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A brief history of Upleatham Old Church

The village of Upleatham near New Marske lies between the Victorian seaside town of Saltburn-by-the-Sea and the historic market town of Guisborough and is about ten miles from Middlesbrough. Upleatham is located within the county of North Yorkshire and the unitary local authority of Redcar and Cleveland. In 1976 Upleatham was designated a conservation area for “...its attractive rural character created by its physical seclusion and tranquillity and the visual harmony of the buildings, gardens, boundary walls and surrounding landscape.”

The Old Church of St. Andrews lies slightly outside the village on the B1268 just north of the village of Skelton and approximately 15 miles north west of Whitby. The church stands alone in a square churchyard of sloping grass bounded by a random-rubble dry-stone wall. Access to the churchyard is either through a gate surrounded by mature holly trees, set at the far north western corner of the churchyard, or over a stile in the wall adjacent to the road. The church is no longer used as a place of worship and its interior, just visible through the door, now lies empty. The fields adjoining the churchyard present visible evidence of a medieval ‘ridge-and-furrow’ field system and are no doubt rich in archaeology.

Upleatham and its old church both sit on the south facing slope of Upleatham Hill, at a point where springs run down from steeper slopes to converge in shallow gills and channels. The higher slopes of the hill have been forested since at least the 18th century and provide a densely wooded backdrop to the village. During the Bronze Age a burial urn containing the cremated remains of a chief was placed in a shallow grave on the summit of the hill. For over 3,000 years the remains of this ancient chief lay undisturbed alongside a smaller urn of decorative artefacts.

Since at least Anglo-Saxon times the steeper upper slopes of Upleatham Hill have been quarried for the golden brown Jurassic sandstone that is characteristic of the older buildings of the area. The lower slopes of Upleatham Hill and the plateau known as either Burleigh or Beacon Moor have long been used for mixed farming. Historically Upleatham would have been a self-sufficient community, although now most of the farmland is run within much larger managed holdings.

The old church is often inaccurately described as the smallest church in England and is actually the remains of a much larger structure that dates at least as far back as the early 12th century. A small section of a 12th century nave remains, with a tower on the west side of the building dating from 1684. The blocked arches visible on the south side of the church suggest an aisle once stood here and the buttress on the wall of the tower is probably the remains of the church's southern wall. The north wall of the church has eight Norman corbels, with another three making an appearance in the 19th century east wall.

Excavations in 1911 uncovered a 9th century Anglo-Danish cross decorated with a carved interlace pattern, a find that supports the view that the village of Upleatham was Christian long before the Norman Conquest. These older finds suggest that the current structure may in fact be built on the site of a much earlier church. Excavations between 1970 and 1974 revealed that both the north and south walls of the church would have extended at least a further three metres. Other finds were also uncovered, including 11th century grave slabs, a 14th century effigy of a knight and shards of pottery from the 13th through to the 20th century.

At some point in the 17th century and for reasons that are somewhat unknown, the village shifted away from the church and slightly further up the hill. Despite finding itself at a distance from the village, the old St. Andrews continued to serve the people of Upleatham for a further 150 years. In 1822 a decision was taken to begin to demolish the old church, but with its replacement not completed until the mid 1930s, the tower and nave were retained for services. When the new St. Andrews was finally finished the old church was put to use as the cemetery chapel. The Old Church of St. Andrews and its surrounding fields were originally considered too remote from the historic core of Upleatham village to be included in the conservation area that was established in 1976. In 2007 the boundary was revised, recognising that the village was originally clustered around the old church and only later extended along Quarry Lane to its current location. The Old Church of St. Andrews building is now Grade II* listed.

The rocks that form this area are a sequence of ironstone seams interbedded with shale and siltstone known as the Cleveland Ironstone Formation. There are five main iron-rich horizons or seams: Avicula, Raisdale, Two Foot, Pecten and Main Seam. The area has long exploited its local ironstone and there are records of ironworks in the area as far back as the 16th century.¹ Skinningrove Mine, the first of 83 ironstone mines in the Cleveland region, was established in 1848, and three years later in 1851, Upleatham Mine opened on the New Marske side of Upleatham Hill. It went on to employ 500 men and boys and was reputed to be the best in the world, producing high-grade ore in seams eight to thirteen feet thick. The Cleveland mines became the most important ironstone mining area in Britain, contributing a third of Britain's total output. Iron and steel produced in the region was used to build railways and bridges in India and Australia, and was exported across the world, to Europe, Africa and the Americas. The first blast furnace had opened on Teesside the same year as Upleatham Mine, and by 1875, when Dorman Long & Co. was established, there were over 100 furnaces in the region. Originally an iron and steel company, Dorman Long & Co. later diversified into bridge construction, with the Tyne Bridge, the Sydney Harbour Bridge, as well as the Tees Newport Bridge all to its name.²

