

Crossed Paths
MIRANDA WHALL



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publisher.

This project; publication, documentary film
and exhibition is dedicated to my father,
artist and inspiration Dick Whall

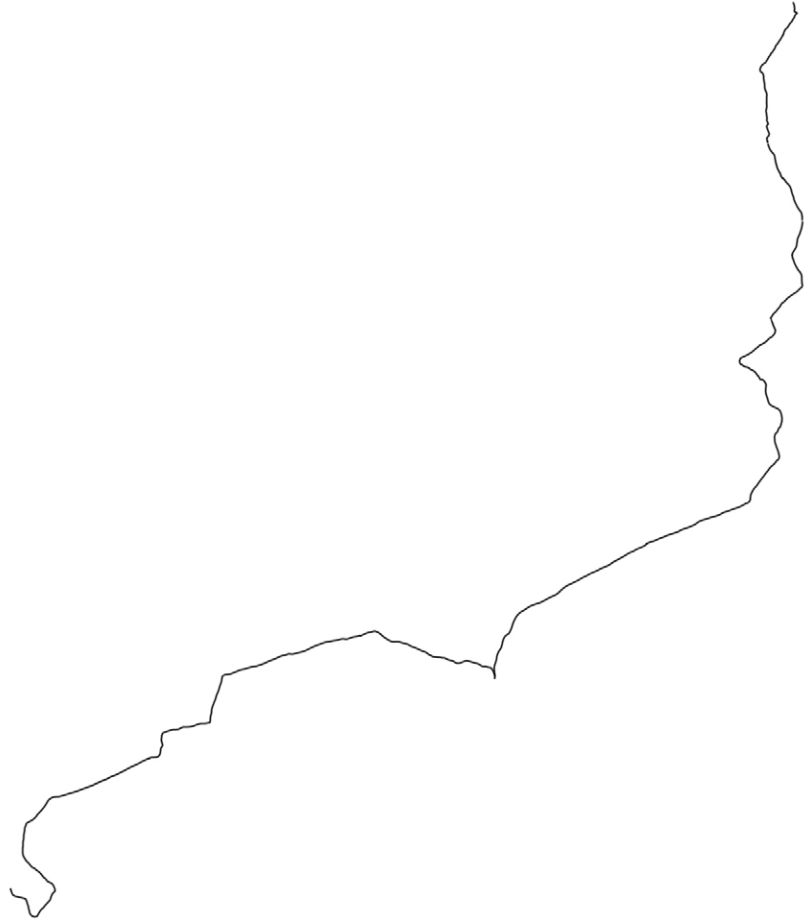
Mae'r prosiect hwn: y cyhoeddiad, y
ffilm ddogfennol a'r arddangosfa
wedi eu cysegru i nhad,
yr artist a'm hysbrydoliaeth, Dick Whall.



The crawl started on the 26th July at Pen y Garn (611m) next to the Cefn Coch wind farm in the Elenydd Special Area of Conservation, Cambrian Mountains, West Wales.

Contents

Crawling, not walking	7
<i>Simon Whitehead</i>	
Cropian, nid cerdded	14
<i>Simon Whitehead</i>	
Crawl 1	19
Crawl 2	29
Crawl 3	39
Crawl 4	49
Crawl 5	59
Crawl 6	69
Crawl 7	79
Crawl 8	89
Acknowledgements	103



Rarely do infants crawl alone.

Miranda Whall says that she has forgotten why she decided to crawl across the Cambrian mountains. So perhaps crawling was itself a way to remember?

A developmental algorithm, a practice of intimacy with earth and the substance of her body through the yielding and push needed to traverse a mountain on all fours; a return to the low-down, pre-verbal somatic physicality of childhood; a move to the proximal; the world up close.

Whall's *Crossed Paths* is a wide ranging enquiry, incorporating film, performance, the body, mountain and upland ecology with the multiple, de-centralised iterations of 8 collaborators and scientists. The central activity and practice of crawling seems rich with subversion. Miranda's view of the ground, the horizontality of her spine, hands, shins and feet along with the different, contralateral orientation of her limbs as she lopes head to tail, tail to head through the mountain in effect de-stabilises the many contemporary, adult, vertical and scholarly perspectives on landscape and performance.

When children do cross-lateral movements (arm and leg movements that cross over from one side of the body to the other) the two sides of the brain are forced to communicate, and this strengthens the nerve-cell pathways linking both sides of the brain through the corpus callosum.

A body all GoPro - a body all eyes. Cameras evidence the surrounding habitat as well as the multiple movements of the body; data is collected, but this also contains the kinetic information of how a body articulates in time, on all fours, across uneven ground. There is local affect here: the mountain, the animal, plant and other-than-human are implicated in these crawls, and often they get caught up in the hardware. Miranda enters an already complex upland ecosystem, becomes briefly woven in and creates an immediate and fugitive series of performative reverberations.

Crawling occurs as a practice in many religious and ritual ceremonies, parades and pilgrimages. Often as an act of absolution, it has also been used as a strategy in performance. In 2000, Andre Stitt crawled across Belfast:

Crawling, not walking...

Conviction was an act of remembrance of the Ireland he grew up in and an act of penance for The Troubles. Urban and highly public, Stitt crawled whilst ritually being tarred and feathered.

Miranda, in contrast, chooses the relative human isolation of the Cambrian mountains in the uplands of mid Wales, the complexity of topology and ground cover, the exposure to weather and the incidental fellowship with other life forms. She wears technical clothing beneath a ritual totemic dead sheep's fleece. Whilst crawling she is sheep-like; as she stands, black underbelly, GoPro cameras and red shoes exposed, she appears comical, a child in dress ups, uncanny. She comments: *The core, the weight and volume of my body is absent in both documentations of my experience... The substance of me is absent in both. The landscape is the subject, I am the object from which, because of which, the landscape is seen.*

Somewhat ironically Miranda describes her practice as *following in the footsteps* of a canon of male artists who walk. Crawling usually occurs before walking, it is rich with the ground, with plant life, the insect realm, with dirt and the topology of the mountain. It begets a child's perspective to landscape; a low-down, breathy,

sweaty, haptic and cross-lateral physicality, one that prepares the child-body and brain's capacity to learn and communicate. Whall describes the experience in her Blog as *utter abandonment, pure unadulterated joy and feeling empowered and dynamic, defiant and invincible*. The return to all fours is a route to remembering...

As the limbs develop control and coordination, meaningful interaction with others and with the world around becomes increasingly possible. First she learns to yield weight through each limb, establishing a rooted connection with the ground; out of this supportive contact she pushes herself up and out of gravity.

Whall describes the book, *The Living Mountain* by Nan Shepherd as an inspiration to the project. Shepherd writes of the entering of the mountain, the going *in* is *all*. The action of crawling therefore brings Miranda's attention and ours into the matter of the mountain. The hybrid human / four limbed animal *hefts* onto the surface, and the tactility with this habitat is an embodied, all consuming encounter. The up-close mountain has texture, provides friction, a weave in which Whall becomes interwoven, and as she progresses it

moves and snags and brushes in counterpoint to her crawls.

Line drawings are the artefacts that remain. Simple marks left by crawling, reduced inscriptions uploaded from GPS. These are the digital, remote tracings of her body in space. I wonder, what are the traces left in the body by the touch of the mountain and the reciprocal pressures between body and ground? Indeed, maybe it is Miranda's body that still contains the mountain and remembers its behaviours and rhythms?

A dance ensues... a performance of the mountain, as remembered by the body that crawled into it.

