also associates with May Swenson's poetry of nature and the human mind that playfully engaged with code and riddle. She wrote of the 'anti-specialism' of the poet contrasted to the scientist, 'I see it based in a craving to get through the curtains of things as they **appear** to things as they are and then into the larger, wilder space of things as they are **becoming**'<sup>88</sup> These ideas on shape as a reward in the viewer's experience all add to the casting of writing in shape form.

My poem, 'Fire Dance', addresses 'hidden things', it presents in a cruciform that is suggestive of both spirituality and architecture. The vertical and transversed form can indicate religion, but it can also be seen as a building outline viewed either in plan or elevation. In my poem 'Google with Cows', the visual movement of text evokes time as in the Noigrandes mode, the computer-controlled drone is transported to the mythological era using flowchart icons. The text of my poem 'Lady Honoria's Path' similarly uses shape to conjure up the flow of time in memory and the swaying motion of a carriage. The piece, 'Bogbot' was created first as a square block poem, (echoing Bob Cobbing),<sup>89</sup> evoking the forces of compression physically applied in nature and cerebrally applied in memory.

As the collection developed, my ideas evolved into exploring shape in the digital space, creating poetry using technological applications in film and 3-D. My new practices allow me to combine poetic composition with digital media. I drew on the ideas and work of artists like Mara Patricia Hernandez and Isaac Julien to conceive of multi-layered images that reveal a satisfaction of poetic experience independent of linguistics for the viewer/reader.

## 8. Neural games / playfulness – ideas of trusting sound & chance and rejecting/distrusting logic and meaning. How does this tie to ecology and randomness in nature?

By opening poetry up to non-verbal communication and the randomness and playfulness

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<sup>88</sup> Swenson, M. (2013) *Collected Poems originally published in 1965*. The Library of America: USA

<sup>89</sup> Cobbing, B (1989) 'Square Poem' <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/> accessed 05/02/22

contained therein, concretist creativity mirrors the natural world in its biodiversity and aleatory cross pollination. The serendipitous consequence of a dandelion seed clinging to a blackbird's plumage, then falling to pollinate a field, is a delightful analogy to the instigation of composition by surrendering to the vagaries and possibilities of word mutations and associations. Nonsense can reveal a deeper pattern of sense both in the natural and cerebral worlds. I have stood in the nave of the Basilica de Sagrada Familia in Barcelona and appreciated how the architect Gaudi was inspired by nature.

In my writing, I was looking for this trust in a creative design process, to reveal in chaos an underlying order and harmony. This is a parallel with the understanding of energy in atomic physics and the Brownian movements of particles in bog waters that Tim Robinson wrote about so poetically.<sup>90</sup> The essential notion of Brownian movements is that while the particles themselves whizz around indiscriminately they provide convincing evidence to prove the existence of atoms and molecules. I deliberated on the parallels of atomic science with the birth of Modernism in poetry. '*Un coup de dés*' liberated poetry from the straitjacket of metre and rhyme to create free verse that released the kinetic energy of creative writing. It departed from formal verse with a combination of free verse and unusual typographic layout. '*i/Bog*' embraces these aleatory games, to tease out the complex ecosystems installed by nature and betrayed by man. This reflects my older age as a student in the world of literature, I have looked for freshness and adventure in my thinking and my exploration of this world. I took note of the thoughts of Bob Cobbing in developing his creative and cultural practice, from a sense of excitement rather than criticism, leading to his seminal work, *The ABC of Sound*.<sup>91</sup>

My poem, 'Song of the CO<sub>2</sub>', emerged in this fashion, seeking to express the horror of carbon emissions without sacrificing poetry to the jaws and enjambments of righteousness. I have been very conscious of creating writing that keeps away from the didactic and allows the reader to consider what is presented to them as freely as possible. The poem is based around the scientific acronym for carbon dioxide. The oxygenated carbon is notationally written as CO<sub>2</sub> and/or COO. I used these capital letters to lead into word and images created by a sense of sound effect rather than a narrative logic. A pattern emerged of the relationship between man and the planet, catastrophically altered

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<sup>90</sup> Robinson, T. (2007) *Connemara Listening to the Wind* Penguin:UK

<sup>91</sup> Sutherland, W.M. (2001 August 19) *Interview with Bob Cobbing: The point about Criticism is that it is frequently wrong.* [https://ubuweb.com/papers/cobbing\\_sutherland.html](https://ubuweb.com/papers/cobbing_sutherland.html) accessed 18/05/2019

by the industrial age. The final line of the poem ‘orchestral manoevrings of the quark’,<sup>92</sup> brings hints of pop culture and the absurdities of expression in the book, *Finnegan’s Wake*. There was reworking of the composition, but the essential approach was to explore with spontaneity and respond to the unexpected. The poem, for me, represents the recapture of carbon dioxide from the world of science and its re-presentation as a creature of the cosmos.

#### 9. Reinventing jaded language - breaking down into units and rediscovering joy.

The excavation of linguistic units embedded and entombed in words reinvigorates language, with a release from the canonical and the discovery of the obscure and the concealed. A mix of playfulness and happenstance can be deployed to explore the abstract and arcane, and surrender message in ways different and more hospitable than information and reportage. The whole ambition of my work in *i/Bog* is to create for the reader/perceiver a sense of the big climate crisis issues expressed in a sense of individual and community impact, and to do so free from what Pound described as an ‘atrophy’ in literature and with the sense of dance and music in poetry.<sup>93</sup>

Being alive to the vitality of language is honed in a poly-lingual or anti-monoglot cultural environment. Wales is a case in point, it rose above the limitations of scale and its neo-colonial domination by England to be active in the international Concrete poetry movement in the late sixties. It is noted for ‘innovative poetry (that) has embodied fluidity, cultural exchange and a disregard for national barriers.’<sup>47</sup> I have been inspired by the Swansea School of Concrete Poetry through my studies in the University of Swansea with Professor John Goodby. The leading poets, Peter Finch and Peter Meilleur, experimented with sound mutations and interlinguistic resonances. The legacy and awareness of the Swansea School fired many ideas for the ‘*i/Bog*’ collection, illustrating again the easeful exuberance with which concrete poetry transcends national boundaries, as an international exploration of creative space. I cite, notable examples of this influence, in the guttural garrottings of Finch in ‘Blodeuwedd’<sup>94</sup> and the plangent calls of language-locked words across water in the performance-based poem of Meilleur, ‘River Dee and Deeper.’<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Gillespie, G.E.P. (2010) *Why Joyce Is and Is Not Responsible for the Quark in Contemporary Physics* <http://www.siff.us.es/iberjoyce/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/POJ-3.pdf> accessed 20/01/22. Author’s Note: The quark, an elementary particle, was named from a line in *Finnegan’s Wake*, ‘Three quarks for Muster Mark.’ Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark is a UK pop band.

<sup>93</sup> Pound, E. *ABC of Reading*. Faber& Faber: London. (1934)

<sup>94</sup> Finch, P. (1998) *Blodeuwedd* <http://www.peterfinch.co.uk/blodeuwedd1.mp3> accessed 31/01/2022



These sources and inspirations propelled the composition of two poems set in the long poem, ‘The LeggyFins of Barney Nolan.’ They are drawn from the space between languages. I will treat of each in turn, they share the common approach of invoking sound as a steppingstone across translation and time.

‘The Poetic Contention of the River Shannon’ is a poem crafted in 1962, from a journal publication in 1913 of a series of manuscripts, thought to have been composed between 1632 and 1715.<sup>95</sup> The academic, Brian O Cuiv, provided an accompanying translation of the text from classical Gaelic into formal English. The poem is effectively a series of inter-textualised stanzas drawn from different authorial sources. It is a humorous exchange regarding the ownership of the River Shannon, and it also speaks to our age in its theme of protecting natural resources. I created my own version of the contention to restore the humour and aural qualities that are lost in translation, to re-present the debate to contemporary audiences.

I wanted to create a sense of the original sound derived from metre and rhyme to ensure that I was faithful to the dominance of orality in Gaelic culture. Classical Gaelic language in the scripted form is difficult to read or more accurately to hear. I devised a compositional process of working across the Gaelic text and the translation to English prose to create a contemporary version. This is illustrated below in the tracking of verse two <sup>95</sup>

Original C 17<sup>th</sup> Gaelic:

‘Acht mar dhlighios deaghollamh  
sgela gach rainn do fhriotal,  
an sgel cla6n do cheartughadh,  
c6ir do chongmhail 'na hionadh,  
inne6sad go healadhnach  
mo sge6il um sheilbh na Sionna.

Mid C 20<sup>th</sup> English translation:

But as a good chief-judge is bound to expound the statements of each party, correct false information, and maintain justice in its rightful place, I shall state with professional skill my findings about the ownership of the Shannon

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<sup>95</sup> O Cuiv, B. (1962) The Poetic Contention about the River Shannon. *Ériu* 19 pp 89-110  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/30006864> accessed 08/04/2021

My Contemporary Version:

No judge ever declaired himself short of expositions  
Story spieling of both sides poingtend tintinnabulations  
Meanderthall tales, tricksters distracted,  
Schooner et legislator debayted the Sinnanon'

My poem, 'Sheeny Shiny Foil', has a similar evolution in the sense of 'concreting' sound and exploiting phoneme to reveal the materiality of text. The location of this piece in the Barney narrative, relates to the historical labour strike to secure fair pay and conditions for the unskilled operatives working on the hydroelectric scheme.<sup>96</sup>

A ballad poem, 'Thirty Two Bob' was published by the union, it captured the anger and sense of betrayal of the workers.<sup>97</sup> The ballad speaks of their poverty and desperation in a jovial way, but the depiction of their toil and hunger captures dogged endurance not doggerel whimsy. I wrote the poem as a hybrid of homophonics and as a caustic parody of the Irish National Anthem, to capture both the patriotism of the workers and to convey their exclusion from the equity of the newly established state.

The idea of 'monumentality' in nation building through major infrastructure projects was cited in academic reviews. I thought that the refraction of word and fragmentation of image in the Alloatti & Bentivoglio poem 'Monumento' captured these thoughts.<sup>98</sup> I reflected this in the composition of the poem. 'Sinne Fianna Fáil / ata fe gheall ag Eireann' are the stirring opening lines of the anthem, meaning 'Soldiers are we, whose lives are pledged to Ireland'. The Gaelic is homophonetically transposed into English and loosely reformed as 'Sheeny Shiny Foil / attaw figall at earning'. The parody of the anthem conserves the truth of the '32 bob' song, revealing the shallowness of a patriotism that betrayed its poorest citizens.

The overall trajectory of this work is to explore the natural and the numinous worlds and make sense of how our past activities have, brought us to precipice of disaster, as well as to seek guidance on restoring equilibrium. We are now both custodians and destroyers of the planet, who have failed to heed our science, and must resort to the psyche to understand our loss and our load.

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<sup>96</sup> Maguire, M. (1998) Socialists, Savages and Hydroelectric Schemes: A Historical Anthropological Account of the Construction of Ardnacrusha. *Anthropology Ireland*, 3. pp. 60-77. <http://mural.maynoothuniversity.ie/8355/1/Socialists.pdf> accessed 14/11/19

<sup>97</sup> Mc Carthy, M. (2004) *High Tension. Life on the Shannon Scheme* p38. Lilliput Press: Dublin

<sup>98</sup> Balgiu, A. & de la Torre, M. (Eds) (2020) *Women in Concrete Poetry. 1959-1979* Primary Information:USA

10. Memorised poetry excites human connection and fosters an intuitive understanding of ecological challenges that sidesteps the barriers of scientific and political debates.

Memorising went out of style as pedagogical principles rejected learning by rote, as counterproductive to the development of understanding and interpretation.<sup>99</sup> As a follow on, this weakens the engagement with orality and the shared enjoyment of sound. Memorising and reciting of poetry and prose was a part of ordinary public life at social gatherings in the home, the pub or meeting place. It was integral to the warmth of human connection. It was not confined to the ivory towers of academia or the earnest quavering of politicians. Poets were the entertainers and the chroniclers of the working people, dubiously categorised as ‘the poets in low life’.<sup>100</sup> Sound, rhythm, word-echo, intonation worked with memory, interjection, repartee to create a poetic experience that surged past the boundaries of understanding.

My research sought to reveal the ‘concrete’ in older poetry and question if an arrogance of innovation blinds us to the subtleties and layers of old poetry and the craft of the ‘uneducated’ and simple poets.<sup>101</sup> Augustos di Campos quoted ‘*E caddi come corpo morto cade*’ in his exposition on the latent presence of materiality in Classical Poetry, and the duality of the concrete movement in both ‘making it new’ as well as drawing from the past. This analysis deepens the appreciation of the ‘low life’ poets as exemplified by the writing of Patrick Mc Gill.<sup>102</sup>

The term, *navvy*, was accorded to the *soi-disant* unskilled labourers of civil engineering infrastructure projects, that commenced with the development of municipal infrastructure in Victorian Britain, notably led by the Civil Engineers Brunel, Telford, and Stephenson. In terms of the climate crisis within the British and Irish Isles, they mark the start of the Industrial Revolution that over the decades has released the carbon now heating up our climate to unsustainable levels. Research for *i/Bog* provoked questions. How can the voice of the navy illuminate the decarbonisation agenda? Can the evocations of the ‘Children of the Dead End’<sup>103</sup> confer an urgency to the changes that society are being asked to adopt? Can the re-presentation of these ballad-poems solder a human connection to the immediate plight of

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<sup>99</sup> Alfano, V. (2019) *Ode to the poem: why memorising poetry still matters for human connection*. <https://theconversation.com/> acc.21/09/19

<sup>100</sup> University of Chicago Library (2015) The Poets in Low Life Exhibition <https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/collex/exhibits/poetic-associations-nineteenth-century-english-poetry-collection-dr-gerald-n-wachs>. accessed 19/10/21

<sup>101</sup> Gilonis, H. (2020) *Isolated in Aber Cuawg*. Oystercatcher Press: Wales  
p.11 ‘All of these devices were every day in Welsh poetic writing of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries – a sign, perhaps, that English-language avant gardists should beware over-easy complacency.’

<sup>102</sup> Pierse, M. (Ed) (2017) *A History of Irish Working-Class Writing* Cambridge University Press:UK

<sup>103</sup> Mc Gill, P. (1911) ‘Songs of the Dead End’ In *The Navvy Poet* p.ix ‘I sing of them, The underworld, the great oppressed,/ Befooled of parson, priest and King/ Who mutely plod earth’s pregnant breast,/ Weary of their sorrowing,/ – The Great Unwashed – of them I sing.’

the planet?

The impact of the climate crisis can be ignored and less threatening in Ireland when those directly affected live in the Himalayan meltwater flooded regions of Pakistan or the sand engulfed cities of deltaic Sudan. This apathy is termed ‘climate nonchalance’.<sup>104</sup> If we are faced with the kindred hardships and courtships of earlier generations, can those honest renderings impel us to seek a common cause in a global crisis? Can we generate an affect theory response, in connecting the harsh lives and life chances of our ‘low life’ grandparents with the contemporary threatened lives of the climate vulnerable?

My long poem, ‘The Leggyfins of Barney Nolan’, interweaves these ideas as it draws on rural poverty in Ireland in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, from the children of famine survivors. Barney, as a character, shares some of the traits of Finnegan, the late lamented workman of *Finnegan’s Wake* and ‘Leggyfins’ in the title endorses this consanguinity<sup>105</sup>. Both are citizens of the same emerging nation and are ‘men of hod, cement and edifices.’ The ballad ‘Finnegan’s Wake’, an old Dublin ballad was the origin for the Joycean character; the novel heterogeneously intertwined the ribaldry and mundanity of the Dublin *demi-monde* with esoteric disquisitions on philosophy, morality and Babelian lexicography. It is best appreciated outside the realms of understanding when one yields to the flow and sounds.<sup>106</sup>

My audio poem for the workmen, ‘Songsalong from the Hole’ is composed from texts sampled from an array of songs of the era. Singing while working communally is means of creating rhythm for the labour, supporting team collaboration, and most importantly asserting identity and sense of self. Having worked as a civil engineer, I know that the workmen would have sung. I concocted this poem to create an impression of many voices rising from the construction site, with the individual snatches creating an overall song.

