

EARTHLY DELIGHTS
Thinking Through Drawing

by

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ABSTRACT

Earthly Delights: Thinking Through Drawing encourages human individuals to explore natural environments in a new light by transforming the spaces in which we encounter them, namely by bringing the exterior world of nature into interior spaces. In doing so, I work to encourage a reworking of our current understanding of what it means to experience nature and what it means for something to be natural. Beginning with an initial understanding of the natural environment as that which operates within the context of the outdoors, this text and accompanying artwork work to make sense of the different ways through which people remain part of rather than separate from the natural world, one that often goes overlooked. Natural processes, including flow, growth, erosion, and decay of plants and other organic matter, are taken into consideration in this process. Considering our presence in the time of the Anthropocene, I propose an imaginable call to action through the method of care. The resulting created speculative experience invites participants to come to their understanding about personal relationships with, and feelings towards, nature-based ecologies. Traditional methods of drawing are engaged in this body of work to speculate on a contemporary conceptualization of nature and how it might exist to human and more-than-human eyes. The works of art explore a delight in seeking connections to nature. Acknowledging such relationships strives to challenge thoughts about our place as humans existing as part of environmental spaces, demonstrating the potential for nature and people to exist as equals.

Keywords: *Earth, Anthropocene, biophilia, enlivenment, becoming, care, drawing*

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To family and friends, thank you for your support and for always cheering me on in my artistic pursuits. You might not all be “artsy,” but you still lent me eyes, ears, and hands, and for that, I am grateful.

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INTRODUCTION

She is there one second and gone the next – her whole self drawing in what is around her, a glittering, immeasurable sea.

Earthly Delights has been a process, very much like the natural processes I have observed and engaged with throughout my time at OCAD University. I have spent my time looking as well as immersing myself in the outdoors collecting natural materials, photographing plants, recording sounds, and taking videos to build up a collection of resources. The rest of my time has involved searching for ways to capture these often fleeting materials and moments both indoors and outdoors. Employing the methodology of care through a practice-based approach in addition to a/r/t/ography has made this possible.

Coming from a background in drawing and painting, I embrace traditional materials such as graphite, charcoal, and ink. In the IAMD program, I have had the opportunity to explore what other disciplines have to offer both in terms of processes and materials. I have tried my hand at mould-making and VR drawing and painting, to name a few, to determine what they could offer my research and practice (fig. 1 & 2). While I chose to pursue alternative processes than those two just listed, I found that this ongoing investigation developed in me an expanded view of how I could approach my thesis work in new ways. The consideration of repetition, installation, and space all come to mind here. The work I have developed involves myself and nature as collaborators in the creation of a nature-based body of work, intended to be viewed by people during the final exhibition. While this research began as an attempt to capture and contain nature as a force, what has resulted is a body of work that welcomes the act of letting go, identifying how powerful the natural environment can be in our daily lives even when we least expect it.



Figure 1. Unruly Tiles, clear resin, 2019.

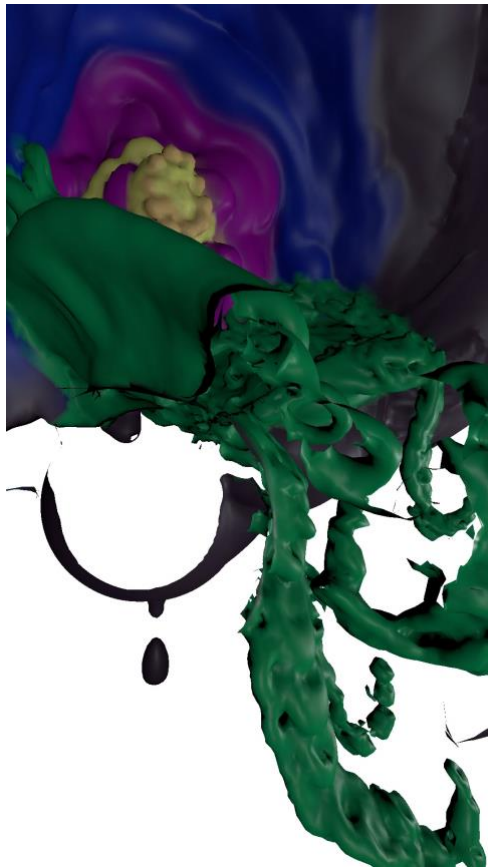


Figure 2. VR Drawing #1, 2019.

