

THE MANUAL TO ABSURD JOURNEYS



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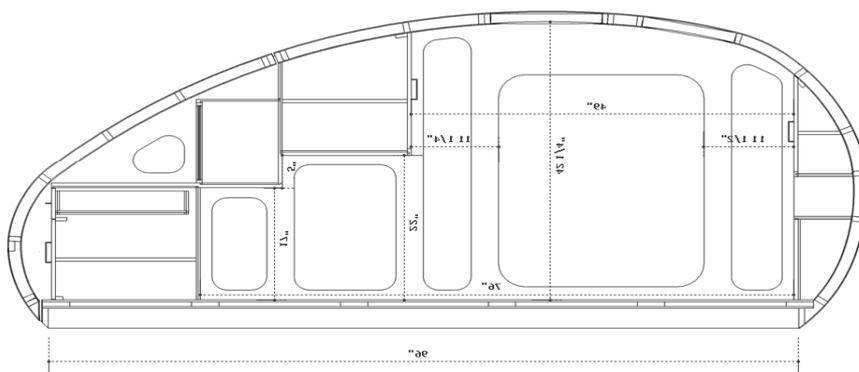
Manual | man·u·al \ 'man-yə-wəl , -yəl , -yü-əl \

[*noun*] plural, manuals. A set of instructions for an unfamiliar machine.

The Manual to Absurd Journeys

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Fig. 1
Teardrop trailer
caravan



0. A Reading Guide to the Manual

The Manual to Absurd Journeys offers infinite possibilities of dissemination. The knowledge of personal and ontological concepts which the Manual is based on, or from which it heavily borrows, will prove itself useful to the reader.

The Search

Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland are separated by an open border made visible only through minor differences in road surface or the change from miles to kilometres and vice versa on traffic signs. The partition meanders through fields and streams, through herds of cattle and bodies of water, and occasionally wanders into a house, dividing a living room in two. In the summer of 2017, I ran 200 miles in 7 consecutive days in an attempt to trace it. I invited residents of the borderland communities to join my travels through a territory which they experience dualistically, or twofold. What I mean by this is that they know it extremely well - every country road, gravel path and household they neighboured since childhood - and simultaneously not at all, approaching its existence with a degree of separation due to its immanent extraterritoriality. The paradox of an open border became even more pronounced after the Brexit referendum of 2016 exposed its fragility and destabilised its future. The decision to leave the European Union entailed that the Northern Irish boundary would become a new frontier between the UK and the rest of Europe, a task it is inherently ill-equipped to perform. Overnight, the geopolitical features which previously ensured the boundary's seamless quality have suddenly become defects.

The map is not capable of adequately representing the dichotomy between the open-border-apparatus and the open-border-land, similarly to how it could never articulate the tension around a space so removed from territorial norms. Further still, the map cannot even faithfully depict an invisible line made fluid by minor changes in the overlaying of fresh tarmac, field work or even the growth of trees. No, it's not possible - what we are witnessing through the widely publicised conundrum of the Northern Irish border is a conflict of the unmovable vastness of land vs the man-made tensions placed upon it. Its recurrence almost always points to the conclusion that it is not a matter of the people and their land, or even the seemingly more accurate notion of the land and its people; the land simply outsizes (out-vasts) all human efforts to stratify it. All governance, division or ownership of land is an extremely temporary contract (or conflict), not between the land and the owner but between the owner and other groups of people; an arrangement which trickled down through the forces of agriculture and colonialism. Objects we can hold and control, but how do we control a landscape in flux? Who owns the shifting of a tectonic plate? The fractures within the concept of territorial ownership become exposed and multiply under the pressure of increasingly complex political realities. The map from a

bird eye's point of view is illusory.¹ The decision to commence *The Search* originated within a specific time and circumstance in the history of the Northern Irish border but its actions responded to a broader desire: to re-orienteer oneself within the eye of the map.

The Rhizome

'The Earth (...) is a body without organs,' Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari write in 'A Thousand Plateaus,' a pivotal text which abandons the philosophical tendency towards discontinuity in favour of an ontological continuum.² What is discontinuity? We can see its emergence in the discourse of Plato, who distinguishes between the intelligible and the sensible in the Analogy of the Divided Line. The realm of the mind, or the intelligible, holds 'forms' (ideas) which remain largely unchanged, while the sensible - that which is visible - is a changing and unreliable representation of the intelligible. To use the example of a horse, its intelligible form is reliably horse-like - it is the physical horse whose representation is inconsistent, varying from animal to animal or changing beyond recognition due to age or injury. The theory of the Divided Line relies on the compartmentalisation of perception. It operates through analogy, whose affirmation exists only in tandem with negation. Analogy therefore depends on the corollary: that which we can deduce or that which we already know. So discontinuity requires pre-obtained knowledge; it establishes a hierarchy of thought. A concerning limitation of discontinuity is that it contradicts an essential requirement for metaphysics: the univocity of being.

Discontinuity has historically been the foundation of the majority of Western thought. 'A Thousand Plateaus' offers in its place a rhizome. The rhizome is the opposite of discontinuity. In contrast to linear chronology, a rhizome is a system of thought enacted as an assemblage - a network of 'word and thing, power and geography.'³ A rhizome contains, forms and offshoots experimental, non-hierarchical connections which are inevitably in motion. It is the unstructured overlaying of roots of many trees, or the entanglement of burrowing rats.⁴ From this point onwards, Deleuze and Guattari implement rhizomatic thinking to deconstruct and dismantle areas of discontinuity, from the Freudian approach to psychoanalysis (which they describe as a barrier to a child's rhizome), to the chronological and human-centric narrative of evolution, and even the State apparatus. 'A rhizome is made of plateaus,' they say, defining a plateau as 'a continuous, self vibrating region of intensities whose development avoids any orientation toward a culmination point or external end. (...) We are writing this book as a rhizome. It is composed of plateaus.'⁵ And the Manual is also made of plateaus. It contains a reading guide and five chapters which can be read independently of each other, in any chosen order and in any chosen number. They co-exist and reticulate, but are not co-dependent. Should you choose to read the Manual as a continuity, you may wish to start with chapter 1 and work your way through to 5, then having reached the end of that chapter, read again through 4, 3, 2, and 1. This could go on. 'History is always written from the sedentary point of view and in the name of a unitary State apparatus(...) What is lacking is

a Nomadology, the opposite of history.’⁶ A linear reading method only reinforces a passive consumption of narratives.

The Manual is not equipped with a binary conclusion. This is because it prioritises the critical value of asking questions over the value of formulating answers. The Manual is a rhizome; it remains open. What is presented to the reader are overlaying assemblages of ideas, stories and thoughts bound together by intensities of time, rhythm, distance and sheer absurdity. This rhizomatic structure entails repetition and overlay of themes throughout the Manual; for example, in the recurrence of the Search and its convergence with narratives of travel. But it is not a treatise or a journal of the Search. Like the wandering of a runner’s thoughts or the anthropological collages of human migration, the Manual is to be viewed from a perspective of motion. It is an attempt at Nomadology.

The Limit Experience

The Limit Experience appears across a variety of critical literature and philosophy, as a term to describe an experience or action approaching a threshold of its intensity or possibility.

The limit experience and its proximity to the sublime - that which reaches a point of greatness beyond being measured, reproduced or approximated - had been of particular interest to Romanticists, particularly in relation to the fluidity between the sublime of awe and horror. Critic Jan Verwoert writes: ‘(...) Novalis hails the obliteration of the self in the face of the sublime (...) He does so, however, only to portray this moment of obliteration as a pathway to higher experiences (...)’⁷ Within Romanticism, the limit applied to the grandeur of landscape or death. Post-structuralism extends the limit experience to literature, poetry, and art. Any creative pursuit is capable of surpassing its form; an artwork can reach the threshold of breaking away from itself, where it is no longer an artwork but a ‘becoming’.

In this Manual, the limit experience is explored as relative to the liminality of the processes of motion, speed, and travel. It is important to understand its significance in relation to the Search as an artwork and an action on the verge of exhausting itself.⁸ Both the limit experience and the Search speak of journeying, dissected within the Manual matter-of-factly and as a metaphor. Once the limit experience is observed within a metaphor, it itself becomes metaphorical, meaning it can be many things at once or anything at all. And since the limit experience encompasses limit-actions, then it functions within the nature of that action in the moment preceding its breaking away from the subject. If it can be anything, and if it can be predisposed by action, then we must consider that the limit experience could be political, or at least, it could approach becoming political. The Search as a whole was a limit experience; it was also undoubtedly political as I drove my body into a state which emphasised the absurdity of the action and the landscape. The testing of the fluidity of art-making is always political because it authors new autonomies within art (*yes, but is it art?*). The testing of one’s body reiterates the right to experience and claim our bodily autonomies, but the body within the State is

always political, and the political dynamics of a body or bodies within border areas are self-evident. If running 200 miles has the potentiality to become a political statement, at what exact moment does it become political (inception, occurrence, completion)? Is any act potentially political, so long as it transpires on a border? Is lifting a stone across the border a potentially political act? Is it a point of reaching a threshold?

Final Briefings

The role of the Reading Guide is to facilitate the seamless reading of the Manual. But that is only an element of a larger intention. What the contemporary creative dialogue requires is the process of democratisation. The current condition of the contemporary art machine is one of an increased codification of discourse, whereby growing portions of the public find themselves excluded from physical or intellectual artistic spaces. The duty of a contemporary artist is to have a socially responsible practice which does not reinforce a hermetic framework. This requires the introduction of accessible and inclusive modes of critique.

The Manual plays with the conventions of an instructions handbook but only to poke fun at closed-circuit problem-solving. On the contrary, it establishes multiple starting, stopover and mooring points for the network of absurdity in motion.

