

Glas: Alfred Wallis' New Plastic Panorama

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By Merryn Tresidder

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Thesis Committee:

Programme Advisor: Mathew Reichertz, Associate Professor, Division of Fine Arts

Studio Advisor: Erica Mendritzki, Assistant Professor, Division of Fine Arts

Sheila Provazza: Regular Part Time Faculty, Division of Fine Arts

External Member: Sarah Fillmore, Chief Curator of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia



(Fig.1) Image of one of Robert Montgomery's 'Billboard series'

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I need to begin this document with a **land acknowledgment**. In Wabanaki legend, Glooscap is the creator of existence¹, the creator of Turtle Island. Local sagas describe him constantly fighting with his twin brother, who he eventually has to turn to stone. Other traditions tell of him turning into a giant beaver, to slap the Bay of Fundy with his tail, creating the 'Five Islands' there. In Mi'kmaq culture, one story is that when Glooscap lay to sleep, "Nova Scotia" was his bed and "Prince Edward Island" his pillow, something I have directly referenced in the last panel of my panorama. Glooscap, in some traditions, arrived on a granite canoe. Floating granite is personally a familiar paradox; I'll come back to that later. In acknowledging Mi'kma'ki as a praxis, I became exposed to more than just the culture of the forefathers of *this* land (a culture I have much to learn about and will relish in doing so). I also became exposed to a new framework, vernacular and practice of decolonization and resistance. I hope other visitors to these shores repeat this mantra, and also look to themselves when acknowledging NSCAD is on stolen land.

Here in Mi'kma'ki, the 'Treaties of Peace and Friendship' are described as a part of *ongoing* relations, and "do not deal with surrender of lands and resources". The land is unceded, and my best attempt thus far at reckoning with what this means, is that we're saying the land is unyielded, it's never been surrendered. I have to ask myself what that means pragmatically? We often hear some pretty deflated and insincere recitals. Some acknowledgments have started to eerily remind me of the prayers we had to reluctantly regurgitate at my Protestant primary school, three times a day. I often feel that same sense of embarrassment and awkwardness for fellow classmates when these introductions are so visibly insincere. Like those reluctant prayers, I have to ask myself if anyone is benefiting from these words. There's ambivalence from all corners of Canadian communities, it would appear, as to why we repeat this chant. Lynn Gehl, an Algonquin Anishinaabe-kwe tells the Global News "It's become meaningless and patronizing."²

The benefit of repeating this is for those of us from the settler's position. The utility in acknowledging Mi'kma'ki is still important. If myself, migrants and/or settlers were to forget where they are, then we only need to look to any other corner of Britain's Empire to see how Anglicization, proselytization, genocide and economically imposed poverty can actually destroy a culture, and what's more, make said culture believe that it's all for one's own betterment and civil accord. What's happening in Canada is important. I spent ages wondering what the rest of the world could look like if these acknowledgments happened elsewhere, in the *commonwealth* - South Africa, Kenya, Australia, New South Wales, Wales, home?

It's important to note here that I do not wish to equate the plight of Mi'kma'ki and its ongoing colonization (of which I am a part), with Cornwall. To do so would be wrong; these are different experiences, generations apart. Everyone's understanding of the world is in relation to their past, or their own history. This is how we sympathise; this is the beginning of reconciliation. There are, however, two inexplicably linked facets connecting Kernow (Cornwall in Cornish) and Mi'kma'ki that I wish to acknowledge. Firstly the Atlantic Ocean: for thousands of years, both of our peoples have found sustenance from it and have existed on extremities of land being eroded by it. Secondly, an imposed British rule³. What the English Crown practised at home, through trial and error, became a blueprint for empire. Making any further comparisons between the Celtic Nations of the UK and the Indigenous Nations of Turtle Island risks a lack of acknowledgment concerning white privilege, and ignores the fact that any migration here, Celtic or otherwise, is an act of ongoing colonization itself. The methods of oppression do remain the same however; a tried and tested model of divide and conquer, of turning communities against themselves, finding the weakest link, often in the name of 'Business', be that Fur, Tea, Opium, Tin, or Humans.

Now is the time to show solidarity. Who owns land, or should anyone own land at all, is what we should really be questioning here. Who will inherit it? My Marxist leanings intuitively put me at odds with corporate land-ownership. The world is watching what is happening here; all eyes *truly* are on Wet'suwet'en. Sometimes, when local divides in opinion show, Canada almost appears classless, too polite to consider exploitation at home, or that we are a foreign entity. The divides among settlers seem concerned more with rural and urban, or East vs West (+ The Maritimes if anyone actually remembers). After spending two years here in K'jipuktuk, a stone's-throw away from Tufts Cove, (the original Mi'kmaq settlement in the 'Halifax' area) I've seen two very different sides. This is not just a settler/Indigenous binary, class is very real. On one side, an affluent middle class, building up towards the sky and over the water, on the Halifax Peninsula. The other here in 'Dartmouth', a place where 'gentrification has yet to take off', since the Halifax Explosion of 1917 completely devastated the Mi'kmaq and working class communities of 'Dartmouth' and Africville. For the moment, all I can do is put my best foot forward and try to listen, however I wish to position my work within the framework of these acknowledgments.

¹ Marion Robertson, "Tales of the Great Glooscap", in *Red Earth, Tales of the Mi'kmaq* (Nimbus Publishing, 1969, 2006), 51-60

² Brett Bundle, "On Land Acknowledgments, Some Indigenous Advocates are Ambivalent", *Global News*, January 29th, 2019

³ Initially, only Scotland in the British 'Union of Equals' actually signed the 1st Act. Everyone else was "annexed", a word one reads a lot in Anglo-centric history books, a softer way of saying conquered. Eventually Scotland would be too.

In my utopian dreamworld, English speaking expats, 'proud Brits'- of course, never described as immigrants - would give an acknowledgment to whomever they are addressing - wherever they are, not only to respect and remember the gruesome history of colonialism and its very real traumas, but to remind themselves that it's up to them/us to recognise their/my own privileges that they/I have generationally accrued. Contemporary Britain was built on the backs of the colonized, foreign and domestic. It seems many in the arts continue to overlook this.

England is especially on unceded territory. The beating heart of all Anglophone empires was spawned on stolen land, England and its language are native to nowhere. By this logic, I will not legitimise the latin appropriation of the concept of a *New Scotland*, especially when the refugees from the Highland clearances, who give this place its namesake in English/Latin, speak the *Old Tongue*, Gaelic – a tongue which, like Mi'kmaq, the English Crown tried to extinguish. Since the failed expulsion of the Acadians to Québec, Louisiana and Boston⁴, we must again acknowledge that there is more blood, more trauma on this soil than any one community might care to remember. After all that is said and done, it feels that the ~~Union~~ Flag (The Butchers Apron) flies higher *here* than it does at home, where it seldom flies at all. Acknowledging Mi'kma'ki is, I believe, an honest, genuine start. Where am I/are we in relation to all of this, *really*? It's recently been suggested to me that '...going from the colonized to the colonizer, must be hard to wrap your heart and head around', this much I can say is true, and as of yet I have no answers, only gratitude. I want to reconcile.

⁴ J. Hornsby, Stephen, "Explanatory maps of Saint Croix & Acadia: Acadian Deportation, Migration, and Resettlement", *University of Maine*, Accessed January 2020

It suits my subject matter to **consider a 1st person text**, something relational for future MFA research/creation students. Whatever I write, providing I graduate, will be in the NSCAD library for as long as their records exist. Because of this, I am slightly more in control of my own narrative, than the fisherman/painter Alfred Wallis (1855-1942) was of his. Alfred being the core 'naive' subject of British Modernity, Ben Nicholson and now myself. My practise has been described as naive, and similar to folk art: I'm going to delve deeper into this aesthetic for my paintings. I want to exercise my control, I want a few things to be heard. I took great delight in sifting through the current alumni records, as it enabled me to piece together the academic lineage and tradition of the school. That said, the content of the thesis boxes vary, from the far fetched conceptual (Rita McKeough, merely supplying us with a glove in a folder), to the expected convoluted and wordy art-academic responses to research/creation. The power of using Auto-Ethnographic writing techniques seemed unimaginable when I started this course. Not bogged down by art doublespeak and academia, Auto-Ethnography is an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze the personal, in order to understand a wider cultural experience. Writing this thesis has not only enabled me to demonstrate the personal relationship I have with my subject matter, in a more 'gesamtkunstwerk' like way, than a traditional academic text, it has also manifested into a relevant platform through which to show my personal gratitude to the faculty that have been so patient with me during their own time of crisis. After the faculty strike in 2019⁵, I wanted to write something that might make sense of these turbulent two years. Therefore this text will explore an anecdotal approach.

