



Kate Davis

h e l e h
t n a a y p n

In memory of Dr Robert Woof, and for my daughter and my mother

who gave me the invitation, the inspiration and the courage

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For her exhibition *headhearhole*, the culmination of her residency at The Wordsworth Trust, Kate Davis took her opening far beyond the usual private view. As well as using her actual works: sculpture, photography and installations to form the three distinct sections of the show; head, heart, and hole, Davis embraced performance and music as an active part of her exhibition.

In the evening, as the opening event unfolded at Grasmere, visitors gained a deeper insight into the exhibition as Davis gave an actual voice to the final area of her show designated *hole*.

Two groups of musicians provided this voice. Firstly, Kirsten Norrie's band 'Lugosi's Ghost' performed a series of haunting songs, a reverie from a female perspective that acted as a form of lure. This was immediately followed by a response from Gallon Drunk, who at Davis's request played their hard, guitar based blues-rock, an extraordinary cacophony that Davis had identified as a powerful male voice and sound; a sound that she placed in Lower Rydal Cave. This cave was also the subject of one of the exhibition works, a photograph portraying Eros, a male stripped to the waist, shooting a long bow into the cave's mouth.

For this one evening the exhibition was imbued with a primal performance and an animalistic, ritualistic component. The spirit of this evening resonates throughout the works in both their first presentation in the Wordsworth Trust and their onward journey to Fred (London) in 2008.

This publication, produced by the Wordsworth Trust and Fred (London) celebrates the exhibition *headhearhole* both in its original form at the Lake District and its second manifestation within four gallery walls at Fred (London).

I would also like to thank Gabriel Coxhead and Sarah Kent for their contributing essays.

Fred Mann 2008

This book discusses and illustrates work that Kate Davis produced while she was artist-in-residence at the Wordsworth Trust in Town End, Grasmere, in the heart of the English Lake District, from April to October 2007. That work culminated in a thought-provoking and stimulating exhibition between October and December 2007. Entitled *headhearhole*, the exhibition showed work by Kate in three locations – the cottage where Kate resided during her residency; the Trust's gallery, 3°West, at Town End; and its boathouse nestling on the edge of Grasmere Lake. This was the first solo exhibition of work by Kate since 2005.

The Trust's internationally important collection of books, manuscripts and pictures, centred on Wordsworth, Coleridge, Turner, Constable, Farington, Lear and other great figures of the Romantic age, reflects the creative influence of Grasmere and the Lake District upon writers and artists. That influence continues today as some of the most important writers and artists of the current generation, such as Kate Davis, seek inspiration there. Not only did Kate employ our Boathouse as a studio, where she created work that will now be viewed in different settings – national and perhaps international – from that in which it was generated and first shown, but she incorporated the Boathouse itself into her exhibition: as well as being a space for showing her work, it was also a part of her work. The 'Golden' Boathouse, as it became, was not only the location for creative thought and application, but also a manifestation of it. Following that theme, we are delighted that Grasmere, where Wordsworth lived during his 'Golden decade' (1799–1808) and wrote most of his greatest work, was the setting for inspiration to and new work by one of today's most interesting artists.

I thank Kate Davis for her work and for this book, and Kate Royall for assisting with the arrangements for Kate Davis's residency and the setting up of the exhibition. In that latter regard, thanks are due also to Mark Ward and Peter Foster of the Wordsworth Trust. My thanks are due also to Craig Birtles of the Wordsworth Trust, for working with Kate Davis to design this book, demonstrating as it does the rewarding collaboration between the artist and the Trust. I must thank Peter Hughes, Richard Lilley and Benjamin Rhodes for their generous contributions towards the costs of the exhibition, and most importantly I thank Fred Mann of Fred (London) for his support for Kate Davis's residency, and his very generous financial contribution towards Kate's exhibition and this publication.