I selected lines from ballads, love songs, songs of republicanism and humorous songs. The lines were assembled and collaged to break all narrative thread; I wanted to counter the semantic and bring to the fore the embedded image. I deliberately aligned comedy with patriotism. I selected lines that included names to give a feeling of character and geography. There are twelve stanzas with fourteen lines, I assembled the lines with consideration of end rhyme and evenness of metre, to enhance the formation of polyphonic appeal. The poem succeeds in creating farcical effect but remains true to eulogising the endeavours of the

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<sup>104</sup> Pettinger, T. (2021) *In the face of chaos why are we so nonchalant about climate change?* <https://theconversation.com> accessed 20/10/21

<sup>105</sup> Joyce, J. (1992) ‘*Finnegan’s Wake*.’ Penguin Books: Great Britain. p.4

<sup>106</sup> The Clancy Brothers singing Finnegan’s Wake. In *The David Frost TV show* March 5 1970; <https://www.youtube.com> Acc. 19/10/21.

labourers. I created this as an audio poem to reveal the materiality of the text and the endurance of presence in the sound of the human voice.<sup>107</sup>

11. Folk poetry of loss and emigration was often not written down but conserved in communal renditions. How can this inspire the digital world?

The primarily oral culture of Irish popular poetry, *filíocht na ndaoine*, from Raftaire in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century to the 20 Century navvy poets such as Francis Fahy from Kinvara, exhibits the gestural characteristics<sup>108</sup> that attune rhythm and rhyme to their narratives of walking and journey. The association of the creative muse with the active process of ambulation and leave-taking is widely noted. The French poet Rimbaud was somewhat notorious for running away from home and walking over 200 km to Paris. The association of cultural expression and metaphorical pathways in earlier societies of the Celtic Isles, often called ‘the old ways’<sup>109</sup>, reveals the depth of the synergy that has existed between the routes that people travel, (by land and sea) and the cultural expression of those people.

Looking at the possibilities and opportunities of concrete and visual poetry, can there be a synthesis of the folk based narrative and the anti-poetic materiality? I was keen to interpolate the presence of space in the concrete with the rhythmic pattern of Irish poetry of peregrination. (I note that, ‘pattern’ is also a Hiberno English term for pilgrimage.<sup>110</sup>) This presence of space carries the weight of possession and dispossession, in the context of forced displacement and emigration. In the sense of the overall impetus of *i/Bog*, the poetry is hooking in reader engagement with the climate crisis, through evoking the traditional ballad style but disrupting it to give contemporary resonance.

The ideas of contested space, both as a physical terrain and in a metaphorical sense, draw on my work experiences of community environmental (Greencare) projects in Northern Ireland. These Greencare initiatives restored habitats and offered nature-based amenity in run down locations in inner-city Belfast.<sup>111</sup> The opposing communities were assisted to collaborate on environmental improvements, and to imagine these degraded sites as a shared green space. This was in direct contrast to government imposed militarised zones at the interface of segregated housing estates.

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<sup>107</sup> von Webern, A. & de Campos, A. (1981) Klangfarbenmelodie in Poly-Chromatic poems. In *Comparative Literature Studies* 18(3) pp. 386-398. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40246278> accessed 21/10/2022

<sup>108</sup> Wainwright, J. (2011) *Poetry the basics*. Routledge: Abingdon UK

<sup>109</sup> Mac Farlane, R. (2012) *The Old Ways*. Penguin Books: London

<sup>110</sup> Dolan, P.T. (2020) *The Dictionary of Hiberno English*. Gill Books: Dublin

<sup>111</sup> Belfast Telegraph (2009 July 8<sup>th</sup>) *Grant helps new Community Garden* <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/grant-helps-new-community-garden-28485983.html> accessed 21/10/22

In 2003, when I led the Groundwork NI peer-based review, the political atmosphere was still quite febrile. I was however deeply struck by the sense of positivity and well-being in conversations between people from opposing backgrounds, when we talked of the practicalities of clear-ups, composting and butterfly counting. These impressions of remaining true to a violent history with martial tradition, whilst also creating a parallel space in which to communicate collaborate and play, fed into my poem ‘The Soldiereens’s Song.’

The poem imagines the ruminations of a 16<sup>th</sup> century Gaelic soldier on the 21<sup>st</sup> society of Ireland and on global issues. I fused the retrospection of historical archives with the concept of transgressive space. This allowed me to present the poem with an authenticity of happening mediated through elasticated time, in a parallel with the Einsteinian definition of time as a fulcrum/ string theory<sup>112</sup>.

The original march of the O’Sullivan Beara army has been recorded by historians and more significantly in music, poetry, and folk history. The preservation of this event in the oral traditions ensured the account was not lost during the British occupation. It survived as an oral folk record that captured the detail of route and survival tactics. The march took place in the depths of winter 1601, traversing the island north to south for two hundred and thirty miles. Fifty years ago, a relative of mine pointed out a hedge break on a field boundary on her small holding, in the townland of Tully near Ballygar. She declared, with intractable certainty, that it marked a passing point on the march. Decades later, the route was plotted accurately, drawing from a wide range of documents, landscape features and oral histories. It confirmed the accuracy of Kitty Burke’s statement. It shows the extraordinary power of a single observational tale when set in context, as if these myriad memory beads were joined up in a necklace, mapping out the two hundred and thirty miles from carnage to refuge.

The ‘Soldiereen’s Song’ poem is based on a local landscape feature, a distinctive mound that is recorded in local lore as the grave of one of O’Sullivan Beara’s men. In granting him a voice, the poem seeks to cast both a critical glance over the contemporary, and encourage the same emotional loyalty to future generations, as we have held sacred the lives of past generations. It suggests that if we can be patriotic about the remembered past, we can be equally patriotic about the imagined future.

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<sup>112</sup> Kramer, N. (Spring 2013) Ud maate jeg": Andersen's Fodreise as Transgressive Space. In *Scandinavian Studies*. 85(1) University of Illinois Press on behalf of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study Stable pp.39-66. ‘its explicit yet playful awareness of the perception of space as a central and fundamental dimension of its narrative’ <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406> Accessed 13/12/18

## 12. Sense of place & Eco-poetry: the physical and the immured.

'i/Bog' sets out to craft a sense of place to secure a relationship with climate crisis global impacts, that are anchored in the individual neighbourhood context. The motto 'think global, act local' is used to promote the significance of each individual action in impacting, for better or worse on planet Earth. But I wonder what does 'local' now mean? If it just means location and geography, then the efforts to instigate a sense of global stewardship are limited to a radius of responsibility, perceived idiosyncratically amongst the citizenries. Effectively, this is a restriction to the immediate neighbourhood or more likely the family home.

Today, over 56% of the World population are urban dwelling. This is a marked shift from the 1950's when 20% of the continental population of Africa and Asia was rural; it is now 43% and 51% respectively. Ireland shifted from 45% urban to 64% urban over the same era.<sup>113</sup> This displacement from birthplace, accompanied by the pace of landscape concretization, has sundered the emotional bonds with 'mother earth'. Indigenous cultures are widely praised and indeed envied for the primeval presence of nature in their cultures. The Native American saying, 'we do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children', is widely quoted. My research considered ideas on both reinstating lost connections, as well as creating a sense of belonging in a new homeland.

A common introductory greeting in Wales is *O ble dych'n ddod yn wreiddol?* (Where are you originally from?). The suggestion is 'you're not from about here'. This is a common assumption in any country that underwent societal transition during the population surges, and displacement of the Industrial Revolution. If this sense of 'not belonging' obstructs an engagement with the local, then a human ecology of embracing an incomer into the ecosystem will be frustrated. There is also the challenge of modern farming methods that have accelerated the pace of land degradation and turned the rural resident from custodian to extortioner. Suggestions of reining in levels of meat consumption, to reduce carbon emissions, are met with howls of fury.

My writing explored hidden ways to bridge this divide and uncovered accounts of the mediaeval practice of embedding animal and human bones in construction to grant the walls power to ward off misfortune.<sup>114</sup> A sense of place is generally understood to mean the emotive bonds generated by local identity, amenity, and heritage. My writing was looking for a deeper, more pantheistic sense of place to challenge the master-servant dynamic of

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<sup>113</sup> The World Bank (2022) *Data* <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/> accessed 21/10/22

<sup>114</sup> Ó Súilleabháin, S. (1945 March) Foundation Sacrifices. In *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 75(1), pp. 45-52. <http://www.jstor.com/stable/25510484>

industrialised societies with the natural world.

Linking the concept of concrete as embodied carbon <sup>115</sup> with the ideas of concrete poetry as embodied meme, led to reading about horse skulls hidden in dance floors.<sup>116</sup> The composition of 'Fire Dance' is derived from the compression of Imagism, especially the style of William Carlos Williams. The metre is irregular and flips from dactyl to anapest, to echo the idea of hearth stone dancing. The visual shape relates to the architectural plan view of construction, as well as the vertical flow of echo from the buried skull amplifying the hearthstone beats that pulse the upward chimney flames. The materiality of the surrounding page both encase and frame the poem and evokes the spirit of Ian Hamilton Finlay.<sup>117</sup>

The theme of immured lives recurs throughout *i/Bog*. This was the subject of my conference paper 'If the stones talk can we hear them', included in the supplementary appendix, page 199 of this thesis. The intention of bringing to life the sense of the immured in our physical surroundings runs across the collection in the action of visual image, the evocation of sound and the thread of narrative. Human encroachment of wildlife habits <sup>118</sup> has led to the pandemic, and Ireland is a laggard in climate crisis action<sup>119</sup>. My poetry elucidates this theme of the physical world as an embodiment of our past lives and beliefs, to stimulate reflection on listening to the planet and being aware of the sentience of our surroundings.

### 13. What does gender reveal about concrete poetry ... or what does concrete poetry reveal about gender?

As a woman, who worked extensively in male dominated industries, I am very aware that the ideation of 'concrete' and of 'woman' are generally deemed to be mutually exclusive. It has been particularly exciting and rewarding to read and study the female voice in concrete / visual poetry. Aside from the anthology and retrospective critique undertaken by Mary Ellen Solt, it can appear that women were virtually absent from the canon. (Incidentally the same could be said of Dadaism, it is only recently that <sup>120</sup> the role of female artists Emily Hennings

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<sup>115</sup> Circular Ecology. *Embodied Carbon – The ICE Database*. <https://circularecology.com/> accessed 02/11/21

<sup>116</sup> Meier, A.C. (2018) The Horse Skulls Hidden in the Dance Floors of Ireland. <https://daily.jstor.org/> accessed 15/08/2020

<sup>117</sup> Hamilton Finlay, I. (1962-68). *Poor Old Tired Horse*. <https://www.ubu.com/> accessed 02/11/2021

<sup>118</sup> Sudworth, J. (2020 December 21) *Covid: Wuhan scientist would 'welcome' visit probing lab-leak theory* 'I have seen substantial evidence that these are naturally occurring phenomena driven by human encroachment into wildlife habitat, which is clearly on display across south-east Asia.' Dr Peter Daszak, disease ecologist and the president of EcoHealth Alliance. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-55364445> accessed 22/12/20

<sup>119</sup> Sargeant, N. (2019 August 27) *Official stats paint Ireland as EU laggard on climate and environment*. <https://greennews.ie>. Acc.21/09/19

<sup>120</sup> Rosemont, P. (2016 March/April) Women of Dada and their Times. In <https://againsthcurrent.org/atc181/p4589>. accessed 02/11/2012



and Sophie Tauber Arp have been accorded recognition in the history of Cabaret Voltaire.)

The online open source, *monoskop*, a repository of women's concrete poetry was set up in 2000 to conserve and promote their work. In the early part of my research, I created a matrix of the thirty-two listed poets whose active periods were mostly 1950s to 1980s, so ranging from earlier semiotic styles to the start of digital compositions. This was relatively crude, as I could only work from redirections to online monographs or some personal websites. Most of the poets listed are North American or European, again reinforcing the misrepresentation of concrete poetry as a world view. Though the poetry itself may not be colonialist, the view is certainly so in its exclusion of African, Asian, and other cultures.

Mirella Bentivoglio noted in the recently published anthology, that women have had to overcome the obstacles of being 'rendered immaterial' both by 'public absence and private confinement'.<sup>98</sup> The anthology notes that Bentivoglio wrote about 'strangely interwoven rhythms' and Fahlstrom wrote about 'the importance of repetition, intimately connected to the body's own cadences.' This theme of women being drawn to rhythms, both as a metaphor and metronome of the female condition, suggested a rhyming of the menstrual cycle with the ecological cycle. It creates a feminist interpretation of the Solt sonnet 'Moonshot' informed by the convergence of lunar and menstrual cycle.

Feminist theories, women's magazines and the commercial opportunities of the digital age have revealed the level and scale of female output in concrete and visual poetry that ineluctably reveal the earlier era as biased and patriarchal. The overriding theme of women poets is still of being engaged in escaping constraints and challenging the male gaze and its monopoly on meaning. The poet Siklosi writes of fragility as an act of resilience **Error! Bookmark not defined.** in framing the female condition in terms of self-determination and confident opposition.<sup>56</sup> These studies and reflections influenced my writing and encouraged my own development of individual style and voice. The work of Paula Claire was a source of inspiration in the participatory performances for my community poetry project, 'Th'other Together.' Mary Ellen Solt influenced my piece 'Fearnaght Formation' and Bentivoglio helped me imagine the 'Emigrant's Letter.'

#### 14. 'Found' poetry as a source of authenticity and the distillation of narratives.

The presentation of writing 'found' in the cultural environment creates an emotional weight that breaks through the contentiousness of 'what is the right thing to do' debates. The ambition of *i/Bog* is to find a way to articulate the issues of climate change that are obscured

in the scientific data and technical language, or to quote Greta Thunberg, ‘no more blah blah blah’. Drawing from the Dadaistic principles of *found poetry* to unfreeze the shackles of syntax, offers a new and unexpected response to reports from the scientific field.

My poem, ‘Shark’, was derived as *l’objet trouvé* model. It was created using the Oulipo technique from a BBC news report on the effects of climate change on shark populations related to managing cancer rates in humans.<sup>121</sup> I selected text from the report using an interval based on the arithmetical progression,  $n+1$ . This gave a selection of words ordered in the pattern of 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> etc. The poem distils the detail of the research implications without recourse to semantic coherence.

For the final stanza of my poem, ‘The Soldiereen’s Song’, I researched folkloric records to embed in this excerpt an account of an eviction in the eighteenth century,<sup>122</sup>

‘O world, how can you face your  
God and do this thing to  
your people?  
Even the tents made from the  
wattles of destroyed tigeens were burned.  
No four-footed beast could be saved.’

The voice of the soldier has veered throughout from archaic staidness to a freer contemporary style, but in this final stanza I used an archived voice from local history to describe twenty first century conflagration, showing the universality of human despoilation caused by conflict and war.

My poem, ‘You asked me’, is composed from an interview/discussion with someone who did not feel included in the local community because he and his family were marked as outsiders; the ‘othering’ of emigrants in the rural community. I was struck by his repetition of the phrase, ‘you asked me’. He told me that despite being a resident for fifteen years nobody asked him about ‘things’. I wanted the poem to convey the sheer hurt of being excluded from conversation and to highlight the need we have as social beings to talk, to hear our sounds.

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<sup>121</sup> Stafford, R. (2016 October 27) *How overfishing and shark-finning could increase the pace of climate change*. <https://theconversation.com>

<sup>122</sup> The Schools Collection <https://www.duchas.ie/en/cbes> ‘Cluan as go brath’ pp 213-216, in appendix 3 of this thesis.

## 15. The aerial view.

This is a perspective not naturally granted to us wingless humans. It presents a new understanding of the physical environment and propels one to contemplate the limitless possibilities of the ‘space-things in word-time’ expressed by Gomringer. When Kamensky, who was an early aviator, wrote his poem, ‘Tango with Cows’, he invaded a space previously held by birds and angels.

I conceived of my poem, ‘Google with Cows’, as a form of homage, what I term ‘drone poetry’. I wanted to bring together ideas about the future and our cosmic relationship with earth. This led to creating my own poem/art installation for the Ballygar Arts Galway 2020 project, ‘Elephant in the Room’.

