Sheffield Hallam University

An Idea of North

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northern light

Andrew Robinson - *An Idea of North*

YOU
ARE
HERE

Robert Frank

THE SUNDAY TIMES magazine

Project Details

Aileen Harvey
West From Here

From the northwest coast of Scotland, the Outer Hebrides islands line the far horizon. *West From Here* is a set of seventeen photographs that follow the coast of the archipelago, looking out in twilight from that western edge towards the further west. Each photograph is a one-second exposure facing due west at midnight, taken during May and June - when at this latitude it is twilight. The images were made on consecutive nights, a day's walking apart, as I travelled south along the islands.

The project aims to explore cultural ideas of the West and of liminality in relation to this border landscape, between land and water, bright and dark. Thoughts about departure have particular bite for this coast, with its history of forced emigration to the New World. The rules that structure the series are a framework that leaves space for chance, weather and accident to come into the work, and I see the walking as a collaborative element, a measurement of, and by, land and body both. It combines 'How far can I walk today?', with 'where is the next good stopping place?'.

Berneray 000005062010
Sheilibridh 000031052010
Howmore 000010062010
Luskentyre 000003062010
35 x 33 cm, C-type prints mounted on aluminium

Anne Campbell
Islands & High Lands

These images are from an on-going body of work using a variety of experimental and darkroom photographic processes to explore the Scottish landscape, in particular the fragile northern ecosystems of the Highlands and Islands.

Working with film and chemical processes, (layering and exposing different areas of the print by the use of bleaching and redeveloping), allows for the creation of textural layers, creating one-off, subtle yet complex images, that mirror the atmospheric and changeable weather systems, the landscape and our response to it; the transitory nature of human presence. The surface qualities can be painterly and descriptive of personal experience, or may mirror the visceral qualities of nature: they can reference the past while looking to the future. Some of this work formed part of a joint exhibition with Shetland photographer Chloe Garrick in Shetland Museum & Galleries in 2014.

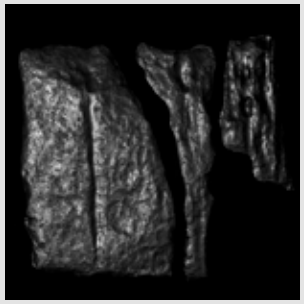
The Road , (Lewis) Infrared film, Lith Print
The Wave, (Atlantic Ocean) Hand Toned Lith Print, Mordancage
The Quiraing, (Skye) Lith Print

Liza Dracup
Sharpe's Wood

Sharpe's Wood (2007) is a substantial body of photographic research in a woodland on the periphery of Bradford, bordered in part by residential properties, highways, pastoral land and a production plant. The wood is on the edge of both the urban and the rural, an in-between place shaped by two contrasting terrains. Sharpe's Wood cannot be found by name on any Ordinance Survey map.

To the uninformed eye the wood is a 'natural' environment, a place of the wild, with no intervention from the human hand. The singularity of the extended exposure is used to reveal the transformational potential and aesthetic paradoxes of photographic seeing. The technical capabilities – and limitations - of the camera and film present a world of contradictions and questions, leading to a depiction of opposites simultaneously: light and dark, day and night, 'truth' and 'illusion'. The extended exposure times led to the visualisation and preservation of a 'hidden' landscape once concealed from the eye.

Untitled, Sharpe's Wood (2007), C-Type hand prints



Tom Baskeyfield & Mario Popham
Shaped by Stone

Over Millennia we have shaped stone: chipped, cut, split, crushed; turned hillsides into quarries; strata into streets. Like many other towns this process is the foundation of Macclesfield. The pink and blue-ish Gritstone of Tegg's Nose has been quarried for hundreds of years. The hill exists as fragments scattered around the town, it sits in the walls, the facing of buildings and the linings of streets.

Through a dialogue between analogue processes (including large format photography, drawing, embossed rubbings, darkroom experimentation, writing, walking and talking) artists Tom Baskeyfield and Mario Popham aim to bring to the fore these layers of our shared history. As such, this work is an enquiry into the fabric of our surroundings and how we have shaped, and been shaped by, our natural environment.