David Wilson – The Robert Woof Director,
The Wordsworth Trust, Grasmere, February 2008

Head, heart, hole(s)

GABRIEL COXHEAD



During her residency at the Wordsworth Trust in Grasmere, Kate Davis experienced an unusually high number of dreams. The reason, she thinks, was to do with being so close to so much water – as if there was a communion, a sort of psychic resonance, that occurred between the submerged depths of the Lake District and the dark, hidden places beneath the surface of the mind. Certainly, it's this sense of proximity to the shapes and currents of the subconscious that makes her work so uncanny, so powerfully affecting. Evoking both the personal subconscious of dreamscapes, and also a collective, cultural subconscious involving myths and archetypal symbols, Davis's concluding exhibition at the Wordsworth Trust encapsulated her residency in magical, numinous terms: as a process of inhabiting the Lake District; and also of letting it take possession of her.

The major work – an installation in multiple parts and locations, entitled *headhearthole* – made this interrelationship explicit. It was simultaneously a portrait of the Lake District and also a kind of self-portrait, charting Davis's daily journeys and routines, and representing what might be called a sort of corporal geography – a progression through the stations of the body; a triangulation of its most essential, symbolic zones, with each stage pointing the way towards the next.

'*head*' was symbolised by the cottage where Davis lived during her residency – her mental space, full of daytime thoughts and nighttime reveries. Affixed onto the surfaces of the windowpanes, looking out from the ground-floor living-room and first-floor bedroom, were two sentences, handwritten in great, looping letters, describing the processes of inspiration and cognition which had occupied Davis: 'My dreams become your vision'; and 'My vision becomes your dreams'. The statements functioned as a sort of autobiographical communiqué from artist to audience: a formal declaration of belief in art's essential role as a vehicle of communication, a way of traversing the boundaries between the individual and the collective, the conscious and the unconscious.

The second site, *'heart'*, consisted of a rowboat situated inside an old boathouse, right on the shore of Grasmere itself. This was no naturalistic setting, though – rather, the sense was of something fantastic and enchanted. The boat was sleek and silvery, built from polished strips of mirror-like steel. And instead of being moored on water, it was placed in the small, upstairs room of the boathouse, whose floor, walls and ceiling were all painted in a rich, burnished gold, while a fire flickered warmly in the hearth. The atmosphere was one of preciousness, closeness, secrecy – hence the *'heart'* of the title. But also because the building, as Davis's studio during her residency, formed the heart of her practice as an artist – her intimate workspace, the place where she brought her ideas to life.

Again, here, the idea was of art as a kind of transportation, a way of traversing boundaries. Constructed according to the proportions of Davis's body, the boat suggested a sort of floating bed, a funeral vessel – something used to ferry souls to another realm. Pointed in the direction of a propped-open window that overlooked Grasmere, it seemed about to embark on some mystical journey, some magical crossing – indeed, it's worth pointing out that the suffix *'mere'*, so common in place-names in the Lake District, means not just *'lake'*, but also *'boundary'*.

The final destination, in fact, was beyond Grasmere, on the far side of neighbouring Rydal Waters: Lower Rydal Cave – the *'hole'* of the title. Appropriately, it seemed to exist in a separate reality from the other two installations. Its out-of-the-way location – a good 2km, cross-country walk from the Wordsworth Trust – made it feel only tenuously, obscurely incorporated into the body of work. Also, even if the trek were made, the experience of the site was of a completely different order: for while the cave itself made the sexual connotations of the title clear – with its womblike vault, its dank darkness, its muscly striations of rock – there was no specific work of art, as such, on display. Or rather, the art was located in the conceptual act of naming – that is, in designating this particular site, the empty cave, as art.

'hole' thus took on several, parallel meanings: as a gap in the actual, physical landscape; as a sort of hallowed, mythic site, symbolising female sexuality; and also as a kind of rupture within Davis's own project – a culminating moment of sudden emptiness, an epistemological vacancy. Standing in the middle of the cave, the sense was of some invisible force or presence hovering just beyond the edge of manifestation, summoned up through myth or art, yet too obscure to ever be directly apprehended.

