

Earth Echo

AFFECTIVE REFLECTION

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Question the image, you said. And I did.

But the image is a collage, made of fragments, of carefully chosen parts, joined together, juxtaposed, having to co-exist, to be on the same plane; so each bit gave me a different reply.

Question the image, you said. But before I do that, I need to know what to ask. This is hard. I see every day how hard it is, as we enquire (how are you?) without expecting a true answer (on a scale of 1 to 10, I am a 4 today, tired, a bit below par). I also see how we ask questions to hear ourselves ask them, rather than to listen to anyone's response. I see how questions are thrown in, without observing first. If you learn one thing from my writing, let it be this: first, notice.

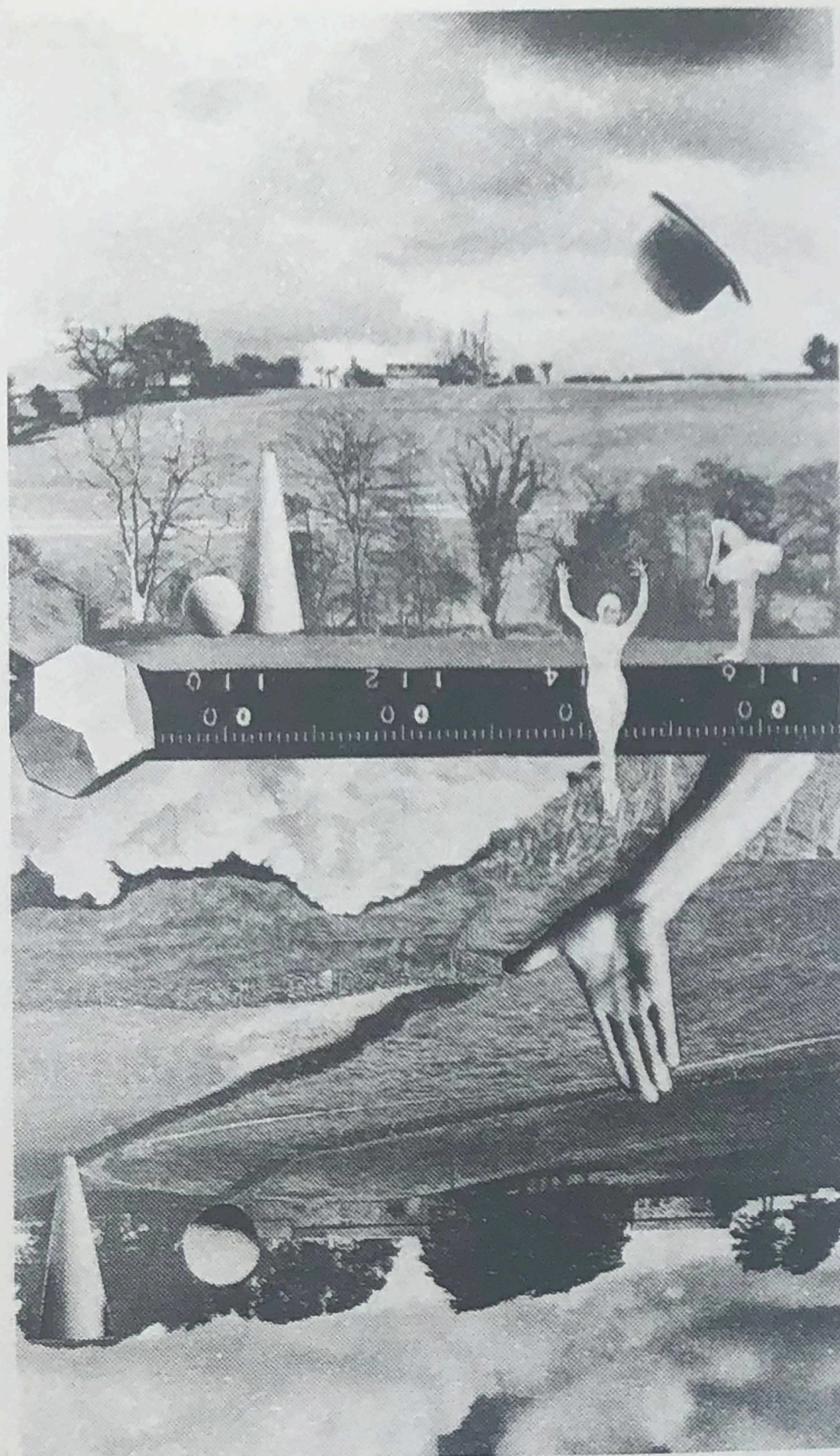
There is a fragment of a starry sky, with lighter patches, maybe the Milky Way. There is a darker portion, with a waning crescent moon, just like it was last night. The meeting points between fragments, curved or straight, are sharp, surgical, seamless to the untrained eye but tactile. And yes, there is texture too. I would say some of it is tree bark and some of it, if it had been in colour, would be shiny. Like thick golden sap, or bright green, lush lichen. But I cannot know, as the image is in black and white, making it of another time. There is a part with a perfect, light circle, maybe another moon, full this time. Imagine if we could see two moons at once, our attention spread in the night sky. Which one would I pick? We cannot often look at two things at once, even though I am trying to see my mind, while also looking at the image (sometimes, it is possible). There are fragments of connective architecture, bits of doors or windows, folding the space onto itself, showing that what I am seeing is more akin to my unconscious than the space I inhabit. It follows different rules. And just below two steps, one triangular, one round, a pair of feminine legs in ballet *pointes* take a hop into the wooden stage. The legs are just legs, I told you the image was made of fragments. The body is made of the delicate wing of a moth. I can see just one, so I doubt it can fly. She is a cyborg, more-than-human. The dancer is greeted by a fellow moth-like being, made of sofa mouldings, leaves and ocelli like daffodils instead of eyes.

