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**A WALK IN THE COUNTRYSIDE:
EXPLORING MEMORY THROUGH PAINTING**

BETHANY JAYNE MORGAN

A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts by Research.

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ABSTRACT

Walking as a method for understanding the natural world, and our place within it, has been explored by many artists, writers and poets over the years; the walking companion guides of Alfred Wainwright, the travel writing of Robert Macfarlane and the 'walking as thinking' ideology of Rebecca Solnit. The idea of walking in relation to art has seen the work of Richard Long and Hamish Fulton at the forefront of knowledge for many years, with them creating work in direct response to walks they have undertaken. These works are photographic, direct representations of the landscape that prompt memory and experience, and are exhibited after the walk. This thesis will follow in the footsteps of Fulton and Long, but detour from their path to explore walking's relationship to painting and how it can uncover emotional memory through abstraction. It will consider the argument of Isabelle Graw, of how painting is indexicality, documenting through process how painting can harness emotions and feelings within its brushstrokes and argue that this is perhaps more successful than photography. Much like Fulton and Long, the places chosen to walk within this thesis, Scarborough, Malham and Marsden Moor, are that of nature, most specifically traditional English countryside. The walks are to gain an initial understanding of one's relationship to these landscapes, which are then subsequently responded to in the studio through painting. Through this process, it is the aim to understand how walking abstracts the landscape, how memory is an internal, emotional response to experience and how walking, memory and painting are cyclically linked together.

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INTRODUCTION

'This book could not have been written by sitting still' wrote Robert Macfarlane in *The Old Ways: A Journey on Foot* (2013, p.xi), and the same can be said about this thesis. The link between art and walking has been explored by many artists, with the most prolific and well-known being Richard Long and Hamish Fulton. The work they produce is informed by many walks they have undertaken, with Long creating work within the landscape - disrupting the site – and Fulton traversing the landscape – taking 'only photographs and leav[ing] only footsteps' (Cox, 2017). Both artists present and exhibit their work after the event, with each artwork being a response to a previous walk. They would not be able to make their artwork without the experience of walking, and therefore the memory of the walks in which they take. Both utilise photography as a means of expressing these journeys, a way of documenting the interaction with the landscape of Long and the intriguing moments that captivate Fulton. The notion of photography as indexicality is perhaps the reason for it being the main medium of choice for both of these artists, to be able to capture the essence of their relationship to the landscape in which they walk, yet this thesis puts forward the argument that there is another - perhaps even more effective – way of capturing the experience of walking and harnessing emotion and memory into something visual: painting.

Painting and walking both have a commonality, physical effort. To walk is to use the muscles in the legs to propel oneself across a landscape. To paint - in its traditional form - is to utilise the muscles in the arms to guide a paintbrush across a surface, leaving marks much like footprints. Isabelle Graw states that painting suggests 'a physical connection' (2016, p.92) to its artist. This is perhaps due to the physical effort manifested to create it but could also be linked to the emotional aspect of painting, the notion that the painting is alive and conversing with its creator through past experience of process. Unlike photography which - in the digital age - can be completely instantaneous, painting requires time, consideration and adapts as it forms allowing it to blossom with each paint stroke until complete. It prompts a range of emotions from euphoria to confusion, sombre to frustration and, due to its artist-involved nature, these current emotions and remembered emotions are captured successfully within layers of pigment.

Memory is an internal faculty which allows for the recalling of past experiences into the present, informing the current and enabling understanding of the past. It can be considered to be an emotional response and, in relation to walking and painting, links the two aspects together giving an understanding of the initial walk undertaken but then, through painting, one's relationship to the landscape walked. Memory allows for the exploration of emotions, building up an emotional register informed by continual experiences – the more walks undertaken and paintings created, the more sophisticated the recollection becomes. It is key to understanding the landscape, how walking transforms the relationship to it but also the way in which memory distorts and abstracts these elements to form new experiences. This notion is formalised through

painting, allowing for something intangible to become tangible, a visual entity that harnesses insular processes to allow for further experiences and memories to be formed through the finished paintings.

The chosen landscapes which form the following case studies discussed in this thesis are traditional English countryside. The first case study is Malham in North Yorkshire consisting of idyllic waterfalls and breathtaking views, the next is Scarborough, which consists of a walk along South Bay Beach, and finally a walk on Marsden Moor, specifically Wessenden Head; a walk in the elements. Within this thesis, it is important to choose landscapes of different topographies, but also of nature rather than urban, to begin to comprehend how walking forms a relationship to natural landscape but also how emotion and memory link walking with painting in the studio. A field journal will hold the emotions, observations and thoughts that occur during the walk, which later informs the painting within the studio. It is acknowledged that emotional and visual observations, as well as perception, are influenced by a person's class and cultural position so it is important to highlight the subject position of the researcher. To clarify the voice through which this thesis is written, the researcher is a 25-year-old, white female from a middle-class background. It is understood that these factors will have an influence on the following case studies and the artistic outcomes produced. Painting as a term, within this thesis, encompasses both paintings on paper and ceramics. Ceramics form an expanded painting practice which encompass the same depth of emotion as the two-dimensional works, but explores this and memory further by becoming a sculptural entity. Each case study is formed of two separate parts. The first is a narrative written after the walk which is informed by both memory and the field journal, the second part is after the work within the studio has been completed and the resulting outcomes are discussed. Each case study, containing the two components, is separate yet it is noted that by the very notion of memory each is linked and informed by the next resulting in the walks and paintings being an extension of the previous experience. It is important to highlight that the field journal and resulting paintings formed within the studio are separate from this thesis, within an accompanying *Book of Artwork*, and are referred to as 'page...' when being directly referenced in the text.

METHODOLOGY

Painting - Walking - Memory; Walking - Memory - Painting; Memory - Painting - Walking

The processes of painting, walking and remembering combine to create the overall methodology used within this thesis. These methods are interchangeable, with each component having influence on the other forming a cyclical process that could be said to have no distinct beginning, middle or end.

The act of painting, the body being so involved in its process; the utilisation of the energy of the arm to create a mark has a relationship with the physicality of the body moving through space, the energy within the legs propelling it across differing terrains. In this sense, with the link between using the legs to mark the landscape and the arm to mark with a brush, painting was the only logical choice of artistic inquiry as 'painting suggests a physical connection to the one who made it' (Graw, 2016, p.92). The artwork created at the end of the process needs to embody this physical connection of myself to the landscape, and my remembered experience of my walks. Painting, due to its indexicality, allows for this visual connection to form, and for the mental and physical labour of walking to be encompassed within it – painterly marks to indicate effort.

The walks to be discussed are sited within the traditional English landscape, in which the location has been selected prior to the walk. The term 'traditional English landscape' is defined as the natural landscape of England such as the countryside, coasts and moorland, those landscapes associated with the British Landscape Painters, most famous of those being Constable and Turner. During these walks, thoughts, feelings and visual observations are recorded within a field journal that is taken on every journey. These recordings are documented in the form of quick sketches and notes; however, no photographs will be used within the studio as it is the experience of the walk which is captured and responded to, 'walking as enabling sight and thought' (Macfarlane, 2013, p.24), rather than an accurate visual record of the landscape. The photograph would restrict the painting, developing into a response to what was depicted in the image rather than the memory of the experience. As the walks are situated within the traditional English landscape, the memories are situated within the studio.

The utilisation of memory links the two previous methods together, with memory being a key factor in both the walks and painting within the studio. Each walk is informed by the memory of the preceding one, with the same occurring in the studio during the process of painting. Memory allows for a personal account of the walking experience, using a means of measuring unlike anything used within science or maths. An example of this is the following quote by Sir Leslie Stephen, 'the steepness is not expressed in degrees, but by the memory of the sensation produced when a snow-slope seems to be rising up and smiting you in the face' (1924, cited in Schama, 1996, p.505). This remembered experience, along with the documentation in the

field journal, is what informs the painting within the studio, and without it they would not contain the 'lived experience' or labour utilised within the walk and studio, revealing the ways in which memory distorts experience and walking abstracts the landscape.

As discussed previously, the differing individual methods within the overall methodology form a circular process which could be placed in any order to explore the relationship between each. Within this thesis, the selected order is Walking – Memory – Painting in which the initial walk is explored firstly through written narrative prompted by memory, and by the documentation within my field journal, and secondly through painting within the studio, the site of the remembered experience. This methodology will allow for exploration into how much influence walking has on painting, how much influence painting has on walking, and how memory is intertwined and encompassed within both. Each written walk has an end, yet throughout this thesis there will be elements highlighting how aspects learnt during the process inform and continue into the next case studies.

CONTEXT

PAINTING

‘Its specific indexicality makes it seem saturated with the painter’s individuality – which is to say, the uniqueness of the painted picture fosters the notion that its singular author is somewhat contained within it’

(Graw, 2018, p.144)

The traditional idea of painting is a process in which the human body is incredibly involved. The hand clasping a brush dipped in pigment, the muscles in the arm guiding it across a surface creating marks which mean something to the artist who creates them, leaving a visible trace of them. ‘It is through the act of painting – putting brush to canvas or panel – that the painter’s person appears to be brought into play, creating the phantasmatic impression of a presence that turns out to be an absence’ (Graw, 2018, p.51). According to Isabelle Graw, painting is indexicality and holds the artist within its object like a ghostly presence, an absent author (2018). This notion of painting holding the artist’s presence is perhaps due to the energy that was exerted to create it, the physical movement utilised to put pigment to surface. Isabelle Graw discusses this, stating, ‘painting, therefore, generates the illusionary impression that it is possible to grasp a fiber of the living labor that was mobilized for it’ (2016, p.99). This living labour could not only relate to the physical act of painting, but also perhaps the means in which the idea for the painting was conceived, the mental labour that occurs as the work forms. In a way, this idea could relate to walking, footsteps being the mark left to indicate the presence of an absent author. ‘Materially visible painterly signs, like brushstrokes, are read as “traces of an activity” (Graw, 2018, p.21). This sense of a trace of activity could also be said to be a trace of a memory, thought or emotion encapsulated within painterly signs, with these signifiers being initially ‘perceived and experienced as physical first and foremost’ (Graw, 2018, p.121) but then, due to the indexical quality of painting, this physicality unveils the prospect of coming into ‘contact with the creator’s lived reality’ (Graw, 2018, p.144). Painting harnesses the artist, creating a conversation between artist and painting during creation and further reveals the artist-as-subject when unveiled to the public, even if the painting is representing something else, the artist is always present.

Considering this notion of painting having a conversation with its artist, Jutta Koether states that ‘each thought might be one gesture; each gesture a thought’ (2016, p.58). This link between the two, almost giving painting a mind, a memory, of its own is echoed by Graw, ‘the idea that painting possesses intellectual faculties and is even capable of thinking for itself’ (2018, p.43). Thinking about this in relation to the previously discussed idea of painting containing the artist within it, the concept of the painting having an influence in its creation could link to memory, experience and instinct, ‘the act of painting as if painting itself

had guided the brush' (Sylvester, 1987, cited in Graw, 2018, p.24). Experience guides memory, the subconscious guiding the present which could possibly make it seem as if the painting has a life and is painting itself, when in fact it could actually be the memory of previous paintings informing the current, 'the mythic idea of an autonomous subject-like painting capable of action does not come from nowhere; it resonates with the experience of production' (Graw, 2018, p.24). In this sense, it is also important to note that each new painting has signs of every preceding painting, 'however much energy you put into something you then present as the latest masterpiece, this dependence of one picture on the other nevertheless comes into play, there's a constant negotiation and communication between the paintings themselves' (Graw, 2018, p.82).

Considering both of these aspects, painting is probably one of the only art forms which has the ability to harness an artist within it and project that sense of life onto the audience who subsequently view it. 'Painting, in Hegel's view, moves us...because it stages principles that feel familiar to us and that constitute us, such as the ability to form a distinctive personality or individual conception of something (Graw, 2018, p.53). There is an inherent connection to painting – whether artist or viewer – that only painting seems to possess, 'while all artworks possess a kind of "memorial power" (Boltanski/ Arnaud Esquerre) because they are associated with a person, this power operates quite literally in painting' (Graw, 2016, p.97 – p.98). This 'memorial power' can be found in the work of Paul Cézanne, who went through 'the painstaking process of transposing sensation into form, the excruciating doubt that comes with each decision to add a mark to those already present on a surface', Merleau-Ponty called this 'Cézanne's Doubt' (1993, cited in Joselit, p.12 – p.14). This emotion and doubt are harnessed in the work which may prompt similar thoughts, feelings and memories in the audience. 'Observers noted the particular affective power that paintings exert on their viewers. He attested to painting's ability to deeply penetrate our "innermost feelings," far exceeding the power of the spoken word' (Quintilian, 1922, cited in Graw, 2018, p.19). Painting forms a link between both artist and viewer through its materiality, its traces of activity and authorship, forming a highly personalised, 'living', end object.

WALKING

'Always, everywhere, people have walked, veining the earth with paths visible and invisible,
symmetrical or meandering'

(Clark, 1988, cited in Macfarlane, 2013, p.13)

Walking is a versatile, inclusive act. It requires no machine or technology to progress, just the human body and its energy to travel across a landscape. Walking within the countryside, otherwise known as 'rural walking', according to Edensor (2000), takes on two separate forms, that of those who are prone to 'sauntering, ambling, strolling, plodding, promenading, wandering' and secondly those who partake in 'marching, trail-walking, trekking, hiking, hill-walking, yomping and peak-bagging'. In both cases, the focus is

on the physical movement of walking in varying degrees of intensity, strolling is defined as 'to walk leisurely as inclination directs' (Dictionary.com, n.d.) whereas trekking is 'a journey or trip, especially one involving difficulty or hardship' (Dictionary.com, n.d.). There are infamous routes, such as the Pennine Way, which - when conquered by walking - place the walker on a pedestal of achievement. 'In that pub resides what I imagine to be a leather-bound, gold-embossed, parchment-paged ledger, locked in a glass case, containing all of the names of the heroes who have taken part in this great adventure' (Armitage, 2013, p.263). The focus of walking in this sense is more about testing physical endurance, receiving an accolade, and pushing the human body to its limits, yet walking is much more than this.