At Halifax's 1st Annual Anarchist Book Fair, long before I was considering a performative text, I came across a book; 'Decolonizing Academia, Poverty, Oppression & Pain', by Clelia O. Rodríguez⁶. Maybe not surprisingly, the book is far from what's considered traditionally academic. It's really centred on the personal experiences of the author, as a self-described person of colour within western academic institutions. At times it feels more like a poem, however it remains scholarly. Rodríguez writes;

"This text is like a peeling onion. Removing layers is a process of untangling deadlines in the name of higher education, letting fluidity be the guiding light of a rigid process that suffocates the breathing pattern in my dreams. The form is yours to feel. The content is yours to create, in a space framed by critical thinking". pg2

From here on out, the same applies to you as you read this text. The form is yours to feel. The content is yours to create. Much of the experiences of oppression described in Rodríguez's book have historically been perpetuated by white, cis gender males, and they/we continue to do so, knowingly or not. To try and reconcile with the question I asked myself earlier, (Am I not just a part of an ongoing colonization?) yes, I am, just by being here on Turtle Island. So when I say that I don't wish to compare anyone's struggle, that's not necessarily accurate, implicitly one can draw parallels. We may well be able to find solidarity in that familiarity of shared experience, but what I don't want to do is conflate my oppression with the pain, and the certainly more fresh scars of other peoples' experiences and oppression.

⁵ Caora McKenna, "NSCAD Faculty Strike Ends, Classes Resume", *The Coast*, March 14th, 2019

⁶ Clelia O. Rodríguez, "Unlearning", in *Decolonizing Academia, Poverty, Oppression & Pain* (Fernwood Publishing, 2019), 1-33

Remembering Gloscap's granite Canoe was about *when I started to think about the sea*. It's the same Ocean, here and at home, but it feels like different water. In Greco-Romano cultures, Poseidon or Neptune is the god of the brine. Their commands are so strong that to this day, superstition demands fishermen on both sides of the Atlantic refrain from mentioning anything church or clergy related, for fear of trying their temper.

Who created the sea, or existence even, in the eyes of the Celts is a lost idea, overshadowed by modern interpretations of 'paganism'⁷, one of the draws for artists migrating to Cornwall. During the Christian proselytising of Cornwall, one character - St Piran (The patron saint of Tin Miners, and by extension Cornwall), is said to have floated across the Celtic Sea from Ireland on a granite millstone he was strapped upon (punishment for misdoings in Ireland). Remembering Gloscap's granite canoe, and using Alfred as a vehicle, I became compelled to tell some of the alternative and obscure narratives that extend across the Atlantic and tie these two maritime communities together, in an act of solidarity amidst ongoing Anglicisation.

Floating granite has become a personal symbol of resistance & resilience. The cliffs, the ground itself, at home and out here, are made of the same type of granite. During Pangea, we would have been touching, but now both Mi'kma'ki and Kernow are at the *ends* of our worlds. It often looks just like home, here. There are always push factors, as well as pull factors when people decide to leave home. Now I've crossed over, I've left. Historically, many peoples' ancestors did it by way of the sail boats Alfred painted, these vessels being a much more pressing subject of interest now that I'm here. Wallis, in his old age, tried desperately to paint the memory of the ships he'd worked on, as they were slowly decommissioned. This was his way of fending off loneliness. He painted his memory of fishing expeditions as far as Mi'kma'ki. A scarcity of young abled bodies to work the boats, often left older generations fishing for as long as they were able, to feed the few who stayed. Cornwall's diaspora reaches as far as Australia in search of better economic circumstances. The saying goes 'wherever there is a hole in the ground, you'll find a Cornishman digging', a reference to our mining heritage. So where's all this money going/gone? Why all this bad blood - still? British history is a long and convoluted story (I think they prefer it that way). Some further context is required.

Alfred saw his own children and wife die before him. Feudalist entitlement laws on intestate capital exist to this day in Cornwall. The Prince of Wales/Duke of Cornwall still has rite to benefit from unclaimed inheritance, Buckingham palace rules over us quite directly⁸, a law it hasn't extended to any other nation in the UK. The Palace of Westminster (Parliament) too, has always had a choice in acknowledging Celtic discourses, but England's representation at Parliament can out-manoeuvre the remaining nations, even if they were to bloc vote. Small gestures in acknowledging its crimes at home (the Highland Clearances in Scotland, the Tony Pandy 'riots' in Wales, and continuing occupation of Ulster county, Ireland), seems an unlikely reality; no attempts at an apology or reconciliation appear on the horizon. If England had truly acted as an equal, the UK might not be facing a second Scottish referendum⁹ on Independence, the murmuring threat of Irish Unification¹⁰ and a strong movement for an Independent Wales¹¹. It's this historical Anglo-Saxon belligerence that frames Alfred as a person to be discovered, in an untamed corner of an island, where people barely speak English. Kernow is the last remembered (if at all) British nation. Somewhat of an oddity, our little known history leaves us in a quite deliberate, constitutional grey area. Ben Nicholson was well aware of this difference.

REALITY CHECK

The Queen of England recognises Kernow as 'A Royal Duchy' and therefore not one of her majesty's 'Counties of England', enabling our own self-rule by Stannary Parliament¹². However, post-War of the [English] Roses, victorious parliamentary forces went on to punish Cornwall (for harbouring the then-King), by suspending our unique system of governance, something that would have lasting implications on Anglo-Kernow relations, and cost many lives over the

⁷ BBC Regional News Editor, "Paganism is 'Second Most Popular' Faith in South-West England", *BBC*, August 29th, 2017

⁸ Jordan Rayner, "I'm From Those Who Die Without Wills Passes to Prince Charles' Estate", *The Telegraph*, October 3rd, 2012

⁹ Jamie Maxwell, "A New Scottish Independence Vote Seems All but Inevitable", *Foreign Policy*, January 24th, 2020

¹⁰ Jenifer Duggan, "Brexit Has Revived the Prospect of a United Ireland. Could It Actually Happen?", *Time*, February 7th, 2020

¹¹ Rhiannon Lucy Cosslett, "Brexit is Giving Welsh Nationalism a New Popular Appeal", *The Guardian*, September 28, 2019

¹² The Stannary law (derived from the Latin: *stannum* for tin) is the body of British law that governs tin mining in Devon and Cornwall; although no longer of much practical relevance, the Stannary law remains part of the law of the United Kingdom and is arguably the oldest law incorporated into the English legal system. Special laws for tin miners pre-date written legal codes in Britain, and ancient traditions exempted everyone connected with tin mining in Cornwall and Devon from any jurisdiction other than the Stannary courts, G.R. Lewis, *The Stannaries, A Study Of The Medieval Tin Miners Of Cornwall And Devon*, (D. Bradford Barton Ltd 1965), 1-10

following 300 years¹³. For those of us who are ethnically Cornish, *this* is what we know (what Ben Nicholson chose to overlook): Kernow is one of the three mainland, ancient Celtic nations in the '[Barely] United Kingdoms of Great Britain and Northern Ireland'. Cornish culture and history, let alone language, have not and have never been taught in any school curriculum. European project funds have been a far bigger contributor to our language and culture than the UK Parliament to date. What we do still have, against all odds, is our own national character, one of honesty to a (historic) fault, and of stubbornness beyond belief. It's this personality that has maintained what is often described, in a prerogative sense, as a 'folklore', an ancient assemblage of pre-Christian rituals and festivals, town to town, each with its own unique day and celebration. In these oral traditions we keep our culture alive, these customs have saved us, and it's that anecdotal tradition and *necessity* of storytelling, that I wish to draw on. Ben Nicholson and Barbara Hepworth stayed in Cornwall after the second world war. They fell in love with something they couldn't explain. Cornwall felt different, It is.

