

# A Group Exhibition by the Associates of Chapel Arts Studios

August 2025

The Chapel, St Mary's Cemetery, Andover, Hampshire, UK

<https://www.chapelartsstudios.co.uk/artists>

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‘Shelf Life’ is a mixed media 3-D installation with live film.

The work comments on the demise of the local high street. An aperture enables the viewer to peer through a delivery hatch, revealing traces of a former grocery store. This perspective evokes remnants of an earlier time when people were on first name terms with the shop owners and could spend time discussing local issues. On the opposite side of the road a busy Tesco Express is visible, constantly frequented by harried customers in stark contrast to the redundant smaller store.

‘Last Orders’ is a mixed media 3-D installation with live film and an animatronic figure.

The piece explores the disappearance of the urban pub as demographic changes and lack of disposable income impact on the demand for public houses. While younger people pursue healthier lifestyle options and developers chase the land they occupy; as incomes are squeezed and costs of utilities rise, many pubs struggle to survive. These buildings have long provided a meeting place for members of the local community and as they disappear along with public libraries, local parks and cheap cafes, so too do opportunities for social interaction, creating the ideal conditions for loneliness and isolation.

July 2025

@daviesmonaghanandklein

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# *¡No pasarán!*

Simon Peter Green

In 1936, 36 year old George Palmer, a First World War veteran who had endured gas attacks and trench foot, said goodbye to his mother, Eunice O'Brien, who lived at 49 Enham, Hampshire.

As Test Valley's sole volunteer for the Spanish Civil War, George defied a legal ban that would later see many prosecuted and embarked on a daunting journey: crossing the English Channel, evading French police, and trekking over the Pyrenees into Spain.

He enlisted in the International Brigades, 35,000 volunteers from more than 50 countries, and served in No. 1 Company, the Major Attlee Company.

On 12 January 1937, near Madrid, George was killed at Las Rozas, reportedly "blown to pieces." His comrade, Phil Harker, described how he "died an anti-fascist soldier who had won a name for himself."

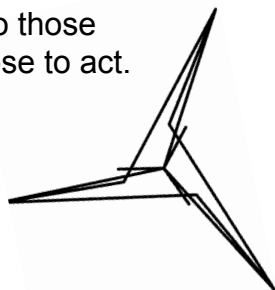
It was not fraud or foolishness,  
Glory, revenge, or pay:  
We came because our open eyes  
Could see no other way.      // Cecil Day-Lewis

I stood in Enham, knocking on doors, chatting with locals, even stopping at the post office yet no one remembered George or his mother. Their story remains quietly forgotten.

This work is my tribute to George Palmer, and to those who recognise fascism's urgent threat and choose to act.