When Upleatham Mine closed it was done gradually in three stages, starting in 1912, with a further reduction in scale in 1921, before finally closing completely in 1923. Upleatham now consists of little more than a few rows of houses adjacent to Errington Woods. Like the church the village is also a remnant of an earlier incarnation, with subsidence caused by the ironstone mining resulting in the demolition of more than half of its buildings between 1890 and 1905. In the latter half of the 20th century these sites were sold off as plots for twelve new houses. These detached houses and bungalows have a suburban appearance at odds with the old buildings of the village and as a relatively self-contained extension, they sit outside the conservation area boundary. The new 19th century St. Andrews church is now also deconsecrated and in 2016 was advertised for sale at £600,000, having been lovingly restored and refurbished to a very high standard by its current owner to create a unique executive style four bedroom detached house.

A conversation overheard at the Riverside One site in Middlesbrough's Middlehaven development area

THE ARCHITECT: We're here in Middlesbrough today to witness a major step on the road towards realising the massive Middlehaven regeneration scheme. Plans for the first two multi-million pound residential blocks have just been unveiled – the first of nine cube blocks that will be developed by BioRegional Quintain.

THE INTERN: As I look out across the redundant dockyards I can see that the new Middlesbrough College is already under construction and beginning to change the skyline.

Tees Valley Regeneration, the local development agency, has been tasked with coordinating major physical development and inward investment into the town. The new college is an important part of that plan!

[turning away] On my way here I saw the burning flare of the chemical plants. The flames shooting up high into the sky.

You know of course that Middlesbrough was the inspiration for Ridley Scott's 1982 film Blade Runner. Have you seen it? No? It's such an iconic opening shot. The dystopian city of the future!

Huge tongues of fire billowing up into the blue sky... so vivid. Even on this bright day.

The last vessel left these the docks not long before that film came out. There've been attempts at regeneration since '85... the Teesside Development Corporation was set up in '87 but it wasn't until 1998 that Middlesbrough Council, English Partnerships and One NorthEast appointed a leading firm of town planners to establish the initial Middlehaven master plan. This more recent master plan follows the launch of Tees Valley Regeneration in 2003.

That's when Will Alsop was asked to develop his proposals.

Yes... to transform this area into a space for living, working, learning and having fun!

It's only days since Liverpool City Council abandoned The Cloud, Alsop's plan for the Mersey waterfront.

Indeed. A shame I felt. After all, it was meant to be the showpiece for their turn as Cultural Capital in 2008. I'd heard there was haggling about feasibility.

The projected costs had risen by almost £100 million.

I'll admit I was ambivalent about Alsop to start with, but if you want that kind of vision it comes at a cost doesn't it? I mean he's currently working on schemes in Bradford, Halifax, Barnsley, Walsall and Stoke... regenerating cities across the North of England!

And the Midlands.

Well, what we've seen here though, with this Middlehaven master plan, is that he's managed to pull a significant game changer out of the hat. There isn't going to be anywhere else in Europe with such a daring development as this.

They're calling it the Land of the Giants.³

It's already a land of giants! I mean just look at the Transporter Bridge. It symbolises the past, Ironopolis! That sudden growth of the town, its industrial legacy... but now thanks to this plan, it's also a symbol for the future, for the new homes and jobs this lays the foundations for.

The Tees Transporter Bridge is a fascinating object... the first time I saw it, it struck me as alien, absurd almost – although of course it's still a working piece of engineering. For me it's not just how it symbolises the town, its history, but how as some sort of massive sculptural object it directs my eye out and beyond the town, out to the Cleveland Hills, to Roseberry Topping. It brings things into focus.

Absolutely... and Alsop's plans are sharp... witty too! I mean a primary school in the shape of a huge spelling block! A shiny multi-storey hotel in the shape of an inverted champagne bottle! Isn't that great fun?

Apartment blocks like Prada skirts... a Space Invader inspired museum of digital media...

I think it's fair to say that Alsop's master plan perfectly captures the spirit of the place. I mean, I know in the past he's been accused of just plonking big objects down...

[glancing sideways] Individually named buildings by signature architects thrown across a map like dice across Las Vegas baize.

Indeed... Like I say, we are in the land of the giants now! As mayor Ray Mallon has said, the scale of the ambition sends out an important message to business, to investment.

The KerPlunk hotel! A blue Rubik's Cube...

I think such names indicate Alsop's awareness...

[interrupting] The toaster theatre!

I mean he's playing into that, knowingly. There's a wit here! Plus, don't you think such nicknames are a great way for people to form relationships with the built environment? You know, the Gherkin and all that... I think there's a level of self-deprecation at play here that offers the people of Middlesbrough a different way to engage with these buildings.

Are you saying that you see Alsop's buildings as characters in the landscape somehow?

