Sham–Real Shadows

On Navigating the Anthropocene

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Abstract

I make intimate scale objects that encourage audience interaction through their mobile devices, or small to larger scale works utilizing phenomenological engagement with projections, or mirrors. My research is focused on the Anthropocene, our current human-influenced global geological epoch born of the Industrial Revolution. It is my hope that my passion for the ideas contained in this subject will have some resonance in the work, while the things I make and the experiences they permit can be understood as meditations, and salves for bleak subject matter. The works discussed herein do not lecture toward my personal thinking around the Anthropocene (we get the planet we make), rather they direct themselves toward suggestions of how nature is presented, understood and utilized in a human-dominated world, and what that does to how we understand our relationship vis-à-vis nature. I believe that these are symptom and source for the problems we currently face and will carry with us into the future.

The works discussed in detail are Familiar Strangers, Sham–Real Shadows, and The Relics of the Anthropocene Temple. These works utilize human-made materials sourced from nature such as paper, MDF, light, and plastics, as well as contemporary technology such as lasers (an Anthropocene futuristic form of primitive fire). Frequent research sources, such as naturalist wallpaper, are chosen for their presentation of a commodified and rationalized Nature; a shadow of a shadow used as simulacrum to decorate interiors in a human world. The areas of inquiry focus on two streams with the attempt to answer the question, "are there ways to explore the ideological underpinnings and ramifications of the Anthropocene?" These two primary avenues of exploration are:

- Nature–human dichotomies and ways of designing nature, presenting and thus knowing Nature as simulacrum re-presented in repetitive patterns and then used to decorate human space, and
- Hyperobjects as Burkeian, and Kantian sublime presented as patterning of indeterminate space as meditations on, and signifiers of bleakness and hope, light and darkness destabilization and interconnectedness, time and the unknown knowing.

These two outcomes are explored in detail with in this document, and have formed the basis of my current practice.

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Under bright lights (such as a from a cell phone flash-light) the laser process is made evident—the burns show that these are things that have survived fire (metaphoric and literal). **Shown:** *Interval 08: four years before, and 156 after the origins of the species and we're still here* (working title) Laser-cut paper and MDF, glue, embroidery thread, Phillips screws. 10.16 x 10.16 x 10.16 cm. 2014.

Lace-work designs, such as this, there are no corner supports thus making the form extremely prone to breaking and eventual collapse. This speaks to the delicateness of the human relationship with nature—careless and brash breaks it; earnestness and concern keeps it standing. **Shown:** Detail of *Interval 09: life is an act of consumption, jupiter* (working title) showing delicateness of form.

Sham–Real Shadows Exhibition, The GAM Gallery, Vancouver, BC, 23 January–21 February 2015. **Shown above left:** Final display on C-shaped MDF ledges. **Shown above right and left:** *Interval 13: a parliament of effective distances* (working title). Laser-cut paper and MDF, glue, embroidery thread, on custom light fixture, with custom light bulb. 10.16 x 10.16 x 10.16 cm. 2014.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the faculty of MAA program for their dedication and assistance, keen minds and support. Foremost among them I especially owe thanks to my advisor Fiona Bowie for her patience and willingness to encourage and push me to explore new materials and methods for making art as today I am producing work that is very much different from what I was making when I began this journey.

Besides my advisor I would also like to thank Kathleen Ritter and Simon Levin who provided keen insight and earnest support for the development of many new projects that worked in ways of making and thinking that I would have never considered otherwise. And I would also like to thank Dr. Chris Jones for taking a chance on me and offering his support.

I would also like to thank the support staff at the Soft Shop's Laser Output Centre who pushed the laser cutter to its edge of capabilities for me, as well as Angeles Hernandez Correa for her organization and assistance throughout the past two years.

Finally I thank my cohort Christann Kennedy, Melany Nugent-Noble, Valérie Tremblay Blouin, Troy Gronsdahl, Dionne Paul, Galan Aitken, Jay Havens and Cadine Navarro for their generous support and honest critiques.

Dedication

To my partner Andrew and my four-legged companion Sherlock for their tireless, patience, love and support during this journey. Thank you, and "woof, woof".

Key terms

Anthropocene: Our current geological era born of the industrial revolution that is dated to 1784 to coincide with James Watt's invention of the steam engine, and exacerbated after immediately after 1944 with the first atomic bombs and subsequently the Great Leap forward of the 1940s and '50s.

Anthroposcene: There are two ways I define this neologism. Both definitions speak to "setting the stage" for the Anthropocene.
1. A work of art (time-based, 3D, 2D or other) that when pulled out of its original context appears as something quite different than probably intended, specifically that it appears to speak too, relate with, predict, or present the Anthropocene.
1. A work of art (time-based, 3D, 2D or other) that specifically references the Anthropocene.

Dystopia: A utopia that is negative relative to the global impact of the Anthropocene.

Eutopia: A utopia that is positive relative to the global impact of the Anthropocene.

Hyperobject: Another term coined by Timothy Morton referring to objects massively distributed throughout time and space relative to human life spans. Examples include polymers, nuclear waste, the oceans, Mount Krakatau, genetic DNA, the planet Earth, the Sun, and so on.

The mesh: A theoretical mesh within which all things sit. This is a term coined by Timothy Morton that implies a theoretical mesh that exists as the interwoven fabric of (all) life and non-life. The word mesh carries with it a two dimensional visualization that should be set aside in order to fully understand it as an every expanding multi-dimensional weaving of all that we currently do and do not know or understand. Therefore the mesh that Morton (and I) speaks of is 3D, multidimensional, and each piece is woven to every other piece. Something of this complexity lacks a sufficient word in the English language, but the Greek word ametros, meaning "unmeasured", comes close.

Nature: A generalized romantic or exploitative view of nature as usually found in a Nature–Human dichotomy.

Nature: An open definition of nature that opens its scope by refusing to explicitly define it. This is a term that references a collapse of the Nature–Human dichotomy in preference of acknowledging our implication within the systems of the natural world, i.e. the before mentioned Mesh of all living and nonliving things that is obscured by the Fog of Anthropomorphism.

Solvo desertum: Free-willed Nature; a form of wilderness predicated on Romantic notions of what nature should look and be like. Perhaps this, in outcome, is identical to voluntas desertum, but it is differentiated through its intent.

Strange stranger: Another term coined by Timothy Morton, this refers to the conceptual distance that is required in order to better understand and relate to the other life forms entangled in the Mesh and lost in the Fog.

Utopia: Defined henceforth as a "no-place" that could equally be eutopian or dystopian.

Voluntas desertum: Already and always free nature; an acknowledgement of an unknowable knowing of our enmeshment within nature through choice of acceptance of nature as is over a decision to purposely abandon any specific way of understanding and categorizing Nature.

Part I: Shooting through mirages from the past

Representations and ideology

"Ideology isn't just in your head. It's in the shape of a Coke bottle. It's in the way some things appear 'natural'—rolling hills and greenery—as if the Industrial Revolution never occurred." —Timothy Morton, *The Ecological Thought*

The works discussed in Part I are enmeshed in past ways of knowing, representing, and burying nature behind façades of itself. These works point toward Aesop's arrow as idealized replicas of nature aligned to our thinking about *Nature*, that are then made from materials sourced from its own destruction.

Nature in the arts (and elsewhere) is a discombobulated concept that is tossed between and betwixt opposed and confused uses: basis, authority, genesis, metaphor, raw material, frontier, divine, sublime, evil, fear, and escape among many others. The found patterns employed in the work reference prevailing romanticized ideals of nature since the start of the Industrial Revolution. In turn those ideals limit our engagement with nature and our understanding of it as something that we are a part, not apart. The works discussed in Part I re-represent these ideals in new modes of presentation.

Familiar Strangers

Figure 01: Adjacent page An audience member illuminates and traces the outer edges to cast "shadows of nature" from the chosen form that attempts to place "nature in a box". Note: the closer a cell phone light is to the sculpture the more all encompassing the shadows cast become. **Shown:** *Interval 09: life is an act of consumption, jupiter* (working title). Laser-cut paper and MDF, glue, embroidery thread, Phillips screws. 10.16 x 10.16 x 10.16 cm. 2014.

Description

Familiar Strangers is a sculptural time lapse of iconic, award winning Western naturalist wallpaper designs since the onset of the Industrial Revolution (circa 1784), thus linking them directly to the start of the transition toward the Anthropocene proper[1]. These works are delicate, fragile, laser-cut cubes intendended as disruptions of their paper surfaces to re–present these patterns from nature. These works are then displayed to encourage audience interaction with their cell phones lights (Figure 01) to investigate these re-presentations of nature in a familiar, yet strange form—as simulacrum as pattern.

Materials and processes

As a material, paper is a foundational item in modern knowledge—the primary formats for the dissemination of information for over 800 years in the West, and nearly two thousand in China, yet it was not popularized in décor until the Industrial Revolution made mass printing possible[2]. Patterning our man-made environments has existed for millennia[3] and today patterning dots our materialized landscapes, actively influencing thoughts, actions, and plans in active ways (modern urban street grids), passively (décor patterns such as wallpaper), and somewhere in between (concrete, gravel, asphalt and other built textures). Within all of these patterns, wallpaper is a passive daily reminder that nature can be turned into *Nature*; that it can be bent, controlled, and broken. Wallpaper, indirectly (as ideology via pattern) and directly (it is made from plants, and trees, dyes, chemicals, and glues) points to the destruction of nature for a solely human (such as the arts), as well as capitalist purposes.

Laser–cutting as a process and material choice leaves behind trace evidence of a form of highly controlled fire alongside proof that these works survived it (Figure 02). This is paramount to *Familiar Strangers*, for in a grand sense our Anthropocene journey, from the very beginning of human evolution to becoming the driving force of nature[4] that we are today, began with our control of fire. Arguably it is the first thing to allow humans to separate from the rest of the natural world (our control

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1. The first machine–made wallpaper was crafted by the French "royal manufacturer" Christophe-Phillppe Oberkampf and dates to 1785

2. Wall hanging of cotton or silk have existed since at least the 1600s while other forms of patterned wallcoverings have existed for millenia.

3. The chevrons on the 700,000 year old Java Island pseudodon shell engravings are the oldest known "man–made" patterns—made by a human predecessor, homo erectus, and whose intent for the pattern is subject to some debate. ("Zigzags on a Shell From Java Are the Oldest Human Engravings", 2014)

4. For example, the United Nations estimates that we now move more sediment globally and annually than all of the powers of erosion combined.

Figure 02: Under bright lights (such as a from a cell phone flash-light) the laser process is made evident—the burns show that these are things that have survived fire (metaphoric and literal). **Shown:** *Interval 08: four years before, and 156 after the origins of the species and we're still here* (working title) Laser-cut paper and MDF, glue, embroidery thread, Phillips screws. 10.16 x 10.16 x 10.16 cm. 2014.

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over natural forces), and such a ubiquitous and deep-in-time hyperobject (we can not know how we came to know how to produce and control it) is an important reference as it suggests that, although not visible unless investigated closely, there is more to the work to consider than pattern alone. Laser is fire's 20th century high–technology update, rendering a process that encapsulates the deep past, the present, and the future—the perfect tool for the Anthropocene. The fire the laser produces is texture both literally, and metaphorically as the boxes display the evidence of burning to craft such fragility, but their shadows carry no such reference.

On arriving at the final form

Artist David Thomas Smith creates kaleidoscopic patterns from composited aerial photographs as a way to explore sites of global capitalism ("Imagery, Imagination, Earth", 2013). Smith's work is disturbing and beautiful, and quite literally shows the vast ways in which capitalism and human demand has patterned the earth's terrain. I choose to work with commercial wallpaper because to me it represents a patterning of nature in a micro way that in turn primes us to accept the macro patterning that Smith spells out for us in his photography. Wallpaper, to me, demonstrates nature as simulacra; as a thing that is beautiful yet disturbing in how it flattens and bends that-which-is-not-us (*Nature*) into rational repeating shapes and forms. In an even deeper sense *Familiar Strangers* et al. is a response to the patterning of capitalism, and of green modernism that proposes management of the Earth as if it were a giant garden. In this scenario global capitalism decides the pattern, and ultimately what gets to grow and what (and whom) is weeded out.

Like the connection between wallpaper patterning and ideological patterning, several key aesthetic decisions I made with *Familiar Strangers* depended on linguistic connections. These *Familiar Strangers* re–presents simulacra of nature inside cubes to speak to placing nature in a metaphoric and literal box. This is an answer to Timothy Morton's ponderance that our failed *Nature* ideas "force organic forms into [ideological] boxes that cannot do them justice" (Morton, *Ecology Without Nature*, 2007, 20), while the white cube shape is also a nod to the gallery space in which the work is disseminated. When explored with light the work casts shadows of pseudo–nature that in its layers presents a shadow of a shadow of a shadow of nature. It is also important to note that the boxes are hollow because nothing truly natural exists inside an ideological box.

Where the project began

I see the premising *Familiar Strangers* designs as "small acts of violence"[5]. They may not be large-scale clear cuts like one would find in an Edward Burtynsky photograph, but they are small subconscious actions that suggest and condition toward tolerance, and acceptance of violence against the natural world. With the idea of violence, and the material of paper, I began exploring the work of Thomas Demand, specifically his photographs of life-sized replicas of sites of social or political trauma. *Familiar Strangers* began by building intricate hand-cut replicas of the interior framing of

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5. Analogous to the term *micro-aggressions*.

Figure 03: Lace-work designs, such as this, there are no corner supports thus making the form extremely prone to breaking and eventual collapse. This speaks to the delicateness of the human relationship with nature—careless and brash breaks it; earnestness and concern keeps it standing. **Shown:** Detail of *Interval 09: life is an act of consumption, jupiter* (working title) showing delicateness of form.

suburban homes that would be subjected to simulations of landscape burning, flooding, or glacier crushing to see what residue would be left to photograph. From these artifacts of trauma I crafted patterns, but this approach felt too focused on illustrating dystopia rather than thinking on patterning in literal, and ideological ways. With that observation I began to search for something more simple yet related to human dwellings. In this I kept coming back to wallpaper as simulacrum. For me these small cubes represent the possibility of a room somewhere (or anywhere) where these small acts of violence work on someone's subconscious, or my own.

Subverting wallpapers

Many Western patterns stem from adaption, and mixing of styles, more commonly taking the form of appropriation of non-Western cultures, such as Scottish re-interpretations of 200–600 CE Persian Paisley patterns ("The History of the Paisley Symbol and Paisley Pattern", 2014), or Dutch willow patterns based off of Chinese designs depicting pastoral scenes in blue, and white (Joseph Portanova, 2013). CNTRLZAC designs dishware for Italian company Hyb|rid that juxtaposes original Middle Eastern or Asian designs with the European adaptation onto the same dish, bowl, or glass. It seems far too poignant that these are designed in Italy, manufactured in China, and sold in North America. I see these decorative crafts as Anthropocene products that explore the origins of patterns while pointing out that colonialism's history with pattern didn't end as its commercialized appropriation and exploitation continues today.

Today, wallpapers are the focus of numerous artists. In *Domestic Interventions* (CityScape Community Art Space, North Vancouver, BC, 17 October–15 November 2014) artist Janet Wang subverted *Toile de Jouy*—a less expensive, printed style of repetitive images of the idyllic (Azzarito, 2009)—by seeding typical pastoral scenes with the detritus of everyday Toronto including images of needles, used condoms, as well as its ignored, and underprivileged people. The pattern was silkscreened by hand on fabric and used to craft a tent typical of persons without proper housing that survive in the parks, and streets of that city.

Wang's approach of subverting an old style to create her own take is poignant, but it is not a solution that felt right for this project as I desired to work with designs that were in someway approved by a capitalistic system inside a timeline, which would necessitate that they already exist. This meant that altering the designs beyond reducing them to solid and void, and blending them together to make the tops and bottoms of the cubes, couldn't be done. If I alter the designs then they are more motif then historical proof, less re-presentation than opinion; and this doesn't feel right. As a result I must struggle with the strong probability that the aestheticism of the final forms will be seen as reinforcing the ideological patterning that I seek to undermine with *Familiar Strangers*. This sets up a difficult tension where the earnestness of the designs to sign–post nature meets the ideological patterning pointing to *Nature* I see imbedded in them. Making my own patterns, or subverting historical ones are not a rejected way of working, but is something for another project.

A more direct approach, artist Kristin Schoppi's 1993 vegetable wallpaper installation at Access Gallery (see Appendix A, figures A-01, and A-02) made of real vegetables left to rot, takes the odious conceptual underpinning of naturalist wallpaper—taming, and controlling nature—and lets it rot. What a stark way to speak to the rot in humanity's relationship to nature as *Nature*. In this way the work becomes something much more visceral, that demands interaction without choice. I need
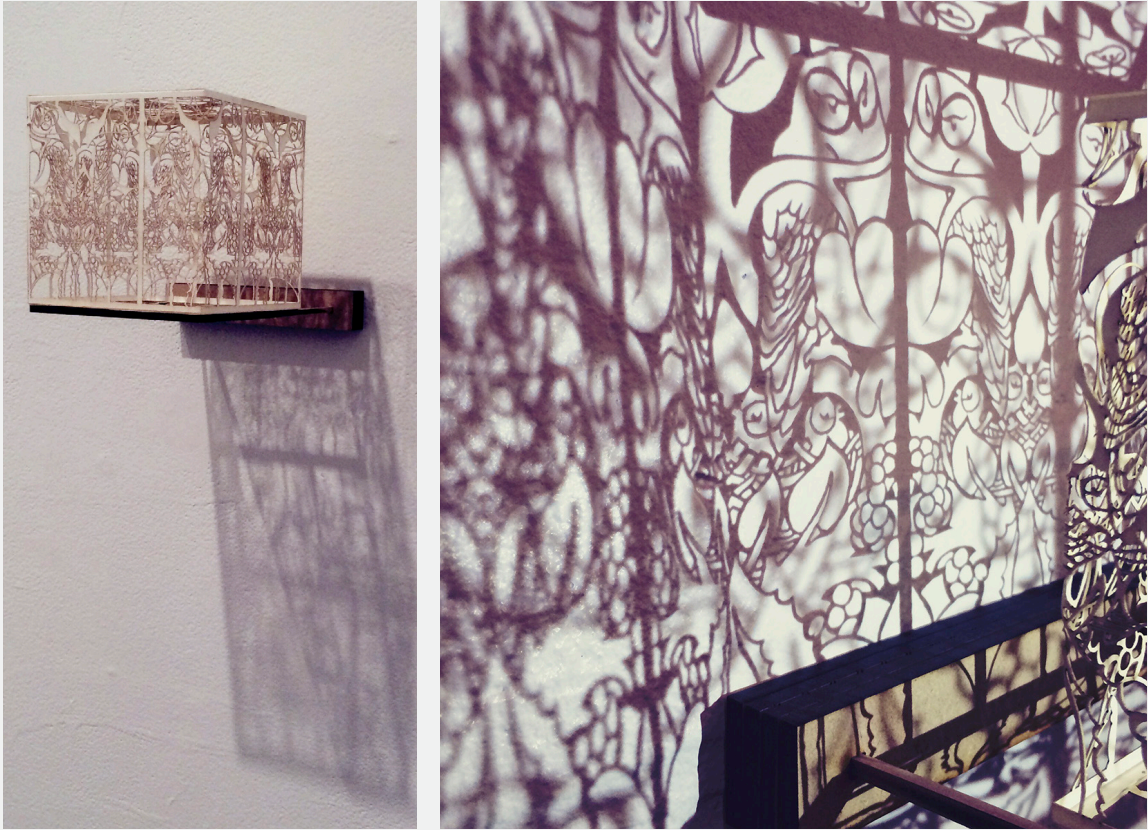
Figure 04: *Sham–Real Shadows* Exhibition, The GAM Gallery, Vancouver, BC, 23 January–21 February 2015. **Shown above left:** Final display on C-shaped MDF ledges. **Shown above right and left:** *Interval 13: a parliament of effective distances* (working title). Laser-cut paper and MDF, glue, embroidery thread, on custom light fixture, with custom light bulb. 10.16 x 10.16 x 10.16 cm. 2014.

my work to do something of Schoppi's in providing something more than just being pattern, therefore getting the wallpaper to be something else in a form that can lead to reader to a conclusion similar but not necessarily identical to my own is critical. This is why I think of these pieces as suggestions—they suggest thinking around nature and *Nature* but do not directly address it via their forms alone.

Authenticity and legitimacy

As I did not want to subvert patterns, or make up my own historicist ones I set out to create a list of patterns that would have the *authenticity* of having been consumed inside a capitalist system. Likewise, *legitimacy* stems from designs that have in

some way been sanctioned within their own discipline, specifically the design of wallpapers.

The steps to selecting what source materials to work with are:
1. Use designs found within the publicly accessible library survey books[6],
1. Craft a shortlist of naturalist wallpapers that connect visually to narrative breaks in Nature thinking,
1. Chose finalists for their contribution to that shifting narrative.

In this I am seeking an overall narrative within the context of capitalist hegemony, and the lead up to the Anthropocene. The individual designers[7] are not a consideration. I am aware that these designers come from diverse backgrounds, and that many may be actively working in ways aligned or opposed to my own. This, however, is not the point of *Familiar Strangers*—the objective being to work with designs that are celebrated, or otherwise acknowledged within an industry that in turn promotes their usage as décor, thus filtering down into the everyday lives of people.