1. Quick Guide: Into the Eye of a Storm

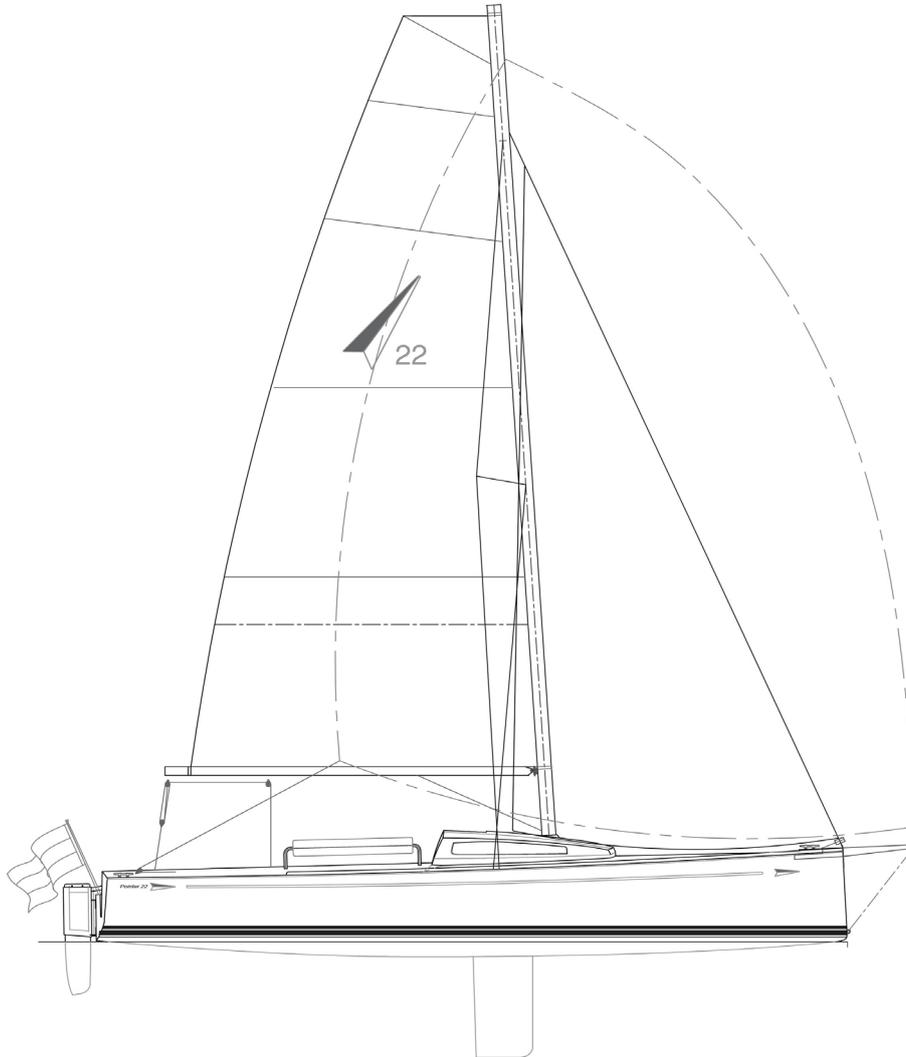


Fig. 2 Pointer 22 Pocket Cruiser sail plan

Between 1973 and 1975, artist Bas Jan Ader worked on a triptych of performances entitled *In Search of the Miraculous*, during which he intended to single-handedly sail the west-east crossing of the North Atlantic Ocean. His departure from Cape Cod was to act as a bridge between a nighttime walk he completed in Los Angeles and the one to follow upon his arrival in Amsterdam. At the opening of the project's first exhibition, a choir performed traditional sea shanties; postcards were given out, depicting the artist aboard his 13-foot single sail pocket cruiser. Even for a skilled sailor, the feat presented itself as a liminal experience within the possibilities of sea voyage; given it was successful, the *Ocean Wave* would become the smallest boat to ever complete the journey. Ader was expected to moor, within approximately three months, in the Netherlands, where he would finally concede his project and hold a retrospective in his native town of Groningen.

He never completed the triptych; never exhibited the retrospective. Spotted floating vertically with its bow completely submerged, approximately 150 nautical miles off the coast of southwest Ireland, the *Ocean Wave* was recovered by Spanish fishermen on the 18th of April, 1976.⁹ The crew of *Eduardo Pondal* hoisted the boat onto their deck and proceeded to search the cabin, yielding several forms of ID, cans of expired food and nautical equipment. The *Pondal's* captain estimated that the boat was unmanned for about six months. Radio contact with the cruiser ceased three weeks into its journey; the untraceable movement and timeline of the boat offered no clues towards the recovery of Ader's body.

Rumours of intended suicide made their way into the conversation surrounding the artist's disappearance but were fervently contradicted. Ader was actually an experienced sailor, having previously worked as a deckhand on a yacht; his artistic choices were dangerous, but not a blatant suicide wish. 'We talked about it, and he assured me repeatedly these were not his intentions,' widowed Mary Sue Ader insisted in an interview a month after the recovery of the cruiser.¹⁰ For some time, the artist's students at the University of California continued to exchange hypotheses of their tutor's survival. Within the yearning of their imagination, he was alive and about to triumphantly return, having successfully orchestrated an extraordinary staged act of disappearance (staging factitious narratives as facts was, after all, his forte). The rumours eventually faded into silence.

After radio contact with the *Ocean Wave* ceased, Ader's mother penned a poem in response to a haunting premonition of her son's death.¹¹

*When he passed the border of birth, I laid him at my breast
 Rocked him in my arms
 He was very small then
 A white body of a man, rocked in the arms of the waves
 Is very small too
 What are we in the infinity of ocean and sky?*

Within the discussion surrounding *In Search of the Miraculous*, there is a temptation to conclude that the artist's disappearance was the perfect ending to an endeavour so preoccupied with eternity. But to weigh the significance of Ader's work on his disappearance is to misconstrue the reasoning behind his actions. Ader was a conceptual artist who alluded to the Romanticist limit experience. In *the Search of the Miraculous*, he was able to simultaneously portray the romanticised archetype and the personal reality of the solitary traveller. 'In a form that is decidedly unemotional and non-subjective,' the voyage 'implies infinity,' not through poetic elation but through the highly logical and technical means of sailing; in doing so it 'transcends reason by rational means.'¹² Throughout his practice, Ader choreographed tragedy, the unavoidable grief made apparent, as a calculated method of challenging fate. He paired it with the Greek tradition of understanding crisis as the imminence of an approaching decision

following a time of uncertainty, particularly in battle.¹³ His surrender to the imminent, best portrayed in his series of video performances where he falls from trees, roofs, or is swept off his feet by gushing winds, stems not from an inability to prevent the consequences, but from a deliberate method of approximating crisis. It is in the moment of crisis that his ultimate decision is to surrender, meaning all calamities happen precisely because Ader lets them happen.

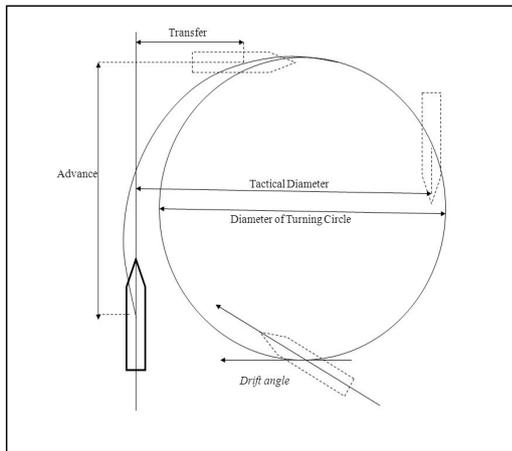


Fig. 3 Boat manoeuvre

Asked why he repetitively filmed himself falling, he answered, ‘because gravity overpowered me.’¹⁴ This willingness to be overpowered - by the infinity of ocean and sky, time and physics - is a radical skill of setting up opportunities for fate and reality to disrupt each other.

The exercise of logic in seemingly absurd acts, and the insistence on a contingency between the irrational and the methodical, are characteristics shared

by prominent durational and performance artists. The sole idea of a man chasing a tornado is farcical, but the same action performed with decisive intent over a significant period of time is a work of art. Over the course of ten years, Francis Alys periodically visited an area of the Mexican countryside known for its recurring small-scale tornadoes and filmed his attempts to run into the eye of the storm. What resulted was a POV compilation of all the singular efforts,

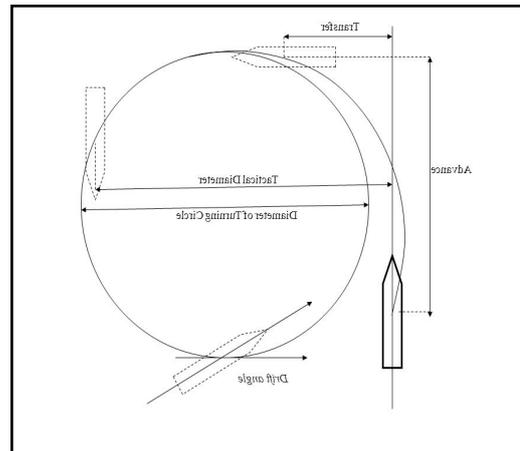


Fig. 4 Boat manoeuvre, upside down

with heavy panting and the occasional scream from behind the lens. At the end of the video, the camera turns and shows Alys covered in a thick layer of dust. Even in comparison with the smallest of tornadoes, human effort appears inherently pathetic, and at best, absurd.

The artist encourages public engagement, such as when he coordinated the collaboration of 500 volunteers in shovelling a sand dune into a new

location in *When Faith Moves Mountains*. Although he describes the relocation of a sand dune as an attempt to de-romanticise land art, the work evokes the connection between the limit experience and the landscape. Where Ader was political through challenging the acceptable medium of an art form, Alys politicises the contingency between land and poetry. He recurrently works within, and deconstructs, the physical and immaterial paradigms of borders and border zones. Borders are tools of foreign policy, and their permeability and appearance are signifiers of authority; they are to people what the puffing of the chest is to a frigate bird. Like the rising level of the oceans, they fluctuate. Border control enforcement oscillates to the frequency of the perceived necessity of such measures. The negative portrayal of refugees and the hardening of borders, observed in several affluent countries of the Global North, correlate with the regions' responsibility for the global climate crisis, forecasted to displace millions of people within the next decades.¹⁵

*Sometimes, doing something poetic can be political and, sometimes, doing something political can be poetic.*¹⁶ In 2004, Francys Alys walked along the armistice border of Jerusalem with a dripping can of green paint. His route mirrored the armistice border known as the 'green line,' sketched on a map by Israeli military leader Moshe Dayan in 1948. The border remained in place until the Six Day War in 1967 after which Israel occupied Palestinian-inhabited territories east of the line. The original drawing of the line was 3 to 4 millimetres thick; placed on a 1 : 20, 000 scale map, it represented a strip of land 60 to 80 metres wide. In the 'Green Line,' Alys questions the designated ownership of the strip, and presents his actions alongside interviews with commentators from Israel, Palestine and other territories. The voice of Rima Hamami, a Jerusalem based anthropologist, resonates over the footage of the 15 mile walk: *'I left Palestine right after the six days which I spent [sic] the six days actually on the green line (...) There was a wall and there was some other place behind that wall but I had no idea what was the place. It was like a whole other universe that somehow, this place that I've known had some kind of mirror opposite. (...) [You are] making an empathetic act and pushing us to see things we don't usually see. (...) We become sort of stuck in the way we see [things]. And I think poetic acts is one way of breaking through that(...) A poetic act is something very powerful to do in that context. Because [you] refuse to serve the dominant way of doing things.'*

Alys appears as a herald or a secular prophet, causing ripples on the impermeable mirror surface by disrupting the accepted modes of looking and seeing. In the final moments of the walk, he drips the last of his green line in front of the Ramot Checkpoint, a permanent security gate controlling some 1, 900 villagers' access to and from Jerusalem. If the limit experience represents the threshold of spiritual and emotional qualities of the human experience, it must be acknowledged that it now occurs in a world which itself is reaching a limit. The limit experience enters the political plane. It is televised and broadcasted, available to the wider global network at the speed of a rapidly intensifying access. The people experiencing the boundary edge are not scholars, but those caught within territorial and societal liminalities. The sky watched as we built a modernity of more borders than trees.