Entwined within this document is a series of reflected upon memories (italicized in green). They remain some of the more moving experiences I have had while outdoors and continue to teach me new things about myself and others as they are read and receive responses. Through the contemplation of these memories, this body of work attempts to understand further that which they stem from, namely, nature. I am hopeful that individuals get to know not just me but one another on a deeper level with the opportunity to connect through the work I have created. As my thesis exhibition location provides space for viewers to sit and stay with the work, individuals may also share their own experiences with and relationship to nature. These memories I have openly embraced exist not only as a sense-making tool for myself but as an attempt to acknowledge the endless inspiration I have drawn from nature during our collaboration throughout the realization of this work.

BLURRING BOUNDARIES

I am not waterproof.

In this world, our human bodies are naturally a part of the landscape. As people, we make up the sea of beings though we are not the only members of this world. Just like our Earth's other creatures, humans are living and susceptible to vulnerabilities, making our similarities apparent. Similarly, humans are not alone in experiencing harmony and catastrophe as all nature experiences such consequences.¹ Working towards dissolving the separation between humans and nature is not to say that a distinction is not always valuable. The difference between plant and animal (and human) helps define us in a time when it may be more challenging to pin down who we are as humans and, more specifically, individuals. The softening of the, perhaps, perceived separation between humans and nature does, however, offer new opportunities. For instance, it welcomes connections with more-than humans through an intertwined existence between all matter. When we begin to think of ourselves as separate from nature, as the term "Anthropocene" suggests, we start to believe that humans

¹ Andreas Weber, *Biopoetics: Towards an Existential Ecology* (Netherlands: Springer, 2016), 122, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-024-0832-4>.

are the dominant species. As humans, we try our best to understand and feel forces of nature simply because we are created of them and not separate from nature at all.² Considering all beings, humans included, as participants in this world, begins to break down such potential boundaries.³ Such a dissolving, then, demonstrating the potential for nature and people to exist as one, and more specifically, as equals. This type of existence will be discussed later in this paper regarding the theory of biopoetics.

In this case, I, as the artist, as well as nature, act as equal partners in the creative process where both of us play active roles. Without one, there would be no system, and without the other, no stimulus. I aim to understand what this boundary-blurring offers everyone in the creation and viewing of this work. Drawing affords a way to get to this state as it is known to reduce the boundary between oneself and the subject, and I have employed it in the hopes of doing just that.⁴

This concept of blurring boundaries brings me to the consideration of speculative design and what it presents the world of art. It becomes easier to talk about a future that individuals are interested in having through provocative, possible futures, or tools.⁵ In this case, the possible future I am presenting exists in an art form. One can see ties from today's world in the charcoal drawings as well as the suggested one in the digitally printed silks, where speculative culture comes into the equation.⁶ Much like how speculative design is more concerned with alternative solutions and their facilitation, this body of work is similarly more

² Andreas Weber, *Enlivenment: Toward a Poetics for the Anthropocene* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2019), chap. 2, Kindle.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Lucy Lyons, "Drawing Your Way into Understanding," *TRACEY: Drawing Knowledge* (May 2012): 14, https://www.lboro.ac.uk/microsites/sota/tracey/journal/edu/2012/PDF/Lucy_Lyons-TRACEY-Journal-DK-2012.pdf.

⁵ Anthony Dunne and Fiona Raby, *Speculative Everything: Design, Fiction, and Social Dreaming* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2013), 2-3, ProQuest Ebook Central.

