

Feeling wor(l)ds: a *feel guide* is the third issue in ATLAS's ongoing series of chapbooks printed and bound by hand on the Making Publics Press—a book making studio located at ATLAS's office, which has all the equipment you will need to print, bind and trim your own books and publications.

This issue makes public fragments of writing, drawings, correspondence, and poems exchanged and developed through *Feeling wor(l)ds*: a project exploring how we might attend to the intimacies of place through being in correspondence with others.

Over the summer of 2022, artists, poets and writers Camille Auer, Ashanti Harris, Katharine Mcfarlane and Astrida Neimanis wrote emails back and forth to one another in an intimate exchange of work, words and worlds. Together they explored ways of corresponding *with* one another's practices, sometimes responding directly, sometimes indirectly, with thoughtful reflections, personal anecdotes, artworks and references. Their contributions here echo this correspondence, which orbited around poetry, birds, listening, moving and remembering.

Akin to the *Feeling wor(l)ds* project, this chapbook celebrates collective research, learning through relation(s) and being

in correspondence with people and place(s).

Rather than a 'field guide', it is composed as a '*feel guide*'—a place for feeling out our relations with the world through words. We invite you to contribute and use these pages to guide your own feelings and thoughts. Amongst the contributor's words, there are blank pages and templates for you to add your own stories, poems, glossary definitions, and drawings.

Issue #3 is a place for collective publication making and corresponding with the Making Publics Press.

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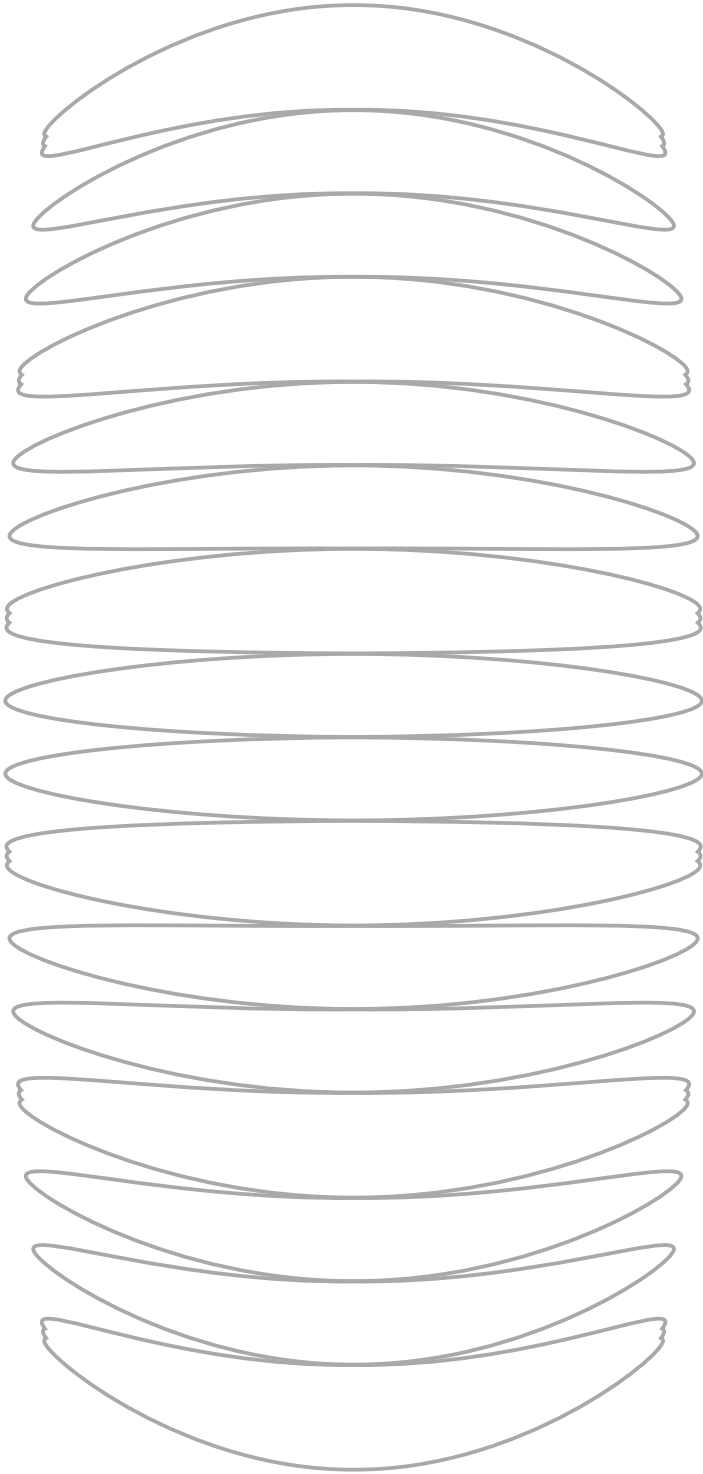
Listening with the body in non-ideal conditions

Astrida Neimanis

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Bios

Feeling wor(l)ds correspondence



Neimanis, Astrida <xxxx@xxxx >

Tue, May 31, 2022 at 7:26 PM To: 'Feeling Wor(l)ds'
<correspondence@atlasarts.org.uk>, <xxxx@xxxx>,
<xxxx@xxxx>, <xxxx@xxxx>

Dear Ashanti, dear Camille

I am not quite sure how to begin. Beginnings are often awkward. So I am just jumping in, *in media res*.

[..]

In the piece that I wrote 'Learning Feeling' I think my main question was this: if we learn to *feel* from sensory engagement with other bodies/worlds around us, then when those worlds/bodies no longer exist, will we no longer feel those feelings? Can certain feelings, in other words, also go extinct? Or do they persevere, phantom feelings, like a phantom limb? (And if a phantom limb is a feeling without a corresponding body to house it, then what does it mean to have a feeling without a corresponding feeling to give it expression? Am I getting way too meta?)

Watching your video, Ashanti, it struck me that thinking with the dead, and queer death studies, might be one way into this question. I don't know.

[..]

While my dad can no longer move easily, nor read himself (he was a very active outdoors person, reader,

intellectual and birder not too long ago) I have discovered that we both love it when I read out loud to him.
[...]

So here I am, startled at the creepy correspondences I am holding: birds, feeling, and thresholds of death.

Warmly,

Astrida

Neimanis, Astrida <xxxx@xxxx>
Thu, Jun 2, 2022 at 7:46 PM To:
'Feeling Wor(l)ds' <correspondence@atlasarts.org.uk>, <xxxx@xxxx>, <xxxx@xxxx> **Cc:** <xxxx@xxxx>, <xxxx@xxxx>

Camille,
There are so many fathers, faeders, in your ruff work. This is all I can see right now. 'we negotiate gravity so different to birds' you write except in death, and then gravity always wins
Hello Katharine, it is nice to have you join us. I look forward to meeting you on ZOOM sometime.

-astrida

Camille Auer <xxxx@xxxx> **Fri, Jun 3, 2022 at 9:59 AM To:** 'Neimanis, Astrida' <xxxx@xxxx> **Cc:** 'Feeling Wor(l)ds' <correspondence@atlasarts.org.uk>, <xxxx@xxxx>, <xxxx@xxxx>, <xxxx@xxxx>

Dear Astrida, Ashanti and Katharine,

Astrida, thank you for giving us a beginning. I often struggle with where to start, because I see thinking as a plane or a space where things exist simultaneously, and pulling that space into the linearity of language sometimes requires some deliberation, force, even.
[...]

On the threshold of winter turning to spring a couple of months ago I was walking from a forest to a field with my dog and saw a flock of barnacle geese on a snowy field [...] There was a lapwing and a couple of mallards among them. The mixture of species made me think, but I didn't arrive at any conclusions. Different water and shore birds flock together for feeding, a mental note.
[...] Wings open, head resting on

the snow, it looked like it had died mid air. [...] This whole event came to my mind with what you, Astrida said about how perhaps in death our relationship to gravity isn't that different to birds'. [...]

Barnacle geese are endangered in Finland, I checked.
[...]
Camille

**Ashanti Harris <xxxx@xxxx> Sun,
Jun 5, 2022 at 11:46 PM To:
<xxxx@xxxx>, Cc: <xxxx@xxxx>,
<xxxx@xxxx>, <xxxx@xxxx>
'Feeling Wor(l)ds'<correspondence
@atlasarts.org.uk>**

Dear Astrida, Camille
and Katharine
[...]