Holes, indeed, are something of a recurring motif within Davis's work – as a metaphor for ideas of the unknown or unrepresentable, an image to stand for that which cannot

be consciously imagined. Besides the *headhearthole* installation, there was also an accompanying exhibition at the Wordsworth Trust's 3°W Gallery which was, quite literally, full of holes – full, that is, of absences, gaps, and vacancies – as various new and updated pieces continued to explore themes to do with sexuality, femininity, and representation.

One such work was a photograph, in which Davis extended her mythological reading of Lower Rydal Cave by staging a fantastic, literally erotic, tableau. Featuring a blond, athletic, young man – a personification of the Greek god, Eros – aiming a bow-and-arrow into the dark depths of the cavernous, rocky hole, the scene portrayed ancient archetypes of gender: the cave as object of desire, obscure and shadowy; and the male urge for congress and conquest, the predatory longing to penetrate such hidden mysteries.

Elsewhere in the gallery, Davis exhibited a large 'pin-hole' drawing, made by pricking hundreds of tiny holes through the back of a sheet of paper – a process she has also used in previous works, reproducing famous depictions of women taken from the history of art. In this case, the image was that rather lecherous vision of female beauty, Aphrodite Kallipygos ('Aphrodite of the beautiful buttocks'), lifting up her toga with typical Hellenistic immodesty. Poking holes thus becomes an overtly political act, a process of sexualised defacement – subverting and appropriating these portraits of women by men; and showing how such representations are merely a sort of screen for the projection of male desires.

At the same time, there was also another sense in which Davis's work was full of holes – that is, in its more usual, metaphorical meaning, denoting a failure of logic or consistency. Implicitly rejecting a vision of the world based around rationalist ideas of scientific knowledge and observation, Davis's work instead articulated a more enduring, primitive, magical way of thinking: the dream-logic of associations and mutations, repetitions and inversions – from the endless circularity of the written window-messages, to the way the flickering fire in the boat-house's hearth conflated with the gurgling sound of nearby water, to the reflections in the steel mirror-boat as it merged alchemically with its golden surroundings.

In particular, several pieces by Davis evoked a sense of sexual transformation, suggesting a sort of fluid, hermaphroditic mingling of male and female symbols. That was the feeling, certainly, in one work consisting of a large sheet of glass, the surface of which Davis had etched using a process of hot metal grinding to create a strange, Rorschach-like pattern – its swirling, polymorphous shape seemingly describing multiple sexual forms.

More overtly hermaphroditic was another object – not a single work, exactly, but rather a shape or form that appeared in two different pieces: a simple wooden stick, the phallic prominence of a single prong at one end, branching out into a ‘v’ at the other; a combination of those most basic signifiers of masculine and feminine, the line and the hole. This shape featured in the *‘heart’* boat-house as a found object, painted gold like the walls – part of the inside installation that had leant outside, propping open the window onto Grasmere like a kind of signpost directing the boat – and also in the *‘Eros’* photograph, in the form of a tree positioned between the young hero and the ancient darkness of the cave. The idea was that the shape functioned as a sort of talisman – though an inherently paradoxical one, since it both seemed to symbolise the connections and fluidity that existed between different states, yet also stood as a kind of boundary marker, a way of emphasizing such absolute distinctions.

This sense of ambivalence, this profound tension, ran throughout Davis’s project at the Wordsworth Trust. By using corresponding sets of archetypal opposites – male and female, light and dark, conscious and unconscious, known and unknown – Davis evoked the perennial desire, the desperate longing of the former to encroach upon, repress, dominate, or illuminate the latter; and also the inevitable frustration of this desire, because of the way the latter constantly threaten to reappear as a rupture, a sudden hole, within any rational, ordered conception of the world.