In Dr. Joanna Boehnert's paper *Design versus the Design Industry* (2014) she argues that all fields of design fail at addressing our current global crisis because the design industry is beholden to capitalism's pursuit of profit, which weeds out those works that do not support this. In her own words, "The exclusive focus on profit and quantitative economic growth results in distortions of knowledge, and reason thereby undermining prospects for the design of long-term prosperity within the context of the current political, and economic regime" (Joanna Boehnert, 2014, 1). Wallpaper is just one aspect of design, and can't speak for a whole multifaceted set of distinct disciplines, but it is very much in bed with the same regimes that Dr. Boehnert speaks of. With this in mind the main objective of *Familiar Strangers* is to be critical of visual representation that supports impoverished thinking about nature within a broader Anthropocene and capitalist narrative—not to critique the intentions of the individual designers referenced here. If I accept Winston Churchill's axiom, "we shape our [environments]; thereafter they shape us", then the designers, artists, curators, and broader system absolutely have a role to play in this regime (or what follows it). I hope that I do as well.

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6. Thus making this experiment not only replicable but also based on information within the accessible public record that anyone can gain access to without barriers. This first methodological step presents a major benefit in that it allows me to source designs selected by experts rather than through my personal taste, however, it also means depending on those experts. As it turns out the experts do not appear to be without bias as the overwhelming majority of naturalist designs in these books are Western. In fact until the later half of the 20th Century they are all predominately, and specifically, European.

7. I also do not wish to treat all of the designers the same, and through my research I have found some moments of earnestness that, in part, speak to my interests in nature, William Morris being one. Morris approached his designs earnestly in a hope that they spoke to natural things, but also to make clear to the viewer that they were not replicants, rather that they stood out as natural, and as designs in equal measure. They are *Nature* designs that through their non-Cartesian grids, and repetition speak to indeterminat (the repeats could go on indefinitely), nature, and an approach to design that could only be human.

Figure 05: Left: Untitled chinoserie design by Linon Batiste, circa 1785. **Right:** *Les Metamorphoses d'Ovide* by an unknown artist, 1785

Naturalist wallpaper designs since circa 1784

Each design presents a locked-in-step shifting relationship with the natural world vis-à-vis representations of it. At the onset of the Industrial Revolution papering one's walls became a populist pursuit in the West. A popular contemporary design was the *Versailles*[8] print that presented diagonal repeats of clusters of florals, branches, and birds often in highly stylized neoclassical forms. Most, however, did not present a dramatic break with the past, often referencing neoclassical, or appropriated non-Western styles such as chinoiseries[9] (Teynac, 1982). As the Industrial Revolution progressed wallpapers speak more to contemporaneous Western thinking on *Nature*

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8. Named after the palace of the same name.
9. A chinoiserie is any pattern derivative of classical Chinese designs.

Figure 06: Upper: *Lucullus* by Auguste Clésinger, 1855, with die cut overlay showing cut outs in both shape and halftone points. Dark areas represent the cuts out of the paper material. **Middle:** Process excerpt of four tone rendering in preparation for halftone die cut for *Interval 08: four years before, and 156 after the origins of the species and we're still here* (working title) in Figure 02. **Lower:** *Interval 08: four years before, and 156 after the origins of the species and we're still here* (working title) on display at the GAM Gallery. Laser-cut paper and MDF, glue, embroidery thread, on custom light fixture, with custom light bulb. 10.16 x 10.16 x 10.16 cm. 2014.
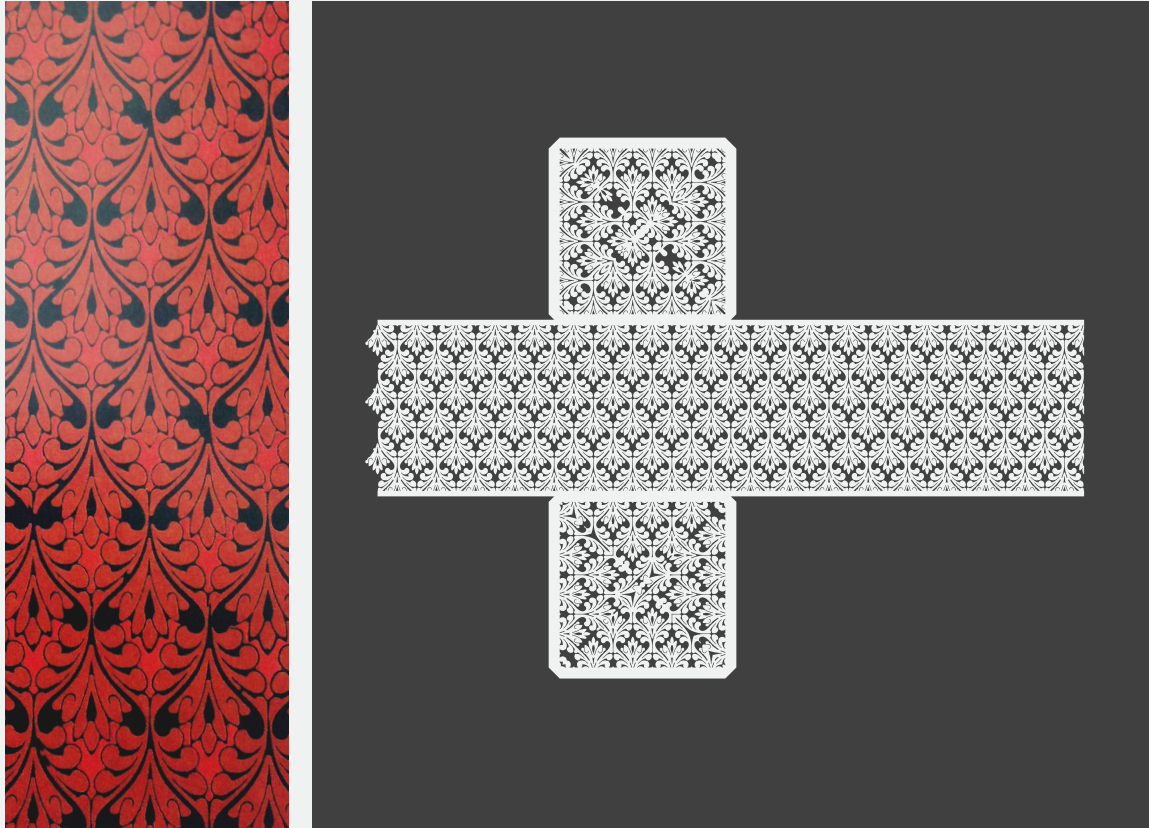
Figure 07: Left: Untitled wallpaper design by Owen Jones, 1855. **Right:** Die cut for *Interval 07: that which is beautiful is never true* (working title).

in relationship to *The Age of Empires*. Its at this time that wallpaper morphs into full scenic murals panoramically depicting landscapes in colonial or mythologized contexts, such as the hunting scenes as seen in Auguste Clésinger's 1855 piece *Lucullus* (Figure 06) (Thibaut-Pomerantz, 2009). Many worked within the Romantic sublime tradition of foreboding landscapes seemingly void of people in "newly discovered" far off lands. These room-wrapping scenes provided any person of means the ability to dream of colonization while at the supper table.

By the mid 19th century this eventually progressed to tight repetitions of manicured plants as seen in Owen Jones's 1850 untitled piece (Figure 07) (Greysmith, 1976). These diverged either into *trompe l'oeil* patterns or towards works that speak eloquently to heavily reconstituted organic forms. William Morris' 1875 *Acanthus* (Figure 08) that explores the qualities of a single type of leaf is one example that captivates. Morris' take on the acanthus plant (a classical motif) is earnest and visually pleasing, but it hardly compares to the actual plant that is more bristle than calculated French curve (Greysmith, 1976). For me both nature and human design, ultimately reading as a uniquely Morrisian attempt to signpost *Natue* over
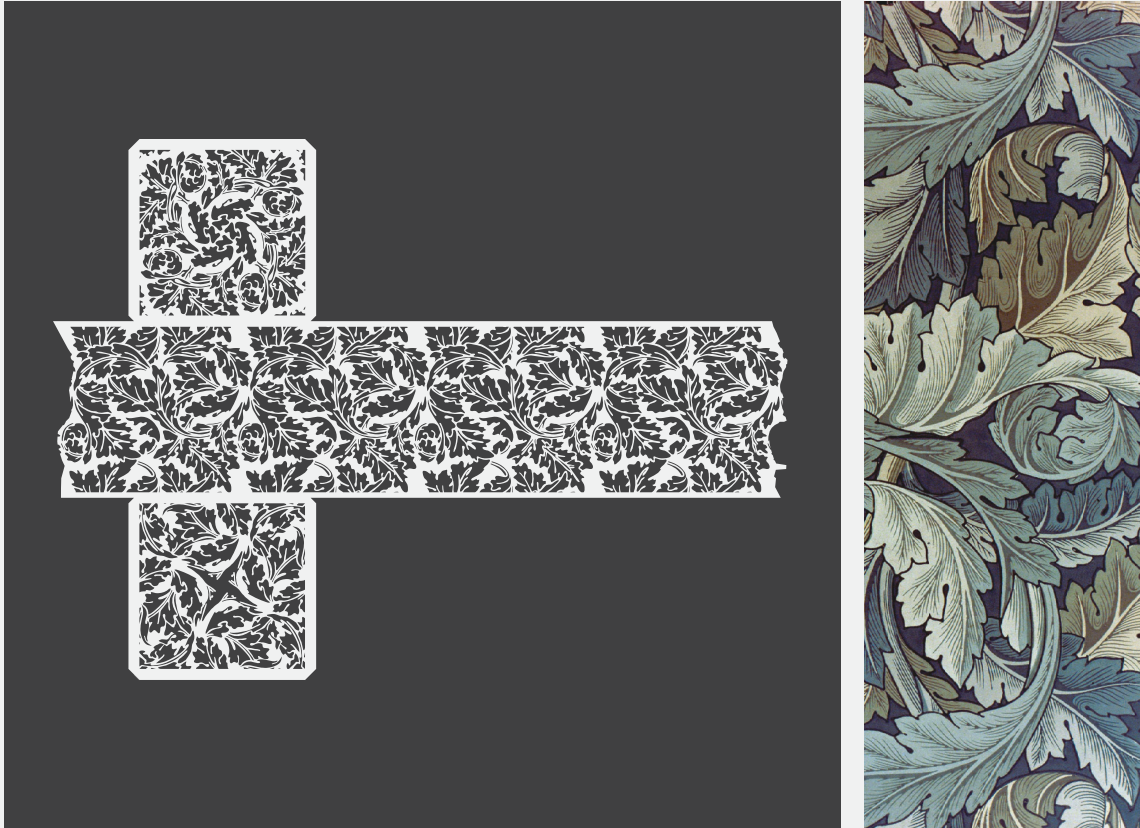
Figure 08: Left: Die cut for *Interval 09: life is an act of consumption, jupiter* (working title). **Right:** *Acanthus* by William Morris, 1875.

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nature. It is a failure as it ultimately points towards order, design, and pattern more clearly than its subject; and yet it is also a *coup d'état* in wallpaper design for its seamlessness, and kinetic energy. Somehow it seems simultaneously arbitrary and calculated; natural and man–made; organic and architectonic—a perfect Anthropocene pattern.

In the later half of the 19th century other wallpaper designs are clearly influenced by Morris as they begin to appear (as a general observation) more realistic while simultaneously becoming more machined in their patterned qualities. I think Morris, in particular, represents one of the best articulated aesthetic breaks from *voluntas desertum*, an "already, and always free nature," in how his work acknowledges that it is simulacrum, in effect being an exercise in design (as a sign–post) first; representation (realism) second. In a way Morris' work is less representation of nature and more design–for–design–sake's that is based off of things that exist in nature.

In the early 20th century approaches to wallpaper design shifted to celebrating not escaping the Industrial Revolution through machined appearances—a hallmark of
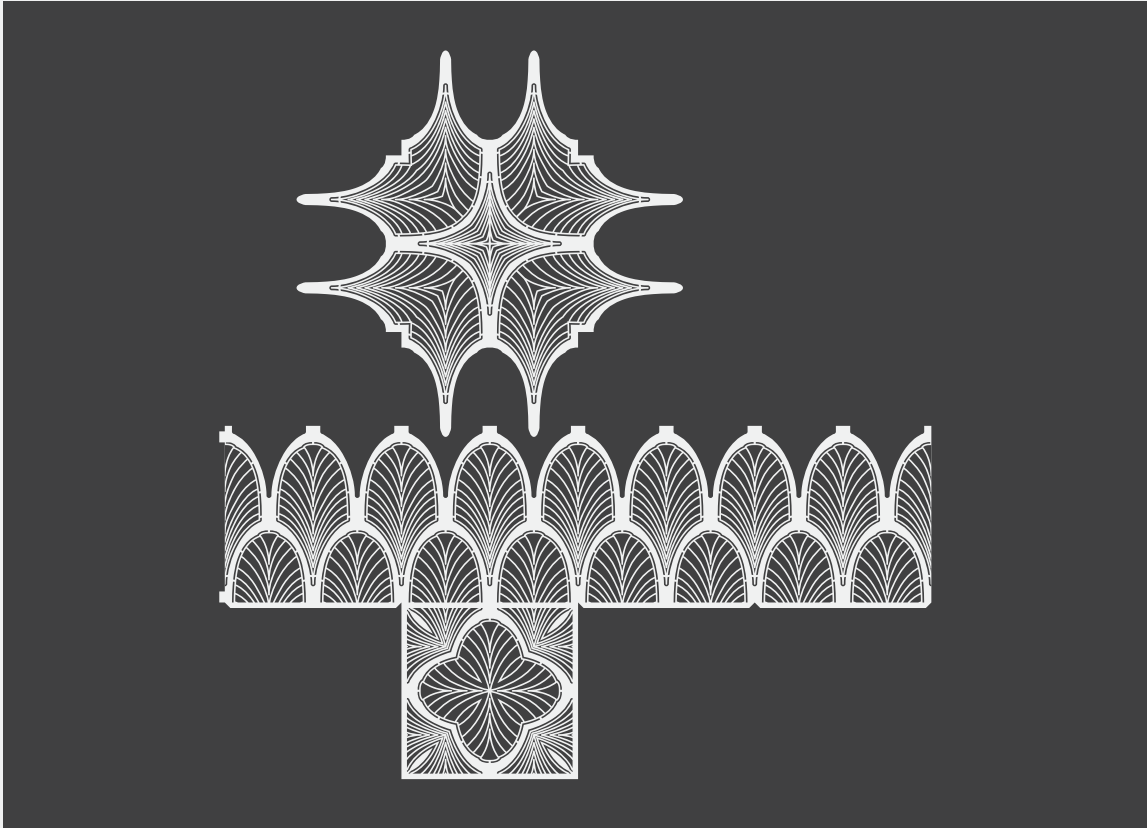
Figure 09: Die cut for *Interval 15: these will never be banana leaves* (working title) showing original pattern along the four sides and new blended patterns for the top and bottom.

many early modernist styles. These shifts coincide with the explosive growth of urban areas as well as newly accepted revelations about nature, such as definitive proof for the concept of extinction as found in the dramatic, and well-publicized demise of the American Passenger Pigeon (Forbush, 1917). The last of these pigeons died in captivity on 01 September 1914 thus signally the annihilation of an animal nicknamed "a living wind"[10] that once blacked out the daylight skies of North America for hours in flocks 300 kilometres long (Mackinnon, 2013, 54). This came as a deep shock to the public, dominated headlines, inspired works of art, and was a major impetus behind the growth of conservation movements in the United States ("Why the Passenger Pigeon Went Extinct").

It is also around this point onwards that I've observed that all of the lauded designs

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10. The description of the flocks can be attributed to Aldo Leopold's 1947 poem *On a Monument to the Pigeon* where he wrote "Men still live who, in their youth, remember pigeons; trees still live who, in their youth, were shaken by a living wind. But a few decades hence only the oldest oaks will remember, and at long last only the hills will know." ('Why the Passenger Pigeon Went Extinct')
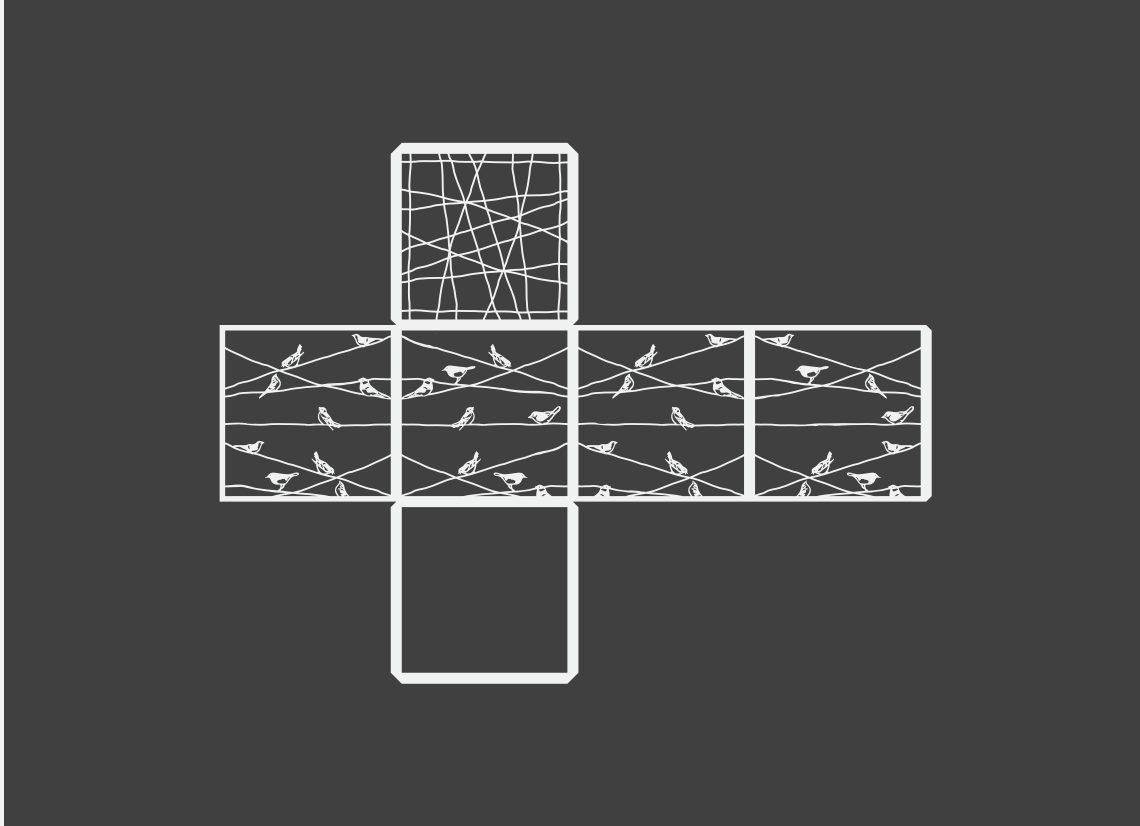
Figure 10: Die cut for *Interval 22: the heat of the sun is you* (working title), 2014.

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depart from any attempt at realism, rather focusing on machined repetition of nature as (re)source. A popular, yet anonymous design of the Art Déco eara, for example, features repeat of banana leaves so machined as to barely be recogizable as leaves at all[11] (Figure 09). The mid-twentieth century continued this trend of eviscerating nature for more man-made aesthetics through cartoonish depictions adhering more to style, thus doing away with attempts at a true enmeshing with nature. Perhaps in an era of atomic blasts rejecting the natural for the over the top pop art[12] or midcentury modern abstractions felt more appropriate.

During the '70s Alain Le Foll created a distinctive instance of naturalism through a wallpaper design titled *The Cliff* (Figure 13) that translates a single cliff face into a

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11. This pattern will sometime appear as titled as *Manhatten* but there is no evidence to suggest that this was its original title. In my discussion around the work I refer to the pattern as banana leaves because those were a popular motif at the time to which this design adheres. This is the only pattern in the *Familiar Strangers* series that I can not attest with 100% certainty that it is a nature derived pattern, but I am convinced beyond the shadow of any doubt.