All this is beginning to sound like a dream. Condensations and displacements. Bits joined together in an impossible space that nonetheless makes sense in its own way. This is the magic of collage: it shows possibilities we have not yet even acknowledged as potentials. And it is always changing, constantly moving, forever becoming. Like our unconscious, like the earth, even when we sleep, even when we are not looking at it. By this continuous evolving, collage is transformative. These are not my thoughts. Art critic Brian O'Doherty said collage is unstoppable generative energy. Others have said it is like memoing, political, critical, spontaneous, malleable, linked to language and metaphorical thinking, analytical, pre-conscious, reflective, disruptive, reconfiguring.

So far, I have been avoiding the task you set me and I have only asked one question of this image. What do I notice? Somewhere, not that long ago, I wrote that analysing art is an illusion, and that art, actually, analyses us, at least in the psychoanalytic sense, so maybe this collage is posing questions to me. What do I see? What do I avoid seeing? How do my eyes travel on the image? Do I recognise any fragments? Is anything happening in the image? What stories do I tell myself about it? What parts of it are like a mirror, where I see myself; or an echo, where I hear myself? Does it trap me? Does it release me? What position is the image putting me into? Am I the dreamer, or in the dream? When I close my eyes, is it still there?

Answering them is the work of a lifetime. To be honest, I would rather sit here and listen to the music it makes, the music the moths are dancing to.

But then you asked me to write about it. And I did.



The Volume Of The Changing Season: The Rites Of Spring Left Hidden Under Loud Skies

Pum would like to give her special thanks to

Dr Gordon Barclay, Psychiatry/Integrative Therapy MA, DRCOG, MRCP, MPhil, MRCPsych

After GP and physician training Gordon worked for 17 years in NHS psychiatry, latterly and until recently as a community and hospital based general adult consultant psychiatrist in Argyll. He now works with the Trauma Psychotherapy Scotland Practice in Glasgow, and is also actively involved in training and supervision related to working therapeutically with psychological trauma. He is honorary Clinical Senior Lecturer, School of Medicine, Glasgow University.

Jonathan Delafield-Butt is Director of the Laboratory for Innovation in Autism where he blends technological advance in smart tech and wearable sensors with daily life for ecological assessment of human psychology and autism. He is a member of the Gillberg Neuropsychiatry Centre at Gothenburg, the Brain and Behaviour Centre at Waseda University in Tokyo, and the Perception Movement Action Research Consortium at the University of Edinburgh. Delafield-Butt completed a Ph.D. in Neuroscience at the University of Edinburgh, postdoctoral research at the University of Copenhagen, and scholarships at Harvard Medical School and the Institute for Advanced Studies at Edinburgh for philosophical scholarship into the mind-body problem.

Dr Laura González is an artist, writer, yoga teacher and an Athenaeum Research Fellow at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. She creates performances for galleries and festivals (Unfix, Buzzcut, Glasgow Open House and Market Gallery). She has been invited to speak at international symposia (MFIT in New York, CAA in Chicago, Medical Museion in Copenhagen). She has also written several books and performed with various dance companies, including Michael Clark. Her work explores knowledge and the body of the hysteric through text, voice, dance and video. She is currently translating Freud's case histories into performance.

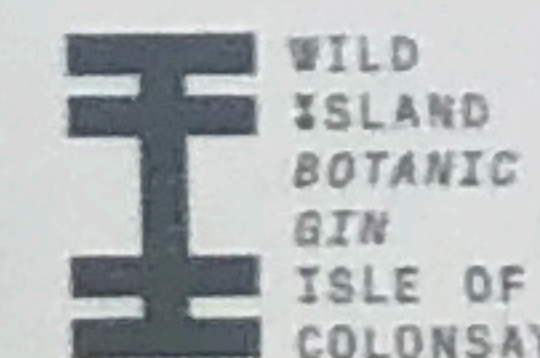
Dr Joe Long, who Pum calls Dr Joe, is a social anthropologist and currently Research Manager at Scottish Autism. Dr Joe's work has included ethnographic research in Siberia and he now draws on his background in social care to undertake applied research in autism services.

Dr Peter Byrne From my student days in the mid 1960s when one of my postgraduate tutors suggested I look at the work held by the OT department in the local psychiatric hospital, to the transfer of the Scottish Art Extraordinary Collection, of which I was a Trustee, to the Glasgow Museums Resource Centre in Nitshill Road, I have been fascinated by what had become labelled as Outsider Art. A career spent first as an artist, then as a psychotherapist, academic, and now once again a painter has convinced me that there is nothing to justify that designation; such work is simply Art, with a capital A.

Gordon Kennedy is a writer and composer based in Glasgow. His primary writing field is poetry: "the revolt of language against the tyranny of language". His music practice involves a core of breath & song in a virtual landscape of electronic instruments made from recordings of the physical landscape. He is also one half of crack sound art duo The Cray Twins, who release work on the London-based FangBomb label. <https://www.facebook.com/thecraytwins/>

Mairi attended The Ruskin, BFA, and Duncan of Jordanstone MFA before beginning a career in disability equality in the arts. She is now, amongst many things, a theatre producer. Mairi is also a friend and supporter of Pum's and Pum always encourages the artist in Mairi.

Sound collages available online <http://organica.uk/earthecho>. The sound collages are collaborative pieces between Pum and Gordon Kennedy of "arranged soundscapes".



With thanks to Wild Island Gin for their sponsorship of Earth Echo