The Borderland, Northern Ireland.

In 2000, John Byrne, a self-described border worrier - ‘not meaning that he actually fretted about it, but that he couldn’t leave it alone’ - turned a derelict building situated on the border line into a Border Interpretive Centre.¹⁷ All big tourist attractions had an Interpretive Centre, he reckoned, and the history of the border made it a major point of interest. Busloads of spectators were driven to the opening, where a speaker described the frontier as ‘the best’ of all existing borders, ‘something that unites the whole country.’¹⁸ At the souvenir stall, Byrne sold ziplock pouches of border soil.

Before the Good Friday Agreement and the European Single Market directive rendered them redundant, Customs checkpoints functioned on the border to ensure the payment of taxes on goods passing between Northern Ireland and the South. In 1940, a full battle between Customs officials and a flour-smuggling gang broke out. The officials attempted to block the convoy of approximately a hundred donkeys driven by about ninety men armed with sticks. The fight lasted till dawn, with donkeys running off in panic and several hundreds of pounds of flour dusting the field. The event was dubbed ‘the donkey serenade’ by the press. From the perspective of time, the Customs huts and flour smuggling seem harmlessly comical. ‘We smile about that phase (...)’ writes Garrett Carr as he concludes the story, ‘It is easy to smile because of the contrast presented with the Troubles.’¹⁹ There are inherent limitations in perceiving a history through the prism of borders, which are often erroneously thought of as causes, rather than complex byproducts, of conflicts. The void of the divisive line goes deeper.

When we are swept up into the eye of a storm, it is an expectedly terrifying experience. It is only after the fear passes that we notice the absurdity of the situation.

Sometimes, going into the eye of a storm is not about how to get out, but which side of the storm you’re on.

Before *The Search*, I was a strong believer in my neutrality. I migrated to Northern Ireland from Poland as a child. It was not until I finished school and moved to Belfast for my studies that I came to understand the degree to which the region’s past remains palpable. Northern Irish schools are almost always Catholic or Protestant but, then again, so are town areas or whole settlements. Despite being aware of an unshifting tension, I never considered myself as having an identity which permanently placed me within. I am not an Irish Catholic nor a Northern Protestant, and in all honesty, regardless of the length of your residency or your age when you moved over, the community continues to perceive mainland Europeans as ‘the Hungarian lad’ or ‘the wee Polish girl.’ In a society where the mentality of *them* ‘uns and *us* ‘uns is the norm, this is actually

a position of privilege; I believed it would enable me to orchestrate a cross-community participatory project. An Aoife or a Billy inviting others to the border zone is always reaching out from, and approaching, an ethnographic boundary, but a foreigner is a blank slate in the midst of green and red.²⁰ All Northerners have a tribal genealogy. Meanwhile, I enter every space as a nomad, eliciting pitiful gazes but benefiting from fluidity for that very reason, or so I thought.

In the weeks leading up to it, the project was gaining traction. The majority of interest came from an organisation campaigning for an open border after the UK's departure from the EU, with members offering me places to stay and food to keep me going. A German news station interviewed me as part of a feature on the challenges posed by the prospective EU border.²¹ People showed up to run with me. Town mayors and politicians made appearances in the mornings, at the departure points; in a few cases, they even ran a few miles with us. What struck me was the lack of diversity in those appearances. I realised early on that I was becoming personally acquainted with most local Sinn Féinn representatives, but have not yet encountered a single Unionist MLA. The discrepancy reflected in the participants. At the end of a day's running, after soaking my legs in a bin bag filled with ice water, I wrote an e-mail to the Democratic Unionist Party leader and Fermanagh representative Arlene Foster. I made it clear I did not expect her to show up personally due to her high rank, but an appearance of one of her employees would encourage inclusivity. I stressed that my actions were not principally anti Brexit (which DUP supported) but pro open border. The response came within a few hours.

Dear Aleks

Unfortunately, Arlene is unable to meet with you tomorrow as you leave Enniskillen to embark on your journey.

Yours sincerely

'At least you tried,' E, who was helping me throughout the run by driving around after me and reminding me to drink or eat, summed up the situation. But over the remaining days, I made sure we documented some of the Union Jacks hanged up on street lamps in Unionist neighbourhoods of the borderland. 'Take a picture of me running through here, will you?' I would ask him. At the very least, I wanted the photographs to capture an effort at parity.

My 'foreigner' identity persisted - a newspaper in Derry~Londonderry called me a 'migrant' - but following the Search, it seemed to acquire an additional connotation.²² Just like John Byrne, I have joined a narrow group of people who carried out something mischievous, bizarre and somewhat unthinkable. I have gone right into the eye of the storm, with no idea how I got there. I have become a border worrier.

2. Winding Your Apparatus, or How to Perceive Time

There was once a man who loved the sea.

He wanted to circumnavigate the world, and more: he wanted to be the fastest solitary sailor to ever do so. The world was watching him as he set out. But Donald Crowhurst was only human. As technical difficulties hindered his progress, he decided to start sending false information on his whereabouts back to the shore in order to cover up his delay. There was a frantic desperation in his actions as fiction rapidly out-travelled him.²³ It was at this point that Crowhurst disassociated himself from the task at hand entirely, living out his last days in a spiritual euphoria, as confirmed by the reflections written down in his notebook. Then one day, the crew of a cargo ship passing his boat noticed it was empty. The last entry in his journal was from a few days before.

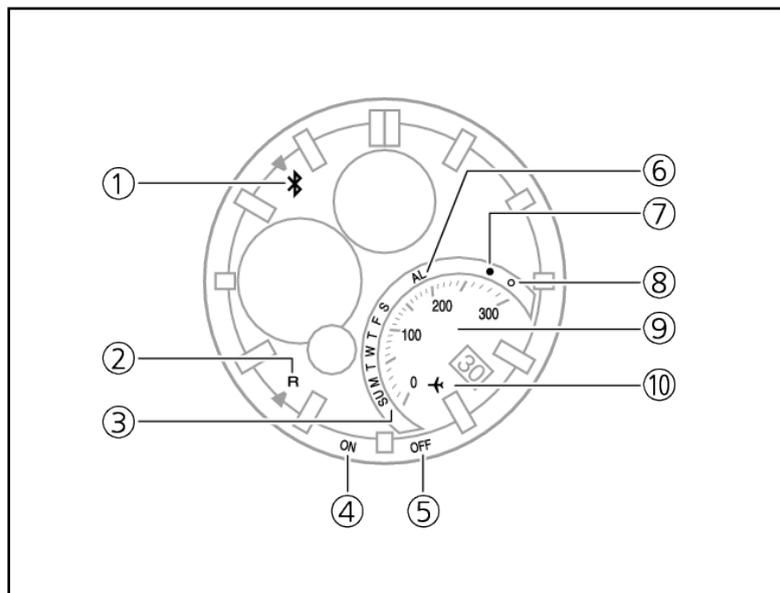


Fig. 5
Casio watch face diagram

In the Irish epic of the *Táin*, anglicised as *The Cattle Raid of Cooley*, a tumultuous battle lasting several weeks unfolds between kingdoms of Ulster and Connacht. It begins with the Connacht queen Medb comparing her wealth with her husband's. As she realises the King is richer by one incredibly fertile bull, her determination is set on correcting the discrepancy. She seeks to borrow an equally potent bull from an Ulster cattle lord; unluckily, the negotiations break down before the loan can be finalised. The queen sets her sights on taking the bull by force as she invades the neighbouring province.

Only seventeen at the time of the raid, a boy named Cuchulainn stands in for the entire Ulster army.

Unbeknownst to Medb, Cuchulainn has powers exceeding those of a mere mortal. *Riastrad*, translated as a ‘warp spasm,’ renders him capable of transforming into a fearless monster, an advantage which, paired with his right to challenge the warriors of the Queen’s army to individual duels, makes him an undefeated opponent.²⁴ Yet despite slaying champion after champion - whole pages of the Tain are dedicated to describing elaborate deaths - the youth is unable to prevent Medb from taking the Ulster bull. After the Queen brings her prize home, her and her husband’s bulls fight each other in a stand-off so violent, it alters the shape of the land, splitting the very ground under their hooves. Though her prize animal succeeds in killing his rival, leaving her husband stripped of his distinguishing wealth, it is itself mortally wounded and so it escapes, leaving behind a trail of organs before it returns to Ulster to die. To this day, the story is thought to explain the place names around the rocky Cooley Peninsula; Ath Luain, the Ford of the Loins; Tromma, the Liver; Etan Tairb, the Bull’s Brow.²⁵ Ask the locals for the name of the deep notch in the ridge of Cooley Mountains, and they will tell you it is known as Medb’s Gap.

In 1921, Northern Ireland will be divided from the rest of the country under the Government of Ireland Act. The North will remain under British jurisdiction, while the rest will become the Irish Free State. The division will follow the boundaries of the mythological kingdom of Ulster, cutting through the Cooley Mountains. Early 20th Century Republican soldiers will adopt the depiction of Cuchulainn who tied himself up to a tree trunk during his last battle, facing his enemies standing, as a symbol of their resistance to the British rule.

If we cast a wide enough net over apocrypha, the net yields astonishing facsimiles between cultures. The recurrence of the Mother, the Wise Man and the Flood are all mythologies archetypes. A commonly known aspect of psychology is how the overlap of themes and motifs in mythologies is credited to the Jungian collective unconscious.

The bull, particularly, is a recurring symbol. The Minoan Bull Cult was based on the rites of acquiring bull-like fertility and strength. Hercules captured a bull; Theseus killed one. In many Polish regions, the Turon (transl. *aurochs-like*) is a performer dressed like a bull who visits households during Christmas.²⁶ The Minotaur was half bull, half man. Some archaeologists theorise that all of these folklores allude to the same bovine creature, which features prominently in one of the historical monographs written by Julius Cesar.

*These animals which are called uri. They are somewhat below the size of an elephant and have an appearance, colour, and shape of a bull. Their strength and speed are remarkable; they spare neither a man or a wild animal that were noticed by them. [Germanic] young men (...) who slaughter the largest number of them, showing the public their horns as proof, get the biggest prize.*²⁷

Other records suggest the aurochs was a calm and non-aggressive animal when not under threat. It manifested a fear of dogs, thus making it possible for gamekeepers to control their grazing areas in medieval European game reserves.²⁸ Their pregnancies were always single pregnancies. In a display of hidden poetry, the last country to house the animal collapsed shortly after its extinction.²⁹ All attempts to domesticate the aurochs failed.

A similar phenomenon is observed with several species of sharks, who die within days of capture. The longest surviving captive great white lived in the Monterey Bay Aquarium in California for 6 months, but only because it was young, meaning its natural conditions were easier to recreate. It died shortly following its release back into the wild. Great whites swim hundreds of kilometres at a time, not only to catch prey but to effectively breathe. The shark's organism weakens as soon as it is caught in a net; it cannot effectively pump water through its gills. In 2016, an adult great white exhibited in Okinawa died within 3 days.