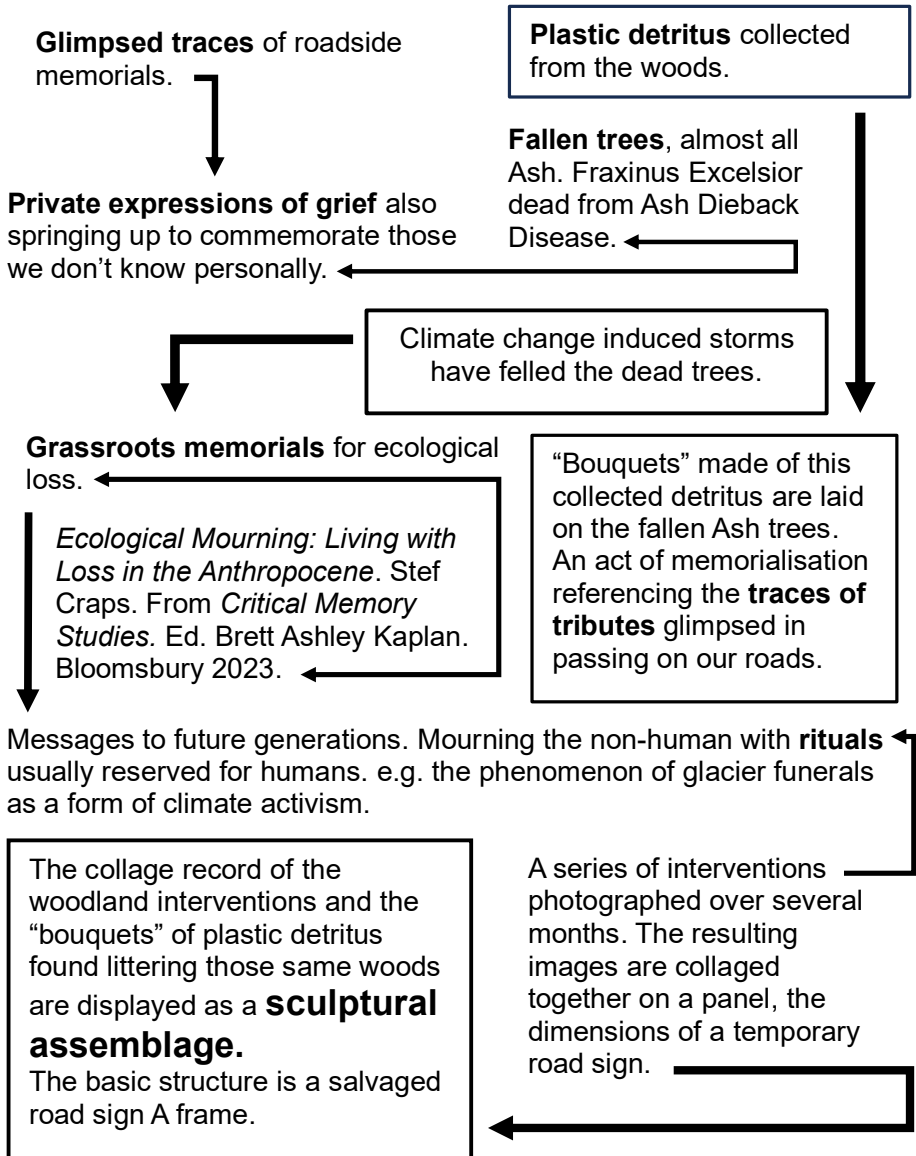
July 2025

<http://simonpetergreen.com>



# RIP Fraxinus Ex

Liz Clifford



**Blog** <https://lizclifford.art/2025/05/19/memorials-to-lost-trees/>

Driving // Kate Mieczkowska

Pulling power is what we need

Desire in a race to succeed

Travelling faster over the ground

A place to sleep safe and sound

Not ours

Each day we push, we fight, we pray to stay

Safely with our kin, our tribe, no sin

To live freely between the traces

Living the same days across the ages

The man the horse, the stage the race

Our pride to win and see

The trace of ancient times

Staying alive amidst the fumes of progress

'For the Sake of the Species' [2025] a progression of works by Julia Keenan.

*'The ripple effect.'* Gustav Metzger [1926-2017] Artist & Political Activist

<https://juliakeenanartist.blogspot.com/2014/05/moving-work-on.html>

: 19th May 2014

Last week Gustav returned to the university to discuss the show, specifically the work made in response, and most interestingly his thoughts around the forth coming conference. He spoke about the university as a conduit for his ideas to move out from like a 'ripple effect' and he wanted this to happen as quickly as possible. There is a real sense of urgency in him that the messages around this subject 'Facing Extinction' should be disseminated as quickly as possible. He spoke of the 'weight of history' and the heavy burden we bear from this, although of some considerable age and quite frail this man has a core of steel running through his veins. He is an incredible inspirational presence.

: 22nd May 2014

The last few days have been spent considering the ideas from the meeting. The work I hope to produce as a response to this is very much an experiment - but without testing I will not know...so with that in mind here is the maquette; I decided to make it full size. The focus of my thoughts whilst in the making process is very much around the idea of 'the weight of history' how these events from the past are part of us - a heavy reminder of historical atrocities. The working title is 'The Weight of History Garment'

: 9th June 2014

The conference took place over the weekend just gone. An opportunity to hear a range of speakers - experts in their fields discussing the subject of mass extinction, could this be a reality? We witnessed a series of presentations and performances by artists, scientists, ecologists and specialist academics. How can artists articulate and shape a program of action? The weekend was a mind-expanding experience and a fantastic opportunity to meet and speak with an inspiring group of people.

## My Body Keeps The Score by Nathalie Semlyen

“Being able to feel safe with other people is probably the single most important aspect of mental health; safe connections are fundamental to meaningful and satisfying lives.”

“In order to change, people need to become aware of their sensations and the way that their bodies interact with the world around them. Physical self-awareness is the first step in releasing the tyranny of the past.”

Van der Kolk found in a study that ten weeks of yoga reduced PTSD symptoms in individuals who previously attempted to use medications to reduce PTSD but failed.

### — Bessel A. van der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*

I saw ‘Traces’ as the chronic pain I’ve carried from the part of my life when I experienced trauma and I wanted to paint myself as finding a way out of that which drags me down. The past, my lower self, gravity and a deep disconnection to who I am meant to be and healing through my yoga practice.