My poem ‘Galaxy for Mary’ is a reflection on the themes of inclusion and equity. The moon landing of 1969 was celebrated as ‘a giant step for mankind’. At the same time, the racism that excluded people of colour from advancement was noted by the Civil Rights Movement. Gill Scott Heron, African American poet expressed this rage in his acerbic, elegant, and profound poem, ‘Whitey on the Moon.’ As the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that momentous occasion was being celebrated, my poem asks how far has mankind advanced in sharing the entitlements of the planet equitably? I discovered that our area is closely linked to that event.<sup>123</sup> Mary Cunniffe, from Funshinagh in Four Roads, was evicted aged two in 1851 and eventually emigrated to America. Her grandson was Michael Collins, command pilot of Apollo.

The object-poem, in its mobile form, captures the extraordinary journey of a homeless child to the pinnacle of human endeavour. I created a concrete poetry installation for the local arts centre. This was composed of a series of suspended framed pieces of text in an enclosed space. I used this form to create a galaxy for Mary, with planetary bodies representing the seventeen Goals of the UN charter for Sustainable Development. The ethereal being of Mary is expressed in a composition for each planet, the reader/viewer was invited to reflect on these thoughts. The walls and ceiling were painted black, I positioned a midlevel mirror surface that reflected light from a low source. The overall effect was to conjure up a sense of cosmic and outer space, to stimulate reflecting on the UN ideals from the perspective of a child.

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<sup>123</sup> Cooney, I. (2021 April 29) Apollo 11 Astronaut had ‘close links’ with Mount Talbot. <https://roscommonherald.ie/> accessed 01/02/22

## 16. Participation – questioning the role of the poet.

The displacement of people through immigration imperatives is generally viewed as ‘flight from a situation’; the presence in a new country is that of exile. As an Irish person who left as an economic migrant in the 80s, one carries an acute awareness of the cultural *cadw-mi-gei*<sup>124</sup> that sustains the identity and resilience of the incomer, the one who is ‘not from around here.’

The cultural project, ‘Th’Other Together’, was developed to open up an awareness and curiosity in cultural diversity in the small West of Ireland village that is Ballygar. My ideas for a community-based poetry project proposal to the EU Capital of Culture 2020 programme in Galway, were prompted by my studies of the history and progression of the concrete poetry movement, the emergence of ‘Fluxus’ and its fusion of participation and performance. The overriding idea was of changing the relationship with an audience from being recipient/servant of the cultural experience to being active in an individual or collective role as co-creators and/or co-performers. The English poet, Paula Claire, was an inspiration and her poetry performance, SUNFLOWERPOWER, for the EU Capital of Culture 2001 in Lisbon, galvanised my ideas for community participation in ‘Th’Other Together’<sup>125</sup>.

The original plans to facilitate poetry writing in the community were transformed into a series of workshops, poetry walks, carnival parade, folkloric research, linguistic forays and artist collaborations that culminated in a spoken word theatrical performance, *Ballygar Shouts Béal Átha Ghartha*. This phase introduced a new dimension of oral and sonic activity to the collection and propelled my creative practice into experimenting in the fields of theatre and multi-media.

The eighteenth-century poet, Antain O Raire, was presented as a folk hero, to stimulate ideas around welcoming people into a community and seeing past the boundaries of language, ability, and status. Raftery, despite blindness and abject poverty, recorded local lives and landscapes with a vigorous espousal of cultural freedom. Poetry and the spoken word were foregrounded in the performance and, though music was intrinsic, my artistic direction was focussed on the sound, sense, and inheritance of word. I drew on the ideas of Paula Claire, as well as the wider Fluxus movement ideals of audience participation. I wanted to reframe the relationship between artist and audience, from director to recipient towards co-creation.

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<sup>124</sup> Author’s note: ‘Cadw-mi-gei’ Welsh meaning treasure or savings as in personal keepsakes.

<sup>125</sup> Claire, P. (2001) SUNFLOWERPOWER <https://www.paulaclaire.com>

A video was produced in collaboration with Armand Golden.<sup>126</sup> It showcases elements of the forty-minute performance; the direct link is incorporated in the community participation section of this thesis. Some people were unable to take part in public performance, I pre-recorded their readings to ensure their distinctive voices and languages were still heard. The audience wore eye-masks at times to heighten sensitivity to sound and to reflect on the perception of difference when vision is excluded. I created a composite poem for the children from cut-ups of the individual poems written in the school, to play with the ideas of aleatory poetics and interplay of sound rhythms. This synthesis of diverse thoughts and voices reflected the ideas of democracy and representativeness of the project, ‘Th’Other Together.’

#### 17. Digital poetry. Beyond Twitter & Instagram.

The absence of paper/papyrus is both a challenge and an invitation to the art of writing. It stimulated my wondering if the digital field is just a medium, or if it can open new ‘space’. Social media provides a conduit between poet/writer and global audience that is democratically equal and bypasses the limitations of traditional publishing. Notwithstanding the issues of platform moderation and government controls, the overall step change of the 21<sup>st</sup> century means publishing online is open, audience ‘likes’ have usurped the place of the editor. Contemporary exposition of meme in the digital space mirrors the concrete poet’s ‘exploitation’ of popular cultural images and slogans.

The original concrete movement deflated into legacy and retrospection in the nineteen seventies, but a new era of concrete poetry has emerged. Kenneth Goldsmith noted, ‘few could have foreseen that it would arise as a digital phoenix in the computer age, presciently predicting the ways we would interact with language in the twenty first century.’<sup>127</sup>

This stimulated my research into the variables possible through the multidimensionality of the digital sphere. The materiality of script can now extend and interrogate the boundaries of cyberspace, a space that disappears in a click, exists in gigabyte ethereality, and self-reconstructs endlessly. Digital tools are now integrated into the arsenal of my writing life and their use is evident in several pieces that use collage, audio, and video. It is noted that the developments of new concrete poetry can be more

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<sup>126</sup> Hannigan Popp, M. & Golden, A. (2020) ‘Th’Other Together’ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ra3KF33pr1M>.

<sup>127</sup> Bean V. & McCabe C. (Eds) (2015) *The New Concrete: Visual Poetry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. p Hayward : London

fluidly accomplished using digital, not graphic space as their structural agent.<sup>128</sup> My desire was however, to create some work that explicitly conjoined the digital world of aleatory ephemeral possibility with the Gaean universe of bogland and memoir.

My poem, 'Bogbot', was conceived as such an endeavour, with a vocabulary drawn from the vernacular, the idiomatic and the macaronic. The base piece is influenced by Language style, the internal rhyme tumbles over into succeeding line as in 'BogrhythmicalBoginimical' or 'BogliciousBograciousBogracist'. My early ideas on this piece explored cinematic visions of Dante<sup>129</sup>, I wondered how the bog world in its complexity of cultural emporium and simplicity of sod could be modelled on the Inferno. I availed of the generosity of Derek Beaulieu<sup>130</sup> who freely offers a compendium of resources online for concrete and visual poetry and encountered the 3D poetry writer<sup>131</sup>.

The poem is presented on the page as a square poem. In the digital space, it is a concatenation of words and phrases mirroring the structure of the carbon atom. I embedded the link as a QR code on the page. It links to the 3D poem and exhibits as a digital relation to the ideogram.

#### 18. Crossing language boundaries is an act of emigration.

The constraints and sanctions of geopolitical boundaries are mirrored in the ethnic codes and outsider distinctions of different languages. This is my lived experience as an immigrant, in the monoglot class-based society of England and its hegemonized neighbours. English is also broadly speaking the language of business and of scientific research internationally. The national languages of Wales/Cymraeg and Irish/Gaelic occupy a position of cultural ambition and political opposition, in the post Brexit sphere of a fractured Euro-UK relationship.

An easy transition in a street conversation from an English greeting of 'Hello mate' to the Welsh 'Shmae butt' is more than a signal of identity, it is a step into another territory, a homeland. Stories abound of people being interrupted in private conversations, be it in Polish or Bengali, with angry shouts to stop talking 'like that.'<sup>132</sup> There is a duality then of living in a society that is linguistically diverse but conducts its collective engagement in one dominant language, whilst within its body bubbles of interaction are hermetically sealed.

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<sup>128</sup> Meilleur, P. (1996) In the digital 1990's, the innovations of concrete poetry are making a new kind of sense. In *Eye magazine*. 20 (Spring) <http://www.evemagazine.com>. accessed 16/11/2021

<sup>129</sup> Glickstein, A. (2019 August 21) Cinematic Visions of Dante and Video Games come together in Russia. In <https://hyperallergic.com/511460>. accessed 21/09/19

<sup>130</sup> Beaulieu, D. (2021) *Steal my Work* <https://derekbeaulieu.ca/> accessed 21/01/2021

<sup>131</sup> Koelink, M, Stale Ritland, J. etc (2017) *3D Poetry Editor* <https://www.3dpoetryeditor.art/> accessed 21/01/21

<sup>132</sup> Bonnie Greer (2019, October 4) BBC Question Time . <https://twitter.com/bbcquestiontime/status/1179886273202458624>

This dilemma truly reflects the ambition of the International Concrete Poetry movement of the nineteen fifties and sixties, in harnessing the multilingual creativity and joyful exchange of cultural expression, to transcend isolation and proscription. The term supranational poetry was devised to open linguistic borders within a poetic space to allow languages in visual form to draw the ‘reader’ across the boundaries of one or more cultures unhampered by the controls of embassy or migration.<sup>133</sup> The ‘Emigrant’s Letter’ poem is most closely related to the idea of supranational poetry, though it is the language of money and music that are contiguously embedded in the graphic space.

Considering these ideas from the perspective of the contemporary 21<sup>st</sup> century led me to revisiting the wordscape of James Joyce in *Finnegan’s Wake* and thinking about the emotional, cultural, and political relationships between the individual and homeland, journey and residence. The awareness of words in semantic, graphic, and aural terms is very different for a bi/multilingual speaker compared to the monoglot. Though brought up in a Gaelic/English environment, this awareness has been more keenly experienced and explored by me in the bilingualism of Wales.

I was stimulated by the poem ‘Dee and Deeper’ by Peter Meilleur. It evokes both the sense of language-held territories through a dual Welsh and English composition, as well as the simultaneous sense of border and connection through the flow of the river in the poem. The presence of the river, both in white space and metaphorically in the poem, allows the languages both to merge as well as hold their separate line. A performance rendition of it is needed to garner the full effect and perceive how time can be compressed or expanded into timelessness. A poem can be a play and a sound poem and a visually charged text. A poem can exhibit diverse features or performances in readings and become a time-based art, a dynamic event with a particular duration.<sup>134</sup>

The ‘Barney’ poem uses these ideas to suggest the rhythm of its reading by opening white space between words, disrupting line expectations and varying fonts to create the visual analogy of the river from stream to spate within the performative aspects of sound and song. There is a tension and disorientation created in the visual layout and style to match the river ecosystem, from the youthful surging of its source to the meeting of waters and stories in its tributaries and then the onward propulsion in prosody of its journey to the ocean.

The ‘Leggyfins of Barney Nolan’ poem is centred on the construction of a

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<sup>133</sup>Wong, E.S., (2015) Interlingual Encounter in Pierre Garnier and Niikuni Seiichi’s French-Japanese Concrete Poetry. In *L2Journal* 7(1). <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/68p0w4jw> accessed 16/11/2021

<sup>134</sup> Davidson, I. Visual Poetry as Performance. (2004) In *Performance Research*, 9:2, 99-107, DOI: [10.1080/13528165.2004.10872020](https://doi.org/10.1080/13528165.2004.10872020) <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13528165.2004.10872020> accessed 01/07/2022

hydroelectric dam on the River Shannon in nineteen twenty-six. It was an event that transformed Irish society in terms of the economy and standard of living. It wreaked calamitous change to the river habitats by flooding the upper zone farmlands, destroying the lower zone beds, and diverting the river into a concrete lined channel. It was a choice between human desperation and environmental damage. These are not easy choices. They are the same issues we face today. I used the idea of river as a zone for interlingual experiment, as a safe space to contemplate the circumstances of the past and reflect on the choices we face today.

My early drafts of the 'Barney' poem looked to directly reflecting epic confrontations. I read and reimagined the confrontations of the Iliad, the realms of the Inferno, the legendary landscapes of the Irish epic 'The Tain' and the Welsh epic tales in the Mabinogion. Ultimately, I moved away from analogy in the narrative structure, and influenced by *Finnegans Wake*, I explored linguistic inventiveness to create sound and meaning. In the final act of emigration, I sought authenticity of landscape by drawing on navigational mapping from that era.<sup>135</sup>

## 19. Strange lands and Arrhythmics

New concrete and visual poetry reinvented the genre in the internet landscape and has created a medium that articulates the distress of the ecosystem through its intrinsic instability. Now digital technologies can take classic concrete elements to places that 'antique concretists' could only dream of.<sup>71</sup> Online platforms such as 'Poem Brut' and 'Poem Atlas' offer exhibition space for poets from diverse backgrounds to transcend the boundaries of word and page. In these creative spaces, the limitations of expectation give way to the unguarded freedom of improvisation and originality. The word 'arrhythmic' in this title was selected from the medical lexicography, to meld the aberrational tendencies of rhythm in concrete with the dysfunctional cycles of the natural planet. This association is deepened when one enters the 'looped up' space on a computer screen, and infinite variables abound. The Poundian concept of *periplum* is thrown adrift in endless variations of the same 'map'.

'Gort an Iomaire' is a piece composed using a digital form of collage, a ready-made with overlying poetic text. The image is of a crossroads village dated c.1905, it is resonant

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<sup>135</sup> Irish Waterways (2009) *Sailing Directions for the Shannon Estuary completed c1848 by Commander James Wolfe R.N.* <https://irishwaterways.files.wordpress.com/2009/10/shannon-erne-sailing-directions.pdf> acc. 13/09/21



with both personal history as well as the universal association of meeting place.<sup>136</sup> I was prompted by the comments by Dawidek Gryglicka, from her study *Visual Text in Poland since 1967*, “we understand concrete poetry more in the way that we ‘understand’ rain, than the way that we understand a sonnet”<sup>137</sup>; and how this relates to the experience of ‘between’ as in the work ‘Między’ by Stanislaw Drozd.<sup>138</sup>

The text also alludes to the philosopher Wittgenstein who spent some time in the West of Ireland and called it the last wilderness in Europe. This signified to me how concrete poetry could loop up space temporally. The poem ‘Gort an Iomaire’, acts as a fabrication of collage, community, and metaphor.

## 20. What use is language to the mute?

The challenge to language lies at the core of concrete poetry and it is this same challenge that I see lying at the heart of our human understanding of the planet. To quote from Ana Hatherly, ‘*A linguagem do ser não são palavras.*’<sup>139</sup>. The writing of ‘i/Bog’ took place during a global pandemic, a time of enforced muteness during, national lockdowns. In a world of endless news coverage and streaming access to scientific data, it was the silence of the streets that spoke most eloquently of the dystopian present. A planet is galvanized into immediate action by a virus but is fiddling around with carbon reduction targets while the planet burns.

Asemic writing, as an artistic practice, is considered to have expanded activity in the late twentieth century, in concert with the decline of cursive writing. It replaces the familiar signs of the alphabet with its own enigmatic signification. The cognitive dissonance and frustration of seeking to discern meaning in the illegible is a provocation to thought, it suggests that writing is doomed because it became solely a vehicle for the purpose of transmitting thought. This moves creative expression beyond eco-poetry into the realm of imaginative communication with the muted world. Henri Michaux explored the relationship of asemic writing to dance and echoed the Mallarméan observations on dance as a form of corporal writing. A sense of movement is created in the coherence and array of graphical markings that invite the reader to imagine meanings or messages beyond the limitations of

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<sup>136</sup> The photograph is dated to 1904. This is the small village of Newbridge near Ballygar, Co.Galway. It is recognisably unchanged in 2022. My father came to live here from 1942 – 1955 when he was appointed as the representative of the Department of Agriculture. He died on April 5th 1963. Acknowledgment and thanks to local historian Paul Connolly for sharing this. [Mount Talbot - A Journey through the Ages](#)

<sup>137</sup> Kearns, J. (2014) [ Review of the book *The history of Visual Text in Poland after 1967.* by Malgorzata Dawidek Gryglicka ] Enclave Review Spring 2014, pp. 7-10.