12. I'm especially thinking of Yayoi Kusama's pop art flowers here.
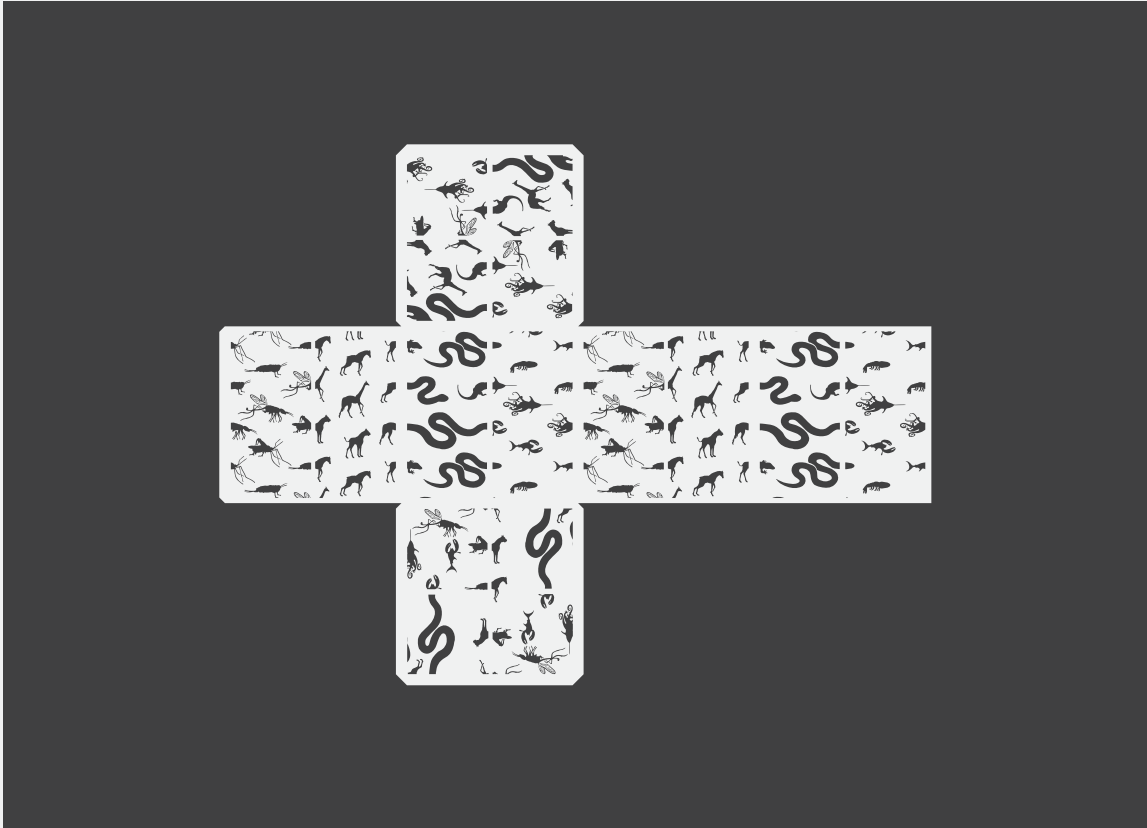
Figure 11: Die cut for *Interval 23: we are our own ghosts in a landscape of our own making* (working title).

floor to ceiling mural-sized panorama[13]. Despite this high point, overall in the last third of the 20th century naturalism appears to wane in popularity (Greysmith, 1976). Of those that I found most are overly derivative of earlier periods and thus present a romantic historicism over any new shift in nature–human thinking.

Finally, in the twenty-first century nature patterns return but abruptly abandon the false promise of presenting a romantic *Nature* and instead present animals as vestigial parts of the urban landscape (Figure 10) or even worse: as resource for genetic and human manipulation (Figure 11) (Blackley, 2006). Perhaps these designs are meant to be ironic, but even so my aversion to them persists.

13. This is also the only naturalist wallpaper design to focus on mineral rather than flora or fauna that I have located at the time of publication.

The 23 intervals

Although this is not an exhaustive study at this point, the evidence from inquiry here presents shifts in naturalist designs alongside new ideological stances, terms, theories or breakthroughs in our understanding of nature, or *Nature*. The trajectory these wallpapers appear to suggest, when placed in context with the research is a procession of ideological violence against nature—mythology fades to romanticism, which fades to hyperrealism, which turns into machined nature, and finally ends in habitat obliteration, and genetic modification (see Appendix B: The 23 intervals, Table 01 for a full list of environmental, social, and economic events so far during the Anthropocene alongside descriptions, titles, and interpretations of the chosen wallpaper designs). To me, this appears to be plotting a course of knowing nature not on its own terms, making "in what way can I make these shifts apparent" becomes the follow-up question to the primary investigative question, "are there new visual ways to present evidence of the ideological underpinnings of the Anthropocene?"

In Anselm Franke's 2013 essay *Earthrise and the Disappearance of the Outside* in discussing the exhibition he curated in the same year, *The Whole Earth and the Disappearance of the Outside*, he speaks to the importance of seeing the whole picture (and perhaps even the small details we often overlook):

> "Within the context of the discussion of the "Anthropocene" as the term for a period in Earth's history shaped by human influence, an age in which mankind becomes a geological factor and the borders between "nature" and "man" need to be rethought in the context of an ecological paradigm, *The Whole Earth* aims to situate the invocations of the "big picture" within a specific historical frame, without which it will become increasingly difficult to even address the relations of power and exploitation as such" (Franke, 2013).

Franke is interested in the question of how we can address any pressing issue in the Anthropocene if we do not address the entrenched borders between nature as *Nature*, and us[14]. It is through exploring these lauded wallpaper designs that I present a conclusion that designing nature to suit ideological shifts can be traced even through simulacra of nature re-presented in repetitive patterns. *Familiar Strangers* then presents ever-worsening shifts of these borders in the familiar spaces of home décor—and then asks another follow up question, "if we can find them here, could we find them elsewhere?" The answer is most probably "yes", but then I wonder what anyone can do with this knowledge, specifically under capitalist (and colonialist) systems so invested in *Nature*–human dichotomies that any attempt to address the relations of power and exploitation found in the Anthropocene seems impossible?

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14. I use the word "entrenched" here to provide context for my intent by using "us". I do not mean to imply that every single human being is stuck in these ways of thinking, but I do believe that the vast majority are entrenched within systems that propose, and support these ideological divides for their own benefit. It's easier to exploit the world till the end of profit if peoples are already conditioned to think of "nature" as mere resource, and not as a constitute whole of which we are part, and of which our very survival depends.

I respond to this by making art and hopefully, through it's dissemination and resulting discussions, raise awareness of issues relating to nature and the subliminal ways we are programmed to think of it as *Nature*.

Ideology, and thinking on nature

The hyper-aestheticism, and fragility of these boxes signify paper-thin aestheticized concepts of *Nature*, while suggesting human destructiveness through evidence of burning. These works suggest a place for an audience to contemplate their own ideas of *Nature*, and their own capacity to explore and engage with it. To quote Paul Klee, as stated in 1920, "art does not reproduce the visible; rather, it makes visible" (Parry et al., 2011, 24), and I hope that *Familiar Strangers* suggests something worth thinking about that is buried behind the ideological lies of modernity: that nature as *Nature* is a hollow box ultimately with nothing to offer.

I hope that the series speaks for a thinking approach to nature, arguing that we do not need to know it in absolutes, but that we simply need to experience it as *voluntas desertum* (already and always free nature) as opposed to *solvo desertum* (free-willed *Nature*[15]). The first requires nothing of us, while the latter implicates us at its centre. I am not arguing for a world where we free ourselves from the ideologies surrounding *Nature*, but via these introduced Latin terms—the language of flora, fauna and minerals—I am suggesting that we need try to forget the old ways of thinking entirely for the moment, and spend some more time getting to know nature on (and in) its own terms.

The roughly 10-year intervals in the *Familiar Strangers* timeline are purposely fluid, presenting an echo of shifting ideological stances. Like Martin Heidegger's "soundless wind"[16] or J.B. Mackinnon's "shifting baselines"[17], it is something you never directly see but which presents itself over time through its affects. It is the storm in the chimney, the rustle of leaves, the Caribou Island[18] where no one living has ever seen caribou (an ecological echo on the map). Through these works I hope to gently remind my audience that, as the lead quote of this chapter suggests, even if it does not directly engage us consciously, design is never passive.

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15. The suggestion here is that the nature has never existed independently of us, and therefore requires no freeing up of its bondage. The only chains that must be broken are the modes of thinking about *Nature*.

16. "Heidegger poetically said that you never hear the wind in itself, only the storm whistling in the chimney, the wind in the trees." (Morton, *The Ecological Thought*, 2012, p. 57) The wind has no real physical presence and just like ideology it must come into contact with something to exist.

17. Shifting baselines is a concept predicated on the idea that each person carries a baseline of how they have seen the world and that as new generations arrive their baselines for measuring change are shifted from their ancestors.

18. The region of Nova Scotia where I grew up. There hasn't been Caribou there in over two hundred years, and I've only known Caribou Island as a peninsula with an odd name. This is because three months before I was born a massive hurricane forced sandbanks to rise and block Caribou Harbour thus making the island a natural peninsula which carries two ecological echos of the past.

In the same way the hidden arrow in the FedEx logo[19] primes us to think of them as the swiftest, wallpaper (and other designs) subliminally shape our thoughts as to what constitutes "natural". Local Vancouver writer, J. B. MacKinnon opines, "We shape the world, and it shapes us in return. We are the creator and the created, the maker and the made," (Mackinnon, 2013, 152), a thought I share and that I hope is evident in the work—specifically that it suggests an entanglement as part of nature (as an Aesopian arrow) and not outside it as *Nature* requires.

In *Ecology without Nature* Timothy Morton states:

> "But ultimately, theory (and meditation, for that matter) is not supposed to make you a "better person" in any sense. It is supposed to expose hypocrisy, or if you prefer, to examine the ways in which ideological illusions maintain their grip" (Morton, *Ecology Without Nature*, 2007, 12).

I continue to look for these strange yet familiar ways of seeing in the many things around me everyday. I see it in the shape, and textures of the urban environment as much as see it in the landscapes in video games. I think these both familiar, and strange things become subconscious background noise. My desire is to then amplify, miniaturize, or otherwise make these visual signifiers for ideology worthy of further exploration, and contemplation focused on the ways we think about nature, and us. Ultimately I do this to remind others and myself that, "Nature is not a temple, but a ruin. A beautiful ruin, but a ruin all the same" (Mackinnon, 2013, 101).

Evocative objects

Familiar Strangers presents a moment where the audience is obliged to cast shadows using the light on their mobile phones, thus crafting a photographic moment where fleeting shadows span across walls. As they push, pull and drag the shadows they give this work life. This photographic interplay of light and shadow, negative and positive, group and intimacy, that when approached meditatively provide a phenomenological experience to engage with simulacrum of nature that can never be *voluntas desertum*—yet the life of the object is there as long as the audience maintains it (Figure 12, and see *Sham–Real Shadows* Exhibition video documentation in Appendix B).

In her book *Evocative Objects* Sherry Turkel puts forth the term evocative object as a conceptual framework for understanding our everyday personal objects as "emotional and intellectual companions that anchor memory, sustain relationships,

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19. Between the "e" and the "x" there lays a hidden arrow pointing left-to-right that subconsciously implies forward motion (in a Western function) through a form of cognitive reading expectation referred to as *page gravity*.
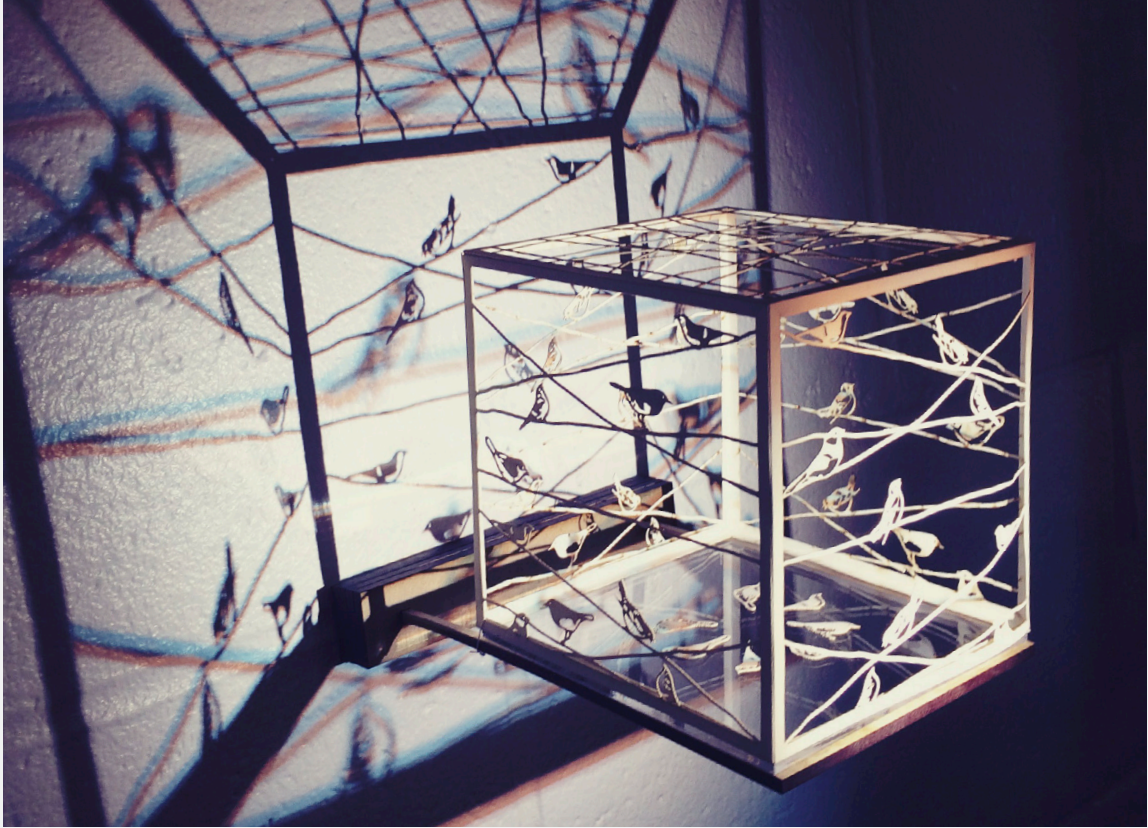
Figure 12: Audience members illumes the "box that failed"—in cutting this one the lasers cut too far and several birds were cleaved from the design. Here they are presented as breaks from the patterning, laying "dead" on the ground. **Shown:** *Interval 22: the heat of the sun is you* (working title). Laser-cut paper and MDF, glue, embroidery thread, Phillips screws. 10.16 x 10.16 x 10.16 cm. 2014.

and provoke new ideas" (Turkel, 2007). The most accessible tool today is one's own mobile phone, which is also usually their primary photographic tool, as well as a simple lighting device.

Corrine Vionnet's composite photographic works utilize this anchoring of memory through combining hundreds of different tourist shots scoured from the Internet all taken by different people from extremely similar vantage points (vistas built for tourists). The result is a ghostly image—a collective memory rather than an individual straight photographic replica. This points to apparent human need to understand something through photographing it with their own tools. I hope then by forcing the audience to interact with *Familiar Strangers* via their own evocative objects that they come to a different, perhaps more personal outcome than via passive observation. I also think it's important to have in the audience's hands an investigative tool in
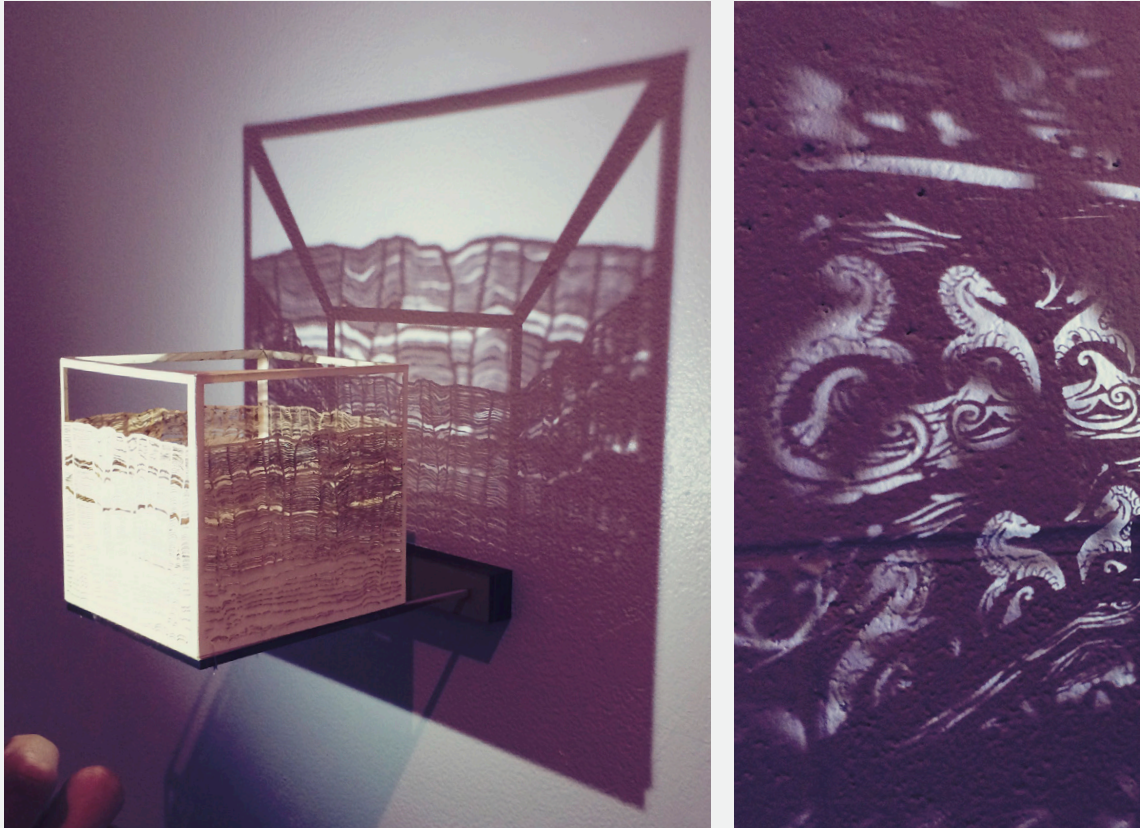
Figure 13: Left: Audience members light up *Interval 11: this is how we dance under waves you can not see* (working title). Laser-cut paper and MDF, glue, embroidery thread, Phillips screws. 10.16 x 10.16 x 10.16 cm. 2014. **Right:** Audience members light up *Interval 20: the world does not die with us* (working title). Laser-cut paper and MDF, glue, embroidery thread, Phillips screws. 10.16 x 10.16 x 10.16 cm. 2014.

order to search for data hinted at in the titles[20] to ultimately lead to discovery and engagement with the broader issues my work, their titles, and the accompanying didactic text touches on. This is especially important when considering that these issues are only suggested at in the various accompany text, and are not inherent in *Familiar Strangers* directly.

20. All keywords are chosen for their ability to land the audience on the first page of an online search should they seek more data on the presented topic.

Harm

By presenting these delicate cubes outside of vitrines on thin nearly invisible shelves they are left vulnerable to an increased desire to touch that opens up the possibility of harm. Morton describes art as space not for "positive qualities (Eros)," but of negative ones, that holds our attention long enough so we may stop "destroying things". He then goes on to remind us that for Walter Benjamin the aesthetic alienates, and distances us from the world (Morton, *Ecology Without Nature*, 2007, 115). I like to think that both—aesthetic alienation from nature, and a desire to not destroy the work—are at play in *Familiar Strangers*. However, should any harm to the sculptures come to pass (this has not yet happened) I intend to let it remain until the exhibition is complete. The natural world is not smoothed over, and to that end the breaks and entanglements resultant of an accident would serve as another layer reminding the viewer of the beautiful lies inherent in the work. That it happened "organically" (as opposed to premeditatively) would also not interfere with my desires for authenticity and legitimacy.

Nature as un-re-presentable

To close, the work takes its name from the mash of Morton's term *strange stranger*, and an observation by René Magritte, that "there's something else of an unfamiliar nature that appears at the same time as familiar things" (Virilio, 1991, 47). In this work exists a strangeness familiar to us all, which presents, and acts more than just décor: it points to its own strange strangeness in its stamped repetition devoid of any wildness. It is an impossibility masquerading as plausibility. In the same way that nature should require no re-presentation (because it's impossible, yet at some level it is always familiar) and that *Nature* requires re-presentations (because it is always estranged from the actual), *Familiar Strangers* draws the audience towards itself because of its familiarity, but disorients them because of its strangeness.

Sham–Real Shadows

Figure 14: Fragility remains as a consistent element as the interior design depends on only a few 0.3175 cm supports just as the little cube cousin depends on 0.15875 cm supports. Another important distinction is that the lighting for *Sham-Real Shadows* is provided, and integrated in its display. This permits a projection of shadows further outward so that the piece may fill an entire space with shadows, and light. **Shown:** *Sham–Real Shadows*. Laser-cut MDF, embroidery thread, custom light fixture, and you. 55.8 x 55.8 x 55.8 cm. 2015.

Description

Sham-Real Shadows isn't just an aggrandizement of its *Familiar Strangers* cousin (Interval 09). The pattern, technical aspects, and shape are indeed similar, however as an installation the work creates a space where the audience can be immersed in projected shadow and light of romantic patterning of *Nature*. It is also a single work that compresses *Nature* to a single moment (rather than a serial timeline) that pulls the audience in, and implicates them as explorers inside an environment in which they are participants (with or without knowing). As a result it crafts a landscape of shadows and metaphor.

Inspiration

As a master of naturalist home décor, who also rejected the processes of industrialization, William Morris favoured stylized evocations over literal transcriptions of nature, deploring the later depictions as "sham-real houghs[21] [sic] and flowers, casting sham-real shadows" (Victoria and Albert Museum, 2011). In other words, Morris rejects overly realistic depictions of nature in pattern, yet I read this as a statement of desire to do the opposite—to reinforce nature as man-made through highly aestheticized, complex patterning. Close to the same time I came across this quote I stumbled upon the before-mentioned Magritte quote on the strangeness of the familiar (Virilio, 1991, 47). These quotes are the genesis of my thinking around shadows as a source for double meaning. As a part of my practice shadows take on many forms both as substances to manifest, as metaphor for ideologies, as photographic play, and as a presentation of a flattened hollowing out of nature when compared to the real deal.

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21. Hough is word loosely defined as a suggestion of a useless limb, and in this instance a severed, decorative branch.

Similarity to other artworks

Sham-Real Shadows was developed independently of Anila Quayyum Agha's 2014 work *Intersections*[22], a piece it bears a strong material resemblance to. It's important to note that Intersections carried no relative bearing on the decisions I made in making my work as I was not aware of Agha's work until after I finished prototyping. Fortunately the two pieces diverge at several points. For example *Sham-Real Shadows* grew out of the process of crafting *Familiar Strangers* whereas *Intersections* does not appear to grow out of a trajectory of working with cubes at all, although it does grow out of a long term interest in pattern. With that in mind it's important to state that although it did not impact my creative process, discovering *Intersections* did affect how I present it as I do not suspend my work as Agha does, rather I present it on a narrow plinth or bespoke legs. In this way *Sham–Real Shadows* has an imposing yet familiar presence (like a silent gramophone in the middle of room filled with shadow and light) different from imposing, alien presence of *Intersections*.