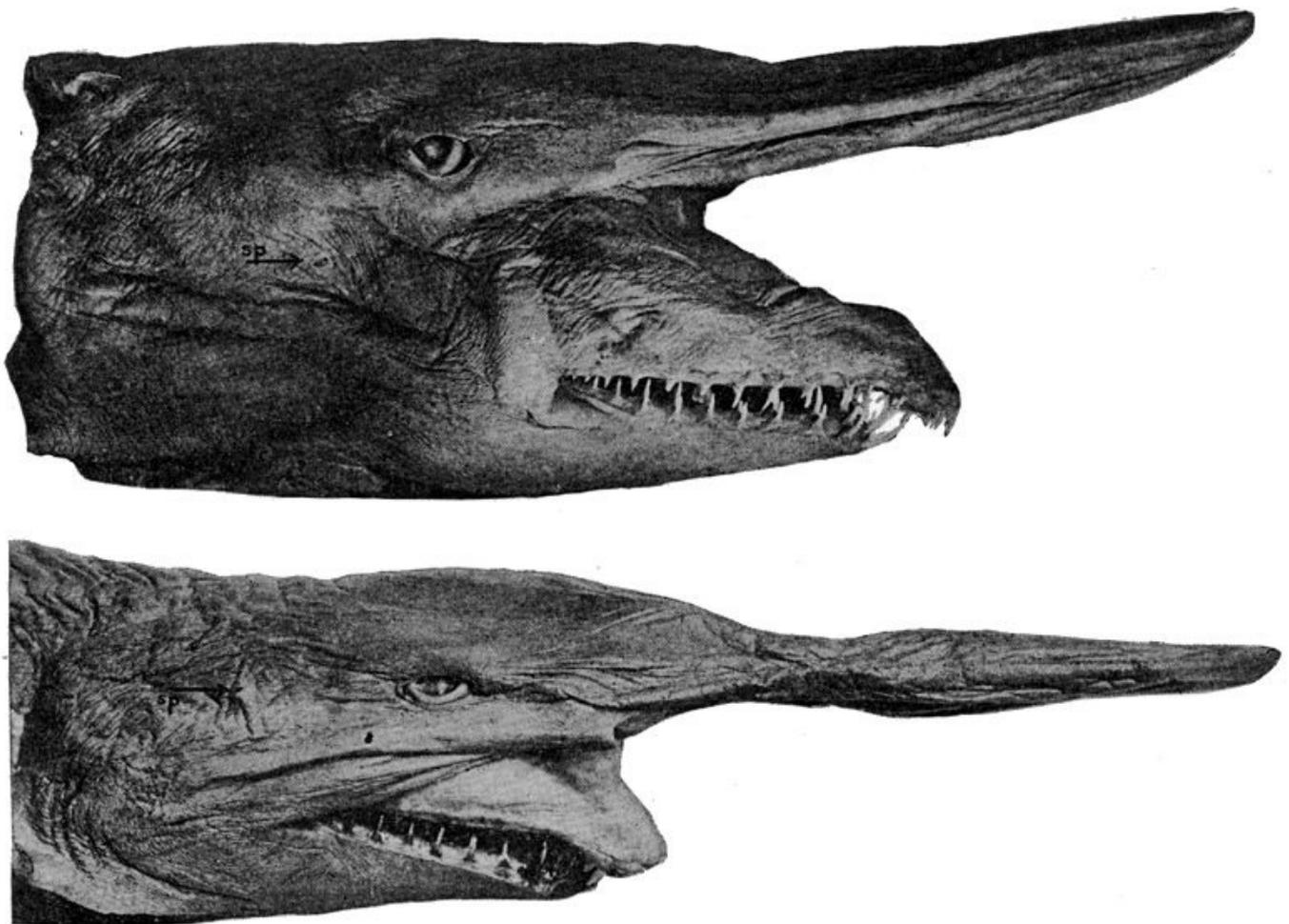


Fig. 6 Goblin shark jaw studies

Sharks are some of the oldest animals in existence, and the most diverse. With over 500 extant species dating back to the Triassic and the Permian, their existence outlasts any efforts of its stratification. The goblin shark - also known as a 'living fossil' - is identical to its descendants from the early Cretaceous, though it is

certainly not the oldest unchanging marine organism (cyanobacteria are 3.5 billion of years old).^{30 31} The space and time traveled by these entities should make us pause. If a goblin shark bites you, are you interacting with prehistory? Don't fret, the global incidence of shark attacks is very low. Nevertheless, anti-shark measures are increasingly implemented around the world and include practices such as shark culls and large net installations, which restrict the animal's access to its natural coastal habitat.³² These phenomena further the abstraction and deterritorialisation of the human experience of the natural environment; by disrupting a precedent of the last 250 million years, we affect its rhizome in manners which cannot be predicted. Some researchers attempt to counter the emerging dystopia of collapsing ecosystems with restorative genetics, but we will not know whether these experiments result in a true reconnection with our surroundings, or an advanced arrival of a deterritorialised futurism, until we witness their effects. The ethics of such research must also be brought into question. Recently, researches have attempted to clone the aurochs, but genome modification is already being used in industrial farming to maximise muscle mass of cattle, and the same line of research now encompasses disenchanting agricultural animals' ability to feel pain.^{33 34} This is reflective of a larger inclination of industrialisation, which perceives beings as mechanised objects rather than sentient entities.³⁵

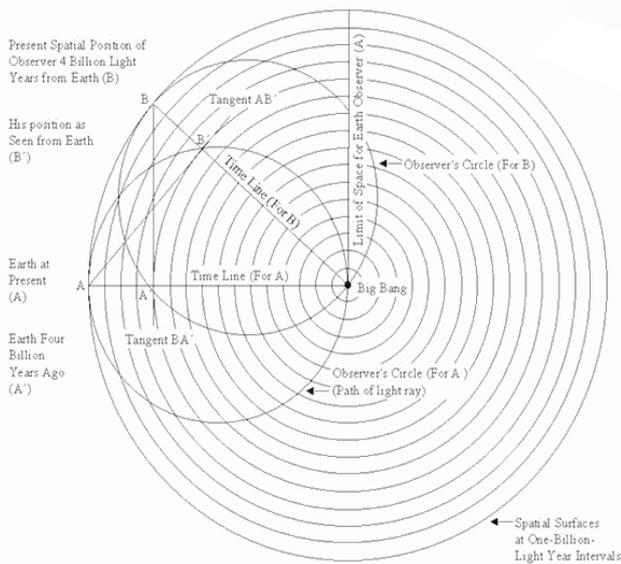


Fig. 7 Time map of the solar system



Fig. 8 Fingerprints

This new perverted paradigm of being, time and process highlights the contingency between the plasticity of memory and the plasticity of the environment. This new memory is overwhelmingly exterior. 'It relies entirely on (...) the immediacy of the recording, the visibility of the image. It adds to life – itself often a function of its own recording – a secondary memory, a prosthesis memory.'³⁶

The accelerating production of data and reality compresses the intensity of several lifetimes into years, days, hours. Immediacy is the new authenticity. AI deterritorialises the brain further as it propels it towards

the machine. The brain is the only organ consistently described through the language of ‘technological metaphors (...); in the digital age, as a computer running its programs.’³⁷ As the central algorithm of the resource exploitation apparatus speeds up, our brains perform the inherent duty of keeping up, at the cost of a heightened need for stimuli and arising desensitisation. Moving image is capable of matching the pace of this new information flow while portraying the imprint of the human experience, but there is an irony in witnessing this on a screen, which is complicit.³⁸ Day in, day out, it participates in the narrative of all-encompassing growth and consumption, edging us towards extinction. Genetic experiments, peak use of fossil fuels and even the touch screen substituting the essential human need for the most intimate sense, all suggest the same possibility: that since we have reached a limit of acceleration, time travel already exists, just not in ways we hoped for.

Now, the Search.

A Feature of the Anthropocene: Raging Industrialisation. The borderland is rich in breathtaking views - the civil war preserved its wildlife better than a national park status ever could. But even the borderland is not safe from the laws of demand and supply, with pockets of mineral extraction showing up as cavernous holes in its continuity. Day 3 brings me to the Slieve Rusheen bog, where I expect to find forest trails, but my GPS leads me to a wide dusty road where loaded trucks roar past, every five minutes on the dot. It turns out the Slieve Rusheen Mountain is heavily mined for its limestone. It makes sense, the nearest households are miles away - this is no man’s land, after all. From the distance, you can see the broken limestone entering the diggers’ gaping mouths.

A Feature of the Anthropocene: Desensitisation. The accelerating rates of incoming information mean we see more of the world’s turbulences, but become adjusted to the exposure. Past events seem to either have occurred further in the past than when they actually transpired, or appear too separate from reality to be perceived as relevant. If the First World War was ‘the war to end all wars,’ then it has either failed its purpose, or the global memory span is at fault (but you couldn’t be blamed; you didn’t see it on Instagram).³⁹ What about immemorial memory? On the drizzly morning of my departure from Aughnacloy, I meet D, who shows me a monument erected where a young man was shot down by the British military on his way to football practice, some forty years ago. It strikes me that he was the same age as I am now. I wonder if his relatives still live in the area, or if they moved elsewhere, unable to look at that spot. But without the context of human memory, monuments become mere objects. Some time later, I ponder what will happen when D stops showing the shooting site to the visitors.

A Feature of the Anthropocene: (Almost) Everything Can Be Quantified, from the atomic radius of a particle to the popularity of a person. The Search starts off stratified with measurements of distances, times and paces, but soon disintegrates out of these frameworks entirely. M, a tall and high-spirited man, introduces

himself to me with a brisk, 'I don't really understand all this art stuff, I just want to run.' He accompanies me for almost two days. We talk as we run, about the border and its past, about where it came from and where it is heading. We talk about me, but we talk about him more, which I actually like, as it leaves me less out of breath and is a nice distraction from the discomfort. M's departure from the Search is almost cinematic as the Mayor of Muff suddenly appears, still wearing the livery collar. He pulls up to us in his car, offering M a lift back to Strabane. Just like that, M reveals he wasn't actually sure how he was getting home - which is about 15 miles away - or how long he intended on running for - it's been several hours - but he realises he should probably take up the offer while it stands. This is the last I see of him, but a few days later, he sends me a message. He tells me not only that he understands the art project now, but that I have changed Ireland. I don't know how to quantify his words, and I am okay with that.

As the Search continues, I stop using measurements of time as a reference point. Knowledge of my usual pace is irrelevant because I can no longer sustain it. Corridor after corridor of tree-lined country roads, I become detached from my body. Strangely, body awareness seems to be completely unnecessary, or even counterproductive, to the reflexes of procedural memory. Maybe it's the exhaustion, but I feel increasingly like I am merely a spectator, and my body is the spectacle. I travel not through distance and not by the measure of time, but somewhere within a rhythmical pounding on the ground.