<sup>138</sup> Drozd, S. (1977/2004) Miedzy <https://www.mocak.pl> accessed 17/11/2021

<sup>139</sup> Hatherly, A. (2009) ‘The language of being is wordless’ In ‘SHORT\_UNFOLDING\_LITANY /MICROLADAINHA\_DESDOBRAVEL’ <http://www.poemsfromtheportuguese.org/>

language. As contemporary artists have become attuned to the climate crisis, the practice of ‘eco-asemics’ has emerged, the handwriting of the natural world. This is not about interpreting the natural world in human terms but a recognition that the natural world has its own thoughts.<sup>140</sup>

I decided, from my research, that asemic writing allows a creative response that is simultaneously reflective of both indefinable and crystalized thoughts. The Fearnaght Formation is an outcrop of red sandstone poking its head up through the boglands of the upper Shannon basin. In 1601, the dwindling remains of the O’Sullivan Beara clan reached this solid ground, after fleeing the conflagration of their homelands. The significance of this feature in terms of the historical march of endurance is both Gaelic, as it was the crossing point into the friendly northern lands, and eco-cultural as it illustrates the global role of the environment as a place of rescue for humankind.

The composition of poetry without word represented for me, the most complete experience of concretism. This is not in the sense of rejection of word or meaning, but in the sense of embracing the spirit of adventure that led the originators to reinvent poetry freed from traditional forms and prescribed meaning. I spent a long time pondering how to express the idea of a space for refuge, within the context of global climate change. The geological maps of the area reminded me of Solt’s ‘Moon Shot Sonnet’. I have never forgotten the sight of graffiti on the New York subway trains when I was a student in 1980. I was intrigued by the idea that it is a form of asemic writing, a statement of illiteracy yearning for meaningful communication. The image underlay of my poem is the graphic of global temperatures, universally recognised as a narrative of climate change.<sup>141</sup> I created a ‘fib’ poem that approximates to the geological shape and simultaneously evokes the relationship of mathematics with poetry.<sup>142</sup> The icons in the fib are the Greek letter  $\delta$ , (delta), used in engineering calculations as a symbol of stress in materials. In gesture they convey movement and dance.

Overall, it seems fitting to conclude the essay with a composition that combines appropriation with assemblage. It can be perceived as meaningful or meaningless and, in that way, invite the viewer/reader to apply their own unvarnished interpretation.

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<sup>140</sup> Schwenger, P. (2019) *Asemic : The Art of Writing*. University of Minnesota Press: USA

<sup>141</sup> Hawkins, E. (2018) *Climate Stripes* <https://www.reading.ac.uk/en/planet/climate-resources> accessed 05/02/22

<sup>142</sup> Christie, M. (2021) *From Fibs to Fractals: Exploring mathematical forms in poetry*. Beirbua Press: Ireland.

### Singular contributions to knowledge and practice

This project set out to address the question: 'How can concrete poetry seek out new energies and avail of the digital world to explore the vocabulary of shape and space in poetry and speak to modern audiences?' The research and writing process has taken place in the context of a world unexpectedly changed by pandemic, it has revealed the latitudes and potential of concrete poetry to express this world, and it has enabled me to improvise and acquire a new set of skills in the digital and performance fields. The lockdown restrictions imposed since March 2019 prevented planned visits to the National Poetry Centre in Southwark, and other plans to travel for research.

However, society and specifically poets have adapted by meeting up online. This timeframe has also seen the emergence of activism groups such as Extinction Rebellion who have placed the climate crisis on the evening news headlines with citizen based civil disobedience. The pandemic has raised an awareness of the fragility of our relationship with the planet, and the implications of losing the habitats that maintain the infection barriers between species. The discourse on decarbonisation of the economy has moved away from fear of business failures and job losses, into an urgency in society motivated by ecogrief and ecocide.<sup>143</sup>

The rhythm of life disturbed by pandemic and the arrhythmia of the planet threatened by climate change was discussed at COP26. In my view, COP 26 has been essentially meaningless in terms of engaging society in the deliberations and devising of solutions by the earth's citizenry. However, how poetry can help us understand the climate crisis is now more widely discussed.<sup>144</sup> I am confident this vindicates my assertion that poetry and creative writing speaks to modern audiences in ways that transcend uncertainty in science and engages the public with intuitive and emotional weight.

My research and writing endeavours have expanded the boundaries of my creative expression and I have acquired new skills in praxis and prosody. I studied a media skills module online with the University of Aberystwyth and this enabled me to lead and direct the short film 'Honoriam.' My collaboration with videographer Armand Golden was successful because of my professional approach to visualisation, coordination, and the editing process,

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<sup>143</sup> Nuttall, P. (2022 Jan.26) *Climate change will be the biggest human rights violation ever.* <https://www.newstatesman.com>. Acc.31/01/22

<sup>144</sup> Thatcher, C. (2021 Nov.5) *How poetry can help us understand the urgency of the climate crisis.* <https://theconversation.com>/acc.22/11/21

as well as my ability to overcome the barriers to working remotely during lockdowns.

Over the course of this study period, my creative practice has developed ‘beyond the page’. The community poetry project, ‘Th’Other Together’, incorporated workshops, audience participation and theatrical production. I designed and presented the poem ‘Galaxy for Mary’ as an art installation; I recorded audio elements for the ‘LeggyFins of Barney Nolan’ and I digitally realised ‘BogBot’ in 3D space.

### Staking a claim for *i/Bog*

My poetic practice shares a terrain with contemporary poets who detonate societal complacencies, engage with audiences dynamically and plunder the boundaries of linguistic conventions.

I align my writing with the work of Peter Meilleur, Canadian Welsh poet. His poetry was sonically charged by the sensitivity of living in the bilingual culture of Wales and weighted by his educational upbringing in Canada. I share his sense of wonder of sounds in language as it switches across boundaries offloading the semantic to embrace the audience with emotional viscerality. I exhibit the same sense of drawing from the surround sound of Cymreig/English bilingualism, to transact expression that play across my inherited and acquired languages. In my writing and direction of ‘Th’Other Together’ community performance, I created a collage of sounds with a range of actors that echoes with his style.

I identify with the poet Warsan Shire and share the impetus to relentlessly reveal the trauma of dislocation, trauma, and disorientation. She has turned the terror of the migrant experiences into poetry, unflinchingly speaking with a female voice. My writing is in a lower register and modulated by a greater distance from the lived experience of precarious journey and exploitation. She breaks through the barriers of Western neo-colonialist aggression to displaced people seeking shelter. Her work has redefined ideas of ‘home’ lacerated by the experiences of women and injustice. I have used similar approaches to storytelling and memoir to redefine ideas of home and homeland in the context of the current dwellers losing sight of their own humanity.

I place my writing alongside the wordsmiths who encourage experimentalism and play with hybrid forms of poetry and prose, notably Philip Terry. I share his inclination to eschew commercialisation in favour of individual expression. I see in his ludic interpretation of the Bayeux Tapestry parallel challenges to homogenisation as in my poem ‘The Leggyfins of Barney’.<sup>145</sup> Similarly, his update of Dante’s *Inferno* into a University campus setting

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<sup>145</sup> Terry, P. (2013) *Tapestry*. Reality Street Editions: UK.

speaks both to the mainstream and to experimenters, as I set out to engage ‘Barney’ with both a general readership as well the more pedantic fans of textual origins.

My practice is located in the same arena as Fran Lock who renders a permeability between page and stage, widening the lexicon with rich traditions of Irish poetry, Traveller songs and linguistic invention.<sup>146</sup> We both draw on lived experiences of immigration and echo nomadic lifestyles; in her case from her Traveller heritage and in mine from living in the mobile community of civil engineering infrastructure projects.

I see parallels between my own approach of working across the disciplines of science and arts as Marlene NourbeSe Philip, who has worked across the disciplines of law and arts. Her magnificent work, *Zong!*, challenges post-colonial societies to commit to the full recovery of the history of the transatlantic slave trade, and the entitlement of healing and reparation for its descendants. She stylistically interweaves historical records with poetic techniques, fugal and contrapuntal, to compose a story that must be told but not by telling.<sup>147</sup> My reading and reflection on her work has deeply influenced my retrospective thoughts on my collection and my creative processes. I have used the guiding principles of social justice melded with archive, memory and scientific evidence to urge an environmental responsibility to the planet. My claim to originality is centred on the multimedia productions of the ‘Honoraria’ film-poem, the ‘BogBot’ digital poem, the ‘LeggyFins of Barney Nolan’ long hybrid poem, and on my role as a cultural practitioner who empowered community members to participate in the live and filmed performances of ‘Th’Other Together.’

### Conclusion

I have demonstrated in the composition and writing of this collection, *i/Bog*, that concrete poetry creates a distinctive mode, for the perception of complex universal themes having reappropriated the original or heroic forms and employed the digital descendants. At this point in post pandemic time, it strikes me that creative and cultural practice has a vital role to play in restoring public participation in society, after the isolation of lockdown. New concrete poetry understands our need for universal communication and citizen participation in safeguarding the planet. *i/Bog* is my offering to the urgency to harness our sensory powers with a collective will to make these changes happen.

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<sup>146</sup> Lock, F. (2014) *The Mystic and the Pig Thief*. Salt Publishing:UK

<sup>147</sup> NourbeSe Philip, M. (2008) *Zong!* p.199 ‘the story that cannot be told must not-tell itself in a language already contaminated, possibly irrevocably and fatally.’ Wesleyan University Press: USA.



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Participation & performance  
With the Ballygar Community.

## Th'Other Together: poetry, performance, and short film.



This is the link to the film, 'Ballygar Shouts'  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ra3KF33pr1M>

A record of engagement, creative writing and performance.

This is a record of my role in organising and directing a community arts project that resulted in a live performance and the production of a short film. The project, Th’Other Together, featured as one of the community projects in the Galway 2020 EU Capital of Culture programme. I designed the project taking account of community consultations undertaken with Ballygar Arts and I submitted a project proposal to the Galway 2020 Small Towns Big Ideas initiative. The funding that I secured enabled me to resource the project with other artists, audio recording equipment, engagement materials and project expenses. I appointed the poet, Pete Mullineaux, to deliver workshops with the local schools and I ran community writing events. I was responsible for writing and distributing all press communication, community information leaflets and working with the Galway 2020 team. I directed, scripted and produced the performance of ‘Ballygar Shouts Beal Atha Ghartha’ and commissioned Armand Golden to video and edit the event. I organised and ran associated activities at Ballygar Carnival in 2018 and 2019 and a series of poetry walks. One of the outcomes has been the development of proposals for a walking hub for the area. I drew up the brief, secured fund and managed a consultancy study with Ballygar Tidy Towns. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic disrupted progress, but we will go on to secure funding to create trails with public art installations. The following pages provide a record of these activities:

1. Press Release for the poetry performance on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019. 158
2. Audience Information Sheets for the event. 161
3. Script for production of the event for stage and film team. 163
4. ‘Our Shared Space’, Ballygar Childrens poem co-created with author. 171
5. Archive material recorded by the school children for the event. 181
6. The original poem by Raftaire, Béal Atha Ghartha 184
7. Participation in Ballygar Carnival with guest poet, Rhea Seren Philips, 2018. 185
8. Making of Carnival Float with assistance for Ballygar Carnival, 2018. do.
9. Organised and ran pop-up poetry events in Ballygar Carnival, 2018 and 2019. do.
10. Set up and maintain social media: [Ballygar Eco Culture](#)
11. Organised and ran a series of poetry walks. 192
12. Ballygar Walking Hub proposals: [Ballygar Carnival presentation](#)
13. Copy of Project Proposal disseminated to community. 193
14. Copy of funding application, 50% awarded. 195

Press Release:

## Galway 2020. European Capital of Culture

### The Other: Together

presents *Ballygar SHOUTS Beal Atha Ghartha.*

event is a live and participative performance, devised from the creative activities undertaken in the past six months with young people and adults across the Ballygar area, taking place on Friday June 7<sup>th</sup> at 8pm in the Market Square.

The Community Poetry Project, 'The Other: Together' asks local people to throw our voices forward for future generations to find, to listen and to catch us as we were and as we are now. This project is funded by Galway 2020 as a Small Towns Big Ideas initiative and made possible with the resources of Ballygar Tidy Towns Volunteers.

*Who lived here? Can we hear them? What kind of place was it?  
Where did they come from? Was there a welcome for an incomer?  
Did they pull together? Have we any of their stories?*

Say, in two hundred years, people want a sense of us as individuals, and as a community, what do we want them to hear? Our project has drawn in voices, accents and languages from across the diversity of our community and is testimony to our rural traditions and our European relationships.

Galway poet Pete Mullineaux ran a number of poetry writing sessions in the national schools of Ballaghlea and Ballygar and with students from Colaiste Mhuire.

The poet, Antaine O Raftaire, wrote a poem called Bealaghartha / Ballygar in 1818 approximately. The sixteen verses celebrate the people and the countryside of this area, that nestles in the arc of the River Shiven as it flows on into the River Suck.

We have taken inspiration from his sense of fun despite infirmity, his talent despite denial of education and his penetrating intelligence in recording the lives being gallantly pursued around him.

We have collected poems and writings that speak of our heritage and aspirations, our sense of fun and tales of loss, our natural world and our homes.

The event is staged in the town square at the newly erected Bandstand. It is a polyphonic participative piece with soundscape and tableau vivant elements.

Armand Golden, sound technologist is co-producing the piece with Margaret Hannigan Popp.

Point of Contact: Margaret Hannigan Popp

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[Ballygar EcoCulture](#)

**Friday June 7th, 8pm**  
Market Square, Ballygar



**Ballygar Shouts Béal Átha Ghartha**

# The Other: Together

SMALL  
TOWNS  
BIG  
IDEAS

**Local Poet Margaret Hannigan Popp, hosts a live and participative performance, devised from the creative activities undertaken in the past six months with young people and adults across the Ballygar area**

PRODUCED BY

Ballygar  
EcoCulture  
& Tiny Towns

PROJECT FUNDED BY



Galway  
2020  
Galilim

Community  
Volunteers



Audience Information Sheet:

## Galway 2020 European Capital of Culture

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Galway poet Pete Mullineaux with Margaret Hannigan Popp ran a number of poetry writing sessions with the national schools of Ballaghlea and Ballygar and students of Colaiste Mhuire.

Local people took part in conversations and 'words walking' activities.

The poet, Antaine O Raftaire, wrote a poem called Bealaghartha / Ballygar in 1818 approximately. The sixteen verses celebrate the people and the countryside of this area, that nestles in the arc of the River Shiven as it flows on into the River Suck through boglands, woodland and heartlands.

We have taken inspiration from his sense of fun despite infirmity, his talent despite denial of education and his penetrating intelligence in recording the lives being gallantly pursued around him.

We have collected poems and writings that speak of our heritage and aspirations, our sense of fun and tales of loss, our natural world, and our homes. The event is staged in the town square at the newly erected Bandstand. It is a polyphonic participative piece with soundscape and tableau vivant elements.

Armand Golden, sound technologist is co-producing the piece with Margaret Hannigan Popp. Warmest thanks to everyone who has helped and supported.

Programme for the Event: Ballygar SHOUTS Beal Atha Ghartha.

June 7<sup>th</sup>, 8pm in Ballygar Market Square.

Scene: The Audience look out across the ford. The scene beyond evokes a remembered past, an imagined future, and a sense of otherness.

Audience: Call out loudly Hello ! Hello ! Hey !

Léitheoir / Reader: Verses of Bealaghartha le Antaine O Raftaire.

A Soundscape of Community Voices rises and fades.

Ballygar National School Pupils: *Poems of A Shared Space* read by Aoife Kelly, Tiernan Keegan, Evan Doyle, Kacper Krysztofor, Hayden Naughten, Harry O’Sullivan, Gerard Healy. Audio: *Fionn Mac Cumhail; San Ruth*.

Soundscape of *Ballygar Carnival* courtesy of David Killilea & Sean Kilgarriff.

Audience is requested to don eye masks for Deep Listening experience.