Yes! That's exactly it. So perhaps we should think about this site as a stage set, and standing here, seven years into this new millennium, I certainly feel a sense of anticipation akin to that one feels whilst waiting for the curtain to rise on a new theatrical production.

I wonder then, if that is the case, then how should we talk about the people who will live and work here? Are they performers? Or the audience?

Yes, perhaps we should think of them as an audience... but you know, also as if in some sort of participatory performance.

[pausing for a second, and staring hard towards the horizon] I wonder if perhaps the parameters of such a performance need to shift. I mean these are, after all, uncertain economic times.

Hm, I'm not quite sure I understand what you're getting at when you talk about shifting the parameters. Are we still talking about the encounter between the architecture and its inhabitants, its users – or about something else?

I don't know... [looking around] Things feel unsustainable, that's all. I sometimes feel as if I'm waiting for a crack of thunder. [looking up at the clear sky] I don't know what I'm saying.

Ah hm, well, I agree, there are winds of change blowing across this landscape... and change always brings challenges.

Can I ask you something?

Of course!

[dropping their gaze] How much of Alsop's master plan do you think will get built?

You mean because the proposals are so bold, so “out there”? Well of course there’s no doubt these are just the signature pieces, the “big vision” pieces, there to lead the regeneration of the area forward and attract the money in and keep it all moving on. And we can see already that things are moving on – just a few months ago mima, the Erick van Egeraat designed art gallery, opened in the new Centre Square.⁴

Tees Valley Regeneration have said that only projects that fit the spirit of Alsop’s concept will get approval to be built. What will this mean in practice do you think?

Well one of the two blocks unveiled today is an Alsop design and the other by FAT.⁵ Both provide wow-factor designs by architects with worldwide reputations.

Fashion. Architecture. Taste. I like some of their work but I wonder what the response here will be.

I love the future these buildings propose for their inhabitants!

I worry about the future.

On that point, it’s worth noting that this whole development is going to be built to the highest standards of sustainable development. The lead developer BioRegional Quintain was, as you probably know, set up as a joint venture between Quintain, a British-based property investment and development business and BioRegional.

They’re the ones with the green credentials aren’t they? I’ve read about their “One Planet Living” philosophy... that developments should be zero carbon and zero waste.

[interrupting] Yes... and will use local food and promote residents’ health and happiness. The cubes will use recycled materials where possible and be stuffed full of insulation too. They’ll be served by a biomass boiler with gas back-up and the overall development will be powered by on-site and off-site wind power. It’ll help residents to save on heating and electricity bills in comparison with other new developments.

Can I ask you a question?

Of course!

[staring at their shoes] What do you think of FAT’s designs for this apartment block...for their Community in a Cube?

You'll have seen the houses they completed last year for the New Islington Millennium Community in Manchester. It seems here they're taking those motifs of New Urbanism to make a rather clever move on the Brutalist idea of housing a community in a single building.

Ivor Smith said of Park Hill in Sheffield that if there was one thing he would have done differently it would have been to treat the top and ground floors differently to those in between.

Well FAT have obviously been listening to Smith on this occasion! Ok, so I'm not one hundred percent certain what a Swiss chalet has to do with anything, but it makes for a charming addition and certainly plays into the English fondness for borrowing from vernacular European architecture for our places of entertainment and leisure.

The chalet will be a pub. For the community.

I've always been rather fond of the Swiss Cottage building in London. Did you know there's been a chalet on that site since 1840? Hm, ha and co-incidentally that's the year that excavation work first began here on the docks!

That's 167 years ago. Could I ask? Do you feel optimistic?

You mean about the development here? Um, well yes. I do! It'd be easy to be cynical, after all I've seen a lot of schemes proposed and of course some will always work better than others. There's the inevitable regeneration rhetoric...

[turning to stare out to the hills in the distance] ... and the oversized artworks.

But speaking as an architect, yes. Hm, yes! I mean I could see myself living here. It's a building for community. And it's a green building in all senses. Trees in the central courtyard, greenery spilling out all over the decks in true Barbican style!

[turning back to look at the architect] Speaking for myself, I'm certainly looking forward to returning here in several years time.

To the Chairman and Members of the Economic Development, Land Services and Planning Department

A MAJOR DECORATIVE FEATURE FOR THE TOWN

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To summarise the details of the commission for a major decorative feature for the town centre.

1.2 To provide further details of the options for funding the commission in order that members can proceed with the second stage of the contract with the artist.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Council proceed with the second stage of the contract with the artist to commission the proposal as outlined in summary in paragraph 3.1.

2.2 That Members instruct Officers to pursue options 1 – 3 as listed in paragraph 3.2. and in consideration of information in paragraphs 3.3 – 3.11.