As he learns to reach out and move beyond his established boundaries, a myriad of interactions, and also responses from the environment, open up. Desire, frustration, fear, pleasure, rage, delight, shame are evoked, and the infant's sense of a subjective self begins to develop.

The different patterning and physiology needed to crawl, the learning to crawl again, engenders a different body and opens other,

or forgotten, neural and muscular pathways. Through touching and being touched by the mountain and its elements the cells and tissues retain the experience as well as returning to a formative time. In somatic movement therapy adults are often encouraged to crawl, so that neural and physiological patterning can be reintegrated and insight into how early experience affects behaviour and current perceptions can surface.

Miranda describes herself as a *facilitator, the sheep/human is a porter - collecting and carrying cultural, social, political and environmental data.*

Anthropologist Kenneth R Olwig, in his text *Performing on the Landscape versus Doing Landscape*, concludes... *we are all like sheep, hefting to the land and to each other, doing landscapes to which we belong both bodily and socially, with all our senses; both eyes wide open.*

Perhaps Miranda through her crawls is also physically modelling something for us: an invitation to enmesh, to heft again. To bring our bodies to the ground, to each other, to animal. The animal agent teaches us again how to belong, to be in, on and around... to bodily know, and practice our place again, amongst the weave of things.

Simon Whitehead
movement artist
Abercych.
March 2018

Includes excerpts from:
Seeking a Sense of Self
by Linda Hartley,
Somatic Psychotherapist
2005.









*Yn anaml fydd babanod yn cropian
ar eu pen eu hun.*

Yn ôl Miranda Whall, mae wedi anghofio pam benderfynodd gropian ar draws mynyddoedd Cambrian. Efallai bod cropian yn ei hunan yn ffordd o gofio felly?

Algorithm datblygiadol, ymarfer o agosatrwydd at y ddaear a sylwedd ei chorff trwy'r ildio a'r gwthio oedd eu hangen i groesi mynydd ar ei phedwar; dychwelyd at gorfforoldeb agos i'r llawr, cyn llefaru, somatig plentyndod; symud tuag at y procsimol; golwg agos ar y byd.

Mae *Crossed Paths* gan Whall yn ymholiad pellgyrhaeddol sy'n cynnwys ffilm, perfformiad, y corff, ecoleg fynyddig ac ucheldirol, gydag amryfal iteriadau

Cropian, nid cerdded... datganoledig gan 8 o gydweithredwyr a

gwyddonwyr. Mae'n ymddangos bod y gweithgaredd canolog a'r ymarfer o gropian yn rhyfeddol o danseiliol. I bob pwrpas, mae golwg Miranda ar y ddaear, llorwedd-dra ei hasgwrn cefn, ei dwylo, ei chrimogau a'u thraed, ynghyd â gogwydd gwahanol, cydgyferbyniol ei haelodau wrth iddi frasgamu

pen wrth gwt, cwt wrth ben drwy'r mynydd, yn dadsefydlogi'r llu o bersbectifau cyfoes, fertigol, ysgolheigaidd, person mewn oed ar dirwedd a pherfformio.

*Pan fod plant yn gwneud symudiadau
trawsochrol (symudiadau'r breichiau a'r coesau
sy'n croesi o un ochr y corff i'r llall), mae
dwy ochr yr ymennydd yn cael eu gorfodi i
gyfathrebu, ac mae hyn yn cryfhau llwybrau'r
nerfelloedd sy'n cysylltu dwy ochr yr
ymennydd drwy'r corpus callosum.*

Corff sy'n GoPro i gyd - corff sy'n llygaid i gyd. Mae camerâu'n dangos y cynefin amgylchynol ynghyd ag amryfal symudiadau'r corff; cesglir data, ond mae'r rhain hefyd yn cynnwys gwybodaeth ginetig am sut mae corff yn ymgymalu'n gydamserol, ar ei bedwar, ar draws daear anwastad. Gwelir effaith leol yma: mae'r mynydd, yr anifail, y planhigyn, a phethau nad ydynt yn ddynol ymhlyg yn y cropian hwn, ac yn aml cânt eu cipio yn y caledwedd. Mae Miranda yn mynd i mewn i ecosystem ucheldirol sy'n gymhleth yn barod, yn cael ei gwehyddu yn hon am ennyd, ac yn creu cyfres ddisyfyd a diflanedig o ddatseineddau perfformiadol.

Mae'r arfer o gropian yn digwydd mewn llawer o seremonïau, paredau a phererindodau crefyddol a defodol. Yn aml mae'n weithred o faddeuant pechodau, ac mae hefyd wedi cael ei ddefnyddio fel strategaeth mewn perfformio. Yn 2000, cropiodd Andre Stitt ar draws Belfast: roedd *Conviction* yn weithred i gofio am yr Iwerddon y cafodd ei fagu ynddi ac yn weithred o benyd am y Trafferthion. Cropiodd Still mewn amgylchedd trefol ac yn dra chyhoeddus gan gael ei goltario a'i bluon ddefodol.

Mewn cyferbyniad, mae Miranda wedi dewis yr unigedd dynol cymharol a brofir ym mynyddoedd Cambrian yn ucheldiroedd canolbarth Cymru, cymhlethdod y dopoleg a'r llystyfiant, bod yn agored i'r tywydd, a'r cyfeillachu achlysurol gyda ffurfiau eraill ar fywyd. Mae'n gwisgo dillad technegol dan gnu dafad wedi marw sy'n dotemig ac yn ddefodol. Wrth iddi gropian, mae'n debyg i ddafad; wrth iddi sefyll, ei bol du, y camerâu GoPro a'i hesgidiau coch yn y golwg, mae'n ymddangos yn gomig, yn rhyfedd, fel plentyn wedi gwisgo i fyny. Meddai: *Mae craidd, pwysau a chyfaint fy nghorff yn absennol yn nwy ddogfennaeth fy mhrofiad... Mae fy sylwedd yn absennol yn y*

ddwy. Y dirwedd yw'r goddrych, y fi yw'r gwrthrych o ble, a thwy'r hwn, y gwelir y dirwedd.

Yn eironig braidd, mae Miranda yn disgrifio'i hymarfer fel *dilyn yn ôl troed*. canon o artistiaid gwrywaidd sy'n cerdded. Fel arfer, mae cropian yn digwydd cyn cerdded, mae wedi ymdrwytho yn y ddaear, mewn planhigion, yn nheyrnas y pryfed, mewn baw, ac yn nhopoleg y mynydd. Mae'n creu safbwynt plentyn ar y dirwedd: corfforoldeb agos i'r llawr, chwythlyd, chwyslyd, haptig a thrawsochrol, un sy'n paratoi capasiti corff ac ymennydd y plentyn ar gyfer dysgu a chyfathrebu. Mae Whall yn disgrifio'r profiad yn ei Blog fel *ymollyngiad llwyr, llawenydd pur, dilwgr* ac fel teimlo *wedi ei grymuso ac yn ddynamig, yn herfeiddiol ac yn anorchfygol*. Mae dychwelyd i fod ar ei phedwar yn llwybr tuag at gofio...

Wrth i aelodau'r corff ddatblygu rheolaeth a chydgyssylltiad, mae rhyngweithio ystyrlon gydag eraill a gyda'r byd o gwmpas yn dod yn fwyfwy posibl. Yn gyntaf mae'n dysgu sut i ildio pwysau drwy bob aelod, gan sefydlu cysylltiad gwreiddiog â'r ddaear; yn ymgodi o'r cyswllt cynhaliol hwn, mae'n ei gwithio ei hun i fyny ac allan o ddisgyrchiant.