⁶ Ibid, 4.

focused on creating and revealing new possible outcomes in the field of art.⁷ This is in lieu of generating one specific result or definition applicable to all.

POSSIBLE WORLDS

I lie in the sand and make snow angels instead. I want to become you, but I settle for wearing you instead. It suits me.

Existing as the opportunity to expand upon what is and is not natural, *Earthly Delights* speculates upon the following research question:

In what way(s) may created, speculative artworks, which reflect external, natural systems, contribute to the transformation of indoor living spaces and encourage urban individuals, among others, to reconsider their relationship to the external world.

This overarching question examines the following objectives:

- a) To transform an indoor environment by incorporating artworks that, when placed indoors, reflect outdoor environments.
- b) To spark discussion about nature and ethics by making the invisible, visible – demonstrating our entanglement with nature.
- c) To problematize an individual's perception concerning what is natural or unnatural through the experience of collaborative work.
- d) To explore how this project shifts people's understanding of their relationship to natural processes, given how past and present actions have altered the earth.

To explore the objectives as mentioned above, I have chosen to work through drawing. Not only is this discipline and process one that I naturally gravitate towards it is also far-reaching and affords many opportunities that I can draw upon as an artist. Being experimental and

⁷ Ibid, 9.

investigative, this is a medium that is known for its exploratory qualities and how it thrives in lending itself as a research method.⁸ With distinct roots within fine art, design, and architecture, drawing also has a significant presence within technology and crafts and can be and is, appreciated as performance and process.⁹

Throughout my time at OCAD University, I have used drawing as a method of recording for observation and as a tool to communicate information, including memory and emotion. Perhaps what has been the most crucial, is that I have been able to use drawing as a thinking process. I have been able to build upon my practice to create a type of routine where I devote hours investing my time in “visually unpicking,” as Lyons calls it.¹⁰ I have been afforded the time and space to not only perceive drawing as this type of cognitive process, as Ionascu and Rohr discuss in *Drawing Now*, but to experience it personally and put it to use in exploring my thesis objectives.¹¹ What better opportunity to use such a process as I go about negotiating and intertwining a variety of ideas together while simultaneously working towards expanding sensitivities and conceptions of nature.¹²

EXHIBITION

Squishing and squelching by scrunching my feet in saturated sand. My extremities reduced to prunes. Admitting icy saltwater causes cruel little stings, smarting my toes.

Built back in 1889, The Gladstone Hotel originated in a time in which the public was becoming more and more impressed by progress brought on by science. The history of this hotel brings us back to systems of classifications within the natural sciences, as observed by

⁸ Adriana Ionascu and Doris Rohr, “Drawing Now,” *Drawing: Research, Theory, Practice* 1, no. 1 (2016): 4, http://dx.doi.org.ocadu.idm.oclc.org/10.1386/dntp.1.1.3_2.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Lyons, “Drawing,” 3.

¹¹ Ionascu and Rohr, “Drawing Now,” 5.

¹² Jen Clarke and Kate Foster, “Field Drawing and Dialogue as a Form of Making Knowledge,” *TRACEY: Drawing Knowledge* (May 2012): 18, https://www.lboro.ac.uk/microsites/sota/tracey/journal/edu/2012/PDF/Jen_Clarke-TRACEY-Journal-DK-2012.pdf.

Charles Darwin. Displaying my work, then, in such a space with this history begins to show how intervening upon organization distinctions starts to create space for new ways of thinking. In this particular case, it involves a thoughtful softening of barriers among humans and nature. Naturally, I was highly interested in this as I was working towards shifting individual's understandings of their relation to nature but also what is and is not natural. I was emboldened to work towards this in a space involved with such a system so long ago.