2.3 That a detailed report on the method of funding the proposal be submitted to a future meeting for consideration.

3. INFORMATION

3.1 The proposal for a major decorative feature for the town centre has now been received from the artist. The details of the commission are as follows:-

i) THE PROPOSAL The sculpture will be some 35ft. high and 14ft. wide and has been inspired by the history and landscape of the town and its surrounding countryside.⁶ A scale model of the finished sculpture has been submitted by the artist. An illustration of the small scale model is included with this report (Appendix I).

The artist has no other public work in Britain, although his sculptures are to be found in cities across the world. The project is therefore of national importance and will make an original contribution to the history of public artwork in Great Britain. An exhibition of the artist's work, including

preliminary sketches and models of the proposed sculpture, is currently touring a number of European cities.

Local television producers, recognising the importance of the commission, are documenting the progress of the proposal and this provides one of the many opportunities for sponsors to be acknowledged.

ii) LOCATION

The site for the sculpture is in the new town square being developed in the town centre. The site will be surrounded by newly built prestige office developments and will include a water feature, a bandstand and seating areas. The new town square is now nearing completion and will be ready for the sculpture to be sited by spring this year. The site preparation is being funded as part of the development of the square, with assistance from the Inner Wards Investment Programme.

iii) FABRICATION

The work is to be fabricated locally as part of a training scheme for unemployed youngsters some of whom it is hoped will find full time employment using the skills they will acquire. The Independent Shipbuilders Training Scheme have their regional headquarters in the town and deliver employment training to previously unemployed youngsters and adults. ISTS has recently worked with the Regional Arts Office to fabricate a number of specialist artworks and this project will demonstrate both nationally and internationally that a high level of fabrication skills are available in the area.

iv) LOCAL BENEFIT

The town is keen to attract tourists to the area and in order to do this it needs to provide attractions of a substantial nature. The sculpture will undoubtedly attract publicity both nationally and internationally at a time when the town all too often receives negative publicity for unemployment and crime. There is already evidence of this happening, for example an article featuring the proposal is to appear in the next issue of the *Orient Express* magazine which is given to travellers on this famous train.

The successful completion of the project will undoubtedly be a great success for the town and contribute to the future fortunes of the wider region.

3.2 Officers from the Regional Art Office have formulated three main options for funding the commission which are as follows:-

- OPTION 1 Finance the commission via grant aid and private sponsorship.
- OPTION 2 a) Finance the commission via grant aid and the sale of a small scale model by the artist.
 b) Finance the commission via grant aid and the sale of an intermediate model by the artist to be fabricated by ISTS in preparation for large scale sculpture.
- OPTION 3 Finance the commission via grant aid and the sale of both the small scale model and the intermediate model.

3.3 At the previous meeting the Regional Arts Office stated that they would underwrite further payments to the artist as detailed in the contract that the Council has entered into with the artist's representative.

3.4 The contract requires that after the initial payment the Council then has the option to proceed further or withdraw incurring no loss other than the initial payment provided by the Regional Arts Office.

3.5 If the Council elects to go forward three further payments are required to the artist's representatives for the design and production of the model and the proposal and detailed design work and supervision.

3.6 The payments to the artist's representative have largely been met by funds from the Regional Arts Office in the form of grants and loan guarantees. In addition a further £1,000 has been raised from a private sponsor and it is anticipated that at least another £2-3,000 will be provided by private sponsors.

3.7 Once the second payment has been made to the artist's representative the small scale model produced by the artist will be the property of the Council to dispose of as it wishes.

3.8 The other costs involved in the project are the fabrication and erection of the work on site, which it is estimated, will cost £40,000. However it is hoped that through sponsorship and grant aid this figure will be reduced to a figure in the region of £10,000. The main sponsors of the fabrication would be ISTS who are fabricating the work and British Steel who have indicated support for the project. An application for £10,000 has been made to the Inner Wards Investment Programme to provide assistance with the transportation and erection of the work on site.

3.9 If the small scale model is sold there will likely be a net gain to the Council, which is proposed to be used to set up a fund to support local artists.

3.10 In addition to the small scale model ISTS will also fabricate an intermediate model, which will also have a value that is estimated to be in excess of £50,000. As part of the contract with the artist's representative, 50% of any receipts from this sale will go to them. An offer has already been made which would secure £20,000 for the Council.

3.11 The view of the Regional Arts Office is that both the small scale model and the intermediate model will increase in value and it would be in the town's interests to keep one or both of the models if other forms of sponsorship can be provided.

APPENDIX II provides a summary of the costs of the project and receipts for each of the options.

Option 1 Relies on Private Sector Sponsorship and around £12,000 would be required together with a grant from British Steel and approval of the IWIP grant for transportation and installation. With this option the Council would retain both the small scale and intermediate models with a capital value in excess of £70,000.