¹³ In the eyes of British constitution, the Queen is still the acting head of state, technically then, her fabric for the United Kingdom's makeup being 'true'. However since the civil war, parliament *actually* "governs" us. Because of this duality, of ceremonial ritual and heredity rule, what Cornwall is, or rather, whether we're autonomous within the UK or not, is to this day a question left unanswered, at the political convenience of Westminster, of course.

I knew Solomon Nagler, a **land lover, the Winnipeg enthusiast**, didn't grow up next to the sea within seconds of meeting him. Not knowing I'd been there, he tried to tell me that Winnipeg is "way cooler than Halifax". I'm naturally biased, but anyone who grew up next to an ocean knows the anxiety you feel when you're stuck inland. It's horrific and the closest I get to being truly anxious - Winnipeg, it can be said, is not for me. Sol tries to compare this 'ocean effect', to the Prairies 'big skies'. Sorry, friend - a mackerel ceiling reflecting off a glas(s)-like, still ocean wins any day, mackerel skies being a maritime phenomenon I've tried to capture in my panorama. But, hey-hoe, he's a great guy and the MFA Director, and we've been a tricky bunch. I've truly valued Sol's council in and outside of University. Thank you Sol, a friend, a colleague - as you constantly reinforce, but very notably a land lover. He gave me this essay to read on Auto-Ethnography¹⁴, 'Telling Stories: Reflexivity, Queer Theory, and Autoethnography'. A quote from it can be directly lifted and reinterpreted as the ethos for my entire show...

" Autoethnography—a method that uses personal experience with a culture and/or a cultural identity to make unfamiliar characteristics of the culture and/or identity familiar for insiders and outsiders" pg110

¹⁴ Tony E. Adams and Stacy Holman Jones, "Telling Stories: Reflexivity, Queer Theory, and Autoethnography", in *Cultural Studies ↔ Methodologies* (SAGE, 2011), 108-116

Dr. Karin Cope. My first studio advisor, also the professor for my pedagogy class. The first person to *really* ask if I'm ok, thank you. On meeting Dr. Cope for the first time I had no knowledge she was a **Sailor. Karin and her historical canon** started with the Greeks (our first reading being Plato's Symposium), and it makes sense; 'Pedagogy' was the name of the class, a greek word with a more sinister root. This concept began, philosophically speaking, in what is now Greece, right? Not Mi'kma'ki or Kernow. Today it translates to 'the art and science of teaching', roughly, because as I discovered as a teaching assistant here, the art of education can be rough. I learned many things in Karin's class, mostly about myself, but also that one day I might actually want to teach. Sometimes I wish that we'd started that class with readings in relation to Mi'kmaq teachings, for *chronologies* sake, but I trust Karin - a lot. She knows what she's doing. Half way through the semester we're given a reading that really puts me on my back foot, and in hindsight, definitely not the sort of text you want to start a syllabus with. It was Bonita Lawrence and Enakshi Dua's 'Decolonising anti-racism'. In retrospect, it would have been too heavy to start with indigenous perspectives, but maybe that's what we need to hear right off the bat.

"What Does It Mean to Look at Canada as Colonized Space? What Does It Mean to Ignore Indigenous Sovereignty?"¹⁵ pg123

This essay has been instrumental in my reckoning with where I am. It attacks the idea of diaspora. It's a difficult read. At one point making the claim that even stolen people on stolen land, descendants of slaves, refugees, historical and contemporary, contribute to a colonial vision for anti-racism, and that Indigenous perspectives are ignored in this discourse. 'Post-colonisation' is a term that's openly rejected in this document, and an ongoing colonisation is what's presented, even within the spheres of anti-racists. As someone who has spent much time in London and Cornwall, organising and demonstrating against right of centre rhetorics, it's at first a bitter pill to swallow. Have I been complicit in this oppression? The text forces me to ask, what am I really doing here? Am I not merely perpetuating the exact kind of issue I fell victim to at home? No, what I'm doing is potentially far worse. One thing I took from this essay, is that I mustn't refer to this land as anything other than Mi'kma'ki, that's a start anyway. This is the moment I began to use Indigenous names wherever possible. Now, theoretically, Indigenous teaching practices interrupt the western historical canon laid out by this course's syllabus. But here, just like at home, history seemed to start with the Greeks or the Romans, again. Surely not? Here it starts with Mi'kmaw histories. At home it started with *my* ancestors, the Celts. This consignment to a historical dust bin (not by Karin but by current history canons), being constantly overlooked when 'measuring' human history feels frustrating, but it happens often, the 'Ancients' are the Greeks and the Romans, no one else. The fact that some of these Celtic languages still survive as a first tongue, shows their resilience. Mark Bradley, in his study, *Colour as Synaesthetic Experience in Antiquity*, writes;

"In 1858, William Gladstone, British Prime Minister-to-be and a proficient Homeric scholar, famously argued that Homer's colour system was founded exclusively upon light and darkness, and that the organ of vision 'was but partially developed among the Greek'¹⁶. Pg127

This is of course in reference to Homer's Iliad and his likening the sea to, 'Wine Red' and 'Honey Green', but never mentioning the word blue, sparking wild rumours that the ancients didn't see blue at all¹⁷. Others theorize that, in a Darwinian sense, our eyes were less developed and we didn't have the full set of cones and rods in our optics, that we have today. So here lies my problem. Gladstone, despite being of Scottish descent, manages an incredible bit of oversight, not only overlooking his own heritage but also every other constituent part of the country/countries he went on to govern. In all the Celtic extremities, the word 'Glas' ('Glas' - "[ˈɡlaːz] hg blue, green (of plants)"¹⁸), seems to have survived these accusations of

¹⁵ Bonita Lawrence & Enakshi Dua, "Decolonising anti-racism", in *Vol. 32, No. 4* (Social Justice, 2005), 120-124

¹⁶ Mark Bradley, "Colour as Synaesthetic Experience in Antiquity", in *Synaesthesia and the Ancient Senses*, ed Shane Butler and Alex Purves (Routledge, 2013), 127-130

¹⁷ Fiona MacDonald, "There's Evidence Humans Didn't Actually See Blue Until Modern Times", *Science Alert*, April 7th, 2018

¹⁸ Ken George, "Gerlyver-Poket/Pocket Dictionary", *Kernewek/Sowsnek*, (Yoran Publishing 2015), 68-70

synaesthesia and colour blindness. It exists in varying descriptions in all of the surviving Celtic Languages. But its survival owes no thanks to people like Gladstone - who of course were educated at Eton - a school whose uniform features 'top & tails'. Make of that what you will, but class and nation are inextricably linked in Canada and the UK, this mustn't be overlooked. Karin is one of those incredible people, the sort of person that always seems appropriately composed, and always, always, always seems to have the right, comforting words on the tip of her tongue. I owe a lot to Dr. Cope with regards to the critical framework I have been building since I got here, thank you Karin, for helping me see, but mostly, thank you for grounding me appropriately.

It was in my colour theory class that I started to pay attention to the colour of the sea, *here*. It's not the same as back home, it's darker, much colder. **Sara Hartland-Rowe, a Cracking 'Cousin Jenny'**.

'Cousin Jacks or Jennies' are members of the Cornish diaspora in our English dialect. I say all this in some light humour, because Sara comes from a Cornish background, she told me so. However, she does believe being Cornish makes her English, 'But one half of me is from Devon, as well' she adds - fine, but Devon was once Cornwall, I want it back. It seems semantic, but I think Sara understands my humour here (I hope so anyway). There are a lot of people with the second names, 'Welsh' or 'Cornish' in the 'Americas', I've never met someone with either of these names back home, not that I can remember anyway (I'd definitely remember). My guess is that our phonetics are too hard to pronounce for monoglot English speakers, most people must have either given up trying (Lord knows I'm considering changing my name), or had their names taken from them in the 'New World'. Sara however, has a very Cornish name, ~~Hartland~~-Rowe (I bet everyone pronounces it Row-ee, or Row-uh first time). After talking with Sara at some length, I came to the realisation that 'Glas', is the phenomena I want to see with when I paint. At the time, Sara seemed almost as excited by this idea as I was.