There are many benefits to having my thesis exhibition at The Gladstone Hotel, where it will be in the future, and I chose this location for several particular reasons. As you enter this beautiful nineteenth-century Victorian building, one has the opportunity to take either the main staircase or hand-operated elevator up to the second floor. As you set foot in the space where my exhibition will be, your feet will meet the hotel's hardwood flooring at about the same time your eyes meet my work – a perfect introduction. The fourteen-foot ceilings will appropriately work to accommodate the larger works on the semi-transparent fabric while the crown molding in the hallways will frame the charcoal drawings on paper. Graceful arches emerge from the architecture of the space and reflect natural forms found outside in nature. Lastly, the balcony doors with their stained glass windows further suggest the bringing of the outdoors, indoors. In this case, it happens to be light filtering through the glass and fresh air floating through the doors and windows when propped open. While not nature per-se, the physical architecture of The Gladstone Hotel acts as an extension of nature itself.

A peer asked me during my colloquium, where people would sit when they encountered my work. While there are benches to rest on in the second-floor gallery space, The Gladstone Hotel is a known resting place for individuals to sit, and quite literally, stay with art. This hotel houses dwellers who, as the company has stated on their homepage, “get in bed with art” where they feel at home in its welcome atmosphere. This idea of dwelling continues the conversation and keeps people thinking as they view my work. This choice in exhibition location was also due to its care with the environment. This hotel works daily to demonstrate the highest standards in environmental performance with its green policy, practices, and initiatives. In the creation of my work, I strive to make green choices as much as possible, as

is practical and am pleased that I will have the opportunity to exhibit my work in a venue that does the same.

When you walk through the exhibition space, you will find yourself getting lost in material, process, and presence. The L-shaped hallways will work to support the meticulous charcoal drawings. At the same time, the work in the alcove will bring you back to the more ephemeral aspects of nature, also introducing colour into the exhibition. It is significant to note that the artworks created for this show reflect natural systems as often understood as existing outside. For instance, the charcoal works visually depict a variety of weird and wonderful plants. The sizeable lightweight silk works that are hand-drawn and then digitally printed, speak to the movement and colours of earth, water, air, and fire. They also emphasize the elements of mystery and secrecy that I so often encounter while exploring the outdoors. Each work involves aspects of drawing and intends to further engage the individual through their immersion into the transformed space. Providing a speculative approach to a weighty subject matter, rather than providing answers about our relationship to the earth, this body of work aims to spark further discussion among viewers about possible connections with surrounding environments.

I hope that this discussion provides readers a descriptive account of how I originally envisioned displaying my work for an audience. While I will pursue showing this body of work at The Gladstone Hotel in the future, I wanted to find an alternative approach to documenting my work in a way with which I was happy. The charcoal works remained inside, where I was able to photograph them appropriately (fig. 3). The silk works, however, were brought outside where my family and I set them up in a ravine to document with natural light (fig. 4). All along, I had been creating these works with considerations of how light and movement would impact them. It was no surprise to me that I loved the final result. The wind was able to pick up parts of the fabric allowing the sun to shine through at different moments and the surrounding trees to cast various shadows. Of course, taking these delicate pieces into the bush means that sooner or later, one of them will wind up catching on something. No matter, though, as I soon saw when scrolling through my camera that it allowed the silk a place to rest, showing off its draping qualities (fig. 5). Draping had been something I was

looking forward to exposing in the alcove space of the exhibition. I may have intended to show my work in a different environment though this was by far the next best solution.



Figure 3. Shoot, willow charcoal on paper, 2020.



Figure 4. Water, digital print on silk georgette, 2020.



Figure 5. *Fire*, digital print on silk georgette, 2020.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

BIOPHILIA

The concept of biophilia, as Wilson describes it, refers to our human affinity to connect ourselves to and make sense of nature and its processes.¹³ I explore this theory of biophilia through the insertion of artworks within an intermediate space between the gallery and home (The Gladstone Hotel) as well as in natural environments (a ravine). I deviate from Wilson's concept of biophilia, where it shows its inclination to view humanity as superior to other beings.¹⁴ An advocate for the Earth Charter, Steven C. Rockefeller, even went on to say, "In order to address the many interrelated social, economic, and ecological problems that face the world today, humanity must undergo a radical change in its attitudes, values, and behavior..."¹⁵ As I am working towards expanding our conception of nature, it is necessary also to understand humans and other beings as equals. The potential of repairing our current

¹³ Edward O. Wilson, *Biophilia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), 1, ProQuest Ebook Central.