Option 2 a) Differs from Option 1 with a smaller level of subsidy from private sponsors and £50,000 provided through the sale of the small scale model. This option would cover all costs with a likely excess of £40,000 with the Council retaining ownership of the intermediate model with a capital asset in excess.

b) Differs from Option 2a) in that the intermediate model is sold and the small scale model would remain in Council ownership.

Option 3 With this option both models would be sold and it is assumed there would be no other capital receipts other than those received to date. This would result in an excess of £40,000 to be used to set up a fund to support local artists.

Option 3 is the most attractive option for the Council at this point in time. However over the next few months it is hoped to confirm other sources of funding which would make Option 2 more attractive as the Council would then retain one of the models, which would appreciate in value.

If no other monies are received towards the project and both models are sold the loan guarantee would be returned to the Regional Arts Office and leave a surplus, subject to the sale price realised. The Regional Arts Office has provided a loan guarantee on the basis it is confident that the sale of the models will cover the amount of the loan.

On the basis of the figures outlined in Appendix 2 officers consider there is no financial risk to the Council.

Robert at the Luddale Cross

I directed Jean out of the village. Rather than taking the road to Whyme, we turned right at the top end of the high street, then over the small stone bridge that crossed the river. I noticed how low the Loss had become and realised that it must rain soon. Jean turned the car radio on, and I was relieved to defer the awkward questions that I felt so obliged to ask. Once over the bridge the village was soon behind us and the narrow road began to meander upwards through the wooded lower slopes of the moors. Whereas the road to Whyme took a more direct route, the road we were following linked the smaller settlements and farms and had no principal destination. The road was frequently only wide enough to allow one car to pass and in some places it seemed little more than a track, with mud and matter straying out from the farmyards we passed through. Jean drove as fast as before, taking sudden swoops around corners, then allowing gravity a free rein as we plummeted down steep gradients from moortop to valley floor. It was exhilarating, but I was relieved that the road was no busier.

We were heading to the moors above Heskethgate; it could be a bleak spot, but the wide views across the surrounding valleys never failed to lift my spirits. Heskethgate itself was little more than a row of houses at a fork in the road. Built early this century, the houses were neat in red brick with small gardens to the front and rear. Their suburban aspirations seemed somewhat anomalous within this isolated landscape and I had often puzzled over their builder's intent. At the end of the row the road split, with the track to the right turning sharply up the steep incline of the slope behind the houses. It seemed to have originated as a precarious shortcut to and from the houses; I imagined in winter that it would frequently be impassable. As we neared the top, I turned back, looking over my shoulder at the dizzying view. The road levelled out and I directed Jean to a place where the road was wide enough to park the car.

Stepping outside and slamming the car doors shut, we were hit by a blast of clear air, flooding me with a well-known relief. The quiet was deep, pierced only by the occasional cry of a bird circling high above us. I suddenly realised how hungry I was.

Jean opened the boot of the car and lifted out my hurriedly made purchases.

‘Hungry?’

I nodded my assent.

‘Well lead the way. I’m sure it would be very easy to get lost up here.’

The car journey had lulled me into passivity. I needed to shake myself out of it.

‘Over this way, back towards the edge.’

I felt as if my voice would disappear within this epic space. Jean picked up the bags with the food in and I led the way. There were no proper paths to speak of, and so we followed a narrow sheep track trodden down through the course scrub. Once or twice we disturbed a toughened ewe as it grazed, teeth noisily tearing at clumps of grass, then running, hooves drumming against dried earth as it made its escape. As our destination came into view I stopped and turned.

‘Look over there,’ I pointed, ‘the Luddale Cross.’⁷

It loomed large against the horizon. Much less a cross than its name would suggest; its symbolism opaque - part pagan, part Christian. Some six feet high, dark in colour and well weathered, the carved monolith was as much part of the landscape as the sheep. As we neared the cross, the rough grass gave way to the vivid green of bilberry bushes. It would be almost a month before the berries were ripe, and I remembered the peculiar sweetness of the preserves that my mother had often made. To the side of the cross was a small clearing where we could sit down to eat.

We sat in silence for a moment, casting our eyes across the spread of the land before us. It was cooler up here than when we had left the village and a few clouds now scattered over the liquid clear sky. The high sun cast their recognisable shapes down onto

the earth below, creating shifting tonal masses within the vivid landscape as they drifted over farms, fields, bracken and gorse. Jean broke the silence.

‘You must have quite a special relationship with the landscape Robert.’

‘I suppose I do. I grew up here of course. Maybe that’s it.’

Jean nodded.

‘I know you’ve only been here a week – but don’t you think there’s *something* about here?’

‘The moors are certainly very beautiful.’

I persevered.

‘But don’t you feel that somehow it’s – it’s different?’

‘How do you mean Robert?’

‘I don’t know, but every morning for nearly twenty years – when I open my curtains in the morning, the moors are the first thing I see.’

I was trying to articulate how I felt but it was difficult to find the right words. I decided to continue anyway.