At a surface level the two works are also conceptually dissimilar. Agha describes Intersections as "interrogat[ing] a motif...believed to represent...Islamic sacred spaces" and speaks to a lived "experience of exclusion as a woman from a space of community and creativity...in Pakistan" ("Anila Quayyum Agha", 2015). In a way we are both speaking about embedded ideologies—small acts of violence as I call them—evidenced in pattern motifs, but the limitations facing Muslim women in Pakistan, and dangerous Romantic ideals of Nature do have limited overlaps beyond the idea of hegemony (and patriarchy) as controller which both do speak toward. Additionally, although I have not seen it in person, the audience for *Intersections* appears relegated to observation[23], but in *Sham-Real Shadows* the audience is an integral part of the materials of the work, with the materials list directly listing "you" as a material.

Marianne Nicolson's *Bakwin-a'tsi Container for Souls* (2006) is another visually similar work. The precision, and consideration of detail in her design is something I appreciate, and while it is interesting that we both speak to colonialism in visually similar works, she speaks of it in much more personal ways by using pattern to explore ceremony, family and the genocide perpetuated by the Canadian residential schools system. Susan Rome, Coordinator of School Programs at the Vancouver Art Gallery, writes of the work "Was I inside the box or outside it? I became an active part ... as my own body created more shadows on the walls" (Rome, 2011). This is the same sort of phenomenological experience I hope my audience takes away when they are inside the *Sham–Real Shadows* space.

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22. This is also a laser-cut wood cube.
23. I have not personally seen this work, but am basing my evaluation off of various video and photographic documentation.

Figure 15: Shadowpaper cast from *Sham–Real Shadows*.

Shadowpaper

The changes to scale, and lighting fundamentally change the engagement with the form. Where *Familiar Strangers* functions when explored up close *Sham–Real Shadows* is explored at a distance, while at the same time on the audience's bodies. I call the projection of light, and shadow onto the adjacent walls *Shadowpaper* (Figure 14). Unlike wallpaper it does not merely decorate a surface, but the surface is temporarily decorated because of it. It is shadow wallpaper, but is also a shadow of wallpaper. Furthermore, when a viewer passes through the space they cannot avoid disruption to the shadowpaper, finding it on their bodies just as shadows of their bodies are cast upon the walls. The phenomenological experience is that the audience implicates themselves in the work, and its theoretical framework, by becoming literally awash with a Romantic patterning of *Nature*. This is not

Figure 16: Overlapping shadowpaper cast by *Sham–Real Shadows* and by other audience generated light sources.

something that is noticed immediately by a lone audience member, rather becoming most apparent when a second person occupies the space, thus providing an example of this implication.

The Vancouver Art Gallery's recent presentation of Vancouver-based collective WALLPAPERS[24] exhibit *Beyond the Trees: Wallpapers in Dialogue with Emily Carr* (25 April to 7 September 2015) "reflect[s] on their perceptions of British Columbia's coastal landscape … through the use of digitally animated patterns … [where] nature is viewed through powerful aesthetic filters" ('Beyond the Trees: Wallpapers in Dialogue with Emily Carr', 2015). This exhibition of video projected wallpapers reflected issues relating to sublime landscapes, clear cuts forests, and paper products—primarily relating to the logging industry often critiqued by Emily Carr through her landscapes.

There are some overlaps of concerns with WALLPAPERS' work, but for me it was the user engagement that spoke most. In both there is a permission of delight, or even whimsy, by having the patterns project onto the audience's bodies. There is something in this joy of engagement that translates the experience first as salve for bleak subject matter—clear cutting, and the horrors of industrial logging on the British Columbian landscape being a dominate theme in WALLPAPER's work; large scale terrains of the future in mine—that invites a phenomenological engagement, that then carries with it an acknowledgement, and remembrance of the concepts, and contents the works suggest. Both works draw attention to "how one experiences nature in a constructed setting" ("Beyond the Trees: Wallpapers in Dialogue with Emily Carr", 2015), but ultimately it is in the enjoyment of the work that space opens up for an audience who avoids thinking about, or discussing painful issues surrounding nature in contemporary world. These projected wallpapers, *Sham–Real Shadows* included, function as salves to sooth those nerves, and as gentle passageways to discussions so desperately needed today.

The overlaps

As with *Familiar Strangers*, *Sham–Real Shadows* is the mesh writ large—the only way to truly see *Nature* (visually or cognitively) is to disturb it—too see past the fog of anthropomorphism, and see clearly. With this in mind the box can be viewed as indicative of passive repetition of a conceptual structuralism that ensnares our ideas about nature as *Nature*, while the shadowpaper becomes the phenomenological engagement with the installation space that activates it and frees it from any specific, applied thought. It's toying with the notion of putting nature in a double

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24. This collective consists of artists Nicolas Sassoon, Sara Ludy and Sylvain Sailly.

box, one solid, and the other made of only shadows, and then placing the audience in the middle of it all.

This becomes more apparent and dynamic with the myriad overlapping shadowpapers on the walls, floor, ceiling, and audience—yellow-toned from the provided light source, and blue-toned from cell phone lights—that result from exploring the physical sculpture (Figure 16). Like the upward fettering of the pattern, only generated by the audience, these are doubled shadows layering upon themselves where the viewer and the artist meld. It's a moment where this repetitious permanently applied thing, wallpaper, starts to fall apart. I've created something solid (like wallpaper), but delicate, to project shadows that are reliant on a light source, which in turn questions the way the pattern is now reliant on something new. The never-moving light is no longer the sole actor, and the result is a shift, a disturbance, in its form that renders the source no longer solid, and knowable. I am inviting my audience to come to my work, and resist it, to add to it, to mess around with it. As a metaphor that suggests that although the pattern source (ideology) is static, the energy we (humanity) bring to it is not. This points more directly to an immutable *Nature*, to life in engagement, and entanglement in the mesh. There are always possibilities in shadows.

Mapping the past
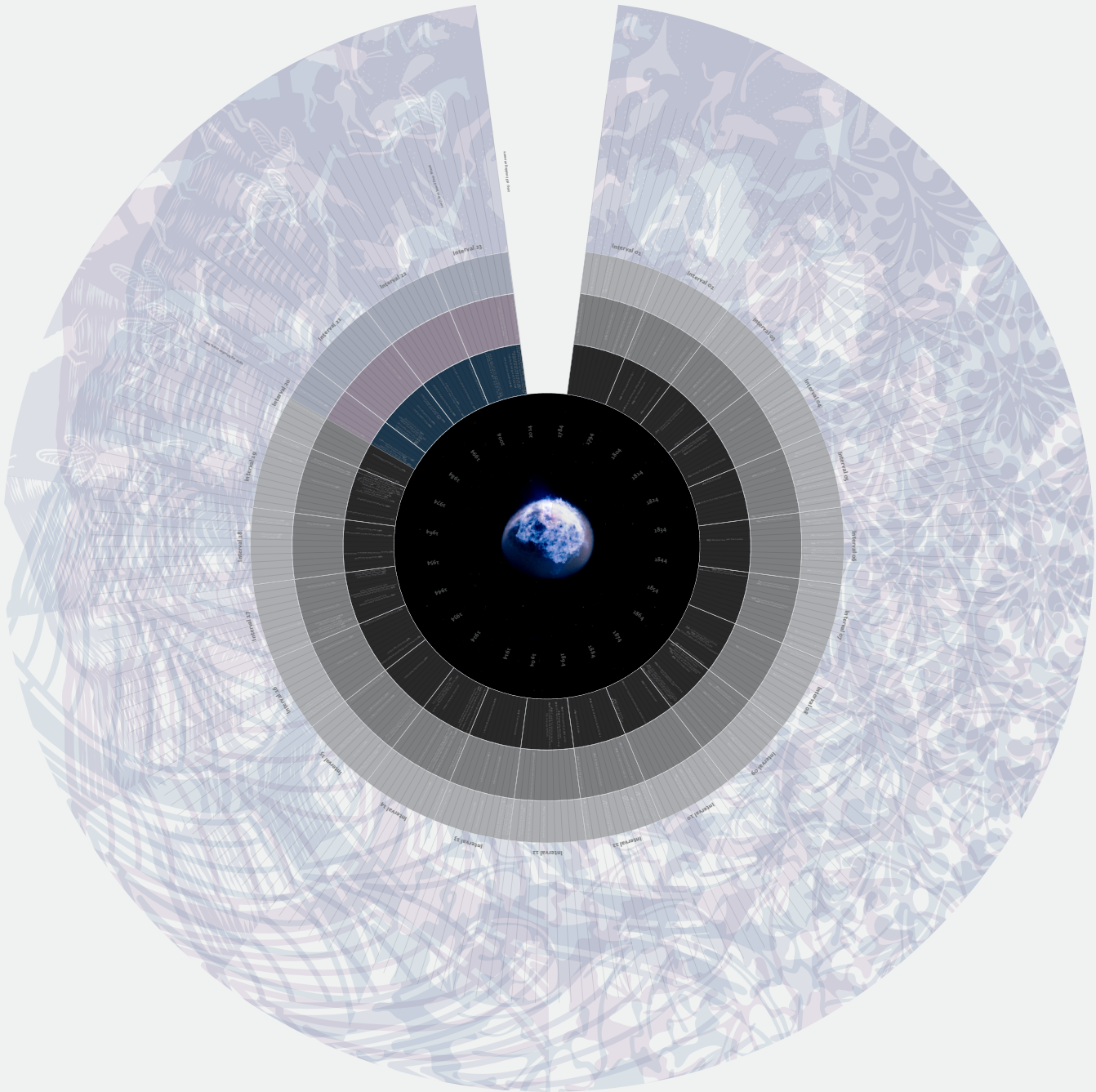
Figure 17: *The 23 intervals* research info-graphic. 61 x 61 cm. 2015. (See Appendix A for a high-resolution version).

The 23 intervals infographic

The intention with *The 23 intervals* (Figure 17), infographic is to make more apparent the connections I see between the chosen patterns shifting nature–human ideologies, and the socio-political landscapes of the Anthropocene. When finished, *The 23 intervals* will present a timeline of the *Three Pillars of Sustainability* (environmental, social, and economic) milestones since 1784 alongside milestones in literature, design, and art, against the chosen wallpapers (Table 01). The graph also charts the active lived baseline of my own life, starting in 1979, for I can only truly know, in an embodied way, how bad things have gotten since I have been alive.

The colouring is derived from a photograph of an exoatmospheric denotation event (a nuclear bomb in space) from October 1962 as part of the strangely named Operation Fishbowl Bluegill (also found at the centre of the infographic). I chose this because it resembles the first complete, clear image of the Earth from space, dubbed *The Blue Marble*, which was taken on my birth date (seven years earlier to the day) on 07 December 1972. The difference between the two images is that one pretends to speak to the futility of human existence in the vast expanse of space, while the speaks to our ability to render any pontification moot as it is a nuclear bomb exploding in space. The conflation this juxtaposition presents is the world I was born into that continues to go down the proverbial rabbit hole where the systems trapping us do not wish to control nature at all—they wish to use it till the end of profit. Or us.[25, 26]

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25. The two sentences at the end is a paraphrase of an impassioned discussion between my advisor, Fiona Bowie, and myself in August 2015. The thought was not my own at the time, but it is one that I now see reflected in my thinking around human–nature dichotomies and paradoxes and I have now adopted as my own.

26. In another autobiographical note, *Van den Eijnden* is a curious, and awkward name most likely stemming from Napoleon's census 1811. It translates to "Of the End". The emphasis on the E is important as the 19th century south Dutch spelling transitions the word from the "end" of some thing to the End of all things. It would then appear that I am demarcated as being of the apocalypse in more ways than one.

Part II: Pointing aimlessly with accuracy

On arrows, and thinking

"The haft of the arrow had been feathered with one of the eagle's own plumes. We often give our enemies the means of our own destruction."

—Aesop

The problem with arrows is that they can be accurate without being precise—a tool in the midst of negotiation is never quite straight. I see all things as having trajectories of their own while remaining interconnected in the mesh of all living and nonliving things that haunts at every moment of every day.[27] Aesop speaks to this ironically when he speaks to small bits left behind used to hunt and kill the eagle. But in the second line he implicates us as a warning that what we leave in our wake we cannot escape. Today, we have caused our own haunting from our own fantasies of *Nature*. Now we are our own ghosts having brought about the possibility and the means of our own destruction, and the potential to take everything else with us when we do.

In the base rhetoric of foreshadowing in the Anthropocene we find the suspects adrift in eutopia and its sibling dystopia. These heterogeneous conjoined twins present only two utopian options in the form of futures. Yet even as these tales present scenarios where the arrow has already struck, the embodied distance is always lacking in the narrative. Aesop suggests that we are made up of each other: archer as us and as nature; the target as nature and as us. If this is true then there is no gap, just a conceptual distance that grows bigger in time. Lao Tzu said "if you are depressed you are living in the past, if you are anxious you are living in the future, if you are at peace you are living in the present." When applied to today's ecological crisis there is a great deal of investment of the future, and the past, but not enough of the present. Admittedly my own work is awash with both anxiety (*The Relics of the Anthropocene Temple* is focused on the future) and depression (*Familiar Strangers* is focused on how we got to where we are today), but in their construction and their reception they become something more. *Sham-Real Shadows* suggests this "something more" through enveloping, and crafting a new space that hints at some new way of seeing our relationship with nature right now in that moment, but I would not describe it as being one "at paece".

In her 08 June 2014 talk *Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Chtulucene: Staying with the Trouble*, Donna Haraway argues that we need to spend more time right where we are (I agree).

"In the midst of *The Three Guineas* Virginia Woolf insists, "Think

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27. *Mesh* and *haunt* are words employed by Timothy Morton when discussing nature. The Mesh refers to his concept of an interconnected, multi directional web of all living and non-living things (this is my interpretation). Haunts is a word Morton uses when referring to the way ideological ways of thinking interact and obfuscate our relationship with nature, which he refers to as fantasies ("The Ecological Thought: A Reply to a Critic", 2010).

we must." Think we must. If ever there has been a time for the need seriously to think, it is now, and it has got to be the kind of thinking that Hannah Arendt accused [Adolph] Eichmann of being incapable of. ... [The] banality of evil in the figure of Eichmann was condensed in Hannah Arendt's analysis into the incapacity to think the world that is actually being lived [emphases are my own]. The inability to confront the consequences of the worlding[28] that one is in fact engaged in, and the limiting and thinking to functionality. The limiting of thinking to business as usual. Being smart, perhaps, being efficient, perhaps, but that Eichmann was incapable of thinking, and in that consisted the banality and ordinariness of evil. And I think among us, the question of whether or not we are Eichmann's is a very serious one" (Haraway, 2014).

I am no Eichmann, but that doesn't mean that I'm a great thinker either, which is beside the point. We may all see Aesop's arrow, but what of its shadow(s)? Aesop warns us, "Beware that you do not lose the substance by grasping at the shadow", but this is exactly what we must do—grasp the shadow tight, and if we cannot change the direction of the arrow, then like Peter Pan, by grabbing its shadow the arrow will follow us. If we aim to think with intent to see and think more clearly, undermining the systems that support the systems that made the Anthropocene may just be possible. Maybe then eutopia and dystopia don't have to be the only choices. Perhaps something more is possible?

Ways of knowing: nature, and us

Possibilities for the future are limited primarily because the problem with grand ecological narratives is that they centre us, the human, in their prognostications. Eutopia and dystopia are two ends of the forward march of time, and both place the story in a swirl around our lone survival. My research driven works, such as the wallpaper-derived *Familiar Strangers*, look at the way the nature-human divide has evolved since the onset of the Industrial Revolution, while *The Relics of the Anthropocene Temple* (discussed in detail in Part III) focus on how this divide might carry forward into the future.

In *Animism*, Anselm Franke posits that what makes us "modern" today is a way of distinguishing ourselves from nature. He defines it as a:

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28. Worlding won't be found in any dictionary, even though the term has been in use for nearly a century. Martin Heidegger popularized the neologism in his 1927 *Being and Time* to mean "being-in-the-world." The idea was to use a verb signifying something ongoing and generative, which could not be reduced to either a philosophical state or a scientific materiality. Since then "worlding" has appeared dozens of times in philosophy, politics, cultural studies, and technology studies. The word has been appropriated, contested, but never quite pinned down––and so remains a floating signifier. Linguists have taught us that terms like "worlding" work less as fixed essences than as mediators of differences among the utterances and concepts around them. But this undetermined character hardly makes "worlding" innocent, deriving as it does from a noun referencing concepts of origins, boundaries, ethnicities, governance, and even consciousness itself. ("Definition « Worlding")

"... categorical distinction between nature and society ... [that] differentiate between facts, the universal laws of nature and matter, and cultural symbolic meanings or social relations ... [and this] knowledge of the indisputable, universal truths of nature is acquired through objectification, by distinguishing what is inherent to the object from what belongs to the knowing subject and has been projected onto the object. ... It is this dissociation of the subjective from the realm of nature and things that simultaneously constitutes the self-possessing subject ... [where the] very act of division ... produces at once an objectified nature composed of absolute facts, and a free, detached subject: the modern, Cartesian self" (Franke, *Animism*, 2010, 14–15).

Franke speaks to the worlding of our world today: we are unable to truly grasp our individual finitude, nor embrace the possibility of a world (or a universe) without us. So how then can one possibly bridge the divide when these nature–human dichotomies and paradoxes are rooted so deeply in our individualism, and not found within living and non–living societies independent of us?

In his 1926 novel *The Silver Stallion* James Branch Cabell wrote, "An optimist proclaims that we live in the best of all possible worlds; and the pessimist fears this is true." If dystopia is the time we live in, then the future holds only two options: a pessimistic further downward spiral (more dystopia), or optimistic salvation (coming eutopia). These visions are often problematic because they're based on an intrinsically dystopian present, and while there is merit in critiquing the detrimental present, these fail because they rely on ways of thinking that premise knowing what is intrinsically unknowable.

Dionisio González' utopic manipulated dwellings provide optimistic answers to the problems of climate change in one localized context, namely Dauphin Island, Alabama. Although intriguing, and meticulously fabricated (digitally) these proposed structures would exist not to mingle within nature, but to resist it—specifically to resist the devastating effects of ever increasing brutality in hurricanes, and ocean level rise, spurred on by global climate change ("Dionisio Gonzalez Imagines Disaster Resistant Surrealist Structures", 2014). Gonzáles refers to the structures as sustainable, but they seem designed to resist reality, and to sustain the current modus operandi (see Appendix A, Figure A-03 for a digital sketch of one of Gonzáles buildings).

I believe that the search for ecological stability should not lie down in the middle with neutopia, nor in the present, but in a radical other space. To find this, we must think. In a March 2014 TED talk, *How the teddy bear taught us compassion*, Jon Mooallem declares that our imagination has become an ecological force, while already having become an ecological echo (Jon Mooallem, TED, 2014). *Is there a fan in the house? The affective sensibility of fandom* is an essay in which Lawrence Grossberg defines ideology as: "the structures of meaning within which we locate ourselves. That is, ideologies are the maps of meaning [taken for] granted as the obviously true

pictures of the way the world is. By defining what is natural, and commonsensical, ideologies construct the ways we experience the world", and those constructs filter down into how we present it (as is the case with *Familiar Strangers*, *Sham–Real Shadows*, and *The Relics*). What I take away from Mooallem and Grossberg is that ideologies are the maps, while thinking is the terrain. So perhaps we should spend more time in the terrain and do our best to toss the maps aside?

In *Animism* Franke summarizes Bruno Latour's similar thinking of "the division of nature and culture, and the subsequent purification of the two domains of subjects on the one side, and things on the other" as being 'only possible by a repression of the middle ground, the mediation that connects subjects with objects in multiple forms'. For Latour everything happens in the middle, and it is here that our thinking needs to function as mediation, translation and networks" (Franke, *Animism*, 2010, 26). From this I think that there is possibility for a third space between the terrain and the map? These are the strange thoughts that keep me awake at night.

What happens to our thinking about nature when *Nature* is excluded from the view? Timothy Morton's concepts the mesh, and the strange stranger, may provide an answer:

> "The ecological thought imagines interconnectedness ... "the mesh". ... The mesh of interconnected things is vast, perhaps immeasurably so. Each entity in the mesh looks strange. Nothing exists all by itself, and so nothing is fully "itself". There is curiously "less" of the Universe at the same time, and for the same reasons, as we see "more" of it. Our encounter with other beings becomes profound. They are strange, even intrinsically strange. Getting to know them makes them stranger. When we talk about life forms, we're talking about strange strangers. The ecological thought imagines a multitude of entangled strange strangers" (Morton, *The Ecological Thought*, 2012, 15).

So, if the map is all the knowledge we have, and the terrain is the "real deal", then this possible third space Franke and Latour speak of may be Morton's mesh. To account for the mesh and the strange stranger is to work in the void between romanticized *Nature* and the real nature; a space where we are part of the subject and the nature–human dichotomy and paradoxes fades from view. I think this third space is the radical acceptance of the "not knowable knowing" (Morton, *The Ecological Thought*, 2012, 168)—of what I think is the forced phenomenological experience of a space and a place we're already in and not paying much attention to.