"The Celts of Great Britain and Ireland see colour very differently from English speakers and take care to describe its nuances with some precision... ..English has not revived the richness of its pre-industrial Revolution vocabulary, rarely using terms like 'brindled', whereas [Scots] Gaelic has maintained its equivalent '*riabhach*'. "¹⁹ Pg 72

Alistair Moffat

My mother tongue Kernewek, is as old as Welsh and Scots Gaelic, arguably older, and as Cornish people, we, unlike the people and culture of our neighbours to the north, possess a language predating Latin Europe. Ironically, Cornish ethnicity was the last British identity to be recognised by government in 2014²⁰, and even then only after mounting pressure from the European Court of Human Rights. This is all seldom acknowledged, and if anything the idea is constantly mocked (especially in Devon), our language ridiculed, deliberately marred with regionalist stereotypes surrounding our strong dialects when using English. This is a xenophobia I've experienced personally. Many times, mostly in Cornwall, I'm told that I am English, and that my Culture is either dead or 'invented'. "Why can't you just be normal and British (English) like the rest of us?". This is why I jokingly challenge Sara's Englishness. All of this is of course embedded in a deep Celtophobia, an ancient disdain for our differences that has enacted itself internationally and politically ever since. Like angry siblings, struggling to share a small room, the rest of the house will unfortunately have to hear us. There's no time for Alistair Moffats 'precise nuances' in Kernow, we're a bit more desperate than our Scottish cousins. Ever since England's civil war, the word 'Britain' today, by extension and in most of the Celtic fringes of the UK, has meant 'Greater England'. Later in this text, the Vorticist manifesto will 'triumphantly declare' this concept of Anglo-Saxon supremacy for me. In the meantime...

A PERSONAL STATEMENT ON GLAS;

...there are many words, in all eight surviving Celtic languages (Cornish, Breton, Welsh, Manx, Scots & Irish Gaelic, Galician & Basque), of Europe's 'Pays de Galles', that have no literal translations outside their own dictionaries. These are words, or at best ideas, that do not directly materialise into English/French/Spanish. One of these words that still exists in all of the British languages is the colour 'glas'. Within the structure of this seemingly alternative choice, to use a *dead* language (I'm standing right here, thank you), I wish to create paintings that reject the idea of the 3 primary colours (as they still exist in latin). What does it mean if I don't see blue, yellow and red when I paint? What would it mean if I only saw 'glas, rudh & melen'?

¹⁹ Alistair Moffat, "The Islands of the Mighty", in *The Sea Kingdoms: the Story Of Celtic Britain and Ireland* (Birlinn, 2008), 60-89

²⁰ UK Government Press Release, "Cornish Granted Minority Status Within The UK", *Houses of Parliament*, April 24th, 2014

It's a tricky conundrum, for me at least, as no one makes paint in glas, it'd be impossible. Once one paints something that is glas, it instantly ceases to exist as glas, because that paint is man-made. I can only look at glas. No one can paint it/with it. We can only paint our experiences of it. One thing that is understood when learning the 'primary colours' in Cornish, is that glas is certainly one of them. But translating this idea back into English, means dragging 'green' into the conversation. At roughly the same time that Alfred is painting his experiences of sail boats and glas at sea, Mondrian has determined De Stijl, and eliminated green from his palette entirely. It's time to elevate glas and Wallis to the discourses they've previously been excluded from, in the true spirit of de-Anglicization. To my cousin Jenny (Sara), thank you for all your time in showing me the historical and scientific complexity of our Cornish language. Your colour theory class was truly enlightening and has given me much food for thought.

Bruce is, as one might say, a part of the woodwork here at NSCAD. That said he has now retired (December 2019) but there are many artists, all over Canada and the world I should imagine, who will echo my sentiment here. **An**

Ocean Away; Bruce Barber of Aotearoa is one of those remarkably knowledgeable people, the sort of person that just sponges up information. Bruce could hear I wasn't English when I spoke, he made extra sure to ask where in the UK I'm from (Now here's someone who already understands the constitutional make-up of the UK, Bruce is the only person I can think of who hasn't accidentally or deliberately referred to me as English). I should confess at this point that I still struggle with the difference between some Aussie and Kiwi accents, but like Bruce, I ask. I sign off all my emails in Kernewek (Cornish), 'Ol an Gwella', meaning 'all the best'. I do it with everyone just in case anyone should try to declare Cornish dead again - boom - there you have it, I sent you an email with it just yesterday. Bruce, in a fantastic twist, started to reply to me in Maori. 'Kia Ora', I now receive in my replies. It means 'have life' and I'm told it's been incorporated amongst Aotearoas' anglophone population in daily use. This is the validation I've been looking for. Thanks Bruce, now let's de-anglicise EVERYTHING (En), TOUT (Fr), A H-UILE DAD (ScGa), MST'T GOQWEI (Mi'k), KENIVER TRA (Ker).

I'm writing this here, because you (Jamie), left before we were given the opportunity to give you the formal written feedback, that NSCAD requires all members of faculty to facilitate at the end of a semester. Ahhh Mr. Jamie Allen. Thanks for a rollercoaster of a ride. I think I'm still processing your class. **Jamie Allen's Sinking Ship** was mysterious and quiet. Institutional critique is your game, European is your name. Seems odd you should be in an institution on Turtle Island, *as a professor*, at our expense. Bald with a long beard, an authentic, expensive, woolen Icelandic jumper and polyester tracksuit bottoms. First impressions left me confused; it's safe to say. The strong characters that our group was composed of, however, was no match for your radical pedagogy. The refusal to never interrupt your students, no matter how benign our conversations, must have lost everyone hours of class time, and sanity on your part, as well as our own. For that I'm sorry. Your article/essay/blog/diary/performative text, 'Sitting on Top of the world'²¹, however, was great; an exploration of the differences between material and knowledge infrastructures, I'm very thankful you finally shared your work with us. Within that document was this image;



Fig.2. "The Inuit View to the South," illustration taken from the book *Playing Dead: A Contemplation Concerning the Arctic* by Canadian author Rudy Wiebe.

According to Jamie's article; "Wiebe wrote of Arctic nations' inability or unwillingness to come to terms with nordic Indigenous Peoples and their perspectives". This got me thinking. What even is north? Fellow MFA candidate Kahn (Chongyin Yuan) tells me the word China means 'centre', or middle kingdom, because it's just that - in the middle of their world view. I certainly put Cornwall at the centre of mine. What's south for me is France. In Africa, France, for all intents and purposes, is in 'the north' – in Europe. That said, there are three norths for crying out loud: magnetic, true and grid. It's fair to

²¹ Jamie Allen, "Sitting On Top of the World: Meridional Media, Arctic Condescension, and Northern Techniques", *Technosphere Magazine*, November 30th, 2018

say, for a multitude of reasons, Jamie's research/creation course left me with more questions than answers, I don't believe this was intentional. I was in a doldrum with no compass. One surprising thing I did take from this is that North is merely a concept, only relevant to some. Sure, we use its idea to navigate, to charter and to map. But is there really a more heinous act upon the land than mapping it. An idea that declares; 'I now see, without being, I can know a place and not visit it, I have colonized it'. I'm going to include some map-like spaces on my panorama. I think I shall put them upside-down.



Fig 3. Graphic (Meme) made by KMTU (Kernow Matters to Us), of home, ed. by me.

I referenced *the* strike earlier in this text. These were **Murky Mutinies, for good reasons.** ¹

won't go into the intricacies, however some were more involved than others. I'd heard of the strong Québécois spirit and found solidarity and camaraderie with a few of my classmates from that region, during this time. We shared a mutual passion for expression when it came to demonstrating. Academically however, I went from a personal aforementioned doldrum, into full-blown faculty mutiny. Naturally, many of the year above me were nervous that faculty might still be striking during their thesis show. As the graduate Student Union rep at the time, I felt dutiful to offer some alternative action, directly contradictory to that of our Union president's advice. Master of Fine Art students felt caught in a pinch; I organised a sit in²².