Voice: *Raftery’s Buttons* by Pete Mullineaux, reading Sheila Flanagan.

Voice: *Centaur* by & reading Margaret Hannigan Popp.

Voice: *Luceafărul* by Mihai Eminescu, reading Georgetta Danila.

Voice: *Wave to the Future* by & reading Margaret Hannigan Popp.

Voice: *Home Longings* by unknown, introduction and reading Michael Nolan.

Voice: *Dove termina l’Arcobaleno* by Richard Rive, reading Alice Ruggiero.

Voice: *Remembering the leebens* by & reading Margaret Hannigan Popp.

Voice: *Calon lân* by Gwyrosydd (Daniel James), singer John Popp.

Voice: *You asked me* by & reading Margaret Hannigan Popp.

Voice: *Elegia o chiopcu polskim* by Krzysztof Kamil Baczyński  
reading Aleksandra Kopytek.

Voice: *The Other: Together* by & reading Margaret Hannigan Popp.

Audience is invited to remove masks and collectively call out names and place names of Ballygar community friends & family, near and far.

ENDS/CRÍOCH.

Script of production:

:

*Ballygar SHOUTS Béal Átha Ghartha.*

## Ballygar SHOUTS Beal Atha Ghartha

*This is an encounter between the audience of present day community members and 'The Others', an imaginary community, citizenry of the past and future of the Ballygar area. They call to each other across the old ford that gave the area its placename.*

### SCENE 1: EXT. AT THE RIVER FORD. EVENING TIME.

The audience are assembled around the bandstand. They face a 'stream' and the open space of the square. A tableau vivant of figures appears and walk on the far side of the ford.

**SFX: Silence.**

1. AUDIENCE                      Hello Hello Hey there (*shouting*)
  
2. THE OTHERS                      (*converse with each other silently, occasionally look over  
  
but do not hear the audience*)
  
3. AUDIENCE                      Hello! Hey! Over here.

**SFX : Bodhran drumming (20 secs)    MHP & TK come out, holding mics.**

4. LEITHEOIR                      Ma bhionn to ag caint ar bhreaghacht / smuaintidh ar  
  
Bheal-a-Ghartha / is geall do dhaoininbh I ngar leis / le  
  
bParrthas na naomh.
  
5. READER                          If you were talking about beauty / just think about Ballygar  
  
for the people close to it / it is like heaven and earth.

6. LEITHEOIR Bionn fear breagh fada ag fas ann / an tslat's an maide  
laimhe / Ubhla, cnoa agus airni / agus meas ar bharr na  
gcraobh.
7. READER There is fine long grass growing there, / and all kinds of  
blackthorn sticks / apples, nuts and sloes / and trees  
abounding with fruit.
8. LEITHEOIR Bionn ceannabhan a lan ann / an breac 's an lius ag  
snamh ann / uain a's caoirigh bana ann / loilidheach  
, lair a's laugh
9. READER There is bog cotton in abundance there / trout and pike  
swim there / lambs and white sheep are there / milked  
cows, calves and mares are there.
10. LEITHEOIR An lacha agus a h-ál ann / 's an chuach ag labhairt go  
h-ard ann / biaidh gur deoch le faghail ann agus failte  
roimh fear slighe
11. READER There are ducks and their young there / trout and pike  
swim there / lambs and white sheep are there / food and

drink is plentiful there / and a welcome for the man of the  
road.

**SFX : Soundscape plays on speakers, increasing loudness (60 secs)**

**MHP & Sheila place mics in position for pupils.**

**Soundscape fades (20secs).**

**SFX: Slievemurray story read by pupils - prerecorded audio.**

*(The story of Fionn Mac Cumhail on Slievemurruy*

*Once when Fionn Mac Cumhail was standing on the top of Mount Mary, he saw an enemy towards him. Fionn searched for a rock and at last he found one.*

*The enemy was at this time near Ahascragh, Fionn lifted the rock in his hands and when his enemy saw the rock he retreated.*

*Fionn lifted the rock in his hands and when his enemy saw the rock he retreated. Fionn threw the rock, but it went too far and it fell near Ahascragh.*

*It is to be seen there yet and now it is lifted on six other stones.*

*When Fionn lifted the rock, it sank into his huge hands and when it fell it sank into the ground.*

*Twenty men were an hour lifting the stone and putting the small stones under it. The marks of Fionn's fingers can be seen on the stone yet.*

*The track of the palm of Fionn's hand is also visible.*

*Two of the finger marks are six inches each in breadth.*

*The track of the palm of the hand is about twenty-two inches in breadth.*

*At end of story soundscape (20secs)*

**SCENE 2: EXT. AT THE RIVER FORD. EVENING TIME.**

***SFX: Soundscape fades to a background murmur***

1. Ballygar NS Class5 & 6 pupils.

Ensemble poem performance – ‘A Shared Space.’

Group wander back to rejoin THE OTHERS.

***SFX: Soundscape rises to a louder chatter and playground noise. (20secs)***

***SFX: San Ruth story read by pupils – prerecorded audio.***

*((The story of San Ruth’s Bush))*

*Fuair Seamus O Caomanigh an giota seo on a h-athar.*

*After San Ruth’s death, the Irish fled back across the bog, and many were killed and swallowed up in it.*

*Some of the English were also killed.*

*A few years ago, men were cutting turf, and they discovered a stirrup and a horseshoe of grandeur.*

*The old people say it was San Ruth’s horse which had been swallowed up.*

*There is a big white thorn bush which is called San Ruth’s bush where the horse met his death.*

*Every year since 1691, the people come to see his bush. They often put pieces of cloth and pins on the bush.*

**SFX:** *Soundscape rises to a louder chatter and adult voices noise. (20 seconds)*

**SCENE 3: EXT. AT THE RIVER FORD. EVENING TIME.**

**SFX:** *loud and then fades as MHP and TK come back to pick up mics and read Raftery poem*

1. LEITHEOIR Ta aifreann saoire a’s Domhnaigh ann / agus eirghe amach  
  
aos’ oig ann / ‘s da mbeidhthea le do lo ann / ni chloisfea caint  
  
ar chios.
2. READER There’s Mass there on holidays and Sundays / young people  
  
socialising / and if you were there for a lifetime / you would’nt  
  
hear anyone talk of rent.
3. LEITHEOIR Bionn braich a’s leann ann / duille glas ar chrann ann / ceol, sult  
  
agus greann ann / ma’s fada gear an oidheach
4. READER There is malt and porter there / fine green foliage on the leaves /  
  
music fun and enjoyment / whether the night is long or short
5. LEITHEOIR Ni’l biaidh na teine gann ann / acht caint a’s comhrádh ‘s  
  
greann ann.



6. READER Food and fire is not scarce there / lots of talk, conversation  
and humour.

**SFX: The Ballygar Carnival song: Rocking in the dome – play all the song loud and then fades.**

(instruction to the audience to put on eye masks)

**SCENE 4: EXT. AT THE RIVER FORD. EVENING TIME.**

1. Voice A **LIVE** reading - Sheila Flanagan.  
***Raftery's Buttons*** by Pete Mullineaux,
2. Voice B **LIVE** reading - Margaret Hannigan Popp  
***Centaur***
3. Voice C **AUDIO** reading - Georgetta Danila  
*Luceafărul* by Mihai Eminescu
4. Voice D **LIVE** reading - Margaret Hannigan Popp.  
***Wave to the Future***
5. Voice E **LIVE** reading – Michael Nolan  
***Home Longings***
6. Voice F **AUDIO** reading - Alice Ruggiero  
***Dove termina l'Arcobaleno***

7. Voice G **LIVE** reading - Margaret Hannigan Popp  
***Remembering the leebeens***
8. Voice H **LIVE** singing – John Popp  
***Calon lân***
9. Voice I **LIVE** reading - Margaret Hannigan Popp  
***You asked me***
10. Voice J **AUDIO** reading - Aleksandra Kopytek  
***Elegia o chiopcu polskim***
11. Voice K **LIVE** reading - Margaret Hannigan Popp  
***The Other: Together***

***SFX: Ballygar Carnival Song – waltz. All of the song is played and fades into:***

**SCENE 5: EXT. AT THE RIVER FORD. EVENING TIME.**

(Instruction to the audience to take off eye masks)

1. AUDIENCE (call out names and placenames of family and neighbours)
2. THE OTHERS (wave back and call to the audience as they come from the far side to stand clapping in front of the audience. Together)

***SFX: Soundscape and music. Maybe more of the waltz in background***

**THE END**

Ballygar National School Poem was created from 'cut ups' of the poems written by the children in the classroom workshop.

## Our Shared Space

A place where you never frown

The park; a place I love to be,  
Swinging on the monkey bar,  
zooming on the zipline,going far.

lots of trees buzzing bees

Sometimes, a beautiful breeze  
Sometimes, making me freeze.

I hope, I never

Wander far.

a walk in the woods

It makes me feel so good

The honeybees

might even get some showers

We saw a deer

and had no fear

we went on walking

Into the shop

to get an ice pop!

nature smell  
roaming around

The amazing church  
Ballygar's beautiful flowers  
Smell so fresh.

Houses, buildings all around  
us.

Animals making noise,  
people making noise  
and friendly chat.

Tractors, lorries, cars go by  
It's not a city, but a lot goes on

When you go walking with a dog  
It won't forget the way back

a small cold town.  
lovely mist with a little twist...  
very small  
but nice and calm.

forests, flowers,  
bees and trees

Why wouldn't someone want to  
visit such a nice place as this?!

And there is the cow that make you go  
"WOW". There's the sheep that's always  
asleep.

So much greens  
leaves falling off the trees and onto my  
knees.

Birds tweeting, my heart

Ballygar carnival so loud  
with the crowd,

people are shooting  
the music is pounding  
chrashing of the bumper cars,

children chomping  
chocolate bars

Ballygar, always so fun,  
especially when I see the sun.

the place to be  
you feel so free  
accepts all

its own community  
hall.  
for one and all

It is not the biggest tourist  
attraction  
but it is a beautiful satisfaction

Ballygar is in the west  
Ballygar is THE BEST.



a wonderful place  
full of character and open space.

The forest beside is full of animals,  
waiting for our dogs to chase.

Hurling, Gaelic and soccer are sports we play  
We are very lucky to be in this place today.

See birds flying and hear  
Rustling leaves

You can taste the ice cream  
you ate.

Touch the slide.  
Touch the fence.  
Touch the bench.

Sit on the swing.  
Slide the fireman pole.  
Have fun.

My life in Ballygar has just begun

and shops even a  
place for coffee drops.

There's a forest for  
walks and talks.

There's a church for  
quiet and candle light.

There's a carnival on  
a warm July night.

Beware the rides!  
Might give you a fright.

Ballygar is the place to be.

Why?

is so cool!  
full of hopes and dreams,

The food here is amazing,  
the education is bizarre.

So, after you've had a delicious  
meal,  
why not come by and say hello  
to meet us all for real.

a nice place when you visit it,  
it will put a smile on your face.

full of hopes and dreams,  
when you come you won't want to leave.

so tidy and clean,  
something you have never seen.

Excerpts used in the script from

Duchas Schools Collection:

Tale of Cuchulainn throwing the rock. Béal Oideas/  
Oral History written by school child in 1937.

were carried to (Ballyo) Baltra for the new  
Catholic Church

Széat.

Once when Fionn Mac Cumhail was standing  
on the top of Mount Mary he saw an  
enemy coming towards him. Fionn searched  
for a rock and at last he found one.

The enemy was at this time near  
Ahascragh. Fionn lifted the rock in his  
hands and when his enemy saw the  
rock he retreated. Fionn threw the rock  
but it went too far and it fell near  
Ahascragh. It is to be seen there yet  
and now it is lifted on six other stones.

When Fionn lifted the rock it sank  
into his huge hands and when it fell  
it sank into the ground. Twenty men  
were then lifting the stone and putting  
the small stones under it. The marks of  
Fionn's fingers can be seen on the stone  
yet. The track of the palm of Fionn's hand  
is also visible. Two of the fingermarks are  
six inches each in breadth. The track  
of the palm of the hand is  
about twenty two inches in  
breadth.

Account of the Battle of Aughrim (1691) Béal Oideas/  
Oral History written by school child in 1937.

is naí teigúis do mbeair Ó' fan sé ar  
 réizead' an fead' veir uaire agus bí na  
 capall iníonn é a romiaa.

Tuair Séamus Ó Caománair an ziora  
 seo fneumon na h'airia

After San Rurho death the Irish  
 fled back across the bog and many  
 were killed and swallowed up in it  
 Some of the English were also killed  
 a few years ago men were cutting turf  
 and they discovered a stirrip and a  
 horseshoe of grandeur. The old people  
 say it was San Rurho <sup>horse</sup> which had  
 been swallowed up. There is a big  
 white thorn bush which is called San Rurho  
 bush that he met his death every year  
 since 1691 the people come to see his  
 bush. They often put pieces of cloth and  
 pins on the bush.

Tuair Séamus Ó Caománair an  
 ziora seo ó na airia

Ta shab' veaz rinceall oir míle  
 o mo áir comnuide ar a druzraa Shab'  
 Murke Uaire amán bí "Ridmí na Craobé  
 Ruaidé ar ruid in araid na zlonnacrac agus  
 rosuir na Ridmí na Craobé Ruaidé ar  
 reicead' Muair a síois stad an shab' sin

Raftery Poem : Bealaghartha written c1818 in Gaelic translation Douglas de hÍde c1903. The creative project explored the concretism of this traditionally composed poem as well as the sense of place. The English version is a literal translation that completely loses the sound and musical pattern that mark it as a creation of an oral culture.

<b>Béalaghartha</b>	<b>Ballygar</b>
<p>Má bhíonn tú ag caint ar bhreaghacht Smuaintidh ar Bhéal-a-ghártha Is geall do dhaoibh I ngar leis Le Parthas na naomh.</p> <p>Bíonn fear (breágh) fada ag fás ann, An tsíat 's an maide láimhe, Úbhla, cnó agus áitriú, Agus meas ar bháir na gcraobh.</p> <p>Bíonn ceanabhán, a lán ann, An breac 's an liás ag snámh ann, Uain a's caoirigh bána ann, Lollidheach, láir a's laogh,</p> <p>An lacha agus a h-ál ann, 'S an chuach ag labhairt (go h-árd) ann, Biadh gur deoch le fagháil ann, Agus fáilte roimh fear slighe</p> <p>Tá an smólach ann 's an chéirseach, 'S an loudubh mar an gcéadna, Ní 'l éan faoi bhéal an aer, nach mBíonn ag éirghe ann 's ag luidhe,</p> <p>Tá an linnet gabhtha I "gcage" ann Agus ceolta biume ar théadaibh, (Bíonn) mil ar bharr an fhéir ann, Bíonn sméara a's sugh-chraoibh;</p> <p>Is mór a déantar déirc ann, Bíonn fáilte roimh lucht-léighinn ann, Bíonn teas go storruidhe ó'n ngréin ann, A's gan fuacht ar bhith san ngeaith.</p> <p>Bíonn síol dá chraith' i gcré ann 'S ní fhásann coirce sgéin ann, 'S dá mbeidhtheá bíladhain a's céad ann Níor bhfada leat do shaothal.</p> <p>Bíonn braich a's leann ann, Duille glas ar chrann ann, Ceól sult agus greann ann, Má 's fada gearr an oidhch';</p> <p>Ní 'l biadh ná teine gann ann, Acht caint a's cóimhrádh 's greann ann, An eilt a's a clann ann, An bruch 's an míol buidhe.</p> <p>Tá uisge 's muilte I gcoir ann Tá seagal, píis a's pór ann Cruithneacht coirce 's éorna ann, Clóbhar fada a's líon,</p> <p>Tá aifreann saoire a's Dómhnaigh ann, Agus éirghe amach aos' óig ann 'S dá mbeidhtheá le do ló ann Ní chloisfeá caint ar chíos.</p> <p>Cá bhfuil an luibh nach bhfásann Tré thaltaidh Bhéal-a-ghartha An casnuadhán, an slánlus, Cruadhphádraig, a's leabhach bhuidhe?</p> <p>Bhuail sé I sgéimh 's I n-áille Castle Hyde le breaghchadh Bail-Áth-Cliaith, Port-Láirge, Cilláirne a's B'T'Áth'n Righ.</p> <p>Triallann daoine a lán ann, Mar faghann said saoghal a's sláinte ann, Ní bhíonn aon ghalar báis ann Ar leinbh fir ná mnaoi,</p> <p>'S mar chuir mé ar Aindriú an báire Ag moladh Béal-a-Ghartha Nach mór an t-úghdar náire An chás ar bhuail mé faoi.</p>	<p>If you were talking about beauty Just think about Ballygar For the people close to it It is like heaven and earth.</p> <p>There is fine long grass growing there And all kinds of blackthorn sticks, Apples, nuts and sloes and trees abounding with fruit.</p> <p>There is bog cotton in abundance there, TROUT and pike swim there, Lambs and white sheep are there, Milked cows, calves and mares are there.</p> <p>There are ducks and their young there, The cuckoo sings loudly there Food and drink is plentiful there, And a welcome for the man of the road.</p> <p>The thrush and the singing birds are there, And so also is the blackbird, There is not a bird under the sky.</p> <p>They keep linnets in cages there And their sweet music is played there, on the strings. There's honey growing on the top of the grass. There are blackberries and raspberries there.</p> <p>There are generous people to meet there, They have a great welcome for the learned. The heat of the sun is always there, And there is never any cold in the wind.</p> <p>Seed is broadcast across the clay, No wild oats grow there, And if you were to live to one hundred and one, You wouldn't think it was long.</p> <p>There is malt and porter there, Fine green foliage on the trees, Music fun and enjoyment, Whether the night is long or short.</p> <p>Food and fire is not scarce there Lots of talk conversation and humour Deer and its young Badger and hare are there</p> <p>There are water and good mills there, There are rye peas and small potatoes, Wheat oats and barley, Long clover and flax.</p> <p>There's Mass there on holidays and Sundays, Young people socialising and if you were there for a lifetime, You wouldn't hear anyone talk of rent.</p> <p>Where is the herb that does not grow, Through the soil of Ballygar, The Dandelion, and the Plantain, Bog Mint and Marshmallow.</p> <p>For loveliness and beauty it beats Castlelyde for splendour, Dublin, Waterford, Killarney and Athenry.</p> <p>A lot of people go there Because they get a good healthy life there, No young man or woman suffers from any fatal disease there.</p> <p>Since I got the better of Andrew With my praising of Ballygar, Isn't it an awful shame The situation that I'm in.</p>