All of the works resulting from the residency, then, centred around this basic paradox: the question of how to portray a vacancy; how to envision the apparition of absence. And these concerns were also echoed in a parallel piece – one that Davis had originally made and exhibited several years previously, but that resonated with the dreamlike atmosphere of the Grasmere installation; which, indeed, had initially been conceived of during a dream. Functioning as a sort of psychic, found object, it consisted of a small, metal table balanced on strangely elongated legs, at the bottom of each of which sat a replica of a lemon: another image which, like that of the hole, has an iconic importance for Davis – perhaps because of its hermaphroditic connotations, its combination of positive and negative, male and female ends. On top of the table sat a stack of dream diaries, containing both old dreams from when the piece was first made; and also the more recent, Grasmere-inspired ones. Underneath there was nothing; an empty space; a hole – one whose height and breadth were determined, as with the boat-piece, according to the proportions of Davis’s own, absent body.

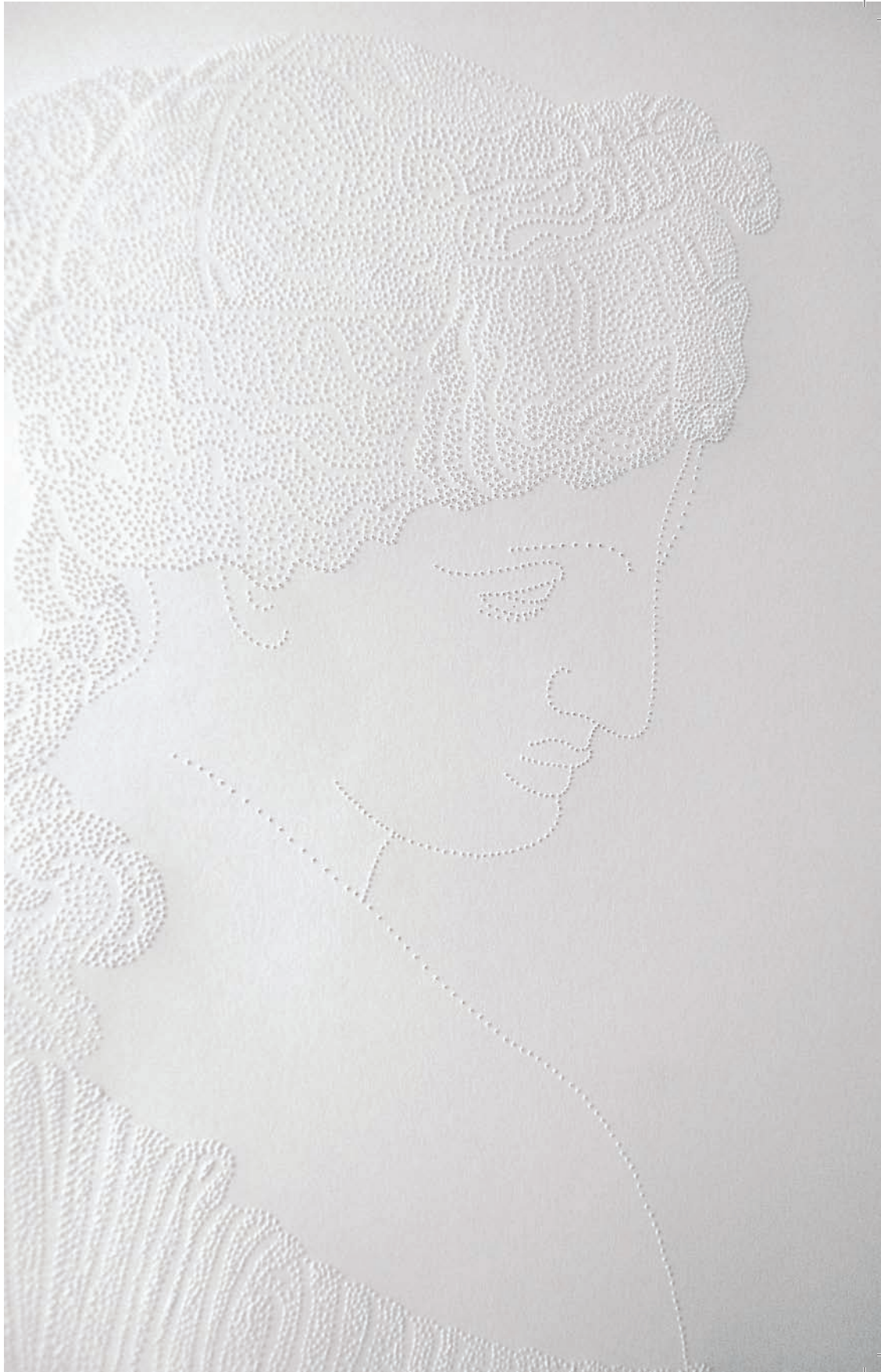
If the shape of the dream-object seemed to suggest the form of a portal, a passage to a different plane of existence, there was also the sense of it being, as with the house-boat-cave installation, a kind of symbolic self-portrait, with its various parts representing