Mae Whall yn disgrifio'r llyfr, *The Living Mountain* gan Nan Shepherd fel ysbrydoliaeth i'r prosiect. Mae Shepherd yn ysgrifennu am fynd i mewn i'r mynydd, mae'r mynd *i mewn yn bopeth*. Felly mae'r weithred o gropian yn tynnu sylw Miranda a'n sylw ninnau at fater y mynydd. Mae'r croesiad o fod dynol / anifail pedwar aelod yn *ymlynu* wrth yr wyneb, ac mae'r hydeimledd â'r cynefin hwn yn gyfarfyddiad corfforedig, hollysol. Mae gwedd i'r mynydd pan y'i gwelir yn agos, mae'n darparu ffrithiant, gwead y mae Whall yn cael ei hymblethu ynddo, ac wrth iddi symud ymlaen mae'r gwead yn symud ac yn rhwygo ac yn ysgubo heibio iddi fel gwrthbwynt i'w chropian.

Llinluniau yw'r arteffactau sydd ar ôl. Marciau syml a adewir wrth gropian, arysgrifau o faint llai a lwythwyd i fyny o GPS. Y rhain yw'r dargopiau digidol, anghysbell o'i chorff mewn gofod. Ys gwn i beth yw'r mymrynnau a adewir yn y corff gan gyffyrddiad y mynydd a'r pwysau cyfatebol rhwng corff a daear? Yn wir, efallai mai corff Miranda sy'n dal i gynnwys y mynydd ac sy'n cofio'i ymddygiadau a'i rythmau?

Mae dawns yn dilyn... perfformiad gan y

mynydd, fel y caiff ei gofio gan y corff a gropiodd i mewn iddo.

Wrth iddo ddysgu i ymestyn a symud y tu hwnt i'w ffiniau sefydledig, mae myrdd o ryngweithiadau, a hefyd ymatebion gan yr amgylchedd, yn ymagor. Mae awydd, rhwystredigaeth, ofn, pleser, llid, hyfrydwch, cywilydd yn cael eu hysgogi, ac mae ymdeimlad y baban o hunan goddrychol yn dechrau datblygu.

Mae'r gwahanol batrymu a'r ffisioleg sydd eu hangen er mwyn medru cropian, y dysgu sut i gropian eto, yn creu corff gwahanol ac yn agor llwybrau nerfol a chyhyrol eraill, neu anghofiedig. Trwy gyffwrdd, a chael eu cyffwrdd gan y mynydd a'i elfennau, mae'r celloedd a'r meinweoedd yn cofio'r profiad ynghyd ag yn dychwelyd at amser ffurfiannol. Mewn therapi symud somatig, mae oedolion yn aml yn cael eu hannog i gropian, fel y gall y patrymu nerfol a ffisiolegol gael ei adfer ac y gall dealltwriaeth o sut mae profiad cynnar yn effeithio ar ymddygiad a chanfyddiadau ddod i'r wyneb.

Mae Miranda yn ei disgrifio ei hun fel *hwylusydd, mae'r ddafad/bod dynol yn gludwr – sy'n*

*casglu ac yn cario data diwylliannol, cymdeithasol,
gwleidyddol ac amgylcheddol.*

Yn ei destun *Performing on the Landscape versus
Doing Landscape*, mae'r anthropolegwr Kenneth R
Olwig yn dod i'r casgliad... *rydym bob un yn debyg
i ddefaid, yn ymlynu wrth y tir ac wrth ein gilydd,
yn gwneud tirweddau yr ydym yn perthyn iddynt yn
gorfforol ac yn gymdeithasol, gyda'n holl synhwyrâu;
a gyda'n dwy lygad ar agor led y pen.*

Efallai bod Miranda, drwy ei chropian, hefyd
yn modelu rhywbeth yn gorfforol ar ein cyfer:
gwahoddiad i ymrwymo, i ymlynu unwaith eto. I
ddod â'n cyrff at y ddaear, at ei gilydd, at anifail.
Mae'r cyfrwng anifeilaidd yn ein haddysgu sut i
berthyn, i fod yn, ar, ac o gwmpas ... i adnabod
yn gorfforol, ac i arfer ein lle unwaith eto ymhlith
gwead pethau.

Simon Whitehead
artist symudiad
Abercych.
Mawrth 2018

Yn cynnwys dyfyniadau o:
Seeking a Sense of Self
gan Linda Hartley,
Seicotherapydd Somatig,
2005.

crawl 1

1









As you orientate and re-orientate in the wet far, we are wet with you, out, out there
Without, with the many, crawling under a loud tradition of creeping landmarks and pedestrian stars.
Cheered on by those of us for who this is an art without ends, a means to measure by four hands and twenty toes
The scratchy land between a pair of knees and blistered thumbs. It means staying low to the ground, in slippery roles,
Mapping organs and dragging pipes through fierce forces, until – something – something comes of the gravity of all our varied situations,
Attraction and relevance pushed face down in a field before paid witnesses and paying customers,
While ranged against the blank your Argos of cameras catalogues, (walking the eye of a fly).
The horizon, sliced by the titan edge, finds its way under the costume and hurts the field you plough,
Fleecing the river of its sheen and crushing the grassland into wiring.
You carry technology like tics, releasing information in plasma streams.
And there we sink, the only certain things the gesture of your sheepskin and the sun stuck speared on a stem
While you, unhinged, tread on an ear here and a nerve there. You're a compound eye on webbed legs crawling for us
From beneath the table of the burning mountain; among those who write their walks with lines, or binary treads, for us
You thread a whole robot through the heather, over rushes and into nitrogen green and move the mountain down towards
The flat lands of our pages, screens, lawns, playing fields, desks and Monopoly boards. You baa.
You suck up the soil by spilling a little blood, and in the exchange of views we profit to the tune of feelings
Made visible from the stitched and rounded vista near at hand to the eye on the things afar.



Ling heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) **Grug** (*Calluna vulgaris*)
Lucy Smith, March 2018

Heather, with its distinctive purple flowers is a plant instantly associated with hill and upland areas. The moorland habitat it creates is often protected because of the rare upland insects and birds that make their home there. Heather shoots are important food for grouse, and the plants provide shelter and nest sites for these and other ground-nesting birds. Sheep will eat heather, but only when the grass runs out. This is because the plant produces chemicals as defences that make it bitter to grazers, and impedes their digestion.