¹⁴ Ibid, 22.

¹⁵ Bryan G. Norton, "Biodiversity and Environmental Values: In Search of a Universal Earth Ethic," *Biodiversity & Conservation* 9, no. 8 (August 2000): 1030, <http://dx.doi.org.ocadu.idm.oclc.org/10.1023/A:1008966400817>.

environment by immersing individuals in a created, physical place works towards welcoming new relationships. These new relationships can teach us as humans, even more, when we open ourselves up to learning from the natural environment, a notion that Kimmerer embraces.¹⁶ Opening up to nature in such a way increases awareness. It focuses attention on the present ecological issues in a way that promotes a shifted view from current hopeless outlooks, to hopeful possibilities for the future. Shifting our view works towards expanding our understanding as well as detaching individuals from trances, as Berry discusses in *The Dream of the Earth*.

BIOPOETICS

An integral component of this thesis is the concept of biopoetics. To fully understand and show how organisms and all things natural can relate to one another through inwardness, biopoetics is what enables us as people to understand ourselves entirely.¹⁷ It exists as to how we can understand ourselves as part of nature. “To become fully human,” Weber states, “we need the relationship to that which is emphatically non-human: the interbeing with other living beings. We have to become animal to truly feel what it means to be humans, we have to become plant, we have to become stone.”¹⁸ My work exists as a way for people to think about and experience nature in a new way.¹⁹ In this case, it is the exhibition that is acting as broadened nature, hopefully in such a way that people start to feel as though they are becoming part of the work as they walk through the exhibition.

ARTISTIC REFERENCES

¹⁶ Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants* (Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 2013), 6.

¹⁷ Weber, *Biopoetics*, 3.

¹⁸ Ibid, 120.

¹⁹ Ibid, 2.

Starting from the very beginning of my research endeavours, I could not get enough of Andy Goldsworthy's *Snowball Drawings*, and later on, Michelle Stuart's *Earth Drawings*. I am consistently motivated by works that involve process but more than that a certain kind of letting go. Attending the 2019 Venice Biennale led me to explore the work of Tomás Saraceno further. *Oracle Readings, Weaving Arachnomancy, Synanthropic Futures: Attention(t)ion to invertebrate rights!*, to be specific. While at the Biennale, I introduced myself to the work of Janne Nabb and Maria Terri, known as the artist duo, Nabbteeri, and their installation, *Ethnographies of a Homespun Spinelessness Cult & Other Neighbourly Relations: Gingerbread House*. Looking at such works has helped me further explore sustainable and alternative ways of inhabiting the environment. I have also felt encouraged in my pondering of multispecies entanglements and generating work with a focus on materiality. I find Nabbteeri's work particularly intriguing as they do not limit themselves to exploring interactions that are tidy. Instead, they allow themselves to delve further into messy entanglements to create such ephemeral installations. I know from my drawing practice that there is essential messiness in doing and coming to know something and works that encourage such encounters continue to inspire me.²⁰

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

DWELLING IN CARE

As this work suggests, and Bellacasa states, care is a human concern, yet it is not just a matter that only affects those it concerns.²¹ Care is a necessary, active, and hands-on process in which one can respond to the current ecological crisis not solely ethically but through generating affect and physical consequence.²² The result I am hoping to achieve is one of action, in which viewers of the work become motivated to begin or continue talking about

²⁰ Clarke and Foster, "Field Drawing," 7.

²¹ María Puig de la Bellacasa, *Matters of Care: Speculative Ethics in More Than Human Worlds* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 2, ProQuest Ebook Central.