anatomical zones. There were the four, lemon-ended limbs, for instance; the journals, as products of memory and language, signifying the mind; and then, in the middle, this failure of representation: the residue of a vanished body – specifically a female body, a dream-body. It was as if such embodiments could not fully be contained within the here and now, the world of the actual and the observable; but instead existed, immanent and invisible, within some elsewhere state – a place beyond representation, a lacuna that lay outside language.

It’s precisely this sense of hovering on the edge between two coexisting, parallel worlds, which characterises Davis’s work. Taken together, her pieces can be seen as an attempt to trace the periphery of a vast void, a fundamental absence, a lacuna – the repository for all the various embodiments of the unknown. And as such, it’s possible to posit the existence of one more, though officially unacknowledged, piece; indeed, perhaps the most crucial element of the whole exhibition, one which all the other individual pieces were inevitably orientated towards; a natural formation which, like the cave, seemed similarly charged with mythic symbolism: the lake itself. ‘Lacuna’, after all, literally means ‘lake’ in its original Latin; or rather, the feminine, diminutive version of the word – so that whereas the masculine, ‘lacus’, denotes simply the physical body of water, ‘lacuna’ carries connotations of the unknown and shadowy, the sexual and the ethereal. Semantics aside, the ultimate success of Davis’s project was the way it seemed to induce a mythical awareness that extended beyond the works themselves, transforming the very waters of the Lake District into something pregnant with magical significance. Enormous holes in the land, they seemed to embody the inconceivable, unknown vastness submerged just below consciousness – marking a threshold between presence and absence, art and myth, and visions and dreams.





















Backward Glances

SARAH KENT



Kate Davis spent ten months as artist in residence at the Wordsworth Trust, where the famous poet once lived, near the Lakeland village of Grasmere. Her residency was divided into two periods, a year apart. During her first visit she established a daily routine, walking between the cottage where she stayed, the boathouse overlooking Lake Grasmere that served as her studio and Lower Rydal Cave, a disused slate mine on the other side of the lake. On days when the dank interior of the cave did not seem too oppressive, she would draw there in the semi-darkness. Mostly, though, she worked in the studio on a series of drawings for exhibition in Germany. And these two frames of reference – the immediate surroundings, on the one hand, and her ongoing preoccupations, on the other – are both evident in the work, most of which was made during the second phase of her residency.

While immersing herself in the ambience of the Lake District hills, she was also reading Wordsworth's poetry. As a child, she used to walk in her sleep and was especially drawn to *The Somnambulist*, a tragic account of unfulfilled desire in which the sleep-walking heroine falls in the river and drowns. The mood of this sorry tale of squandered love found accord with her melancholy reflections on the breakdown of her marriage several years earlier. But there was another reason for her interest in the poem and its description of falling. Davis likens sleepwalking to making art. 'At the start, there's a sense of threat. You enter into a liminal state in which you don't have the usual understanding of space, so you can't control or direct yourself and you feel as if you are falling. Sleep walking is a very similar sensation.'