Robert Macfarlane described 'walking as enabling sight and thought' (2013, p.24), with Rebecca Solnit echoing this sentiment as she states 'it strikes a delicate balance between working and idling, being and doing, it is a bodily labor that produces nothing but thoughts, experiences, arrivals' (2006, cited in Adams, 2017, p.6). When walking within a landscape, observation becomes heightened, normally unnoticed qualities of the surrounding world reveal themselves. 'Walking can be imagined as a visual activity, every walk a tour leisurely enough both to see and to think over sights, to assimilate the new into the known' (Solnit, 2006, cited in Adams, 2017, p.7). Assimilating 'the new into the known' through walking is not just about discovering new visual data from the landscape, it is observing how the self interacts with it, the way in which things change and alter through walking, and beginning to understand the human relationship to the natural landscape. 'The Pennine Way Companion: A Pictorial Guide' by Alfred Wainwright (2004) is an important example of this combination of observation and information captured during a walk. His methodology consisted of documenting his observations in both illustrations and written notes – both factual and emotional – creating a guide in which others could follow, with some information still being relevant today. In 'Walking Home' by Simon Armitage, a book documenting his journey along the Pennine Way much like Wainwright, he discusses every aspect of the walk, what he observes about his surroundings, the people he meets, how his body reacts to the climate. 'I'm surprised by how quickly my mood can change on this walk, how many reversals of spirit take place during the course of the day' (Armitage, 2013, p.64). This 'reversal of spirit' and erratic change of emotion is evident in his detailing of the walk, with statements such as 'it should be torture, but its exhilarating, ecstatic, a frenzied initiation or hysterical reacquaintance with the great outdoors' (Armitage, 2013, p.64) embedded in the narrative, revealing a gradual understanding of his place in the Pennine Way and the mental and physical toll it takes on his body and spirit, all discovered through walking.

Walking is a key part of the artistic practices of Richard Long and Hamish Fulton, two of the most well-known artists to use it as a means of artistic expression. Fulton once stated that 'if I do not walk, I cannot make a work of art' (Tate, 2002), with Richard Long, when discussing his 8 day walk in Dartmoor, describing his practice as 'about the experience of being alone in a place of nature, the topography, the weather, the

naming of places, real time, autobiography, imagination' (Long, n.d., cited in Redhead, 1989, cited in Malpas, 2005, p.85). The final works of both artists are a result of the walks that they engage in, but the difference between the two is that Fulton 'makes no work in the landscape, nor does he remove objects from the landscape for displaying in the gallery' aiming to 'leave no trace' (McKibben, 2002, p.16) whereas Long interacts and alters the landscape with one of his most known works being 'A Line Made by Walking' (Long, 1967) in which he repeatedly walked the same line across a field until the grass was crushed to a point in which the line stayed. Long then photographs these sculptures in nature to document the interaction. Fulton also utilises photography within his work, photographing different aspects of his walks allowing 'chance encounters and discoveries to direct his selection of views' (Tate, 2009). Walking is the sole means of expression for both of these artists, with Fulton stating that 'sometimes no other artwork will result from a walk' (McKibben, 2002, p.21). The process of walking to them is the art, and the work produced in response to the walk is a means of capturing 'some of the experience or [to] remind the viewer of something of their walks' (Malpas, 2005, p.203). The walk is the art, the work produced is remembered experience.

REMEMBERED EXPERIENCE

'Memory, like the mind and time, is unimaginable without physical dimensions; to imagine it as a physical place is to make it a landscape in which its contents are located, and what has location can be approached'

(Solnit, 2006, p.77)

As previously discussed, the produced artwork of Richard Long and Hamish Fulton are an attempt at giving the memories of their walks visual form. The works produced by Fulton are 'private experiences given public form' which he says are 'facts for the walker [i.e. himself] and fictions for everyone else' (McKibben, 2002, p.15). This sense of providing 'fictions' for the public, due to the public not directly experiencing the walk being responded to, could be argued to also be fictions to Fulton, the walker, as 'memory...is inherently selective and there is a proven tendency to rework the original facts of an event or experience in a way that coheres around the wishes and values of the person remembering' (James, 1890, cited in Gibbons, 2007, p.12). In this sense, the artwork produced in response to memory may not be the true recollection of what occurred, as direct and factual recollection of events are not possible. The exhibited art of Fulton is perhaps a mixture of memory, emotion, and imagination, rather than an accurate representation of the physical walk, meaning that the artwork produced is an insight into a personal and private experience, but also into Fulton's mind, thrust into the public eye, and viewed by those who will have no means of recollecting the walk.

Bravo-Riviera and Sotres-Bayon state 'emotional memories, whether negative or positive, leave traces in the brain which can later be retrieved and strongly influence how we perceive, how we form associations with environmental stimuli and, ultimately, guide our decision-making' (2020, p.1). This relationship of memory

to past and present emotional experience, in the context of walking and painting, shows how each walk/painting informs the next, taking aspects from each to form a continual dialogue of perception and creating new knowledge through observation and process. The hippocampus and amygdala are two parts of the brain which deal with emotion, memory and learning, with studies 'strongly suggest[ing] that the amygdala's involvement in emotional processing strengthens the memory network by modulating memory consolidation; thus, emotional content is remembered better than neutral content' (Tyng, Amin, Saad & Malik, 2017, p.7). This relates to the idea of memory being selective, with the experiences that prompt stronger emotions being easier to recall in the future, influencing perception. In regards to observation, Jonathan Crary writes that 'perception and cognition [are] essentially temporal processes dependent upon a dynamic amalgamation of past and present' (1988, p.10) and 'any perception always blends with a preceding or remembered perception' (1988, p.11). In essence, when observing while walking, the site and route undertaken are already being underpinned by preceding memories, resulting in - using Fulton as an example - an artwork that is responding to a specific memory of a specific walk, yet is also responding to all the walks that have preceded it. The hippocampus has been argued to have a number of functions in relation to memory, with it being suggested 'as the hub of a navigation system, supporting the brain's capacity to calculate routes for traversing physical space' (Schiller et al., 2015). It can also be said that it 'creates a systematic network organization that mirrors the spatial and nonspatial associations that can guide choice behavior and associations between memories experienced at different times.' (Schiller et al., 2015) In a sense, the hippocampus is the part of the brain that associates places with memory meaning, it could be argued, that not only are these memories sited within the place walked, they are also sited within the place in which the artwork is created, and the artwork itself becomes a site of memory. Bravo-Riviera and Sotres-Bayon suggest that 'through associative mechanisms, neurons assign emotional significance to environmental stimuli' (2020, p.1) suggesting that emotions experienced both during the walk and painting process can perhaps be assigned to physical, locational and visual entities. This then placed within a gallery setting could prompt memories of walks and experiences past for the viewer. This could perhaps be from photographs or text relating to the walk (as in the work of Long and Fulton) to certain shapes which prompt thoughts and feelings of familiarity.

Both Long and Fulton's utilisation of text within their work to convey their walks prompts thoughts of how writing, especially creative writing, is used by artists in varying forms. Susannah Thompson suggests that 'many artists engage with critical writing and curating alongside their own visual art practice in an attempt to create an unmediated culture and to eliminate 'secondariness' in the production, exhibition and reception of art' (2017, p.114), in a sense making the writing a key part of their practice which allows for direct critique and reflection from initial idea to formal gallery setting. This writing can take many forms, with 'an increasing number of artists [who] have begun to integrate their novels as a fundamental part of their visual art projects' (Maroto & Zielińska, 2011). An ongoing research project by David Maroto and Joanna Zielińska entitled 'The

Book Lovers' collates the work of numerous artists who write novels and seeks to establish how the novel has become a medium within the visual arts. These artists introduce, through their novels, 'elements particular to narrative literature into the visual arts, like fiction, identification and issues of authorship. All of them point to a certain interest in undermining notions of personal identity and in creating new spaces for intersubjective exchange' (Maroto & Zielińska, 2011). The nature of the novel, even if it is fictitious, is that it has a foundation in experience, and encompassed within that, the memories of the author. Sigmund Freud states 'a strong experience in the present awakens in the creative writer a memory of an earlier experience (usually belonging to his childhood) from which there now proceeds a wish which finds its fulfilment in the creative work. The work itself exhibits elements of the recent provoking occasion as well as of the old memory' (1908, cited in Neale, 2011, p.953). This suggests that the artist novel, and the creative writing within it, is a means of not only understanding the artists' present, but also their past.

When thinking about the idea of shapes prompting a sense of familiarity, the art born from biomorphic abstraction comes to mind. Defined as having 'a visual language based on biomorphic shapes – bulbous, lush, sumptuous forms – that are neither representative nor geometric, but that are uncannily familiar; people recognize them and connect with them on a primal level, though they have never seen them before' (Barcio, 2016). The work produced in relation to biomorphism could be said to be a response to memory, not clearly visible as something physical yet notably something of familiarity that could relate to a past experience of the artist and/or the viewer. This type of abstraction is one of many forms produced during the Modernist period, an art movement that was based on 'a rejection of history and conservative values (such as realistic depiction of subjects); innovation and experimentation with form (the shapes, colours and lines that make up the work) with a tendency to abstraction; and an emphasis on materials, techniques and processes' (Tate, n.d.). A number of Modernist artists produced work that suggested shapes of familiarity, and memory, a few examples of these being specifically European Modernist artists. The first and most well-known artist of biomorphic abstraction is Jean Arp. His sculptures are complete abstraction, curvilinear, flowing shapes that do not refer to other recognisable forms yet 'they were from nature, born from him in the same way as a tree bares fruit' (Barcio, 2016). It could be said that these sculptures, born from Arp, are a response to the memory of his experience of nature – not a direct representation of any physical natural form yet still recognisable as being something of nature. Another Modernist artist whose work seems to have a foundation in memory is the paper-cut outs of Henri Matisse. These pieces were made by 'drawing' with scissors. When discussing his process, it is said that Matisse 'would almost always carry his sketchbook with him, drawing prolifically so as to record what he saw accurately and to ensure his memories would last, until they resurfaced, obsessively, in the gouache-painted paper cut-outs of his final years' (Néret & Néret, 2018, p.26). His paper-cut outs formed directly from memory, prompted only by drawings created on site. His forms are devoid of details yet still hold the essence of the shapes being remembered, Matisse stating 'I have achieved a form that is simplified to its essence, and all that I have retained of the object that I used to represent in

the complexity of its space is the sign that is sufficient to make it exist in its own right' (Fourcade, 1972, cited in Néret & Néret, 2018, p.7). These two very different artists utilised simplistic shapes to form their artwork, these shapes being guided by memories and experience, whether that be memories of a place or the process of the creation of a past artwork. The key aspect of Modernism, which focused more on an artist's own, personal experience rather than accurate visual representation of a person or place - artists reducing complex ideas into basic shapes - places it as a strong context to situate the idea of abstract shapes holding the artists memory within it, and the idea of creation through process. The process of walking for Long and Fulton, sculpture for Arp and paper-cuts for Matisse, is underpinned by memories. Without the remembered experience of these artists, their artwork may not have been formed.

A WALK IN MALHAM

MALHAM, NORTH YORKSHIRE, SATURDAY 6TH APRIL 2019

Bird song provides a soothing soundtrack to each assured footstep I take as I make my way out of the picturesque village of Malham at just after 12:20pm and into the countryside. The path I walk is pre-made, a solid concrete form leading into vast fields and open landscape. Running alongside this path is a flowing beck, its water glittering in the sunlight as it meanders, flashes of blue, sea green and purple as it hits obstructions in its way. The brightness of the sun dazzles my eyes, forcing me to close them for a time which reveals embedded colours within my eyelids. Everything becomes overly exposed and overly saturated as I walk further into nature so I decide to put sunglasses on. Immediately I see the effect of this, colours balance, everything comes back into focus. I had looked, prior to the walk, at routes which I could take - with Figure 1 showing the walk I decided upon - but I am guided by the path laid out in front of me, and the way in which the land has been cut off from the path, so I would have been able to follow a route without prior location knowledge. At this point, I have a wire fence to my left – possibly to keep livestock away from the walking public – and a dry-stone wall to my right. In the distance I can see the rolling hills of Malham, the peaks illuminated by the sun, cutting up the view and guiding the eye along its lines to the way ahead. The drystone wall changes sides as I walk further, past an abandoned farm building that has been built with strong, large pieces of stone weathered by the elements. The wall stretches far into the near distance, curving with the landscape and blending in with the rocks piled on the bank next to the stream to the right. A flash of colour catches my eye, urging me to turn my head. Acid yellow, lime green, vivid red and violent orange engulfs some of the stones; abstract shapes spreading across each other as the lichen and mould battle to claim ownership of a small piece of Malham. The vividness of colour is hard to capture, but I use it to guide me as I form inky lines within my field journal.