This is indeed an interesting way to get to know new people [...] the parts that have stayed with me the most has been getting to know you both in some small way through your dads. Last year when my dad was unwell, I asked him to help me with a research project I had been invited to contribute to exploring our complex relationships to crude oil. Scotland is an oil producing country and very

recently, Guyana (the country I am from) also became an oil producing country. [...] In a different lifetime (before I was born) my dad was a geologist working in the gold mining industry in Guyana, so I asked him to help me with this project as a distraction when he was unwell. [...] Stories layered on top of stories, thinking about the layering of time and the minerals of the earth and extraction and being 'out of time'. [...] Something in your messages brought me back to this research project with my dad. I'm not sure whether it was the Barnacle Goose being extracted from the sky, both your words about extinction (and the phantom feelings which inhabit the spaces of loss and extinction), or if it was just the lovely introductions to your dads. I thought I would share a little research film I made which includes some recordings of my dad talking about gold mining. <https://vimeo.com/717336961/80742ade50>
[...] More soon
Ashanti

**Katharine Macfarlane <xxxx@xxxx>
Sun, Jun 12, 2022 at 6:05 PM To:
Ashanti Harris <xxxx@xxxx>,**

Camille Auer <xxxx@xxxx>
Cc: 'Neimanis, Astrida'
<xxxx@xxxx>, '**Feeling Wor(l)ds**'
<correspondence@atlasarts.org.uk>

Hello Ashanti, Astrida & Camille,

[...] I'm sure you each have been struck by different elements of our conversation but personally I have had a head full of feathers, fathers & feelings since reading your work.

I. Feathers

Camille, the line in your message 'different water and shore birds flock together for feeding, a mental note' resonated as I read it whilst staying at RSPB Balranald in North Uist. I was listening to and recording birdsong (very rough recording attached—the wind is omnipresent, and all exists below and beyond it) [...]

Your story of the barnacle goose along with Ashanti's work had me reflecting on how thin the veil between life and death is. How unpredictable. [...]

Wild Duck Eggs

If we had known
Would we have taken a
different route?
Out over the field and up the
common grazing perhaps?
Calves not yet born; the cows
would be further uphill.
But the lambs were young
And no knowing where the
sheep would be.

The other way belonged
to the hens,
Only just laying again.
Nowhere beyond them except
Angus (and Roy) although
We didn't know that then.

And so, even knowing,
This is the way we would
have gone.

Although afterwards
I wished I had shortened
the lead,
Held him on the right side,
Carried him even.
Anything
Not to have heard that empty
clatter of wings
The corbies triumphant call.

II. Fathers

[...]

I did a show called Fieldwork a few years ago which was mainly about my relationship with the Gaelic language but my father became woven through it—I hadn't realised until then how much his (very occasional) stories of being moved away from the land he grew up on and away from the rest of his family [...] had shaped my own identity and left me with a sense of longing for a place I didn't know and which no longer exists. [...] The show was performed live 4 years ago from words composed and held in memory... [...]

*'That was not the only time
that summer
I found myself singing
In a language that was not mine,
That somehow always slipped
around the edges of belonging,
That brought longing for a
home unknown.
Cianalas—homesickness
What is the cure for this,
this longing
Is it homesickness when it comes
in a language
That is not the language of home*

*At home we spoke English,
Or some sort of form of it.
Mother's was perfect,
Father's held traces of his father
before him.
I suppose it was Scots although
We thought of it as Farmer
And I'm ashamed to say I was
ashamed of it
Words like 'yon ewes' and
'o'er yonder'
A language of the earth
At home, not turning the soil
of his birth
But home was the earth he turned.
And I turned and turned
And one way saw the city
With every 't' pronounced correctly
And on the other side....
on the other side
I listened...'*

III Feelings

[...] how much language of feeling we have already lost.

[...] I have always been interested in the limitations of language to express feeling. Often finding that none of the language ascribed to feeling accurately reflected what was flowing within. Learning Gaelic brought new phrases and

'Feeling Wor(l)ds' <correspondence@atlasarts.org.uk>

terminology but still a sense that the feeling slipped around the edges of understanding or naming. I feel with images or sense of place and these do not translate well into any spoken language that I have. Lately I have been exploring other languages in the world around me. The heart-beat of a cuckoo's call for example is the closest expression of contented-forward-looking-with-readiness-for-work-to-come that I have. Ashanti the singing in Oil Dorado was wonderfully evocative in the way of birdsong. Thank you.

I feel these threads are still unravelling and being blown in all different directions but I'd like to thank you all very much for sharing your work and sharing some thoughts that might bring a frame, a beart-bheag or little loom to begin weaving them upon.

Best wishes to you all,
Katharine
[Balranald 2.mp3 482K](#)

Camille Auer <xxxx@xxxx> Mon, Jun 27, 2022 at 11:38 AM To: Katharine Macfarlane <xxxx@xxxx> Cc: Ashanti Harris <xxxx@xxxx>, 'Neimanis, Astrida' <xxxx@xxxx>

Dear Ashanti, Astrida and Katharine,
[...]

Summer reminds me of car trips with the family. Ashanti, your Oil Dorado made me think how we all have a personal relationship to fossil fuels and extractive metals. The reversed singing felt like returning to the formation of that relationship, which is so often about consumption and not the extraction or production.

Consumption and production, are of course entangled and co-dependent in exploitation and the relationship is anything but simple or simply hierarchical. The spectacle works best if we do not think where gasoline comes from. Now that gas prices are record high the memories of long car trips without a worry get a tinge of a thing of the past.

[...]
My moving boxes had a graphic of birds, maybe geese, flying in a plow formation. On my first walk in my new neighbourhood I encountered several flocks of barnacle geese. They have a lot of

fluffy chicks at this time of the year. [...]

Katharine, I relate to what you say about feeling with images and sense of place. Maybe what happened with the duck nest was a perfect description of the precarity we face with the ongoing climate disaster and geo- and biopolitical turmoil.

Looking forward to all your next entries.

Best wishes,

Camille

[Quoted text hidden] [2 attachments](#) 595K

Neimanis, Astrida <xxxx@xxxx> Tue, Jul 5, 2022 at 6:35 AM To: **Camille Auer** <xxxx@xxxx>, **Katharine Macfarlane** <xxxx@xxxx> Cc: **Ashanti Harris** <xxxx@xxxx>, **'Feeling Wor(l)ds' <correspondence@atlasarts.org.uk>**

Dear Katharine, Camille, Ashanti—

I don't know why, I am noticing the birds a lot more [...] Where was it I just heard or read that birds now begin their dawn chorus earlier—before dawn, in fact—because

people sounds have become so noisy?

[...] I don't know what the birds are called—I was never interested before. [...] Now, I'm not sure. It's somehow becoming more important. [...] I am thinking about that Ursula Le Guin story, 'She Unnames Them' [...] Why is it important to know what an animal is called? Katherine, maybe this has something to do with finding a language that can get close enough to something. Or maybe it is something entirely different.

This also reminds me of an Alexis Pauline Gumbs excerpt from her book, *Undrowned*, that some of you might know:

listen (from *Undrowned: Black feminist lessons from marine mammals*) Alexis Pauline Gumbs

How can we listen across species, across extinction, across harm? [...] Once upon a time there was a giant sea mammal, [...] They say she couldn't sing. The only sound was her breathing, but she could hear for miles and miles and miles. What a loss for

listening. [...] I would honour you with my quiet and my breathing, my listening further and further out and in. I would honour you with the slowness of my movement, contemplative and graceful. [...] I will remember you. Not by the name (written in the possessive) of the one they say 'discovered' you after generations of Indigenous relationship. [...]

From sky to sea ... but I am reluctant to leave the birds behind too quickly. I have so loved reading and watching your video and poetry and thoughts and feelings on wild ducks, geese, ruffs ...

[...] so again we are back at birds (and fathers). Some looking for gold, some for oil, some for birds. What distinguishes these desires? [...]