July 2025



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Jewry Street  
Artist Studios



## **Title: The Wanderer: Drawn to Sound**

Music by Kevin Lynch, visuals by Richard Barnfather

This video is the result of a collaboration between my friend Kevin Lynch and I. Whilst arranging the music for Mary Ball the musical, (which is an ongoing collaborative project that I'm working on with long time friend Ben Fellows, musician, writer, teacher), Kevin and I talked of possibly exploring a way of combining our respective specialisms; music and art. This video is the outcome of our first joint venture.

Kevin presented me with his beautiful musical piece, A Different Path and I created the animation as a response. All I had to go on was the title and the music. We decided not to discuss it further than that. I used Procreate, Adobe Fresco, Photoshop, and pulled it all together in Premier Pro.

Although this video was not conceived with the theme 'Traces' in mind, the process of developing imagery for it involved resonating with, and transforming traces of emotion and potential meanings into visual forms. The music transported me to a seemingly vast, gently structured place. How to produce imagery that would ebb and flow with the music, complement it, and yet bring its own individual identity, would be the challenge.

My method was to firstly create an atmospheric background that I felt resonated with the evolving mood of the music. Incrementally I layered up a range of shapes, textures, symbols, and colours, morphing, moving and transitioning them in time with the musical tempo. My aim was to keep the potential interpretations of the visuals as open to further interpretation as possible.

Musical composition by Kevin Lynch, Composer, music producer, creator, [www.kevinlynchmusic.com](http://www.kevinlynchmusic.com)

## **Ley de los Cambios**

by *Laurence Dubé-Rushby*, PhD, PGCE, MCCT, NSEAD, PSI, CAS, Axis

My practice is increasingly concerned with unmaking—not as an act of destruction, but as a methodology that resists the dominant narratives of capitalism, which equate progress with accumulation, productivity, and overconsumption. Unmaking as a concept investigated by a group of environmental scientists based at Utrecht University (Netherlands), led by Giuseppe Feola, inspired my proposal. For Feola it is about rethinking 'alternative ways of living, working and interacting with our environment (2019).

Drawing from my PhD research study and a turn toward performance-based work, I find myself returning to making with my hands—not just thinking. I am craving a tactile engagement with materials—a return to land, territories, traces, and animal matter that inspired my previous installation works.

Nonetheless, I often feel that the world contains enough things. This has prompted a shift in my artistic focus: away from the art-object and towards art as process, gesture, and social connectedness. My work is increasingly informed by post-humanist thought, particularly the writings of Deleuze and Guattari (2019), and more recently Elizabeth Grosz in *Becoming Undone* (2011), which invites to consider life as a fluid assemblage of organic and inorganic matter, always becoming, in constant flux.

I explore unmaking as a generative act: a practice of making and re-making that traces the folds of materials and moments, and reimagine what might emerge if we allow ourselves to come undone, together; a search for connection for new ecologies of assembling and relating.

This exhibition marks my post PhD return to CAS as an active associate member. I joined CAS in its early stage in 2012, since, I took part in numerous collective projects in and out of the Chapel.

In the gallery, I make visible a trace of my last art piece recently entered in the open show: marking the absence of work, a trace as 'residue of meanings\*', engagement, collaboration and friendship that pays tribute to the works of the many associates who have engaged in, and contributed to its amorphous fluid structure. My return to the group is marked both by nostalgia for the freshness and spontaneity that CAS showed in its emergence, and the promise of new artistic adventures and co-creations.

The absence of work echoes a sense of hope for the future; a search for connection through becoming other for new ecologies of assembling and relating.

\* to echo Kate Myeckowska's introductory essay.

Keywords: Absence, Assemblages, More-than-human, Post-materialism, Post-human, Presence, Togetherness, Traces, Unmaking.

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## "A trace, a glimpse, an untrodden path." by Sharon Kearley

Paths are the habits of a landscape. They are acts of consensual making. It's hard to create a footpath on your own...Paths connect."  
(1)

Sharon's handwoven cloth echoes the presence and stories of communities past. Ephemeral and fragile, her cloth evokes delicate elements of time through the trace of a connection between people and place.

Her work often begins with a walk, researching archive maps and forgotten paths. The rhythm of the walk is reflected in the rhythm of making, the dance of the weaver and the interlocking and connecting of threads to create cloth.

Reminiscing through the laying of warp and weft, an interlocking, an interlacing, linking, a slowing of time; a remembering, an awareness of a light presence through the physical absence.

