

Glossaries

Marie

for

Farrington

Forwardness

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Glossaries

Forwardness offers an invitation to re-examine human relations to land
by exploring geology's links to memory and visibility. Geology for
collaboration with the Department of Ulimology.
programme including talks, screenings, listening sessions and an event in
Crowley, Anna's French and Marie Farrington, and a public engagement at
The exhibition is accompanied by a publication with texts by Dr Eleanor
translating the building's various spaces into a series of layered sound
elements from the ventilation shafts, composed of a series of layered
and that in collaboration with the artist, which is a series of layered
diverse that provide a narrative, and which is a series of layered
interventions present an artistic material history for using volcanic
throughout the layers of the Museum Building's structure and texture.
Libraries for Forwardness presents site-responsive works installed
into modes of making in the studio.
process and a rich history, to showcase working and experimental
perform a reflexive mapping of the building's interior and exterior
used by the Department of Geology, the work in Geology for Forwardness
Marble. Through a process of re-purposing and re-arranging geological
Limestone, Cork Red Limestone, Killybeggy Black Limestone and Connemara
a new catalogue of materials, including various types of stone, a
their maps through of a geological education, it is a series of layered
Woodward has a long history of geological and architectural. The building
The Museum Building (1851-52 by George Gilbert Scott) was a
and how land can be applied in its own representation and display
sampling methods as ways to explore an interpretation of landscape
the Environment (2011-22) which has created a series of layered
This project arose from Farrington's return to Trinity College Dublin
the architecture of the Museum Building in Trinity College Dublin
containing a series of layered and layered through

Glossaries for Forwardness is a multi-platform project by Marie Farrington, examining convergences between landscape and memory through the architecture of the Museum Building in Trinity College Dublin. This project arose from Farrington's artist residency at Trinity Centre for the Environment (2021–22) where her research approached geological sampling methods as ways to explore our interpretation of landscape, and how land can be implicit in its own representation and display.

The Museum Building (1853–57) by Cork architects Deane, Son & Woodward is a seminal work of Ruskinian Gothic architecture. The building itself can be thought of as a geological collection: it is constructed from a vast catalogue of stone types, indexing examples of Caen Stone, Armagh Limestone, Cork Red Limestone, Kilkenny Black Limestone and Connemara Marble. Through a process of repurposing and inverting analysis procedures used by the Department of Geology, the works in *Glossaries for Forwardness* perform a reflexive sampling of the building's interior, and translate processes such as thin-sectioning, microscopic imaging and resin-mounting into modes of making in the studio.

Glossaries for Forwardness presents site-responsive works installed throughout the foyer of the Museum Building. Sculptural and textile interventions present an extensive material glossary including volcanic olivine dust, bio-resin, anthracite, acid-etched and fused glass, wool and cast ink. In collaboration with Stanislaw Welbel, a spatial audio installation emanates from the ventilation shafts, composed on a synthesiser by translating the building's various stones into a strata of layered sound. The exhibition is accompanied by a publication with texts by Dr. Quentin Crowley, Anneka French and Marie Farrington, and a public engagement programme including talks, screenings, listening sessions and an event in collaboration with the Department of Ultimology.

By exploring geology's links to memory and visibility, *Glossaries for Forwardness* offers an invitation to reimagine human relations to land.

Just as the geological research that underpins this project is co-determined by the natural processes it attempts to represent, the works in *Glossaries for Forwardness* make space for the active agency of landscape to emerge. As deep-time materials intersect with momentary human gestures, *Glossaries for Forwardness* activates the Museum Building to engage in a co-creative process where the geological actions that formed its architecture – layering, folding, stacking, accumulation and erasure – become concentrated in the act of making. The exhibition is a call for *forwardness*, a linear push across one state of being and into another – solid to liquid, inner to outer – and encourages a critical engagement with the representative frameworks through which the climate crisis is mediated.

This exhibition is curated by Rachel Botha.