[...]
Astrida

Ashanti Harris <xxxx@xxxx> Wed, Jul 6, 2022 at 6:49 PM To: 'Feeling Wor(l)ds' <correspondence@atlasarts.org.uk> Cc: 'Neimanis, Astrida' <xxxx@xxxx>, Camille Auer <xxxx@xxxx>, Katharine Macfarlane <xxxx@xxxx>

Dear Astrida, Camille, Katharine, Joss & Yvonne

[...] I don't know if it is the energy of the day? the phase of the moon? The placement of the planets? Or just the intensity of *feeling* ... but I have been laughing, weeping, inhaling, exhaling, sighing, tingling and singing, whilst reading (aloud) your incredibly rich and generous correspondences. This is definitely a moment when words are absolutely not enough to convey all of the feelings I have right now, as they are so in the body. As an experiment, I tried to articulate these feelings in movement, but this also feels limited. The feelings I am trying to articulate inhabit that infinite, endless space inside us that goes far beyond the limits of the physical body. I feel that the only thing I can do right now is sit with these feelings and listen to them ... breathe with them

[...]
.... And so, while reading your correspondence, I find myself breathing in the wind, the dead, the extinct, the sacrificed, and the ancestor reverence that has been gusting in and out of our correspondence.

Still with your correspondence Katharine, I really related to the way you talk about your fathers stories and how—with your own imaginings filling the gaps—they have shaped your identity and left you with a ‘sense of longing for a place I didn’t know and which no longer exists’. [...] I was raised on stories from my dad of this mystical place that I was from called Guyana—the land of many waters. Guyana ebbed and flowed through my imagination as I grew up and became an important part of my identity [...]

Memory and longing are funny things. I very clearly ‘remember’ Guyana as it was when I was born as much as I ‘remember’ it when my dad was young, before I was born. I loved this line of your poem Katharine

*I found myself singing
In a language that was not mine,
That somehow always slipped
around the edges of belonging,
That brought longing for a
home unknown.*

The reverse singing in Oil’ Dorado is made from recordings of me singing Guyanese Amerindian

songs, and Ghanaian songs, both in languages that I do not speak but in singing them, they are my longing and connection to a place and a time that is in many ways also unknown.

[...]

Ashanti

Feeling Wor(l)ds <correspondence@atlasarts.org.uk> Tue, Jul 26, 2022 at 10:48 PM To: Ashanti Harris <xxxx@xxxx> Cc: ‘Neimanis, Astrida’ <xxxx@xxxx>, Camille Auer <xxxx@xxxx>, Katharine Macfarlane <xxxx@xxxx>

An interlude,
not an interruption,

1. Corncrakes cranking in Oronsay,
somewhere further off,
faint murmurs of seal song,
like ghosts in the wind

<recording attached>

<headphone perhaps required>

2. A second recording, from 1950 held by Tobar an Dualchais: Annie Jonstone imitating the speech of birds, including the thrush, the lark, the crow, the seagull and the dove.

<https://www.tobarandual-chais.co.uk/track/25889?l=en>

Yvonne

Katharine Macfarlane <xxxx@xxxx>
Aug 8, 2022, 4:43 AM To: Ashanti Harris <xxxx@xxxx>, **Camille Auer** <xxxx@xxxx> **Cc: 'Neimanis, Astrida'** <xxxx@xxxx>, **'Feeling Wor(l)ds'** <correspondence@atlasarts.org.uk>

Dear Astrida, Ashanti, Camille,
Yvonne & Joss

Yvonne, thank you for those beautiful recordings—the corncrakes re-remembered North Uist vividly and the TaD recording felt like a comfortable slide back to a lecture room in University Gardens ... which is interesting as the soundscape of the birds sits outside the window here rather than in Glasgow, funny what memories sound can trigger.

[..]

Before I left the island, energised by our correspondence, I was beginning to feel a deeper connection to this place we are learning to call home.

[..]

'And then I will be quiet, so I can hear

you breathing. And then I will be breathing and you'll remind me, do not rush. And the time in me will hush. And then we will be listening for real.'

I used this for several nights as a sort of meditation or reflection before I lay listening in the field next to our house, near the old house, in the same spot each night to see how the sounds shaped and shifted with the time and weather.

Here I was surrounded by tiny white moths and a vague memory of reading or hearing somewhere that moths in Gaelic culture symbolised the soul. A reminder of the thin veil between worlds and of the many souls who had lived in the now ruined black house just yards from our door. There was a sense of anticipation or maybe excitement in beginning to recognise a pattern of sound during these listening times.

[..]

I had also been reading Kerri Ni Dochartaigh *Thin Places* and would like to share a few passages;

I felt it so fully for the first time, the link between the past and the future, the land and the language,

and my place in it all, I felt stuck in the gaps between these markers of our confused lost maps. I knew I was not alone; [...] The things that live alongside us have names that many of us do not know, were never taught –and that night I could see it all so clearly. Naming things, in the language that should always have been offered to you, is a way to sculpt loss. A way to protect that which we still have. [...]

‘The places he spoke of were locations where people felt very different from how they normally do. Places from which people came away changed.

In those places you might experience the material and the spiritual worlds coming together. [...] Places where a veil is lifted away and light steams in, where you see a boundary between worlds disappear right before your eyes, places where you are allowed to cross any borders, where borders and boundaries held no sway.’

[...]

Ashanti, your latest correspondence came through a few days after the accident and so while I was stuck in bed I listened to your *Listening with the Body* several times. I couldn't go outside at that point but imagined I could do so and re-walked some of the routes I

had taken whilst looking for the Thin Places.

[...]

All best,
Katharine

Camille Auer <xxxx@xxxx> sept 5, 2022, 3:22 PM To: Katharine Macfarlane <xxxx@xxxx> Cc: Ashanti Harris <xxxx@xxxx>, ‘Neimanis, Astrida’ <xxxx@xxxx>, ‘Feeling Wor(l)ds’ <correspondence@atlasarts.org.uk>

Dear Katharine, Astrida, Ashanti, Yvonne and Joss

A flock of barnacle geese flew over me the other day. They were vocalising and the sounds drew a sonic spherical space above and around me, resonating in the air. They are preparing for autumn migration. [...]

I've been wanting to say something about species recognition here, but haven't gotten to form clear wordings for it. It feels like a double motion, kind of a cutting-together-apart, to paraphrase Karen Barad. The practice of birding for a lot of people revolves around species recognition and seeing as many species as possible. This feels like a colonial

mindset to me, but when people report their observations online, a lot of data about birds is accumulated and can be used for preservation purposes among other things. When reading about corncrakes in the 'Listening to Birds in the Anthropocene' text and your words Yvonne, I found that a desire to hear them for myself was formed. Also reading about matsutake mushrooms in Anna Lowenthal Tsing's book *The Mushroom at the End of the World* got me searching for matsutakes every autumn. And I got the book *Narrow Edge* that you recommended, Yvonne, I haven't started it yet, but when I was in the archipelago earlier, I was hoping to see red knots, the birds the book is about. So I recognize the desire to see and hear and taste things for myself when I read about them. Why isn't it enough to know that these things exist?

[..] Before the Linnean taxonomy solidified a one name per species and one species per name policy, a species could have had countless local names, and a name could mean several different birds in different local contexts. Naming

makes a being an object of knowledge, that is the first motion, which has a colonial aspect to it, but it also makes it possible to research its lifeways and relations to the phenomena it's a part of, possibly revealing diversity that would be difficult to discern if we weren't able to name things in a somewhat stable and universal way. Sexing birds is an example of this. I have had difficult feelings about it—why would we impose our value tinted understanding of sexes onto birds? But not recognizing the sexes would leave us unable to see how diverse the sexual practices among birds are and there would be more space for normative readings, not less.