In an effort to warm up after 3 days of striking in the cold, bleak maritime winter, I went to the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, before meeting my fellow co-conspirators, nearly forgetting it houses art. Initially, the cafe was just a neutral place, somewhere to be without breaking the picket line, however, I stumbled upon something quite charming there. Buoys and Gulls was a small exhibit of 'knick-knack' like, sea-related art objects from the AGNS collection. Amongst these items, a painting of a tall ship, a clipper specifically. The exhibition label reads; [Artist] Unknown, Cape Island, Shelburne County, Nova Scotia, 1906, 'The Ship Preussen', c1902, Paint and window shade, 39.0x89.0cm Purchase 1978, 1978.22. The image was 'naive' in its drawing, but showed intricate details that only a sailor would understand. There's a whole message in nautical flags that run down the 5th and final mast, and complexly drawn pulleys and rigs show the artist's real mechanical knowledge of their subject. Of course, in reality one could never see *all 53 sails* on this boat at once. The perspective is askew, but by painting from a practical understanding of one's subject, instead of physically seeing, this seems like something I can enjoy. After all, this is exactly what Alfred (and this unknown painter) did. This image is dated before his 'discovery', so he wasn't alone or unique. For fear of creating something pastiche, I want to elevate these unsung, ship-painting heroes to the giant canvases and flat plains of the avant-garde. I mean, what's truly avant-garde here? Painting, or wrestling with Neptune every day, in order to feed the bourgeois painter in the first place? I'm going to paint the North Atlantic as I know it, through the stories that captivated me growing up, staring at it.



Fig.4 [Artist]Unknown, Cape Island, Shelburne County, Nova Scotia, 1906, 'The Ship Preussen', c1902, Paint and window shade, 39.0x89.0cm Purchase 1978, 1978.22

²² Christiana Myers, "NSCAD MFA Students Stage Sit-In", *Canadian Art*, March 8th, 2019

Captain of many Boats; Mathew Reichertz, has spent a lot of time trying to digest my approach to academia. I'm especially grateful for this, I can only imagine how frustrating I've been to deal with, but regardless, Mathew's upbeat disposition has seriously helped keep up my morale. The following notes are from my 1st year review. They're a fine example of how most of my studio visits pan out... sporadic and disjointed, with 'not a lot of agreement'. Much from this two hour meeting has been paraphrased, but it illustrates the moment that I said *what* I wanted to make out loud, a panorama;

Notes from Merryn Tresidder first year review and advancement to candidacy.

Date of review: 18 April 2019

Present were: Sheila Provazza, Alex Livingston, Erica Mendritzki, Bruce Barber and Mathew Reichertz.

Merryn starts with an introduction. Discussion of video from Berlin. Donald Trump lied that he was at the [Berlin]wall when it came down...In response Merryn painted his motif on a piece of the wall and Jamie Allen, on a trip to Berlin, put it back into a souvenir store. Merryn's Motif is like a stamp or a brand, also symbolic. "Glas" is featured twice in the motif. Bringing painting back from the English. Devolution as opposed to decolonization, seems like it is less loaded.

Merryn is also looking at diaspora issues. Diaspora emptied out his country in the mid 18th century. Cycloramas are also coming into his work, combined with irregular polygons. Cycloramas are related to panoramas. This interest relates to the oral tradition in the Celtic world. Merryn sees a connecting between abstraction and the oral tradition. A documentary film in the NSCAD library about proto cinema possibly called 'Pre-cinema' was mentioned. A question was asked about how Merryn is going to use a cyclorama? He responded that he might try building a polyptych (multi panelled painting). and that he imagines a shared horizon line between painting and sculptural elements. The polygons can be different things, they will move out into space, though still on the wall. A question about materials was asked, Does Merryn need to use the traditional stretched canvas? Merryn doesn't think so but is attached to the tradition of painting. Perhaps the shapes will be painted directly on the wall or on cardboard. Responding to a question about level of abstraction vs representation. Merryn thinks that it will be more abstract than representational but will continue to use the birds as a way of creating space. Although abstraction can potentially be a hindrance to communication, Merryn isn't that worried about communicating with an [Anglophone] audience.

The opinion was shared the paintings should be allowed to speak more strongly than Merryn is allowing them to. Merryn answered that he is indeed interested in making paintings and having them speak for themselves. This is his main concern. He is making paintings and is interested in using different colour schemes. There was a question and discussion about how Merryn's choice of materials and processes relate to his research interests. During

that discussion, the idea of how we name colours having an effect on how we use them was expressed as being a powerful idea. Merryn said that these painting[s], the ones from the first year, don't feel "glasy" ...the colour (green, blue, grey) There was discussion about glas as a vehicle for devolution. Along those lines, Inverness (NS) is quite foggy and Merryn is excited to be there and think about the experience of grey. There was mention of Against Method, by Paul Feyerabend and a discussion of Windsor Newton colour.

There was also a Discussion about Lisa Reihana's piece in the Venice Biennale (Emissaries), that is a compelling way to address the issues at play.

Some of the concepts Merryn is interested in could end up giving rise to other forms of expression outside of painting. There was a discussion about reading from left to right, in relation to cycloramas. There was a discussion about what is working, complexity versus simple design, in the work from Merryn's first year. There wasn't a lot of agreement among the committee members. Merryn is thinking about complexity. There was a distinction between wearing an activist hat versus being an artist. Do they have to be the same? Merryn started a Facebook group about Celtic Diaspora. It has been met with much interest.

Questions: [Sheila] Have you looked at any Nova Scotia folk artists? Merryn brings up Maud Lewis and Alfred Wallis...documented ports. Merryn also discussed John Hartman. Folk Art Found Me is another movie that Merryn should watch, it is also in the Library.

The committee agreed that Merryn has had a successful first year and that he has advanced to candidacy for an MFA.

Respectfully,
Mathew Reichertz

Provazza, Privateers, Pirates and Outsider Art

Sprezzatura; a studied carelessness.

Now, in its truest sense, the paintings aren't really a panorama. The view is broken into panels and the vista represented, of the "North" Atlantic, is fragmented and abstracted. Historically, these sized canvases feel like a colonised space. Sheila and I spent much time talking about formal aspects of painting, the Gettysburg Panorama, ideas of Cycloramas, but also her own, that went up at Saint Mary's University in 2005²³. I first met Sheila in 'Intro to painting' (an undergraduate crash-course in the observational use of acrylic and oils), as her teaching assistant. After seeing images of her installation at SMU, I was compelled to engage with this format and scale. I was reminded of the Bayeux Tapestry. After the Romans brought 'civilisation to Britain', they left almost as quickly as they came, creating our 'Dark Ages', (yeah, again, hello, *still* here). In this time, waves of continental Europeans start filling up the Roman void: tribes of Angles, Danes, Jutes, Mercians and finally the Saxons. The Bayeux Tapestry is a 70m long grand narrative, telling of the Norman French conquest and 'annexation' of what's now called England, or Angle-land if you will. It shows the 'Battle of Hastings' where king Harold is shot in the eye by a Breton Longbowman (that's one proverbial point for the Celts), and Norman forces go on to conquer most of the British Isles, establishing the foundations for today's 'unified' monarchy. Alfred's *discovery*, for British art, was a big deal, another game changer (apparently), it's why the Tate institution has invested in an internationally represented gallery, in a small fishing town in rural West Cornwall, that's historically never turned a profit. Instead of putting Wallis further under the microscope, I want to make *him* a tapestry, metaphorically speaking. Later, many artists came to see all this fuss in St Ives. Naom Gabo and Mark Rothko had made their way to Alfred's cottage. These *giants* of abstractionism were curious about Cornwall and Wallis. But Alfred's work was modest, less akin to the non-representational images of America's grand Abstract Expressionists, or other epic paintings from the Renaissance, of biblical proportions and content. It's safe to say that bringing folk art to this scale is certainly unorthodox, but Wallis has some equally grand stories of his own, on his tiny wooden panels.

Sheila's class didn't actually feature these two words, sgraffito and sprezzatura, but I've used these techniques in the panorama. It's fair to say that the influence of the Latin language on Europe and its art is enormous. Ben was trying to escape from those rigidly defined rules of academicians when he waltzed into Alfred's kitchen. I want to use my own language's vernacular\lexicon for painting. I'm going through a sort of sprezzatura when I paint the boats that sit on my 'Neo-Plastic Expressive Sea', but that feels like the word of the colonizer, maybe I can reappropriate it, pirate it even?

