**05.07.21**

**Yeah, so basically like pretty much in each case. It's like about kind of what. Firstly like what you were doing, where, where, where it is, what you were doing. Like, why did you stop and take the picture there? And like you know what's what does it represent what? How natural is it? OK, so yeah, so I don't know where is this one with all the daisies on the left that one on the left is**

It's a walk that I did a couple of weeks ago between. Royden and Saint Margaret's part of the Cam way, which is like a long distance footpath goes sort of through the Storr valley, and connects Harlow to Cambridge I think, and it was, I think it yeah, it's at the edge of a wheat field and it's, uhm, just a naturally occurring. Uhm wildflower Meadow of wild daisies and I just I liked how it's vast as well. I can't quite really get the scale and the photograph, but I mean there are. Thousands of the buggers. And it was really hot sunny day. It was lovely. I was out having a walk by myself. Uhm, yeah, I felt really kind of connected with nature on that particular day, so that's why I stopped into that picture.

Yeah, the one on the right is actually just in a garden and around the corner from where I live in Dalston. Uhm? Again, it was a beautiful hot summers day and this person's front garden, uhm? Which should obviously been planted with wild flower seeds. You can see a couple of poppies and some more dasies there. It was full of bumble bees collecting their nectar and then yeah, I tried to get a one really close the be doing its business.

**So like, yeah, you said the first one is naturally occurring. The second one is a garden, but are they as natural as one another or what? What's the kind of relationship to nature well?**

I mean, I'm not too sure how. You know how wildflower meadows occur naturally? I mean, I would imagine. You know the seeds are just kind of in the ground. Maybe they get kind of dropped by birds, or they don't. Yeah, but I mean, you know obviously the one on the right it was, it was. It has been deliberately planted so I walked past that house. UM, at all times of the year, and I I see them. You know, sort of weeding and. And I see the garden looking as though it's being prepared for planting seeds and everything, so it's. But what I like about it is that they've you know it's it's not one of these kind of really nicely manicured gardens. They've obviously just scattered loads of seeds and hope for the best. And you got a nice mix of. Different wildflowers there,

**yeah, So what is that more natural than if they planted them in like regimented rows? Or yeah you could say it creates a more natural effect, right? More akin to the types of meadows that one would encounter out in the countryside like the one on the left. But is it? But is it? Is it like a a far cry? Or is it, you know, is it just like the same but smaller or?**

Yeah, well it's you know. I mean, it's kind of the same but kind of different. But you know, I mean, I suppose 1 interesting thing about the thing on the left is that obviously that you know it's it was at the edge of a field that had been ploughed and sort of sold with them. A wild world come what's called you know, wheat, we or whatever it's maize. Sort of stuff. Uhm you know so although the these wild particular wildflowers weren't. Probably planted by a farmer. They're probably the result of a deliberate kind of man-made UM bit of planting. So in that way I suppose are not too dissimilar from the ones on the right that have very much been deliberately placed there in order to achieve a pretty effect.

**Cool. How about this this Meadow? This is Hackney Downs yes?**

Uhm, I've visited this Meadow quite a lot in the past few weeks. It's kind of at its peak now, uhm? Oh yeah, and it's yeah. I mean this tomorrow is looks like it's kinda. You know they've this is. A mix of lots of different flowers in there, it doesn't seem that akin to one that would be in nature just because it's sort of too. I don't know you haven't got kind of one particular flower, they are all bunched up together, it's it's like come. Yeah, it looks to me like it's kind of a pretty sort of manicured scene somehow. Although it is beautiful. Yeah, and it's you know it's obviously very much again been deliberately placed there for the public enjoyment. But you know, it's doing its bit for nature in helping bees and other pollinators and achieve their goal in life. To bee. To be or not?

**So what are you doing in Hackney Downs like? You know when you were taking this we we going there specifically to go and look at this Meadow?**

This is actually on Midsommar day and I went there with my partner and our little baby. This is a Swedish tradition to go and pick flowers and make a sort of headdress. On Midsummer days you know, as part of this sort of celebrations, Sweden's the kind of country where summer arriving is quite big thing. So we wanted to capture a bit of that atmosphere and this is the nearest place that we could do it. So we sort of had a little picnic. Wonder if the Meadow, uhm, I think I'll I went right into this sort of center of it, where they've now cut footpath. I think they could have footpath in order to sort of stop people trampling all over the flowers you know is is there. Want to do? Uhm? So yeah, that's what I was up to, really.

**Excellent and so that we've got kind of flowers here as well, but in a slightly different kind of way, yeah. Well, where is it?**

This is by the bridge. The road bridge carries the railway over the edge of Hackney Downs just on Downs Park Rd. Uhm, not interesting. Few a little flowers. There's some wild daisies. I'm not sure what the ones in the bottom called you might be able to help me out with that. Uh, we've got a few of those ones in our garden. They they tend to sort of like little cracks in the wall. Yeah yeah. And I just. I liked the juxtaposition between sort of come. You know? Man-made brickwork and. Pipes of varying ages, scaffolding and a bit of nature. Yeah, it goes to show that nature will prevail.