crawl2

1

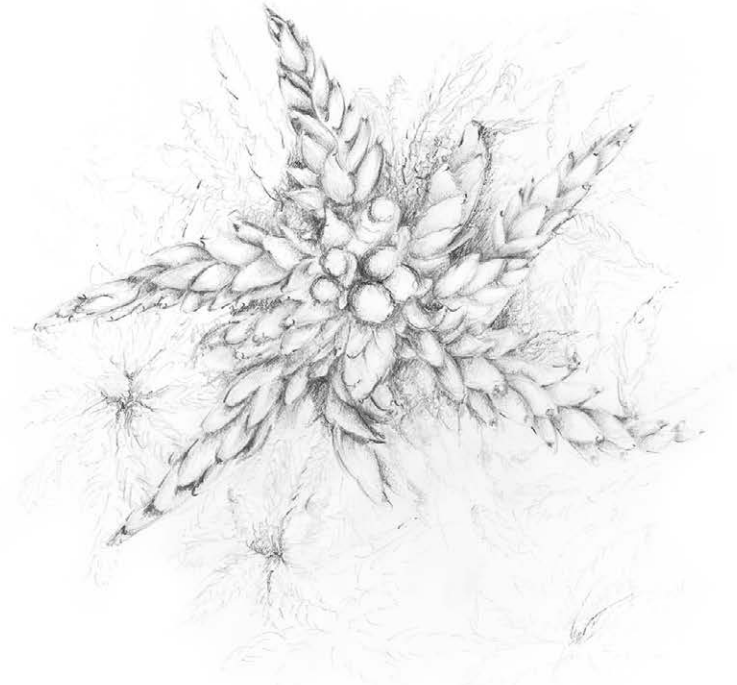








If we are lost under the sun, coming face to face with our singular reflection,
Outliers dancing, and the captains of pleasure steering us around disoriented space,
Then you, guided by moss instead, veering from the sticky path and leering zone, alone
Where the bog plots and the grasses understand what is lost to cameras and a drone,
Progressing with meandering, up there day dreaming, just to the side of work. Our
Pilgrim-messenger, silhouetted against grinding roots and kaleidoscope. Un-accommodated
And unsuspecting, cladding yourself in innocence and an ill-adapted role, you sell a dummy to the Gods,
Leave them for dead, and give the slip, site-stepping and blindsiding, to the Big Bushwackers.
Making your allies with the tiny things, the sheep-sized clouds and animals the two shapes of light,
You dress yourself in waves and brandish lines to break lines. Your ground is held.
Scrambling to attention, Hannah and Destina allow you to suspend joy in a mesh of your own spinning;
Your protective pads and gauntlets work like magic instruments to track down fun.
While, we, suspended, neither down below nor up above, come face to face with the simulation
Of our pleasures, curved around a screen and bright as any bewildered sun.



Peat moss (*Sphagnum* species) **Mwsogl y gors** (*rhywogaeth Sphagnum*) **Miranda Whall, March 2018**

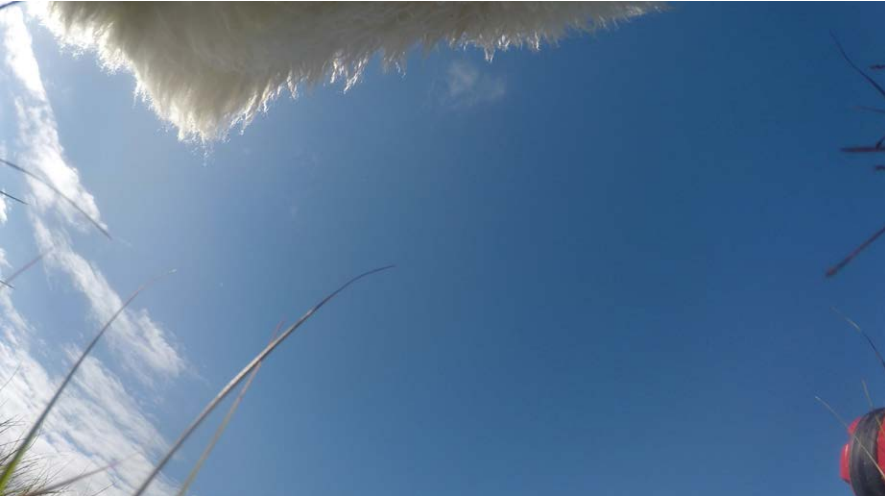
Sphagnum mosses can hold up to 20 times their own weight in water, and so have a very important role in creating bogs. Retaining water in upland areas in this way gives us a steady supply of drinking water, which the mosses help to filter, and reduces the risk of flooding downstream at times of high rainfall. The peat formed under the mosses stores vast quantities of carbon. If managed well these bogs can help offset our greenhouse emissions elsewhere, but if drained or eroded they release this carbon into the atmosphere.

crawl 3

1









III

*People think I could
make another Dolly
but they don't understand
that there would never be
another sheep like her
a copy of copies imprinted*

I wanted so much
to grow wild
branching out in
contradictory time zones
where the hills were dead
it's all wrong but it's
all right at least I could run
losing myself in disposable
bodies no longer animal

not yet machine
common and close
neither dumb nor blonde
and turning back you glimpse
a species receding in so many
versions you can't count
or failing the lookalike contest
for being false enough
to seem completely real

Up there on your own today, you were crawling in a crowd. There was William Pope.L,
Supermanning down Broadway, Gail Burton circumnavigating a lake, Amy Sharrocks walking in shoes of butter
And Ana Teresa Fernández standing in her stilettos made of ice breaking apart in pain,
The ceiling of the sky, flashing day to night to day, spider's legs descending like poles of rain.
Catling was crawling after a glacier, overtaking it, then overtaken by a town,
And I was up there, falling down over the bars of my cot, out through the shop and up the side

Of the Foleshill Road, the woman from the sweet shop rushing out and sweeping me up,
Straight from creeping into flight, a Gutai sculptor mauling mud, holograms, Gao Yuan crawling toward a girl
Perched on a kerb. Weitzenhoffer students performing subservience to governance
With flowers and wine; it was 'a lot harder than I thought it would be', said one, 'fifteen feet feels like fifteen miles',
And asphalt is 'unbearable' on the knees, even when not crawling over a land mine or through maggots.

Rahul Bhatthacharya and Tapti Chaudhury worming, tethered by a noose,
Scratching loosely cryptic messages in both English and Hindi, while
Lonnie van Brummelen dragged a cast of Hermes for months along the sides of roads,

Arriving at the caves at Lascaux, her Hermes had by that time dematerialised.

In the picture you approach a line of wooden posts, wire gridding a massive crystal vista,
Intentions as unclear as a quick change artist hanging around a street corner.

Acconci was under a ramp, cramped. The first of the slitherings dropped gently from memory,
After that a story my mother told me, and finally I crawled around the world wide web,

Finishing at some posts about wealthy celebrity artists and a grid of others unpaid for their services, then

Something about a live art experience 'unique and tailored to the message and theme of your event'.

These were not at all like the wide world I saw in your Go Pro footage, watery and bright,
Glowing before your plunging frame, vast and dark, thrilling as you bent relentlessly to it.

Purple moorgrass (*Molinia caerulea*) Glaswellt y bwla
(*Molinia caerulea*) Ioan Whall-Williams, March 2018

Purple moorgrass is the UK's only deciduous grass; each year the plant dies back completely. This leads to a build-up of dead material, which over time creates distinctive clumps or tussocks. It is a very competitive grass, and if left unmanaged can take over large areas, reducing biodiversity. Around 10% of the UK uplands is dominated by it. Sheep generally avoid eating purple moorgrass if they can, and so farmers have been encouraged to graze cattle on areas where it has taken over.