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Museum Building, Trinity College Dublin



Environmental change and natural archives

The vast expanse of geological time and processes are condensed into natural archives. The environment is constantly shifting and evolving. Over timescales of millions of years, movement of tectonic plates can form mountains, or give birth to oceans. Environmental change is recorded in ice, in crystals, the hard parts of organisms such as corals and shells, in sediments, and in the rock record. To unlock the rich histories of these archives, we need the appropriate knowledge and tools to sample and visualise them. Today, we can see the Atlantic Ocean separates Europe from North America. Using principles of palaeomagnetism, tiny magnetic minerals in sediments and rocks can be used to retrace the drift of continents. Natural crystals, such as zircon ($ZrSiO_4$), act as atomic clocks faithfully recording the passage of time through the decay of uranium into lead; an area known as geochronology. We now know that the North Atlantic Ocean was initiated around 56 million years ago, and sometime before this a large supercontinent, or *Mother-Earth*, existed. To unlock such information from the rock record we need to understand the language of our planet. We can use these natural archives to help us comprehend the world around us.

Museums and memory

Environmental changes over geological timescales are difficult for us to envisage. Our perception is fine-tuned to capture information over seconds, hours, months and years. Museum specimens on the other hand may record protracted events such as oxygenation of the Earth's atmosphere, evolution of species, or changes in patterns of climate. Museum archives are like the libraries of the natural world; they act as repositories of changing conditions, allowing us to browse the great planetary glossary. Early geologists tended to be informal collectors and observers of the natural world, and through their deliberate collection and curation of materials they have transferred their observer status to us. Sir Charles Lewis Giesecke (1761–1833) was an early geologist and collector. Like so many academics of his time, he enjoyed dual professional interests. In his case, starting his career in theatre before

acting as Professor of Mineralogy at the Royal Dublin Society between 1814 and 1833. Giesecke's geological collections catalogue his travels through parts of Europe, the Faroe Islands, and finally on to Greenland, where he was stranded for seven years. When we experience what remains of old museum collections, not only do we interact with archives of the natural world, but we also relive the theatre of the collectors' travels and circumstances of their time. The very act of collecting, displaying, and viewing specimens in a museum forms a direct connection between the planet, the collector, and us.

The Museum Building,
Trinity College Dublin

The Museum Building in Trinity College Dublin was built between 1853 and 1857. In historical and social contexts, this was just after Ireland's Great Famine (*an Gorta Mór*, 1845 to 1852). The building was designed by architects Thomas Deane and Benjamin Woodward, and selected as a winning entry to an open competition. The building itself is an archive of its time; it was inspired by Byzantine architecture of Venice, which was made popular by the art historian John Ruskin in his book *The Stones of Venice*, published in three volumes between 1851 and 1853. The building contains numerous different rock-types mainly from the island of Ireland, but with some sourced from England and France. It is considered one of the key buildings in the development of the Gothic Revival style, with exquisite stone carvings by the Cork-born O'Shea brothers depicting plants and animals from Trinity collections. Connemara Marble is one of the most striking stones used in the building. From a geological perspective, the precursor to the Connemara Marble was deposited approximately 600 million years ago as a marine sediment on the margin of an ancient continent called Laurentia. The rock later experienced high temperatures and pressures during an ancient mountain forming event, known as the Grampian Orogeny, which occurred between 475 and 460 million years ago. During this phase of development, a variety of the mineral olivine (Mg_2SiO_4) formed. Subsequent alteration and hydration events formed the mineral serpentine ($(Mg,Fe)_3Si_2O_5(OH)_4$),

which gives the rock its distinctive green colour. The Connemara Marble is therefore an archive of natural processes, recording some 600 million years of geological evolution of what is now part of the west of Ireland. The design, construction, and use of materials in the Museum Building is an expression of the people, culture, and technological innovations of its time. To walk through the building and experience its collections is to tap into the great planetary memory of environmental change.

