

En utpost mot havet. An outpost against the sea

Caroline Areskog Jones

History can fold in on itself, fracture and dissolve, leaving unresolved, fragile remains; misplaced particles hover as eerie resonance, suspended in space and time.

*The situation is precarious but expectant.
Dust.
Sediment that falls to the
floor.*

From such a seed, an idea, a practice can grow, mutate, evolve, adapt, and a process of transculturation can occur. An ecology all of its own.

In this body of work, presented for my MA show at Royal College of Art, I question dominant hierarchies of categorization which can restrict freedom of thought – nudging away from stasis and entrapment, away from fixed memory. I explore material matter and its transformative potential as a way to fresh perspectives, towards a different dialogue.

*Possibilities.
To shift the narrative sideways, to move between parallel
lines.*

The working title of this overview comes from a text printed in 1941, 'Om Öland,' written by my great grandfather. Carl Areskog was a priest and botanist keen to document the unique ecology of the island where he lived and worked, off the southeast coast of Sweden. It is a place with mixed geologies: wild land and a world heritage site for protection of its environment.

The fragile seed planted.

Written poetically through direct observation, much of what is presented is hard to understand – there is a language barrier to straddle. But I have spent many summers here and know the place well.

These forests have stories to reveal.

Answers to tell – the mutable shadows are 'haunted', as identified by Avery Gordon in her text *Ghostly Matters*, where 'haunting' is defined as that which remains unresolved. They hover in a state of flux, between past and future, myth and fact. I wanted to work with this and challenge the idea of a book being seen as a stable document.

Take my breath away is an archival digital print which acts as a portal, attached directly to its supporting surface. The work is an attempt to articulate the 'shimmer', a space identified by Roland Barthes existing at the slippage between meaning and interpretation.



Figure 1



Figure 2

Figure 1. Take my breath away: liberated drawing by Caroline Areskog Jones 183 x 120 cm

Figure 2. Areskog Jones installation 2018

*Taking an original photograph and drawing it into the present.
Allowing it to breathe.
Relocate the past.*

Living in a world of saturated hypervisibility, where all things are data logged, identified, examined and explored, where neurons and neutrons can be specifically observed and tracked, there still exists unknown states, hard to articulate and categorize, to pin down and confine.

*A Holy Grail.
Just beyond touch, beyond words and out of reach.*

Echoing the transformative capacity of non-human forms, evolving and adapting to their environment, a new ecology is offered with the print red haze – a lithograph in 4 sections, digitally adapted from its previous iteration.

red haze is hung slightly suspended in front of the wall. Printed on shoji and free to move, the fine paper curls and unfurls, it breathes and floats gently with a passing presence. The work is reminiscent of late seventeenth century Japanese ukiyo-e prints, depicting an ancient pine growing within its own landscape of storytelling. The print is built from a series of repetitive marks, containing time within the process of its making, condensing time from its original source, and evoking time as ancient trees absorb their surroundings.

Absorbed echoes and reflections of sorrow, loss and melancholia

Red is a powerful colour and will not be laid down easily. It is defiant and passionate. It is a fundamental colour with its own history. The aim in this work is for the hue to hover: it is not block solid, rather, it is accumulated, dithered, possessing a potential to become planted elsewhere, to uproot and find a fresh environment. To migrate.

In Hitchcock's *Vertigo*, there is a sequence which was shot in Muir Woods amidst giant sequoia trees. The light is diminished, hazy under a towering canopy, and, wearing a white coat, the character Madeleine is spectral. She reaches out. With a sense of déjà-vu this sequence feels suspended, sliding quietly between here and then, a time capsule which is simultaneously mesmerizing and unsettling.

Touching across time.

Pushing Space is a moving image loop formed from fragments captured whilst walking through forests, reminding me of those trodden over many years on Öland, transporting me to another place.

A line made through walking.

This piece is a collective visualization of time spent to escape the technological, to absorb the natural and be fully human. Just as we



Figure 3



Figure 4

move between past, present and future constantly and shuddering, there are varying speeds. Shot in black and white, the projection was installed onto a slice of an ancient oak tree, itself perhaps 200 years old, entitled *Stumped*.

Presenting different manifests of time simultaneously could be said to evoke an eerie sense, as described by Simon O' Sullivan in his essay, *Fictioning the Landscape*, a concept where there is a deliberate attempt to take apparent reality and present alternative narratives within its frame.

With an underlying sense of the rhizomatic, where from a core, lines of singularity and enquiry emerge and grow – this body of work is diverse and seeking new ground. Akin to the digital, ecologies themselves are constantly evolving, in flux, adapting to their new environment. It is a response to an atmosphere of uncertainty and change, a fluid and transformative space.

a turning world manifested during the show, where, over seven days, I made an intervention in the space to reflect a sense of becoming, of growth. Of the work being in evolution. This iteration consisted of scanned, warped, printed matter taken from pages of my grandfather's book scattered on the ground alongside a found object, itself turned and abandoned. Bifurcated pine needles, each a unique profile, rest at the threshold.