²² Ibid, 4.

issues surrounding our environment. The series of memories in this paper exists as one act of care that, through their locating, collecting, and assembling, generates consequence in the form of inner sentiment but also external knowledge that I open myself up to receiving. Bellacasa goes on to state that this concept is much too significant to consider it as a simple question of ethics.²³ In this case, care exists organically. It does so by not attempting to reinforce its idealized meanings of “love work” but as a way to “stay with the trouble,” referencing Donna Haraway.²⁴ Care is vital in the development of this body of work as it is a fundamental aspect of life.²⁵ Further, thinking and knowing needs care.²⁶ As I work towards understanding new ways of thinking and knowing, it is essential that I follow this methodological approach. This employment of care supports me as I, too, encourage awareness among viewers of the many layers a part of this artwork such that they may begin to become open to new and potentially surprising connections.²⁷ In using this method further, I have learned that in order to know something, one must remain attentive to the unknown.²⁸

PRACTICE-BASED

When not working in my studio, I spend much of my time outdoors. Drawing as a process requires devoting time in the presence of one’s subject matter to re-engage with and even “re-see” seemingly familiar material.²⁹ In the case of this thesis, such material includes natural spaces and plants. I walk in and through areas that are tamed, wild, precious, and otherwise. Gardens are a favourite of mine (being another extension of nature as they are

²³ María Puig de la Bellacasa, “‘Nothing Comes Without Its World’: Thinking with Care,” *The Sociological Review* 60, no. 2 (May 2012): 197.

²⁴ Bellacasa, *Matters of Care*, 8.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ María Puig de la Bellacasa, “‘Nothing Comes Without Its World’”, 198.

²⁷ Ibid, 202.

²⁸ Ibid, 212.

²⁹ Lyons, “Drawing,” 1, 7.

groomed and planned for their kind of exhibition). However, I often take the time to explore ravines, parks, and forests near my hometown and where I live in Toronto. To move beyond the nostalgia I frequently encounter while in such natural spaces, and towards action, I go back to the studio where change is a constant.³⁰

Growing up near a ravine, I have since created works that reflect this familiarity (fig. 6). During my first year in the IAMD program, I would bring back fallen materials from these outings, such as leaves and petals, that I could use in my studio and the final presentation of the work (fig. 7, 8 & 9). I now know that with each encounter I made while exploring and in the studio, there was something for me to learn, this being facilitated by drawing.³¹ I got messy and made natural inks from these resources, which I then developed works from as a way to understand further what nature produced (fig. 10 & 11). These activities activated my desire to make what was once invisible, in this case, the everyday materials of nature (those often missed to the eyes of humans because of busyness but also ephemerality), visible through art-making. I also became conscious that I would be able to satisfy another one of my objectives in this endeavour through, quite literally, incorporating small fragments of outdoor environments into my work, which would later work to transform an indoor space. Going outside and actively putting myself in specific settings is not only a way to further connect with nature, but it brings me back to why I am interested in this work in the first place. Every time I do this, it leaves me with a renewed sense of purpose and clarity.

³⁰ Clarke and Foster, "Field Drawing," 8.

³¹ Ibid, 3-4.



Figure 6. Untitled, photo print, 2019.



Figure 7. I Am Not What I Am, flowers, graphite, and ink on paper, 2019.



Figure 8. I Am Not What I Am (Detail), flowers, graphite, and ink on paper, 2019.



Figure 9. I Am Not What I Am (Detail), flowers, graphite, and ink on paper, 2019.

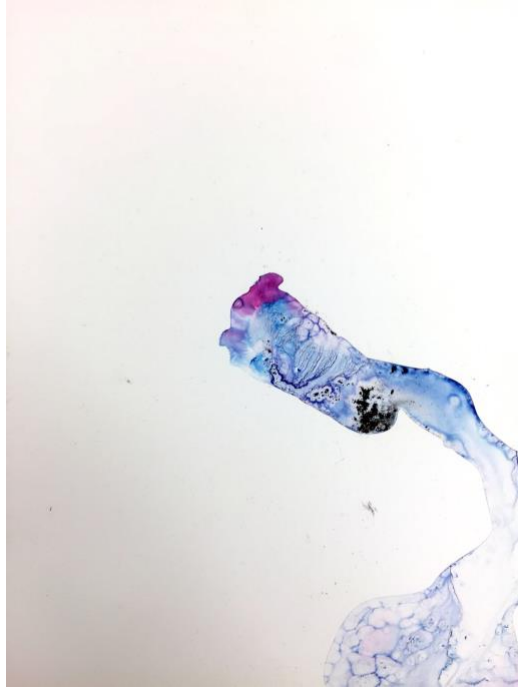


Figure 10. Untitled, ink on paper, 2018.