**I think that's the bottom is called… The common name is Kenilworth Ivy, so it's it's actually a garden plant. But then it escaped into the grounds of Kenilworth Castle. OK, first place, but now it. Now it's just like everywhere, yeah,**

So presumably not native to this country, then no, no. I mean, yeah, so does that matter in terms of like you know how you would read this image? I suppose to the untrained eye, no, it doesn't really matter, I mean. You can sort of. I mean yeah, it's interesting reading a book at the moment, which I think I mentioned last time about the history of countryside in this country, and sort of how our most common flora and fauna got here. And you know, sort of. Variously when it arrived and how and so forth and. Yeah, and I mean. Is again, you know, just like an example of a landscape that could not possibly exist were it not for humans and people might look at this. You think, Oh yeah, it's just so Naturally occurring. But we did it. Coming out of the wall. But I mean to me not knowing too much about flowers and weeds and plants and things, it did stick out as looking a little incongruous and decidedly sort of like a plant that is not native to this island. Why? Because it was 'cause it. Well, it's not. I don't know. I can't really put my finger on. On why, but it's just. I don't really got much more to say about this one right now, I’m stumped.

**Well, let's move on. So so these are plants too.**

Big yeah, one of the right is the Totteridge Yew which I've visited. A few months back, uhm, it's purported to be the oldest living thing in London. It's supposed to be around 2000 years old. Uh, which is pretty fascinating. Also, 'cause there's a church that was built there and you know a lot of. Churches were originally built, I suppose in sort of Saxon times or or later around earlier Pagan sites of worship. Uhm, Yew was venerated tree by lots of Celtic tribes. So. Yeah, it's kind of fascinating, but it's you know it's still there and it's still alive in quite a. Bizarre sort of out of the way part of London as well. It's sort of. It's like a bit of country or surrounded by, UM, quite. Modern housing estates. But it's you know, sort of this hanging on. Despite all of that.

The one on the left is the tree canopy. Uhm, just over the road from where I live in Saint Marks Church is taken from a bench that I'd like to sometimes go and sit on outside the church during lockdown when I sort of needed to get out the house for various reasons, I would quite often just climb over into the church or go through the gate. It wasn't locked and and just sort of sit for a while and you know, let the sort of. Swaying tree canopy Kind of a. You know it can't be done. Transport me away into a slightly more Zen state of mind. And so it's a special place for me.

**so I guess both of these trees in their way have that kind of. There are some benefits, you know, historical or interesting or just like for the for the mind. Yeah, why did you? I mean, why did you choose to visit the Totteridge Yew?**

I think. Well, I'd read about it and I think, yeah, just the mere fact you know it's it's like for me visiting, you know ancient Neolithic, burial mounds or any sites on the landscape that. You know date from the prehistoric times which. In the seven level kind of whether it's in the mind or. Uhm? Yeah, any kind of real way allow you to sort of connect with our ancient past, and I think this is, you know, the fact that it's a living thing. I mean, I know I've read a bit about yews and I know that it's kind of, you know, the bark and the. The makeup of the trunk kind of change and and changes and renews itself over overtime. So you know, although there has been a you there for all of you know 2000 years? Alright, it might not be made up of the exact same kind of bits, same components, but Even so it's it's a place that you can visit today and it's a link to our distant past and it sort of puts things into perspective, and I suppose humbles you and, UM, makes you realize. Kind of how insignificant you are and how your problems. And life don't really matter because you know this. Something like this will will carry on living long after you've gone just in the same way that that life well. So yeah.

**How about in terms of like nature and you know there's this super old you the oldest thing going and then there are these plane trees? Are they both? As natural as one another or indicative of nature,?**

yeah, well, the plane trees are more indicative of nature. UM, obviously again, the they're not as old as I mean they're not the trees themselves. On as old, and the species are playing isn't, you know, like it, it's it's not a sort of ancient native. Species native to this island over this country, uhm. But it's you know, I think the thing about the picture on the left is I'm lucky to live right over the road from this place, and it's it's kind of. It's the nearest bit of nature that I can get to. So for me, it's. You know it is it's it's kind of yeah.

Yeah, this this just shows you just need some from the previous UM, yeah. Picture, you know this is a place where I go to sort of feel a little bit more. Yeah, so get outside of the house and get outside of my own. Self and. Try and reconnect little little bit with nature in some sort of small way, and it's kind of ironic that it's next to church 'cause I'm not a religious man. You know, I'm quite spiritual though in the way of, you know, I sort of believe that there's a some kind of spirit of life running through all of us, which extends into the natural world and you know, out across the universe and space and time, etc. And not to get too deep. Uhm? Yeah, but for me the UM. My most important. A place where I come to worship is outside the church.