*Marking shifting territory, beating the bounds.
Moving in circles.
Turning worlds. Life cycles.
Overlap.*

The analogue and digital are in overlap. Materialities are merging, daily experience absorbs information across multiple platforms, but I do not want to lose touch.

Digital ecologies are evolving, this body of work is evolving. As Katherine Stout wrote: 'Digital is no longer a realm separate to the material world, but each influences the other.'

*A sentinel keeps watch.
I feel it is imperative to listen.*

IMAGE GALLERY



Figure 1: Take my breath away: liberated drawing by Caroline Areskog Jones 183 x 120 cm



Figure 2. Areskog Jones installation 2018



Figure 3: Red Haze: lithograph on shoji by Caroline Areskog Jones 120 x 180 cm 2019

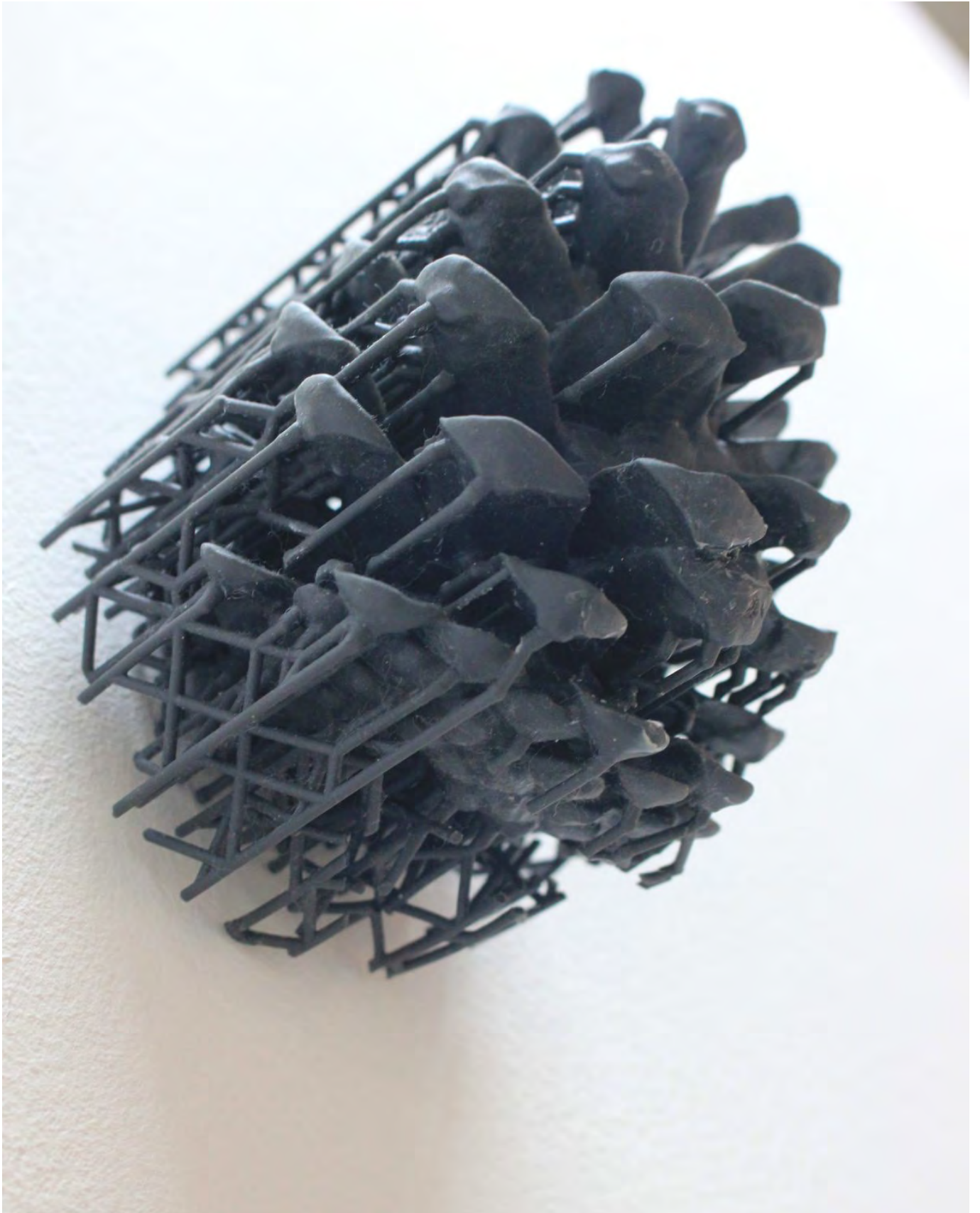


Figure 4: Sentinel, 3D printed object by Caroline Areskog Jones, 2019

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