Figure 11. A Gift, Perhaps, ink on paper, 2019.

I then moved forward, creating drawings that directly reflected the photographs I had taken. Spending May 2019 in Florence as part of the Florence Contemporary Residency, I had the opportunity to explore many outdoor spaces. I spent my time at the Boboli, Bardini, Orto

Botanico, and gardens part of the Villa Di Castello, actively putting myself in the area of nature, allowing for further entanglement of myself in such environments. In the Florence studio, I worked on different watercolor sketches, experimenting with new forms and colours I had seen during site visits (fig. 12). While there, I used my camera as a way to document the plants I was observing, which I referenced in my drawings later on (fig. 13 & 14). In my second year of the program, I continued to work this way though on new and highly meticulous drawings. These drawings exist as a thought process being instinctively completed and come from a desire to understand nature that my determined self believes I can do through hours of dedicated drawing.



Figure 12. Untitled, watercolour on paper, 2019.



Figure 13. Florence Contemporary (Exhibition view), china marker on mylar, 2019.



Figure 14. Encounters of Space and Place, china marker on mylar, 2019.

Utilizing this practice-based research methodology as outlined by Sullivan in *Art Practice as Research: Inquiry in Visual Arts*, I have created space to be both creative and critical in this

process of generating visual work.³² In doing so, I have transformed an existing dwelling space through the insertion of artworks. I have also welcomed further interpretations of participants, which has worked to expand my understanding, acknowledging how they come to encounter and experience the work. Operating within practice-based research allows my artwork to capture both simple and complex concepts. This opportunity is a favourable outcome given that I am focused on expanding upon an individual's perception of nature by increasing awareness. Further, it reflects the trajectory of my work as I, too, explore both simple patterns which work to generate complex natural systems. Fittingly, I have physically incorporated permeable barriers in the form of the translucent fabric allowing the viewer's vision and perhaps ideas to stream through. Lastly, I do not claim to provide answers about our current ecological situation, though I seek to encourage viewers to consider their feelings and generate their response. A practice-based methodology is one that allows this making of meaning.

A/R/TOGRAPHY

As I was looking to develop my understanding of nature further, I have employed the methodology of a/r/tography. A/r/tography has created space for me to participate and engage by questioning the environment in the making of my work.³³ Through the writing process, including the memory series and thesis paper, I have had the opportunity to act as the artist, researcher, and teacher.³⁴ By making my work accessible through ambiguity, I welcome meanings surrounding this body of work to shift over time as they likely will.³⁵ For instance, I have chosen to forgo providing detailed interpretations of my work. This relinquishing is from having learned that allowing others to come to their conclusions will likely result in more considerable contemplation and even understanding than what providing more reading materials may grant. I am always working towards offering my work to open

³² Graeme Sullivan, *Art Practice as Research: Inquiry in Visual Arts* (California: Sage Publications, 2010).

³³ Stephanie Springgay, Rita L. Irwin, and Sylvia Wilson Kind, "A/r/tography as Living Inquiry Through Art and Text," *Qualitative Inquiry* 11, no. 6 (2005): 899, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800405280696>.

³⁴ Ibid, 901.

³⁵ Ibid, 908.

up conversations about people's relationships with nature. By deeply engaging myself through this process of writing, I have required myself to grow as both human and artist (and researcher and teacher).