3. System Looping

Pheidippides died at the bosom of Athens. His collapse was preceded by a 150 mile run from Athens to ask Spartans for help when the Persians invaded Marathon, and a subsequent 25 mile run back to Athens to announce their defeat. Pheidippides is the ideal hero, the hero who perishes before any manifestation of failure or commonality spoils their heroic feat. Now, Sisyphus, is the absurd hero. His love of life, disdain for death and levity towards the gods all contributed to his fate, which was at



Fig. 9

odds with all of these things. Sisyphus was condemned by the gods to roll a boulder up a hill for all of eternity in the underworld. As soon as the stone reached the top it would roll back down again, and Sisyphus would descend the slope and heave the stone up without rest, such was his punishment for his disobedience to the gods. Zeus devised this penance, believing the wise and spirited Sisyphus would abhor it. But instead of falling into despair, Sisyphus persisted with strength akin to the rock he

was pushing. There are correlations between Sisyphus and Icarus, in the sense that for both men the short-lived elation was worth the risks of disobedience even if this results in their fall, but is Sisyphus' punishment even causing him to suffer? 'The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart,' Albert Camus observes in an essay on the Myth of Sisyphus. 'One must imagine Sisyphus happy.'⁴⁰

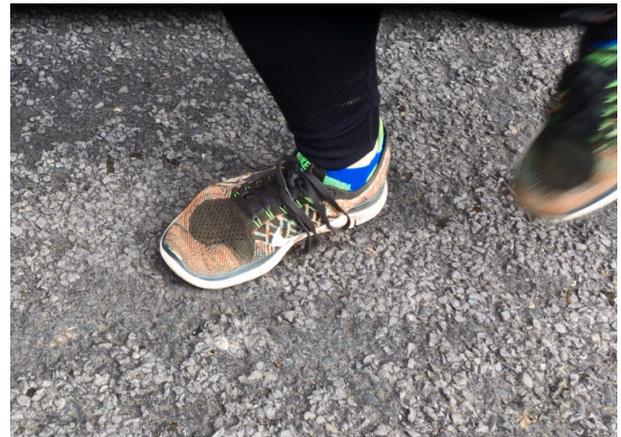


Fig. 10

In 1997, photographer Tracey Moffatt was being considered for the position of the official photographer of the 2000 Sydney Olympics. Although the commission never materialised, Moffatt nevertheless decided to pursue photographing the event. In September of 2000, she photographed athletes who placed fourth as she watched the televised Olympics in her apartment. In a statement for the photo series,

she explains her interest in the competitors who almost made it onto the podium, and reconsiders the nature of success and failure.

I think I'm trying to say something grand about competition in general. That it's beautiful to try. That to reach a final at an Olympic Games is a great achievement. To even be invited to participate in the Olympic Games is a great achievement. To even be athletic in general is a great achievement. To get yourself up and walk down the street is a great achievement. To wake up and face another hideous day is a great achievement. To even think about what you are going to do in the next hour is

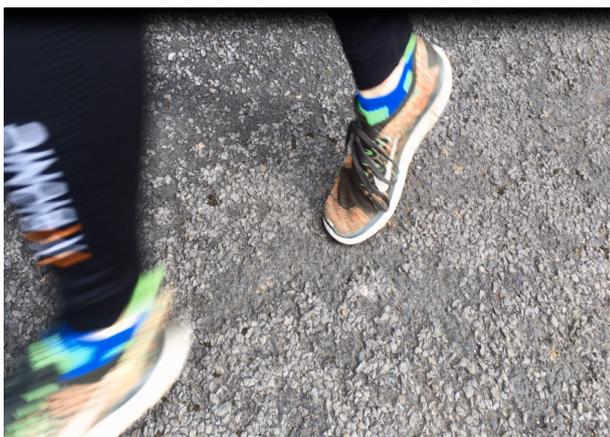


Fig. 11

*a great achievement. I could go on and on. Like I said, I have a different take on it all.*⁴

The contemporary Sisyphus, Forrest Gump, runs for reasons he himself is not sure of: *'since I ran this far, might as well turn around, and just keep on going.'*⁴² It is ironic that we see Gump photographed on the cover of Runner's World, known for celebrating competitive races which he would not participate in; not because

of lack of ability, but due to his disinterest in the institution of competition. A montage of journalists questioning his motivation satirises the Western inability to fathom Sisyphean actions, although the difference between intent and absurdity is merely in the context of their intensity. As spoken by anthropologist Gregory Bateson, and echoed by Deleuze and Guattari, 'it is the regrettable characteristic of the Western mind to relate expressions and actions to exterior or transcendent ends, instead of evaluating them on a plane of consistency in the basis of their intrinsic value.'⁴³

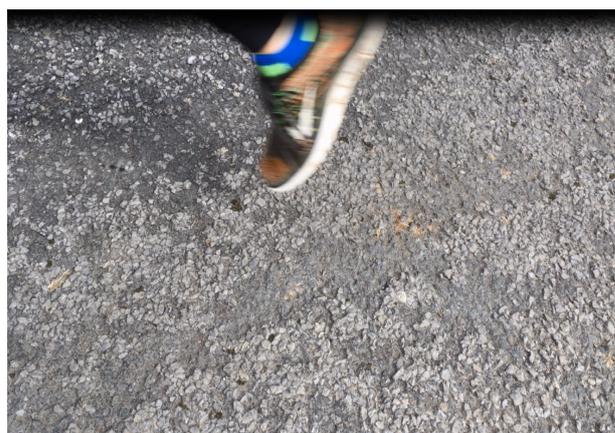


Fig. 12

Fig. 9 - 12
System looping as demonstrated by the author.

In John Walpoert's documentary film 'Outside Voices,' Jenn Shelton describes the mental modus operandi of ultra running as 'the juxtaposition (...) of how you can only do well if you really, really, really fucking care, but you also have to not give a shit, either.' The

film offers rare glimpses into the life of the ultra runner. Those glimpses are paved with unquestionable sacrifices. ‘I spend a lot of time by myself,’ remarks Shelton, in a moment of self-reflective sincerity. ‘I think it makes other people uncomfortable.’ She says this just as we begin to feel the desolate repetition of the life she built, her voice resonating over the shots of the van she lives in, driving to remote locations to run, in solitude, for several hours. On her way to a major race, she explodes with laughter borne out of the awareness of the thinning veil between comedy and tragedy. ‘It’s all I do. It’s all I know. I’m thirty-one years old and I have one skill. And it’s this: tsk - tk, tsk - tk. Moving my fucking legs in front of each other. I have no other skills. (...) My skillset is: left, right, left, right. Thirty-one fucking years.’ In the closing scene of the film, she studies in her van, alone, parked under a night sky, reciting an Italian phrase. It was Shelton’s talent that originally inspired me to consider an ultra distance, but having completed the Search, I can confirm that the only commonalities we share are emotional volatility and a penchant for self-deprecation.

Several people asked me how I trained for the Search, and I usually answer by saying that I approached it as an artist before I approached it as a runner. ‘So you didn’t train then?’ they laugh, evoking, by association, the image of a cerebral, chain-smoking painter. That’s not the case. Prior to completing the Search, I was already a runner, with marathons under my feet and years of worn out shoes. But

the Search was never conceived as a great feat of athleticism; the run was an apparatus enabling the access to archival features of the borderland until the body itself became an archive.⁴⁴ Competitive running is typically not about interacting with the landscape; it is about the fastest line of flight from it. Professionals runners have higher cadences than hobbyists, meaning they actually spend less time with their feet touching the ground. So the fastest possible tracing of the border is not suitable for the purposes of the Search, and conversely, the winding shape of the boundary is not advantageous to seamless running. Every hour was punctuated with instances of becoming lost in the maze of back country roads and trails, and the repetitive attempts at finding the way back out of these digressions, only for the entire process to be repeated the next day. But how is this different from life itself? Running is ‘both exercise and metaphor,’ even (actually, *especially*) at its most mediocre, whereby it becomes not about whether you have improved in comparison to others, but ‘improved over yesterday.’⁴⁵ Finding new ways of moving, or navigating our bodies through unknown environments, is a creative action; it affects both physical and immaterial surfaces. Marathon culture is similar to proto-religions because it congregates syndicates of otherwise disconnected people in a process which is transformative and ultimately leads to a trial of endurance. *The athlete is the alchemist. The athlete is the artist.*⁴⁶ A well-known anecdote in the running community tells of ‘the post-marathon blues,’ a feeling of sadness following a race, experienced not because the

4. Navigating Into Another Place

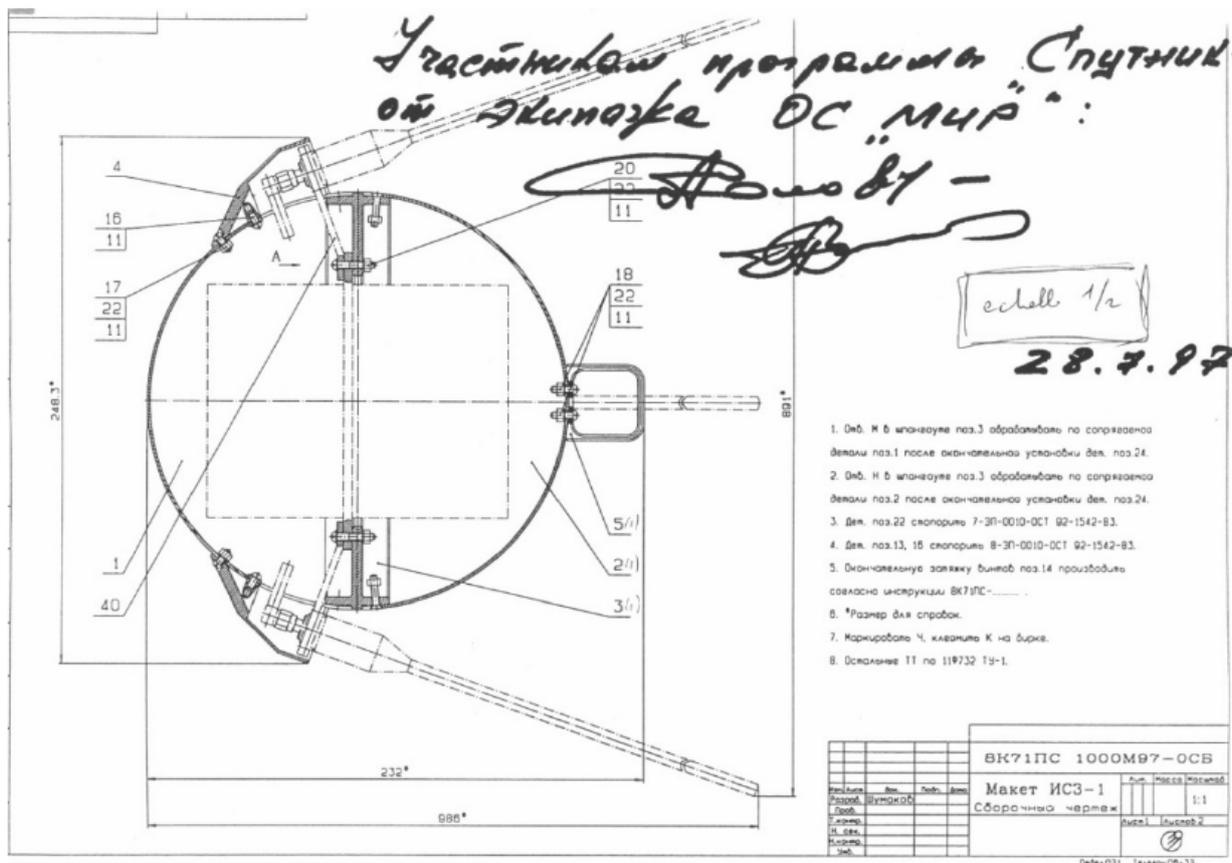


Fig. 14 Technical drawing of Sputnik Earth Sattelite

In 1990, NASA launched the Hubble telescope into space. From its inception to its launch, the largest and most versatile telescope in Earth's orbit cost an estimated 4.7 billion dollars. Orbital telescopes have enabled us to surpass the limitations of observing the evolution of stars and galaxies as a short-lived species by allowing us to create an archive. But the archive is not absolutely truthful as its very purpose is to translate cosmic actualities for the human gaze. It is well known that the vivid colours of the Hubble images are superimposed onto the images.