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Little Pushes

Anneka French

summer/autumn Begin as the seasons change. As cold breath slips in through an open window at 4.30am, as the sun rises sluggishly two hours later, give or take. Only a moment ago, heat pressed down on your slick bodies, too tired to be useful and too heavy to care. Small forest fires started. You slept downstairs. Fire angels. Water lapped across the room's threshold, onto the stones and no one seemed to notice it. Tiny toes were bathed in ice, fabrics cast aside. Rounded bellies and chests left open to the stars, stitching pink nipples in the dark sky where there were none before. A mote. Rain is falling again. You know, that thin sort. And browns are thinking about green. You feel dizzy and grasp for the steady, solidity of wood. The crumbs of a Lotus Biscoff sandwich biscuit are so much like sand. Then the wetness came, dripping, pooling under socks. You remember sleepovers being more fun than this.

autumn/winter Change again. Orange at the core. With more mist and a desire for a warm jacket that never materialises. Your last dahlia has bloomed its disgusting brightness. Red. Soil finally pressed into action. Cardboard is crammed through the letterbox and stored downstairs and in other cavities. Crevices. You stand in the damp grass. A sliced section of a trunk laid flat for a blonde with a fluffy dog named Annie. And the tree seeds are having a mast year, a bumper crop of acorns, pinecones, hazelnuts and chestnuts, the result of a reaction to extreme weather; a crisis heralding a rush for survival. Pull in the waistband to make tight, uneven pleats. Read this. And this. Floor-spill. Ink-spill. Coffee-spill. Slime. You wrap the blanket around you, put the kettle on again. Zoom in. Mind the gap. And the greasy patch over there. Winter's bride is autumn's fool.

winter/spring

You don't have any change. Save the shoots that push through the beds. Greening. If only you could remember which bulbs were planted, where and what you had purchased. The ground vibrates with life that moves about, upwards towards the light. See these little roots? They are golden-grey and brim-full. You lose the apples somewhere along the road and the clip comes off and rolls away too, wheels set free, right down the hill. You wrap the blanket around your shoulders like a cloak, layer upon layer to trap every hot bit. You forget his hat and hope his newly shorn head wouldn't get too cold in the ice. It was in your pocket. Like limestone. Like the wind. You dig into the compacted dust block with a tiny plastic key. Little pushes. The treasure inside reveals itself slowly, with encouragement and water. Blue plastic T-Rex. Arms washed down the drain. Incy Wincy. We smashed it, Always Child, into little sparkling pieces that contained the whole of time.

spring/summer

Your change is interrupted by a thousand different thoughts. You fill a glass patterned with silver circles with water and only then do you notice that a large section of it is missing, left behind in the cupboard. Waiting sharply like the jaws of a rodent or that ladybird that once bit your small-sandalled toe. Paint-stained shorts. You write 'shit' on the whiteboard in neat, perfect letters and grin up at me. Slate stacked on icing, stacked on soup, stacked on crimson-amber cloud formations. Visible marks. There is bruising to the stomach and thigh, and scabs on the calf that catch on rough towels and bobbled sheets. You learn about composting but quickly bin the idea. The worms are too strong for all of this. Too full of memory and carbon and healing and chlorine and pressure. The worms are expected to travel to the office and to keep a tally of their hours like they can't be (or won't be) trusted. They know it like the back of their handless hands. You made dinner. You made her cry. You existed.

Air

In ice cores, bubbles contain memories of ancient temperature changes. These pockets are fossils: tiny samples of past atmospheres archived in air.

Carve

Fresh flowers gathered as models for stone carvings. Separate entropies tied together by the single thread of time.

Cast

A ghostly architecture of emptiness forms when a liquid fills a cavity and solidifies. A cast is memory made physical. While continuously recalling the source of its form, it produces a strange dislocation that inverts the spatial logic of objects. Casting reveals *making* as an act of *archaeology* by inviting the excavation of one material from another, pulling a new form out of abstraction and assimilating it into the collage of material fact.

Clay

Pliant slip of earth. Greenware. Laid aside. Aired out. Leather-hard. Bone dry. Stacked. Soaked. Biscuit fired.

Column

An upright pillar; a vertical division; a geological structure made of layers of different rock types formed by the settling of sediments over millions of years, with the oldest sediments at the bottom and the youngest at the top. This is the process that associates history with verticality.