Long mustard coloured grass divides the landscape as I walk further. I pass many people who have been drawn to the countryside by the dry weather forecast, meaning that natural sounds of the English countryside around me such as bird calls and the wind catching the trees are accompanied by the conversations of passers-by. I reach a point in which the environment around me changes, the sunlight disappearing as I move through a gate with a 'National Trust' metal logo brandished upon it. Trees surround me, their branches arching over forming a natural walkway that guide me through. At this moment I realise I am in the basin of two large embankments. Either side of me are steep inclines shrouded in a sea of green leaves, rolling over each other in the wind like the tide. The green every so often broken by a tree protruding from the ground, cemented by its strong roots into the hardened earth below. The path in front of me has been carved by many people before me, wearing down the ground and the plants to leave a small, uneven rocky trail. The unevenness of the terrain is starting to take its toll on my knees, sharp pains jar through my joints as my feet slip on loose rocks causing me to become less observant of the environment around me and more aware of

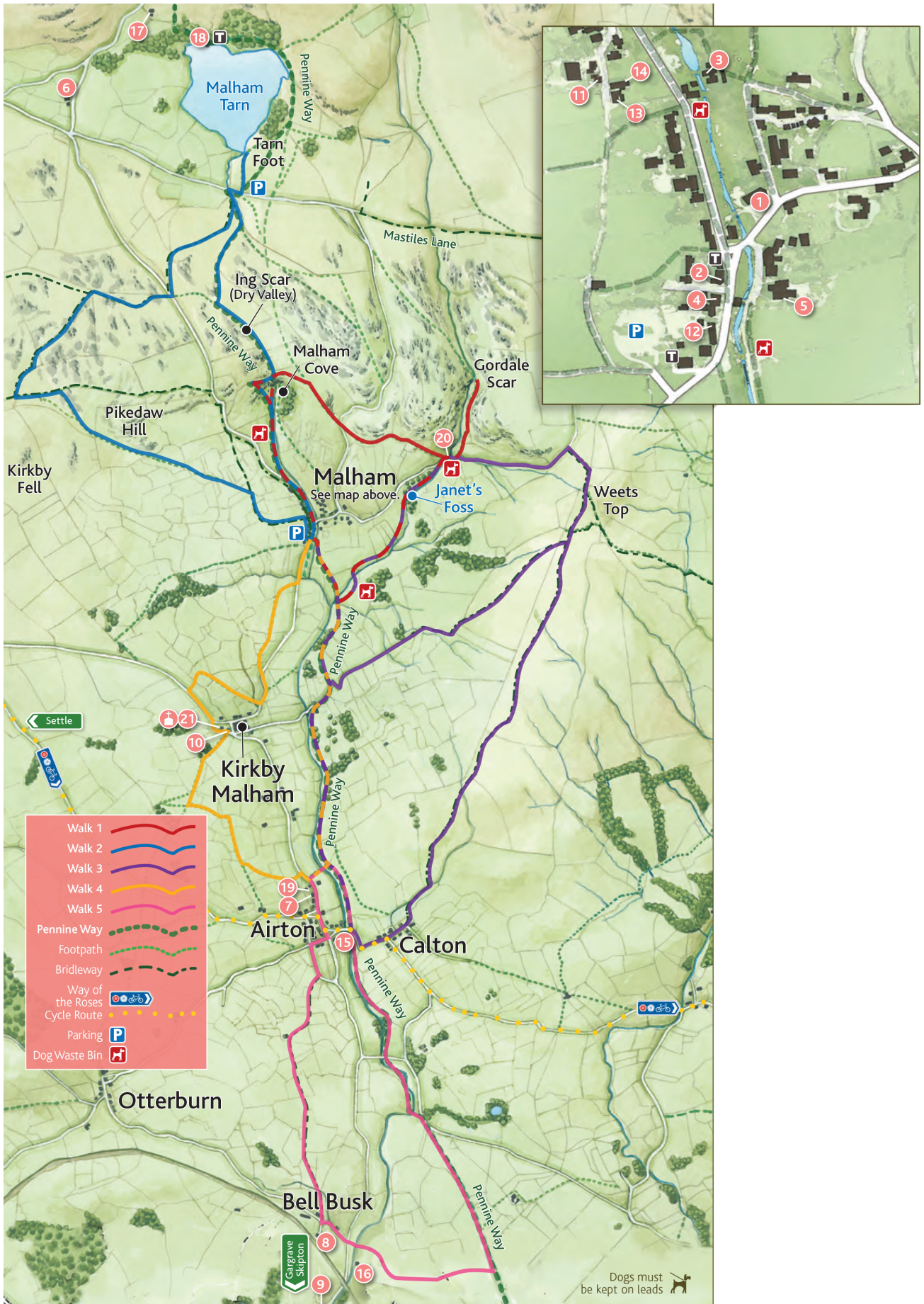


FIGURE 1 - MAP OF MALHAM WITH CHOSEN ROUTE WALKED BEING WALK 1 (MALHAMDALE, 2019)

where my feet are stepping. An ominous rumbling noise comes from the distance, carried by a slight wind. As I approach, the noise becomes more intense and the source is revealed, a shimmering waterfall breaking up the green landscape.

Violent yet calm, the flowing water cascades down the rock face; erosion is evident, with the rocks closest being smooth and almost shiny as if they have been polished. The deluge of water rushes down the rocks, impacting with the body of water below. There is a strangeness to this waterfall, named Janet's Foss as I found out from wooden signs leading me to it. The momentum of water is harsh, vicious, carving the rockface with immense force, yet the pool below has minimal disturbance, stillness. Blue, teal, sea green, lime green, yellow, colours from the nature around reflect on the pool making it resemble an abstract watercolour, pigment stronger in certain parts and more pastel in others. Long lengths of green plants trail next to the streaming waterfall along rocks of slate grey meeting the water and disappearing into its depths. There is something ethereal about this place. I don't know whether it is the vibrancy of colours or the deep rumbling of water but I seem to zone out from the world around me, focusing only on the scene in front of me and my field journal, alternating between the two. The chatter of voices and barking of family pets bring me back to reality as more people descend upon Janet's Foss. It is time to move on.

Smooth stones with hints of pale lilac and blueish grey line the small yet steep incline ahead requiring precision of footing to ensure safe passage. Upon reaching the summit, I emerge from the undergrowth to find I am on a small country lane. The sun is in full bloom as I gently stroll along the tarmac towards Gordale Scar. The heat is intense from above and below as the UV rays bounce back from the road's surface and warm my face. It is at this point that I feel I need to remove the jacket I am wearing, becoming increasingly more uncomfortable in the April sunlight. Moving through another National Trust gate, I stop in the middle of the path that cuts through a large expanse of green grass. I look up at the looming limestone ravine in front of me. Reaching for a pen in my bag, I observe the stone forms and draw them out as lines in my field journal. Distracted, I realise I have danced off the page and I am now drawing onto my skin. As I step further, the walls of the ravine seem to close in on me becoming oppressive as the humidity increases. My skin begins to feel prickly and hot to the touch; my eyes sensitive to the bright light as it bounces off the pale limestone, distorting colour. I am surrounded by a barren landscape. Scorched grass and exposed rock make any other plant life surviving in this environment seem impossible, but it does. Trees cling to the steep-sided ravine, their deep roots burrowing into the limestone, forcing their way through existing cracks and fracturing new ones. They grow high into the sky, too far to gather any close details from them, but close enough to see their twisted branches cutting and carving up the clear blue. The pathway ahead leads me further into the ravine - feeling slightly apprehensive - I take a breath and walk deeper into the looming limestone.

The temperature drops considerably as I am encapsulated by the shade created by the towering walls around me. The brightness of colour I have previously encountered seem to give way to much darker, deeper tones

as I walk. The path ahead is incredibly uneven and treacherous. Ensuring my full concentration is on avoiding falling and causing myself injury. I am only able to acknowledge the large waterfall erupting from the centre of the ravine when reaching a safe point to stand. The noise is loud in my ears as the water crashing down onto the rocks below echoes around the limestone ravine. I am drawn to move closer, to climb as close to the cascading water as I can - as many other people are bravely attempting - but self-preservation is taking over and my feet remain firmly stuck to the rock I am stood upon. I sense there is something more above that waterfall – something that I can only have access to if I allow my ‘fight’ instinct to take over. Nevertheless, the sense of mystery is quite exciting to me, and the experience of not knowing intrigues me – how can I visualise what I don’t physically experience? The water in the pool below me has smoothed the rocks over time, giving them a shimmering quality and a clarity of colour as the water passes over them. A sudden swirling breeze causes the hairs on my arms to stand up as the rapid change in temperature shocks my skin. A shiver shoots down my spine as I look up to the clear blue sky. The limestone is sharp and rugged, weathered by the elements, jagged points reaching out from the main body of rock, unstable and potentially dangerous at great height. I decide at this stage it is probably time to move on. Walking out of the shade once more, I pursue the same path that led me here.

My legs are burning and I am struggling to catch my breath as I tackle the large grassy incline. The scenery around me is probably breath-taking, but I am so engrossed in ensuring I make it to the top of the hill that all I can see is the grass beneath my feet. I lean forward, pulling myself up the best I can. The sound of distant sheep has become the soundtrack for my temporary misery. My field of vision has narrowed, all I can focus on is reaching the top and catching my breath, allowing my muscles to recover. The rucksack on my back is increasingly heavy as my body begins to tire. I have come to a natural point in the landscape in which the hill has levelled off so I pause for a moment. My blurred vision is clearing and I am able to take in the scenery around me. I am at a vantage point where I can see a few of the rolling hills of Malham, spring lambs are causing chaos in nearby fields and the sun illuminates the view. My thighs and calves are throbbing as I stand still, but the pause in movement has rejuvenated them to a point in which I feel I can continue. Looking out across the field, I can see a gate attached to the dry-stone wall behind me which separates this field from another. Next to the gate I can see what looks to be a wooden sign, possibly pointing in the direction of another place of natural wonder, I gather my belongings once more and continue my walk, this time slightly slower to ensure my muscles are not being strained too much.

Sitting down on a perfectly placed piece of rock, I admire the scenery in front of me. The rocks around me are natural yet geometric forms break up the sea of grass with sharp shapes cutting across the view. The sun is intense up here, I am open to the elements with no tree to provide me shade. The rocks are shapes of blue and green, flashes of lilac in the corner of my eye as the sun lands on weathered parts, causing them to reflect its rays. Large birds distort the vivid blue sky above, breaking the stillness of the land below. It is completely



FIGURE 2 - AUTHORS OWN IMAGE. WALKING POINT OF VIEW, MALHAM, NORTH YORKSHIRE

and utterly silent; the silence fills the air like smoke carried on the wind. I feel content sat upon this rock, reflecting on what I have experienced over the course of the walk so far, pondering the effect large amounts of walkers have had on these paths, but also how I feel during my time out in nature. The path ahead leads me over further rolling hills with rocks scattered along the way. I descend a gradual decline to the natural spectacle that has been named Malham Cove. Upon my approach I can see the reason why it has been likened to a cove, as its sweeping limestone forms a glorious arch across the landscape with Malham village and its surroundings forming its sea. The cove itself is treacherous to walk on, large gaps between each piece of limestone call for increased concentration to ensure I do not descend into their abyss. Finding it difficult to watch my footing but to also take in the incredible views ahead, I carefully approach a rock that is closest to the edge, and sit down.

The rock feels comfortable beneath me, smoothed by the wind and rain over centuries, and has a perfect place for me to put my feet without having to dangle them over the edge. Looking out across what can only be described as typically English countryside, I look down. The sheer drop beneath causes me to suddenly panic, my heart beat is quickening and I feel increasingly warm as the anxiety and realisation of just how high up I am flows over me. I reach for my field journal to try and distract myself, using it as a means of calming down the voice in my head telling me to move away, quickly. The heat from the afternoon sun is forming a haze on the horizon. This coupled with the glare of the sun burning into my eyes, creates a distorted visual. I decided to wear all black for this walk, the worst colour in warm weather, and I can slowly feel the heat absorbing into my jeans and burning onto my skin. It is a prickling sensation through the fabric but I try to ignore it as I look into the distance at the colours. Blue is the most prominent, falling into varying shades of green as my eye hits the land, but shades of purple appear as I look further. The more I observe the more details appear to me, the river that carves through green, snaking its way into the distance until it reaches a point of disappearance. There is a stream of people meandering along the pre-made path below, leading the eye to a place of civilisation. Even at great height I can still hear the faint sound of water carried on the wind, like whispers of unknown secrets being revealed. I decide to have a moment of rest from noting things down in my field journal, I just sit and look. I feel myself begin to zone out from the surroundings I am in; my blinking slows and the view ahead becomes distorted, trees transforming into cracks across the rockface, scarring the land.

The burning of the sun through my jeans is becoming unbearable so I decide to get up from the rock I am resting upon and make my way along the long stretch of limestone that is Malham Cove. Placing my field journal in my bag once more, I start to manoeuvre myself into a position in which I can stand up but the thought of the height comes crashing back into my mind, making my legs go weak. Taking a moment to get my balance, I tentatively move myself around, now looking at the vast limestone top, and carefully stand up. Feeling slightly relieved, I step over the vast cracks, admiring the strange flowing forms of the rocks below

my feet, smooth like water. The steps down from the cove are uneven and I tread carefully as I descend them. My knees are shaking, the muscles spasming as the long walk is finally taking its toll. I drag myself along the same meandering path I saw from way up on high, passing the river whose secrets grew louder in my ears and through the multiple dry-stone walls that separate farmers' fields. A metal sign welcomes me to Malham Village, the lettering slightly faded and paint weathered from many years of Yorkshire rain and wind. I know that my walk is nearly over. At around 3pm, with tired legs and aching back, I walk back into the village of Malham, where my walk ends.

MALHAM IN THE STUDIO

The walk in Malham led me through different topographies with key features being waterfalls and the naturally formed monument of Malham Cove. The walk was much longer than that in Scarborough, with the walk in Scarborough being discussed in the following chapter, meaning that the experience of fatigue had transformed into exhaustion, with muscles shaking under the miles in which they were pushed to walk along uneven terrain. From already undertaking my artistic process once, in relation to Scarborough, I had already a clear idea in my mind of how some aspects of the walk would form in the studio. In this sense I had learnt from my previous experience of walking but also from my previous experience of painting. I was aware of what shapes I had used for certain thoughts and feelings previously, and become coherent in what colours work well together or clash. Pondering this walk in the studio, prior to beginning painting, felt more informed this time and my memories became more established within this setting. The paintings that formed from the walk in Malham became a deeper insight into my relationship to the site and the abstracting effect of walking but also formed an understanding of memory and emotion in relation to landscape.

During my time exploring my walk in Scarborough through painting, I was combining the tangible with the intangible, visual observations with emotional responses, without creating a direct representation of the landscape. The painting on page 33 of my *Book of Artwork* is a development of these combinations, focusing upon a large waterfall but also the mystery of what was beyond it. Large blocks of colour form a substantial base in which each painted shape builds upon it, forming a narrative in my mind. This narrative is a combination of the visual, memory, but also imagination. I was unsure what was beyond that waterfall, and the lime green forms moving the eye up the painting prompt the memory of looking up into Gordale Scar, where the waterfall was, and speculating what could be beyond its mass. A combination of sharp and soft forms reflects the physical sharpness of rocks and the smoothness of water, yet – on reflection – the physical act of painting each shape required different means of working prompting a sense of restriction within the geometric forms and freedom in the free-flowing shapes. Page 33, in comparison to the paintings discussed in the previous chapter, has a more complex dynamic of colours and shapes forming a more detailed painting. Reflecting upon this, I believe this is an unconscious response to the complexity of the walk in Malham, which involved struggling up steep inclines, across treacherous rocks and uneven pathways, as well as an aesthetic

response during the process within the studio. Smaller details, such as the dots surrounding the outer edges of the painting, and the smaller squiggly lines flowing across the light blue forms denote the smaller external and internal observations that occurred when stood at the bottom of the waterfall. The flowing lines, in my mind, responded to a cool breeze catching my skin and the way in which it caused the hairs on my arms to stand on edge – feeling the movement of air hovering a fraction above it. There is an element of symmetry within page 33 which, during the process of painting, always brought me back to the centre. This symmetry, during the walking experience, was exactly the moment of viewing the waterfall, the water being central to the remembered visual observation. These sinuous lines have become a recurring element within each of my paintings, adding a flash of colour or joining shapes to create a completed form. These lines, to me, mimic the rhythm of walking and the physical movement of the paintbrush across the page and feel like the closest thing to moving through the landscape other than physically walking through it. Capturing the memory of a fleeting emotion in a way that still is an embodiment of the original feeling, in visual form.