‘It’s almost as if the landscape provides, I don’t know, *solace*. I don’t mean it’s just that I *like* the landscape,’ I broke off. ‘Sorry, this must sound stupid.’

‘Not at all. Sometimes it can be difficult to talk about the things that are important to us.’

‘I suppose what I’m trying to say is that the relationship feels reciprocal.’

I looked at Jean, he was smiling. ‘I’m part of the moors. They’re part of me.’

He turned his head and looked directly at me.

‘I understand how you feel. The relationship we have with our environment is central to our psychological development.’

He paused, then looked away. I felt as if he had been about to say something but had then thought better of it.

Pete makes a threshold

I have been working on Threshold for nearly 18 months and I think it will take approximately another 18 months to finish. I have been inspired in this work by that ancient Cleveland stone carving, the Huntcliff figure. What an unusual and mysterious carving this is! The figure was found at the foot of the Huntcliff in 1886 and for many a year sat on a pedestal outside the Ship Inn. Ostensibly figurative, it might better be understood as a sacred carving – probably of Celtic origin. Perhaps it is because this carving is so close to home – it now sits within the Dorman⁸ – that it has such resonance for my project.

Of course Threshold does not resemble this carving in any immediate visual sense. The hard facets and edges of my carving are a far remove from the soft meanderings and indentations of this prehistoric object. But I understand both to be thresholds in some way. The Huntcliff figure offers a haptic way to project one's imagination across vast distances of time and space. I believe it is a motif that opens up a mythic space that is both timeless and still relevant. I hope Threshold is another way – a contemporary way – of entering this space. I have made the crystalline form to resemble a bud – a symbol both of new growth and a reminder of the deep time embedded in geological formations.

I have been thinking long and hard about how and where to site Threshold. In my mind's eye the ideal place is still the old hill fort on Eston Nab. I can see the carving being activated when placed within the boundary of this ancient structure. Of course there is the issue of vandalism and if all else fails I've been offered a plot outside the Gallery. I suppose this would allow more people to experience the piece, but it really is far from ideal, even by a very long stretch of the imagination.

A bequest

Well that's it then. I got the news I'd been expecting today, and while it's not good news, not good news at all in fact, it is a relief to now finally know the worst. The doctor says I have maybe six months at the most, but said in a way that made me feel I won't live to see the summer. He's told me to put my affairs in order. That as much as anything was the worst of it. The words cut deeper than any scalpel could, not that any will be doing: it's inoperable apparently. Too deep inside my head. Those words, delivered with such harsh, unthinking pragmatism, provoked in me this sinking awareness of how little a life amounts to. I mean my life of course. No kids, no wife, no girlfriend even. Nevertheless I shall put my affairs in order as instructed – or rather I shall once I have worked out what they are. What is it that I might leave this world when it leaves me.

It's evening now and I've been sitting here all day, somewhat overwhelmed, by what... by my own impending mortality I suppose. Well forgive the melodramatics, but surely if there's a time for self pity then this would be it. However as the day passed along (with its inevitable dreadful progression, and the rain never letting up, not for one minute) a thought began to formulate. I'd been returning intermittently to my earlier entry, written not much after 11.30 this morning, and those words that cut me deep, the ones I'd reacted so sharply to, about getting my affairs in order. It was these words that lodged in my head, working away in my thoughts like the slow tick tick of the minute hand on my clock. With these words ticking away, and with nothing in the day to tempt me to head outside, I found myself in idle contemplation of my surroundings and as is so often the case it turns out that "my solution" was already close to hand. My books! This is it then, my big idea. My bequest to the world will be my books. That may be a somewhat grandiose way to put it. I realise it's more likely, desirable even that the beneficiaries of this not insignificant library I've built up these last 25 years will be local. Yes! I like that idea a lot. I just hope they see the value of it. The council, I mean. Now more than ever, with what is to come, we need these writers, these thinkers, to guide and educate us about the exploitations of the past and the path to a better future.⁹

Getting lost with Nick

We'd been travelling again, leaving Nick's parents' garden to go Backtime. We'd been keeping it local this time, heading up onto the moors, walking for miles across hard sprung heather and moss. There was little sight or sound of man, but then that wasn't so different to Realtime and more than once we forgot when we were. Always dangerous, especially when travelling with someone as ether – sensitive as Nick.

This time we'd set out back to Danby High Moor, but when we travelled something had messed up with the dials and we'd landed in thick winter fog. Worse still, it was night time back here. Over in Realtime, it had been a scorcher of an afternoon and despite a few odd looks from the locals, we'd headed out wearing the loose fitting tie-dyed robes we'd picked up earlier that summer on the Isle of Wight. I was shivering already, and I'd landed awkwardly. A sharp pain was shooting up my leg.

"Nick", I said, "Something's gone wrong, we should get back. I've..."