Depth map

Just as contour lines map varying elevation through the changing space between them, a depth map describes variations in distance from a particular viewpoint. It reads objects as topographic bodies and translates them to a tonal gradient.

Dust

Dust is a two-fold repetition. It echoes the past and the surface on which it settles, reconstructing contours and reincorporating itself into the air. Dust complicates categories. It enables the past, pulverised and powdered, to remain in continuous circulation. In the studio off-cuts and dust collect constantly, mirroring the process of creation and assembly through a symmetrical undoing and scattering of matter.

Environmental proxy

Preserved physical characteristics of the environment that can substitute for direct measurements. Through biomineralisation, salmon biologically record their environments. The concentric patterns in their scales can be read, like rings in a tree trunk, as archives or chemical memories of the watery landscapes they inhabited. Salmon scales are microscopic maps of the porous membrane between body and environment.

Erosion

Water has a quality of active in-betweenness. Its future movement is latent within its current movement. It does not present self-sufficient or fixed parameters. Its form is amorphous and structurally interwoven with the vessels or landforms that contain it or carry it forward. It evades the stable material reality of place. Water erodes the notion of location and redefines it as a set of fluid and transitional interconnections that unravel across space and time.

Fieldwork

Environmental field research is a circular feedback loop that is reflexive, its results co-determined by the natural processes it attempts to represent. Through fieldwork, landscape engages in a co-creative process with field researchers and becomes an implicit agent in its own representation. This collaboration enables landscape to take part in its own interpretation and display, directing images and imaginations of itself.

A Glossary for Forwardness

Floor

Tile. Linoleum. Wood. Mud. Carpet. Concrete. Trampled chewing gum. Gridded pattern. Squashed spider. Dispersed spill. Flatness nods to latency, expectancy or potential.

Forward

The future hangs, then falls, amassing on top of the past. The single thread of time unwinds from the spool with a relentless linear push that favours forwardness, always forwardness, across one state of being and into another. Everything falls away, not only making space for the next thing but *pulling the next thing into existence*. Pulling the thread. Endings are moments of production. As things fall away, they are deposited – byproducts of time and entropy – and will remain underneath all the coming accumulation, all the future ruins. These byproducts build the world.

Glossary

A stratification of language. A cumulative building of meaning that emerges between terms which have a collective direction. An attempt to find the fragile edges of a category.

Green

Olivine is a major mineral in the mantle of the Earth. Plate-tectonics push olivine-rich rocks to the Earth's surface. Their green colour is counterintuitive to the imagined red core.

Horizon line

A place of beginnings and endings; a threshold that can never be crossed because it is continuously re-positioned in correspondence to the body. This mobility offers a distinct set of geographical facts for every encounter. The horizon line is a place of paradox – by establishing the eye as the pivot point of the landscape it maintains its own invisibility.

Intertide

When I was five, I cut the palm of my hand on glass. Days later at the beach, saltwater and sand clotted the bandage and hardened the stitches into rusty wires. This was how my hand recovered. The seawater healed the site. The coast and the skin are equivalent zones. Neither is a static mapping of a boundary. Neither is discrete or absolute. They are porous margins that revise their own structures, shaped by tactile crossovers. They fizz with provisionality, continuously unmaking and rebuilding their own fluid architectures.

Label

"Minerals are labeled directly on the specimen or on the matrix in which they are found. The number should be inked onto a small white rectangle and then sealed with varnish. Alternatively a small card label can be glued on – however over time many glues fail and such labels fall off".¹

Landscape

Landscape implies framing, incorporating the act of looking into the idea of land. It proposes itself as a participatory act.

Punctuation

Marks used in writing to indicate a pause, and separate sentences or their elements. These gaps clarify meaning. Breaks and empty spaces are key structures in both language and geology. A comma is a cavity in grammar. A seam is a hyphen in stone.

Resin mount

A granular specimen or sediment sample is embedded in epoxy resin to provide stability for grinding, polishing, analysis or imaging.

Soak

The material exchange of soaking is an exercise in closeness. Immersing fabric in ink breaks down the limits of proximity until the two substances merge into a hybrid remainder of the action. Soaking is an emergent gesture that proposes materials as events which unfold in response to each other.