The painting on page 36, visually, is very different from the rest of the paintings in the *Walk in Malham* series. An aspect that I found I focused upon during my time spent sat on top of Malham Cove looking out across the whole of Malham was the way in which the sun distorted and abstracted the view, but also how the sheer intensity of light caused a change in my vision, and visual phenomenon occurring within my eyes. The bright light caused my vision to become overexposed, resulting in a withdrawal of detail and a paler range of colours. The colour palette used within page 36 reflect this strange light phenomena, paler tones layered upon each other, overlapping as to almost look as if they are flowing into one another rather than being separate shapes. The forms used are remembered visuals of those that floated within my eyes, these shapes described by Crary as ‘physiological colours belonging entirely to the body of the observer’ (1988, p.4). This utilisation of shapes is in contrast to those used in the painting on page 33 as they are in response to something which is not a physical entity, yet is also not an emotion, it is an optical phenomenon. An element of familiarity between this painting and page 33 is the utilisation of similar pattern like forms, the dots that flow along the bottom of the painting seem to join the rest of the shapes together, filling space yet also becoming a kind of visual anchor which stabilises the rest of the painting. Reflecting on this sense of recurring forms within differing paintings in the series, it seems to have become a means of familiarity and remembering which link the differing works together as a total whole as well as being individuals. Each individual painting is in response to a moment yet the whole series combines to respond to the experience of the entirety of the walk. When remembering the strange phenomena that occurred as my eyes reacted to the sun instigated shapes that, unlike the other paintings, are a direct representation of those in which I saw within my eyes. The green flowing forms at the top left corner were present as I blinked, floating around my vision as they do within the painting. Although I have previously discussed not making a direct representation from the experience, which is why no photographs are used, page 36 felt as if I needed to depict exactly what I saw, as it seemed the only means of understanding these entities that were created from within rather than

an external source. These shapes are a personal creation, specific to me, yet this painting – due to its colours and forms – seem to create a similar phenomenon post-experience, resulting in page 36 becoming a vehicle for new optical phenomenon.

Following on from the previous discussion about recurring patterns within my paintings, the painting on page 42 demonstrates familiar shapes that have been evident within the prior works. Through the process of painting, these shapes seem to form organically through the paintbrush, as if they have become synonymous with the memory, and emotion, of the walk in Malham. This painting is an attempt at capturing how the sheer humidity that occurred at a particular point in my walk affected me. Intense sun beat down upon me, causing a blurry sensation in both vision and mind. Within the creation of this painting, as I added layer upon layer of colour, each tone seemed to interact with the previous creating, to me, a kind of visual humidity. The warmth of the colours layered upon one another give a sense of the haze associated with humidity as it reacts with the atmosphere, light and landscape. I feel that page 42 gives a real feeling of the atmosphere in which I experienced and captures the effort exerted to battle through the heat to reach the waterfall. Colder colours intercept the warmed tones creating a busy visual experience which contrasts greatly with the idea of Gordale Scar being a 'barren' landscape. This mass of forms is overpowering, possibly even overwhelming to the viewer giving a taste of the feeling that overcame me as I fought my way through the invisible barrier of heat that tried to stop me progressing forwards. The physical act of painting page 42 was very challenging due to the nature of the pigments used. Each colour required multiple coats of paint to acquire a solid, flat shade meaning that it required more labour in the studio than any of the other paintings discussed both in this chapter and the previous chapter. In a way, this increase in labour within the studio, and increase in time to complete the painting, reflects the impact that particular moment of the walk in Malham had upon both my mental and physical being. The heat slowed my physical speed, just like the paint requiring multiple layers slowed my artistic process, and my mind was in a battle with itself to push on through the heat resulting in a battle of shapes within the painting aesthetically contrasting with one another. Page 42 is a painting encapsulating the physical and mental toll of both walking, and the act of painting.

The painted process of creating a remembered experience into a visual form within the studio became an experience in itself that I wanted to take further. I could hold the paintings within my hands, bring them up close to my eyes to analyse the feeling of dragging my feet across due to exhaustion or the heat of the sun on my skin, yet through many hours spent stood within the studio painting, I felt I could take the process a step further and form it into something with more weight – something sculptural. This led me to consider what my recalled experiences would be like as ceramic forms. The previously mentioned notion of page 42 containing the labour that occurred when battling through the heat and humidity of Gordale Scar, is something that, on reflection, I noticed carried forward with me to this expanded painted practice of ceramics. The two ceramic pieces created in response to my walk in Malham, found on page 44 and page 46,

visually, are completely different from those formed from my walk in Scarborough, yet they hold many similarities. When forming these pieces, I became interested in the idea that the process of creation holds a similar sort of effort and labour to those which I exerted on the walk. The forcing of clay through an extruder to create coils requires muscular strength, full force through my upper back and shoulders to transform the material into a malleable, buildable form. The layering of clay coils upon one another and the subsequent smoothing to form the shape takes time and careful body movements to achieve the desired effect. Clay as a material moulds to pressure meaning that any force enacted upon it by the human hand will leave evidence of that person upon it. This notion relates to Graw's idea that 'painting suggests a physical connection to the one who made it' (2016, p.92), utilising ceramics as an expanded form of painting explores this sense of connection of artist to artwork through the process of touch. My fingerprints are left upon the surface of both of these ceramic sculptures, evidence of my presence, just like footprints on the landscape in which I walked. These ceramics, as well as all the paintings discussed, are an index for the experience remembered and the walk undertaken. The ceramic on page 44 is a response to observing lichen growing on a dry-stone wall – with the colours and shapes adorning it reflecting this – yet the physical shape of the sculpture became a testing of the material, pushing it to see how I could form sweeping curvilinear forms without breaching the surface. The formation of the clay into shape, to me, felt as if I was painting with it and trapped the same energy and tension within it as the works on paper. Considering this idea, the ceramic on page 88 contains both the experience of the changing conditions of moving from light to shade and the experience of painting within the studio. This piece is a vessel holding the memories of the experience, but it also contains remnants of the effort, emotion and labour put into it, resulting in something that clearly suggests a physical connection to me as the artist, but may possibly instigate a connection in the viewer through the sense of familiarity in the shapes used – biomorphic abstraction – and their own perceptions and memories.

Upon completion of this series of work, I was given the opportunity to exhibit it as a whole under the self-chosen title *A Walk in Malham* at the Theatre Royal, Wakefield. *A Walk in Malham* consisted of both paintings (plus sculpture) and prints of the contents of my field journal. Within the curation of this exhibition, I wanted to take the viewer through a narrative of my working process, from initial experience to finished painting, but also establish the relationship between these two parts of my practice. All paintings created in response to my walk in Malham were exhibited yet I went through a process of selection in regards to which pages of my field journal would be included. This selection process was based upon aesthetics – whether the page would look visually appealing increased to a larger scale – and also the content of the written notes – whether there were points of interest within the automatic writing. After this was complete, six double page images were chosen to accompany the paintings and ceramics. I curated Figure 3 in a way that was logical for the space in which it was exhibited and how the viewer would interact with it. Thinking about the narrative nature of the exhibition, I created an exhibition guide (see Figure 11) which guided the viewer a certain way around the space, a kind of map of the exhibition landscape like that which guided me around the initial

landscape of Malham. Within this guide held the titles of the pieces, based on unique memories, observations and emotions that occurred on the initial walk. Viewing the contents of my field journal within an exhibition context allowed me to gain a further understanding of how each part of my artistic process links to the other, and also how these processes abstracted and distorted my initial experience. Figure 4 shows a section of the exhibition in which a page of my field journal is displayed with a corresponding painting. Observing these two pieces together highlighted the relationship between walking, remembering and painting, and how emotion tied everything together. The documentation in my field journal was created in the moment. The writing and drawing are in response to direct contact with the landscape. Once removed from this landscape, it becomes a product of memory, a tool in which to recall the experience. The painting is a product of the studio, situated within an exhibition setting it still holds the residue of the studio process as well as the walking memory. The field journal harnesses the imprint of the conditions which occurred at the time the ink touched the paper. The heat of the sun burning down, the wind battering the pages affecting my writing. Figure 4 provided more detail to the viewer in regards to what the work is about, revealing even more personal information with the inclusion of my field notes. I both engaged in and overheard a number of conversations during the exhibition that related to the viewers own relationship and experience of the landscape of Malham. This prompted consideration of the ways the paintings communicated both the experiences and memories to the viewer. On reflection, when considering the exhibition as a whole, I believe that the paintings communicate the underlying experiences and memories through the forms used to create them. These painted shapes – biomorphic forms – resemble some of the Malham landscape, communicating both the sense of the physical site but also, combined with colour choice, highlight certain experiences. For example, the small painting in



FIGURE 3 - AUTHORS OWN IMAGE. 'A WALK IN MALHAM' EXHIBITION, THEATRE ROYAL WAKEFIELD (2019)



FIGURE 4 - AUTHORS OWN IMAGE. PHOTOGRAPH OF FIELD JOURNAL ALONGSIDE CORRESPONDING PAINTING, 'A WALK IN MALHAM' (2019)



FIGURE 5 - AUTHORS OWN IMAGE. PAINTINGS IN 'A WALK IN MALHAM' (2019)

Figure 3 (which is on page 38 in my *Book of Artwork*) being a swirling combination of warm colours communicates a sense of physical heat, urgency and pain to the viewer through colour, shape and form, as well as the painting title. The shapes that resemble the physical landscape, on reflection, were made subconsciously in the painting process – as no photographs were used – meaning that captured visual observations were recalled during painting, as well as emotional observations.

The exploration of the initial walk began as a written narrative documenting and describing the events that occurred during my walk in Malham. This narrative felt focused on the way in which I interacted with the landscape and it interacted with me, the spasming of my leg muscles as I descended the staircase at Malham Cove, the visual phenomenon of the sun within my eyes distorting vision and forming colours within my eyelids. The walk in Malham forced me to exert more physical energy than my walk in Scarborough due to the topography of the landscape and the memory of this informed the subsequent paintings that formed from this experience. The colours utilised within all the paintings are bold, oversaturated tones which respond to the ways in which the sun activated the colours as I walked. I feel that the colours used within the paintings, such as that on page 36, have become their own contained palettes with them interacting and contrasting with one another. This conversation of colour within the paintings reflect the relationship between physical and emotional experience during the walk. The number of paintings created in response to this walk was fourteen (plus two ceramics. On reflection, this large number of paintings produced is an unconscious response to both the length of the walk and the more detailed nature of each painting being a sign of the physical effort undertaken during this walk. Reflecting upon exhibiting these works alongside my field journal, it has prompted further understanding of the way in which each painting holds the residue of both the memory of the walk but also the memory of the studio, and the labour and emotion in which was utilised to create it, with the field journal situating the painting within the context of the landscape. Overall, the exploration into my remembered experience of my walk in Malham has resulted in the discovery of repeated pattern within my paintings, further understanding of the use of biomorphic shapes and colour to convey memory visually, and more established knowledge of how the atmospheric conditions walked through influence the process of painting within the studio.

A WALK IN SCARBOROUGH

SOUTH BAY BEACH, SCARBOROUGH, SUNDAY 10TH FEBRUARY 2019

During a mid-February morning on the English coast it is presumed that it would be raining, or perhaps even snowing, with a cold blustery breeze battering the coastline and the people who brave the outdoors. This day, however, is surprisingly mild. Starting at 11am, I set out on my walk across Scarborough's South Bay Beach. It has been a very long time since I have seen the sea in England so I am excited at what the walk is going to bring. Stepping onto the sand from the concrete steps leading from the road, I make my way to the first point of interest, the flash of colour or shape that catches my eye. In this case, it is a pile of seaweed curled around itself; a cluster of reds and burgundy twisted and contorted in the sand to form a strange eel-like shape. I stop directly above it, removing my field journal from my bag and grabbing a number of coloured pens to begin forming the shapes I saw. I use the pen to trace the shape of the seaweed, looking more at the plant than at the page of my field journal and, now it is finished, I look back at the drawing. It does not resemble at all the physical object in front of me. It is a series of layered lines forming shapes, shapes that have been created through visual observation and physical mark making, becoming abstract within the process. Although abstracted, it is enough to jog my memory when back in the studio of my experience of this particular pile of seaweed at this very moment in time on this part of South Bay Beach.

As I continue along the beach, I note down the way in which the wind is hitting my face, causing my hair to obscure my vision, the way it moves my field journal as I try to write, distorting my words. The wind is slightly worsening, feeling much colder than I first thought. The number of clumps of seaweed begin to diminish as I get nearer to the water; the sea is too violent for them to form. The crashing waves are an ominous soundtrack as I step into the water, looking down at the sand beneath my feet and looking for anything that catches my attention. Sand is firmer when wet, this means that I can walk freely within the water and immediate area where the sea has just touched. Without realising it, the tide has come slightly further into shore, resulting in the water moving further up my wellies than I originally anticipated. I can feel the cold of the water through the material and begin to retreat out of the sea when I see a lone piece of seaweed floating in the ebb and flow of the tide. The sun breaks through the cloud just as I am close enough to the plant to begin to draw its form. The sunlight activates the colours, revealing deep rich reds and mustard yellows, hints of acid green and pale blue as the froth of the ocean flows over it, distorting it for a second. The tide obscures the seaweed forming differing layers within my mind as the shapes morph and change. I have been stood observing this single piece of seaweed for so long that the sun has disappeared back behind the clouds, and the wind is biting at my hands, turning them a bright shade of pink and making them simultaneously ache yet feel numb.



FIGURE 6 - MAP OF SOUTH BAY BEACH, SCARBOROUGH, WITH ROUTE WALKED (ORDNANCE SURVEY, 2019)

Noting things down within my field journal is becoming difficult. The chill has really got to the joints in my fingers which is causing them to feel stiff and awkward. I walk for a period of time with my hand in my pockets to try and get the blood flowing back to my fingers, enabling me to have full use of my hands again. I can do this for my hands, but unfortunately my face is bearing the same harsh conditions. My nose especially is incredibly cold, so cold it feels as if it is fizzing behind the bridge of my nose and creeping into my eyes. This strange sensation causes my eyes to water, distorting my vision of the beach around me. The drawings within my field journal at this point are very quick, with a note of how the colours have become duller due to the light fading as clouds formed. However, reflecting upon this, the drastic change in colour – I believe – could actually also be to do with the excess moisture building up in my eyes due to the slight burning sensation within my nose. The feeling coupled with the slight change in light distorting the colours, reducing them to a duller form of themselves.