In the paintings of Josh Keyes humans have all vanished without explanation. The works are inspired by Alan Weisman's investigations in *The World Without Us*, and illustrate a future Earth where the human world decays and is slowly reintegrated into the natural one. In these works sky, animals, objects, and ground plain are "cut" from the scene in architectonic slices that float on a field of white, while animals appear naturalistic, or surrealist (in one an orca swims underground ripping up old asphalt with its dorsal fin). I interpret Keyes paintings to be less of an illustration

of what will happen, than a demonstration of what is already happening today—specifically that nature is among us, is around us, for we are a part of it. In this view nature knows us, but we do not seem to know it, or at least would rather not truly know it on its own terms as *voluntas desertum*. I see these works as a nod toward this radical third space: the mesh.

J. B. Mackinnon defines nature by "our most ordinary definition [as] the sum total of everything that is not us and did not spring from our imaginations" (Mackinnon, 2013, 9). In the future we are facing human extinction, but at this moment the fog of anthropomorphism empowers, and entitles humanity to cause mass extirpations and extinctions within the mesh of all living and nonliving things that annihilates what makes us human—our connections and uniqueness within the extended realm of life—today. This distance has enabled us, but it does not—must not—define us.

A prominent line of inquiry in Anselm Franke's curated two-year *The Anthropocene Project* (2013–2014) was "How do we re-sensitize ourselves to the world we live in?" and "How do we connect what we do with what we know?" ("The Anthropocene Project. A Report", HKW, 2014). The answer is in this radical third place, possibly the mesh, but to access it we must first do what Haraway insists: we must think.

Ways of knowing: Capitalocene

As we ratchet the world ever further to feed our insatiable appetites, our desperate bid to advance technology, and increase organization so that we may escape the ramifications only adds fire to the flames. Alongside this we have corporations as the predominate social institution of our day, and to quote the opening lines of Mark Achbar and Jennifer Abbott's 2003 documentary *The Corporation*, "like the telephone system ... [corporations extend] everywhere." Khan Lee explores systems of capitalism and commerce in Hearts & Arrows where he cuts an ice diamond of literal ice at sunrise with Vancouver's iconic shipping cranes in the background. This exhibition at Centre A (23 May–27 July 2013) had a huge impact on my thinking on the possibility of, in Lee's own words, "creating meaning from an imperfect situation" ("Hearts and Arrows", Centre A, 2013). He was speaking to the act of production, but I read it as Anthropocene metaphor.

In the Age of Man[29], this imperfect situation I'm interested in, humans are often cast as the principal cause of doom, but I do not believe this to be true. Some are more directly to blame, but the majority of humanity finds itself trapped within a system

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29. The folly of Man as a gendered signifier is apt as it is hard to see how the same state of affairs could arise of a more pluralistic system void of the fog of patriarchy. To quote from University of Wisconsin: Milwaukee's Anthropocene Feminism conference website: "In many ways, however, the Anthropocene is a strikingly resonant iteration of the problematic forcefully articulated in Donna Haraway's "Cyborg Manifesto," which sees the human, nonhuman, culture, and nature as inextricably entangled, and warns that the consequences of attempts to dominate human and nonhuman nature can be at once devastatingly successful and productively perverse. Indeed, the concept of the Anthropocene has arguably been implicit in feminism, critical theory, and queer theory for decades, a genealogy that is largely ignored, or worse, erased, by the masculine authority of science." ("Anthropocene Feminism | April 10-12, 2014")

from which escape is not an advertised option. In her talk Haraway also discusses this entrapment, and then places the blame for "the failings of the Anthropos and the Anthropocene" to the underlying *Capitalocene*, a neologism of her own that references the death grip of capitalist systems (Haraway, 2014). Everything that is wrong with the Anthropocene is very important to the Capitalocene, which Haraway dates to the mid-twelfth century rise of massive trade routes, and banking systems. For example, the melting arctic means that more oil (approximately 30% of the world's reserves) are now up for grabs. In her words, "The sucking of the last calorie of carbon out of this planet is a big deal" (Haraway, 2014). But it's not just the arctic, or things far, far away from most of us. Lily Allen, in the song *The Fear*, writes "... I am a weapon of massive consumption / And it's not my fault it's how I'm programmed to function." Everyone is at risk to being converted by the Capitalocene into weapons of massive consumption or they will find themselves facing elimination (weeding) from the system (the pattern)—for what does not contribute to economic value does not have value under capitalism[30]. Capitalism is intent to use up this world and all its inhabitants until the end of profit, but Colonialism isn't dead either, having merely morphed from nation states to corporations. It's ramped up, on speed and steroids, and it's hungry—and in the Anthropocene–Capitalocene what, and who does not fit the pattern is weeded out.

In his 2013 book *24/7: Late capitalism and the End of Sleep* Jonathan Crary, in his discussion on sleep as the final frontier of capitalism, posits that a world that never sleeps needs no awakening (Crary, 2013). Capitalism has no interest in the Anthropos as its *raison d'être* is augmented financial gain without limit—a purpose driving and greatly benefitting from the technological and industrial advancements of the Anthropocene. It is a system that has ensnared all of us as consumer, consumed, or that which is weeded away in order to underscore short–term gain over long–term sustainability. Crary summarizes the real problems facing the Anthropocene today: "even among plural voices affirming that 'another world is possible,' there is often the misconception that economic justice, mitigation of climate change, and egalitarian social relations can somehow occur alongside the continued existence of corporations like Google, Apple, and General Electric" (Crary, 49). On Karl Marx he reminds us that, "the first requirement of capitalism, [Marx] wrote, was the dissolution of the relation to the earth" (Crary, 63). The book is a *tour-de-force* in its critique of capitalism as the driving force behind a destructive Anthropocene, but it also presents mediations on why we "conjure an exemption for the biocide underway everywhere on this planet" (Crary, 101) while reminding the reader that our "fate is not terminal" and that it is possible to envision a world without billionaires, which has a future other than barbarism or the post-human, and in which history can take on other forms than reified nightmares of catastrophe"[31] (Crary, 128). Inside me is a battle between my inner cynic and my depressed sense of hope that whispers to

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30. I am not against consumption, nor am I directly opposed to some aspects of capitalism which is in social and human forms of measurement often much better than the feudal systems it replaced, but yet even as I type this on my 2010 MacBook Air and do so in the hopes of better explaining a practice that is embedded in the exchange of capital, I can not find any way to deny that we all consume far too much, and that the effects of this is that of a supernova on the resources, systems, and societies that we need to survive. And that is to say nothing to the mineral, plant and animal forms we must share this world with.

31. I have not overlooked the irony that this is what the works of *The Temple* discussed in Part III presents first for the audience.

me that the future that Crary envisions is just not possible. I do not want the End to be dark, and it may be cynical, but I find his "world without billionaires" as much a fantasy as romantic *Nature*. To overcome this perhaps hope is a commodity that needs to be reclaimed, and spread liberally.

Ways of unknowing: are there any?

It is my belief that utopian thinking will not save us, nor will it provide a reason to. As Martin states we need to spend more time in the "mud" to know that we know what we know; to really think as Haraway states. Through this we may reach a way of unknowing, despite "not knowable knowing" being a slippery slope. I beleive art should not be made on the acceptance of ignorance, but I find most ecological art comes across as didactic one–liners. Problematically art also has the liberty of not having to be for anything—to subvert functions. All of this leaves me thinking that the possibility for "not knowable knowing" art must exist. So think we must; unknow we must. Think I must; unknow I must.

I have no answers for this, but Haraway does provide a novel solution in the *Cthulucene*, a new possible epoch defined by "an understanding that to be a one at all, you must be a many, and it's not a metaphor" (Haraway, 2014). Similar to Morton's mesh this new possible epoch requires an entanglement with everything living and not, and a dissolution of the divisions of us versus everything else. I also believe that we get the planet that we make, but when we make a decision about what kind of world to live in, we must accept that we are also choosing what kind of human beings we will be. Haraway's hope for a Cthulucene reworlding is summarized as "the activation of the cthulonic powers that is within our grasp as we collect up the trash of the Anthropocene and the exterminism of the Capitalocene, to [create] something that might possibly have a chance of ongoing" (Haraway, 2014).

As Irmgard Emmelhainz stated in the Anthropocene, "the spaces of publicity now occupy the spaces of hope" (Emmelhainz, 2015). I believe the Cthulucene could be one way to push back the occupation of hope. It gives me great energy for future work that I hope will dig deeper into this third space: the Mesh; the Cthulucene; the thinking; the unknowing.

Part III: Shooting into illusions from the future

A little bit Anthroposcene

"In my understanding, an artwork is fundamentally tied to its surroundings, to the present, to society, to cultural, and geographic determinants. It activates this dense texture, thereby examining the world in which we live—and by doing so, it can ultimately change the world."
—Olafur Eliasson, *Art Now*, Vol 4

The works discussed in Part III are awash in ideas of patterning the future via dystopian narratives. These works point toward the Aesopian arrow's trajectory of willful self-harm that are inspired by personal stories, as well as the writings, artworks, and things that I have encountered that, despite their origins or intentions, in a contemporary context seem a little too Anthroposcene. The artwork I immediately think about when saying this is Paul Kos' *The Sound of Ice Melting* (1970)—all of those microphones listening intently, and then amplifying the sounds of a block of ice melting in a gallery is such a beautiful metaphor for global warming, and the need to really imagine the ever-augmenting effect our current way of life is having on our collective futures. In a way my thinking aligns well with Eliasson evaluation of art as I see it connected to its and my present in different ways. These actants activate the mesh when they come in context with the Anthropocene in ways I would not otherwise consider them. Yet beyond heralding catastrophe the legacy of the Anthropocene is to leave permanent proof of human existence in the sediments of the Earth. Perhaps, in the distant future, a new intelligent life form will find this proof, and ponder it. There is a long and large list of possible surroundings, presents, societies, cultures and geographic determinants that will come in contact and alter the context of our world as we've made it today. Part of me sees this as poetically beautiful. But a thing isn't beautiful because it lasts forever, and part of this cleaving from original context is shifting meanings in mixing bowl that is the Anthropocene. In this tension *The Relics of the Anthropocene Temple* project rose to explore hyperobjects as things that we destroy or create that will leave behind proof of our existence. To answer Eliasson's proposition they examine the world while simultaneously distorting it.

The Relics of the Anthropocene Temple
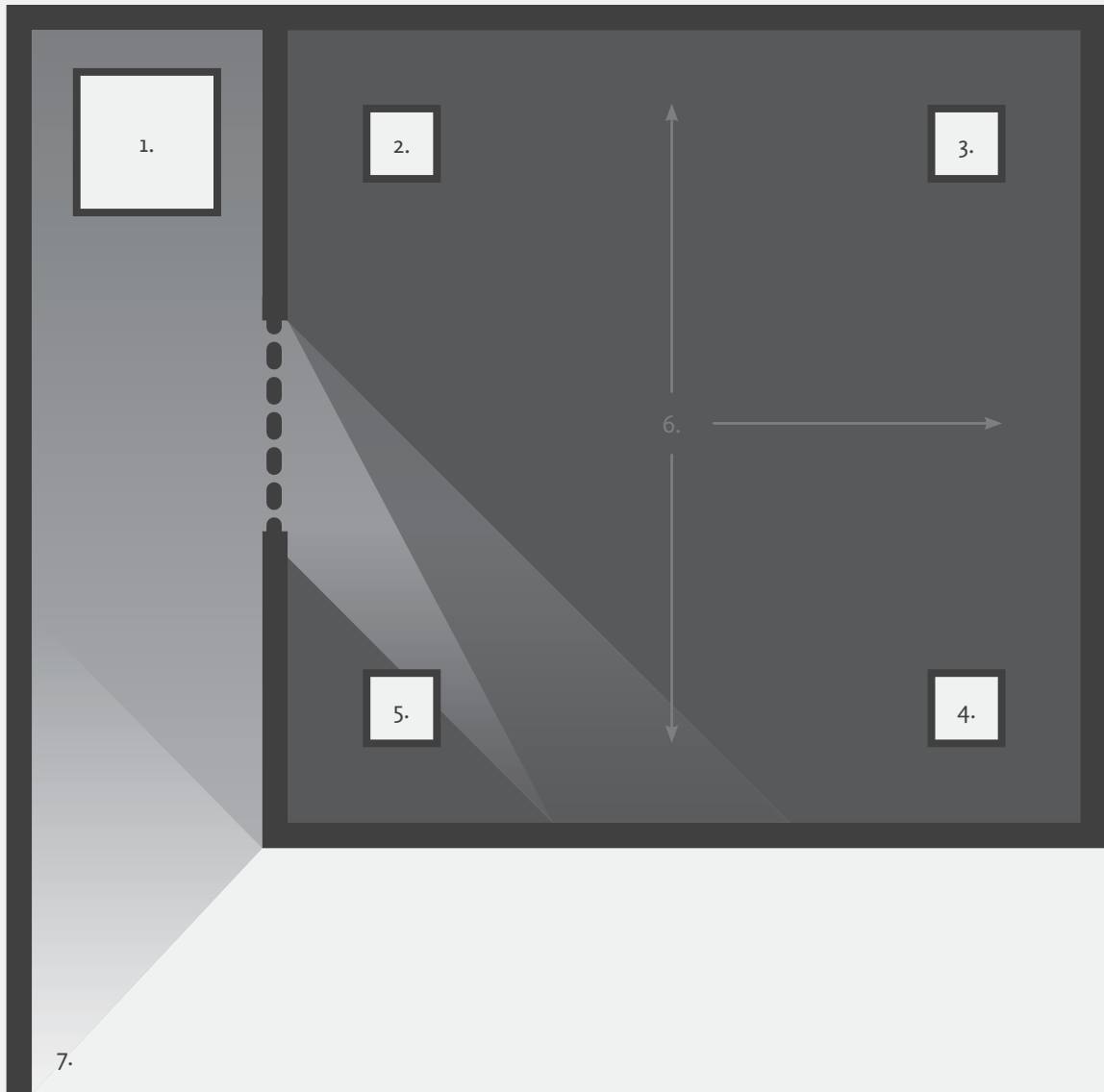
Figure 18: Illustration showing *The Anthropocene Temple* including placement of *The Relics*, walls, curtain (denoted by dotted line), and light leaks. **Note:** The largest work, *Sham–Real Shadows*, is in the small place, while the smaller *Relics* are in the big space. This misplacement was calculated to craft a tension of scale that gives way to an open blackness with spots of brilliance.

Shown: Layout of *The Anthropocene Temple* Exhibit:

1. *Sham–Real Shadows*,
2. *Relic I*,
3. *Relic II*,
4. *Relic III*,
5. *Relic IV,*
6. *The Temple Prints* (located on the walls),
7. Didactic panel.

Description

The Anthropocene Temple (Figure 18) is an imagining of a future place for reverence (and confusion) from objects of an unknown(able) future looking back to today. Each piece is a discrete work, but together they compose a space for quiet contemplation, anxiety (and maybe some grotesque humour) around hyperobjects. As defined by Timothy Morton in his 2013 book of the same name, a hyperobject is a thing that is massively distributed throughout time and space relative to human life spans. These can range from Styrofoam to global warming.

Materials

The Relics presented inside *The Temple* are small dioramas ensconced in infinity boxes, that are made from five sides of surveillance Plexiglas. The man-made materials used to craft the dioramas within include laser-cut paper, MDF, 3D printed sculptures, plastics, LED lighting, batteries, embroidery thread, and found materials. It's truly a mixed bag of various ecological impacts with a heavy use on non-biodegradable hyperobjects (that will in turn become part the geologic proof of the geologic epoch, called Anthropocene), that must also be connected to a power grid of some kind.

The use of surveillance Plexiglas was critical in order to focus on the idea of patterning into the future. These patterns are single repeats of dioramas representing future landscapes deep in time that exist in an exterior space. The patterns inside *The Relics* represent to me a colonization of the future by the anxieties of today. The end result is an outward expanding repeat of reflections—a patterning—of the dioramas on the inside that goes on and on into indeterminate space that warps and darkens. This is a phenomenon called regressive infinity, and in its observation one finds a disorientation of depth, and scale.

Inside *The Temple*

The first *Relic* that the audience generally encounters when entering *The Temple* proper is the dimmest and least visible before the eyes have adjusted to the dark of the space. In a usual clockwise procession, the second encountered *Relic* (also the a brightest) is landscape filled with menacing spikes and fog, made from 3D printed black plastic and fluffed wool. The title, *Relic I: No esteemed deed; nothing of value here* (Figure 19), refers to a United States Department of Energy's proposed
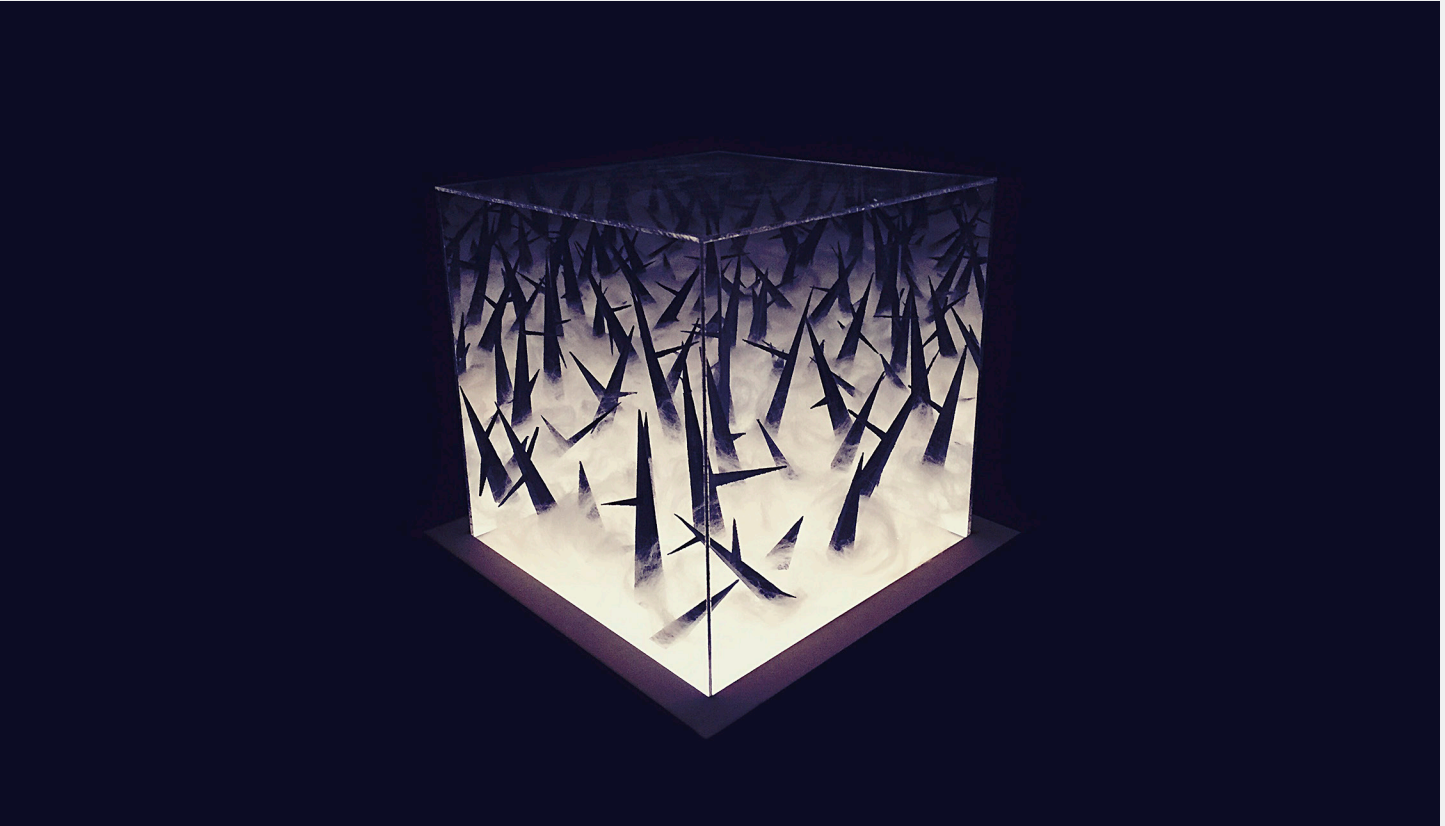
Figure 19: *Relic I: No esteemed deed; nothing of value here*. Laser-cut MDF, surveillance Plexiglas, wool, paper, 3D printed sculpture, fixture, LED light bulb. 25.4x25.4x25.4 cm. 2015.

Figure 20: Sketch I have made of "landscape of repulsion" from a mock of a conceptual landscape of concrete thorns to warn future generations to steer clear of New Mexico's Yucca Mountain radioactive wastes burial ground as commissioned by the U.S. Department of Energy sometime in the early 1970s. Sourced from WIT's *World Ecology Report* - Vol. 04, No. 5 - *The Digest of Critical Environmental Information* (WIT, 1992, 12 pages)

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landscape installation of menacing spikes (Figure 20), and accompanying written warning (see Appendix A, Figure A-04), above a nuclear waste disposal site in order to warn distant civilizations to stay away; to "not settle here."