Highlighting traditional hand weaving skills and the importance of natural materials, a need for zero waste. Her love of indigo and rust, the guttural marks share those tales of the emotional and physical connection to both people and place, marking time. Her weaving poses the question of the now and its importance shaping the future with regards to our past, the memories of the threads we weave to reconstruct the narrative of our life.

"Movements of the body, the only movements there are, mark this membrane. Again and again the approach to touch its surface, to press, to rub, to mark. What are inscribed are the signs of passing."  
(2)

1 - Robert Macfarlane, *The Old Ways: A Journey on Foot*.

2 - Morris, Robert *In Conversation with W.I.T Mitchell* (1994) *Artform* vol 32, no. 8. Pp86-92 reprinted in *Memory* (2012) Farr,I.(Ed) pub London and Cambridge MA Whitechapel Art Gallery and MIT Press. Pp.92-3

## Coral Fowley

### The Deception of Colour: On Structural Colour, Memory, and Material Remains

In *The Deception of Colour* (4 of a 12 part series) Coral Fowley attempts to render visible the unseen. Her focus is not only the nano-structures of iridescent insects, but also the layered traces of textile consumption, ecological degradation, and sensory memory. These natural optical effects, caused by microscopic physical structures rather than pigment, disrupt our understanding of colour as a fixed or stable phenomenon (Kinoshita & Yoshioka, 2005).

Structural colour becomes a metaphor for deception: what seems vibrant and saturated is, in fact, a trick of light. Fowley draws this illusion into dialogue with the textile industry's dependence on synthetic dyes, a chemical legacy that leaves ecological harm in its wake. As anthropologist Elizabeth Fisher writes, "materials have political lives," and textiles carry not just aesthetic value, but environmental and ethical weight (Fisher, 2020). In working with textile waste, found polymer, metal and glass fastenings, Fowley traces the afterlives of materials that persist beyond their use.

Importantly, Fowley rejects the immediacy of colour altogether. These works are rendered achromatic allowing the viewer to confront the material and structural elements directly. Laura U. Marks' concept of "haptic visuality", the idea that vision can function like touch, is central here: "Haptic visuality...touches the image as it touches them" (Marks, 2002). Fowley's pieces are not simply to be viewed, but to be felt, drawing the viewer into a slowed, contemplative form of perception. In doing so, Fowley explores themes of both slowness and sensory engagement.

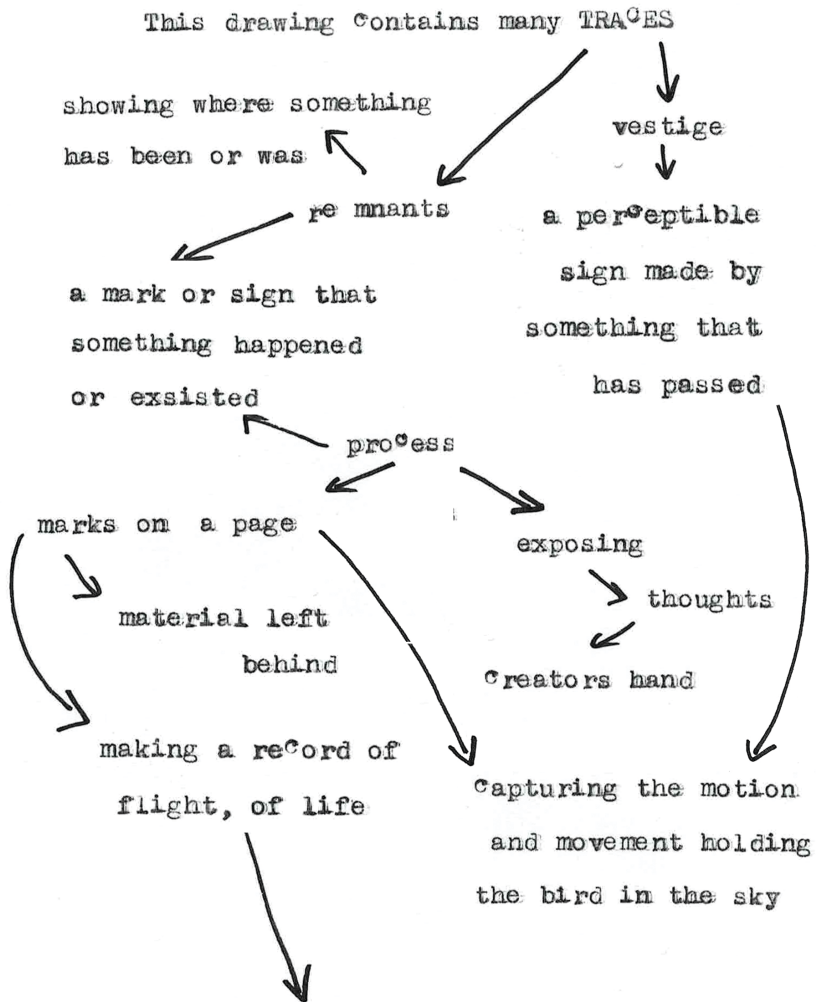
Each piece operates as a trace, of insect architecture, of textile industrial residue, of time and handling. Embroidery becomes a durational act, an index of care and labour. As theorist Tim Ingold argues, threads are not just materials but lines of becoming; they carry memory, tension, and transformation (Ingold, 2007). In Fowley's work, embellishment is not decorative, but mnemonic: a palimpsest of touch, decay, and reassembly.