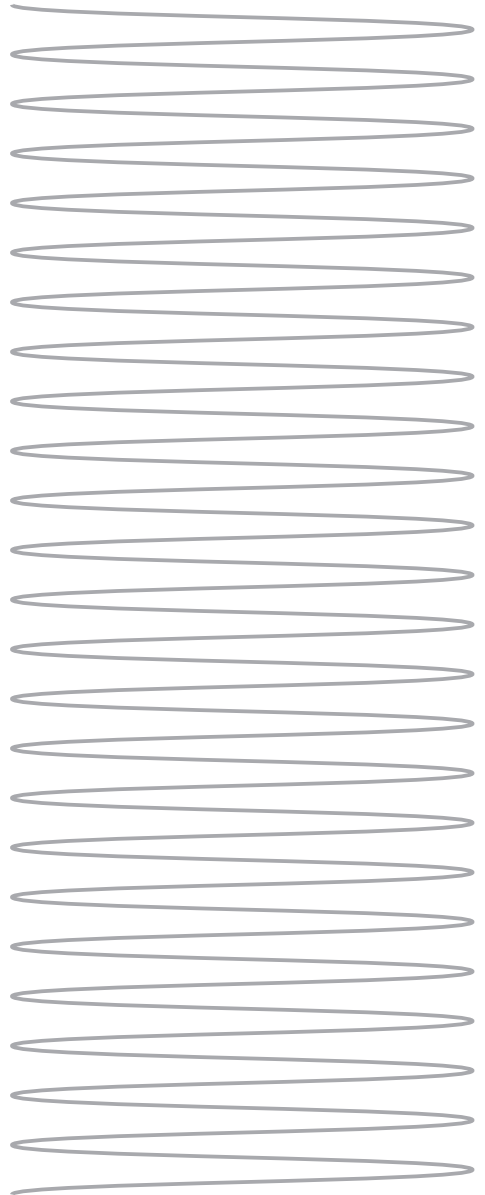
The phantom feelings from your text, Astrida, have been in my thoughts. The phantom futures that we thought we might have if it weren't for the climate disaster. The number of ruff flocks if it weren't for the destruction of their habitats. I have been thinking about this when I have seen the birds, how the flocks might be ten times larger and a hundred times more common. But the ones that are there make it possible to

imagine the ones that no longer are.

Some very unfinished thoughts.
I hope the coming autumn will be easy on you all. [...]

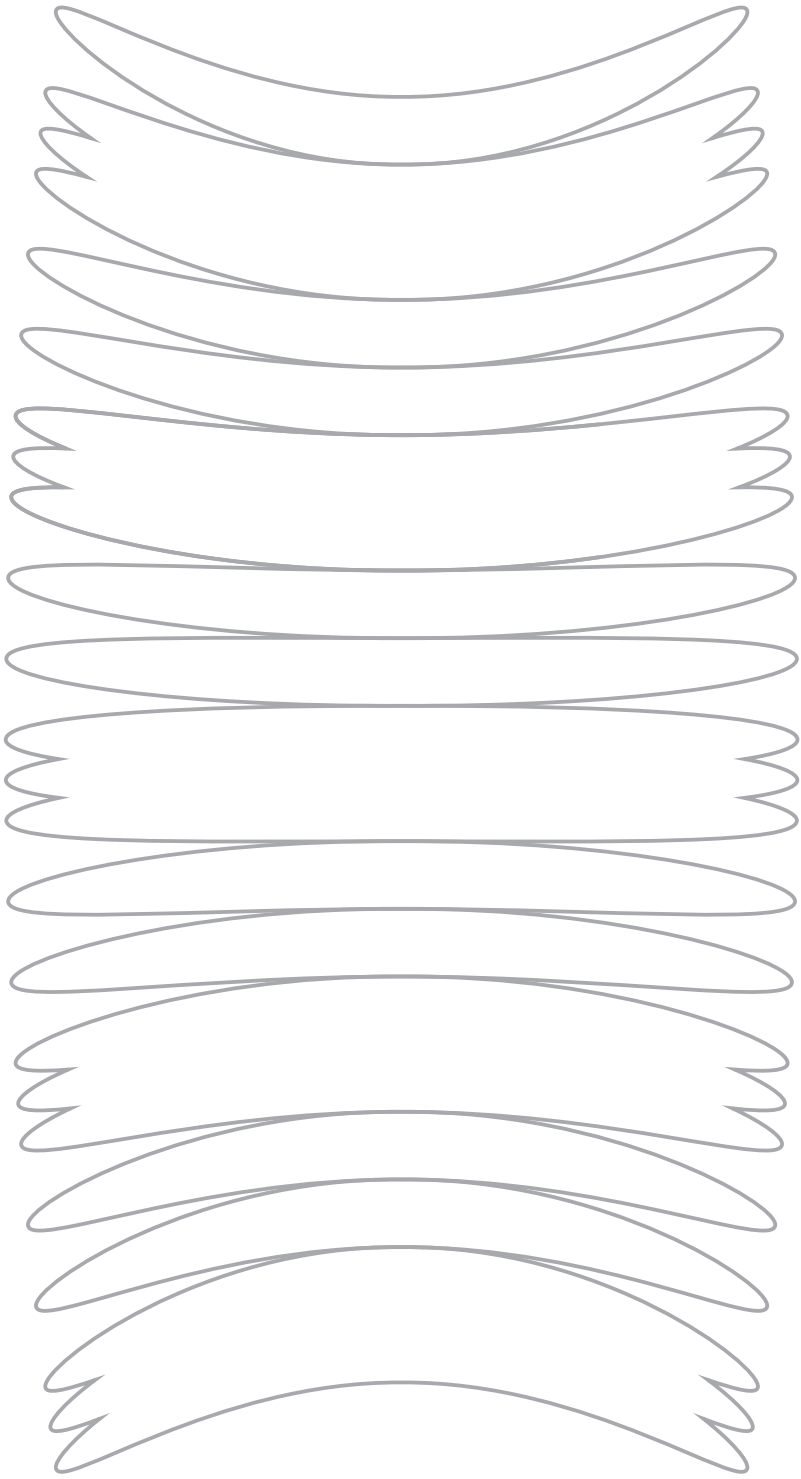
Warmly,

Camille



180 common cranes

Camille Auer



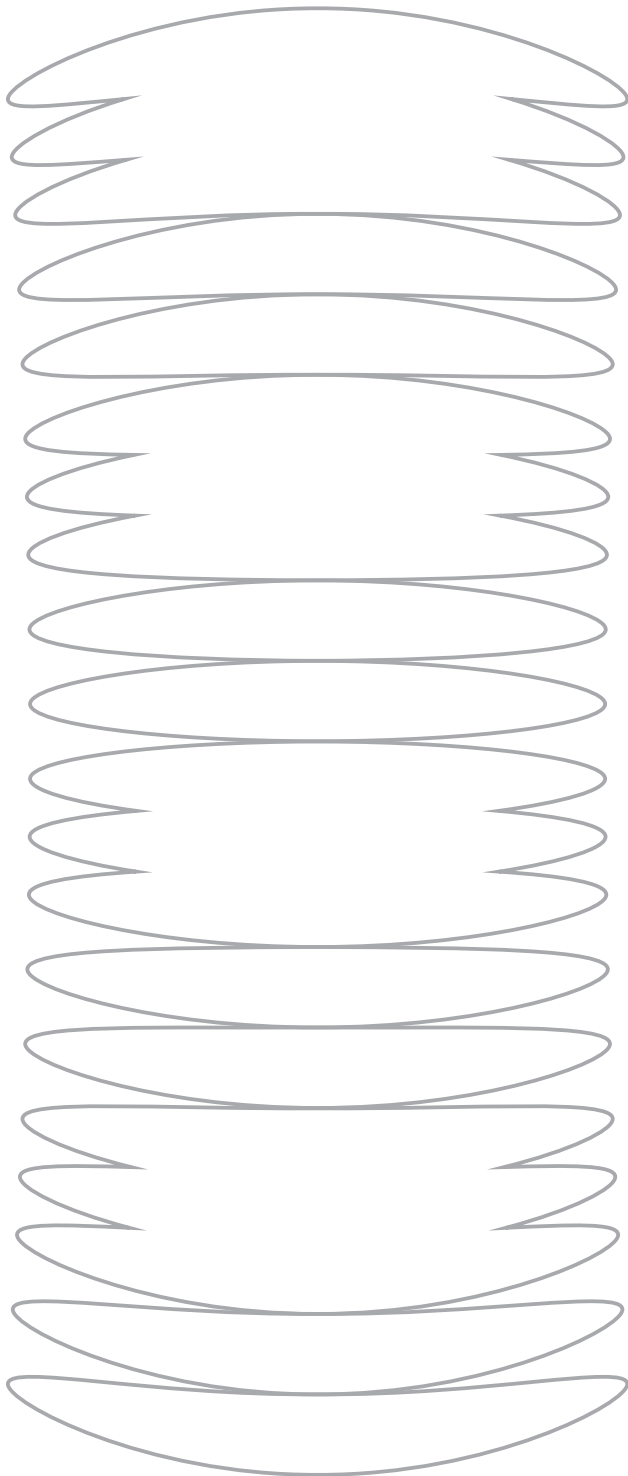
a
hundred
and
eighty
common
cranes
fly
over
the
field
their
calls
first
approaching
then
receding

and
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waves
in their in their
lines waves lines
when
they
change
formation
like
pearls
each
around
two
meters in
in wingspan
in
a necklace
that is
is
swimming a
snake

A collage, a choreography, a collective imagining

Ashanti Harris







You're stood on the harbour up on a half-wall looking out into the dark water. There is a ship in the near distance. You can hear its mechanical hum, but you cannot tell if it's moving in, or backing out of the harbour. You watch for a while, moving your eyes between the ship and the horizon. A tiny slither, desperately holding on to day as darkness washes over. You take a deep breath in ... and as you breathe out, you think about Guyana. You say the name out loud Guyana. Allowing the final syllable to pass from your tongue, to the roof of your mouth, and flick out into the water. Plummeting deep into the darkness, it changes tone, becomes muffled.