The third work encountered (and also the second brightest), *Relic II: The woods between the worlds* (Figure 21) is a much bleaker variant of its namesake. In CS Lewis' *The Magician's Nephew*, the original Woods are green lands filled with deciduous trees under perpetual sun. But it's not the trees nor sun that is important, rather the magical ponds betwixt the trees that have the power to magically transport someone to a new, and different world. It is a little Anthroposcene: a world between worlds where one can literally choose what kind of world they would like to go to! Rendered via a forest of pillars on a plane of gasoline sheen, the ponds of magical water are replaced with mirrors. The mirror—pond is not there to reflect the viewers back at themselves, but to reflect this world back onto itself. This suggests an inception; of

being trapped inside human constructs—a world of indecision we need to escape from. It is an aesthetic place, but not somewhere I would like lingering for too long.

Relic III: Mine #000 (Figure 22), is part homage to the photographs of mines by Edward Burtynsky, and a reference to the massive quantities of sediments that are moved by human forces each year—more than all natural forces combined. This work consists of a laser-cut paper sculpture of an open-pit mine in three tiers that go down into the plinth, and then opens up to a "plasticy" oil sheen interior. Copper string lights are being pulled out of the Earth by a miniature representation of a massive-scale industrial crane used in mining. This sits on a mirrored, ice–like surface being cut into by the mines as a repeat of indeterminate resource extraction.

The final *Relic* (also the first seen) focuses a massive flock of indefinite pink lawn flamingos spread out over an abstraction of a city grid lit at night. Titled *Relic IV: Lawn (plasti–phoenicoptera phobia)* (Figure 23) when viewed the flock of miniature lawn ornaments becomes a grotesque massing of the bizarre. It speaks to simulacra of nature, in a way similar to how I operated with *Familiar Strangers*, but more directly through it's *horror vacuii* and for asking what could be more false than a plastic flock of pink flamingo on suburban lawns?

Finally, as an assemblage these works speak to each other by literally (and metaphorically) reflecting off of each other in the dark of *The Temple*. Each *Relic*, in carrying the reflection its neighbouring *Relic* creates an effect akin to looking at a settlement on the horizon. This does not repeat inside the vitrines, but rather exists on the outside, suggesting to the audience that each of these scenarios is but one of many possibilities.

Similarity to other artworks

Visually the works can be thought of as miniaturized suggestions of future worlds visually akin to Yayoi Kusama's infinity rooms—works that specifically speaks to me as an optimistic gestures toward space travel. They are also related Guillaume Lachapelle's work with infinity boxes. Although some of his works have the Anthroposcene vibe it does not directly address these concerns, but rather intends to be meditation on virtual space. I find his infinity boxes have became a major point of inspiration for the development of my *Relics* in materiality but not in concept.
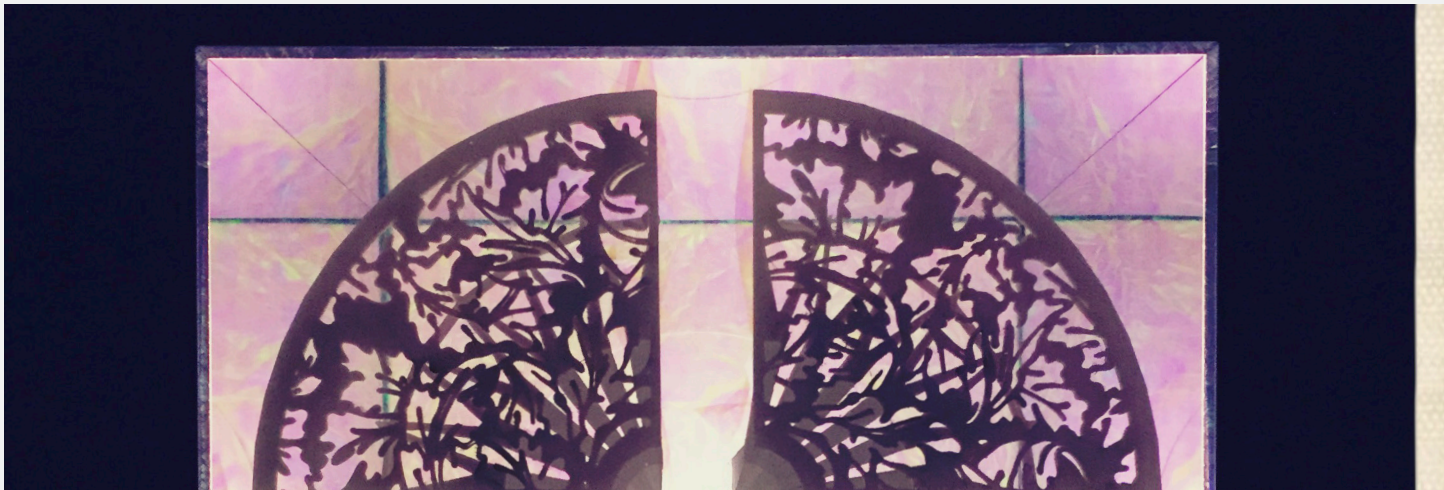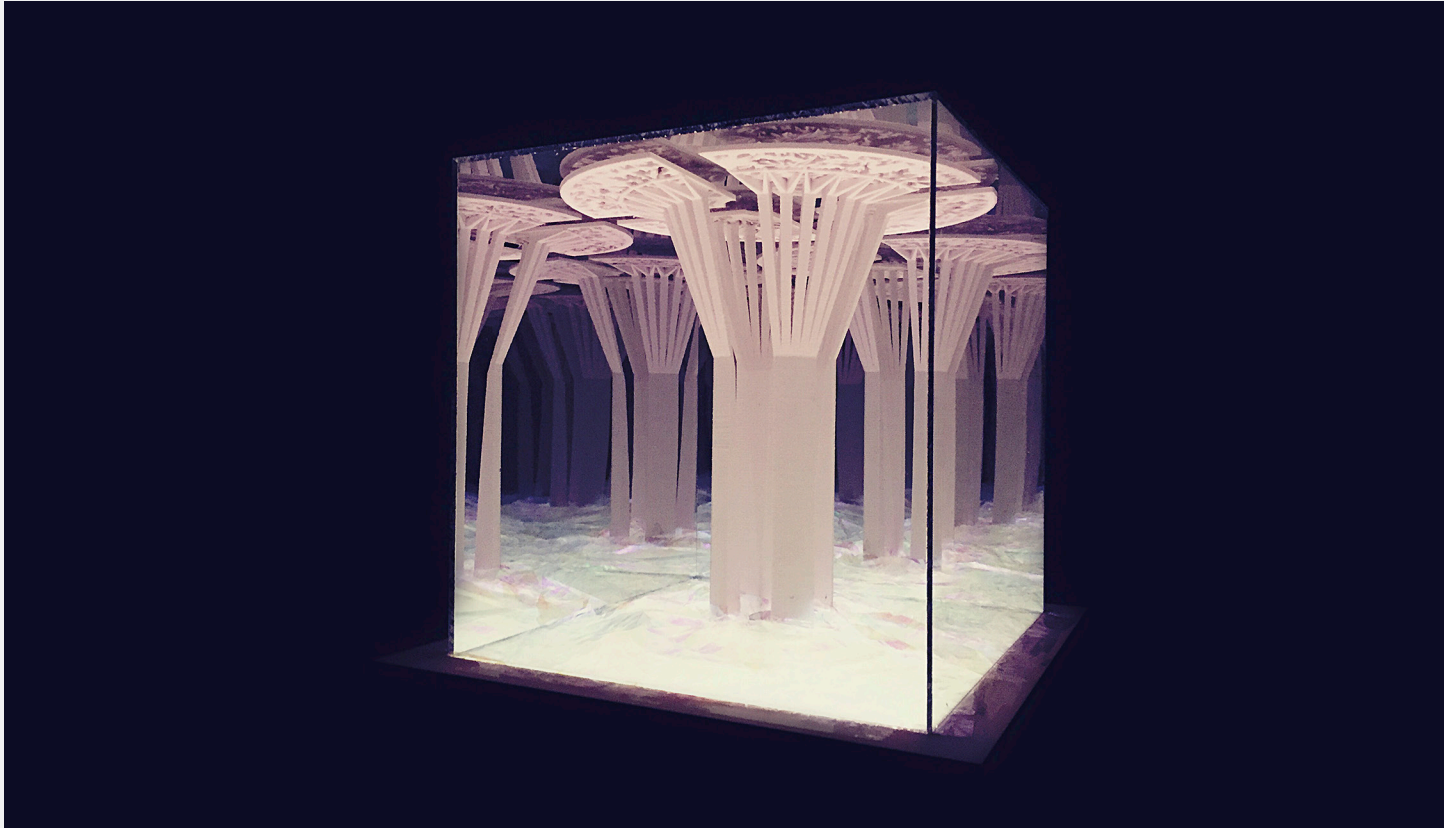
Figure 21: *Relic II: The wood between the worlds*. Laser-cut MDF, surveillance Plexiglas, paper, mirror, 3D printed sculpture, fixture, LED light bulb. 25.4x25.4x25.4 cm. 2015
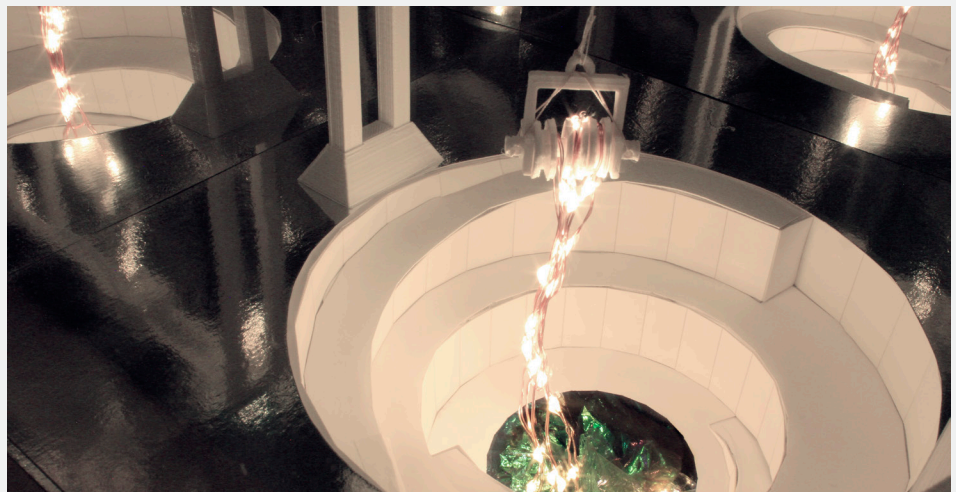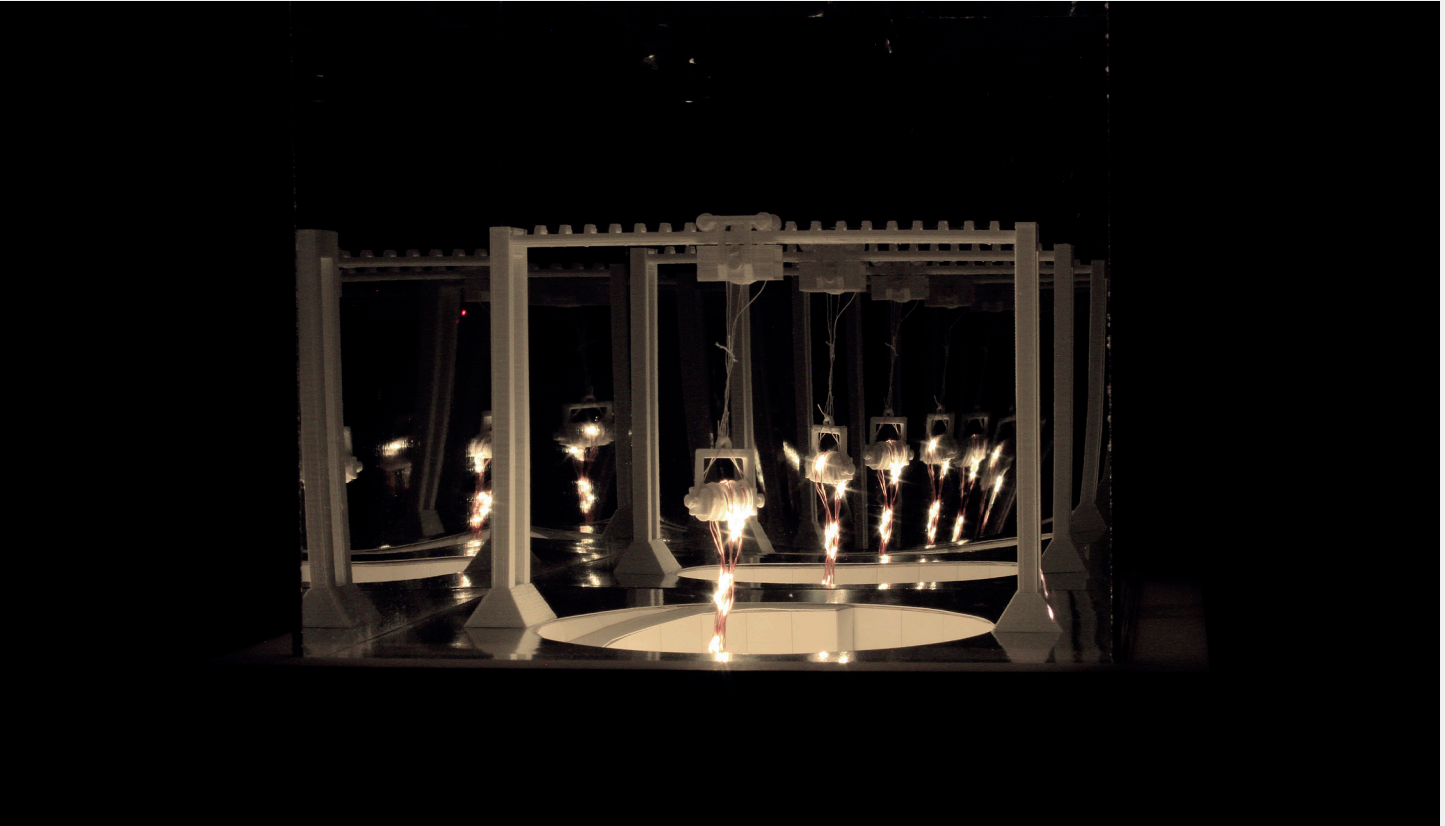
Figure 22: *Relic III: Mine #000*. Laser-cut MDF, surveillance Plexiglas, paper, mirrored paper, 3D printed sculpture, string LED lights. 25.4x25.4x25.4 cm. 2015.
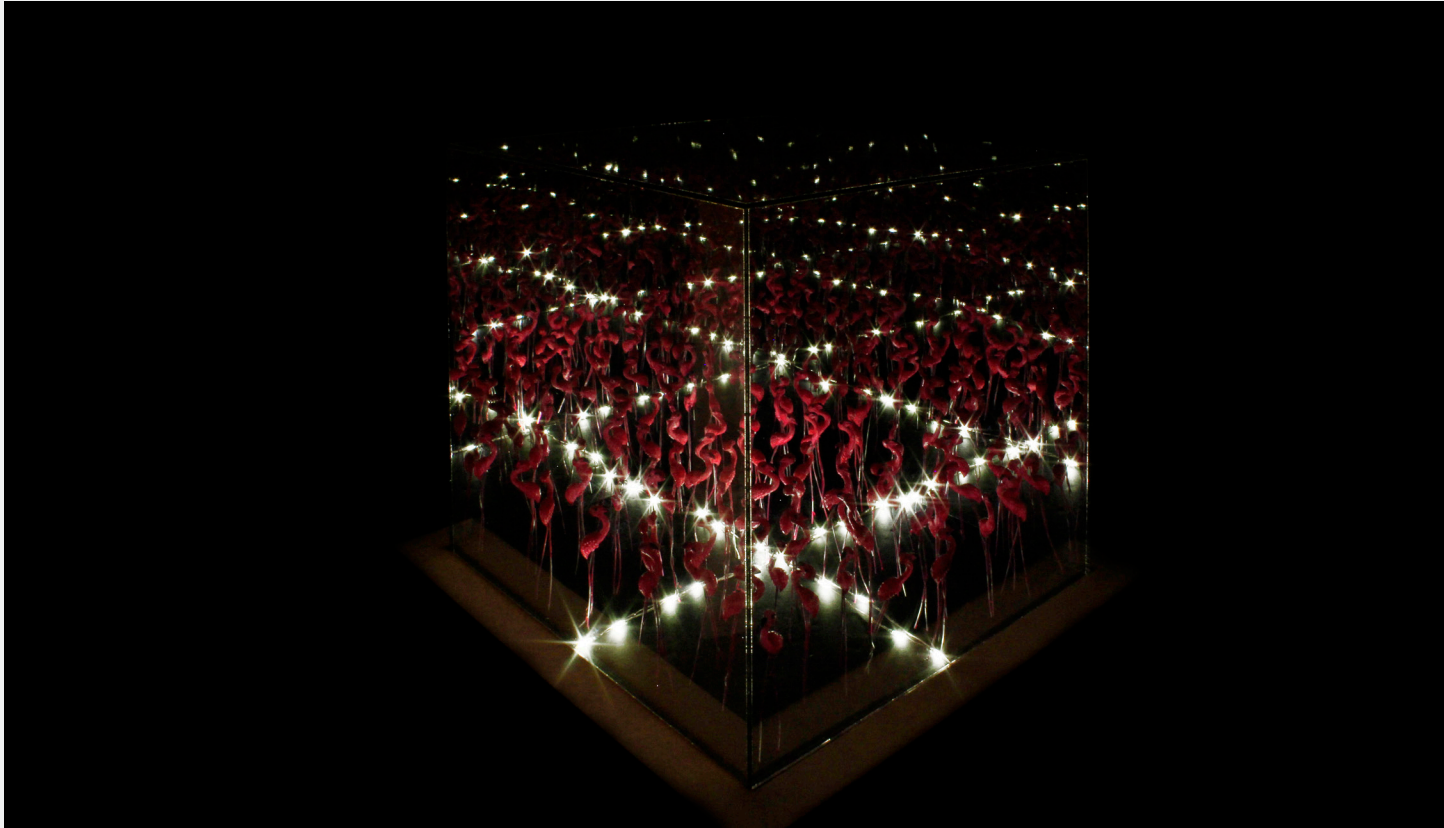
Figure 23: *Relic IV: Lawn (plasti–phoenicopteriphobia).* Laser-cut MDF, surveillance Plexiglas, paper, repainted dollhouse lawn ornaments, string LED lights. 25.4x25.4x25.4 cm. 2015.
Note: 30-second exposure. Not indicative of actual brightness of the piece.
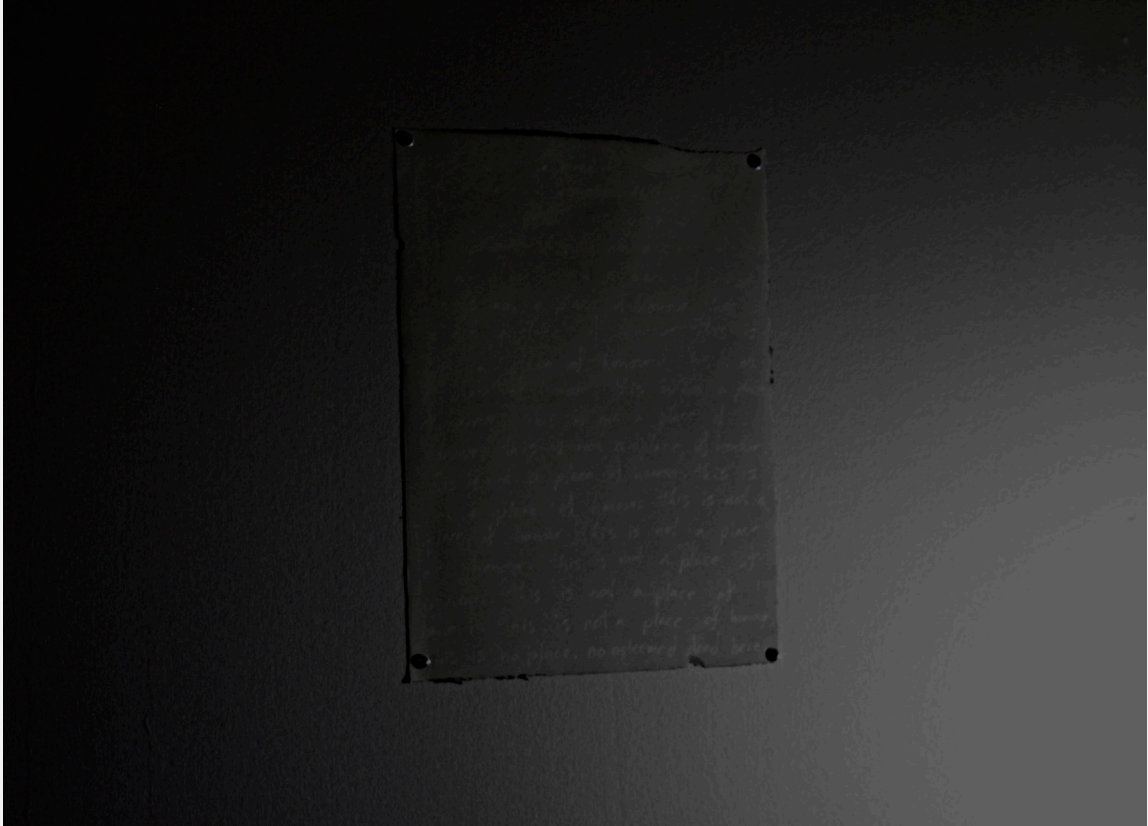
Figure 24: *The Temple Prints*. Black ink, black rag paper, black thumbtacks Dimensions vary. 2015.