I reach a section of the beach which contains many rock formations that have resulted in small pools, creating tiny ecosystems. At this point, the wind is strong but the sun has reappeared from the clouds, warming my extremities so my vision is no longer being affected by the cold. Walking towards the nearest rock pool, I notice something partially buried within the sand. On closer observation, it is a piece of seaweed but unlike any I have seen before. There is a leaf formation but it is attached to a very long, thick, pale yellow stem-like structure. I crouch down to get an even closer look and pull it from the sand to see it as a whole. On the opposite end to the leaf is, what I believe to be, a formation of roots. These roots are thick and short, unlike the roots that I have encountered of weeds on walks around my local area. They seem more alien than plant like, creating a formation that resembles an alien mouth or a still from a sci-fi horror movie. It is obvious from its makeup that the thick stem is that way to withstand the strong current it would be subjected to, yet in this case it wasn't strong enough and has been violently thrown onto the beach and buried by the tide.

A key feature I notice as I stand looking down into one of the rock pools is the calmness of the plants within it compared to the lone piece of seaweed in the open tide I discussed earlier. The rock formation protects the contents within from the harsher sea, producing a much softer, slower flow of water. The slower moving water means the sunlight captures and enhances the movement of the different types of seaweed. I kneel down to make some quick drawings and notes but I am battling against the wind to keep balance as well as work within my field journal. This is becoming a contest between me and the elements, and eventually the elements win. My hands become so cold once more that it is a struggle to put pen to paper, resulting in quick scribbles and smudged ink as water from the sea hit the page. My knees become weak and start to ache and my hair is continuously blowing across my face, totally obstructing my vision, I can no longer stand it. Standing within another rock pool, I notice that the water only comes part way up my wellies and the temperature of it is distinctly warmer than the open sea. In relation to the seaweed I have seen attached to rocks on the



FIGURE 7 - AUTHORS OWN IMAGE. WALKING POINT OF VIEW, SOUTH BAY BEACH, SCARBOROUGH

beach and the harbour wall, the seaweed within the water of a rock pool takes on a totally different form. The plants I have seen out of water are limp and follow the form of the rock. They lie motionless, with a dullness of colour as they dry out in the slowly rising temperature. When observing the same plants within the rock pool, they come to life. The original flatness I witnessed is becoming a multitude of flowing shapes. The colours seem to be ignited in the water, the dullness transforming into combinations of vivid yellow, blue and multiple shades of green. A number of different seaweeds thrive within this rock pool and the forms and colours combine within my mind to create layers and ideas for capturing this moment within the studio. I move from rock pool to rock pool, identifying plants that I have seen before and scribbling down new-found shapes in my field journal, being within these pools is a whole experience within itself.

It has come to a point in which I can no longer stand the wind and my hands are starting to have a slight tinge of purple to them due to the cold, they are painful at the joints and I am struggling to write. I have been walking for nearly 2 hours on changing terrain, with drier sand being harder to walk on requiring more energy, uneven rocks to reach rock pools requiring a lot of mental concentration to ensure no injury occurs and the resistance of the sea being harsh on my legs; I am physically tired. The route I have taken for the walk follows the natural flow of the beach, so I have decided to follow it back to near where I started. I note that the physical tiredness I am feeling has an impact on the way in which I am seeing. I am starting to feel slightly disassociated from the environment surrounding me. The details which I noticed before have gone, becoming just shapes in my peripheral vision. I am unable to concentrate on what is around me and I have become fixated on getting to a place where I can sit down and warm up. The experience within this final section of the walk is blurry and fading in nature, perhaps a reflection of the growing tiredness of both my mind and body in this moment. The walk ends at 12:55pm, a few metres away from where it began.

SCARBOROUGH IN THE STUDIO

Upon returning from the walk along South Bay Beach in Scarborough, I spent a number of hours considering it. As a part of my process, it is important to sit and recollect my experience, looking back over the notes and sketches I have made in my field journal to establish my memories and solidify my observations. This time spent thinking within the studio, I feel, helps to establish a connection with the experience, allowing for the remembering of it to be easier and flow when being explored through painting rather than becoming stagnated and forgotten amongst other mundane memories. At this stage, I am unaware as to what the paintings will become, notes of tones within the journal may inform colour choices, but the shapes which begin to build up as the memory forms and develops have not yet been discovered. This transformation develops through the physical act of painting which can only be started within the studio away from the visual stimuli of South Bay Beach. Upon completion of these paintings, they become titled with a snippet of the memory that they are a response to – giving a small insight into the experience yet not explicitly

recounting the events. Once the walk has made sense to me after thinking through its details for a while, I begin.

The first and strongest memory that came to mind as I sat pondering in the studio was being stood within the increasing tide, watching a singular piece of seaweed being carried by the water. As it was caught by the current, it flipped and danced becoming abstracted in my eyes, forming only shapes and colours. To capture this memory, I broke it down into a series of layered shapes, considering each colour as they formed, this process created the painting on page 74. This painting is in response to a physical object - the seaweed - in a process - flowing in the water - yet I wanted to ensure that I did not begin to paint something that is a direct visual representation of the physical object. As the painting progressed, I found that each shape not only responded to the memory but also responded to the previous shape, adapting to create something that visually flowed and worked together aesthetically as well as in the context of the walking experience. The colours used are based from those I noted down in my field journal when observing the changes that the seaweed undertook in varying light and tide. Darkest colour to lightest was an aesthetic choice as through the process I came to a realisation that the experience was pleasant to me and that the painted response needed to be visually pleasant for the next viewer who experiences it. Due to responding to the experience of observing a physical entity, when transforming it through painting it came to a point in which the process began to feel restricted, the seaweed and its shapes were stuck in my head and I could not see past its forms. The lighter green that cuts across the entire painting reflects how the sun burst through the cloud, but it was also a battle within myself to ensure that I continued to transform a memory, and not paint a piece of seaweed on the paper. The lightest colour applied marked the completion of the painting. Being the first painting within the process, page 74 felt like the beginning of a journey of discovery for the painting 'walk' ahead. Reflecting on the process of making this piece, I felt that I needed to concentrate more on the experience – what I thought, felt, and observed – rather than just the observation of what I could see in front of me, I believed that this would allow me to understand my experience of the walk in a more coherent way and how it transforms through painting – rather than how an object is transformed through painting.

Following on from my exploration into the memory of seaweed floating in the shallow tide on page 74, I reflected on what I had learnt and decided upon making visual an experience that combined both observation and my body directly affecting the landscape, resulting in the painting on page 75. Visually, the experience of the movement of my foot causing the water to ripple transformed into a series of connected, elongated shapes almost reminiscent of the sea plants themselves. I did not physically observe strong colour when in the moment, yet, as I processed the experience through the paintbrush, it became apparent that it needed to be vibrant – documenting how the presence of my body disrupted and changed the environment it was within. The long flowing forms layered over each other create an almost three-dimensional experience, the eye starting with the vivid lime green in the foreground and moving further and further back through the

colours. It gives the impression of movement, wind hitting the surface of water – reminding me of how the sea air stung my face. This painting, on page 75, felt as if it required more physical effort than page 74, as to build up the vibrancy of colour meant multiple coats of paint were required. Upon considering this in relation to the previously discussed idea of not only responding to the experience but responding to the previous shape, it could perhaps be thought that I am adapting to the process and experience of the painting – the finished piece combining two levels of experience, the recollected memory and the experience of the process. As I progressed through this piece, I found the memory shifting and changing with the painting, as if the painting was unlocking further information that I could not recall through thinking alone. I spent longer on the process within the studio for this piece which I feel has produced a more coherent, thought out painting – allowing time to ponder upon the next step, and really consider what I knew about what I was putting onto the paper. Unlike page 74, I wanted to attempt to make the emotions that occurred on the physical walk a visual entity, to grasp how they interact with the physical observations. The swirling forms layered upon the flowing shapes came from feelings uncovered that had been momentarily forgotten. The visual combination shows a contrast between hardened, pointed forms with softer more ethereal elements. The stronger, bolder coloured aspects being a response to something physical, the seaweed within the rockpool, and the lighter soft edged shapes seeming to float around the piece being the shift between excitement, apprehension and confusion. This piece prompted me to consider how I would give pure emotion and feeling visual form, and what that would become.

Emotion and feeling are something not thought of as visual, they are an abstract concept that are known by all but cannot really be given a physical form. During the walk in Scarborough, I experienced many different visible cues, observed objects in space and my surroundings. Yet while the physical observations occurred, there were also invisible observations: how the salty sea air hit my skin causing it to sting, how the muscles in my legs burned and throbbed as I dragged them across the damp sand. The painting on page 76 is the transformation of the invisible emotion into something tangible. This is a response to how I felt at the very end of the walk where I had been battered by the elements for nearly two hours. Compared to the other paintings within this series, page 76 has a very muted colour palette, varying tones of the colour blue swirling around one another and almost intertwining amongst themselves. The more subdued colour range is my own interpretation of the feeling of complete fatigue, vision becoming almost blurred and narrowed giving way to physical colours not being experienced in the same way as that of a person with full energy. Compared with page 75, page 76 is made up primarily of softer, flowing shapes – these shapes seem to form almost instinctively as I think about that moment in the walk. Layering shapes creates an almost chaotic feel, being a response to how tiredness affected my vision making it seem fuzzy and delayed. The sharp orange flash across the sea of blue is a reminder of the pain in which I was feeling in my back at the time of walking. I pondered for a while how I could make visual the feeling of pain, the way in which there was a sharp stabbing feeling within the bottom of my spine, shooting both up my back and down my legs slowing my pace across

the sand. I settled upon sprawling, sharper orange shapes creeping across the surface trying to overwhelm the painting and become the central focus. The extreme contrast of colour, in a way, becoming visual pain to the viewer – the vivid colour assaulting the eyes on viewing it and being the most dominant form upon first glance. During this particular experience of the walk, not only was I feeling fatigue but I was also feeling cold to the very core. Blue is an obvious colour choice to represent being cold, yet thinking back to the surroundings I observed, there was a very blue tinge to a lot of the environment around me. Visually, to someone who did not experience exactly the conditions that I am responding to, I would perhaps think they would relate it to the sea due to the colouration and shapes used however for me personally, the physical process of layering each shape – instinctively forming them from remembered emotion – has captured the moment in a way I don't believe any other media could have accomplished.

Considering the paintings made in response to the walk, I began to create further ceramic responses. Using the hand-building method of coiling, I formed undulating, abstract shaped vessels that, on reflection, are actually responses to shapes remembered within my paintings rather than the memory of the physical act of walking in Scarborough. These vessels are an indirect response to my experiences of walking, and are one step to creating a completely new experience. The ceramics are adorned with painted forms that are from those in my paintings, for example the ceramic on page 82 has shapes that are inspired by those in the painting on page 75. Ceramics, as a process, are both freedom and restriction – I was able to create whatever form I wanted in clay yet it was the kiln that determined whether it would survive its fire or not or what colour the underglaze would become. The ceramic on page 84 was formed from a combination of different paintings within the series, harsh shapes prompt memories of uncomfortable feelings such as pain, aching, exhaustion etc., and page 84 is the transformation of this into three-dimensional form, deep cuts in the softer, flowing surface give a sharper edge. The ceramics on page 82 and page 88 became an exploration into scale, with page 82 becoming larger, more dramatic in form in comparison to the much smaller compact aspect of page 88. This exploration into scale allowed for thoughts around the scale of memory and how it transfers into the physical. Page 82 and page 88 are very similar in shape yet they look very different, not only due to size and colour, but also due to the notion of the handmade. Each ceramic sculpture was made at a different time under the same conditions yet the way in which the clay eventually fell was dependent upon how I manoeuvred each coil, the texture of the clay and how the form set upon drying. In regards to moving towards sculpture as a means of responding to recollected experience, I do not feel that it is a replacement for the paintings produced, it is, to me, an expanded painted practice where the ceramics become paintings in themselves.

Upon completion of this series of work, I decided upon titling it as a whole. As the works are a collective response to an ongoing experience and walk, the series became *A Walk in Scarborough*. This series was exhibited in the group exhibition, *Situating Practices* (Booth, 2019) in which postgraduate researchers from

around the country were selected to exhibit their work in the Market Gallery in Huddersfield. The exhibition was curated by Claire Booth and sought 'to engage in a dialogue about what it means to do research in, with and through practice' (Booth, 2019), forcing me to really consider my research and why I use painting as a means of exploring my remembered experience of walking as I determined how the works would be displayed within the exhibition. This was the first time *A Walk in Scarborough* (Figure 8) as a series had been curated within a formal gallery setting – both paintings and ceramic sculptures. The process of curating the work, determining which order the paintings would be hung on the wall, started as a personal journey chronologically through my own memory of the walk, yet it became apparent that this way of displaying was not visually stimulating and did not seem to tie together. I was curating it in a way that was personal to me, yet this very personal experience was about to be publicly displayed, viewed and observed by people who had no knowledge of the original experience, so this was something that needed to be considered. The experience of the initial walk in Scarborough transformed firstly by memory and secondly through painting, transformed again in the gallery space to create a whole new phenomenological experience. The ceramics situated on plinths were spread across the gallery floor allowing for them to be walked around, creating a journey through the works – almost reminiscent of a walk in itself. The paintings were displayed in a way which flowed through colour and form, each seeming to link to the next visually and walking the eye across each piece. Reflecting upon this, seeing the work within an exhibition setting under the overarching title of *A Walk in Scarborough*, revealed aspects of the work which I had not considered while making it. Due to only providing the prompt of the title of the work, and a small statement detailing what the work is about, it became something else to a new viewer, the shapes and colours prompting a memory and emotion personal to them – entirely different from the one in which formed it originally. Considering now the shapes used within the paintings in this series, it is apparent that they are associated with the sea – even though they are abstracted - meaning that the viewer is already prompted with the sort of conditions the original walk was undertaken in. An example of this would be the ceramic on page 82 with its overall form suggesting undulating waves or the curves of rocks eroded by the sea. Both of the name of the series and the coastal nature of the shapes formed communicated to the viewer the kind of experiences that occurred.