Fowley's textiles are not static. They invite contact, and as they are handled, they may shift: beads fall, threads loosen. These small changes are not failures but part of the work's life — evidence of participation, attention, and impermanence. Traces of touch are allowed to remain, resisting conservation in favour of continuity.

By enlarging the nano-structures of fragile insect wings, Fowley makes room for reflection on what we fail to see: the invisible labour of natural structures, the toxicity of synthetic ones, and the environmental traces we leave behind. Her works become speculative spaces that trace possible futures in which natural phenomena replace extractive ones — a gentle provocation toward reimagining our material relationships.

#### References:

- Fisher, E. (2020). *The Weather is Fine: Conversations with Artists and Material Entanglement*. Open Humanities Press.
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- Kinoshita, S., & Yoshioka, S. (2005). Structural colors in nature: The role of regularity and irregularity in the structure. *ChemPhysChem*, 6(8), 1442–1459.
- Marks, L. U. (2002). *Touch: Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media*. University of Minnesota Press.



I was here, we left a TRACE

Elizabeth Hammond

# Caroline Perkins

## Traces

The wall is a bruise.

A cold moon under my skin.

I press my finger into it

Sighs/shivers.

Paint goes on thick,

slides away in strips.

Still it shows through/Traces

Purple's map:

ridges/pits/skin

the weather of old wounds.

Grief sleeps in the plaster.

Turns over.

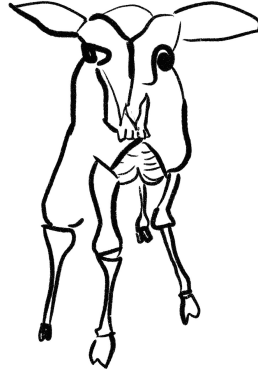
Opens one eye.

Every layer memory,

a vein/ yours/ mine.

The wall holds the body.

The body keeps the bruise.



## TINA SANCHEZ - Contemplation and Where's She's At

As a multidisciplinary artist, Tina Sanchez finds inspiration in the fluidity of media and the boundless potential of diverse materials, which she uses as tools to evoke reflection, foster connection, and encourage both personal and societal growth. Her work is marked by ongoing evolution; continuously exploring new techniques and materials, deepening understanding of art's power to transform, heal, and inspire.

Her practice frequently integrates recycled elements, combining upcycling with found and new materials across a range of creative methods celebrating brushstrokes, sculptural marks and scratches.

In this exhibition, she offers a contemplative insight into healing exploration through her oil painting "**Contemplation**", which examines themes of inner peace and introspection. The piece embodies a sense of fulfilment and quiet satisfaction that arises when her practice reaches a moment of meaningful repose.

Her engagement with clay, exemplified in the sculpture "**Where's She's At**", underscores her fascination with tactile qualities of the material carrying traces of fingerprints, and subtle surface marks that reveal the physical act of shaping, highlighting organic transient nature of the medium and encouraging reflection on both the physical and emotional imprints.

Both works exemplify exploration of marks and traces as tangible gestures and expressions and intentions within practice, a realisation of the power of the soul and self.

<https://tinasanchezartist.com>

<https://myfriendlyplanet.co.uk>

<https://www.instagram.com/monkeysanchez.art>

<https://www.facebook.com/TinaSanchezArtist>

<https://www.facebook.com/Tina.Sanchez.Visual.Artist.Sculptor/>

## Marta Lichocinska- Gathering

For some time now, birds have emerged as a recurring motif in my work, consistently taking on a strong visual presence in my paintings.

This connection has grown and deepened over time, as I find myself chasing after each one, exploring the significance they hold in my artistic journey.

My fascination began in my youth when I witnessed storks gathering in the fields of Eastern Poland. Their remarkable journey and their unwavering return to the same nests and farmyards to raise their young captivated me.