What was in the shadows

Any good temple hides secrets. *The Temple Prints* (Figure 24) are expressions (some incomplete, some just blank paper) that were made of black ink on black paper pinned to the wall. Like Peter Gee's meditation on the 04 April 1968 assassination of Martin Luther King, the future is as the ink on that work: layers of more darkness devoid of hope where the future seems a fait accompli. Nearly invisible, the work provides another layer of reveal. When the eyes fully adjust the works are possible to see, but as all three materials (ink, paper, wall) are of the same flat black, it is easily missed. They consist of scribbled anxieties, statistics, and facts from the present that line the walls of this proposed future place. As a metaphor they ask "if we managed to crawl so far out of the darkness why couldn't we bring along more light?"[32]

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32. This is a variation of a question posed in the SyFy channel's 2015 television series *The Expanse*.

On the purpose of art

When I was young I recall my mother describing art thus: "Art is a hole punched through the fabric of time that attempts to unravel the whole thing". In a time of hyperobjects—those things massively distributed throughout time and space—it's hard to imagine how any work could punch through a bigger hole than an open pit mine, an acidic ocean, or a mass extinction event. If *Mount Rushmore* will carry visible faces at least seven million years into the future, what then could my art (or any art) possibly do to achieve an impact of equal measure? In the face of such massive beasts I shrink, pulling my work into defensive miniaturization.

Each of the interior *Relics* speak toward hyperobjects: *Relic I* to nuclear waste, *Relic II* to humanity, *Relic III* to landscapes, and *Relic IV* to plastics respectively. Indirectly, they speak to anxieties about the future, our long-term impact, and the evisceration of nature alongside its replacement with simulacra. To quote from Irmgard Emmelhainz' essay *Conditions of Visuality Under the Anthropocene and Images of the Anthropocene to Come*, our "long-term geomorphic implications have become unintelligible" (Emmelhainz, 2015). We are lacking ground on which to stage the future and any typical way of conceiving the world no longer applies. The Anthropocene is less about lauding the coming of the Age of Man than acknowledging that the ways we think of our relationship to the world have allowed things to get wildly out of any sense of control. Even if we could abruptly place down our tools, the world will still end up being one shaped by man (Mackinnon, 2013). Inside *The Temple* can be found a few of the things that will continue to haunt us into whatever the future holds: *Relic I*'s inhospitable landscapes, *Relic II*'s indecision, *Relic III*'s destruction, and *Relic IV*'s distance from nature.

In a 2008 interview included in the exhibition catalogue for *Mythologies in the Making* Anish Kapoor stated "... artists don't make objects, artists make mythologies, and it's through the mythologies that we read the object" (Kapoor, 2008). In regard to time, these dioramas are future places not-yet-made, seen as *Relics* in a future temple whose only congregants are people from today. Everything here is out of time, with hyperobjects having too much, and us having too little. It may prove a mistake to so carelessly let Aesopian feathers drop, but that no longer matters as the changes we have made manifest can no longer be undone.[33] Our modern world exists in a new era of our making, an Anthropocene that announces the collapse of the future through "slow fragmentation towards primitivism, perpetual crisis, and planetary ecological collapse" (Emmelhainz, 2015). This is a prime landscape to answer Kapoor's call by making ever more mythologies.

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33. Current global warming will continue unaided for at least 500 more years. 24,100 years is the half-life of plutonium-139. (Morton, *Hyperobjects*, 2013)

Green modernism

The reflection-based patterning speaks to this indeterminateness through the effect of regressive infinity but isn't just a parlour-trick. The use of mirrors was important to reference the enlargement of controlled space to something that becomes immeasurably vast. This is a direct foreshadowing of green modernism as a contemporary real world patterning of the Earth. The green modernist movement is an aggrandizement of nature-as-garden to be churned out as template across the globe—patterning-cum-ecumenoplis[34]. It is the opposite of Haraway's Cthulucene for its goal is not to think, but to act via control. Gardening the world carries with it the weight of deciding what and who, lives and dies. This is a world where the Capitalocene drives the future. It is a fantasy that implores its adherents to stay the course and let technology solve all of our problems. Technology will help, but only we can save us, and that means a radical rethinking of the way things are, before we can think through how they can be. These *Relics* set up and become my own Anthropocene mythologies to counter radical and dangerous delusions like these that are already in the mix.[35]

The sublime

In his introductory essay to *The Sublime* editor Simon Morley introduces seven major categories of the sublime, as they exist in art today. Those are The Unrepresentable, Transcendence, Nature, Terror, The Uncanny, and Altered States. Using this book as a tool for analysis the works of *The Temple* seem to fall most snugly in the first category, while aligning to Edmund Burke's[36] notion of the sublime as "a destabilizing force", and Immanuel Kant's concept of the sublime "as revealing a reality that is fundamentally indeterminate" (Morley, 2010, 19–20). Morely's collection of disparate writings about the sublime have come to greatly influence my own understanding of this nebulous concept, but not as much as the included writing and analysis of French philospher Jean-François Lyotard.

In his 1988 essay, *The Sublime and the Avant-Garde*, Lyotard declares that it is essential to finding the feeling of the sublime as being not of the here-and-now, but that it is "essential ... that it alludes to something which can not be shown, or presented..." (Morley, 2010, 27). This aligns to the longer-term effects of hyperobjects

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34. This concept is not dissimilar from the massive capital planet Trantor in Issac Asimov's *Foundation Series* (1942–1993), Coruscant in George Lucas' Star Wars (1977–) series, or Ores in The Wachowskis *Jupiter Ascending* (2015).

35. During the ten days of installation not all interpretations of *The Temple* and *The Relics* brought forth ideas of the Anthropocene but mythologies, and "toxic fairytales" were common readings that although not exact are on par with what I hoped the audience would take away from the work.

36. "The best-known theory published in Britain is Edmund Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757). Burke's definition of the sublime focuses on such terms as darkness, obscurity, privation, vastness, magnificence, loudness and suddenness, and that our reaction is defined by a kind of pleasurable terror." ("Art and the Sublime", 2015)

as things that are so massively distributed in time and space relative to humanity that we cannot ever truly know them, and thus never truly capture them. The indeterminate space inside *The Relics* is that thing which can't be shown, while the darkness and stillness of *The Temple* echoes the indeterminate space inside the vitrines. It is within this context that the audience's inability to interact with *The Relics* directly speaks to Lyotard's continuation of thought that the sublime exists in places where "the possibility of nothing happening" is associated with anxieties around existence, and the unconscious (Morley, 2010, 29). In the same essay Lyotard declares that the sublime occurs in a moment when the aesthetic beauty is disrupted by something else (Morley, 2010, 33). He then goes on to write "Art does not imitate nature, it creates a world apart, *eine Zwischenwelt*, as Paul Klee will say; *eine Nebenwelt*, one might say in the which the monstrous and the formless have their rights because they can be sublime" (Morley, 2010, 33). In the past the monstrous sublime was used to craft daunting landscapes of the "new world". In these the natural world is usually presented as monstrous and insurmountable, but American landscapes of the time balance this sublime via paths through the obstacles (river, canyon, footpath, or valley). That allows these landscapes to read as propaganda for colonization—an invitation to conquer, and to stamp the patterning of Western civilization on a supposedly uninhabited and untamed land. These, we know, were mythologies captured in art, and like them my *Relics* present a future of ramped up colonialism where the future landscapes are now colonized by fear, anxiety, and dystopia—all byproducts of the Capitalocene.

Furthermore this presentation of indeterminate space in *The Relics* are disturbing, and provoking in a generative way that appears to match Longinus' stance on the sublime as assessed by Lyotard. Longinus could not write about the sublime in a traditional intellectual way indicative of his time (techne rhetorike) but in his inability to pin it down within a framework of rational rhetoric he does state: "*il y a à partir d'elle beaucoup de réflexion* [from the sublime springs a lot of reflection]" (Morley, 2010, 31). Perhaps within these works the disturbance that forces reflection comes from their paradoxes—high degree of aesthetic polish (jewel like) contrasted against their conceptual framework (Anthropocene) and the phenomenology of the space (dark, quiet, a little foreboding).

In terms of how my work should read I do not want *The Temple* to require an intimate knowledge of the specific points of reference, but rather to evoke feeling first, followed by thinking, and hopefully further exploration by the audience. Perhaps from my unconscious I created these mythologized landscapes as a betrayal to the complexity and specificity of scientific knowledge that Thomas Struth's photography of massive human constructions require[37], and that are described by Benjamin Buchloh as depicting the "technological sublime". Yet perhaps more accurately it was an unconscious desire to create work that functioned as narrative rather than a lecture.[38] Jacques Derrida, when summarizing G. W. F. Hegel in his 1978 essay *Parergon* said "... the sublime is not in nature but only in ourselves..." (Morley,

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37. Such as his Tokamak Asdek *Upgrade Interior 2* (2009).
38. A generous way of describing the installation from fellow graduate student Troy Gronsdahl.

2010, 44) and that is perhaps the key to the feeling of the sublime in *The Temple*. I believe that a general conscious or subconscious understanding of the scale of damage we (as a species) are having on the mesh, alongside the alien and alienating ways we interact with and outside it is already present in the world. I would go so far as to argue that it is obvious, even if we do not wish to admit it. That is why the works lean toward *eine Zwischenwelt*, or a cause for *réflexion*, and thus function as a destabilization force (of Anthropocene mythologies) in this world we think we know.

Barbara Freeman in her 1995 article *The Feminine Sublime* explains Lyotard's ideas on the sublime further: "In the formulation of Jean-François Lyotard, for example, the sublime is not the presentation of the unpresentable, but the presentation of the fact that the unpresentable exists" (Morley, 2010, 65). There is a great deal of anxiety around the Anthropocene because when accessing the current state of things, and making predictions, we cannot possibly know the fate of humanity, nor any living or nonliving thing. The future is then unknowable, but the beauty and aesthetic qualities of *The Relics* very much are. To summarize Philip Shaw's take on the sublime, the pleasure from viewing the work comes from the ability to avoid—to not be inside—the "signifier for the deadly encounter with the Thing" (Morley, 2010, 54). Inside *The Temple* that "Thing" is the Anthropocene—the end of this worlding as we now know it—and because of their jewel like aesthetics and whimsical scale *The Relics* safely ensnare these deadly mythologies at a comfortable distance from the viewer, thus making room for the sublime inside the installation.

The future as not presentable, art as salve

Are there ways to explore?

My thesis line of inquiry has been, "are there ways to explore the ideological underpinnings and ramifications of the Anthropocene?" For the works in *The Temple* I believe the answer to be yes as the work brought forward the notions of "toxic fairytales" and Burkeian, and Kantian sublime to give answers for the things we cannot know. The Anthropocene has been presented as a synonym for Armageddon, and for good reasons as the subject matter is dark, and difficult to pin down without falling into areas of hope or despair. I do not consider myself an optimist, nor a pessimist, but rather as an activist that in my own way is fostering dialogue and thinking around issues that are important to not only me, but to all things inside the mesh. We have caused this current state of affairs, and we cannot undo it, so we must navigate a new world with a new climate that is in our own making, and in the eye of the storm no one can truly see. The past is factitious ideology and, the future is unknowable mythology, and both are poisoning the present. So if true nature cannot be replicated and presented, and the future is unknowable, what I produce are not glimpses forward or backward, but salves for things or ways of thinking I can't escape. I do not know how they could be otherwise yet, but there is still time for me to evolve, for as Donna Haraway surmises the state of our contemporary situation, "the sky has not fallen. Not yet." (Haraway, 2014) and as Jonathon Crary proposes there is activism even in daring to imagine a "world without billionaires".

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Appendix A: Other images

Figure A-01: Kristin Schoppi. *Papered Wall #6*. 8 artichoke leaves, 85 red cabbages, 4 asparagus, 4 red peppers, 9 beets, 1952 sprouts, 1 cauliflower, 7 sui choy, 10 cherry tomatoes, 15 250 staples, 4 coriander, 1952 pins, 12 garlic cloves, 47 nails, 8 green beans, 9 screws, 5 green onions, 135 cm of wire, 36 mung beans. 1993. (Included with permission from the artist.)

Figure A-02: DETAIL. Kristin Schoppi. *Papered Wall #6*. 8 artichoke leaves, 85 red cabbages, 4 asparagus, 4 red peppers, 9 beets, 1952 sprouts, 1 cauliflower, 7 sui choy, 10 cherry tomatoes, 15 250 staples, 4 coriander, 1952 pins, 12 garlic cloves, 47 nails, 8 green beans, 9 screws, 5 green onions, 135 cm of wire, 36 mung beans. 1993. (Included with permission from the artist.)
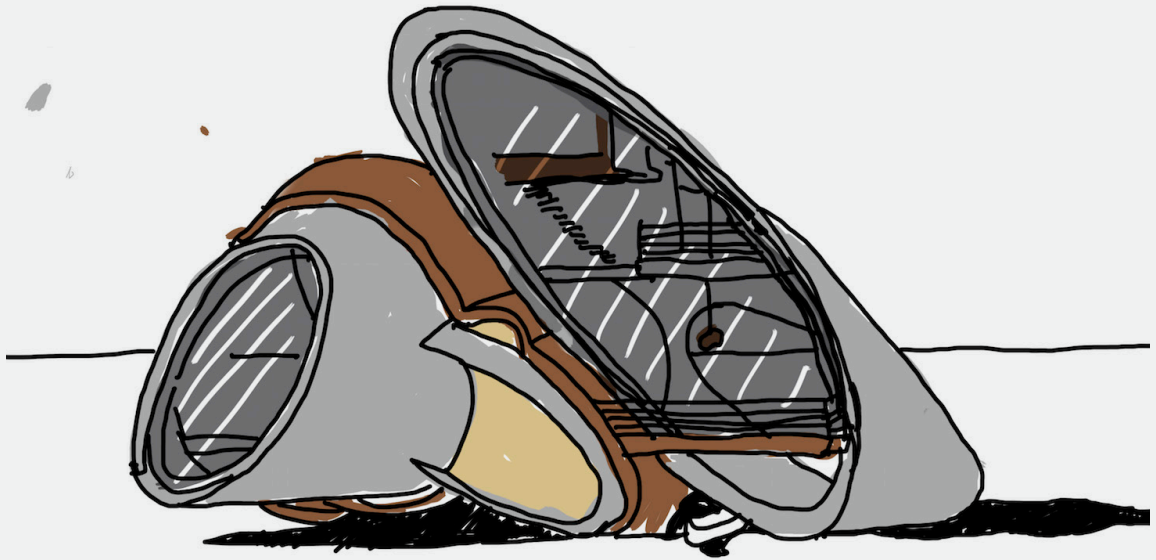
Figure A-03: Sketch I have made from a photo-image of a conceptual building proposal from Dionisio González series Dauphin Island.

This place is a message… and part of a system of messages… pay attention to it! Sending this message was important to us. We considered ourselves to be a powerful culture.

This place is not a place of honor…no highly esteemed deed is commemorated here… nothing valued is here.

What is here is dangerous and repulsive to us. This message is a warning about danger.

The danger is in a particular location… it increases toward a center… the center of danger is here… of a particular size and shape, and below us.

The danger is still present, in your time, as it was in ours.

The danger is to the body, and it can kill.

The form of the danger is an emanation of energy.

The danger is unleashed only if you substantially disturb this place physically. This place is best shunned and left uninhabited.

Figure A-04: The text that is to accompany the "landscape of repulsion". Sourced from 'This Place Is Not a Place of Honor.' N.p., n.d. Web. 20 October. 2014.

Appendix B

Table 01

Mapping wallpaper designs against historical events and impacts pertaining to the environment, society, and economy during the Anthropocene over a 229 year period since the start of the Industrial Revolution (the date I've chosen for the beginning of the Anthropocene proper). This is done to remain consistent with the *Three Legged Stool of Sustainability*'s categories of Planet, People, and Profits (Anderson, 2006). The corresponding symbols represent the need to multiple the environment ($\otimes$), to add human society into the equation ($\oplus$), and need for limitations on economic activities at the expense of the first two ($\varnothing$). I have done my best to list events I have found relevant to researching the Anthropocene, or that have had a profound impact on the way I see the world personally, however given the breadth and depth of this survey there will be need for future expansion. I have limited each item to one category—the principle category for that group—although each may be applicable to more than one, or all three categories.

It is important to note that this table does not indicate a direct correlation, but it does establish some convincing inferences (for my research and work) between the motifs, styles, or subject matters that were popular in the years mapped, and against the major events presented.

Interval	Years	Title, designer, date, and source	Description of pattern and critique from a personal perspective	Historical events and impacts pertaining to the Environment (⊗), Society (⊕), and Economy (∅) during the Anthropocene	Corresponding working titles for Familiar Strangers
01	1784 – 1793	*Les Metamorphoses d'Ovide* Unknown 1785	Trompe-l'œil neoclassical wall repeat with individual panels illustrating Ovid's Metamorphosis including the creation myths of Ancient Rome. Nature is relegated to background, myth, and a peculiar border of roses that occurs around the five panels of each section between a set of pillars. Everything is grey, or gold except these roses and a repeat of sashes along the upper perimetre. Presents view of nature as source for mythology.	⊕ 1784 (circa) Romantic movement begins ∅ 1785 Coal gas first used for lighting ∅ 1787 Colonization of Australia begins (last continent of European colonization) ∅ 1787 First steam ship is patented ⊕ 1789 French Revolution begins ∅ 1792 Stock exchange exclusivity begins (Wall Street stockbroker insider trading pack signed) ⊕ 1791 Haitian Revolution begins (only successful slave revolt ever) ⊕ 1792 French Revolutionary Wars begin	*Interval 01:* *creationism by any other name smells the same*
02	1794 – 1803	Chinoise Unknown 1797	Two repeating panels of trees, birds, and aviaries bordered by a repeat of what looks like corn. Left panel features a naturalist illustration of a grey crane and a small tree; right panel features several birds and an aviary in the distance. Presents a view of nature as source for vicarious knowledge and collection.	⊕ 1795 United indigenous Kingdom of Hawaii founded ⊗ 1796 *Extinction* established as fact ⊕ 1798 Neoclasscism ends ∅ 1798 *Essay on the Principles of Population* published ⊗ 1799 First conservation law ⊕ 1802 Human population one billion ⊕ 1802 First anti-child labour laws ⊕ 1803 Napoleonic Wars begin ∅ 1803 Louisiana Purchase	*Interval 02:* *there is always more somewhere else*
03	1804– 1813	*Jardins de Bagetelle* Joseph Dufour 1804	A grande paramique designed to cover all the walls of a room. Graphic illustration of neoclassical architecture and one East Asian styled outbuilding set in a French garden. A variety of wealthy patrons are in the garden. The Château de Bagatelle was a pleasure ground for the French aristocracy and was used only occasionally when hunting in the adjacent woods—essentially a maison de plaisance. Presents a view of nature as resource for pleasure.	∅ 1804 First locomotive ∅ 1804 Lewis and Clark expedition begins ⊕ 1807 British slave trade ends ∅ 1807 First passenger railway ⊗ 1808 Coal first burned for residential heat ⊗ 1808 Unknown volcanic eruption lowers global temperatures for at least ten years ⊕ 1810 Spanish colonial revolts begin ⊕ 1811 Luddite movement formed ∅ 1812 The Frame Breaking Act makes machine breaking punishable by death ⊗ 1813 World's first nature preserve	*Interval 03:* *send me away to where the weight of the world we have failed can not touch me*
04	1814 – 1823	*Les Chasses de Campiegne* Carle Vernet 1815	A two panelled illustration repeat of an idyllic American South hunt respite with finely dressed gentlemen, horses, hounds, lower class workers being interrupted while going about their day, and vistas of far off ships and towns. Was original installed in a Kentucky plantation home. Presents a view of nature as resource for class differentiation.	∅ 1814 First mass-produced machine (machine made by a machine) ⊗ 1815 Mount Tamboro erupts and drastically effects global weather and temperatures ⊕ 1816 "Year Without A Summer" ∅ 1817 Erie Canal construction begins ∅ 1817 First cholera epidemic ∅ 1817 Term *comparative advantage* coined (capitalism benefits the weak as well as the strong) ∅ 1818 British East India Company quells remaining Indian colonial resistance ∅ 1819 First steam ship crosses Atlantic ⊗ 1821 World's first geographic society founded ∅ 1821 First adoption of gold standard	*Interval 04:* *here, where we starve, we can see the workings of our comparative advantage*
05	1824 – 1833	*Famous Hunts* Zuber 1831	A grande paramique illustration of a somber hunt. Features well-to-do pleasure hunters along side hounds along a creek between two fields populated with simple peasants. Two trees, and a far off castle dominate the image but not as much as the curious sky. In this version near three quarters of the image area is dominated by a white horizon to blue-sky gradient. It is a graphic and distinctive piece compared to others of its interval. Presents a view of nature as resource for pleasure.	⊕ 1824 Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is founded ∅ 1825 First public railway ∅ 1825 First stock market crash ⊕ 1826 First true photograph ∅ 1828 First electric motor ⊗ 1828 Vitalism's first major disaccreditation (*élan vital*; non-living and living entities are fundamentally different because of souls) ∅ 1829 Genocide of the Beothuk people complete with death of Shanawdithit ∅ 1829 Hot blast industrial process invented ∅ 1830 Indian Removal Act (US) ∅ 1832 First world travel guide published ⊕ 1833 First Factory Act regulates factory working conditions	*Interval 05:* *the skies are alive with sounds muffled by the cries of the dying*