Shaped by Stone was commissioned in 2016 by The Barnaby Festival in Macclesfield, with support from Arts Council England.

Embossed graphite rubbing & Bideford Black on Fabriano paper (various sizes) and 20x16" Ilford gloss finish, fibre based, silver gelatine prints.

Anna Lilleengen
Metamorphosis Series I and II (Norway, 2013-14)

In the early-mid twentieth century, French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Henri Bergson both arrived at a 'philosophy of immanence' that described the material world as underpinned by a metaphysical reality that is subject to constant and 'indivisible change'.

Allan Kaprow, the American Fluxus artist, subsequently devised a series of 'activities' that referred to this as 'constant metamorphosis' and encouraged a Zen-like attention to processes of transformative change in the real, material world.
The sense that processes of decay and regeneration are in themselves transient, linked and in rapid flux, is the starting point Lilleengen takes in her Metamorphosis series where she juxtaposes the idea of essential permanence with the paradoxical ephemerality of matter.

Metamorphosis, Series II - #4, Norway, 2014.
Metamorphosis, Series I #1, *Original*, Norway, 2013
Metamorphosis, Series I - #3, *Pale*, Norway, 2013
Metamorphosis, Series I - #6, *Petals*, Norway, 2013
Metamorphosis, Series II - #3, Norway, 2014
Metamorphosis, Series II - #5, Norway, 2014
Metamorphosis, Series II - #6, Norway, 2014
C-Type prints on foamex

Andrew Robinson
An Idea of North

An Idea of North brings together images from photographic projects undertaken over the past 30 years in Northern England, Scotland and Ireland, alongside related ephemera and collages created from reworked appropriated imagery.

Presented as an extended sequence in book form the work questions the construction, through film, photography, story and personal history, of an idea of north as both a physical and psychological landscape.

Limited edition 54 page B4 book digitally printed on Evolution Uncoated 100gms and KeayKolour 300gms.

Sketch from The Hut, Snipe Point, Holy Island, 2006

A selection of pages from 'An Idea of North' including:

You Are Here - stills collage: Billy Liar, 1962, A Taste of Honey, 1961, This Sporting Life, 1963
1960s lucite paperweight from Whitley Bay, Northumberland
Robert Frank - Photo Poche, Paris, 1983
Abandoned Fishing boat, nr Durrás, County Cork, Ireland, 2004
Boat Cradles, Filey, North Yorkshire, Sept 1992
Shipwreck, Seaton Sluice Beach, Northumberland, 1988
Skyline - stills collage: Man of Aran, 1934, The 39 Steps, 1935, The Edge of The World, 1937, I Know Where I'm Going, 1945
Sharks Fin Cave, Cullercoats, Northumberland, 1993
The Sunday Times Magazine, Jan 14th 1971

Gather - stills collage from 'The Shetland Experience' 1978

Contributors

Andrew Robinson
An Idea of North

Andrew's photographic practice investigates notions of individual and communal identity through a visual anthropology of people, place and trace applying creative strategies that integrate still and moving imagery along with text, audio and found materials. A BSc Hons degree in Geology from the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and a spell as a post-graduate researcher informed the development of an interest in time, place and visual narrative. Since graduating with distinction in Photography from the Royal College of Art Andrew has undertaken numerous arts commissions and residencies leading to exhibition and publication and has worked on research and consultation projects in a range of settings.

Andrew currently holds a full time post as Senor Lecturer in Photography teaching on the Mart and BA Hons courses at Sheffield Hallam University; acts as external examiner for the BA Hons Photography Course at De Montford University, Leicester; treasurer for the Association of Photography in Higher Education; and is the founder and curator of the online photobook resource 'Photobiliophile.co.uk'

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Sonya Robinson
The Refusal of the Image