She found the dramatic Cumbrian landscape extremely erotic and soon realised that the three places in which she had chosen to spend her time there were affecting what she did and how she thought about things. She decided to title the exhibition at the Trust *headhearthole* and to categorise the places that had played such an important part in the gestation of the work in the same way, so establishing a link between the terrain of the body and the lie of the land – between anatomy and geography. The cottage where she planned, cogitated and dreamed was designated as the *Head* space, the boathouse where she worked as the *Heart* and the cave, which she thought of as an entry point into the earth, as the *Hole*. 'At a certain moment,' she says, 'the realisation struck that all my work can probably be categorised in this way.'

For the exhibition, the boathouse studio was painted gold and a fire was lit in the grate. On the floor rested a boat made of stainless steel polished to a mirror finish that reflected its surroundings, so infusing the vessel with a golden unreality. The bow pointed towards a window that overlooked the lake, as though it anticipated floating onto the open water where, as Davis pointed out, it would become invisible; reflecting the sky above and the lake beneath, the boat would apparently dissolve in a seamless union with the elements.

The window was propped open with a forked bough resembling a stick figure and, from the outside, branch and window combined into a shape resembling a prow, which made one imagine the building as a ship about to set sail. The sound of gurgling water drew attention to a stream that, as it reached the lake, sent an endless flow of ripples across the luminous surface which shone silver in the cool winter light.

One could imagine the artist lying in the gleaming boat and drifting rudderless, in a state of dreamy acquiescence. It reminded me of Tennyson's *The Lady of Shalott*, floating downstream towards Camelot in the painting by John William Waterhouse. Tennyson's heroine leaves her enchanted island in a fatal bid to join the world, but I envisaged the artist going in the other direction, leaving reality behind for a place where sky and water unite in an elemental kiss – disappearing at the aptly-named vanishing point.

Beached on the studio floor its hull propped up by a branch, though, the boat seemed more like a relic from some ancient ritual – a burial ship, perhaps, or a vessel for ferrying souls on their final journey. Does everyone harbour a desire to escape into the nirvana of nothingness? The visions of imaginary journeys evoked by the installation seemed to invite one to brood on this question and to ponder the attraction of morbid ecstasy.

Meanwhile, over the road, cryptic comments written on the windows of the cottage addressed a different kind of escape – into the realm of dreaming. On the bedroom window, black letters spelled out the message *My Dreams Become Your Vision*, so emphasising the significance of dreams as an imaginative resource. Written in white on the lounge window, the reciprocal remark *My Vision Becomes Your Dreams* acknowledged the importance of art in stimulating fantasy and desire.

Dreams first played a role in Davis's work when she was a student at Falmouth School of Art. The waves pounding on the Cornish coast induced recurring dreams whose erotic passion was unlike anything she had experienced before, and she decided to record them. With the help of the poet and Jungian psychologist, Peter Redgrove, she embarked on a diagrammatic analysis of their content. Some twenty five years later, sleeping in proximity to Lake Grasmere had a similar effect, except that this quieter, more enclosed body of water elicited dreams that were more explicit and even more intense than those provoked by the open sea.

The Trust gallery is divided into three rooms and Davis decided to designate them as *Head*, *Heart* and *Hole*, respectively, and to create an installation in each one of work based on the relevant theme. Dominating the Head space was *Le Vent Se Lève* (The Wind Gets Up), a sculpture originally made in conjunction with the first dream project and later remade. Resting on a table, whose legs are over six feet tall is a portfolio containing accounts of the dreams that visited her in Cornwall and Cumbria. With access denied, the portfolio's contents can only be guessed at, but for those who know the artists' work, the yellow-painted, bronze lemons under the legs provide a clue. She has used the fruit many times as a symbol of fecundity but, in this context, its meaning is slightly different. One end of the fruit is phallic, the other resembles a breast; this combination of male and female forms implies self-sufficiency, and lemon trees do, in fact, self-fertilise. The lemon therefore makes an appropriate emblem of auto-eroticism and this seems especially apt in terms of dreaming when passions may be real, but lovers are always phantom.