Interval	Years	Title, designer, date, and source	Description of pattern and critique from a personal perspective	Historical events and impacts pertaining to the Environment (⊗), Society (⊕), and Economy (∅) during the Anthropocene	Corresponding working titles for Familiar Strangers
06	1834 – 1843	*Scenes of North America* Zuber et Cie 1834	A large A grande paramique illustration of North American natural landmarks such as Niagara Falls. The sublimity of the natural landscape's imposing features is mitigated by insertion of modern transportation devices such as steam ships and stagecoaches, and representation of tourism. It also features a slew of ethic stereotypes while curiously portrayed as well-to-do. Presents a view of nature as obedient, and pleasurably conquerable over being sublime.	∅ 1834 Industrial capitalism as social system begins ⊕ 1834 Slavery abolished in British Empire ∅ 1835 English becomes only official language of India ∅ 1837 Telegraph patented ⊗ 1837 *Woodman Save That Tree* written (first environmentalist song) ⊕ 1838 Trail of Tears begins ∅ 1839 First Opium War begins, and Hong Kong is seized ∅ 1839 Rubber is vulcanized ∅ 1839 Electricity is clarified ∅ 1840 First national claims over Antarctic made ∅ 1840 The first tea plantations established in India ∅ 1842 First state managed forest	*Interval 06:* *whose glory and renown are spread o'er land and sea*
07	1844 – 1853	Untitled Owen Jones 1850	A diagonal repeat of a manicured plant–like motif. Overall framing device within the repeat is evocative of a shield repeat with a concave cone shape at its top. The curled forms and round ball finials border and fall into this shape. Presents a view of nature as source for obviously man-made, rationalized geometric repeat that could be described as wholly abstract—a celebration of design over nature (Figure 07).	⊗ 1844 Great Auk extinct ∅ 1844 First central banking ⊗ 1844 *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation* published (early evolutionary and transmutation theories written in accessible manner) ⊕ 1845 The Great Irish Famine begins ⊕ 1845 Term *Manifest Destiny* is coined ⊕ 1847 The Vegetarian Society formed ⊕ 1848 The Communist Manifesto published ⊕ 1848 Realism movement begins ∅ 1851 Crystal Palace Exhibition (first large scale exhibition of industrially made products) ∅ 1852 First multi-city trip through the air ∅ 1853 World's first public aquarium	*Interval 07:* *that which is beautiful is never true*
08	1854 – 1863	*Lucullus* Auguste Clésinger 1855	Trompe-l'œil illustrative multi-panel repeat evocative of a neoclassical frieze. There are a range of foreground forms that fade in a series of flat tones into the darkness of the implied narrow interior space between the top and the bottom of the repeat. Figures and forms in the piece include geese, hounds, baskets of food, farming paraphernalia and cherubs. Presents a view of nature as mythologized fancy. It is also a celebration of design over nature for it's graphic and blatant colour separations and depiction of nature as provision of the gods to man (Figure 05).	∅ 1854 The US "Black Ships" force Japan to open its borders to trade ∅ 1856 Second Opium War begins ∅ 1857 British take over of Mughal territory complete ⊕ 1857 Symbolism movement begins ∅ 1858 Territory of the British East Indian Company is annexed into the Empire proper ⊗ 1859 The Carrington Event (last large electrical disruption from the sun ⊗ 1859 *On the Origin of Species* published (*Theory of Evolution* within) ⊗ 1859 *Greenhouse effect* explained ⊗ 1860 Term *pollution* first used to describe environmental contamination ∅ 1862 Parkesine patented (first man-made plastic) ⊗ 1863 First underground urban railway opens ⊗ 1863 Alkali Acts (first air pollution laws)	*Interval 08:* *four years before, and 156 after the origins of the species and we're still here*
09	1864 – 1873	*Acanthus* William Morris 1875	A striking rework of a classical motif. The repeat is on an organic, non-rectilinear frame, while the interior designs appear to follow an arrangement of consecutive circle shapes that read as a chain of number 8s or an infinite repeat of the infinity symbol (∞). The work is illustrative and bends the source material (acanthus leaves) into a striking geometry that speaks more to a man-made nature than too any attempt at realism whilst still managing to capture something of the original plant. Presents a view of nature as something that should be dominated, and controlled by man, while simultaneously respecting it for its innate beauty (Figure 08).	∅ 1864 The Chicago Board of Trade approves trading of "futures" ⊗ 1864 *Man and Nature* published (first book to examine man's effects on nature) ⊕ 1865 Impressionism movement begins ⊗ 1865 Principles for *genetics* established ⊕ 1865 American slavery ends ∅ 1865 First typewriter invented ⊗ 1865 *Periodic Table of the Elements* published ⊗ 1866 Term *ecology* coined ⊗ 1866 First transatlantic telegraph cable laid ⊕ 1867 Dominion of Canada created ∅ 1869 First North American transcontinental railway ∅ 1869 Suez Canal opens ⊗ 1869 Sea Birds Preservation Act (world's first nature protection law) ∅ 1870 Standard Oil founded ⊕ 1871 England legalizes trade unions ⊗ 1872 World's first national park established ⊗ 1872 First of *Desirability of establishing a "Close-time" for the preservation of indigenous animals* series published ⊗ 1873 Term *Anthropozoic* era proposed (precursor to *Anthropocene*)	*Interval 09:* *life is an act of consumption, jupiter*

Interval	Years	Title, designer, date, and source	Description of pattern and critique from a personal perspective	Historical events and impacts pertaining to the Environment (⊗), Society (⊕), and Economy (∅) during the Anthropocene	Corresponding working titles for Familiar Strangers
10	1874 – 1883	*Untitled (irises)* CFA Voysey 1880	A cartoonish depiction of irises and bull rushes on the banks of a river or pond. Overall structure is indicative of typical curve–peaked church windows. Presents a view of nature as simplified, dull, and passive—one that conforms to simple geometry and line work over any attempt to represent the actual.	∅ 1874 First telephone patented ⊗ 1875 Term *biosphere* coined ∅ 1877 Queen Victoria proclaimed Empress of India ∅ 1877 Phonograph invented ∅ 1878 Northern Sea Route successfully navigated ⊗ 1879 Term *Psychozoic* proposed (precursor to *Anthropocene*) ∅ 1879 Light bulb patented ∅ 1879 Standard time proposed ∅ 1883 Earliest industrial intellectual property treaty signed ⊗ 1883 Krakatau eruption ⊗ 1883 First solar cell invented	*Interval 10:* *the world keeps moving on but in my repetition i steal more time*
11	1884 – 1893	*Seahorses* CFA Voysey 1887	A striking but simplistic, cartoonish line drawing illustration of ocean waves and sea horses. The main compositional structure consists of repetitive oval shapes within which two sea horses either look away or towards each other. Presents a view of nature as static—that simulacrum as signpost is sufficient to speak to nature.	∅ 1884 The Berlin Conference on colonization of Africa and the regulation of New Imperialism ⊕ 1885 Post–Impressionism movement begins ∅ 1885 First automobile patented ∅ 1885 Dry cell battery invented ∅ 1886 Coca-Cola invented ⊕ 1886 First eight hour workday law ∅ 1887 First working wind turbine ∅ 1887 Gramophone is patented ⊗ 1898 National Geographic Society founded ∅ 1889 L'Exposition Universelle (largest exhibition of industrially made products) ⊕ 1890 Art Nouveau movement begins ∅ 1890 First successful airplane flight ∅ 1890 End of the American Frontier (colonization of US controlled North America declared complete) ⊗ 1892 Sierra Club founded ∅ 1893 US annexation of Kingdom of Hawaii ⊕ 1893 Women's suffrage first granted	*Interval 11:* *this is how we dance under waves you can not see*
12	1894 – 1903	*Flamingoes* Otto Eckman 1898	Three part panel repeat. Top panel is a repeat of a flamingo in flight with a vibrant sky above and sea below. Middle panel is a pattern repeat of a flock of flamingoes crafting a dense impenetrable wall—you can not see past them and may forms overlap and confuse on top of each other. Bottom panel features a row of frogs underwater with foliage between and above them. Although illustrative over realist—and somewhat goofy in mood—the design presents a nature that is interdependent, dense, and alive, but ultimately merely entertaining for us to look at.	⊗ 1895 The term *greenhouse effect* coined ⊗ 1896 CO₂ emissions first linked to climate change ⊗ 1896 *Radioactivity* discovered ⊗ 1898 Study of *Ecological succession* pioneered ⊗ 1898 The Coal Smoke Abatement Society formed (first environmental NGO) ∅ 1899 First successful transatlantic radio signal ⊕ 1901 Expressionism, and Fauvism movements begin ∅ 1901 US Steel first billion dollar company ∅ 1902 First wireless telephone ∅ 1902 First artificial climate machine patented (air-conditioner)	*Interval 12:* *all of us is present for your infinite and indefinite pleasure*
13	1904 – 1913	*Whoot* CFA Voysey 1904	Another strong illustrative graphic repeat of birds that works on a simple mirror reflection repeat of a tall skinning rectangle composition. The design presents foliage and owls alongside newly hatched offspring—a parliament of repetition. Presents a life cycle of an animal in a clear way, but in a simple repeat that creates a textured surface from a distance and abundance up close. Presents a view of nature and the cycle of life as infinite and indefinite.	∅ 1904 Study of *geopolitics* coined ∅ 1904 Standard Oil controls 91% of US oil production ∅ 1904 Trans-Siberian Railway opens ∅ 1905 *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* published (justifies Capitalism as Calvinist) ⊗ 1905 The term *smog* coined ⊕ 1907 Cubism movement begins ∅ 1908 Model T released for sale ∅ 1909 Bakelite invented ⊕ 1909 Futurism movement begins ⊗ 1911 Newfoundland Wolf extinct ∅ 1913 The assembly line invented	*Interval 13:* *a parliament of effective distances*

Interval	Years	Title, designer, date, and source	Description of pattern and critique from a personal perspective	Historical events and impacts pertaining to the Environment (⊗), Society (⊕), and Economy (∅) during the Anthropocene	Corresponding working titles for Familiar Strangers
14	1914 – 1923	*Les Sonsonnets* Paul Marrot 1921	A simplistic line drawing pattern illustrating starlings and branches bent to a spiral shape. The pattern consists of a single drawing with a mirrored twin slightly below it and to the right to craft the illusion of one branch with two twigs. The birds are supplied with food in the form of berries that grow on the branches. This presents an ideal of nature as plentiful and able to take care of itself.	⊗ 1914 American passenger pigeon is declared extinct (populist proof of extinction) ∅ 1914 Panama Canal opens ⊕ 1914 World War I begins ⊗ 1915 The Ecological Society of America is founded ⊕ 1916 Easter Uprising—beginnings of decolonization of Europe ⊗ 1916 *Plant Sucession* published (proposed that landscapes evolve toward perfection and that nature can repair itself) ⊕ 1916 Technicolor invented ⊕ 1917 Surrealism, Dada, and De Stijl movements begin ⊕ 1917 October Revolution ⊕ 1917 First time a nation depended primarily on food imports to feed its citizens ⊕ 1919 Treaty of Versailles ends WWI and creates many new European nations carved from multi-ethnic continental empires ⊗ 1920 British cod fishery collapse ⊗ 1922 Terms *Anthropogene* and *Noosphere* coined (precursors to Anthropocene) ⊗ 1922 Term *environmentalism* coined	*Interval 14: despite the extinction of my brethren i will return orderly and predictable*
15	1924 – 1933	Unknown (banana leaves) Anonymous 1925[1]	A machined geometric repeat of highly aesthetic banana leaves.[39] The pattern is made of a single leaf constructed from a half oval (cut along the horizontal horizon) and a concave stem that is cut out of the void from the repeating half oval form. The interior of each leaf is a vertically extending series of architectonic lines as stand-ins for the veins and stem of the leaf. Presents a wholly machined, simulacrum of nature indicative of an era that highly celebrated technological advancement and continued large scale colonization between the World Wars.	⊕ 1925 Art Déco and Surrealist movements begin ⊕ 1925 Scopes Trial on teaching of evolution versus creationism in US public schools ∅ 1925 Television invented ∅ 1925 Process for frozen food invented ∅ 1927 First "Talkie" film ⊕ 1929 Abstract Expressionism begins ∅ 1929 Black Tuesday (stock market crash) ∅ 1929 Great Depression begins ⊗ 1930 The Great Dust Bowl begins ⊕ 1930 Socialist Realism begins ⊕ 1933 Nazis came to power federally in Germany	*Interval 15: these will never be banana leaves*
16	1934 – 1943	*Chamilles* René Gabriel 1936	A cut paper style illustration of diagonally repeating tree branches and love birds. Presents a whimsical, crafty, colloquial representation of nature I read as idyllic idealism versus the reality that most lovebirds the purchasers of this wallpaper will encounter will be in cages in residential settings.	⊗ 1935 Term *ecosystem* coined ⊗ 1935 Term *Dauerwald* coined ("perpetual forest" meaning eternal; related to forest management) ⊗ 1936 Tasmanian Tiger extinct ∅ 1936 T*he General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* published ∅ 1936 *Keynesian Economics Theory* published ⊕ 1939 World War II begins ⊕ 1942 The Manhattan Project begins ⊗ 1943 First big smog attributed to automobiles	*Interval 16: nothing is beautiful because it lasts*
17	1944 – 1953	*The Parakeet and the Mermaid* Henri Matisse 1952	A discombobulated assemblage of various shapes indicative of seaweed, apples arranged in an energized scattering that gets ever more dense as they encroach on to a crude silhouette of a mermaid on the right and a parakeet on the left. The paper is a direct representation of Matisse's "cut outs" work of the same name and of the same year. Presents a fantastical, imagined world of plenty that is mythological and impossible—an acerbic take on impossible views of nature.[40]	∅ 1944 International Monetary Found founded ⊕ 1944 First nuclear bomb test ⊕ 1945 First nuclear bomb use ⊕ 1945 Rapid political decolonization begins ⊕ 1945 WWII in Europe ends ⊕ 1946 WWII in Asia ends ⊕ 1946 Great Acceleration begins ∅ 1947 hydraulic fracturing process invented ⊗ 1947 Term *evolutionary synthesis* clarified (consensus on how evolution proceeds) ⊕ 1948 United Nations founded ⊗ 1949 Term *desertification* coined ⊗ 1949 *A Sand County Almanc* published (argues for land ethic—responsible relationship between humans and nature) ⊕ 1952 Pop Art movement begins ⊗ 1952 The Great Smog (London) ⊗ 1952 Caribbean Monk Seal extinct ⊗ 1952 Term *global warming* coined	*Interval 17: space has the boundaries of my imagination—i am anticipating things to come*

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39. This is the only pattern in the series not sourced from a library book. It breaks the system of selection that I crafted however it is a distinctive iteration of Art Déco pattern and an iconic one appearing on fabrics and dishware that I have personally encountered numerous times, and although it breaks my rules they are my rules to break.

40. A quote often attributed to Henri Matisse (but unconfirmed by the time of the publication): "When we speak of nature it is wrong to forget that we are ourselves a part of nature. We ought to view ourselves with the same curiosity and openness with which we study a tree, the sky or a thought, because we too are linked to the entire universe."

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18	1954 – 1963	*Woods* Cole & Son 1959	A strong repeat of diagonal braches stem from and interweaving between trunks in direct horizontal alignment. The effect is of a prison made of trees that can extend indefinitely to the left, right, top, or bottom. It is an endless plenty of woods that presents nature as a boundless resource without possible end.	⊕ 1956 UK Clean Air Act passed ∅ 1957 Sputnik—first artificial satellite to orbit the Earth ∅ 1960 Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries founded ∅ 1960 First working laser ⊗ 1961 World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) founded ⊗ 1962 *Silent Spring* published ⊕ 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis ∅ 1962 LED light technology developed ∅ 1962 First computer game	*Interval 18: there are satellites in the skies, lasers on the ground, and in the woods a silent spring all around*
19	1964 – 1973	*Frog Treillage* Charles Tausch 1970	A fanciful repeat of frogs in spread eagle position that has the graphic effect of an interlocking web of Xs. It is cartoonish, and whimsical in its presentation of frogs formed into a grid indicative of garden fencing and vine growing (treillage). Presents a view of nature as conforming to a pattern that itself is referencing gardening—the ordering of nature to our benefit.	⊕ 1964 Earth Art and Op Art movements begin ∅ 1965 Astroturf invented ⊕ 1965 First successful lawsuit for environmental harm ⊗ 1968 *The Population Bomb* published ⊕ 1969 First humans on the moon ⊗ 1970 Caspian Tiger extinct ⊗ 1970 First Earth Day celebrations ⊗ 1970 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ∅ 1971 First email ∅ 1971 Bretton Woods system abandoned ⊗ 1971 UNESCO *Man and Biosphere* ⊗ 1972 First national ban on DDT ⊕ 1972 Conference on the Human Environment ⊕ 1972 "Think globally, act locally" campaign ⊗ 1972 *The Limits to Growth* published ⊗ 1972 *Should Trees Have Standing* published (should non-human living things have legal status) ⊗ 1972 *The Gaia Theory* published ∅ 1973 OPEC oil crisis ⊗ 1973 Ecology Party founded (becomes the multi-nation Green Party) ⊗ 1973 Term *deep ecology* coined (human life is just one equal component in a broader global ecosystem) ⊗ 1973 US Endangered Species Act	*Interval 19: gardens, gardens everywhere*
20	1974 – 1983	*The Cliffs* Alain Le Foll 1977	The only clear isolated study of a non-living, non-human made subject in any naturalist wallpaper I have found in my searches. The illustration is graphic, heavy, and somber. Presents a view of nature as ancient, sublime and indomitable.	⊗ 1974 World's largest land park founded ∅ 1978 Term *neoliberalism* first used in current sense ⊗ 1977 First fully sequenced DNA genome ⊗ 1979 Three Mile Island nuclear event ⊗ 1979 *Gaia: A new look at life on Earth* published ⊗ 1979 *The Sinking Ark* is published ∅ 1980 Volcker Shock (hyper inflation) ⊗ 1980 Earth First! Founded ⊗ 1980 Environmental Justice movement begins	*Interval 20: the world will not die with us*
21	1984 – 1993	*Malita* P Frey 1980	A bright and garish repeat of flower bouquets. The bouquets feature five of the same flower in a fanned repeat with each set contained within a outlined shape. That shape is created by bisecting a circle and then crafting a downward point concave point that sits snuggly between the circle shapes below it to the right and left. Illustration style presents an orderly take on nature that borders on kitsch indifference to the subject matter while the repeat reflects a mass consumerist idea toward packaged cut flowers that squares nicely with a massive boom in the flower market in the 1980s.	⊗ 1984 Term *ecocentrism* coined (a nature centred system of values) ⊗ 1984 *Sea of Slaughter* is published ⊗ 1985 Hole in ozone layer proven ⊗ 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster ⊗ 1986 *Risk Society* published ⊗ 1989 Exxon Valdez disaster ⊗ 1990 The term *rewilding* coined (a movement to re-wild the human developed world) ⊕ 1991 Collapse of the Soviet Bloc ⊗ 1992 Rio '92 Earth Summit ⊗ 1992 Newfoundland cod fishery collapse, moratorium goes into effect	*Interval 21: flowers with impact*
22	1994 – 2003	*Garden Birds* Louise Body 2001	A stark motif of crossing telephone wires with birds perched upon them. This presents the first full replacement of the natural world as backdrop with the human one suggestive of an urban environment. Presents a frank and blunt representation of animals existing in a human-made environment.	⊗ 1995 *Shifting Baseline Syndrome* published (we can not truly understand the totality of environmental degradation as our own baselines within our own lifetimes are already skewed) ∅ 1997 Chinese workers hand pollinate apple blossoms due to extirpation of bees ⊗ 1997 Kyoto Protocol created ⊗ 2000 Term *Anthropocene* coined in current definition ⊗ 2003 Hurricane Juan slams into Nova Scotia (first major environmental catastrophe that had a deep impact on me)	*Interval 22: the heat of the sun is you*

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23	2004 – 2013	*Hybrid* Nice 2005	A presentation of silhouettes of various fauna. In the centre of each panel there is a complete animal or insect, while adjacent to the left and right appears half of the creature bisected vertically through the middle. These half-forms line up with entirely different fauna also in half-form to create new mutant animals. Presents a violent take on nature as a resource for experimentation and genetic manipulation.	⊗ 2007 *An Inconvient Truth* released ⊗ 2007 Step It Up rallies ⊗ 2007 *The World Without Us* published ⊗ 2007 *Ecology Without Nature* published ⊗ 2007 The term *biocentrism* coined (biology is the fundamental science for understanding the universe) ∅ 2008 Sub-prime mortgage crisis ⊗ 2010 Deepwater Horizon disaster ⊕ 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster ⊕ 2011 Leaded gasoline banned internationally ⊗ 2011 Deep Green Resistance founded ⊗ 2012 *The Ecological Thought* published ⊗ 2012 World's largest marine park founded ⊗ 2013 *Hyperobjects* published ⊗ 2013 Human–made global warming is declared reality (United Nations) ⊗ 2013 *The Once and Future World: Nature As It Was, As It Is, As It Could Be* published ⊕ 2013 Two year *Anthropocene Project* at Berlin's Haus der Kulturen der Welt opens	*Interval 23:* *we are our own ghosts in a landscape of our own making*

Appendix C

Additional documentation

There is a DVD and or USB drive, titled *Sham–Real Shadows DVD* and *TrevorMAA* respectively, attached to this document that includes additional film, and high-resolution photographic documentation for the projects discussed within this document, as well as the *In the Grass 8:4*5 video work mentioned but not discussed in this document.

The same information is also available online at:
http://lowresgradstudios.ecuad.ca/tvdeynden/sham-real-shadows-final-thesis-document/