*It's time to go back
Stand up and plant your feet firmly on the ground
Take a deep breath ... and as you exhale, feel the weight of your body on your feet
Take a few moments to gently sway from side
to side and forwards and backwards, testing your
point of balance
How far can you go?
Come back to your centre
And slowly, starting with your left foot, take a small step backwards
Take your time ...
let your toe reach back in search of the ground
and allow the heel to follow on contact
Now the next foot
Keep going slowly ...
Pushing every part of your foot into the ground with each step
Think about the contact between your feet and the ground
There is a lot of ground beneath you*

I'm going to share some thoughts about time and place that I would like you to take with you on your journey.

I will begin with a quote from the novel *Beloved* by Toni Morrison. In this part of the novel, the main character Sethe, is speaking to her daughter Denver about Rememory.

'I was talking about time. It's so hard for me to believe in it. Some things go. Pass on. Some things just stay. I used to think it was my rememory. You know. Some things you forget. Other things you never do. But it's not. Places, places are still there. If a house burns down, it's gone, but the place—the picture of it—stays, and not just in my rememory, but out there, in the world. What I remember is a picture floating around out there outside my head. I mean, even if I don't think it, even if I die, the picture of what I did, or knew, or saw is still out there. Right in the place where it happened.'

Toni Morrison uses the term 'rememory' to describe how events which have passed can materialise within the present; a history or a 'past' which, like a ghost, can 'appear' or take form, haunting those they confront.

What would it mean if we treated this confrontation differently?

The word confront is built from *con*—meaning 'with'

And *front* meaning 'face'

To be *with* another face to face

To be in conversation *with*

By simply being in time and in space, we are already in a peripheral conversation with multitudinous rememories. Gods, Ancestors and Demons. The things you imagine in conversation with the things you want to remember and the things you cannot forget. What has passed and what is present and what is yet to occur is never so clearly separated out.





But what if we didn't run from these ghosts? What would happen if we met these rememorys face to face? What if we walked with these rememorys as a companion? Continuing the unspoken conversations that we are already in with them. In joy and in pain, they are already incarnated in our bodies, so what if we allow ourselves to listen and feel and move in with them?

∞

The name Guyana comes from an indigenous Amerindian language and means 'Land of many waters'.

Kaiture falls, the world's largest single drop waterfall, runs like a hundred thousand ghosts, raging, crying, hissing and whispering as they hurdle down from the Potaro river. Kaiture's wide, coffee coloured flow drops eight hundred and twenty two feet into the depths of the Amazon rainforest below and runs for two hundred and twenty five kilometres until it meets the Essequibo, the largest river in Guyana, which sees their sister Demerara only as their waters stream like tears returning to eyes, into the Atlantic. The current of their cry mixing with the shrieking crash of the ocean, colouring its waves and shores dark with the Guyana brown waters.

∞

*Breathe
Take long deep breaths
allowing your lungs to fill up to their capacity, and slowly
Slowly
Release
Now, slowly, make your way to the floor in a comfortable position
relax all over
give in to gravity
soften your body resistance
spend a few more moments with your breath*

testing the moment of stillness between the inhale and the exhale
feeling the breath move your body

∞

'I will remember you. Not by the name (written in the possessive) of the one they say "discovered" you after generations of Indigenous relationship. I will say once upon a time there was a huge and quiet swimmer, a plant-based rough-skinned listener, a fat and graceful mammal. And then I will be quiet, so I can hear you breathing. And then I will be breathing and you'll remind me, do not rush. And the time in me will hush. And then we will be listening for real.'
—Alexis Pauline Gumbs, *Undrowned: Black feminist lessons from marine mammals*.

∞

What does it mean to take two steps forward and one step back?
The phrase often refers to an encounter that slows you down in a disruptive way
but what if we welcome this encounter?
What if we choose to move through the world this way?
With two steps into the unknown ahead of us balanced with a step backwards
into what we already know and what has already passed

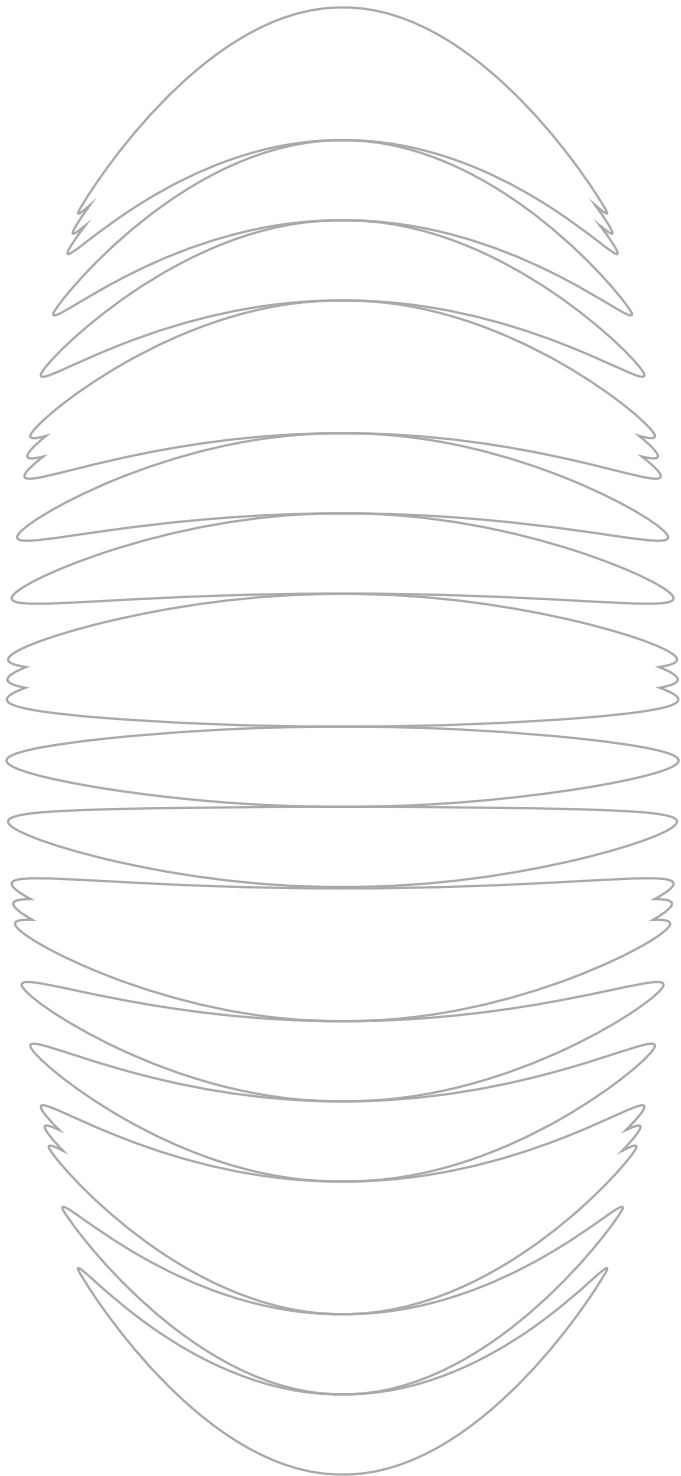
If you feel able to do so, take the next part of your journey walking two steps
forward and one step back
Slowly, step your first foot forward, followed by the next
And then step your first foot back
Letting your toe reach the ground behind you and allowing your heel to follow
until your entire sole has met the ground
And repeat
one foot forward
another foot forward
one foot back

*Let yourself fall into a rhythm that's yours
There is no wrong way to do this
Feel the undulation of this movement to the rhythm of your breath
Watch the undulation of the world as the sights around you
pass by and return again.*



Holdfast

Astrida Neimanis





i. feeling
there are so many ways to die

exposed,
elementally displaced kelp feigns leather, invertebrate
life on this stretch of beach
the strength, and the sleek, of the once slipping-up limbs now wilted,
give in
to the weight of the open air

lie still,
hold on

these supple arms once wrapped themselves around otter
(almost gone)
necklaces, linking hands
giant kelp
thwarting floating away

sinuous grace, furling unfurling
densely furred flak, trying to get some rest.
now, here, on the sand to hold it between my fingers is
touching ghosts,
Feeling
a dislocated frond, vegetable tentacle
is to put your palm on the back of another beached soul
(porpoise skin, whale cheek)
still breathing this
multispecies synaesthesia
as elemental as
breathing.