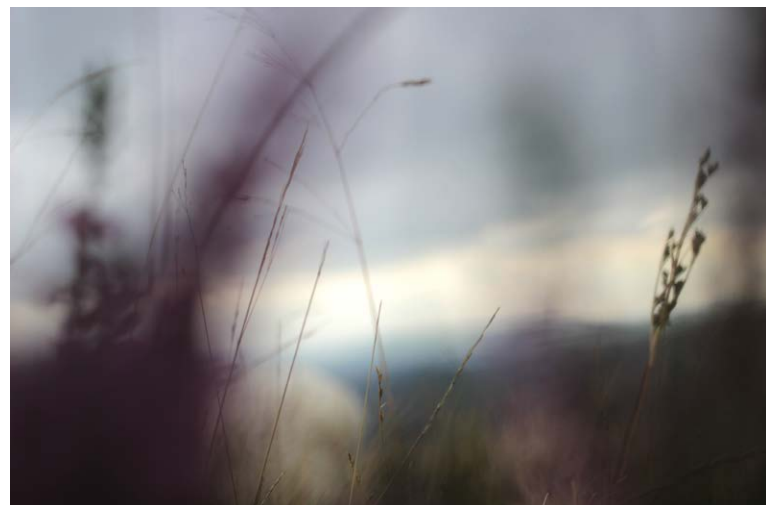
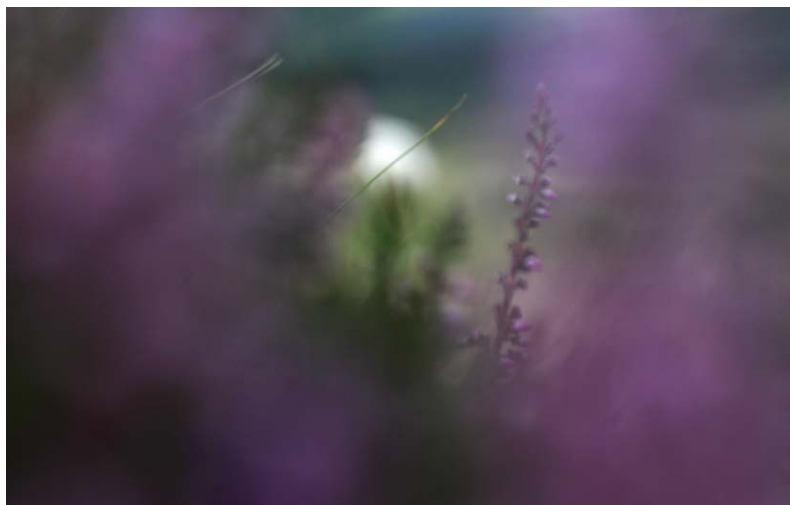
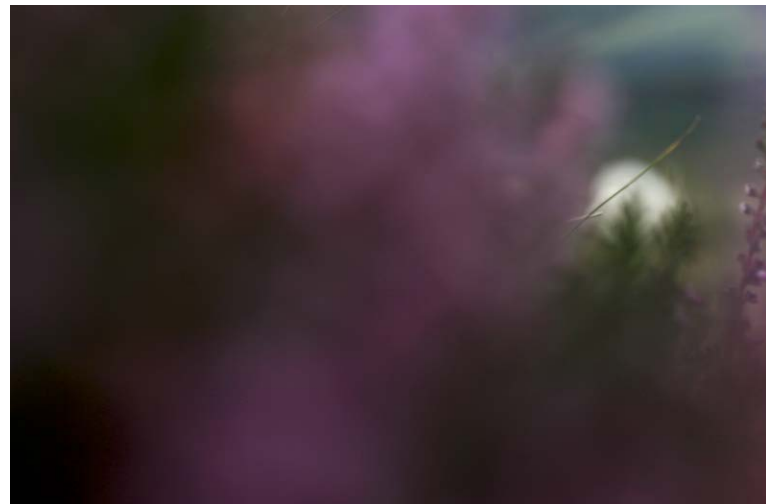
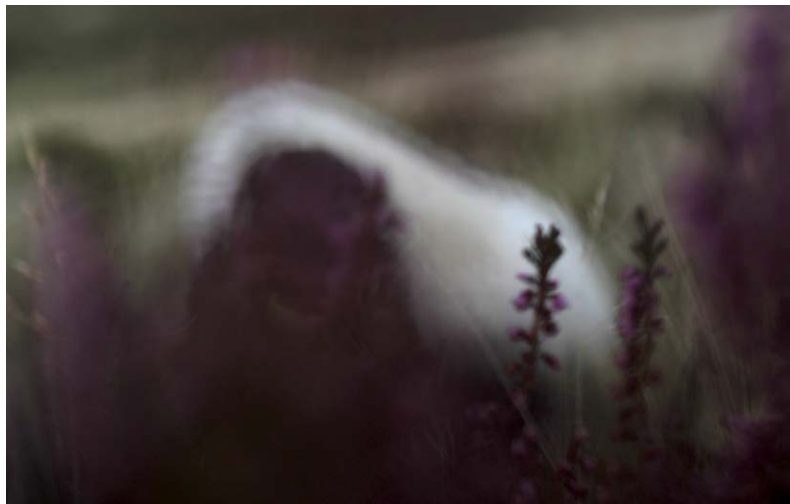


crawl 4

3









Purple cloud, what am I seeing? Purple cloud, are you taking stock, or what are you bringing?

Purple cloud, were you lacking in enthusiasm because the world got too familiar,

That you faltered before finishing the job?

Purple cloud, how much are you sweeping under how big a carpet?

Is the territory wrapped up in the map? How much is altered?

'The Purple Cloud' is the title of a novel, written in 1901, by an evil man about a weak man,

Whose poisoner wife sends him on an expedition to the North Pole, where somehow, perhaps spiritually, he

Holes the crust and releases a hallucinatory gas that poisons everyone. Yet

The weak individual carries on as if something remained, visiting for days on end

The corpses of his friends and those of the writers he admires. Then he begins to travel,

Like the gas, commandeering steam trains, building with machines giant ziggurats at each stopping place,

As if nothing were wrong, as if he could simply go on and on as before. The purple heather is a similar thing,

It has no compassion for the mass killings here and the floods and reactor failure there.

It colours regardless; the soil erodes away, sixty years of the tops remain and yet it goes on flowering, undismayed,

As if all were well. Heartless heather, as relentless as an economy, its besom stems ready to assemble and

Sweep away everything. A purple haze obscuring a flag of ground, making a soup of thoughts,

Complacent in its dominance, schooled in hardiness, grounded on acid and hard knocks,

Waiting for its moment, modest emperor, to team up with the jellyfish, in a purple charm,

Taxing a stock of grievances; all the dyeing in the wool and grinding and regurgitation,

The Ancient Egyptian-like progress of purple souls through the four stomach chambers of the great god Baa.

Sentimental jewelry of the hillside, not being able to see is all part of being. Down there,

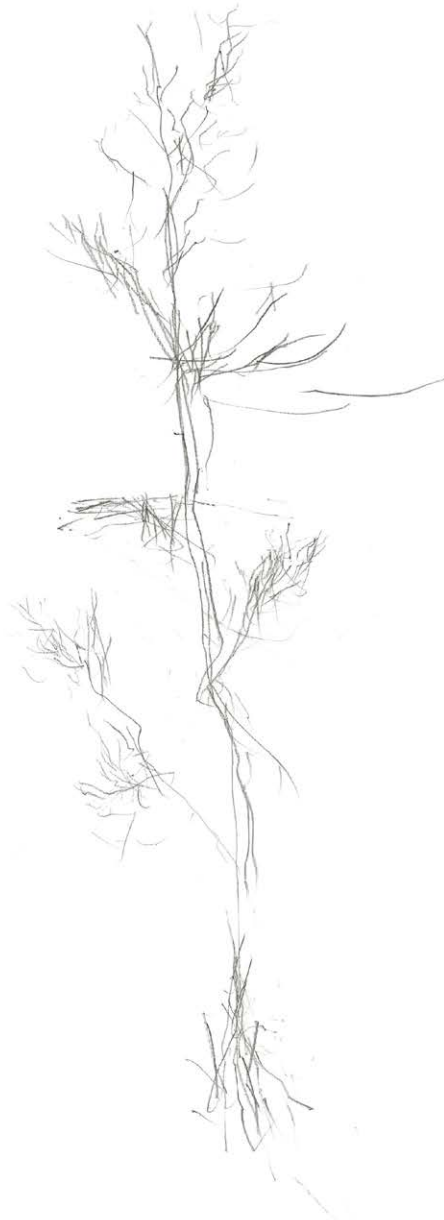
Among its mesh of fungal threads, commercial wounding goes on, the exchange of sugars for minerals and water,

As if everything were normal. It's putting on its waxy coat, as if for just another day.