Having chosen to leave my homeland many years ago, painting has become my new language—a means of communication that transcends distance. Each summer, I return home to my special place, reconnecting with friends and family while tracing the memories that bind us to one another and to the land. These visits serve as a reminder of my roots and the powerful connections...

As I navigate my life under different skies, I feel a profound connection to the theme of migration - both of birds and of people. My work reflects this deep need to trace connections, to explore the bonds we share with our origins, and to honour the journeys and experiences that shape us....



Ed Saye

(Grove St 4 Life, oil on gessoed panel, 2025)



Tina Scahill

The outline and the marks left show a cycle of decay,  
of covering and uncovering a necessary need.

Like the sticking of a plaster  
that falls off gradually through  
the sloughing of skin and rubbing  
of clothes, traces of intervention  
cover my body.

Drugs seep into my skin  
Make me feel my fertile self again  
Clear head no fog no pain

A system bending to my SMALL voice  
Growing **LOUDER** with the outrage  
Women's rights... our rights - to engage with science

The trace of my skin  
The echo of my transition  
Watch out for the futuristic moth that will shape the night

Fighting for what's ~~mine~~ yours ours



[www.scahilldesign.co.uk](http://www.scahilldesign.co.uk)

## Appendix 1

### Traces exhibition Summary by Kate Mieczkowska

In the Chapel of rest here today, a place synonymous with the departing and last traces of the living, we establish a dialogue between absence and presence as tangible art works.

Ultimately, Traces asks us to consider how every artwork is a meeting point between presence and absence. The absence of an ancestor, a vanished tradition, a lost moment in time – these can all be felt through the presence of an object or image that carries their imprint. Conversely, the presence of new technology or novel ideas can make us acutely aware of what might be missing – the human touch, the “aura,” the original context.

In an age of rapid change, from the handmade to the mind-uploaded, this exhibition suggests that what truly endures are the traces: the residues of meaning and connection that art leaves in its wake. By expanding our view to include the craft object, the algorithm, and the neural spark, we come to see art not as isolated masterpieces, but as dynamic records of human thought, labour, and creativity in all its forms.

So, as you walk through Traces, take a moment to look closely at the works and ponder: What absent history or person does this piece keep alive? What unseen processes of mind or machine led to this visible result? And how do these traces converse with each other across mediums? You may find that the boundary between past and present, human and machine, material and ethereal, is far more porous than it seems. The gallery becomes a space of ghosts and echoes in the profoundly moving sense that art is always haunted by something more. In these halls, absence has a presence, and every presence hints at something absent. Traces invites you to listen to those hints, to engage with the dance of absence and presence, and perhaps to feel, in a quietly revelatory way, the continuity of creative energy that connects us all, across time, culture, and even species. After all, when the lights go out and the audience departs, what remains in the empty gallery? Not silence, but traces – the conversation between art and memory, still resonating, still alive, “mark of the absence of a presence, an always-already absent present”

This "always-already hidden" contradiction is trace. "indicate a way out of the closure imposed by the system...". Trace is, again, not presence but an empty simulation of it:

## Trace

[treɪs]

verb

traces (third person present)

find or discover by investigation:

"police are trying to trace a white van seen in the area"

find or describe the origin or development of:

"Bob's book traces his flying career with the RAF"

follow or mark the course or position of (something) with one's eye, mind, or finger:

"through the binoculars, I traced the path I had taken the night before"

take (a particular path or route):

"a tear traced a lonely path down her cheek"

copy (a drawing, map, or design) by drawing over its lines on a superimposed piece of transparent paper:

"trace a map of the world on to a large piece of paper"

draw (a pattern or line), especially with one's finger or toe:

"she traced a pattern in the dirt with the toe of her shoe"

give an outline of:

"the article traces out some of the connections between education, qualifications, and the labour market"

noun

traces (plural noun)

a mark, object, or other indication of the existence or passing of something:

"remove all traces of the old adhesive" · "the aircraft disappeared without trace"

a line or pattern displayed by an instrument to show the existence or nature of something which is being recorded or measured.  
a physical change in the brain presumed to be caused by a process of learning or memory.  
a very small quantity, especially one too small to be accurately measured:  
"his body contained traces of amphetamines" · "trace quantities of PCBs"

a barely discernible indication of something:  
"just a trace of a smile"

a procedure to investigate the source of something, such as the place from which a phone call was made:  
"we've got a trace on the call"

a line which represents the projection of a curve or surface on a plane or the intersection of a curve or surface with a plane.

NORTH AMERICAN ENGLISH  
WEST INDIAN ENGLISH

a path or track.  
mathematics  
the sum of the elements in the principal diagonal of a square matrix.