Overall, the exploration into the walk I undertook in Scarborough was formed in two separate parts. An initial text in the form of the narrative of my walk, detailing aspects prompted by my field journal but also aspects that were remembered as the writing began to flow into a structured documentation of each stage. This narrative discussed both visual observations but also emotions that occurred and the way in which these phenomena effected the way I perceived and remembered my time walking this coastal landscape. Writing at length about my walk allowed for more in depth exploration in the studio, as the recollected experience had become something somewhat physical – in the form of words – which made the transformation into visual form become easier. Creating the series, *A Walk in Scarborough* established an outlet to understand my relationship to the coastline – somewhere which I do not often tread – in a way that prompted thinking



FIGURE 8 - AUTHORS OWN IMAGE. 'A WALK IN SCARBOROUGH' IN SITUATING PRACTICES (2019)

through process allowing memories to unfold. Considering my emotions as well as physical visual observations seemed to uncover an intriguing dialogue in the form of shapes and colours, with them seeming to cause tension or harmony within the paintings – for example the extreme contrast of colour in the painting on page 76. Contrasting this with the walk in Malham, I created less paintings in response to Scarborough – eight (plus four ceramics) as opposed to fourteen (plus two ceramics). On reflection, I believe this could be in relation to the length of the walk, with Scarborough’s walk taking nearly half the time, but also potentially the lack in variety of emotions and experiences. Malham’s topography is incredibly diverse, meaning that as the landscape is traversed, so are a number of different terrains, whereas the topography of Scarborough remains very similar throughout the whole walk. This lack of differing visual stimuli, I believe, provided less phenomenological stimuli resulting in less production within the studio. As previously discussed, the walk is personal to me as only I experienced it, yet the process within my studio creating the paintings and ceramics can also be thought of as very personal as I am mostly alone when these works take form. Considering this idea of being alone in the process, wrapped up within my own thoughts, observations and experiences, the very public *Situating Practices* exhibition, at first, felt as if my memories were being infiltrated – intimate, personal object of recollected experience being scrutinised by a viewer who did not experience it as I did, however this is not the case. The inclusion of my work within this exhibition uncovered the idea that, yes, these were objects of my memory and only I would truly understand the meaning and ideas behind them yet due to the abstract, biomorphic nature of the shapes, they also prompt memories for others who have walked South Bay Beach in Scarborough or any other coastal landscape in England. In conclusion, the process of *A Walk in Scarborough* allowed me to begin understanding how memory abstracts and distorts original experience, and how the landscape transforms through the process of walking. Both of these ideas prompted me to carry out the same method again but applied to a differing English pastoral landscape to see what an alteration of initial site would produce at the end of my studio working processes and what further I could discover about memory and the experience of nature.

A WALK ON MARSDEN MOOR

WESSENDEN HEAD, MARSDEN MOOR, SUNDAY 21ST JULY 2019

To my right is a battered wooden sign, weather-worn by the continual wind that blasts the moor on a daily basis. Written on this sign is 'Pennine Way'. A small shiver of excitement passes through my spine like a wave – I am about to embark on a small section of one of the most arduous and hazardous walks in the UK. The path ahead is made of stone and gravel, a clear walkway yet difficult terrain to traverse. The moor is notorious for being windy but I did not expect the ongoing assault battering my body from all sides and screaming in my ears. The wind carries noise from miles away. Distant traffic feels like it is right behind me, crashing past at breakneck speed, then it is gone. I am not used to being at such altitude and the physical effects of this is lasting for a while. I feel like I am in a bubble, as if I am observing the world around me from a distant place - a different dimension – dissociated from my physical body on the moor. Everything is becoming very abstracted, delayed sensory experiences set me a little on edge as buried fight or flight instincts surface. I continue down the rocky path, tensing the muscles in my jaw to try to clear the clicking and bubbling within my ears – a technique learnt from air travel – until I start to feel present within the landscape again.

Either side of the path is littered with a multitude of different weeds and wild flowers swaying and dancing in the wind. Vibrant purple thistles grow taller than I have ever seen before, large spines covering the entire surface of its stem with enlarged flowers erupting from the violent looking buds that sit upon them. These extra-terrestrial forms can be seen growing across the rest of the moor, some clustered together in ominous groups, some out on their own braving the elements that wish to destroy them. The view surrounding me is complete and utter nature, as far as the eye can see are rolling moors, the sun catching distant hills causing their botanical surface to illuminate in vibrant colours. I stand for a few moments just taking in the view, thinking about the walk ahead. This moment of contemplation makes me more aware of my breathing, noticing how the air feels so much clearer and colder in my lungs yet deeper breaths are needed to counteract the thinner atmosphere the height causes.

The rocky path snakes down the valley ahead and I follow its meandering direction. The combination of loose rocks and a slight decline results in difficulty in walking, my boots slipping from underneath me causing moments of unbalance; panic in the pit of my stomach at the prospect of falling. Distant traffic noise fades away, the sounds of nature overtaking it. Strong wind catches the long grass, the friction of its movement on the stems creating an orchestral symphony serenading the wildlife that now appears from hiding. A large dragonfly drifts past on the breeze, flashes of vivid hot pink settle in my eyes as its wings break through the atmosphere. It rests on a plant nearby, the pink of its wings now hidden tight against its body. One thing that

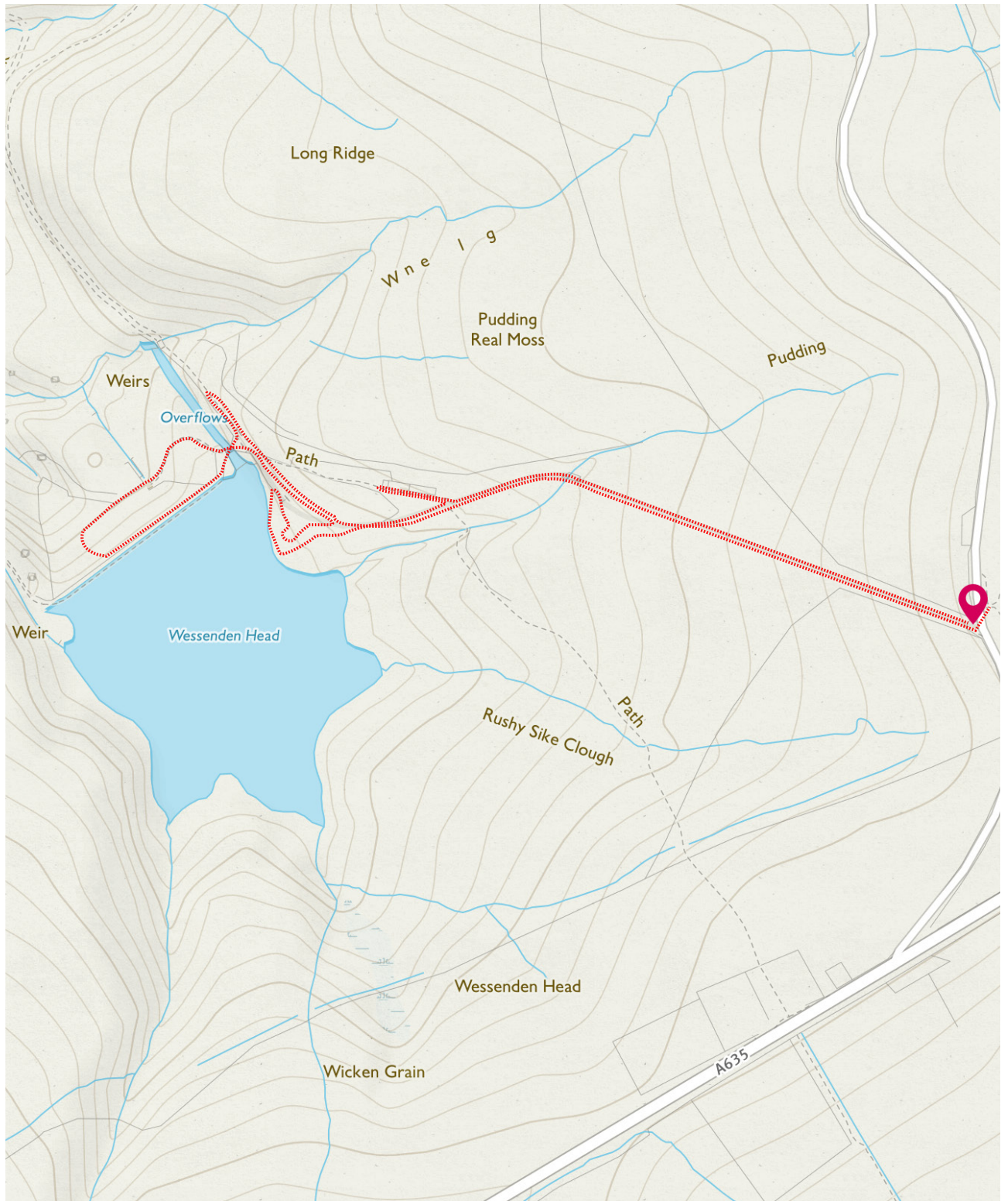


FIGURE 9 - MAP OF WESSENDEN HEAD, MARSDEN MOOR, WITH ROUTE WALKED (ORDNANCE SURVEY, 2019)

stands out to me, as I observe the surroundings, is that most of the plants that thrive on the moor have a purple hue. The colour is increasingly intense as the varying hues reveal themselves to me. I ponder for a while, watching the lilacs, magentas and mauve swirl and twirl amongst themselves, why is it that they are all varying shades of the same colour? Is it due to the mineral content in the soil? It intrigues me.

The sun erupts from a break in the clouds above, illuminating me in a spotlight of intense light and heat. The way it bursts through the clouds feels almost biblical, as if I am being bathed in some sort of moorland enlightenment. Accompanying the rays of light is an immense wave of heat, prickling the skin of my face, a welcome warmth in the harsh wind, then it disappears. On the bracing wind flies multiple cyclists, breaking up the serene nature with the loud, crushing sound of tyres on ground. I move quickly to one side as one of them storms past me, becoming dust in the distance in seconds. I decide to try and move off the designated path as I feel in the way, my eye drawn to a section of exposed soil leading to a grass incline, no determined path yet a clear route leading on into the moor – compressed grass by previous walkers. I step up the grass verge, feeling steadier on my feet than on the rocky path and stumble upon a concrete platform nestled amongst the weeds, what is it?

Mustard coloured lichen litter the top of the concrete platform, contrasting vibrant colour with dull grey. Standing upon it, I can see clearly for miles. Different hills cut across the landscape, forming abstract shapes, a distorted view of Marsden Moor. Ominous dark clouds loom to the left, still far enough away to seem unthreatening yet clearly holding torrential weather within their slow-moving exterior. I sit down on the stone surface, the view reducing to the immediate surroundings. Foxgloves stand tall amongst the sea of green, growing as large as small trees, the second tallest plant that seems to grow on the moor to the thistles. I open my field journal and start to trace their shapes, overlapping circles distinguish flowers from stems, splashes of orange and yellow creep in from the lichen in my foreground. Sitting still makes me more aware of how the bleak weather is affecting my body. My ears are numb yet achy, even without a mirror I can feel that they probably are red in appearance. Eyes filling with water as I struggle to blink. Fighting to see through my watery eyes, I realise that straight ahead is a large reservoir, hidden behind a large overgrown bank of weeds. I stand up to get a better look then jump down from the concrete, the ground below absorbing the impact from my knees.

There is no obvious way to reach the bank of the reservoir, so I decide to create my own path. Stepping into the long grass, I take it slowly, planning my route to ensure I minimise the risk of injury. The ground beneath my feet is soft and spongy, absorbing my boot with each step. This absorption makes moving down the hill towards the reservoir easier, as natural steps form under my weight. I get to a point where the hill is incredibly steep so I sit down amongst the plants to take a moment to consider how I can get down to the water. I am hidden in this spot, a perfect vantage point for observing passing people and wildlife without

them seeing me. The sky is grey yet incredibly bright, creating a strange sensation within my eyes similar to that of a camera flash. White shapes appear in front of me, and remain when I blink. Everything seems fuzzy and slightly blurry, bright yet dull, vivid yet faded. This kind of light sensitivity is causing a slight sense of disorientation and I am unsteady as I stand to continue towards the reservoir, boots slipping on the dewy grass. Placing my field journal within my bag to ensure I do not drop it, I take a breath – arms straight out at either side to gather as much balance as I can – and descend the uneven terrain to the water.

The sound of gentle flowing water fills the air as I wander along the shore, carefully placing one foot in front of the other to avoid standing on any small water plants that peek up from the sand below. The closer I get to the walls of the reservoir, the damper the ground becomes; my boots squelching as the sand turns to mud. Thick and viscous, it starts to swallow up my boots, each step becoming harder onto the next. I look for the nearest bit of dry land, something that will save me from being imminently engulfed by mud. The stone wall of the reservoir has a bank of weeds that looks as if it has a way out at the top. Using the wall to stabilise myself, I peel through the weeds, carefully pulling leaves and stems out of my way, making progress towards the summit. I reach the halfway point when an obstruction stops me in my tracks, a thistle that is at least 5'11 looming over me. Menacing spikes taunting me, daring me to try to squeeze past it. I use my denim jacket to try to push the nearest stem away from me, but in doing this it causes a much higher stem to move closer, grazing across my shoulder. I later find that it has cut my skin, an etched line of dried blood as a memento of my walk on the moor. After putting up a fight for a few minutes, I turn on my heels and retreat back the way I came, back into the thick mud. As I gently step, I notice a small frog in the undergrowth, its bulbous eyes staring back at me trying to work out if I am friend or foe.

I discover the route that brought me down to the reservoir, the clue being the flattened plants crushed down to the ground forming a path for me to follow. Letting my palms graze over the tops of the plants that line the way, their flowers cause a tickling sensation on my palms half pleasant, half uncomfortable. By the time I reach the rocky path once more, it has become an intense itch that requires me to stop for a moment to scratch the sensation away – making the skin on my palms momentarily flush with redness. Continuing on, I notice that the path splits ahead, a larger portion ploughs on forwards into the wilderness, but a much smaller path leads left which I choose to follow. This much smaller path is in fact a dead-end, home to only a bench in the middle of a weed-crowded clearing. I sit down upon it, feeling the weight lift from my knees. Taking a few deep breaths – the air much thinner up on the moor – I see just how quickly the clouds above are moving, speeding across the sky. I can see that in certain areas the cloud cover is more dense, darker hills in the distance being battered by oncoming rain, fully aware that with the current wind direction, the apocalyptic looking clouds will be overhead in no time. Looking down at my boots, battle scarred with mud, leaves peeking out from under the sole. I realise that my socks have fallen down in them, the heel now under

my foot resulting in my skin starting to nip against the hard fabric at the back, not yet a blister but certainly the start of one.