Nothing can threaten the purple cloud, while all the rest is washed away.

Sheep's fescue (*Festuca ovina*)
Peiswellt y defaid (*Festuca ovina*)
Andrew Whall, March 2018

This is one of the hill grasses that sheep prefer to eat. It is a slow-growing plant with thin, bristle-like leaves which tend to form dense tufts. It can grow on a variety of different soils, but is generally found in drier areas. Because it is a less competitive grass, other plants and flowers are often found growing alongside it, creating patches of mixed species which are good feeding sites for livestock and wildlife.



5
crawl

2









V

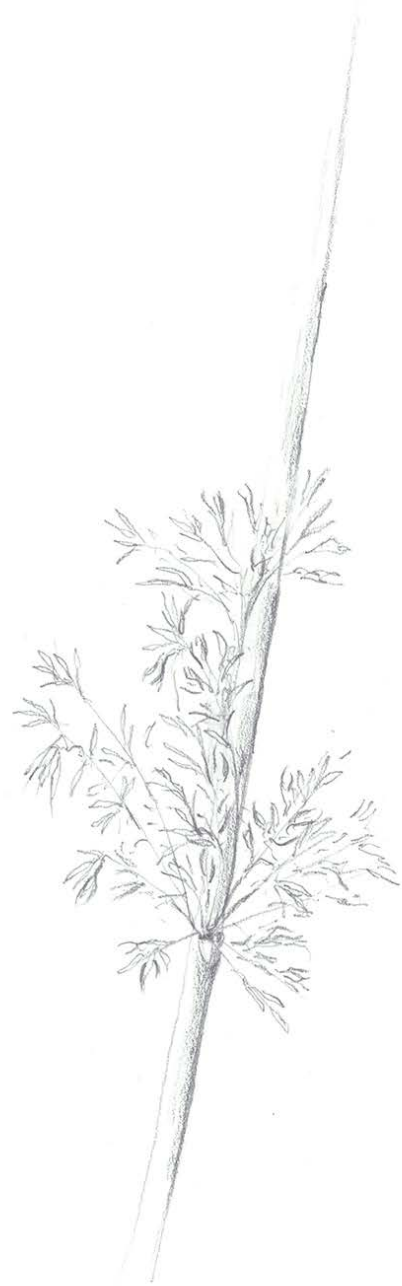
a gentle animal
 its body clad in wool
 harmless, placid by nature
but what you're counting
 every night what you dream
 is electric an energy
passing through this
 body all wired up like everyone
 zoom out on woolly maggots
or a tin turned upside-down
 the weight of it baaing
 a buzz in the hand
alive as an insect
 trapped in dense wool
 the tick and the flea
chewing through tomorrows
 that are eaten by yesterdays
 for this read habitat
a fully automated system
 keeps ticking over
 from red sky in the morning
to deserted glass blue hills
 that fade in circles
 nibbled to the root

This is definitely not what the human body was designed to do. This.
This moment when the camera and the sheep meet. And perhaps
The little house at the bottom of the valley knows something about it
Too? The ruin with the smile and the two shining eyes? Who lives there? The Russian tenant
Of a violent Dog-Diogenes? A hunter stripping down naked to the badger,
To get inside its mind-sett, to prod the uncomprehending lion with a stick,
A horse's-head handle to make it speak? Eating earthworms or worming their way
Into casts of thousands, animal farms, afternoon cartoons, creature comforts, biting their audiences, they come
Tied at the foot and neck, dressed in strips of meat to the ram market and the balance sheet,
The circle of investors like flukes in a rat piece about smell and choice.
'I look aggressive, but I'm not really', 'I'm kind of awkward, I can't see well'.
They get very slippery: this whole thing about so-called morals; animals are control-freaks.
The skin work of The Perverts, their psychology is often, casually, alien or animal,
Arto Spectaculo impersonates the animal inside, protagonists like priests,
While skin work is a specialist skill, when the animal has four legs, especially,
A million animals died to make one artist a billionaire, finance stitched to biology,
I like banking and banking likes me, Charlie the Clown offers a range of themed events,
Including Dinosaurs and Rain-Forest Animals, but you, you don't
Look like you're pretending, you look like a book
About leucistic crows published by other birds, you appear as a fragile super hero
In Kick-Ass goggles, red soles and black knee pads, offering your white bones
To the folds of the purpley-brown mountain: Sheepwoman, Sheepthing, The Flocking,
Agnus of Wallia, The White Fleece, Woolly Avenger, Deep Sheep, Creeping Angel,
Harbinger of the Hill. The wrist cannot tell the rock, the rock cannot tell the wrist.
The designer and the blob, the mechanic and the camera, gristle and distance.
Representations that are not how they feel, not how you think, but
How you must be, how everything must be, must be well, well must be.

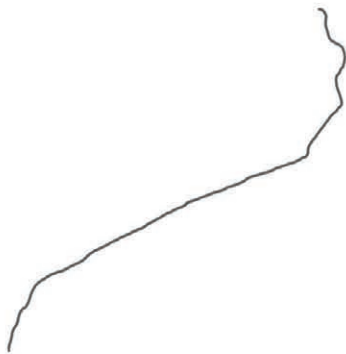
Soft rush (*Juncus effusus*) **Brwyn pabwyr** (*Juncus effusus*)

Jill Whall, March 2018

Rushes are generally found in wetter areas and so often grows alongside purple moorgrass. They have smooth green stems with distinctive brown flowers towards the tip. Very few animals eat rushes, but they can provide shelter and nest sites. When they grow in improved upland pastures they are controlled by cutting. In the past the inside of the plant, the pith, was soaked in fat and used in household lamps as wicks.



6
crawl











VI

is this what thinking is
 this browsing the tips
 a constant rumination
where we wander
 at the back of the brain
 in impossible forests
in the trace of a movement
 with wired primrose eyes
 you never noticed
in a zig-zag movement
 of multiplied inheritance
 running sideways
or looping to infinity
 a figure of eight
 repeating the day's journey
in the silences between
 the words stretched out
 in a Möbius strip
where you can't tell
 which way the landscape
 will unfold itself next
we sniff the grass
 grip it the head moving
 swiftly forwards and up

Posting a mountain through a letter box, slicing winds and streams and stamping flat
The greedy eyes of crows, strip-mined with desire, in tacking scraps and comings about.

Ambulated violations of the code set the sails of property and the mark of wakes,
Coffin roads are choked with vectors. Period. The map pushes through them all, cutting up on the inside,
And the hoof comes down hard, the silver slipper brands the ground and the cry goes up sideways

From the opened quarry. This chart's a claw, tearing blood fathoms deep, loam spurts and
The compost heaps smell of tired meat, hanging out in the sheet of sky.

It is furnished, it is furnished, they cry, the veneer is meaningful! The shallows are full of grass
And skirt is cut from the plate, there is no way to leave, we're all on Flatland now!