Origin

Middle English (first recorded as a noun in the sense 'path that someone or something takes'): from

Old French trace (noun), tracer (verb), based on Latin tractus (see tract).

## Traces

What remains when the maker's hands depart, when a machine creates, or when an idea takes physical form? Traces, an exhibition at Chapel Arts Studios, explores these questions by examining how absence and presence intertwine through craft, technology, and the very biology of creativity from within our community in Andover. The show's themes of

absence, presence, and the trace invite us to consider cultural memories preserved (or lost) in handmade art objects like paintings, prints and sculptures, narratives of forgotten peoples, the emergent “ghost in the machine” of artificial creativity through digital art works, videos or writing, and the invisible energy of thought made material. As artist Chiharu Shiota notes, “presence in absence” can leave a “lingering, almost corporeal trace” in memory and space. In a similar spirit, this introduction traverses the role of craft in cultural memory, the impact of artificial intelligence on creative processes, and the energetic transference that occurs in the brain during thinking and making manifesting the residues or traces of energy. In doing so, it sets the stage for an exhibition that is both intellectually rigorous and accessible probing how the seen and unseen converge in art. This catalogue forms an intrinsic element of this exhibition. As a group we chose to represent the artworks and our own practice as artists with text and simple line drawings.

In doing so we considered the work of Jacques Derrida. Jacques Derrida, one of the most influential philosophers of the twentieth century, introduced a lexicon that radically transformed the way we understand language, meaning, and textuality. Among his most enigmatic and pivotal concepts is that of the trace. To summarise “traces” in Derrida’s philosophy is to enter the labyrinth of deconstruction—his critical approach that unsettles the structures of Western thought, especially as they relate to presence, absence, meaning, and difference.

This summary seeks to elucidate the origins, development, and implications of the concept of the trace within Derrida’s work, situating it within his broader project and exploring its lasting resonance for philosophy, literary theory, and beyond.

For Derrida, then, the trace is not merely the vestige of a presence that once was and is now gone. Rather, it is the mark of an absence that is constitutive of presence itself. The trace is both what remains and what is effaced - a paradoxical entity that haunts language and thought, rendering each present meaning always already shadowed by what is not present.

Derrida contests this by showing that writing, in its broadest sense (what he calls “arche-writing”), is coeval with language itself: every sign, whether spoken or written, contains the trace of other signs and is marked by difference and deferral.

This insight is encapsulated in Derrida's neologism *différance*, which plays on the dual meaning in French of “to differ” and “to defer.”

Meaning is never present in its entirety; it is always postponed, always inhabited by the traces of other meanings. The trace is, therefore, the ghostly presence of otherness within every sign, the ungraspable remainder that both enables and disrupts meaning.

Our artworks here today will encourage us as viewers to ‘fill the gap’ with our own interpretations and meaning based on our experiences. Not every person will have the same experience. This is the beauty of the experience of viewing artworks and the psychological dance that an artist can take us on contributes to how much a piece is valued culturally.

## Trace, Memory, and Temporality

Derrida's concept of the trace is intimately bound up with questions of memory and temporality. To remember something is never simply to retrieve a pure presence from the past; what we recall is always mediated, always shaped by the traces it has left in language, thought, and culture. The trace is thus the condition of both remembering and forgetting. It is what allows meaning and identity to persist over time, but also what ensures that neither is ever fully present or whole.

The trace is thus a challenge to ontology—the philosophical study of being. For Derrida, being is never simply present-to-itself; it is always mediated, always haunted by traces of what it is not. The trace is what makes being possible, but also what renders it unstable, open to difference and transformation.

## Craft, Memory, and the Handmade Trace

Craft practices have long served as vessels of cultural memory, especially in the UK where artisanal traditions are part of the national heritage. Traditional crafts form an “essential component of a nation's cultural heritage and identity,” reflecting the history, values, and stories of communities. Many such skills are passed down through generations, so that each handmade object carries the stories and experiences of predecessors, ensuring that knowledge “is not lost to time”. In Britain, this extends beyond the famed image of country houses and antique teacups – it encompasses diverse, often overlooked, craft lineages. For

instance, the UK's Heritage Crafts Association has highlighted Romani, Traveller, and other minority craft traditions that were once thought to "belong to the past," and works to preserve these living practices before they vanish. By safeguarding everything from canal boat painting to traditional wagon-making, such efforts keep cultural memory present; they prevent entire skill sets (and the identities tied to them) from slipping into absence. Each saved craft is, in essence, a trace of a people's history given form in wood, metal, clay, or cloth.