I remember the cold jolt, the breathtaking
arrival of everything
going under

flashing against my thinnest skin
the world is sharper in the dark.

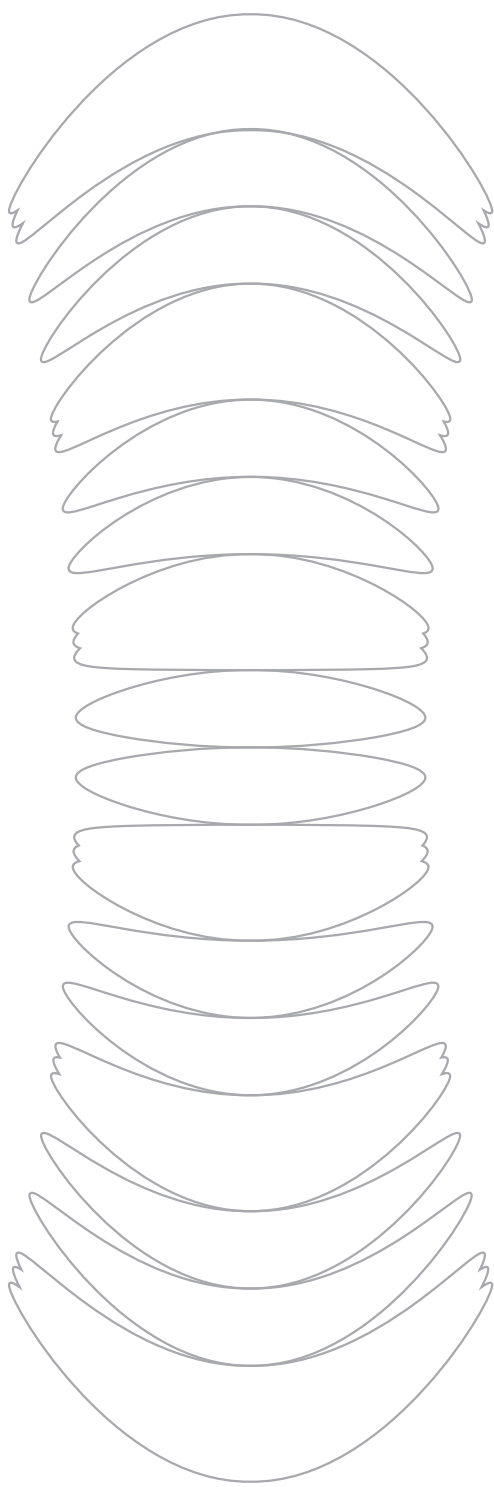
i feel alive
i feel alive —

This is an extract from Astrida Neimanis's text 'Learning Feeling' commissioned by and published in A I S T I T / coming to our senses, curated by Satu Herrala and Hans Rosenström, edited by Sini Rinne-Kanto and Andrew Hodgson (Helsinki: Garret publications, 2021).



Correspondence and response

Katharine Macfarlane



Ku, ku

A cuckoo call.

Echo from the *ridge* resounds through the heart of us.
This year she sits on a bare-branch.

The sheep eat just as they have always done,
grazing sideways down the *hill*.
They *bleat* infrequently.

I warrant those *wolves* live still
in the *dark crevices* that colour the *crag*s. A *water-horse*
lying in the *brown of the loch*, mane-tangled in the *reed-beds*.

Wait for the *cuckoo call* to return.

The *wind* carries echoes of *Hallaig*.
Slides through the spaces between *grey-stone* and
rattles at a broken *hearth*, *rust-red iron*.

I warrant those *wolves* live still
warming themselves at *fires* they did not build. And the *water-horse*,
lying with *silver-tongue*, grows fat on their spoils.

The *cuckoo call* silenced by *winter*.

*‘Where was it I heard or read that birds
now begin their dawn chorus earlier—
before dawn, in fact—because people
sounds have become so noisy?’ A.N.*

Nesting

'bi glic, bi glic'

curlew, you who shifts from *tide* to *tide*
from *wintery*, *limpet*-pick beach
to ghost of the *moor*,
you, belonging to both and all
at once,
you leave me longing.

curlew, your song, a choice
haunting the *midnight twilight*.
your way of being in both worlds
of one and of the other
at once
leaves me longing for the *sheiling*

today, I turn to the *linnet*
shake seeds of *sunflower*
to bring to her as gifts.
I will build a nest lined with *mosses*
and *wool*,
call her home.

*'sense of longing for a place I didn't
know and which no longer exists'* K.M.

Gorse Against a Steel-grey Sky

Gorse against a steel-grey sky;
yellow, photo-flood sharp sting of feeling -
a sunrise saturation.

You, a small bird, *blue-tit* maybe, or warbler.

The *gorse* is wavering,
caught in a sea-driven breeze
it scatters *vanilla*, coconut at your feet.

And you, a smile, all *moth*-mouthed.

It would have been better to put the hen-house
by the *gorse* where the *hooded crows* don't perch.

Better the whip of *wind* down hill
than losing an eye.

And you, all smiles, teeth intact.

'I'm also thinking about my future children ... and what spaces we will occupy in their memories and imaginations ...' A.H.

Correspondence

'I have always been interested in the limitations of language to express feeling, often finding that none of the language ascribed to feeling accurately reflects what is flowing within. Learning Gaelic brings new phrases and terminology but still a sense that the feeling slides around the edges of understanding or naming. I feel with images, sounds or sense of place, and these do not translate well into any spoken or written language that I have' K.M.

The poems you have just read incorporate this landscape-based language of feeling in italics. I invite you to 'translate' the last poem into the closest approximation in English using the extract from a **Glossary of Landscape-based Language of Feeling** which you will find at the end of this chapter.

Each landscape-based language term corresponds to a feeling, an emotion, a memory or an experience—an equivalent term in English, simply copy these correspondences into the blank spaces in the poem below in place of the italicised word(s). You may find

more than one feeling, emotion, memory or experience associated with a landscape-based language term, use the context and your own judgement to select the meaning you feel fits best.

Gorse Against a Steel-grey Sky

_____ against a steel-_____;
_____ photo-flood sharp sting of feeling—
a_____ saturation.

You, a small bird, _____ maybe, or
_____.

The _____ is wavering,
caught in a _____
it scatters _____, coconut at your feet.

And you, a smile, all _____-mouthed.

It would have been better to put the _____-house
by the _____ where the
_____ don't perch.

Better the whip of _____ down hill
than losing an eye.

And you, all smiles, teeth intact.

Response

It has been a great pleasure of our correspondence as part of *Feeling wor(l)ds* to find a shared language of landscape. We have naturally moved towards placing our correspondence in the worlds around us and have drifted towards language rich in birdsong, weather, changing seasons and thresholds between this and other worlds. For all our shared and warm correspondence our reflections have been deeply personal, often intimately so. In just such a way individual correspondence with landscape-based language will differ. I may correlate a cuckoo-call with the feeling of *contented forward-looking with readiness for work to come* whereas another may respond to a cuckoo call with a feeling of *unease, of warning*.