Flying circuses may come and fleets of cosmic battle cruisers launch in galaxies far away,

Locust hoards will vertical take off and land, but all of them are caught up by the hand,
And crushed. The universe only now creeps out between the fingers of the wooly cartographer,
The leader of squadrons, pulping the ooze under the synth drone. There is no homing beacon,
No cones to warn, just the lasting expanse and the rolling out of a final protester's shout.

Apocypsis cum ellipsis! Gorse abolished from a room; a sheep ushered from a theatre

Onto a landscape of fractions. The sum is over. The pixels take wing, murmuring.



Tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*) **Tresgl y Moch**
(*Potentilla erecta*) **Robyn Munday, March 2018**

Tormentil is a little plant that produces bright little yellow flowers that are comparatively easy to spot amongst the greens and browns of hill grassland.

Although small, it is comparatively nutritious, and so is worth the effort for sheep to find. Tormentil has been used as a herbal medicine, and its roots produce a red vegetable dye, most commonly used for leather.

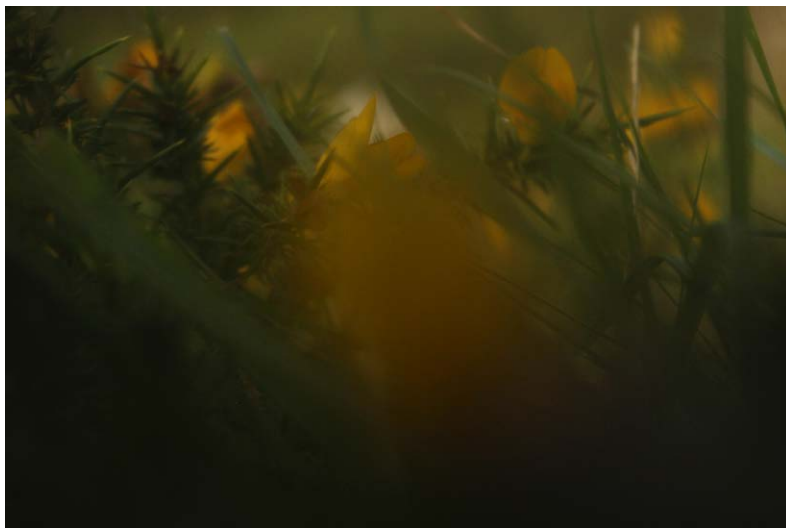
7
crawl











VII

here we come flocking
 defaid undivided as
 fluffy atoms massing
where a thought becomes
 contraction of muscle
 hoof prints in soft grass
as we come through cloud
 glimpsed through heather
 in sheep's clothing
where the wolves have gone
 this hock or pastern
 could be mine or hers
or his or theirs or anyone's
 the sky held up by
 multiple blue screens
tipped at an angle
 where only the lost ewe
 wanders sheepishly
or trots full pelt
 into the sodden landscape
 watched by a hollow socket
shrinking to a speck
 or a tangle of wool
 caught on the wire

Laid out on a plane of dread, compounded in tales told in mobile homophones,
Comes a willingness to horror, and to kneel to the defiant liturgies once, and then, again.
Bells are laid out on a sheet of reddening bed linen, cross a map of floral stains,
A part of everything gone fictional, travelling to the pool under the bad hill; the low moans
Start up and the deep winds refuse to tell the much-puzzled trees or the speaking animals, staked out
Like pegs on a cribbage board, how much they no no no. Stop. The map has split its means, a body of veins
Lain around an abandonment, running with rimes and steam, blue lines dropped from the sky,
In a body, you know, once upon a time, how the skull dome fills with stars, and all's a quiet tomb passing through;
It's us in Willow Lane it's passing through. A minnow crossing a mind, carelessly.
This flat planet will continue for just so long as it knows it doesn't have to; then, that's it.
It will lay down its mailed net over the porter's head, fill it with a grid of sprawling hill
Laid out for a banquet on a spacecraft, as big as a horizon, swamping its landing stage,
Salt will spill, caught in a shawl, the tall tale thing chopped down between whistling thumbs,
The kingdom comes, and the stinging grass and the strangling of stumps, the feeding on the crumbs,
Droppings from old feasts, the place where place takes off, de-territorialised by your frozen explosion, Miranda.
The four points of the woolly compass is a fable, dissected by a surgeon-sheep, spreading its eyes to the edges
Of the compound. Then the compass is rounded up and no one knows where they are on the moor,
Without gorse or table, weight or worse. Sentries awake in bracken and focus
The lenses of their nano-machines. A white beast, alone, punctuated,
A priest de-flocked, naked of its purple power, steeples down in the hill grease, furze-strewn.
Sidling up to heaven; a toot to warn the order that this is the track where something like a long book ends,
Flailing along the network, dropping episodes down the long, long walk, it's all OK,
All will thus be fine, no one dies. Undo the picnic box, unpick the thistle from the fleece,
Read the tunes in leadshot droppings, unstick the shrug we've all been hiding with
And let the awful thing fall fitfully apart; the eyes out of their sockets, four points of a squared compass, and lay
The table before your committees of friendly and supportive spies.



Perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*) Rhygwellt parhaol
(*Lolium perenne*) Helena Whall, March 2018

Ryegrass has been the powerhouse of upland farming. It is a domesticated grass that plant breeders have been working with for decades. The varieties produced have a nutritional value which is much superior to any native grass. In the decades following the second world war hill farmers were given grants to drain and plough up poor quality hill pasture, and sown new ryegrass mixtures. However, this productivity requires fertiliser inputs, and without these, ryegrasses tends to die out in harsh upland areas.

8
crawl











VIII

at eye level what comes
 running towards you
 in a broken movement
as the sky jumps
 the grass goes out of
 focus where your own bones
face another in relations
 that stop nowhere
 under the skin
of a voice a broken
 moment coming back
 bydd yn ôl but it's never
byth yn ôl to the same
 place some place
 almost the same
where almost is all
 and most is mist
 coming down over
the pastures where
 the past is leading you
 beside the still pool
reeling back death in
 digital flicker through its
 shadows and valleys

On its own the glove crawls, a black vampire squid, a five fingered submarine.

I walk alone to Cudden Point, later drink a beer with its legend on the label,

While a soaring diagram of terns unfolds over a dragon's back. In Wales,

The superhuman kit is packed away in the darkness for a display, later.

The dismay of completion, like the farmer's explosion; blowing up the squid

With dynamite he exchanged for a cow. Now, OK, the sheep are safe, but we are,

All of us, un-lucked, unbuckled from black fortune, the deep forest is dismayed.

Diminished by the sharp hierarchy of our ordering, squeezing itself between packets of automobile,

The creeping thing bends its limbs into its brain, consumed by itself if caged,

A hand-mind landmine of sheep-eating genius loci, it is defiant in its colony, enraged,

Suckered and suppressed. While, here, the breeze hovers on its knees, nerves to the ground,

Stretched out like a hawk, while a stentorian sheep chases crows to an edge and stops.

