

Work samples | Orla Mc Hardy | 2024

1

Ponds, or flesh on the bones of abstraction



Ponds, or flesh on the bones of abstraction, film still:

2023-2024, video, hand drawn & 2D digital animation, 08'08, sound, dimensions variable

Link to the film: [here](#)

*** I am about to re-edit the film with a newly recorded soundtrack - narrated with a different voice & slightly edited script. Additional animation will be added.**

Ponds, or Flesh on the Bones of Abstraction is part of the group exhibition, *As You May Sense*, featuring artists studying at Uniarts Helsinki who responded to the brief given as part of the course *Environment, Data, and Contamination* which was run by Samir Bhowmik and Jussi Parikka. As part of Helsinki Biennial 2023, they were tasked to develop an artistic research

studio that addresses relevant methods for the affective and sensed datascares of the city and the broader region, including the Finnish Gulf. The exhibition is also part of Uniarts Helsinki's Research Pavilion.

Data is inscribed on material surfaces, it exists across bodies from human skin to water; it can be heard as it can be performed. As sensing, this realm of environmental data becomes a practice that can be teased out with artistic methods.

Ponds or Flesh on the Bones of Abstraction, uses anecdotal thinking as a way to pay close attention to hyperlocal environments and networks, to see what they might teach us about living in a time of uncertain futures and climate crisis. In this case, caring for a small garden pond in rural Ireland and the frogs that live in it, as well as caring for my two small children, reveals surprising new understanding and empathy for events unfolding far away; the eutrophication of the waters around the Baltic Sea, and of the kinds of life unfolding in mining tailing ponds around the world. In the slippery balance between life and death, animation is used to re-create a frog's death/life thrusting gesture, where the slow time of animation production becomes an enactment of care.

2

These are the (m)others



3D scans of mini sculptures (2019-ongoing)

***Dimensions variable (*each portrait can exist as a stand alone animated loop for screen or projection)**

This is an ongoing series called, [*These are the \(m\)others*](#), in which I make small portrait sculptures of the (m)others - friends & caregivers who have shared their love, time and expertise with my children.

Working in the 3D realm is pushing my thinking towards the virtual as a site of heterotopia, and how technology can confuse bodily norms and biological constraints. I'm interested in gardens- both real as well as virtual gardens - spaces for speculative growth & recovery.

3

Containers for the contained (For Ursula) 2020-ongoing

*after *The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction*, Ursula K. Le Guin, work in progress



1. Biscuit fired & unglazed slip cast pots taken from a mold of a cracked plastic sandcastle bucket. I'll make as many pots as needed to hold the essay, *The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction* by Ursula K Le Guin. One pot holds a made-to-fit sculpture of sticks, glue and a toy elephant
2. 3D scan of the sculpture- sticks, glue, toy elephant
3. Pots with glaze and handwritten transcription by my children, friends, family who have come to stay, visit- containers for my local community- and a way to share the essay with people who might not ordinarily come in contact with it. The blocky shapes are copied from my son's drawings. It will take a while to get the whole essay transcribed. The slowtime of the making, will show the

evolution of my children learning to write. So far, I have transcribed 3 out of 12 pages and have covered 6 pots.