Eroticism pervades Davis's work and this project is no exception. The exhibits in the *Hole* space equate entry into the earth with access to the body. *Eros* is a photograph taken at dusk outside Lower Rydal Cave; lit by spotlights and printed on metallic paper, the scene acquires a chilly, lunar brilliance. Standing in front of the cave, the bifurcating trunk of a silver birch emphasises the vaginal shape of the entrance. The god of love aims his arrow at the opening, but the diminutive size of his weapon makes his advances seem absurdly presumptuous.

Leaning against an adjoining wall was a sheet of glass bearing a heraldic design resembling the ink blots devised by psychologist, Hermann Rorschach as a diagnostic tool. Many years ago, Davis used the ink-blot technique to explore the unconscious origins of creativity and kept this example because it was the most suggestive. Enlarged to human scale, the dark blue shape resembles the X-ray of a female pelvis and therefore suggests a link between creativity and reproduction. The image was made by embedding tiny particles of steel in the glass, the catalyst for this miraculous impregnation being intense heat. By building up the image in six successive layers, the artist was able to achieve minute variations in density and tone similar to those found in her pin-prick drawings.

One of these enigmatic drawings was hung in the *Heart* space; *Aphrodite Kallipygos* (Aphrodite of the Beautiful Buttocks) is based on a Hellenistic sculpture of the goddess of love, lifting her tunic to reveal her perfect posterior. The lost original is known only through a small Roman copy in the National Archeological Museum in Naples, but Davis has enlarged the figure to human proportions and, using steel pins, has pricked an outline drawing of the sculpture into a sheet of paper whose creamy surface resembles marble.

Piercing the paper from behind creates holes surrounded by raised aureoles that catch the light and cast tiny shadows. Using pins of six different sizes produces astoundingly subtle gradations in tone that are made in light rather than with a pencil, ink or charcoal. Shadows cast by clusters of large pinpricks evoke the fluency of hair and the soft folds of drapery, while the roundness of a cheek

or limb is suggested with tiny blemishes that, catching the light, surround the figure with shimmering radiance. The gold wall opposite the drawing acted like the mirror in which Venus is frequently shown admiring herself – as a foil for the seductive glance which she casts over her shoulder.

According to popular myth, Aphrodite was born from the foaming sea, but another version describes her as the daughter of Rhea, the Earth Mother. These dual connections – with water and soil – allowed her to become a pivotal figure in Davis's project, since she provided a vital link between the erotic dreams provoked by water and the associations made by the artist between the landscape and the body.

Seen in situ, the work made in the Lake District created such a strong rapport with its surroundings that it was impossible to envisage it being shown elsewhere without losing much of its meaning. Removal of the work to Fred's Gallery in London inevitably destroys the immediacy of these connections; rather than disappearing, though, the references remain as memories that become part of the history of the project. Printed as artworks in their own right, for example, photographs of the boathouse installation create a sense of continuity, of the boat as a vessel on a journey which is far from over.

Fred's gallery is situated beside the Grand Union Canal; resting on a platform built beside the windows overlooking the canal, the boat lies parallel to the water, as though it had docked there temporarily. The gold walls of the boathouse have been replaced by a golden block that, accompanying the boat on its travels, warms the interior with reflected light as though inviting one to step aboard. The two branches that initially propped up the boat and held open the boathouse window have now been cast in bronze, to become like fossilized memories.

In this new context, *Aphrodite Kallipygos* loosens her ties with sea and rocks and, instead, takes her place among previous pin-prick drawings of erotic sculptures of women made by men. The artist embarked on the first series in 1998, in response to Giacometti's sculpture *Woman with Her Throat Cut*, an insect-like creature lying on her back, splayed and disemboweled. Fascinated and appalled by this degrading image, Davis devised her aggressive form of mark-making as a way of dispelling the violence of the original and, since then, has used the technique to interrogate other sculptures of women shown in extremis.