By Antoin Raftery



Participation in Ballygar Carnival:

Words Walking Float crafted from papier mâché and wire frame.

Participation in parade & Award for float!

Pop-up poetry in street theatre with readings & discussions.

Rhea Seren Phillips as poet in residence staying in Lisquel













# Ballygar Eco Cultural Group



**Invites you to:**

## **A Short Walk with Poetry**

**Sunday January 6<sup>th</sup> 12.30 – 2.00pm**

**From the Courthouse to Aghrane Bog**

**In the footsteps of Siúlòid Raftaire**

**Wear outdoor shoes, partly wet & soft.**

***A gentle saunter with words and chat***

**with Margaret Hannigan Popp**

**Local poet & project organiser.**



## Community Information Board, Ballygar Carnival 2019

The proposal for our Small Towns Big Ideas project is to undertake an exploration of identity and inclusion within the communities of the Ballygar area. This draws on the nature poem, *Beal a Ghàrtha*, by the poet Raftery, who was disabled by blindness and marginalised by poverty and homelessness. We will reflect on the issues of loneliness and isolation caused by physical disability, mental illness and cultural barriers in a contemporary setting. A number of poets and writers will facilitate and elucidate a creative response, through workshops and home visits, to create a body of work that articulates the sense of other and stimulates a shared belonging of our natural surroundings that have been famished and replenished through waves of migration.

### Planned Activities - Le Chèile :

A week of creative conversations & composition with poets & writers based on the following elements:

- A Hedge School event in the Town square with readings hosted in the new Bandstand.
- Scribble Fest - Wider community response to the poetry exhibition through on the spot comments on the walls.
- The Other: Together – printed and posted up anthology of poetry. Exhibits in various shops & businesses to create a trail.

- Foròige Young People – spoken word poetry performance.
- Bíonn Siúlach Scéalach – Words Walk. A melding of poetry and migrancy. Community walk to gather materials & thoughts.
- Solivitur Ambulando – a peer based collective learning exercise to devise a way forward for further activity and legacy.

## Funding application the Galway EU2020 Capital of Culture.

50% grant award. Phase 2 N/A

### **SIÙLÓID: The OTHER.**

What is it like to walk in someone else's shoes? Why am I the Other? Who do you see when you look the other way? Where would I go if I was free to walk?

The people of Ballygar will reflect on, listen to and challenge perceptions of belonging and freedom. The project will reach out beyond the existing hives of community activity to engage people who are discouraged from a close and visible relationship in the landscape either because physical or mental disabilities restrict access or they are alienated by cultural factors that inhibit exploration. This project is partly inspired by the poem 'Beal a Ghartha' written by Raftery who overcame the loss of sight, the death of his family and the indignities of his nomadic life to become the most loved poet and musician of rural Connaught. The medium of poetry, using modern/concrete poetry to embrace linguistic diversity, will give expression to those who are 'ag siúlòid' in the footsteps of 'the Other'.

#### Place & Timelines

- Development of project & events to engage individuals and groups.  
June – October
- Raising awareness & engagement with community groups, youth groups & schools, Carers & social groups and outreach with isolated and marginalised individuals. July - November
- Community cultural activities working in the locality.  
September – January
- Le Cheile: a week of creative conversations & composition with poets & writers.
- Completion of Phase 1:  
March 30 (Breithlà Raftaire) or La le Bhride February 1 2019 (Imbolc)
- Building on the evaluation & success of the project a second phase will be proposed to Galway 2020 for 2019 taking the project forward with European & possibly a Japanese eco-cultural partners.
- It is hoped that other fundraising will lead to the creation of a series of Disabled Access trails where the Concrete poems in 3 D form will be installed. This second phase will include digital media art for users via smartphones read QR codes on the trail that keep the cultural project alive.

**Budget:**

1. Materials, Communications, Venues for Community Activities €2,000
2. Writer & Artist costs: Accomodations & Travel & Fees €2,000
3. Health & Safety, Welfare, Compliances €1,000

**Participants:**

Community group members: 100. School Pupils: classes in Ballaghelea, Ballygar, Mount Talbot & Scoil Muire.

Audiences: 300 locals at events.

Visitors from outside of the area attracted to events in first year: 100

**Think Connect:**

Ballygar Tidy Towns collective working with: Special Olympics, Able Award, Ballygar Carers Group, Scoil Muire, Local Primary Schools.

Forms of Art & Cultural Media: Poetry, Visual Art, Digital Media Art, Music.

Exploring the Themes of Language, Landscape & Migration:

Gaelic & old travelling bard traditions, other languages in our community, (here and abroad), nomadic lifestyles, boglands & biodiversity, loss of identity in migration and evolving of new identities, younger generations, opening up to new sensory experiences.

Accessible spaces & Venues: overall goal of the project is to create accessible links to our nature spaces.

**Think Green:**

Produce & implement Green Plan for the event. Set targets for CO2 reductions.

**Think Big:**

A concrete poetry project that creates an eco-cultural facility that is inclusive and specifically invites people with disabilities to actively participate in a community facility.

**Think Europe:**

Developing a partnership with Leeuwarden-Friesland, King of the Meadows and Asakura region, Fukuoka prefecture, Japan

**Think Digital:**

Phase 2: digital & 3 D media in physical realisations associated social media.



## Supplementary Material

1. Conference paper associated with PhD 199
2. Exhibition sheet for Galaxy for Mary. 209
3. Pages from archives of the Schools Collection 211
4. Storyboards for Lady Honoria's Path filming. 217
5. Source material for Songsalong from the Hole. 233

# **Conference Paper**

**University of Swansea, Wales.**

**Post-Graduate Conference of Arts and the Humanities.**

**26 September 2019.**

## **Theme: Building Stories**

*‘How can the Stones shout when nobody is listening.’*

The title of the presentation comes from the legend of the Lia Fáil – a legendary stone in Ireland that is said to call out when the people of the island are in danger. *Fáil* is the Gaelic word that loosely translates for destiny – so it is the ‘Stone of Destiny’. On a wider perspective the legend resonates with the universal stories of Mother Earth protecting her people and her planet. Humankind has appropriated or perverted this story to claim the resources of the earth for exploitation for the benefit of human society. Since the industrial era of the 19th century this has led to rising CO2 levels with associated global warming and what we now recognise as the climate crisis.

This presentation is about two cultural activities based on building stories around our relationships with our environment i.e., ‘the stones around us’ and exploring ways that we can listen and hear voices in a very noisy and confusing world. My creative writing is exploring how poetry, in particular contemporary evolutions of concrete and visual poetry, can articulate the voices of endangerment in fresh tones and inclusive language.

A significant challenge is transforming a global multi-faceted issue into a problem that is meaningful at the individual and community level. I have undertaken this work as part of my PhD creative writing research process. The first piece is a poetry performance developed through community participation and the second is a concrete poetry installation.

*The Lia Fáil: Ecological grief and loss*

A central idea of my writing is how we can harness the power of grief and loss to understand and connect at a deep level with the information, challenges, choices, and decisions of the climate crisis. I started with this idea because being Irish, and particularly from the West of Ireland, I have been born into and immersed in a culture that mourns a landscape emptied of its villages with emigrant songs (particularly but not exclusively American & Australian) that call out to mountains, rivers and fields, for example, we sing of *The Mountains of Mourne* and of *Galway Bay*.

The reality is that alongside these emotions and recollections and myriad festivals the climate crisis is not just progressing; it is accelerating. In Ireland itself we have the paradox or the hypocrisy of celebrating the Emerald Isle and simultaneously destroying our peatlands, carbon sinks of international importance. Obviously, there is a whole question of government



policy failure, but I am focussing my work on the creative role and responsibility to our planet. Scientists now talk of the failure of their information, data, reports etc to engage with the broader public and the need for emotional engagement and cultural activity to fill a void where rational argument and data driven evidence has failed. That is the ambition of the Cape Farewell Foundation where artists and scientists are dedicated to changing the way that we think.

I think we must create the space for building stories, stories that are local to give the emotional weight to global issues, making the remote present and locally tangible. The UN report in August 2019 estimates 280 million people will soon be displaced worldwide. If you can see in that figure the story of the townland of Bohill, where in 1847, all of its people fled their village in one day to secure a passage on a coffin ship then you can understand that figure of 280 million displaced people and relate it to the loss of peatlands in Ireland. Our 310,000 ha of raised bog was reduced to 50,000 from 1981 to 2018, over just 40 years. These are the circumstances that surround the decision that needs to be made now on 800 jobs in Bord na Mòna.

So that's the ecological grief that I am looking at in a contemporary setting and seeking out ways of transmuting this familiar grief / cultural inheritance into an ecological grief that mobilises the emotional intensity needed to engage with the challenges of the climate change crisis.

Defining the concept of 'ecological grief' is the subject of recent publications by Ellis and Cunsolo<sup>148</sup> who quoted

*'The eminent American naturalist Aldo Leopold was among the first to describe the emotional toll of ecological loss in his 1949 book, A Sand Count Almanac: "One of the penalties of an ecological education," he wrote, "is to live alone in a world of wounds."*

In 2017, Ireland had the third-highest emissions of greenhouse gases per capita in the EU at 13.3 tonnes of CO2 equivalent. This is 51 per cent higher than the EU average of 8.8 tonnes. Agriculture accounts for 33 per cent of our overall emissions in Ireland and is rising

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<sup>148</sup> <https://theconversation.com/hope-and-mourning-in-the-anthropocene-understanding-ecological-grief> accessed 21/09/19)

alongside transport emissions that doubled from a 10 per cent average in 1990-1994 to 20 per cent in 2017.

So that is the challenge for my writing and research. How does the writer '*live alone in a world of wounds*' and meaningfully engage a reader or audience in the '*anticipatory mourning*' that creates the space engaging with the challenges of the climate crisis?

### *Concrete & Visual Poetry*

This is form of poetry and creative writing that I am researching and redeploing for the modern audience. *Concretism* emerged in the post war period. The ideas behind concrete poetry were of rejecting language that was burdened by elitism and empire and rediscovering sound and shape in language and communication. The central idea is the physical materiality of text. *Silencio* is a famous poem by the founding figure Swiss/German Eugen Gomringer – the space in the poem is the heart of the poem. 1956 and it evokes the Buddhist notion of '*words as a barrier to understanding*'.

In Brazil a group of poets known as the Noigrandes separately developed this style and there were other poetry schools in Canada, Sweden and also here in Wales there was the Swansea Concrete School of poetry. I refer you to the recent publication by John Goodby & Lynton Davies, '*The Edge of Necessary*.'

The short video that accompanies this presentation is an account of my community poetry project, '*The Other: Together*'. (see performance information sheet in the conference pack) Emigration and sense of place are intrinsically linked by a loss of identity manifested in the poetry and music of displaced people. I have drawn inspiration from the work of Peter Meilleur / Childe Roland, the Canadian/Welsh poet. John Goodby told me about his poem *Dee and Deeper* and a performance that Peter Meilleur undertook with school children. It is a poem in two languages English & Welsh; it is not bilingual; it does not rely on meaning for emotional connection. John and Rhys Trimble gave a wonderful rendition in Cardiff to mark the death of the poet. The river Dee discloses its story of people, history and nature through unfurling sound-based images that can be interpreted linguistically but it is the running ripples of sound that spring the river to life. In a world where meaning is manifested in

conflicting interpretations, the concrete poem invites understanding through sound and visual cues and the audience is creatively engaged by intuitive intelligence.

### *Hinterland*

I have created a focus by centring my writing research on the upper Shannon bioregion in Ireland, a place of wetland, emigration, and mythology. Because it is my ‘home’ place, I was also able to connect with the Galway 2020 EU Capital of Culture programme for Small Towns / Big Ideas. Funding was provided for the community participation and performance event. The connection has proved opportune and broadened the possibilities of my writing and experimentation with digital technologies. The main themes of Galway2020 are landscape, migration and language and offered a genuine reflection of my writing subjects and imagery:

*Bogs & Callow:* the challenges & solutions of carbon loss & carbon capture.

*People Leaving:* Rural Ireland still is a place of emigration but also it is a place of incomers. In a small town being isolated hurts more than in the metropolitan centre where anonymity can be a protection.

*Mythologies:* connections between cultural loss (particularly folklore) and biodiversity loss.

The community participation project was based around a core question.

‘In 200 years’, time, what is your story that you want future generations to listen to?’.

The inspiration was a poem written 200 years ago by the travelling musician poet Antaine Raftaire. The poem was written in praise of the townland of Ballygar, Béal átha Ghartha. Effectively it is a listing of the plants, animals and wildlife for the area and creates a picture of the ecosystems. Raftaire is inspirational because he had no sight, but he listened. He was illiterate, but he created memory. He was homeless, but he was welcomed and respected as he made his way from town and village. He spoke in a language that is generally not used today. Though we Irish value passionately the Gaelic language, we would struggle to converse with him today.

Several poetry workshops in the community and the schools were undertaken. I curated a sheaf of poems written by the school children and secured input from adults. No new poems emerged from the adult workshops, ‘older’ poems and locally composed

music were rediscovered and shared. However, I had not attracted any adult participants from minority backgrounds, neither the long resident traveller community nor the ‘new’ Irish residents.

Therefore, I devised a performance based more on sound than writing so that individual encounters could be incorporated with live performances using recordings and sound mix technologies.

I looked at work undertaken by the English Concrete poet Paula Claire and a concrete performance work that she organised for the Lisbon EU 2002 Capital of Culture. It had elements of audience participation and environmentally themed on the sunflower (*helianthus*). It explored the relationship between diurnal cycle and the river Tagus.<sup>149</sup>

*A Place of Shouts: Beal Atha Ghartha is the Gaelic name for Ballygar.*

This is what you will hear in the video that is composed from scenes in a forty-minute event and relates to the script attached.