The mission to create a lens capable of capturing these images in extreme conditions was not without malfunctions. It became apparent shortly after the launch that the engineers excessively polished the device's primary mirror, intensifying the very same 'spherical aberration problems' they were hoping to prevent.⁴⁷ Researchers were able to fix the mistake by creating its opposite, working through reverse aberration models to manufacture corrective optics. In 1993, the new optics were installed during the first of Hubble's manned servicing mission. The scientists behind the Hubble did their best in the face of unprecedentedly complex operations, but the headlines were ruthless in their judgement of the enterprise. 'The Hubble: One Sick Puppy!' announced one of them.⁴⁸ Yet the real bizarre journey which the press omitted entirely is the one made by light as it captures the images of galactic objects which, by the time we witness their reflection, may have already

ceased to exist.

While vast resources are invested into exploring space, we continue to know very little about the world's oceans. We treat the oceanic interaction as secondary, inferior to the extraterrestrial mystery, so much so that it is used as a training ground for astronomers in preparation for the more epic quest of the cosmos or more prosaically, as a final destination for waste disposal. At the Poles, the Stratosphere ends at about 8 kilometres; the Mariana Trench reaches down to a similar 11 kilometres, but the parallels do not seem to translate into public interest in the subterranean. At 5 miles below the water surface, the pressure of the water is equivalent to the weight to 1, 600 elephants standing on a roof of a small car.⁴⁹ There is life there. In the end, the reasons behind the delay in the Trench's exploration are largely prosaic; it is in many ways just as challenging to survey as space while lacking the appeal of interstellar colonialism, and lighting up the impermeable weight of water, in particular, poses an optical obstacle.

Stargazing is as old as human consciousness itself. In a canonical example of the limit experience offered by Immanuel Kant in his *Critique of Judgement*, he describes the reflex of looking upwards, despite never being able to look at all of the night sky at once. It is within the moment of confronting the limits of their own entity with the limitless vastness of the universe that the stargazer feels the need to assert their existence within it, despite the painful impossibility of this task. Yet it is at this time that the human experience of self is felt most intensely. We carry within us an intrinsic wanderlust. Fuelled by the curiosity and childlike recalcitrance inherited from a shared diasporic ancestor we oppose all stagnation. A common misconception is that the anatomically modern man descends from the Neanderthal, but we are in fact much closer related to the Homo Erectus who was nomadic.⁵⁰ The Achilles tendon serves no function in walking, but is indispensable to running. It was not part of the Neanderthal anatomy and first appeared in the Homo Erectus. The hominids travelled in packs, running long distances as they hunted other mammals who could run faster over shorter journeys, but eventually overheated during longer journeys. It would be at this point that the male and female hunters - the Erectus travelled in packs of entire families - would break into a sprint. The proponents of the Running Man theory suggest that 'running is rooted in our collective imagination, and our collective imagination is rooted in running.'⁵¹ The desire to go faster and further, where no one else has ever been, is the extension of that ancestral imagination.

The artist is the 'illegitimate cosmonaut,' propelled via 'nameless, collective energies.'⁵² Just like an astronaut, he or she or they cannot embark on the mission of flight by themselves. The artist thinks, makes, and borrows from the environment - in solitude and often for years at a time - until the environment finally responds. Where the astronaut carries the myth of Soviet utopianism, or American exceptionalism, on their shoulders, the artist creates instinctively, for their own exploratory pleasure. Yet just like the astronaut, the artist encapsulates entire imaginations within their attempts of flight. The yearning to escape gravity and experience the sublime stems not from our need to transcend the physical, but from the very part of the unconscious which seeks spiritual transcendence.

In *Ecstasies: The Witches' Sabbath*, Carlo Ginzburg investigates shamanistic practices, pointing out similarities between the Mediterranean, Central Asian, American and other antiquities. He recounts how in 14th Century

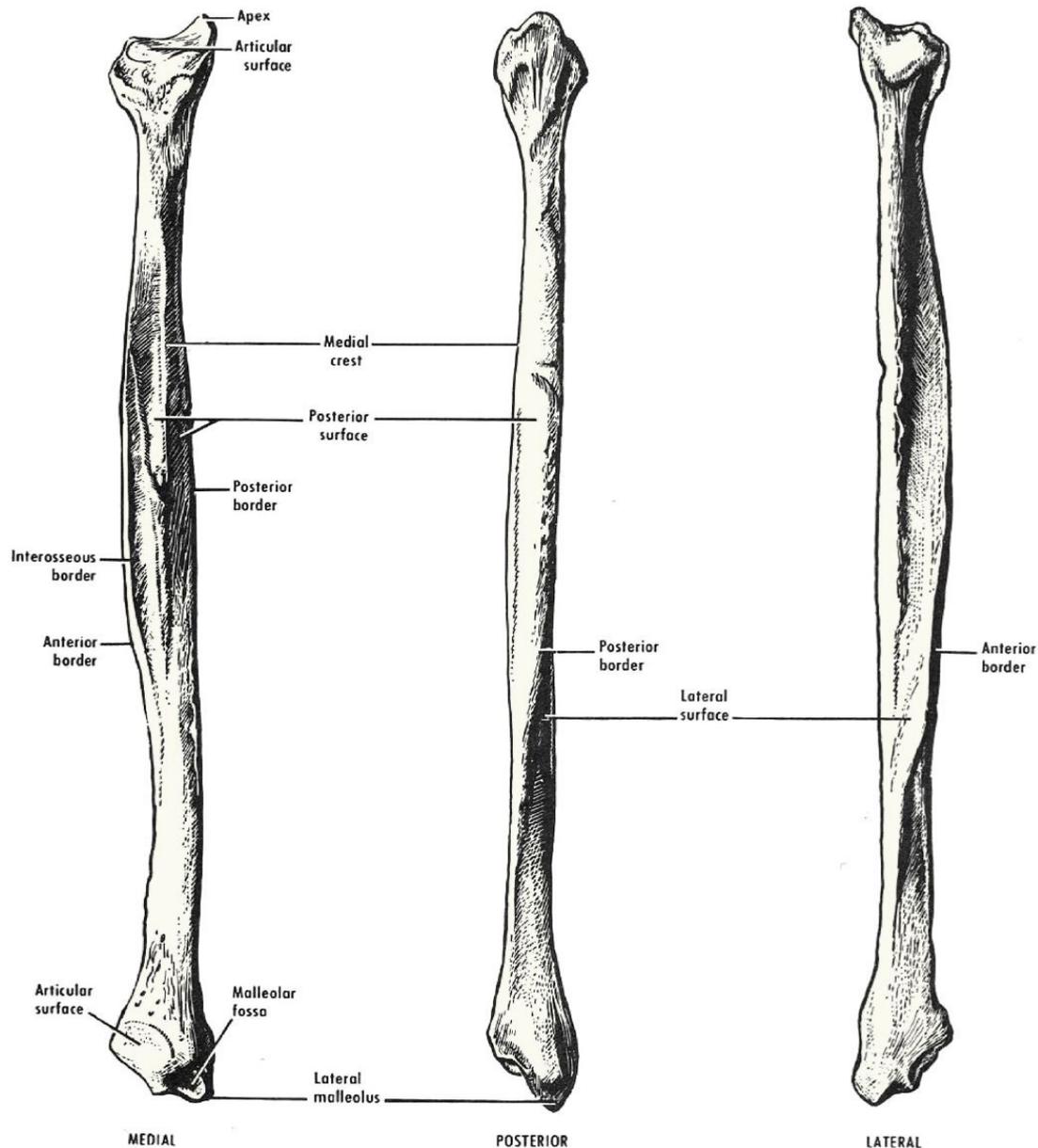


Fig. 15 Fibula anatomy

France, people struck with leprosy suffered endemic extermination, for it was thought that they possessed ‘poisons and weapons’ capable of killing entire populations.⁵³ He continues to find parallels between unusual asymmetries of the body and secret knowledge. Most mythologies tell of a half animal, half human hybrid, such as the Sphinx, whose consistent function is to facilitate ‘the stages of an initiatory journey to the beyond.’⁵⁴ The half man appears to be an intermediary figure between the world of the living and the dead, whether through zoomorphism or a hobbled gait. Achilles illustrates perfectly the ‘triple connection between fated child, peculiarities linked with walking, and the world of the dead.’⁵⁵ His parents submerge him in the Styx, the river of the nether world, to grant him unprecedented powers. But that which keeps him tethered to his earthly mother’s hand - his foot - does not come in contact with the waters. Achilles’

foot forever keeps him grounded to the world of mortals. Several other Greek myths divulge the vulnerability of the feet, perhaps hinting at a larger significance of the motif. Oedipus had his ankles pierced as a baby; Jason appears before Pelias wearing only one sandal; Perseus, too, receives only one of his sandals prior to fighting Gorgon. Melampus ('black foot'), the healer of Thessaly, had his feet blackened after becoming exposed to the sun as a child. What is the connection between the injured, the one-sandalled and the extraordinary?

A more compelling picture emerges through the analysis of shamanistic ritualism amongst the tribes of Siberia, Central Asia, Haiti, and other locations. The shaman frequents as the community's mediator with the immaterial plane; a representative of his people's interest in the underworld, where he may ask the spirits for better favours. Faced with the precarious existence of drought, sickness, and famine, the shaman responded by becoming free of his bodily weight, accessing 'a level of perception where he could find the strength to change the face of reality.'⁵⁶ Ritualistic dances and ecstasy allowed him to procure prey in nomadic societies, and crops where agriculture had been established. But this is always at the expense of an asymmetry, which as perceived by Ginzburg, is the common mark, or price, of contacting or transforming the nether world. Such was the spiritual force of the shaman, that to maintain an equilibrium, something had to be given away, and this often manifested as a limp or partial paralysis.