During a residency at the British School in Rome, for instance, she made daily visits to look at Bernini's sculptures of *The Ecstasy of St Theresa* and *The Blessed Ludovica Albertoni*. Both women are shown reclining, heads thrown back, eyes closed and mouths open in a transport either of ecstasy or agony. While Ludovica was dying of stomach cancer, St Theresa had visions of being pierced by an angel's flaming arrow; 'so excessive was the sweetness caused me by

this intense pain', she wrote, 'that one can never wish to lose it . . .' Assaulting large sheets of paper with steel pins, Davis not only lays claim to the images, but also to the sublimated sexuality of these highly-charged sculptures.

Aphrodite Kallipygos has other forerunners in Davis' work; by turning her back, she joins the ranks of women seen walking away from us. The role was initially taken by the artist; she first appeared in 1998 in the video *Red Shift*, wearing a coat that fills the screen with intense red. As she climbs further up a snow covered hill, she diminishes in size until, eventually, she disappears in an endless expanse of white – much as I imagined the boat merging with the pale waters of Lake Grasmere.

Condition Blue is a drawing in which the retreating woman is portrayed in blue ink. In 2001, Davis entered it for the Jerwood Drawing Prize and discovered that she had won the competition the day her husband left her. At the time his departure came like a bolt from the blue but, unconsciously, she must have been anticipating the separation for some time. 'When I made *Red Shift*', she says, 'I had in mind *A Story of the Falling Sleet* which is part of Dostoyevsky's *Notes From Underground*. In it there's an image of Lisa walking away from her lover and disappearing into the falling snow.'

This association makes it clear that in *Red Shift* she was already rehearsing departure. As an action, though, walking away is highly ambiguous – it can imply anything from rage and despair to ambivalence or optimism – and, in a subsequent series of drawings, Davis translates the image of the disappearing woman into different colours whose nuances suggest a wide range of feelings and responses. The recent inclusion of Aphrodite introduces a new element – that of erotic potential – which implies a shift from regret and retrospection to a throughout this project, the theme of departure occurs in many different guises, whether desirable or terrifying, real or imagined. In reality, though, Davis's trajectory is never linear. Working elliptically, she follows a looping course, returning again and again to ideas that she has explored in the past, and each time she revisits them, she adds another layer of meaning and intent.

The work made during her residency at the Wordsworth Trust is enriched by reference both to the landscape that gave rise to it and to the artist's previous work, and its installation at Fred's Gallery produces a shift in emphasis. Separation from Grasmere disrupts the work's engagement with the particularities of a given place, but the neutrality of the new context allows one to appreciate the degree to which the project represents a continuation of many of the artist's previous concerns. It allows this fascinating body of work to live and to resonate beyond the environment in which it was made.

The journey continues . . .



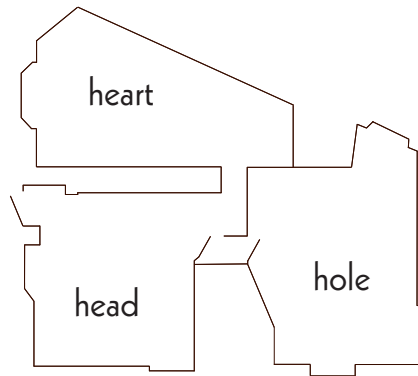
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Home at Grasmere

'Tis, but I cannot name it, 'tis the sense
Of majesty, and beauty, and repose,
A blended holiness of earth and sky,
Something that makes this individual spot,
This small abiding-place of many men,
A termination, and a last retreat,
A centre, come from wheresoe'er you will,
A whole without dependence or defect,
Made for itself, and happy in itself,
Perfect contentment, Unity entire.

Lines 161–170. First published 1888 as part of *The Recluse*.
Originally composed in Dove Cottage, 1800.



3°W Gallery

headhearthole

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**head
heart
hole** 'If you truly experience the black, the white and the red together
you have known the pubic hair, the white skin and the red menstrual
blood, you now have no fear and have lost all aggression.'