Sonar

A spatial use of sound to navigate a path, detect objects or measure distance.

Staircase

A diagonal path into the "reservoir of air".²

Surface

The end point of light and the starting point of shadow. The imagehood of a thing. An archive of material interference. A site of intense contact between the history and future of an object.

Thin section

A sample of marble is attached to a glass slide and ground down with carborundum grit until reduced to a translucent film of stone, the depth of which can only be measured in microns.

Ventilation

The bodily workings of a building. A circulation system carved through the threshold of the walls. When a current of air is funnelled through the tunnel it emerges as a breath that collects residues: a relic in reverse.

¹ Wyse Jackson, P. (2013) 'Guidelines for the curation of geological materials to be housed in the Geological Museum, Trinity College Dublin'. Available at: <https://www.tcd.ie/Geology/assets/pdf/museum/Guidelines%20for%20the%20Curation%20of%20Geological%20Materials.pdf>

² Budd, L. (2019) 'The Ventilation System of the Museum Building' in Casey, C., Wyse Jackson, P. (eds) (2019) *The Museum Building of Trinity College Dublin. A model of Victorian craftsmanship*. Four Courts Press, Dublin, Ireland.

A note on audio development

The sound installation which accompanies the exhibition has a double function.

Firstly, it creates a sonic environment in which visitors experience the architecture of the building and the exhibition. The audio track was built by assigning sounds, based on their aura and sonic qualities, to the various minerals from which the building's stones were formed. In this sense, the audio installation becomes a soundtrack that illustrates the material of the space. Sound creates a framework: an ambiance that affects the act of looking. It functions in a similar way to music in a movie, determining how viewers perceive and understand what is happening on the screen. In such, creating a soundscape for an exhibition is very close to curatorial practice. It sets up an atmosphere, a context. It delivers an interpretation. The sound installation in *Glossaries for Forwardness* is site-specific and unique for the ventilation system of the Museum Building. The speakers placed in the shafts enable the sound to travel through the walls and frame the space.

Secondly, the development of this audio work alludes to geological processes. The sounds were produced on a Frequency Modulation Synthesizer. In FM sound synthesis, the frequency of the waveform is changed. The more a wave is modulated, the more complex it gradually becomes. This process mirrors geological transformations in which rocks that experience high temperatures and pressures also change their qualities, with other factors such as hydration creating further alterations. In the making of this work, wave sounds or 'carriers' were modulated and arranged harmonically, melodically and rhythmically on a timeline, translating the stones in the architecture into an ephemeral strata of sound. The music that emerges from the ventilation shafts echoes and blends in the space, creating a stratified structure of shifting sonic layers.

Stanislaw Welbel

A note on the design

The Museum Building is renowned for the distinctive materials employed in its construction. Our design for the exhibition identity references both the emphasis placed on materials in the building's design and the Geology and Geography departments housed within the building.

Inspired by the process used to design the building, we allowed the materials we worked with to decide the design outcome. For example, at points in this publication, type is printed on the opposite side of the page it is seen. This is a way of incorporating the paper (and its transparent nature) as a design element in and of itself. For the signage, we avoided traditional printing techniques. Instead we laser cut our design directly into the wood used to construct the sandwich board.

Alongside this, we drew on research into the era the Museum Building was constructed. We were interested in the marbling used for the end pages of books designed during that time. Marbling appealed to us as a piece of contemporaneous 'graphic design' that references geology, in how it looks and its name. We created traditional marbled patterns using iron gall ink (a type of ink popular at that time). The digital applications required a digital solution – for these we created animated artificial marbling in a 3D program that recreated the effect of ink in water. These elements were then layered on top of each to reference geological layering. The grid used to lay out our designs is the same proportions of the pattern of distinctive tiles on the floor of the Museum Building. We used an updated cut of Caslon as the primary typeface. Caslon was associated with private presses linked with the early Arts and Craft movement whose theories helped inspire the architects of the Museum Building in their approach.

Design by Models and Constructs