The smell of cabbages; death is near. Nimble the sentinel preens, sharp as a child's cot,

Chasing black dots in the wind, and is thrown back by the last gasps of storm. I finish the beer,

Turn the bottle around, the beast is blown to pieces at the bottom of the cliff,

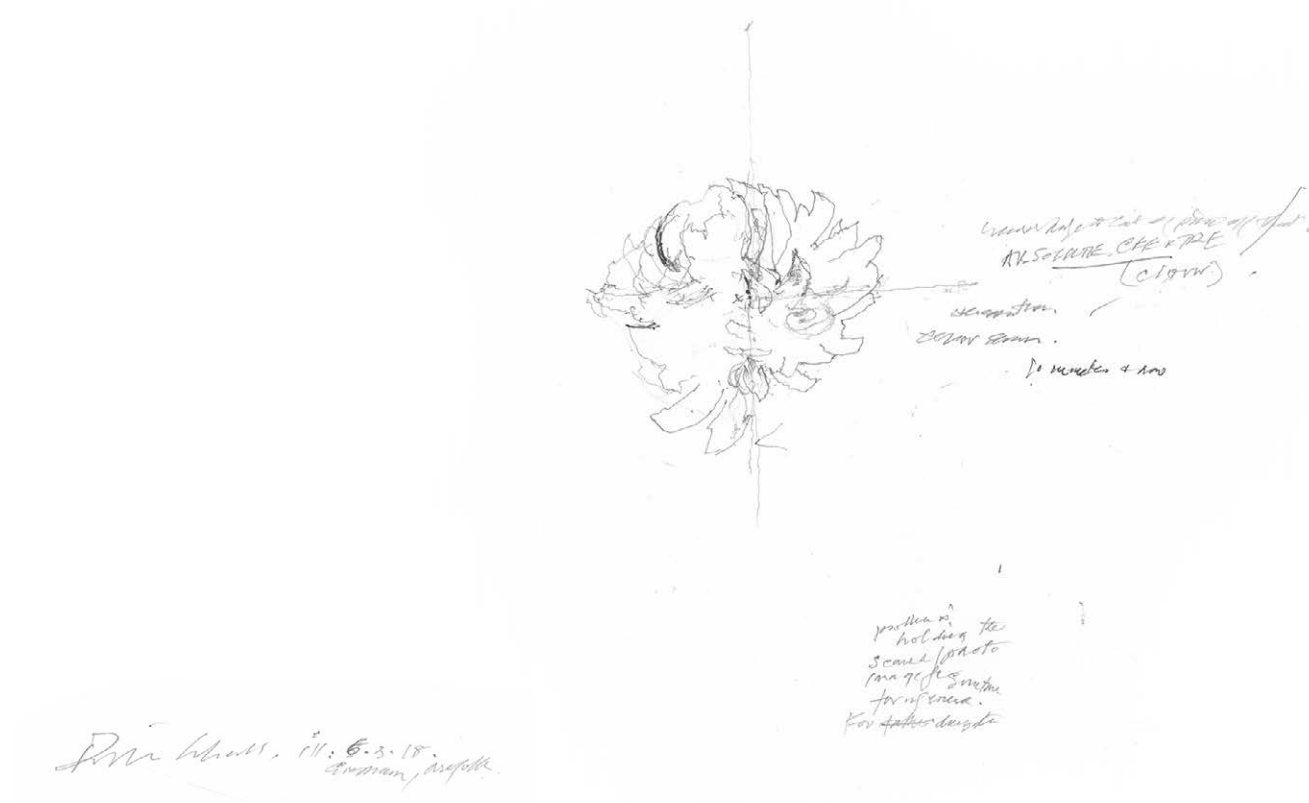
We are safe, yet bowed, I bend through green tunnels of thorns to make it home.

The reaction works in both directions, the roots erode, the eyes open up

In the finger tips, the one lens inside is alive in its sleeve of slats and bones.

You are in the river, then up the steps, when the batteries stop; a black angel, haloed in wool,

Reflected in a fleet of golden leaves; in a world thrown upside down, you stand up.



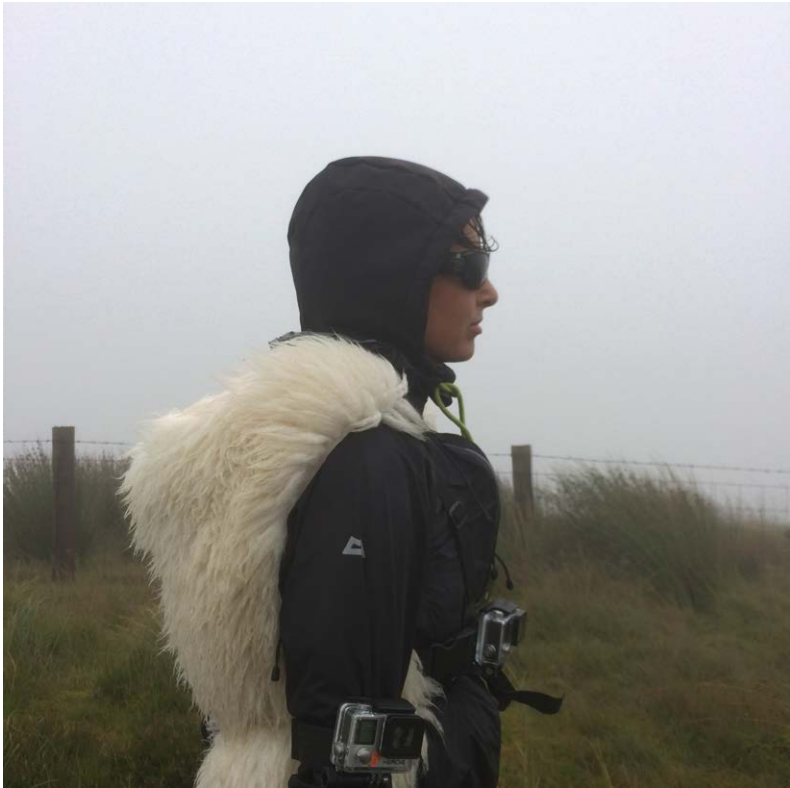
White clover (*Trifolium repens*) Meillion gwyn (*Trifolium repens*)

Dick Whall, March 2018

White clover is another plant species that has been domesticated and improved by decades of plant breeding, and it is commonly sown in mixtures with ryegrass. Clovers are high in protein and so very valuable as forage for livestock. They are also a legume, which means they can capture atmospheric nitrogen and make it available in the soil for other plants. This reduces the amount of artificial fertiliser that needs to be spread to keep improved grasslands flourishing.



The crawl ended on the 8th November at the Pwllpeiran Upland Research Centre, Cwmystwyth, Cambrian Mountains, West Wales.







Photographs by Hannah Mann, Rhys Thwaites-Jones and Miranda Whall

Poems by Zoe Skoulding

Text by Phil Smith

Introductory text by Simon Whitehead

Map drawings by Miranda Whall

Plant drawings by Miranda Whall & the Whall family

Plant information by Mariecia Fraser

Thank you:

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During the summer and autumn of 2017 artist Miranda Whall crawled 5.5 miles through the bio- diverse Cambrian Mountains in West Wales wearing a sheep fleece and 15 GoPro cameras. This multi - platform, interdisciplinary project tells the story of a mountain where the narrative is told from the legs, arms, hands, head, back, stomach and mouth of a human / sheep, highlighting that each have shaped the upland landscape we see today and both have a role to play in shaping its future.

Crossed Paths comprises three projects which will take place between 2017 and 2021 in Wales, Scotland and France. The three projects will bring together film, text, audio, performance; the body in motion, mountain and upland ecology. Each telling the story of a mountain from a different human/animal perspective.

To view all aspects of the project please visit:

<http://www.mirandawhall.space>



“To know fully even one field or one land is a lifetime’s experience... in the world of poetic experience it is depth that counts not width.”

The Living Mountain, NAN SHEPHERD (1977)

www.mirandawhall.space