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Deracinating the Garden (Performance, presentation, intervention)

In this presentation, the main thematic focus will be to concentrate on estrangement as it relates to the 'Inhuman' (sites and moments of experience). More precisely, I will explore how Lyotard's essay *Scapeland* itself allows us to engage in a kind of 'estrangement', and to participate in the uncanny via text. I will look at objects, landscapes and "affects" (or events), ones, which may perhaps defy explanation, visibility, and dimension. For me, Lyotard's commitment to the 'Inhuman', to the liminal and to what he called "libidinal intensities," is where the environmental significance of Lyotard's work resides. The performance-presentation will draw on my developing research interests in social and political constructions of rural experience through the depiction of landscape and in the development of performative acts and anecdotal narration as a means of pursuing them. My approach, in developing this performance-presentation, is to combine a meditation upon, and use of, specific objects and images - which I have made and encountered during my research - with narration of 'memories' and academic text to reveal optical experiences with revelatory, in-the-moment encounters. My aim, through the strategies and procedures of this work, is to achieve a performative reflection upon the mediated operations of movement in a fissured picturesque, post-industrial landscape. This performance-presentation is part of my on-going experimentation with fragmented images, epigrammatic pieces of writing, the performer's body, and the live presence of the body outside the documentary image frame. By these means I seek to counterpoint the 'closure' of the live body with the open-endedness and ambiguity of represented fragments. The research imperative is to create imagery that points beyond the picturesque, and which moves, instead, towards the grotesque and to whiteness. I use the term whiteness to assign in an aesthetic sense what Jean-Francois Lyotard alternately calls the 'sublime' or the 'inhuman' and what Maurice Blanchot calls 'the catastrophe of thought'. I will present performance documentation from specific spaces or sites that might be publicly experienced as 'unsettling', thereby evoking a 'presence of absence'. I want to research what it means to be 'covertly discernible', simultaneously - but impossibly - there and not there. With this strategy, my intention is to allow for transferable, diverse, and discontinuous embodiments: not reenactments. That is to say, embodied moments revealed at threshold points - within the body of the performer and also via objects, text and images, assembled resources, for adaption.

Lee Hassall is a sculptor and filmmaker of international repute. He is currently Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at the University of Lincoln. Lee is interested in ideas of landscape, time, and performance. Since 2010, he has been working on a PhD in performance in the Department of Theatre, Film and Television at Aberystwyth University, Supervised by Professor Mike Pearson. For much of 2014 he has worked with Professor Carl Lavery on an 80-minute performance piece called *Return to Battleship Island*, which they have toured throughout the UK and in Buenos Aires. <http://staff.lincoln.ac.uk/lhassall>
<http://cargocollective.com/curatingthecosmos/Lee-HassallThe-Future-of-Ruins-Hashima>