²³ Provazza, Sheila, "Artist's Statement", Pavia Gallery, Accessed October 2019

For my third semester of my Teaching Assistance training here at NSCAD, I was put in **A. Campbell's Candle Light Classes** 'Survey of 20th Century [Western] Art'. Alison had an uphill battle with this class of seventy odd. It started at 18:00 on a Monday evening and clashed with The Anna Leonowens Gallery show openings. Regardless, trying to get through one hundred years of some of the world's most rapidly changing aesthetics is a challenge. Alison's passion for her subject really showed when she recited (screamed) Dada poetry for (at) us. During this class, naturally, many students found themselves outraged by Picasso and Matisse, 'how can they be such eurocentric idiots?'. "Racist asshole!" one person actually wrote in their paper. After much marking, the students' personal disgust with these two characters and their use of the word primitivist, occupied so much of their attention, that I felt they had become blinkered. Picasso bashing is easy, he's now a well documented arsehole, but don't forget Ben Nicholson. Art historian Virginia Button has spent much time sifting through the 7,000 letters in the Tate St. Ives' collection of Alfred and Ben 'memorabilia'. Famous for his white reliefs, Nicholson had exhibited at Documenta III, and put Britain back on the art map. During the outbreak of the second world war Ben had to flee from Paris, where he had visited Mondrian, Picasso and Giacometti. He'd flirted with nearly every style of European painting before going to Cornwall. He had 'itchy feet', it seemed, and was unable to settle with his 1st wife Winifred, whom he later divorced, to be with Barbara Hepworth. He remained aloof in long-term relations of any kind. With reference to his mother, Button writes:

"Ben began to identify more with her, particularly her Scottish, 'Celtic' identity. He cast her as the instinctive primitive, the opposite of his father's seductive and hollow [English] sophistication, often citing her honest, down to earth sense of reality as a key influence on his work."²⁴ Pg11

Now, Button's account of the St Ives Modernist era is by far more neutral than art historian Chris Stevens, who constantly refers to Cornwall as England, and British Modernity as English Modernism. Stevens has for a long time now been the 'art authority' at the Tate St Ives; this was very much the case when I worked there. However easier to read that Button's account might be, she chooses to put Celtic in inverted commas still. As if it wasn't a possible identity for his mother? Because we're all British anyway - right? Until it becomes English Modernism, discovered by a Scot, in Cornwall..?

Like William Gladstone, Nicholson suffered from the same weird amnesia when it came to their shared Scottish heritage. Before becoming 'the father' of Chris Stephens' coined *English* Modernism, Ben had flirted with the Vorticists, in an attempt to break free of his *own* mental doldrums. In Alison's Monday evening class, later on in the semester, we would study the Vorticists manifesto 'BLAST! 1914', a document Nicholson would certainly have read as he swanned in and out of these circles. Those students who were so quick to bash Picasso and Matisse seemed to suffer from rose-tinted spectacles, concerning their feelings with 'merry old England', I felt a personal disappointment when they didn't rip into the Vorticists in the same way they did Picasso. In Alison's student reviews of BLAST, only one or two people remarked on the blatant quote about England and its self-image, or perhaps its own amnesia:

"VI

1. The Modern World is due almost entirely to Anglo-Saxon Genius, - its appearance and its spirit.
2. Machinery, trains, steam-ships, all that distinguishes externally our time, came far more from here than anywhere else.
3. In dress, manners, mechanical inventions, LIFE, that is ENGLAND, has influenced Europe in the same way France has Art.
4. But busy with this LIFE-EFFORT, she has been the last to become conscious of the Art that is an organism of this new Order and Will of Man.
5. Machinery is the greatest Earth-medium: incidentally it sweeps away the doctrines of a narrow and pedantic Realism at one stroke.

²⁴ Virginia Button, "Life and Work, an Overview", in *Ben Nicholson, St Ives Artists*, (Tate Publishing, 2007), 9-36

6. By mechanical inventiveness, too, just as Englishmen have spread themselves all over the Earth, they have brought all the hemispheres around them in their original island."²⁵ pg291

One man's terrorist however, is another's freedom fighter. "Life-Effort" here seems a bit rich, if you're sitting on the other side of the fence. The irony of course being that the 'Life' effort looks a lot more like death, murder, or 'genocide effort' in most cases. The other stark irony being that recently, a lot of people voted for Brexit, precisely *because* 'they have brought all the hemispheres around them in their original island'²⁶. Or effectively, to stop migration is what a lot of people voted for, 'we want our country back' is the scarily current rhetoric on the streets of England. Negating the above list is easy (in fact I created a counter list for my diorama), however it's another uncomfortable read. Quick google searches will show a torrent of British inventions and people who have no Anglo-Saxon heritage. It'd be a long, arduous task to list all of those non-Anglo British contributions, however I'd like the reader to note that I'm reclaiming British Artistic Modernity, as a Cornish cultural contribution, not a Vorticist one. Nor is it Ben Nicholson's achievement. What this manifesto does do however, is give a sense of a self insistent English cultural dominance in the UK. One that led Nicholson to cite Alfred as his own 'primitive' discovery, an art-language he undoubtedly learned from his time in Paris.

²⁵ R. Aldington, Arbuthnot, L. Atkinson, Gaudier Brezka, J. Dismorr, G. Halmilton, E. Pond, W. Robberts, H. Sanders, E. Wadsworth, Wyndham Lewis, "Blast 1914", in *Modernism: An Anthology of Sources and Documents*, ed. Vassiliki Kolocotroni, Jane Goldman and Olga Taxidou (Chicago University Press, 1998) 291-294

²⁶ Adam, Karla & Booth, Willaim, "Immigration worries drove the Brexit vote. Then attitudes changed", The Washington Post, November 16, 2018

There was a class called 'What's Love Got To Do With It', a painters' theory class centred around **love** and painting. But regardless of the week's sub-topic, religiously, one discussion kept resurfacing for *me*. The idea of a 'painters' painter'; a painter who makes paintings that seemingly 'only painters can talk about'. **Erica Mendritzki The**

Beginning of the End. Starting at NSCAD in 2018 as well, Erica has brought some amazing visiting artists through our doors and has been a much needed critical eye in the studio. Acrylic however, Erica hates. She'll go on record saying so (I asked). I use and enjoy it greatly, regardless - Plastic Paint, acrylic, seems a fitting tribute to the misinterpretation, *Plastic Expressionism*. And of course, if a cheaper, acrylic alternative was available for Alfred, I'm sure he would have used it for economic reasons at least, but that's not why I made a reference to the term Plastic Expression. Over two issues of 'De Stijl' (The Style) magazine, Mondrian published his 'Dialogo over de Nieuwe Beelding' in 1919²⁷. Around the same time Alfred was stockpiling his *aides-memoire* in oil. Mondrian invents a discussion between a Painter and Singer, it's a very performative text. In Harry Holzman and Martin S. James' translation, 'Dialogue on the New Plastic', we can see how linguistically, English is still relatively compatible with its continental roots, arguably more so than any Celtic language. The phrase 'Nieuwe Beelding', however hasn't taken on such a literal translation, 'beelding' in this context carries connotations of forming and making which are absent from the word plastic. That said it's the word "Plastic" I want to play with, it's become a bit of a pun.

All of this overthinking, overspeaking and constant rationale, created a climate of saturation for Ben Nicholson. It's reactively placed me in one now. Hence why Ben found relief in Alfred's images. This dichotomy still exists today. 'Art International English', a term coined by the self titled E-Flux journal points to the idea that Art speak is more complicated than its ever been, and for no obvious reason other than an over-intellectualization, creating an arts hierarchy within English. Either by design or by unknowingly adhering, many art texts exclude those who don't understand *the* contemporary art vocabulary of their time. I kept imagining what other MFA students would have to say if they were confronted with a Joan Snyder and then asked to find something they love about it. Has painting become a self-fulfilling endeavour? Isn't this the same saturation Ben suffered from? Other MFAs often say things to me such as; 'I don't know how to talk about painting, but...'. To which I usually reply (after hearing them talk about painting) - 'why not? you have eyes, a mouth and an opinion don't you?'. And it's with this attitude in mind that I wanted to make something naive, something that, even without this enormous back story, people can just look at. Something that might feel visually accessible to as many people as possible - something that a sculptor, professor, miner, farmer or even fisherman would be able to talk about, without saying 'I don't get all this modern art stuff', or 'I don't know how to talk about paintings'.