Sonya's research considers the unnameable and unrepresentable origin of the 'image in trauma'. Research is informed by psychoanalysis and continental philosophy, relating issues of loss, desire and origin. Strategies of distanciation, performative intervention and aesthetic defense negotiate a tolerable distance from which the image in trauma is to be approached. Sonya is an academic, artist and writer. She studied for an MA in Fine Art (Media) at The Slade School of Fine Art. She is currently Senior Lecturer MArt/BA (Hons) Photography at Sheffield Hallam University. Exhibitions include Doverodde Book Arts Festival IV + Symposium – 2012, Denmark. She has delivered papers at I Wonder, What is Wrong with Alice? Nostalgias: Visualising Longing, November 2013, Margate and The 'Afterlife' Of Photography, Symposium: Alice Culture: The Endurance of Wonderland, Tate, Liverpool, 19th November 2011

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Theo Simpson
the land of the day before

Simpson's work has featured most recently in: Palladian Design, exhibition at RIBA (2016), Shooting Space: Architecture in Contemporary Photography (Phaidon 2015) and journals Mas Context and Photoworks. His work is also held in various international public collections including the V&A National Art Library, Fotomuseum, Winterthur, Royal Institute of British Architects and the Tate Artists' Book Library.

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Ravinder Surah
Living Things (Blue)

The work of fine art photographer Ravinder Surah creatively explores the human condition combining ideas of vulnerability with the philosophies of metaphysics to create complex engaging artworks that aim to stimulate the emotions of the viewer. He explores the human condition utilising a creative mix of both direct and abstract representations to challenge the viewer's perceptions and to ultimately provoke thought and reflection on our relationship with both nature and society. Using video and still images to display how susceptible we are to the elements surrounding us, Surah also directs emphasis on his own anxieties and personal feelings as a stimulation to drive his perplexing work. Surah explains 'Without comfort we fall into the hands of nature which feeds us with life but which could also suddenly surrender us to our deaths; without security humanity would struggle to exist'.

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Jonny Sutton
Ultraviolet Landscapes

Jonny Sutton is a contemporary artist working primarily with lens based media. Sutton's work interrogates our ideas about the world around us, exploring the central contemporary themes of nature, technology and the everyday. Using various techniques Sutton re-presents the world around us, allowing us to observe it from a new perspective. Of particular interest is the way in which modern technologies are rapidly changing our relationship with imagery. As content becomes more readily available, accessible and highly disposable, the way in which we interact with it evolves, having a profound effect on the development of an increasingly digital society.

Sutton's work has been exhibited widely, most recently at SIA Gallery and Millennium Galleries, Sheffield; as well as having featured on numerous websites including Beautiful Decay, Nerve.com and Daily Inspiration. Currently working on a number of artistic and scientific projects in the North of England, Sutton is engaged in freelance work in art, photography and consultancy.

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Patrick Wichert
Northern England

Patrick is concerned with narratives which present themselves in familiar landscapes, mostly those of Southern Germany and Northern England. These are intuitive explorations, a persistent routine of drawing with a (passive) lens, often those sea-and landscapes which resonate considering their role in the history of Europe. 'I respond to the light and describe with it a melancholic drifting, recalling memories and historical events. I walk for convenience and attuned to my rhythm of thought, this I can accommodate close to my wider family and professional tasks. Now I spend most of my time in Northern England where an increasingly familiar landscape has been emerging in my photographs. It also is becoming part of me. In seeking familiar, unimposing and moderately scaled environs I indicate skepticism with the grand gesture, the overwhelming emotion. My approach is normally contained within a straight realist aesthetic, resulting in tentative elementary documents.'

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Chi Yan Wong
The Unpredictable Landscapes

Chi Yan Wong is a photographer based in London with a strong interest in analogue photography, working mainly in 35mm black and white film, Polaroid and alternative processes. Chi's practice consists of landscape and still life photography and the work she creates is characterised by its strong yet sensitive visual style and subtle qualities. She is passionate about exploring a range of techniques and experimenting with different photographic processes working at the boundaries of the medium.