In the 1985 film *The Divine Horsemen: The Living Gods of Haiti*, filmmaker Maya Deren captured traditional rituals of voodoo dancing. She explored these practices from the interest point of a choreographer, but the voodoo movement encompasses realities beyond the body. The colonial ethnography misrepresented and exoticised these divine ceremonies, the practice of which signifies the embodiment of the goddess herself. In one of the scenes of *The Divine Horsemen*, we witness the arrival of Erzulie, the goddess of fertility and life, in the body of one of the dancers. Erzulie, one of the Haitian loa (*spirits*) is 'the very principle by which man conceives and creates divinity.'⁵⁷ Others notice the change in the devotee, and their movements become noticeably slower; tensions dissolve. The air becomes remarkably cooler, and the heat less pervasive. Could this be what Deleuze had in mind when describing the proto-world?

Towards the end of the Search, I injured the Achilles tendon on my right foot. To this day, it becomes inflamed in times of work exhaustion or psychological stress, but oddly enough, this never happens due to running.

When I initially felt the pain, I wanted to wallow in it. I did not feel able to run, and I worried about long-term damage if I continued. But I pushed myself to keep moving, and although the sharp discomfort of every step did not diminish, my perception of it changed. Rationally, I knew that an exertion of this intensity carried with it a risk of injury. But deeper, instinctively, I think I recognised the triple exchange between the land, the desire, and the body. It is almost as if the Search could not have happened in the way it transpired, had it not been for that currency. The scar tissue forming on my tendon was the proof of an opening behind it. I welcome it when it chooses to make its power known, always at the right time, like all the best talismans do. That pain was my closest companion during an absurd journey. It turned my body into more than just a body; it forged an archive.

When I was younger, I suffered from endometriosis. Tissue migrated from the inside of my womb, bleeding the viscera which were not supposed to bleed. This led me to have surgery during which a machine conducted

all the breathing for me, rhythmically stretching and emptying my lungs. As I began healing, I noticed some pains and aches. This was completely normal - 'it's the recovery from the invasive anaesthesia,' the doctors explained - except that all the pain concentrated on the right side of my body. A few months after the surgery, I began running, as a result of an important decision in my life: that I will nurture the connection between my physical and mental wellbeing. Going running enabled me to develop a new relationship with pain, except this time, the pain was a celebration of a body which was finally strong enough to be frivolously pushed to its limit. But as I persisted hard and long enough to actually cause trauma, a pattern of injuries, accumulated over the years, emerged: it was always the right glute, the right IT band, the right Achilles which suffered. I had a few instances of near-debilitating back spasms lasting several months, and they always occurred on my right side. Even as I write this, I can feel the ever-present tightness in my left ribcage; according to physiotherapists, the left side of my trunk overcompensates for the weak right hip I am eternally trying to strengthen. None of the discomfort ever stops me from running - at least not for very long - but it does occasionally cast my thoughts back to the operating table and the respiratory machine. I wonder if the peculiar asymmetry could ever be explained. I talk sense into myself, reiterating that the injuries correlated with a time of increased and intensive exercise, but at times I submit to the inconceivable and find myself difficult to convince.

With every stretch of a tendon, the proto world flutters.

5. Conclusion: This is not a conclusion, it's a circle

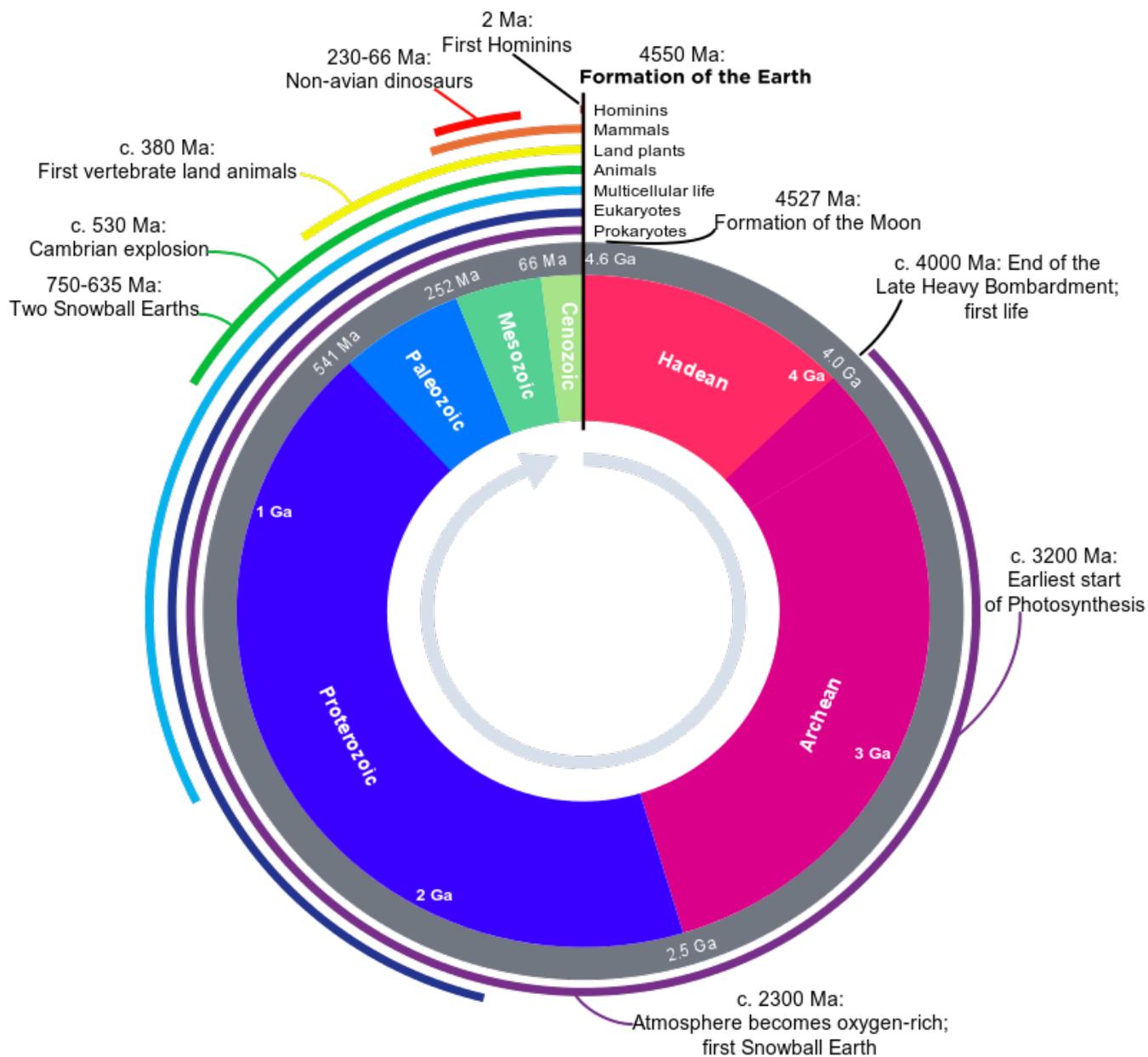


Fig. 16 Geological clock

You should love thyself enough, hominid, to know where you came from.

You were formed out of the debris of solar dust. You collided with Theia and then, you were also the moon. You grew rocks, and your molten heat moved them until they formed into clusters. You grew on water

and your breath was oxygen. You were a single cell. At some point, you began combining your squishy membrane with the membranes of others. Tell me, did you had sentience? Can you recall the ecstasy of those unions in the touch of your lover?

You had gills and scales and claws; an infinity of sophisticated languages. You were pounded and destroyed by meteors, so you became amphibians, trees, and insects. You pushed glaciers along your surface; you sacrificed your limbs. You made a manifestation of yourself, at the price of amnesia of your collective memory. At every point, you were all of these things, even when you were only one of them, or in those navy moments when you ceased to exist.

You are approaching your extinction. Do you believe in an ecological samsara? That after you pass, the nourishment of all your bodies will signal to the Earth its regeneration? Or will the suffocating atmosphere you leave behind engulf itself? Are you counting on this happening, so that you can reboot, collapse into death and reunite with Theia in the afterlife of another galaxy? Do you miss the warmth of her core and mantle? Do you need to feel her ferocious impact around you as it merges with your own? Where do you go in the night when you dream?

You should remember how you were once loved, through each and every one of your absurd journeys, so you can love thyself enough, hominid, to realise where you are going.

This is not a conclusion, it's a circle.

Cover Page

Polaroid photo collage, '*Notes From the Search*' (author's own work, 2017 - 2018)

Figures

Fig. 1 - Teardrop trailer caravan technical drawing, accessible at <http://teardropbuilder.com/plans-design-documents/wyoming-woody-teardrop-plans/attachment/wyoming-woody-teardrop-trailer-plans_54> [accessed June 28 2018]

Fig. 2 - Pointer 22 Pocket Cruiser Sail Plan, accessible at <<https://www.pointeryachts.com/pointer-22/en/specifications/zeilplan/>> [accessed June 28 2018]

Fig. 3, 4 - Boat manoeuvre/ boat manouevre, upside down (mirrored by author), accessible at <<https://slideplayer.com/slide/3100337/>> [accessed June 28 2018]

Fig. 5 - Casio watch face diagram, accessible at <https://support.casio.jp/wat/manual/5419_ja/YLGNSYqpcqnvmc.html> [accessed June 28 2018]

Fig. 6 - Goblin shark jaw studies, accessible at <<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/5d/Mitsu.JPG>> [accessed June 28 2018]

Fig. 7 - Time map of the solar system, accessible at <<https://arxiv.org/html/gr-qc/9911111>> [accessed June 28 2018]

Fig. 8 - Fingerprint, accessible at <<http://nownews.seoul.co.kr/news/newsView.php?id=20150519601015>> [accessed June 28 2018]

Fig. 9, 10, 11, 12 - System looping as demonstrated by the author, video stills from *The Search* documentation, (author's own work, 2017)

Fig. 13 - Loop distance made by a runner, documented on Strava, accessible at <<https://blog.strava.com/pt/galleries/best-of-photos-2016/>> [accessed June 28 2018]

Fig. 14 - Technical Drawing of Sputnik Earth Satellite, accessible at <<feed://www.nathaliepottier.com/category/passions/techsci/feed/>> [accessed June 28 2018]

Fig. 15 - Fibula Anatomy, accessible at <http://humansbody.club/fibula-anatomy/> [accessed June 28 2018]

Fig. 16 - Geological Clock, accessible at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geologic_time_scale#/media/File:Geologic_Clock_with_events_and_periods.svg [accessed June 28 2018]

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<https://eu.usatoday.com/story/tech/sciencefair/2014/12/19/deepest-fish-discovered-pacific/20659917/> [accessed 23 July 2018]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4NLifoApTMc>> [accessed 9 June 2018]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=83WTxmkye04>> [accessed 24 June 2018]

Endnotes

¹ ‘The rhizome is altogether different, a *map and not a tracing*. Make a map, not a tracing.’ - Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi, Illustrated Edition (London: Continuum, 2008), p. 13

² Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi, Illustrated Edition (London: Continuum, 2008), p. 45

³ Brent Adkins, *Deleuze and Guattari's A Thousand Plateaus: A Critical Introduction and Guide* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), p. 25

⁴ ‘Rats are rhizomes.’ - Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi, Illustrated Edition (London: Continuum, 2008), p. 7

⁵ Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi, Illustrated Edition (London: Continuum, 2008), p. 24

⁶ Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi, Illustrated Edition (London: Continuum, 2008), p. 25

⁷ Jan Verwoert, Bas Jan Ader: *In Search of the Miraculous* (London: Afterall Books, 2006), p. 13

⁸ This is an intended reference to Georges Perec, whose *Attempt at Exhausting a Place* is a personal monologue from the standpoint of a passive observer, or as he described it, ‘what happens when nothing happens.’ The reportage of mundane everyday activities unravelling on a public square over the course of a Parisian weekend is deliberately redundant, and the rhythmic dissociation reverberating through it is familiar through my own rhythmical motions of long distance running.