"No way!", he interrupted, "I'm picking up some real uncanny vibes. Something big's going down here in the late nineteenth century!"

"But Nick, this could get real, it's freezing up here, I can barely see my hand in front of my face."

I looked at Nick, he seemed unaffected by the cold, his skin glowing and warm.

"I mean do we even know where we are?" I asked, "These moors are a dangerous place in winter."

"Don't worry man", he said, his eyes gazing out into the fog distractedly, "It's not Realtime. It's all cool." He turned to look at me, sharply. "You're in pain aren't you? Why don't I go find help... If we're where I think we are there's a farm just over.... just over there."

He gestured through the swirling fog. He was right though. We'd been Backtime here a few weeks ago. If the dials were accurate, we were up by the cross, the farm just a ruin now in Realtime.

“Nick...”, I shouted, but it was too late to stop him. He was already striding off into the dense cloud, disappearing in a matter of seconds. I was left alone, surrounded by a thick silence. I stood up to try and run after him, but the movement sent a jarring pain up my shins. I was just going to have to wait it out. If there was one thing I knew about Nick, he would always come back, one way or another. I looked in my knapsack and was relieved to find I’d packed a sweater. I pulled it on over my ridiculous garb and sat back down to wait it out. I rummaged in the knapsack again and dug out a bar of chocolate. I checked my watch. If I had a square every 30 minutes that would last me until daylight and then, well, Nick would be back, or that’s what I told myself.

Perhaps I’d nodded off, but time sometimes does weird things in Backtime. Through the mist there came the sound of voices. I looked up with a start to see three figures making their way towards me. I realised they couldn’t see me; sometimes that happens if the signal’s weak and this fog probably wasn’t helping.

I was sitting at the top of a slight incline and reaching the summit the three paused. I could now see it was two women and a young boy. Their faces were tired and the boy had tears streaking his grubby cheeks. Then I remembered. The Abbey! They must have walked up from the Abbey far down in the valley below. They spoke, and although I couldn’t understand the dialect, I could tell they were lost, frightened. A half memory jolted through me... some nuns and their attendant lost on the moor.¹⁰ The edges of my vision began to blur.

Nick was in front of me then, a faint glimmer of late winter dawn making itself known despite the murk. He had a mad look in his eyes, even for him. He was panting, although whether out of exhilaration or fear, I couldn’t tell.

“Man, you won’t believe”, he said, “You won’t believe...”

“Nick...? What happened?”

“The farm, the cross, none of it’s there.... I mean I know these moors, they’re just not there. Gone.”

“They’re not gone”, I said, “They’re not even here yet!”

“What d’you mean?” asked Nick.

“I saw the nuns. The crosses. That’s in their memory. They died. I just saw them... I couldn’t ... I mean I couldn’t stop it.”

A look of realisation flashed across Nick's face.

"The dials. The dials were off, I mean completely off.... This isn't 1896! We've gone Backtime to the twelfth fucking century!"

Endnotes

¹ An anonymous letter known as *The Cottonian Manuscript* written at the start of the 17th century gives a detailed account of the landscape, customs and geology of Cleveland. The letter describes an area rich in minerals and fossils and evidences knowledge of the commercial prospects of this, with advice to its recipient, Sir Thomas Chaloner the younger, to open an alum mine. Chaloner appears to have acted upon this, with his alum works at Belman Bank on the Guisborough Estate opening in 1605. *The Cottonian Manuscript* was most recently transcribed by Dan O'Sullivan, and published in 2012 with a new introduction in *The Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*.

² Despite these achievements the Tees Transporter Bridge was not built by Dorman Long. Following a 1907 Act of Parliament, six tenders were received, with Sir William Arrols Co. Ltd. of Glasgow going on to complete the bridge for a contract price of £68,026 6s 8d (the equivalent of about £6.5 million today). Prince Arthur of Connaught formally opened the bridge on 17th October 1911.

³ *Temenos*, sited in the Middlehaven area of Middlesbrough is a 110 metre long, 50 metre high sculpture by Anish Kapoor. It was intended to be the first of five works by the artist in a series known as The Tees Valley Giants. *Temenos* was funded by the Government initiative The Northern Way, the regional development agency One NorthEast, Arts Council England, the Northern Rock Foundation, Middlesbrough Football Club and BioRegional Quintain. Work began in 2008 and *Temenos* was officially presented to the people of Middlesbrough on June 10th 2010. In September 2012, Kapoor insisted that the other projects would go ahead, but by September 2016 no progress had been announced.