I invite you to consider your response to each of the landscape-based language terms in the **Glossary of Landscape-based Language of Feeling**. You may not have an immediate response or indeed may have multiple responses. You may wish to sit with each term for a while, to close your

eyes and visualise the object or imagine the sound, taking note in the Response column of any feelings, emotions, memories or experiences this landscape-based language stirs within you. You may not have a response for each of the terms, this is ok. There may be other landscape-based language that you wish to add to the Glossary.

I invite you to translate the original poem once more by placing your responses to the landscape-based language from the **Glossary** in the relevant spaces in the poems below. Do not worry if you do not have a response to some of the italicised words, just copy the original landscape-based language into the relevant blank spaces.

Gorse Against a Steel-grey Sky

_____ against a steel-_____;
_____ photo-flood sharp sting of feeling—
a_____ saturation.

You, a small bird, _____ maybe, or
_____.

The _____ is wavering,
caught in a _____
it scatters _____, coconut at your feet.

And you, a smile, all _____-mouthed.

It would have been better to put the _____-house
by the _____ where the
_____ don't perch.

Better the whip of _____ down hill
than losing an eye.

And you, all smiles, teeth intact.

Rereading these translations of the poems how does the use of your own responses affect how you engage with each poem?

In what ways does this translation differ from your initial reading of the poem?

'Recently I have been reflecting on how closely feelings, intuition, knowledge and survival are interwoven. That feeling of joy on an early spring day the trigger for a thought that now is the time to begin preparing the ground or that uneasy feeling as the clouds gather over the ridge and the wind white-tips the sea that acts as prompt to check the hens are safe enough and the shed doors are shut. A passing thought ... I wonder also if this is a part of growing older, an awareness that we must pass knowledge on but must first seek or receive this knowing or feeling through an 'elemental multi-species synaesthesia?' And what happens if we turn to learn and the knowledge is lost leaving us with an unanswerable feeling? I wonder how much language of feeling we have already lost' K.M.

It feels good, vital, revitalising to have learned, discovered, reclaimed and re-remembered

a little more language of feeling through our correspondence, to begin to trust in a way of communicating that 'has something to do with finding a language that can get close enough to something' A.N.

It feels good to be content to get close enough.

Glossary of Landscape-based Language of Feeling

'finding a language that can get close enough to something' A.N.

Correspondence /kɒrɪˈspɒnd(ə)ns/ noun

1. a close similarity, connection, or equivalence.
2. communication by exchanging letters.

<u>Landscape-based Language</u>	<u>Correspondence</u>	<u>Response</u>
acorn	▪ sensible, reliability, ▪ prudence	▪
amber	▪ warmth, connection ▪ with ancestors, ▪ family and belonging	▪
blackbird	▪ the purest, sweetest, ▪ gentlest happiness, ▪ contentment ▪ and peace	▪
blue-tit in flight	▪ childlike excitement, ▪ exuberance with ▪ no foolishness ▪ insinuated	▪
blue-tit perched	▪ a gladness held	▪

	▪ close, gently blithe	▪
	▪	▪
blue tit song	▪ trusting, glad with	▪
	▪ an openness	▪
	▪	▪
crag	▪ Past, history	▪
	▪	▪
cuckoo call	▪ contented forward-	▪
	▪ looking with	▪
	▪ readiness for work to	▪
	▪ come. If the cuckoo	▪
	▪ is calling from a tree	▪
	▪ that is not yet in bud	▪
	▪ the forward-looking	▪
	▪ is less contented	▪
	▪ even slightly	▪
	▪ apprehensive and	▪
	▪ there is anticipation	▪
	▪ of significant work	▪
	▪ to come.	▪
	▪	▪
	▪	▪
curlew	▪ spirituality,	▪
	▪ the unknown,	▪
	▪ mystery, vision	▪
	▪	▪
	▪	▪
dew	▪ light, life-giving	▪
	▪ or affirming,	▪
	▪ a connection with	▪
	▪ the spiritual either	▪
	▪ present or should	▪

	▪ be sought	▪
	▪	▪
elm	▪ the beginning, ▪ route, source, ▪ ancient wisdom	▪
	▪	▪
elderberries	▪ pretty or attractive, ▪ drawn towards ▪ something, safe ▪ and protected	▪
	▪	▪
feather	▪ knowledge of this ▪ world but also all ▪ the knowing not yet ▪ received, honour	▪
	▪	▪
grasshopper warbler song	▪ peaceful, warm, ▪ easy feeling. ▪ Memory of hunting ▪ for grasshoppers as ▪ a child”	▪
	▪	▪
gorse flower in bloom	▪ optimism, a state of ▪ cheerfulness	▪
	▪	▪
gorse pods	▪ fear, death, ▪ claustrophobic or ▪ trapped feeling	▪
	▪	▪

grey sky	▪ sense of foreboding, ▪ low-level fear, worry ▪ or panic	▪ ▪ ▪
guillemot	▪ feeling overwhelmed, ▪ small, insignificant, ▪ aware of the ▪ vastness of the rest ▪ of the world	▪ ▪ ▪ ▪ ▪
hen	▪ domestic life, ▪ family life	▪ ▪ ▪
hooded crows	▪ insecurities, fears an ▪ ominous unspecified ▪ threat, be watchful	▪ ▪ ▪ ▪
juniper	▪ faithfulness, trust, ▪ friendships that ▪ are important	▪ ▪ ▪ ▪
limpet	▪ insecurity, scarcity	▪ ▪ ▪
moss	▪ healing and ▪ protection	▪ ▪ ▪
moth	▪ in Gaelic culture ▪ symbolises the soul	▪ ▪ ▪

	▪ or death. Maybe a	▪
	▪ learned association.	▪
	▪ Soul, an essence of	▪
	▪ being, a person full	▪
	▪ of life, a messenger	▪
	▪	▪
	▪	▪
ridge	▪ solidity of the past,	▪
(Trotternish Ridge)	▪ strength of the	▪
	▪ ancestors,	▪
	▪ foundations	▪
	▪	▪
	▪	▪
rust-red	▪ warmth, a sense of	▪
	▪ belonging	▪
	▪	▪
	▪	▪
sea	▪ whitecapped, rough,	▪
	▪ waves dashing on	▪
	▪ rocks—thrill, danger—	▪
	▪ excitement, desire to	▪
	▪ move forwards	▪
	▪ forcefully	▪
	▪	▪
	▪	▪
shieling	▪ a hopeful, young way	▪
	▪ of looking at the	▪
	▪ world. Safe, secure	▪
	▪ and looking forwards,	▪
	▪ warmth and sunshine	▪
	▪	▪
	▪	▪
sky	▪ a reflection of what	▪
	▪ could be, what is to	▪
	▪ come, the future	▪
	▪	▪

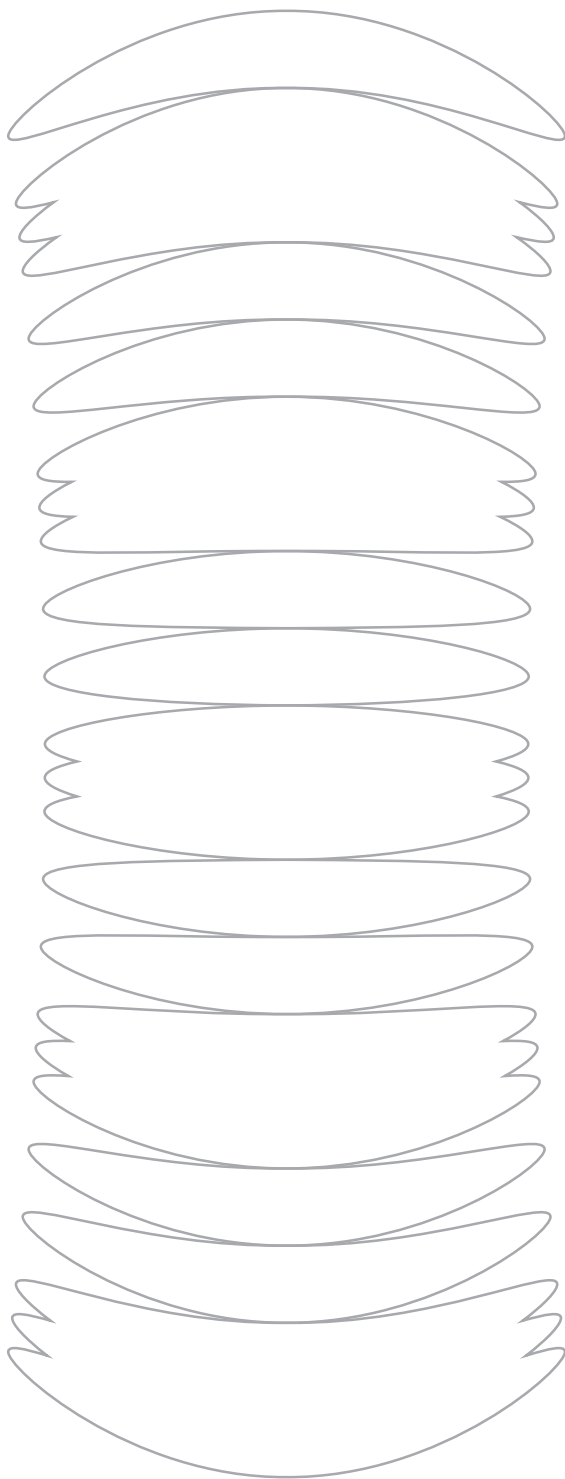
snipe	▪ shaken or disturbed ▪ from a state of ▪ complacency, ▪ turning, looking for ▪ new direction
tide	▪ opportunity, ▪ especially an ebb ▪ tide. An incoming ▪ tide has a note ▪ of caution.
vanilla warbler (see grasshopper warbler)	▪ a learned association ▪ with cleanliness ▪ and homeliness
wind—storm	▪ excitement, purpose
wind—light	▪ movement, travelling, ▪ uplifted
yellow	▪ hopeful, new ▪ beginnings with ▪ a clean slate, or ▪ sometimes a cosy ▪ home-feeling, ▪ especially with yellow ▪ lichen. Yellow flowers ▪ are generally happy ▪ and friendship