The accessibility of Alfred's aesthetic is what drew Ben into his kitchen, this accessibility was formed from Alfred's material knowledge of his subjects, he couldn't have made his compositions in any other way, it was his 'lack', for want of a better word, of painterly training, combined with old age and persistence that gave him his style, not an academy. Money can't buy Alfred's experiences of sprezzatura, Nicholson knew that. Like Cornwall itself, Alfred seemed alien to Ben, I think he was happy to not ask proper questions about our language, culture, etc. and just live in a perceived oddity. The narrative I have placed within my panorama and diorama, are a 'what if' moment. What if Alfred had a mutual conversation with Ben instead. What if they talked about Ben's time with the Vorticists and knowledge of 'De Stijl', with *mutual* interest? How would Alfred's images have looked then? What if Ben had listened to Alfred and elevated his position from a sailor to an artist? Had Ben acknowledged that he was on unceded territory, and was not only a guest in Alfred's kitchen, but in my opinion, a guest the second he crossed the Tamar River into Cornwall, how would the conversation have proceeded then? I'd like to think the boats and stories I've included in these images *could* have been the topic of their imaginary mutual conversation. In a time when pedagogical institutions are encouraging a framework of decolonisation, it seems appropriate to re-evaluate Alfred's story, and offer Glas to the dialogue.

²⁷Piet Mondrian, "Dialogue on the New Plastic", in *Rationalization and Transformation, Art in theory 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas, New Edition*, ed. Charles Harrison & Paul Wood, (Blackwell Publishing, 2002) 284-288

Figures

1. Image of one of Robert Montgomery's 'Billboard series'
 2. "The Inuit View to the South," illustration taken from the book *Playing Dead: A Contemplation Concerning the Arctic* by Canadian author Rudy Wiebe. Original source: (Edmonton: NeWest, 1989), 333.
 3. Graphic (Meme) made by KMTU (Kernow Matters to Us), of home, ed. by me.
 4. [Artist]Unknown, Cape Island, Shelburne County, Nova Scotia, 1906, 'The Ship Preussen', c1902, Paint and window shade, 39.0x89.0cm Purchase 1978, 1978.22
 5. Dexter Dalwood; Ulrike Meinhof's bedsit, and my own digital rendering of my proposed installation
 6. Alfred Wallis's, 'Voyage to Labrador'
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NOT QUITE FINISHED

Appendix;

Text does not live on its own, especially not this one, nor do paintings, and to understand these, I need to tell you about some other **Pictures, Words & a Few Things**. I was going to start my noon talk outside the gallery, looking in. We were going to 'discover' my paintings, just as Ben Nicholson discovered Alfred, but then a world changing event interrupted my plans for a noon talk. They say these things, good and bad, come in threes. After the Faculty Strike and an AWOL Research/Creation Professor, I should have seen a third catastrophe coming - The Coronavirus.

My thesis exhibition has been postponed, a fortnight before I was due to show. I'm currently preparing to defend digitally. This is difficult, it's as though Walter Benjamin wrote nothing on the 'aura,' or mechanical and technical reproductions, it's as though Camera Lucida stayed in Roland Barthes' head as a 'nice idea', it's as though John Berger never went to art school. Social distancing, pretty much a world wide state of emergency, and a physical lockdown, mean I won't be exhibiting in the academic term I was supposed to graduate. Instead I've had to document as much of my incomplete panorama as I can (it's far too large to get in my flat), with a crude and rushed photography set up. It's been a long time since I've had to use a camera so scientifically. I've gathered all the items for my proposed installations and will be setting that aspect up in my living room. 'Stay the blazes home' we're told by the NS Premier, whose comments went viral (every pun intended). Desperate times call for desperate measures, and frantically, I've done my best to digitally render the gallery space I intended to use, in a programme called 'SketchUp'. This file, coupled with my incomplete panorama photographs, with the addition of my 'work from home' installation, have become the items of my new defence. The following is a script, for my talk at the Anna Leonowens Gallery, an introduction to my exhibition, ideas and practice;

Date: Thursday April 2nd, some time after 12 noon.

Exterior: Anna Leonowens Gallery main entrance,

Scene: Director Kate Walchuk gives a land acknowledgment and introduces the artist (me);

ME: Welcome and thank you for joining me outside the gallery here today **[ADD WEATHER ANECDOTE]**. **Please feel free to ask any questions, at any point, during today's tour.** For my thesis exhibit, I have reimagined the moment British Modernity was discovered at its problematic source of 'primitivism', in the dingy kitchen of a Cornish fisherman, in the small village of St. Ives. The largest amalgamation of Alfred Wallis' paintings are in a private collection, donated to Cambridge University, in Kettles Yard, the house-turned-gallery formerly owned by Helen and Jim Ede. Whilst the Tate Gallery in St Ives, Cornwall, has a considerable archive of Alfred's life, his paintings were exported before the Tate was constructed. In the manner of a guided museum tour, typical of these small cottage exhibits, I thought we'd start this one outside - looking in. In-between the Great Wars, artist Ben Nicholson was to 'stumble upon' Alfred, an 'old-boy' who had journeyed as far as Mi'kma'ki in an attempt to evade poverty and squalor. Instead of elevating Wallis to the status of artist, upon meeting him Nicholson described Alfred as naive and childlike, and excluded him from any potential dialogue with Europe's Modernist discourses, othering him, and his/my own culture and customs. The works I have created, project a personal importance in the idea of seeing colours in a Cornish language system, and reposition the historical narrative surrounding the 'discovery' of Wallis. I try to re-tell this story from my reimagining of Alfred's perspective. Why? Because he was/is Cornish too, and like Alfred I made a Journey here to Mi'kma'ki. We both try(ed) to paint - we both try(ed) to paint the sea. Why not, we've both crossed it. It's fair to say I have an unreasonable affiliation with a person I've never met.

Looking in from the cobbled street, what *can't* we see? All along the east coast of Nova Scotia and in Newfoundland's settler-fishing communities, as well as almost every fishing town in Cornwall, people still use lace curtains, or 'net curtains' as they are commonly referred to, in reference to fishing nets. As you can see, one half of the Anna Leonowens Gallery window has been 'netted' - as is traditional in maritime communities - obscuring one's view in, but still letting light pass, just as Alfred's cottage sports to this day. This forces the viewer to be nosey, to come inside to see, much like Ben Nicholson when he barged into Alfred's kitchen. I want to try and evoke that same moment of "discovery". Let us come in and take a seat. It's time for us to *barge*.

We all move indoors and continue the tour

ME: After opening the front door, you may have noticed a sign. One is confronted, 8ft in front of them, by an 8ft squared partitioning wall. On this wall, on the door facing side, is a notice. Regardless as to what it says, whether anyone understood it or not, we all came in, effectively ignoring it. This notice is made in reference to the pub signs that continued as late as the 1980s in some areas, reading; 'No Blacks, No Dogs, No Irish'. Sometimes reading other peoples of colour and/or Celtic nations. Instead, my sign is the first thing one will see that has been turned upside-down. In Cornish it reads; 'More Black **People**, More Dogs, More Irish'. Then one enters the room. After being forced into the middle of Gallery One by the partitioning wall, you'll be able to see the whole panorama at once, stopping people from hugging the room, left to right, as they so often do in the Anna. Concealed on the inside of the wall here, is my installation/diorama/key to the maps that are these paintings. Referencing Dexter Dalwood's, 'Ulrike Meinhof's bedsit', 2000, the objects on this 1920s desk, and the walls surrounding it, are arranged so as to mimic Dexter's painting. A small framed reproduction of Dalwood's work sits on the desk. What's else, pinned to the walls, is vintage style, British damask wallpaper, typical of the out-dated decor in cottages left derelict (I should note here that in the UK 'cottage' doesn't refer to a second holiday home in the woods, it's normally to do with the age of a house someone lives in). This wallpaper is often *left over* from this 1920s era that I'm harking to. The installation gives clues as to what's going on in the paintings, small models of boats, and literature, some of which, in English, is piled on the desk. These objects tie myself into this narrative, and bring Alfred's story to a contemporary sphere. These are the objects and items Ben Nicholson *didn't* understand in his founding of British Modernism.