Craft objects are unique in how they materialise memory. The Crafts Study Centre in Farnham has been called a "memory bank for British craft," a repository of things, words and ideas associated with making. In a lecture aptly titled "Lipstick Traces," craft theorist Glenn Adamson described craft as both "making in the moment" and "keeping in the mind," placing craft's "memory work" in a broad context of objects that capture time. A handcrafted object can thus be viewed as a time capsule: through learned technique and tactile labour, it embeds tradition and personal narrative into material. Contemporary memory studies even suggest that objects themselves play an active role in cultural memory. Scholars in the emerging "material turn" argue that things are not passive – they can be "integral to how societies remember," even having a "memory of their own" that exceeds human lifespans. A weathered family quilt or a piece of folk pottery might outlast its creators and users, yet still "do things to us" – evoking feelings or stories – long after those humans are gone. In this way, craft bridges absence and presence: the makers may no longer be here, but their artefacts continue to speak, acting as agents of remembrance.

Notably, contemporary art has rediscovered craft as a means of engaging with history and identity. Many modern artists initially positioned themselves in opposition to "tradition," rejecting old media or techniques in favour of conceptual or digital approaches. Yet paradoxically these same artists "do not discard... a constant draw on individual and collective memory". Even in cutting-edge installations, the "quest for memory materialisation remains prevalent," with artworks often grappling with historical events, lost voices, or personal nostalgia. In other words, while the materials might change (a video projection instead of oil paint, say), the impulse to encode and interrogate memory through art persists. Indeed, we see artists integrating craft techniques within contemporary art to harness their memory-evoking power.



## Traces of the organic in digital art

After all, creativity has traditionally been considered a deeply human trait, tied to our emotions, imagination, even our flaws and idiosyncrasies. In contemporary culture and ultimately contemporary art the machine and the digital world have taken a firm and prominent place. The AI becomes a muse (albeit one that runs on silicon and code), and the human remains the editor and visionary. This optimistic view sees AI not as replacing human creativity, but augmenting it – much like the camera once expanded the painter's world, or digital tools expanded photography. There is even a delightful irony here that speaks to presence and absence: an AI, lacking conscious intention, can nonetheless manifest something visually striking or meaningful, which a human observer might then imbue with interpretation. The “ghost in the machine” ends up producing real art objects (digital or physical prints) – new traces in the art world, authored by no-one and everyone at once. In this exhibition we see artists using technology to enhance a print, make a painting informed by a digital image or use an AI to inform a piece of writing.

## Mind, Matter, and Traces of Creative Energies

Modern neuroscience has begun to map this remarkable journey from mind to matter. Creative thinking doesn't reside in a single “spark” or isolated spot in the brain; it's a whole-brain workout involving multiple networks working in concert. The isolated solitary genius artist is primarily a myth. Each ‘genius’ is created and wrapped in the Traces of thought and intention from their peer group. A tapestry of threads of thought and action all woven together to create the cultural carpet that we all stand upon. The Chapel Art creative brain is coming together in this show to showcase our individual approaches to our group experience of ‘being’ in Andover.

This carries a nearly spiritual echo: the notion that an artist “imbues” an object with their energy or spirit is an ancient idea, found in many cultures' understanding of art and craft. From a scientific perspective, we might refine that to say the object encodes the results of the artist's energetic output. But to you our most esteemed visitor, the distinction may not matter. The important point is that we feel something emanating from authentic handmade works – a sense of connectivity to the absent creator. It's the same reason we might treasure a grandparent's hand-carved chair or a quilt: beyond their utility, they carry an emotional weight

because they literally embody the time, labour, and care of the person who made them.

The object is a presence that stands in for the person now absent. In the context of an exhibition about Traces, this insight from neuroscience and craft is powerful.

It says that every creative artefact is, at root, a trace of a mind in motion. Whether the “mind” is human or, in the case of AI art, silicon-based, the concept holds: a burst of creative energy leaves an imprint that others can perceive. In both cases, something invisible is made visible. Absence becomes presence. The art object is the mediator, the frozen ripple of an act of creation.

## Conclusion: The Ever-Presence of Traces

Considering at this moment in Andover through our collective art making, the influences of craft, digital technologies, neural chemistry, a community of different people under the roof of a single exhibition is an ambitious endeavour – yet Traces manages to reveal a unifying thread through these themes. Each domain we’ve explored deals with what is left behind: the marks, memories, or questions that persist after an initial creative act has taken place. These are all Traces – echoes of presence

## Appendix 2

## Acknowledgements

The artist associates would like to extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who has made this exhibition possible.