'stories layered on top of stories' A.H.

Listening with the body in non-ideal conditions

Astrida Neimanis



Astrida Neimanis with Ashanti Harris
16 October 2022
Kelowna, BC

walking as

resting as

*small circles, heel of
your hand
spine, the towering grasses
traffic & birds
stretching like the maples*

*expand
empty
sense*

*lower back
ribcage
abdomen*

hand

*I check a text
homes
for sale roofers attached to roofs with ropes*

Did I lock the door?

*walking changes as I hit the sound,
the sand
a few mid-October sun gods
a sequined lake, showing off*



rememory
confrontation (with, face)
as the lake licks the sand again
again

again

the floppy house, the one that was for sale in May, astronomically
high bargain, out of place in this neighbourhood's poshness is

gone

construction fence holding in the nothing left

I am / am I

at the ocean

Soften your body, you say.
My foot melts into the sound
the sand

*Begin to imagine the ground
you are walking
on. My feet the organs of imagination:
eye, nose, ear
lower back, ribcage, abdomen*

What does the ground evoke in you?

birds, inside or outside
my earbuds,
who knows it
doesn't matter.

the beach is behind a fence, and a gate
the lake, the water





an old sock in the sand
an organ abandoned

My body is never unencumbered, when
I prepare it, I need
to negotiate everything it carries I
can't simply
put it down
What means my own
movement?
All of this is moving me.

How does the ground hold you?

Let the world move past you at a different pace
I am slower than the fake tide, lake
water licking

so much cooler in the shade of this old willow, *what is beyond*
the sky?

In the tunnel under the highway my
whole body is
a
gaping

ear

a bubble jostled by the licking, intact and then
not.

two forward, one back—
—I come back to the ocean
(not a bluebottle)
what we already know, what is

already past
it is yours, it is
someone else's

test your point of balance I have
dreams of me
of keeping my feet stuck to the ground as I
fall forward 45 degree angle and also

fall back
my torso a weighted
metronome a ticking broken
clock (is this mine, is it someone
else's?) anchored
by my
feet

here

walking

slow contact between the ground and your feet

the last sign I see is a sign
in a public patch of garden in
the sand, some
scrubby shrubs poking
up. 'Water me,'
it says.

The body is an infinite archive.

when I get home, the bright
purple flowers

'water me'—







A last correspondence from Astrida Neimanis responding to Ashanti Harris's work 'Listening with the Body: a walking workshop' undertaken by Astrida on 16 October 2022, Kelowna, BC. You are invited to use the blank pages in this chapbook for your own reflections and responses.

Acknowledgments

Feeling wor(l)ds: a *feel* guide is issue #3 of the Making Publics Press Chapbook series. It is printed on demand at ATLAS Arts. The book is available for free, and shared by printing and binding together with those who wish to read it.

This issue is collated and edited by Joss Allen and Yvonne Billimore with contributions from Camille Auer, Ashanti Harris, Katharine Macfarlane and Astrida Neimanis. Special thanks to all the contributors and to Katharine Barrington and Heather Fulton for supporting the process. Thanks also to Karoliina Korpilahti and Finnish Institute in the UK and Ireland, as our partners in the *Feeling wor(l)ds* project.

Bios

Camille Auer is a trans-disciplinary artist and writer, living between Helsinki and Turku. Her art practice has always been theory driven, but instead of illustrating existing theories, she uses forms ranging from sound, moving image, performance and text-based installations to contribute to theoretical discourse as modes of thinking in their own right. Her rich body of work is diverse in form and content, but a common theme is the othering of trans and nonhuman bodies, such as herself or queer birds. Her work has been shown in The Finnish Museum of Photography, Wäinö Aaltonen Museum and Titanik gallery, among many others. Her work is currently supported by the Finnish Cultural Foundation.

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Ashanti Harris is a multi-disciplinary artist and researcher based in Glasgow. Working with dance, performance, facilitation, film, installation and writing, Ashanti's work disrupts historical

narratives and reimagines them from a Caribbean diasporic perspective. As part of her creative practice, she is co-director of the dance company Project X—platforming dance of the African and Caribbean diaspora in Scotland; and works collaboratively as part of the collective Glasgow Open Dance School (G.O.D.S)—facilitating experimental movement workshops and research groups. She is also lecturer in Contemporary Performance at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and co-facilitates the British Art Network research group The Re-Action of Black Performance.

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Katharine Macfarlane is an award-winning Scottish poet and educator whose lyrical poetry is rooted in the history, landscape and folklore of Scotland. With a passion for creating connections, celebrating communities and championing underrepresented voices her work explores themes such as identity,

tradition, environment, relationships, parenthood, violence and journeys. She was the Scottish Slam Poetry Champion 2020 and placed third in the World Cup of Poetry in 2020. Her work has been published in numerous anthologies and journals with a full collection of poetry published in 2021 by Speculative Books. <http://katharinemacfarlane.com>

Astrida Neimanis is a cultural theorist working at the intersection of feminism and environmental change. Her research focuses on bodies, water, and weather, and how they can help us reimagine justice, care, responsibility and relation in the time of climate catastrophe. Her most recent book, *Bodies of Water: Posthuman Feminist Phenomenology* is a call for humans to examine our relationships to oceans, watersheds, and other aquatic life forms from the perspective of our own primarily watery bodies, and our ecological, poetic, and political connections to other bodies of water. Additional research interests

include theories and practice of interdisciplinarity, feminist epistemologies, intersectionality, multispecies justice, and everyday militarisms.

Joss Allen was co-artistic director (maternity cover) for ATLAS between Nov 2021 and Oct 2022. Joss is interested in how creative practices shape forms of commons and ecological ways of being.

Yvonne Billimore was co-artistic director (maternity cover) for ATLAS between Nov 2021 and Oct 2022. Her work facilitates situations for collective learning, exchange and experiences with particular attention given to feminist and ecological matters.

Colophon

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About the Making Publics Press:

The Making Publics Press is a book making studio at ATLAS Arts, with equipment to design, print, bind and trim publications on demand. A space for conversation and community building, the press supports the making of small runs of creative book projects, quickly and cheaply—getting books out into the world and across Skye, Raasay and Lochalsh. For us, publishing means to make new publics and new kinds of social spaces.

About ATLAS Arts:

ATLAS Arts organises collective art projects across Skye, Raasay and Lochalsh. We work with artists and local residents to have conversations that are rooted in this place and this time, through a

programme of long-term projects, screenings, residencies, meals, workshops and sharings. We pay attention to the social, political and global significance of these conversations and the building of communities in between.

www.atlasarts.org.uk



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issue #3
Feeling wor(l)ds