While I am interested in reaching others, I have also had the opportunity to connect more with myself. This tricky and awkward process has allowed for increased access to a previously inaccessible and isolated place. Losing myself in time, intentionally transporting myself back to precise moments, and sharing these memories with an audience has required giving up my solitude and privacy, yet gaining an understanding not otherwise possible. Regarding my research question, a/r/tography allows me to reconsider my relationship with the external world through the exploration of my memories in nature. It remains my belief that this opening up and sharing of such recollections will encourage others to do the same. Not only this, but the employment of such a methodology enables previously invisible or otherwise hidden thoughts surrounding this subject matter the potential to become visible through text. This making of the unseen, seen, further demonstrates our deep and ongoing entanglement with nature.

CONCLUSION

BECOMING

Interestingly, drawing affords many benefits, similar to biophilic effects. It provides stress relief and improves memory, communication, and problem-solving skills. It offers a visual element, which the viewer can rest their eyes and minds on if they so choose. This study of how artworks transform our understanding of nature will work towards generating knowledge in the fields of art and design. I intend to contribute to interdisciplinary practices, my experience of how utilizing art and design can transform a space through the discipline of drawing. I expect that the problematization of an individual's perception of what is natural and unnatural will open up a broader discussion of nature and ethics. Lastly, I intended to gather anonymous responses throughout the exhibition through the addition of a

collaborative component such as a guestbook. I am excited that I will have this opportunity in the future.

I began this process questioning how created speculative artworks could contribute to the transformation of an indoor living space. Not only that, but I was interested in determining in what ways this could encourage people to reconsider their relationship to the external world. Looking back on my objectives, it is apparent that, no, I did not transform an indoor environment. However, I was able to prepare for that outcome in addition to reaching an alternative solution. This solution allowed for the visualization of my work outside. This resolution further permitted the invisible to become visible, another one of my objectives. While I was successful in showing natural processes on paper and silk, I was encouraged to see the shadows from the ravine become apparent on the surface of the silk, revealing light and also having exposed wind through the movement of the silk through the bush and across the bridge.

Beginning this work, I was highly concerned with collecting the experiences of others. What resulted was much more personal for me as an artist and as an individual. Immersing myself in my memories and nature enabled me to explore my ideas of the natural and unnatural and my relationships with such processes. I believe that this will have made the work more enduring and have left me better equipped for when I do show this work during an exhibition in the future. In addition to this, in my practice-based research, I initially intended to explore further the collaborative and interactive components involving human individuals viewing and experiencing the final work. That said, what resulted was an increased attentiveness on my behalf in regards to the interactivity between myself and nature as a collaborator, especially when developing and presenting the work outdoors. The simple act of looking and seeing that drawing necessitates drew my attention towards this reciprocal relationship that I was participating in and the humanity this action involved.³⁶ I know that I was able to better care for my subject by spending so much time looking and thus understanding.³⁷ I hope that

³⁶ Lyons, "Drawing," 1, 4.

³⁷ Ibid, 13.

when others see this work, they might do the same. It is in the act of drawing itself that ecological awareness can develop as it is a process of recognition in my investigation into nature.³⁸

I feel that I have learned a great deal in how individuals, myself very much included, can experience the external world in such a newly insightful way. This learning involves the conceptualization of bringing the outdoors in, but also when we begin to bring works of art outdoors. It is hard for me to let go when creating work due to an apprehension of the unknown. I have learned over the past two years that it is not only liberating but necessary to do so, perhaps now more than ever. This need is especially real when creating work that has to do with something as ephemeral as nature and its processes. I had to let go of continually capturing and containing nature as a force and its intended presentation. I can, fortunately, say that what resulted is that much more meaningful because of this.

³⁸ Clarke and Foster, "Field Drawing," 2.

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APPENDIX A: ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Additional digital files uploaded to the Open Research Repository include:

Earthly Delights: Thinking Through Drawing, an artist book of final thesis artworks including digital prints on silk and charcoal drawings on paper, 2020.

File name: McLeod_Laurel_A_2020_Earthly Delights

File type: PDF