⁴ MIMA (previously mima) opened to the public on 27th January 2007 and houses the Middlesbrough Collection. This collection was brought together from Middlesbrough Art Gallery, Cleveland Craft Centre and Cleveland Gallery. A plan for an art gallery, on a site granted by Sir Arthur Dorman in 1904, failed to materialise and from 1927-1957 the town's collection was housed in The Carnegie Library and Grange Road Methodist Church. In 1957 the collection moved to the newly opened Middlesbrough Art Gallery on Linthorpe Road. The Cleveland Craft Centre on Gilkes Street built on the town's strong ceramics heritage and was home to a collection of British studio ceramics and contemporary jewellery. Its sister institution, The Cleveland Gallery, hosted the Cleveland International Drawing Biennale and closed in 1999. Middlesbrough Art Gallery and The Cleveland Craft Centre both closed in 2003, when plans for MIMA were confirmed.

⁵ Riverside One, or the Community in a Cube as it's now known, was the first, and to date, the only one of Alsop's proposed cube apartment blocks to be realised in Middlehaven. The building received a mixed response upon completion in 2012, but is notable for the high environmental standards of its design.

⁶ *Bottle of Notes* by Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen is composed of words from Cleveland born Captain James Cook's journals. The text, taken from the log of Captain Cook's first voyage to the South Pacific in 1768, reads, "We had every advantage we could desire in observing the whole passage of the planet Venus over the Sun's disk". The inner text is from a 1987 poem, *Memos of a Gadfly*, by van Bruggen about her childhood in Amsterdam, "I like to remember seagulls in full flight gliding over the ring of canals."

⁷ The best known of the many ancient standing stones on the North Yorkshire Moors is Ralph's Cross – otherwise known as Young Ralph to distinguish it from Old Ralph, a much smaller stone sited a couple of hundred yards away to the south west. Old Ralph is accompanied by Fat Betty, more formally known as White Cross. Despite its name, this lump of white painted stone bears little resemblance to a cross. There is a legend that if Fat Betty ever joins Old Ralph they will get married.

⁸ The Dorman Museum was founded by Sir Arthur Dorman of the Dorman Long engineering company, opening in 1904 on Linthorpe Road. In 1927 Frank Elgee, the curator of the museum uncovered parts of an earthenware cremation urn, together with burnt bone and flint at the hill fort on Eston Nab. The Dorman Museum holds a library of archaeological journals and photographs relating to these finds. The Huntcliff figure was moved to the Dorman Museum in 1980.

⁹ The Keith Teasdale Library was presented by his family to Cleveland County Libraries. The books were previously kept in Berwick Hills Library but are now held in the reference room at Middlesbrough's Central Library. The bookplate stuck in the front of each book tell us that Keith Teasdale was "a cabinet maker, student and book collector of Middlesbrough who died in 1974 aged 44." Central Library have been unable to provide any further information about Keith Teasdale and the text in this publication is a fiction, and is not based on any known biographical details about his life or death.

¹⁰ There are many myths about the group of stones known as Old Ralph, Young Ralph, Fat Betty and the Margery Stone. Some say Betty was the name of the Mother Superior at Rosedale Abbey who got lost on the moor. Another story tells of a group of nuns known as the White Ladies and their devoted elderly servant Ralph. They were due to meet Margery, a nun from Baysdale Abbey, when a thick fog descended and they became lost. Ralph shouted their names and they were reunited, and the stones are a reminder of them all. Another version of this myth tells of a less fortunate outcome, with two nuns from Rosedale Abbey and their attendant becoming lost in a thick fog and dying. The white painted cross of Fat Betty commemorates the dead nuns. In another story, a farmer arrives home and only then realises his wife Betty, or Margaret, is no longer with him on their cart. He travels back, only to find her already lying dead on the moors.

A Proposal To Ask Where Does A Threshold Begin & End is presented in and around Middlesbrough's Centre Square from 26 May to 25 October 2018. The artwork is the result of an 18 month process that began in 2016 with an invitation to Joanne Tatham & Tom O'Sullivan to create a new entrance for Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (MIMA).

A Proposal To Ask Where Does A Threshold Begin & End consists of four elements that build cumulatively over the presentation period:

- 1 A maquette on display within MIMA.
- 2 A series of 10 framed photographs exhibited in buildings around Centre Square.

Cleveland Business Centre, Oak Street
Untitled (Upleatham)
Untitled (Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art)

Holiday Inn Express, Albert Road
Untitled (Middlehaven)
Untitled (The former Cleveland Gallery)

Middlesbrough Town Hall, Albert Road
Untitled (Central Gardens)
Untitled (Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art)
Untitled (Middlesbrough Central Library)

MIMA, Centre Square
Untitled (Danby Moor)
Untitled (Tees Transporter Bridge)
Untitled (The former Cleveland Gallery)

- 3 *A Cleveland Oddity*, a publication available in MIMA, written by Joanne Tatham and Tom O'Sullivan.

- 4 A large temporary structure sited from July to October 2018 in Centre Square and abutting the façade of MIMA.

A Cleveland & Oddity Joanne Tatham Tom O'Sullivan