From my vantage point on the bench, I am able to see a perfect looking wooden gate nearby. I can see no path beyond it but from the way in which the plants are short and flattened it is obvious that the grass has been walked on before, or even perhaps driven on. Standing up is difficult, muscles seize up from stopping for a moment. In order to reach the path, I have to pass through a battered metal gate first. This leads me onto a perfect route that will take me across the top of the reservoir, but I do not want to go that way. Finding the latch to open the wooden gate, it dawns on me that perhaps I am not supposed to be walking this way, with the thought that perhaps this belongs to Yorkshire Water rather than the people and that any moment I will be carted off for trespassing. Part of me wants to turn back, but part of me feels compelled to carry on – a sense of excitement bubbling up at the thought of not being allowed to be there. Beyond the gate leads into a valley, sheltered from the more violent wind on the open moor causing eerie silence; the world moving around me yet no noise emanating from anywhere. The whole valley opens up as I reach a small old stone outbuilding whose true function is unknown to me. Reaching the edge of a very large sheer drop, I look out across miles and miles of moorland. I can see a body of water straight ahead, framed either side by hills of vivid green creating a funnel for the eye. Observing more closely, I spot a small house slightly hidden behind a cluster of trees, the only visible civilisation around. I feel completely and utterly alone, secluded on my own private piece of moor surrounded by a sea of burgundy, mauve, red-wine, deep purples and lilacs. Turning away from the edge, my back to the looming drop into the abyss, the plants sway in the gentler breeze, as if a pebble has been dropped into water sending ripples across its surface. It is a steep hill back up to where I originally entered at the gate, the sheer bank of weeds like a tidal wave ready to crash over my head. A fence lines the top of this hill, standing out in the increasingly darkening sky. I continue walking at the flattest point, studying the fence for a gap or new gate leading me out of my solidarity. There is none.

Determining that there is no second exit and with tiredness increasing, I decide not to return the way I came but to tackle the hill head on, unsure what consequences I may face when reaching the obstruction of the fence at the top. Leaning forwards to keep my balance, I set off at a pace to propel my weight up the hill, feet gripping onto the soft peaty ground, arms swinging vigorously forward and backwards to keep balance. Halfway up I begin to flag, the muscles in my thighs screaming for me to stop, sweat starts to seep from my pores. The fatigue begins to affect my stride, I lose balance and seem to zig-zag up the hill rather than walk straight. All this time I am only seeing the ground, too much physical effort to look up at the direction I am going – hoping I am still on target. Just as I am about to give up, everything aching and my heart thumping loudly in my ears, I reach the fence. Thin wire separates me from the perfect concrete reservoir path I saw previously. Carefully pushing the top wire down, I lift one leg over to reach the other side followed by the other – a dog runs past followed closely by its owner – I am back in relative civilisation.



FIGURE 10 - AUTHORS OWN IMAGE. WALKING POINT OF VIEW, WESSENDEN HEAD, MARSDEN MOOR

Thick, dark clouds grow overhead. Deep navy and royal blue bleeds into a grey that is almost black, the same weather that has been miles away no more than 20 minutes ago. A slight shift in cloud allows a small beam of sunlight to illuminate the way, the route back to the road where I originally entered the moor. Looking at the ever-ominous weather that is approaching, threatening to cause chaos where I am walking, I take this illuminated path as a sign it is time to retreat back to the safety of my parked car. The looming unknown sets me on edge, anxiety bubbling up within me, starting from my feet and flowing up through my body causing me to quicken my pace – hidden instincts indicating that danger is coming. Continuing on the path back to safety, a deep rumbling sound halts me in my tracks. The sound is guttural, the ground feeling like it is shaking with the vibrations of its frequency. I scan my surroundings – nothing on the moor – then I look up. A large passenger plane comes into view from behind a cloud, low enough to make out the colours of the airline in which operates the flight. ‘It must be about to land at Manchester’ I think to myself, remembering the multiple times I have flown over the moors when returning from a holiday in a much hotter climate. The plane disappears but the noise which accompanies it lasts well after it has gone, slowly reducing in volume, carrying on the wind for the next destination to experience it.

A storm is coming. The humidity reaches peak levels as I power up the rocky incline back to the road. I walk faster and faster, body temperature increasing with every step. The uneven surface of the path causes my boots to slip, ankles rolling and sliding sending shooting pains up my legs to my hips. Each step becomes increasingly more uncomfortable, the pain creeping into the bottom of my back, a hot heat rising in my muscles as they tense with the incline. The steady hill feels as if it is going on forever, eyes to the floor I take a peep every now and then to see if the end is any closer. I reach breaking point where I have to stop. Sweat beading on my forehead, I breath in deeply, gasping for air to cool me down. In the distance cars charge past on the very top of the moor, looking like small toys being pushed along a green shelf. The road noise grows louder which spurs me on to start walking again, motivating myself to believe that it is nearly over. I did not realise earlier but I dropped a vivid yellow pen from my bag, only discovering it as I see it lying by the side of the path slightly dusty but still in one piece, surviving the threat of cyclist’s wheels. Finally, I reach the gate which leads from the moor to the road, stumbling onto the tarmac like I have been lost for weeks or even months. I noticed before the walk that there were flowers and teddy bears attached to a fence very close to where I have parked, looking incredibly old and weather worn with the flowers passing their best a long time before I set eyes on them. Upon seeing it when I first set off, I presumed that they were there in respect to someone who lost their life in a car accident, however when I take a closer look at the end of my walk I realise it is actually a shrine to Keith Bennett, one of the children murdered and supposedly buried on the moor by Moors Murderer, Ian Brady. I look out over the expanse of moor and a tinge of sadness hits me. My mood changes upon learning this new information, with my walk ending just before 12pm in a very sombre state.

MARSDEN MOOR IN THE STUDIO

In contrast to the two previously discussed walks, the walk at Wessenden Head subjected me to more extremes of weather than both of the other locations put together, resulting in stronger emotions occurring along the journey. These emotions, in some way, mirrored those which occurred in Malham, the aching muscles, exhaustion etc., however the weather in Malham was brilliant sunshine with the colours around me being activated by its light, which reflected in the studio. In the case of Marsden Moor, this colour-activating sunlight was hidden behind a thick layer of ominous looking clouds, so upon returning to the studio I was unsure as to what the shapes I had discovered from my two previous series in the studio would develop into under this more subtle, dull memory. The moor's topography was very similar, prompting feelings of barrenness, yet after walking through it, it was apparent that there was an abundance of plant life thriving within this 'barren' landscape. Thinking back to the written narrative of the walk over Marsden Moor, there was a discussion of a physical tribute, in the form of flowers and teddy bears, highlighting the sinister history of the landscape and its links to the moor's murders. When considering this after the walk and back in the studio, the atmosphere in which the memory was sited changed and felt different to the previous case studies. There was a feeling of uneasiness to the memory in the studio, an internal conflict of thoughts of the beauty in the landscape clashing with the knowledge of its terrible historical context. I felt like I had to consider this walk for longer in the studio before beginning to paint, thinking about how I wished to frame the memory and the way in which I wanted to develop the process of remembering through this experience. I decided not to focus on the history of the landscape, as I wanted to understand my relationship to the place at that present moment through walking, but it was a factor that stayed at the back of my mind in the studio.

During the walk on the moor, unlike during the walk in Scarborough or Malham, I took time to sit within the landscape, being absorbed by the life that inhabited it. The painting on page 121 encapsulates the memory of being sat surrounded by plants that seemed to tower over me. As previously discussed in relation to the paintings created from my walk in Malham, I found a pattern of shapes once again within the studio that seemed to allow the memories to form more quickly and coherently. The clusters of circles, upon reflection, are inspired by the tall cone like forms of the foxgloves that surrounded me, partially blocking my view. In complete contrast to the other paintings discussed in the past chapters, I naturally seemed to gravitate towards colours which were more subdued, forming a coherent colour palette yet not being as bold as my previous paintings. There were still flashes of colours which appeared during my walk, yet overall the tones were muted, and this toning down of colour, in the context of the walk, seemed to give greater insight into my memories than if I were to have chosen very saturated colours. I believe this was mostly due to the weather on the day, being very overcast and grey, so the light that cascaded down onto the land below did not have the same activating power as pure sunlight. A combination of shapes makes up page 121 and these clusters of forms give a sense of being hidden and protected, the aesthetic softness of the flowing lines gives

a sense of gentle movement as if the piece is swaying. Strong lines were included within the painting as a means of visually breaking through the forms. Initially in the studio I was not going to include these due to trying to hold onto this sense of softness, yet each layer of colour seemed to be lost on each other. Learning from previous paintings, I felt it needed something to break through this, cutting through the shapes without detracting from the rest. During the actual moment of the walk, the wind was strong and howling within my ears, battering the leaves of the plants yet their visible movement did not reflect the sound emanating from them, a contrast of strength and fragility. Page 121 felt like a development from my previous paintings due to its clear visual difference. It allowed me to gain an understanding of how the memory of the landscape is not reliant upon overly-saturated colours, and how this painting feels as though it holds the serenity in which I was feeling at the time, housing a peacefulness within it.

A key observation that I noted regarding the overall landscape of Marsden Moor was that, seemingly, all the plants thriving had a purple tinge to them. This sea of purple was visible for miles in varying different shades and hues, rippling and changing with the direction of the wind. I remember questioning the reason why this was the most prominent colour for miles and it stuck within my mind. Upon returning to the studio, I felt an inner urge to paint something which encapsulated this unusual visual phenomenon. The painting on page 126 developed from this memory. An important aspect of this particular experience was the way in which the wind caused the purple to flourish and change, resulting in the painting being visually busy with many differing shapes that twirl and intertwine with each other. Some of the shapes became elongated in the studio process, responding to my surprise at the moorland plants seeming to be much larger than any plants I had experienced. These large forms loomed overhead, overwhelming the space and I feel this sense of overwhelming occurs within page 126 as sharp shapes cut across sinuous lines and strong colour slices through pale. Initially, before starting my working process, I had envisaged this painting consisting of only shades of purple, however upon moving through the stages of colours and shapes I established that other colours were needed to amplify the purple and pull the painting together. Lines of green, much like those in the painting on page 121, cut across the top right of the painting yet in contrast to the preceding work these do not act as a means of visual disruption, they seem to link the other forms together subtly in the background. Flowing shapes in clusters litter the foreground, as if they are floating around each other. These shapes, when forming within the studio, seem to harness both the memory of the swirling wind carrying both sound and movement but also the flow of the paintbrush across the paper, guided by intuition and remembered experiences of paintings past. Much like page 121, even when working with a set colour, page 126 is still very much more subdued to the eye. I feel that this painting takes longer to unfold than those painted in Malham, much like the moor itself. Different layers reveal themselves the longer it is looked at, small circular forms flowing across the paper, as the small details did upon Wessenden Head; a dragon fly with wings of hot pink flittering across my eyeline.

When walking on the moor, as discussed in the written narrative section of this chapter, there was a moment in which the clouds parted and the sun shone down seemingly onto the very spot I stood. I remember feeling almost ethereal, a strange sense of fate that I just happened to be stood where this occurred. The painting on page 125 emerged from this obscure, almost biblical experience. This painting stands out amongst the rest of the series of works in which were created in response to this walk. It has a strong sense of symmetry with the eye being drawn to the very centre where an acid green line snakes across the paper. The lines within page 125 are strong and command the eye to follow them, overpowering and hard to see past, much like the sun when it burst through the clouds over the moor. When viewed together within the studio as a series, this painting bursts from the group, the memory being vivid within my mind as I look at it. Thinking back to the discussion of 'the idea that painting possesses intellectual faculties and is even capable of thinking for itself' (2018, p.43), I felt this painting harnessed this notion the most during its creation. The lines seemed to form from the paintbrush itself rather than from my arm guiding it, each shape seemingly conversing with the next in a constant dialogue. I believe that this idea of page 125 'painting itself' is not only down to the experience of production as previously discussed but also down to the symmetry of the piece. One half of the painting guided the other half, forming something in which could not become without the other. The smaller forms in which surround the top right and bottom left corners give a sense of excitement and anticipation, seeming to swirl and buzz around the more substantial stationary shapes. This, on reflection, links back to the experience I had when stood at this precise moment. The sun burst through the clouds yet the wind was still strong, battering my body and causing shapes to appear in my peripheral vision, almost silhouettes due to the intense light affecting my eyes. Overall, page 125 encompasses both a remembered visual observations and feelings that occurred within the moment. A combination of the two brought together into a singular, visual form in which prompts further experience as more time passes from the initial memory. Due to the aesthetic nature of the work, I believe that this etherealness and almost powerfulness continues to develop in the work; the original experience always being saturated within it.

Within the past two chapters, the ceramics that formed from the paintings were singular vessels adorned with biomorphic abstract shapes, however upon completing the paintings in response to the moor it prompted me to push this further and try to form singular ceramics that contain more than one vessel. The ceramic on page 130 developed from a sense of intrigue, remembering how there was always a feeling of uncertainty as I was walking across the moor. The undulating forms reflect the way in which the distant landscape cut across my vision creating shapes and lines in my eyeline. The underglaze upon this ceramic is not as detailed as that of my paintings, with the entire piece being completely painted within two hours, yet this provides the work with a sense of urgency. The marks of the brush are clearly present, looking as if they have been quickly passed over the surface, the artist presence very visible in every aspect. The element of rushing to complete the piece, and the urgency of the brushstrokes, upon reflection, link back to the discussed element of underlying panic at the latter stages of the walk when the weather began to loom

overhead and my buried instincts erupted from me willing me to leave as quickly as possible. The two vessels seem as if in a conversation with each other, the smaller curved closely to the larger feeling as one yet also separate. I continued to develop this idea of multiple vessels within one ceramic and produced the piece on page 132 which is made up of three varying in size vessels. The physical making of this piece was challenging, trying to layer three separate forms in close proximity to each other without touching each other or trapping air within the clay – which would result in an explosion in the kiln – gave a strong element of anxiety to the piece. This piece in particular highlighted the emotions that occur during the process of ceramics. Uncertainty, anxiety, frustration, contentment, nervousness and finally elation. The emotional memory of ceramics seems to correspond with the emotional memory of walking, with each of these feelings listed being present within not only the walk on the moor but the two previously discussed walks also. I feel, considering all the ceramics previously discussed, that there is a clear development in not only technique but consideration of what informs the works. The ceramics inspired by my walk on the moor seem to have a sense of coherency to them, becoming a collection rather than just individual entities. They respond to each other and, as a collection, seem to strengthen the memory of the walk, prompting a more rapid recalling of experience.