The school children read a story that was sourced from the Irish 1938 Schools Collection.<sup>150</sup> A digitised copy of this nationwide cultural / folklore project was put online a few years ago. I ‘found’ two stories that are now unknown in the community. Both invest landscape features with ‘big’ stories. The first one relates to the mythical figure of the giant Finn Mac Cumhail and the other relates to the 1691 Battle of Aughrim. The landscape become the curator and guardian of cultural treasure. If you quarry that rock, you will kill the giant and if you clear that bush because you want to plough the field you will desecrate the graves of warriors. This is followed by different voices in different languages from within the community reading or singing. Some of the reading was pre-recorded, on a one-to-one basis the readers were very happy to come to our recording studio but for the actual event none of the readers from other ethnic backgrounds (except) came to the event. In that sense the story of ‘Shouts’, the sounds of our village, would not have happened without this cultural event. It is significant that this reluctance or fear does not occur in the school setting or church setting. This suggests that sense of place in the cultural sense is more complex than the ‘fitting in’ with the requirements of parental responsibility or the obligations of faith.

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<sup>149</sup> <http://www.paulaclaire.com/videos.htm#> accessed 24/01/2010

<sup>150</sup> <https://www.duchas.ie/en/cbes>. Accessed 19/01/2020

The audience wore blindfolds so that the experience was about sound and listening and conference attendees may want to close your eyes to enjoy a similar experience.

[ showing of video ‘The Other: Together’]

### *Galaxy for Mary*

I was invited to submit a piece for an exhibition themed on people, place, privilege, and prejudice that was the subject of another Galway 2020 project in September 2019.

During my research, one of the stories that I stumbled on was that of the grandmother of Michael Collins, astronaut on Apollo 11, the USA space shuttle.

I had been reading up about him because of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1969 moon landing. He champions planetary concerns when he is called upon to talk of his experiences and says, ‘*sometimes we humans don’t seem to really deserve to live on this nice little thing that you can see from a quarter of million miles up*’.

I have long admired the poem, ‘Whitey on the Moon’, by Gill Scot Heron<sup>151</sup>. It is an encapsulation of mankind’s achievements and failures that is both direct and elegant.

I wanted to respond to the exhibition themes with a story from its local roots to its global significance and to say that a child in a ditch is still looking at the moon and can only dream of a better future is very contemporary in the context of global flight of refugees.

In creating the persona of Mary with her galaxy of planet/poems, I seek a way of making the seventeen UN goals of sustainable development relatable to the individual.<sup>152</sup> In this way I want my concrete poem to creatively engage the individual with the intuitive intelligence that I referred to earlier.

I also draw attention to the poem ‘Piano and Drums’ by Gabriel Okara<sup>153</sup>. The drums represent traditional African life, attuned to the rhythms of nature and the piano is the Western ‘technical’ world of so-called sophistication. I drew from this, ideas on the genocide of cultures and what it means for our global futures when we effectively wipe out folkloric cultures that are deemed to have no value in economic terms. In Ireland, this means the rejection and ‘othering’ of our nomadic community, ‘*the travellers*’. Mary, as a child of the

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<sup>151</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=goh2x\\_G0ct4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=goh2x_G0ct4) accessed 24/01/2020

<sup>152</sup> <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/envision2030.html> accessed 24/01/2020

<sup>153</sup> Piano and Drum, Gerald Okara. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fDQndh\\_tXgM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fDQndh_tXgM) accessed 18/01/2020

ditch, became the grandmother of Michael the astronaut who traversed the final frontier. I stood on the roadside in the townland of Funshinagh, it offers a panoramic view over the surrounding lowlands and at night the moon shines bright and close.

There is a famous concrete poem, 'Moonshot Sonnet' by Mary Ellen Solt.<sup>154</sup> It is drawn from NASA photographs of the moon landing and based on the co-ordinates of the landing pattern that she reformatted as a sonnet pattern. It notably illustrates the creative space available to poetry that transcends the traditional boundaries of established and popular forms.

In a similar aleatory manner, I worked out that there were seventeen letters in the old Irish alphabet, and I 'explored' or mined the Gaelic language to find one that could speak of the essence of each goal as an alternative title to the given UN heading.

As in the Childe Meilleur poem, '*Dee & Deeper*', these Gaelic are not translations of the English words but an invitation to play with sound and defer a focus on meaning.

The poem and information sheet are attached and short video record of the installation.

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<sup>154</sup> <http://socks-studio.com/2019/12/15/mary-ellen-solt-moonshot-sonnet-1964/> accessed 24/01/2020

## Attachment.

Title: How can the Stones shout when Nobody is listening.

Author: Margaret Hannigan Popp. PhD research. M.A, PGBus., PGMgmt., B.E.

Email: [REDACTED]

Institution: University of Swansea.

Department: Creative Writing.

Topic: Telling the story of the Climate Change crisis measured by the loss of cultural hinterland, modulated by the grief of emigration, and calibrated by the immediacy of environmental destruction.

Keywords: Climate Change. Cultural Engagements. Concrete & Visual Poetry. Creative Practice. Community Participation. Deconstruction. Polyphony.

The climate change crisis poses an existential threat to our planet, but the overall response is hampered by disbelief in the scientific evidence and mired in political ineptitude. The title of the paper refers to the *Lia Fáil*, the stone in Irish/Celtic legend that called out when the island was threatened. My creative writing is exploring how poetry, in particular contemporary evolutions of concrete and visual poetry, can articulate the voices of endangerment in fresh tones and inclusive language. A significant challenge is transforming a global multi-faceted issue into a problem that is meaningful at the individual and community level. I have created a focus by centring my writing research on the upper Shannon bioregion in Ireland, a place of wetland, emigration, and mythology. I contend that a cultural response can act where science and politics have failed to mobilise the collective will to take actions that mitigate the inevitable impacts of climate change. My presentation will include an account of my community poetry project, 'The Other: Together', with a short video, undertaken with the support of Galway EU2020. Emigration and sense of place are intrinsically linked by a loss of identity manifested in the poetry and music of displaced people. My writing seeks out

ways of transmuting this familiar grief into an ecological grief that mobilises the emotional intensity needed to engage with the challenges of the climate change crisis.

*Attached information sheets for the poetry performance event and the concrete poetry installation.*



# GALAXY FOR MARY

Concrete Poem Installation

Exhibition

Elephant in the Room

Galway EU2020

Galaxy for Mary is a reflection on the themes of the 'Elephant in the Room' project. The moon landing of 1969 was celebrated as 'a giant step for mankind'. At the same time the racism that excluded people of colour from advancement was contrasted. Gill Scott Heron, African American poet expressed this rage in his acerbic, elegant and profound poem, 'Whitey on the Moon.' As the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that momentous occasion is celebrated how far has mankind advanced in sharing the entitlements of the planet equally?

Thanks to Paul Connolly, Mount Talbot, I discovered that our area is closely linked to that event. Mary Cunniffe from Funshinagh in Four Roads was evicted age 2 in 1851 and eventually emigrated to America. Her grandson is Michael Collins, command pilot of Apollo 11. What an extraordinary journey for a homeless child to the pinnacle of human endeavour.

This is a *concrete* poetry installation, a form of poetry that uses space and movement as well as language and sound. I have used this form to reflect on these ideas, to create a galaxy for Mary with planetary bodies representing the 17 Goals of the UN charter for Sustainable Development. The ethereal being of Mary is expressed in a composition for each planet and the reader/viewer is invited to reflect on these thoughts.

Credits: Thanks to John Popp and Maria Hannigan for assisting in the installation. The planets are created from recycled materials.

Margaret Hannigan Popp

Ballygar Eco Culture.

# The Elephant in the Room



Launch and talk with

**Mark Patrick Hederman.**

**Sept 14<sup>th</sup>, 8pm.**

**Sun 15<sup>th</sup> 3pm:** *'Journey of 3000 miles'*  
Story of Seeking refuge.  
**8pm:** **Who Belongs?** Panel talk.

**Mon –Fri:** **Visual Art Exhibition open daily**

**Tues 17<sup>th</sup> 4pm:** **Shelta Workshop.**  
**8pm:** **Coppers and Brass Documentary.**

**Wed 18<sup>th</sup> 8pm:** **'Speak for yourself'**  
Responding to racist comments  
among family & friends.

**Thurs 19<sup>th</sup> 8pm:** **Direct Provision-**  
**Creating a Better Way.**

**Fri 20<sup>th</sup> 8pm:** **Fortress Europe**  
Evening of discussion with our MEP'S.

**Sat 21<sup>st</sup> 10am:** **Who is my neighbour?**  
**2pm:** **The Stories we learn**  
**Myths and Assumptions**

**Sun 22<sup>nd</sup> 8pm:** **A night of Music with**  
**Atmos Collective and friends.**

Screenings Daily: Kelvin's Story, Seeking Freedom,  
Educating the World and more.

Ballygar Arts and Theatre Space Facebook for updates.   
[ballygarartsandtheatre@gmail.com](mailto:ballygarartsandtheatre@gmail.com)

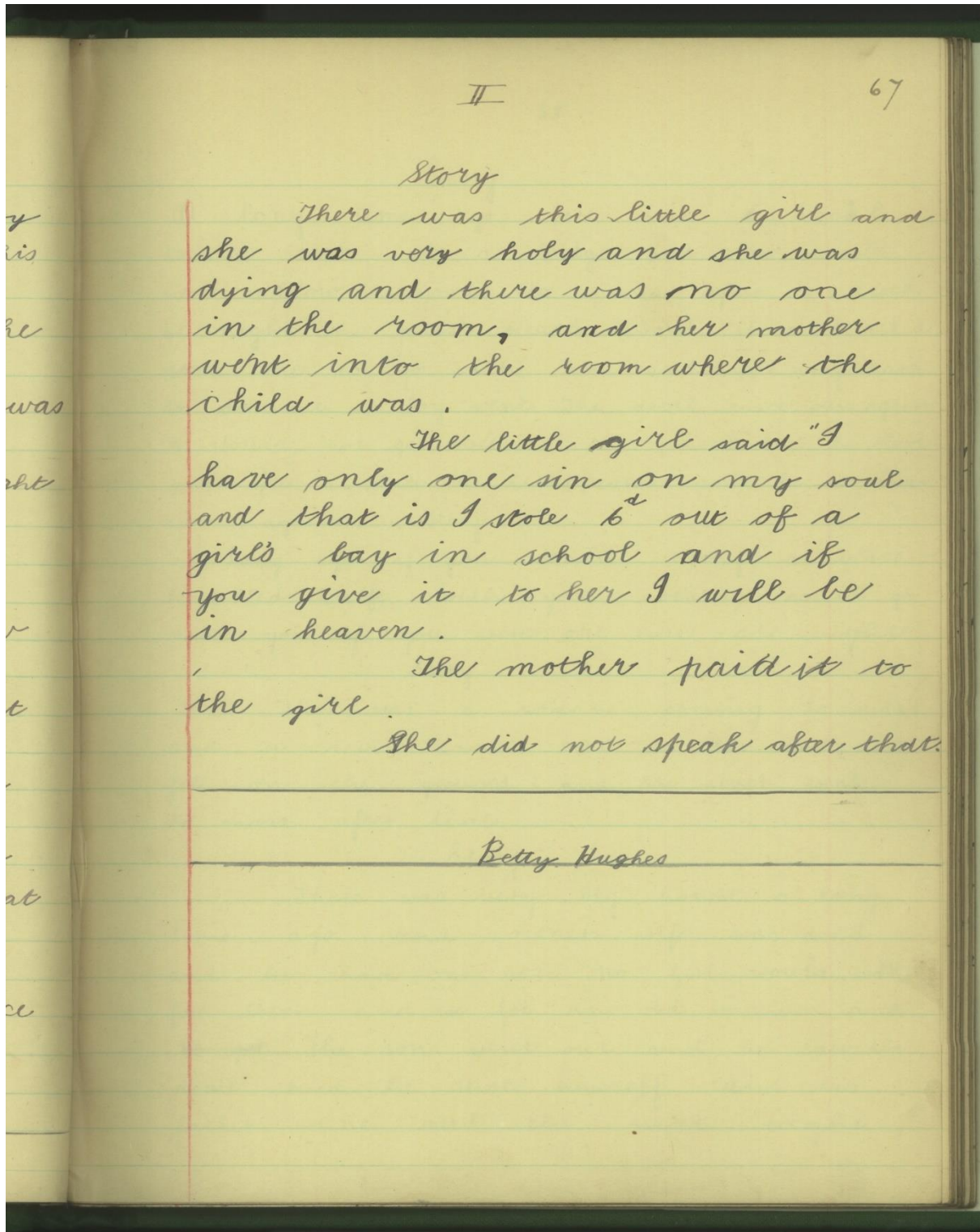


Funded by Galway 2020 under the Small Towns Big Ideas Programme.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ldNp55fwIcs>

3. Selected pages from the Schools Collection relevant to 'Nosing in Limbo' and 'The Soldiereen's Song'



~~Clon~~  
 Cloonascarberrry.  
 Cloon as go bragh - go bragh

1. labrao mac. Golla Coman.
2. Above address
3. 86. 4. Farmer.  
Same address

The above is now re inhabited through the Congested Districts' Board. During my time and my father's and grandfather's and earlier ancestors this was a farm-a ranch under the mastership of a family known as French, who lived at Ballinamone Bridge, one mile distant. It once belonged to a landlord, named Kelly-a protestant. He lived on an adjacent premises to Cloonascarberrry, about a half mile distant from the boundary. This place of residence was and is known as Ballybane (baile ban)

The present narrative begins when Cloonascarberrry was inhabited by tenants under Kelly. They holdings consisted of three ridges or sets. These were very wide something like, three of our present ridges under potatoes into one. They extended from the public road on the north to the mearing at Ballybane, a distance of at least half a mile or more. There was no boundary fence, save what they called a

(Capt. Ford) s'birds sod. No fence was necessary at this time for the unfortunate tenants had no four footed beast - neither Cow, calf nor horse or ass.. All was tillage and mostly wheat.. consequently there was no manure, and the only manure or stimulant they could procure for their few root crops was ashes

This ashes was procured by burning the "Serau's" or tough turf on the surface of the sea land. These were procured, not by ploughing but by "serawing" every bit of the surface, gathering it into heaps and burning it, sometimes making big circular holes in the land, according to the time left burning and the amount of ashes required for the crop.

These unfortunate people were unable to pay their rents and as <sup>was</sup> usual, in those times, the notice to "quit" was given: not by the landlord, but by his hiring called a "steward", or "understrapper" as was the odious term by which he was referred to since.

The eviction was duly carried out by this steward who called himself a Catholic..

In the evening of this infamous day of eviction the unfortunate tenants were on the roadside in tents made of wattles from their destroyed little dwellings. Their cries could be heard all round the Country side.. It ran - Bluan as go bráic "Out of Bluan for ever"

The landlord, not fully aware of what had taken place during the day, when he heard the cries asked what it was all about. The steward informed him. The landlord thereupon said to his steward "Go and reinstate these people (mind he was a protestant) How can I face my God and do this thing with these people". Said the steward, "As they are out now let them stay there" "Will you take the sin of it?" said his lord. "I will" said the steward. "Have it then" said his master.

A few years after this happening the steward died in the yard in Ballybane. His remains were put into a coffin and placed on a cart to be brought to the graveyard. The horse refused to draw the cart, another refused and so on till all the horses in the yard had failed.

At last a mule that was chousing round was requisitioned and he with the direction of the neighbouring priest, removed the cart coffin and remains.

I myself can point out in a neighbouring townland in the parish of Ballyjoran where to which place some of those people went to find shelter, the wattles that held up the thatched roofs of the cabins in Cluan. They are still there on at least one house for the same purpose and are

still sound, and capable of bearing their burden  
The most of these families consisted of  
Kilcommins and Killeas and are all  
related by some distant tie.

Lawrence Kilcommins  
told  
By my father.



4. Storyboards for Honoria film

First storyboard:

Opening:

We hear the beat of a metronome.

Superimpose title screen.

(do I want location ? or context)

*HONORIA 29/08/2021*

1. Ext. Sky. Daytime.

Big clouds pillow the blue sky. Tilt down to bogscape. (how do we move to tree tunnel)

Metronome fades.