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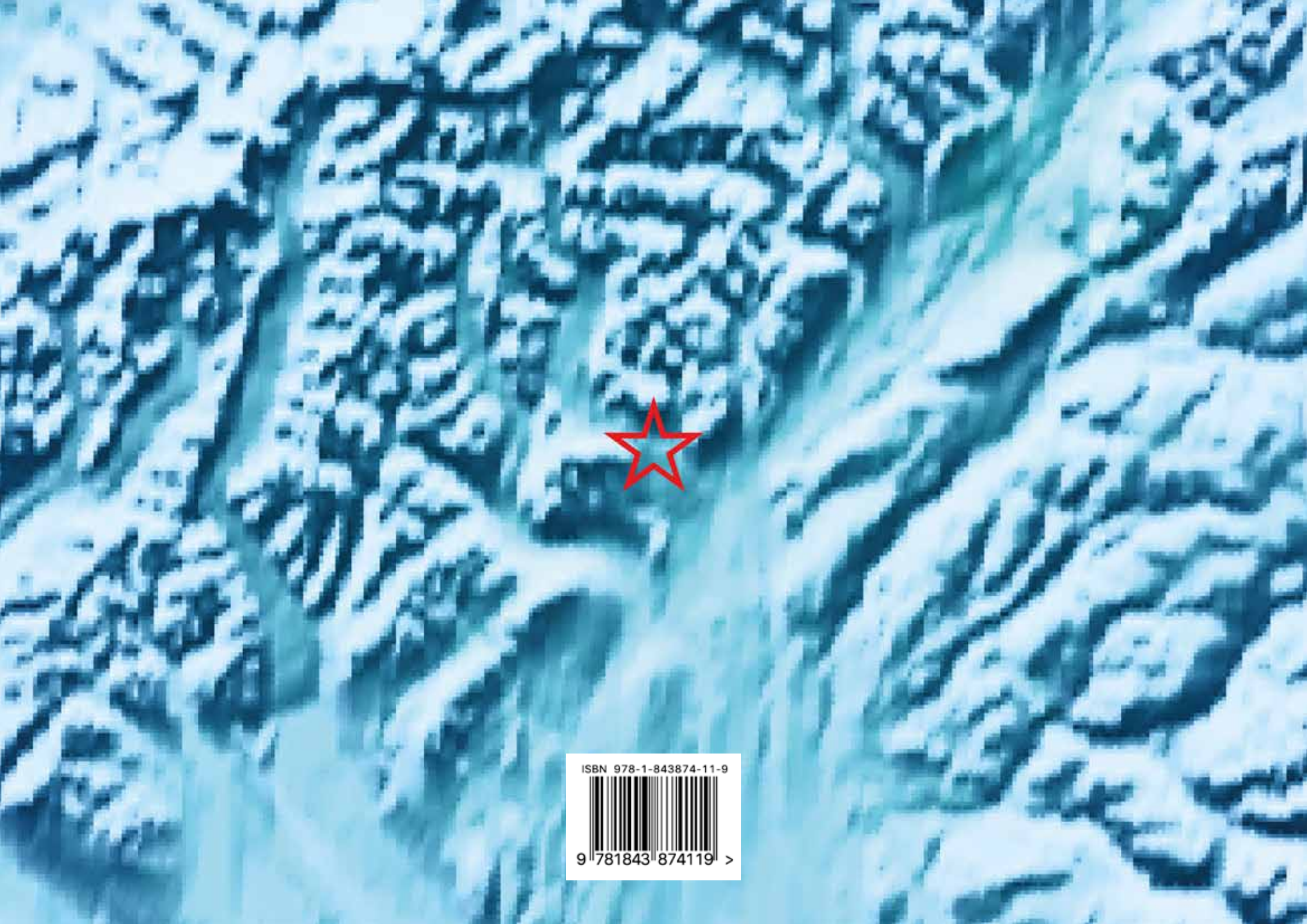
Credits

Northern Light was exhibited at the Sheffield Institute of Arts (SIA) gallery, 153 Arundel Street, Sheffield, S1 2NU, England, from July 4 – July 31 2016.

The exhibition was curated by Michèle Lazenby to accompany a two day academic conference at the Sheffield Hallam University hosted by Darcy White and Chris Goldie.

Conference, exhibition and publication have been supported by the Department of Media Arts and Communication and the Art & Design Research Centre. at Sheffield Hallam University.

Telephone Box, Portsonachan, Lock Awe, Argyll and Bute, Scotland, April 1998
Andrew Robinson



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