The walk at Wessenden Head, across windy moorland with a dull, cloudy sky overhead, was in complete contrast to that of the walks in Scarborough and Malham. The works created in the studio in response to the memory of this walk consider both visual observations and observations of emotion that occurred along the way. Each painting has an underlying sense of emotion that underpins every brushstroke and shape formed, radiating feelings of unease, intrigue and contemplation. It is noted that, due to the difference in weather conditions at the time of the walk, the paintings have directly responded to this with subtler colour palettes being chosen and their placing within the overall painting being more carefully considered. In my opinion, the work made in response to the moor feels even more refined than that of the two previous walks and I believe this is due to remembering the past experiences, both within the landscape and the studio, which allowed this series of paintings to become more informed, subconscious memories of process guiding me. This series of paintings, unlike the two previous series, was not publicly exhibited but viewing them within an exhibition context, I feel, is not important. This is due to the knowledge learnt from the two previous exhibitions held, where it was understood that these paintings could prompt memories personal to the viewer – even without reference to the true meaning of each painting – due to both the subconscious abstract shapes which relate to an aspect of the physical landscape prompting feelings of familiarity, especially in relation to the context of the exhibition, *A Walk in Malham* and *A Walk in Scarborough*, and the colours used, but also how the complete painting relates to the field journal at the start of the process. Overall, the paintings in response to my memory of the moor feel like the most personal out of all the paintings I have created. This is perhaps due to the landscape in which the walk was undertaken, and the upsetting history of that site, creating an emotionally charged setting before the walk even began. *A Walk*

on Marsden Moor as a series, has provided further understanding of how the memory of a walk can inform the process of painting, but it has also given a clearer view of the way in which the conditions of the original experience can alter and change the perspective, and choices made, within the studio, thus forming works which can be clearly identifiable as a response to a specific walked landscape on a specific day in my past.

CONCLUSION

At the start of this journey, it was the intention to explore the relationship between the landscape and memory, understanding this through the methods of walking and painting. This was realised through undertaking three case studies, the first in Scarborough, the second in Malham and the final on Marsden Moor. Each case study was made up of a walk through these environments, documented by notes and sketches within a field journal which were then referred to when back in the studio. Each case study was structured the same way, a walk was undertaken, a written narrative was formed post-walk from memory and the field journal, both of these aspects were then utilised within the studio to form paintings. It is clear, after completing all the case studies, that memory gives an understanding of one's relationship to the landscape through capturing observations and allowing for recall of experience, yet a key aspect of these particular memories was the emotional response to the walks that occurred which seemed to continually develop to become an important part of each painting made during the process within the studio. These emotional memories occurred within two sites, the site of the walk and within the studio, resulting in the final outcome being an intuitive product of complex memory created by the methodology used in response to a specific natural location.

Considering the previously discussed work of the artists Hamish Fulton and Richard Long, and their choice of photography as a means of documenting the memory, experience and emotion of the walks they undertook, the findings within this thesis challenge photography as being the superior way of harnessing indexicality, and more specifically being the best means of capturing the emotional memory of a walk in nature. The process of painting required time to reach completion prompting consideration of each element, adapting to each brushstroke and shape created, to reach the final painting. It was found that the physical effort exerted within the walk in the landscape seemed to correspond with the effort required to build and finalise a painting, resulting in an agreement with Isabelle Graw's statement of the 'painted picture foster[ing] the notion that its singular author is somewhat contained within it' (2018, p.144). Personal time, effort, emotion and thought are captured within each painting, with each brushstroke telling of the artist-author behind it. Photography, in the work of Fulton and Long, does not seem to have this same intensity of authorship within it, possibly due to the small effort needed to create the work – one click of a shutter and the memory is captured to be printed and exhibited. The nature of photography is the ability to capture the closest direct representation of what the eye sees as possible, resulting in the work of Fulton being a direct visual representation of where he walked giving a specific location for memories to be prompted from. Unlike photography, it was argued that painting is able to capture and prompt memory in a more successful way through not only harnessing the artist within it, but also through the utilisation of biomorphic shapes – such as that of Jean Arp – which are 'uncannily familiar' with 'people recogniz[ing] them and connect[ing] with them on a primal level, though they have never seen them before' (Barcio, 2016). It was found that painting

was able to harness and express memory through abstraction, documenting the emotional response that is innate within the internal processes of memory.

It was discovered that through the process of painting and ceramics (encompassed as the word painting within this thesis), the relationship between the walk and memory was given a visual outlet which could then be viewed as an object – a memory object. Each painting held its own emotional register, capturing feelings such as exhilaration, awe and bemusement within shapes and forms that were sited both within the landscapes of the three case studies, but also within the studio of their creation. Each painting became an entity of personal recollection and contemplation in which, through the post-walk process, allowed for a formation of visual and internal observations to become something in which could be observed by a viewer. Painting formalised the feelings in which the memories were made up of, immortalising them in such a way that they could prompt thoughts, emotions and memories in a viewer, which was discovered in the works exhibited in *Situating Practices* (Booth, 2019) and *A Walk in Malham*. This public showcase of the paintings further formalised the connection between the initial walk and memory, siting it within a gallery setting for a viewer to explore. Specifically, *A Walk in Malham* enabled the understanding of the relationship of the field journal to the finished outcome, and also solidified the importance of no photographs being used as a reference for the work prompting full reliance upon the emotional memory to start the painting process – ensuring the finished outcome was in no way an obvious visual representation of the landscape in which was walked.

In conclusion, walking through a natural landscape is a physical and emotional act which forms unique memories based upon the conditions at that specific time. These memories are an emotional response in which painting has been found to harness and formalise recollected experiences and, as a process, has shown the ability to aid recall and adapt to help inform and develop. Each case study has highlighted how, just like the walks of Fulton and Long, each walk and experience in the studio informed the next, uncovering a cyclical process in which each iteration forms a deeper knowledge of the relationship between walking, memory and painting. Further research into this subject, possibly with further expansion of the practice of painting as a means of capturing memory, would allow for a thorough exploration and discovery of further new knowledge within the field, however the findings within this thesis show that walking and painting, when utilised as methods together, can unlock understanding of memory in relation to landscape.

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APPENDICES

SITUATING PRACTICES EXHIBITION GUIDE TEXT

Beth Morgan
University of Huddersfield (MRes)

Beth Morgan's creative practice is focused on giving her own personal, remembered experience of walking through landscapes a visual form. Overly saturated colours, biomorphic shapes and layered forms build up as she recollects her experience of a specific walk in a particular site, transforming and shifting until it inspires a sculpture. Her paintings and sculptures are complete abstractions yet the shapes remain familiar due to their organic nature. Her practice-based research concentrates on understanding her relationship with the landscape, considering how it is transformed through the act of walking and how memory distorts and abstracts, forming new experiences. Walking is an important part of her practice, the more she walks the more responses she creates, giving her a greater understanding of how walking informs and encompasses who she is as a creative practitioner.

8. A Walk in Scarborough (2019)

The series of works on display are developed from a walk Morgan has undertaken along the long stretching coastline of South Bay Beach in Scarborough, walking amongst thriving rockpools, barnacle covered sea walls and craggy rocks, across barren sandscapes littered with seaweed cast onto the shore by a violent sea. Her practice is situated within these natural environments, immersing herself within them, considering the ways in which the weather alters the colours around her, how the wind caught a certain leaf, how the sun distorts the view or tiredness disrupts focus. No photographs are taken during the walk, only notes and quick sketches in her 'field journal'. These are used in the studio to prompt a memory or feeling.

The artworks are personal to Morgan and her experience of particular walks in particular sites. Within the gallery setting, the works themselves take on a whole new phenomenological experience for the audience, prompting feelings of the strangely familiar as most people will have, at some point in their lives, taken a similar walk in an English landscape.

A Walk in Malham

'Walking over the large limestone mass of Malham Cove, I looked out over the village of Malham and its surrounding countryside. The sun shone down, cascading layers of light across the landscape, illuminating the river below and distorting the natural colours in a haze of heat. I observed the shapes around me, the limestone beneath my feet were flowing forms like water. Large gaps between them made the walk across the cove treacherous; full concentration required to ensure safe passage to the ground below. The blue of the sky and the green of the land met perfectly in the centre of my vision as I made my way along the meandering path back to the village. The river next to me provided a calming soundtrack to my ever-slowng pace, muscles aching from the distance I had travelled, snaking across the land to a point in which it vanished from view. After what felt like hours, I reached a perfectly tarmacked road that brought me back into the traditionally English, picturesque village of Malham, where my walk ended'

A Walk in Malham is the culmination of a series of work developed from a walk undertaken through the traditional English pastoral countryside of Malham by artist, Beth Morgan. These works are in response to her remembered experience of that particular day; the way in which the heat of the sun distorted her vision, how tiredness disrupted focus, the way the water flowed over a single rock in the beck leading to Janet's Foss and how the leaves quivered in the subtle breeze. No photographs were taken during the walk, only notes and quick sketches in her 'field journal', meaning each piece is formed from a memory personal to the artist. Recollected experience given physical, visual form and exhibited in the public realm, creating new experiences to the observer.

Alongside her paintings, Morgan will also be showcasing an insight into her *Field Journal* that accompanies her on every walk she takes and is the first step of her creative process. Normally hidden away in her studio, this will be the first time it will be exhibited to the public.

Beth Morgan is an artist whose creative practice is focused on giving her own personal, remembered experience of walking through a landscape visual form. Overly saturated colours, biomorphic shapes and layered forms build up as she recollects her experience of a walk in a particular site, transforming and shifting until it inspires a sculpture. Her paintings and sculptures are complete abstractions yet the shapes remain strangely familiar due to their organic nature. Her practice concentrates on understanding her relationship to the landscape, considering how it is transformed through the act of walking and how memory distorts and abstracts, forming new experiences. Walking is an important part of her practice, the more she walks the more responses she creates, giving her a greater understanding of how walking informs and encompasses who she is as a creative practitioner.

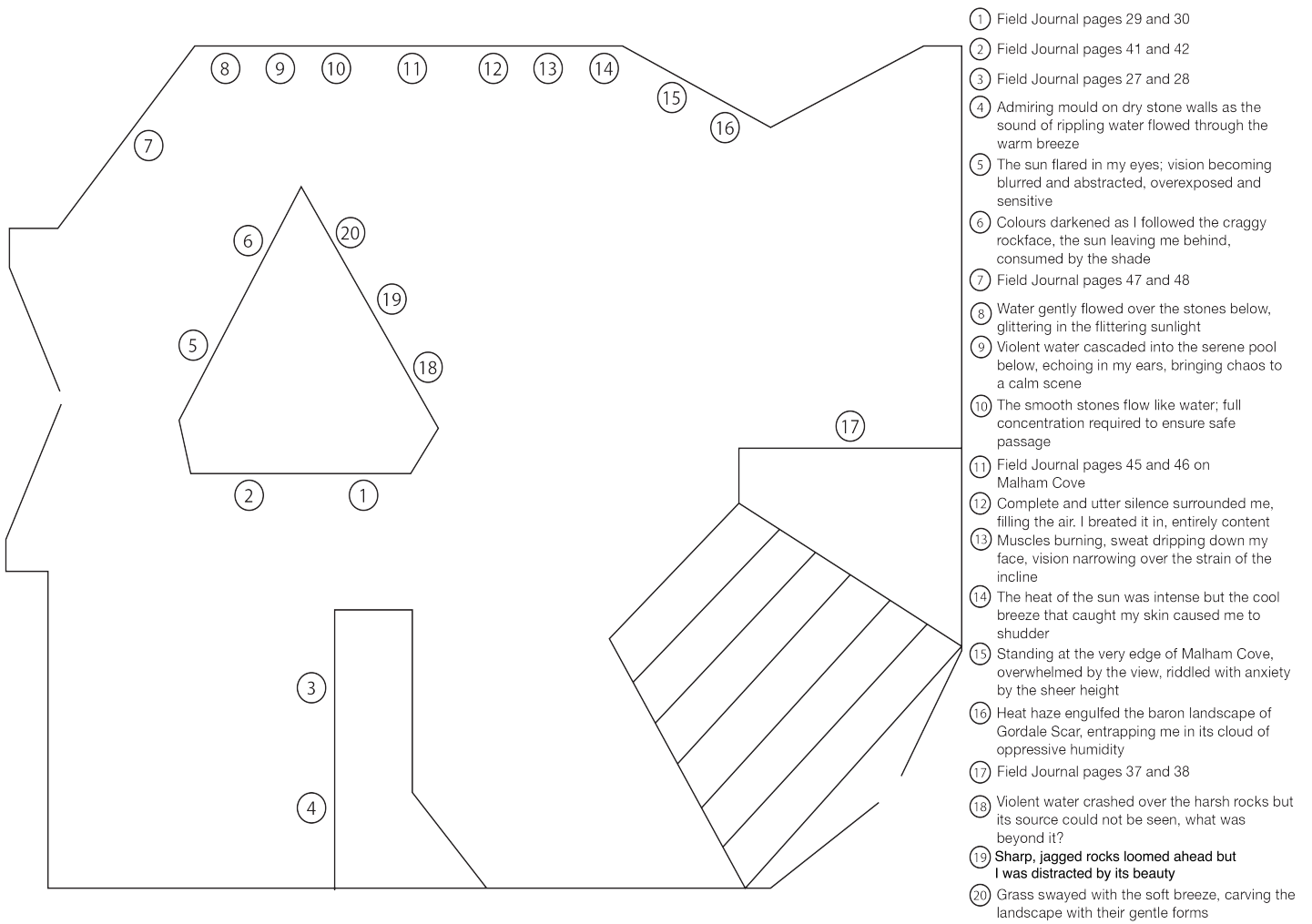


FIGURE 11 - 'A WALK IN MALHAM' (2019) EXHIBITION FLOOR PLAN