Fig 5. Dexter Dalwood; Ulrike Meinhof's bedsit, and my own digital rendering of my proposed installation

Still Me: The panorama we see now is an abstract rendition of the North Atlantic Sea, a reimagining of Alfred's journey here, on a small, yellow, diesel boat **[WALK OVER AND POINT AT ALFRED'S BOAT ON PANNEL 5]**. History will remember Alfred as a folk artist, who like many folk and fisherman of his time, detailed different sail ships, famous for differing reasons - but usually as aides-memoire, making paintings for themselves alone. The sailboats I have painted in a similar fashion are all reputable boats, each with their own story. Alfred's paintings were props for his own epic 'voyages', things to talk about with his neighbours when he got home, unbelievable truths and experiences to relay to fellow Cornishmen. Good stories happen to those who can tell them. I chose to use the word panorama for the same sort of showmanship, an extension of a truth maybe, an exaggerated tale. Alfred's images were usually painted on driftwood, (although any old scrap seemed to do). What they are not, however, is large. There are many stories I've tried to reference in these paintings, the only thing that connects them all, is the current, my own language of irregular polygons that find their way into many of my images. I've always worked with thick narratives behind my abstractions, and I've always wanted to give those ideas, literally and metaphorically, as much space as I can. Without that space, my threads of trapezoids have nowhere to go, nowhere to take the viewer. In this scene, I've tried to make my shapes start and finish on, or at Truro, from Kernow to Mi'kma'ki²⁸**[READ**

²⁸ It was a predominantly Presbyterian, **Ulster**-Scott migration that renamed 'Wagobagitik' for the final time. The Acadians adapted this name to 'Cobequid', before the Ulstermen, eventually rebranding it entirely, too Truro. I imagine this happened because the bay of Fundy is the world's largest receding tide, Truro at home is connected to the sea by a very similar tidal bore, and is the second largest recorded tide in the world, after the Bay of Fundy. Truro N.S. is, of course, 'Wagobagitik', and should remain that way. But I'd be lying to myself if I didn't admit that it was a pull factor in my migration.

OUT FOOTNOTE]. These strands of polygons become representative, or symbolic of different things in different images, in this polyptych, they've become the Gulf stream current, another geographical feature connecting both Truros. These shapes are also a device, one to create movement between paintings, the other to tie elements of the image together. "Western" audiences might read this image left to right, most people hug the wall and go around one way or the other, these shapes are an attempt at steering people through the paintings, tying up all the narratives and sections, locking them all in, whilst simultaneously delivering the viewer into the next panel. Connecting the dots if you will, but also merging my own aesthetic, with this personal & political narrative.



Fig.6 'Voyage to Labrador', Alfred Wallis

Since painting abstract landscapes, I've always been interested in planar, flat surfaces. My own abstract language has been influenced greatly by Mondrian and the Vorticists. I've spent *actual, substantial* time with their *actual* works, I've been privileged in this way. This panorama is 'cut and stick', or 'copy and paste', dare I say it - pastiche. Piet banished green from his pallet, using only the Latin language primary colours, he also rejected nature. Until I took Sara Hartland-Rowe's Colour Theory course, I'd never thought about the application of my native language to Munsell's colour wheel, it didn't work - linguistically speaking. A Cornish language palette should include all shades of 'Glas'. A term used in Cornish to describe anything blue, green, grey, watery, grassy, or liquid - as long as it is organic. Man-made blues and greens are not described as Glas.

POINT AT COLOUR WHEEL IN DIORAMA, AD-HOC EXPLAIN GLAS

In making my own Pumice gel too, with sand from Martinique Beach, Mathew Reichertz asked me if that was a reference to Courbet, **[WALK OVER AND SCRATCH AT LAND MASS ON PAINTING]** as he used sand to make paintings feel 'more real'. I suppose I agree, whilst it wasn't directly, or admittedly even knowingly, a Courbet reference, how best can one show granite, other than actually using ground granite dust itself? The constant rationalization of *everything* in the early modernist era fascinates and scares me, it always seems to overstep ecology, as if our existence and languages aren't inextricably linked to nature. How odd that Mondrian should choose to exclude it. As if we are not natural. These paintings are my own re-rationalization of British Modernism, from the perspective of the othered, Alfred & me.

Still Me;

Boats in the paintings (left to right);

1. Two Cornish Luggers, a very specific type of twin mast, gaff-rigged fishing boat. Famed for advancing deep sea trawling techniques, and perfecting the gaff rig system, these boats are agile and small, allowing them to fish around the deep waters surrounding the tall cliffs at home.

2. Rumoured to have been born in the same village as me (Breage), this is John Carter's gaff-rigged clipper, named 'The King of Prussia'. A small fortified cove with hand chiselled cart tracks, from the 17th C, lead to the smugglers' caves at 'Prussia Cove'. These caves are a stone's throw from where I grew up. Carter was one of the original pirates of the Caribbean, he's the reason Hollywood's Black Beard has a Cornish accent. The stuff of legend for all British children, our rum smuggling legacy has become the romanticised 'Yarr me hearties', sabre-waving pirate we all know today. Even Gilbert and Sullivan cashed in on the legacy, writing the play 'The Pirates of Penzance'. If you turn our national flag 45 degrees, it's pretty much the Jolly Roger. I should note, these were not privateers, the tales surrounding these seamen are popular because they answered to no man but their captain. Certainly not the Monarchy or State.
3. The S.S. Great Eastern, at 211m in length, she was by far the biggest ship built at the time (1853). With a sail and coal powered paddle combination, she was almost unique. Designed and engineered by inventor Isambard Kingdom Brunel, the S.S. Great Eastern was built with the intention of going east to Australia (she never made it there). Unfortunately her identical sister ship, the S.S. Great Western, sunk in the Atlantic, and the Great Eastern replaced it to recommence civil carrier duties to and from the Americas. Before being decommissioned, the boat laid a transatlantic submarine cable, that spanned from Penzance (Cornwall, UK) to Cable Wharf here in Ki'jipuktuk via Newfoundland - ultimately connecting it to Delhi and Australia by the end of the 1800s.
4. An Umiak/Umialak/umiaq/umiac/oomiac/ongiuk or anyak, depending on which part of the Arctic you're from. These open deer skin boats originate from what's now called 'Greenland', and have been found as far as Siberia. They are one of the earliest deep sea sailed fishing boats known to human history.
5. The Hector. This 18th century Dutch galleon was to transport victims of the Scottish Highland Clearings. It brought the largest single shipment of refugees from Scotland to Nova Scotia, after already safely relocating another shipment to Boston. It arrived at what's now called 'Pictou Landing', where a replica can be visited. This boat to Nova Scotian Gaels, is what 'The Mayflower' is to Americans, in terms of its legacy amongst Western European descended settlers.
6. Alfred Wallis' diesel boat (that he journeyed to Mi'kma'ki on).
7. The Bluenose, that I'm sure you'll all recognise from the Nova Scotia car registration plates.

Other symbolic references in the paintings;

1. Fish & Nets. For the viewer, these are present to hint that the ships in my paintings aren't Military, in case they weren't already recognisable.
2. Icelandic Turf Houses. A constant point of fascination for me, even before I'd visited. Iceland has no Indigenous population and the people that built these structures were either Norse Vikings or their Irish slaves.
3. Nautical Flag Message, I'm not going to reveal what it says as it can easily be Googled. Work it out for yourself, please.
4. Glooscap's Pillow.
5. Acadian Lighthouse - I've visited home once since I've lived in Mi'kma'ki. These structures have a unique aesthetic and in an unforeseen twist, now evoke a sort of 'Hiraeth Welsh/Hiredh Cornish'. Another word you can Google, the Welsh interpretation is easiest understood.
6. St Bernard's whale/island (Panels 2 and 3)
7. Marconi's first transAtlantic wireless transmission, from Cornwall to Cape Breton (Kites, panels 1 and 5)

The End