⁹ Tiernan Morgan, *In Search of Bas Jan Ader, the Artist Who Disappeared at Sea* (2016) <<https://hyperallergic.com/336146/in-search-of-bas-jan-ader-the-artist-who-disappeared-at-sea/>> [accessed 29 March 2018]

¹⁰ Liza Bear, Willoughby Sharp, ‘Bas Jan Ader: In Search of the Miraculous’, *Avalanche*, Issue 13, (1976), p. 24 - 27

¹¹ Johanna Adriana Ader Appels, *From the Deep Waters of Sleep* (2013) <<http://talesofla.tumblr.com/post/50257102086/from-the-deep-waters-of-sleep-a-poem-written>> [accessed 14 March 2018]

¹² Jan Verwoert, *Bas Jan Ader: In Search of the Miraculous* (London: Afterall Books, 2006), p. 13 - 14

¹³ Jan Verwoert, *Bas Jan Ader: In Search of the Miraculous* (London: Afterall Books, 2006), p. 26

¹⁴ Frieze Magazine (authors unlisted), *On Bas Jan Ader* (2018) <<https://frieze.com/article/bas-jan-ader>> [accessed 20 June 2018]

¹⁵ Tod Miller, *Storming The Wall: Climate Change, Migration and Homeland Security*, ed. by Greg Ruggiero (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2017), p. 116

¹⁶ Francis Alys, *The Green Line* (2016) <<http://francisalys.com/the-green-line/>> [accessed 1 March 2018]

¹⁷ Garrett Carr, *The Rule of the Land* (London: Faber & Faber, 2017), p. 4

¹⁸ Garrett Carr, *The Rule of the Land* (London: Faber & Faber, 2017), p. 3

¹⁹ Garrett Carr, *The Rule of the Land* (London: Faber & Faber, 2017), p. 72

²⁰ In Northern Ireland, red is widely regarded as the colour representing the Protestant part of the population, due to its increased usage by unionists and loyalist commencing in the beginning of the 20th century. Conversely, green is the emblematic colour of Irish Catholics. The few existing integrated schools (schools which Catholic and Protestant attend together) often incorporate both colours into the design of their uniform.

²¹ DW TV, *Polish artist runs the length of Irish border* (2017) <<https://www.dw.com/en/polish-artist-runs-the-length-of-irish-border/av-40542915>> [accessed 31 May 2018]

²² Marianne Flood, *Derry group joins Polish migrant on 200 mile Brexit protest run of Irish border* (2017) <<https://www.derrynow.com/news/derry-group-joins-polish-migrant-200-mile-brexit-protest-run-irish-border/176115>> [accessed 31 May 2018]

²³ Jan Verwoert, *Bas Jan Ader: In Search of the Miraculous* (London: Afterall Books, 2006), p. 46

²⁴ Thomas Kinsella, *The Tain*, 2nd (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 80

²⁵ Garrett Carr, *The Rule of the Land* (London: Faber & Faber, 2017), p. 30

²⁶ Author's own translation

²⁷ Alexander M. Dzieduszycki, Ryszard Slomski, Mirosław S. Ryba, *Will an Aurochs Come Back to Polish Forests* (Poznan: Bibliotheca Turcoviana, Poznan University of Life Science Publisher, 2010), p. 23

²⁸ Alexander M. Dzieduszycki, Ryszard Slomski, Mirosław S. Ryba, *Will an Aurochs Come Back to Polish Forests*

(Poznan: Bibliotheca Turcoviciana, Poznan University of Life Science Publisher, 2010), p. 28

²⁹ The Deluge, instigated by the joint military powers of Russia and Sweden, is theorised to have been the most desrtuctive event in the history of Poland (notably, by professor Andrzej Rottermund). It transpired just over thirty years from the 1627 aurochs extinction.

³⁰ L. Hussakof., ‘A new goblin shark, *Scapanorhynchus jordani*, from Japan’, *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History*, 26, (1909), 256 - 262, available at <<http://digitallibrary.amnh.org/bitstream/handle/2246/1929/v2/dspace/ingest/pdfSource/bul/B026a19.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>> [accessed 15 June 2018]

³¹ Russell J. Garwood, ‘Patterns In Palaeontology: The first 3 billion years of evolution’, *Palaeontology Online*, (2012), <<https://www.palaeontologyonline.com/articles/2012/patterns-in-palaeontology-the-first-3-billion-years-of-evolution/>> [accessed March 19 2018]

³² Motherboard, *Surrounded: Island of the Sharks* (2016) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4NLifoApTMc>> [accessed 9 June 2018]

³³ Alexander M. Dzieduszycki, Ryszard Slomski, Mirosław S. Ryba, *Will an Aurochs Come Back to Polish Forests* (Poznan: Bibliotheca Turcoviciana, Poznan University of Life Science Publisher, 2010), p. 120

³⁴ Jonathan Latimer, *Oxford Uehiro Prize in Practical Ethics: Why We Should Genetically ‘Disenhance’ Animals Used in Factory Farms* (06/03/2018) <<http://blog.practicaethics.ox.ac.uk/2018/03/oxford-uehiro-prize-in-practical-ethics-why-we-should-genetically-disenhance-animals-used-in-factory-farms/>> [accessed 15 July 2018]

³⁵ Noah Yuval Harari, *Sapiens, A Brief History of Humankind*, trans. by Noah Yuval Harari, John Purcell and Haim Watzman (New York : Harper, 2011), p. 344

³⁶ Nora Pierre, ‘Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire’, *Representations*, 26 (1989), p. 13

³⁷ Catherine Malabou, *What Should We Do with Our Brain?*, trans. by Sebastian Rand (Fordham: Fordham University Press, 2008), p. 6

³⁸ In particular, I was thinking back to the multi-channel projection ‘Purple,’ by John Akomfrah, which I viewed in the Barbican, London, in January of 2018. The desynchronised sequences of archival and commissioned footage create a multi-faceted view of the homo sapiens in the Anthropocene. The archival footage traces the origins of climate change, as does the commissioned footage, however the latter consumed immense transport and energy resource to produce. Additionally, the work, overall, places the public members in the position of the passive spectator. There is much that ‘Purple’ accomplishes, but could it be possible that it is at least partially complicit in romanticising a social justice issue?

³⁹ W. Warren Wagar, *H.G. Wells: Traversing Time*, (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2004) p. 147

⁴⁰ Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus: And Other Essays*, trans. by Justin O'Brien, 2nd (New York: Vintage Books USA, 1991), p. 81

⁴¹ Tracey Moffatt, *Fourth #17, from the series Fourth* (2001) <<https://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection/works/154.2011.17/?>> [accessed 1 June 2018]

⁴² Forrest Gump, dir. by Robert Zemeckis (Paramount Pictures, 1994)⁴¹ Gregory Bateson, *Steps To an Ecology of the Mind* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1972) p. 113

⁴³ Gregory Bateson, *Steps To an Ecology of the Mind* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1972) p. 113

⁴⁴ I use the word 'archive' as something which roots itself in the molecular history of a landscape, but also exists autonomously, in the same way that Uriel Orlow's photographs of trees planted by Dutch settler in South Africa designated the very trees as an archive. Uriel Orlow, *The Memory of Trees* (year unspecified) <<https://urielorlow.net/work/the-memory-of-trees/>> [accessed 2 June 2018]

⁴⁵ Haruki Murakami, *What I Talk About When I Talk About Running*, trans. by Phillip Gabriel (London: Vintage, 2009), p. 11

⁴⁶ This phrase was taken from Matthew Barney's manifesto from his work 'Drawing Restraint.' Barney recurrently incorporates elements of climbing and bouldering into his practice. Matthew Barney, *Drawing Restraint* (2010) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=83WTxmkye04>> [accessed 24 June 2018]

⁴⁷ Simon Goodwin and John Gribbin, *Deep Space: new pictures from the Hubble space telescope* (London: Constable and Company Limited, 1999), p. 13

⁴⁸ Simon Goodwin and John Gribbin, *Deep Space: new pictures from the Hubble space telescope* (London: Constable and Company Limited, 1999), p. 10

⁴⁹ Michael Winter, *Deepest fish found 5 miles down in Pacific trench* (09/12/2014) <<https://eu.usatoday.com/story/tech/sciencefair/2014/12/19/deepest-fish-discovered-pacific/20659917/>> [accessed 23 July 2018]

⁵⁰ Christopher McDougal, *Born to Run: The hidden tribe, the ultra runners and the greatest race the world has never seen* (London : Profile Books, 2010), p. 220

⁵¹ Christopher McDougal, *Born to Run: The hidden tribe, the ultra runners and the greatest race the world has never seen* (London : Profile Books, 2010), p. 239

⁵² Boris Groys, Ilya Kabakov: The Man Who Flew into Space from his Apartment (London: Afterall Books, 2006), p.

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⁵³ Carlo Ginzburg, *Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath* (London: Hutchinson Radius, 1990), p. 33

⁵⁴ Carlo Ginzburg, *Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath* (London: Hutchinson Radius, 1990), p. 228

⁵⁵ Carlo Ginzburg, *Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath* (London: Hutchinson Radius, 1990), p. 231

⁵⁶ Marina Warner, *Professionals in Ecstasy: Shamans and Film-Makers*, RCA CHS Lecture Series 'The Subject is Present', Royal College of Art, 7th of February 2011⁵⁴ *The Divine Horsemen: The Living Gods of Haiti*, dir. by Maya Deren (undistributed, 1985)

⁵⁷ *Divine Horsemen: The Living Gods of Haiti*, dir. by Maya Deren (1985)