*HONORIA 29/08/2021*



1. Ext. Tree Tunnel Sheila Cloonkeen.

The viewer moves slowly through the dark tree canopy. Ahead is a weak light.

Voice over :

*The world is old today,/ lumbering horse/can you not trot/and make this day less grey?/The advent tide/has washed me cold,/my faith is strong,my belly weak./  
I yearn to break my fast./Comfort me old steed*



1. Ext. A paved path . Lisquel.

A single board runs the length of the path. It is marked by a bright white straight line. (like a road marking). A woman walks slowly along the white line in high heels. Only the lower leg comes into view.

Voice over :

*What is it that sends me / on the dark road,/ pursued by the raven / trees of Aughrane Woods?/ Blustered by the hail / across the open bog, in their little tigeens / the spailpeen pray / 'there goes the Lady./ I nod my head.*



5. Camera follows the wheel turning in a straight rut across the field. Some props? A clock? Horse statue?

Voice over :

*My widow's lace / is ruffed by birth, / thin bones  
handle the rosary, / a shrivelled penance weighs / a  
virtuous life / in a subversive carriage/glazed with  
piety./At Cloonlyon crossroads/I summon up, / the one  
I was before*

HONORIA 29/08/2021



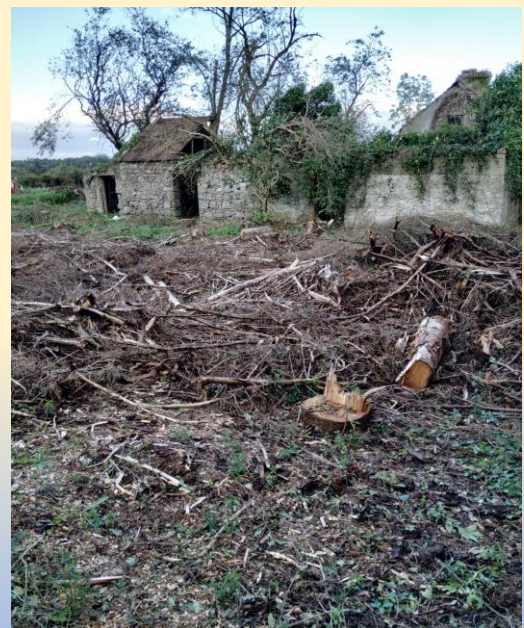
1. Ext. Bogland. Lisquel

Sweeping view over the bogland at Geraghty's house.

Voice over :

*Téidh go bheidhis mé lán le gaoithe / gadaí mé an  
dorch ón oíche, cé gur chas mé, / bánseadh nithe, is  
mise bean nach stopfaidh choíche*

HONORIA 29/08/2021



Voice over :

*My younger self / Claws the wind /  
Strike me cold./ You pass me by /  
My innards shriek / an empty lap /  
betoken solitude*



HONORIA 29/08/2021

Voice over :

*/ the purest maid / defiled by age  
/ outer spinster / inner rage. /  
I am the husk./She shunned the seed.*

*( blue shoes & pink tights walking on board)*



HONORIA 29/08/2021

Roighnigh me an caoi seo sealbh  
Is iomai liom an dion 's an dealbh  
Bionn an scornach bog nuair a bheihim balbh  
Caoineadh mathair leis an leanbh marbh



*HONORIA 29/08/2021*

Voice over:

The iron-clad wheel / embeds the  
rut /of my to and fro pathway /  
from lord of soils / to Lord of Souls /  
a bog balked line patrols /  
the boundary with Gaelic penury. /



*HONORIA 29/08/2021*

Voice Over:

I am weary of these shrivelled people /  
Their wretched state eludes my eye /

(wellingtons & medical props)



*HONORIA 29/08/2021*

Voice Over:

Wind mirrors blow ghostly shapes  
/ a rolling fog traps the sun in its  
tain /

(the diving bell )

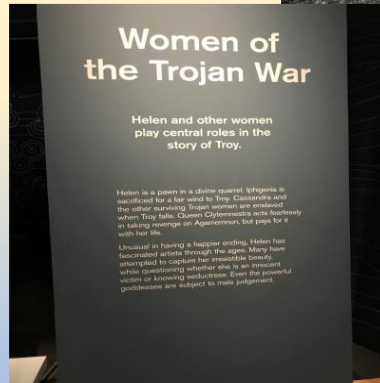


*HONORIA 29/08/2021*

Voice Over:

My younger self  
moves towards me  
/ Out of the lilting  
air in Cloonlyon

(footprints

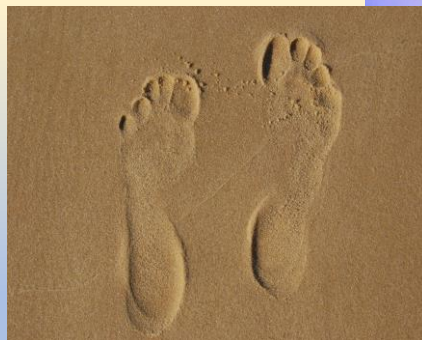


HONORIA 29/08/2021

Voice Over:

/ Out of the  
lilting air in  
Cloonlyon

(footprints on  
flour along  
path)





Voice Over

A grim visage, *le nez retroussé*/ a  
chevalier heart in a woman's chest.

Fur Coated figure with deer head



HONORIA 29/08/2021

## Storyboard for final editing

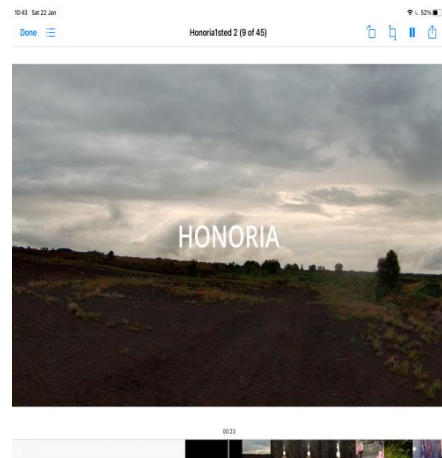
Font *Honor*ia

A poem, 'Lady Honoria's Path'  
from the collection *i/Bog*

by Margaret Hannigan Popp

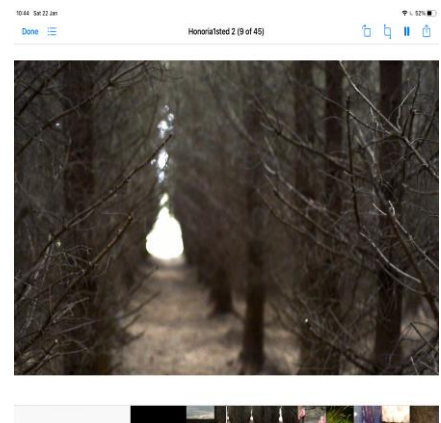
in collaboration with Armand Golden.

Filmed in Ballygar, Ireland.



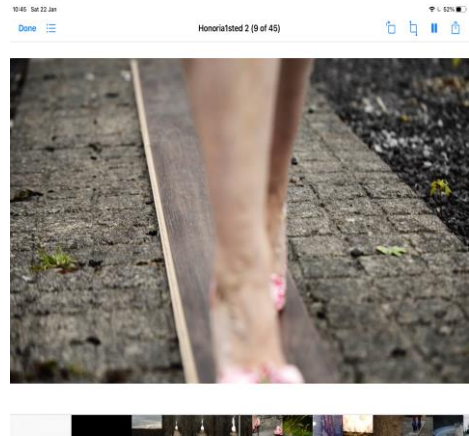
Honoria 22/01/2022

*Voice over*  
Lady Honoria's Path.  
The world is old today lumbering horse  
can you not trot and make this day less grey?  
The advent tide has washed me cold,  
my faith is strong, my belly weak.  
I yearn to break my fast.  
Comfort me sweet palfrey.



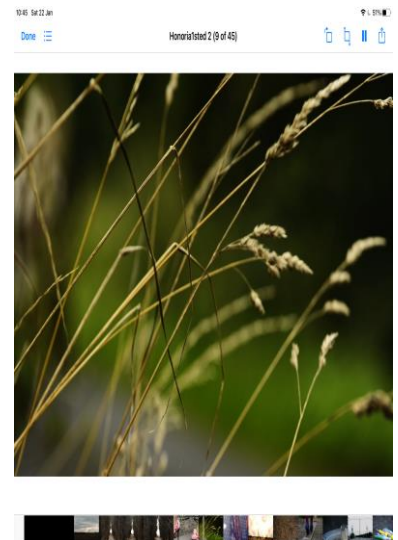
Honoria 22/01/2022

What is it that sends me  
on the dark road,  
pursued by the raven  
trees of Aughrane Woods?  
Blustered by the hail  
across the open bog,  
in their little tigeens  
the *spailpeen* pray  
'there goes the Lady.'  
I nod my head.



Honoriated 22/01/2022

My widow's lace  
is ruffed by birth,  
thin bones handle the  
rosary,  
a shrivelled penance  
weighs  
a virtuous life  
in a subversive carriage  
glazed with piety.



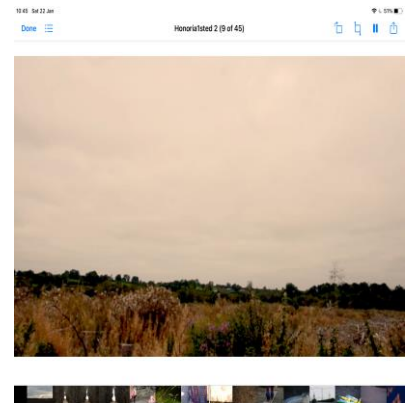
Honoriated 22/01/2022

At Cloonlyon crossroads  
I summon up,  
the one I was before.



Honoria 22/01/2022

*Téidh go bheidhis mé lán le  
gaoithe  
gadaí mé an dorch ón oíche,  
cé gur chas mé, bánseadh níthe,  
is mise bean nach stopfaidh  
choíche.*



Honoria 22/01/2022

My younger  
self  
claws the  
wind  
strike me cold  
You pass me  
by  
My innards  
shriek  
an empty lap  
betokens  
solitude

10:46 Sat 22 Jan  
Done  
Honorialisted 2 (9 of 45)



Honoria 22/01/2022

the purest maid  
defiled by age  
outer spinster  
inner rage.

I am the husk  
She shunned the seed.

10:46 Sat 22 Jan  
Done  
Honorialisted 2 (9 of 45)



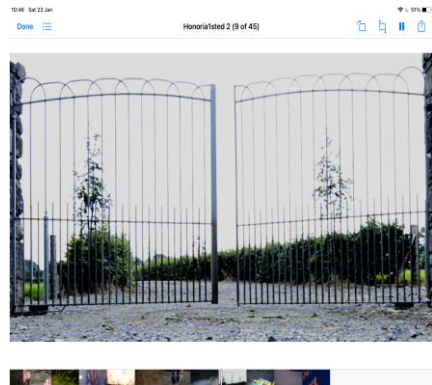
Honoria 22/01/2022

Roighnigh me an caoi seo  
sealbh  
Is iomai liom an dion 's an  
dealbh Bionn an scornach  
bog nuair a bheim balbh  
Caoineadh mathair leis an  
leanbh marbh.



Honoria 22/01/2022

The iron-clad embeds the rut.  
To and fro, my pathway  
from lord of soil to Lord of souls.  
A bog-balked line patrols the boundary  
of Gaelic penury



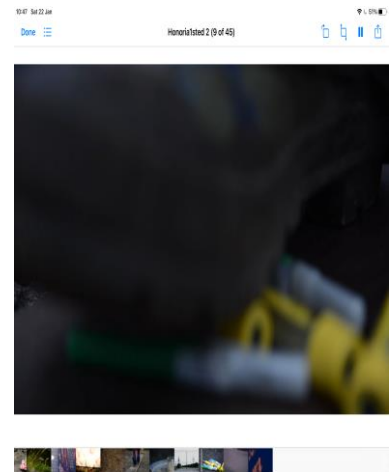
Honoria 22/01/2022

I am weary of these  
shrivelled people

Their wretched state eludes  
my eye

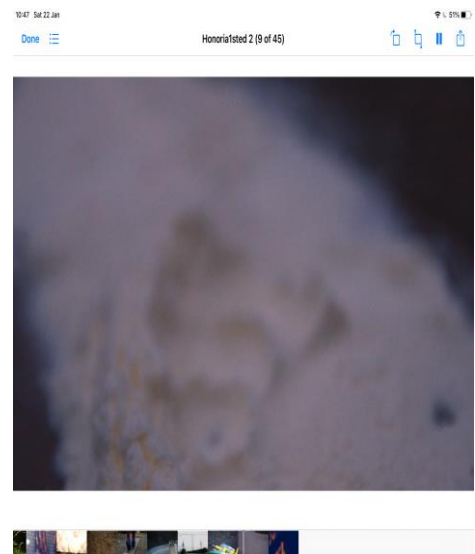
Wind mirrors blow ghostly  
shapes

a rolling fog traps the sun  
in its tain.



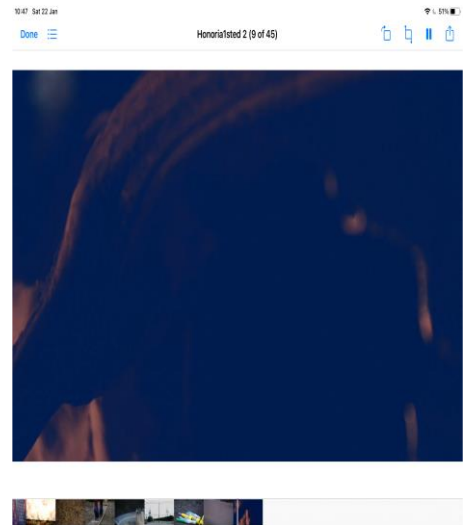
Honoria 22/01/2022

My younger self moves towards me  
Out of the lilting air in Cloonlyon  
A grim visage, *le nez retroussé*,  
a chevalier heart in a woman's chest.



Honoria 22/01/2022

*Cuir do ghnó chun taisce  
A mharcaigh na gclaon rosc  
Buail an bóthar. O luí na gréine,  
Mo chara go daingean thú*



Honorias 22/01/2022

Thanks to the following:

John Popp. Ty Quinn & Wales.  
Sheila Flanagan. ArtFarm.  
Margaret Cottrell & Graham Thorne.  
Rosie & Friend.  
Ballygar Town Hall.  
Gerry & Geraldine Briggs.  
Maria Hannigan.  
Hughes Bar, Ballinamore Bridge.  
The Thatch Bar, Ballygar.  
University of Aberystwyth.  
Swansea University.



Honorias 22/01/2022



5. Listing of original songs re Songsalong

- a. Kelly the boy from Killane <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXvt25IsIZ0>
- b. The Rose of Tralee [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0UjhVYn\\_Y9M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0UjhVYn_Y9M)
- c. Nell Flaherty's Drake <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4JudTGMp4Yw>
- d. The Lass of Aughrim <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lyDMslOpnH8>
- e. The West's Awake <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZXCT3LwL2Go>
- f. Are ye right there Michael <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7w7eH6JuL50>
- g. Believe me if all those endearing young charms  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6BKlxbDB4Q>
- h. I'm a Rover <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sh-FtYP9s88>
- i. Gortnamona <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I-ttbUWbBdE>
- j. Little Beggarman <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5OPy7-Uqmv8>
- k. Abdulla Bulbul Ameer [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lv6M2omQ\\_U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lv6M2omQ_U)
- l. The Foggy Dew <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yaS3vaNUYgs>
- m. Paddy on the Railway <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCIBOZYlgrM>
- n. An Poc ar Buile [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHCfQ\\_YIPVE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHCfQ_YIPVE)
- o. Boolavogue <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BSYOVv8ciWo>
- p. Master Mc Grath <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KlQ4-jaMzM>
- q. The Spanish Lady <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TUijRpLLwT4>
- r. The Juice of the Barley <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YLkirjNIDgU>
- s. Sullivan's John <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mVii9no-SSk>
- t. Phil the Flutter's Ball <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KnsV4CvBBhQ>
- u. If I was a Blackbird <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KnsV4CvBBhQ>

Ends.