**This is your your altar.**

Yes exactly yeah.

**OK, that's that's all brilliant. What about this bridge here? Well, you know the task was to go and take photos of things of nature. Well, why did you take this picture?**

Well, I thought this was interesting. This was again again on the walk from Royden to Saint Margarets. This is sort of near the conclusion of the walk on the way to Saint Margarets train station, so Road Bridge over the River Lea Navigation and it just struck me as a pretty rural scene and not too far from the heart of London. But you know what's interesting is probably pretty much everything in. It is not obviously naturally occurring thing, including the river which was diverted and dug out as a sort of, you know, navigational aid, or you know, navigational channel. Victorian times, UM.

Yeah, I mean I guess the the most for me, the most natural natural thing in this picture would probably be the sun or the trees in the distance, although no doubt some of them are are in the gardens of the houses that you can see. And I suppose the sky is about the most natural thing that you know that's the most thing. The thing that is most untainted by man. Yeah. Most visibly untainted.

**I guess it's almost it's like that Hackney Downs wildflower Meadow or the garden or whatever you know, or even the perimeter of the farmers field in a way, you know you could say that's they are a part of nature or natural but in their way, but then they're all the work of the hand of man in a another way.**

Yeah, but I mean you know what's great about the the canal. Uhm, River Lee Canal and the Hertford Union Canal. Or you know, the sort of canals that people use in London for pleasure. Is that at one time I? I suppose there would have been quite highly polluted by industry now and now that industry has moved away, some of the nature has returned or it's you know, sort of. Uh is got there for the first time, you know? I mean, I'm sure there there is. Sort of. Birds and fish is and. Pondweeds and whatever that wouldn't have been there at the time that it was built up, just 'cause it would have been, you know, like there have been heavy industry using it the whole time. And pollution running into it so. Yeah, although it's a a man made object, it is conducive to sort of, UM. You know it's helping out the nature around it I suppose. Right, yeah?

**Cool. What about these manhole covers?**

**Y**eah, yeah, this is actually the same Storm Drain covers taken about a week apart and this is in Bohemia Place in Hackney, nearby where I work. And it's, uh, what I like about these they come is that there's a few of them dotted around and. There all the ones in in the kind of immediate vicinity of of Mare Street and Amhurst Rd connected to the sewer which runs underground, which was originally the Hackney Brook which runs through it. I mentioned that last time as one of my obsessions.

And you can sort of trace the the course of it, but you can trace course of it on a map, but these are the kind of. Uhm, you know visible reminders that it's it's still there and it's still kind of flowing underground and the picture on the right. You know, I like it because it's it's taken during a heavy rain storm and it's a. You know it's it's the it's the river still there still kind of doing its job spiriting the water away to the sea or be it come in a culverted and covered up manner.

**What makes that so natural? That's like a kind of thing where, like there's the natural stuff doing it's doing its thing there, but in a way that's been messed about with by people.**

Yeah, like that. That doesn't necessarily make it any less likely to occur or less natural. It's still yeah, well, that's it fascinates me that it's. You know you can't really get rid of rivers, you know so many of them flowing underground in pipes below London. You know they're all all the rivers that sort of ever flowed in London pretty much is still there. They've just been diverted underground. Turn into sewers and I like the fact that you know they they persist and they're kind of, you know, running underneath us as ghosts of the past, and UM. A link to future. Like the UM. Uh, yeah, I mean, you know.

Obviously if you if if if anybody was to look at these two pictures, they say, well, OK, well, it's just not natural at all. There's nothing natural there, yeah, but you know, I mean pretty much like, I mean, we've said this before. It's it's hard to kind of get into it when you sort of thing, right? You know, obviously all the metal has been mined and is natural, and the stones are natural and the rain is natural and. Yeah, and the thing that it's the purpose. Of it being there, you know is it's for a. No natural phenomenon, you know, rain falling and. Being carried along in rivers and so forth. Yeah, uh cool yeah.

**Of these, but for these two together. Because they're both animals.**

Yeah, uhm? Yeah, the one on the left is a horse, obviously in UM Hackney City Farm, which is another great asset in this part of London I think was originally part of the gas works. Uhm, that was on this show surrounding streets that was heavily bombed in the Second World War and opened in about the 70s or 80s as a city farm. So it's a great place to go. Uhm, bring all the family, especially like for. You know, I always think there's probably so many inner city kids. That unlike you or me may have grown up in slightly more rural areas, probably don't don't very often get the chance to be up close to. Farmyard animals you know, like horses, pigs, chickens, etc.

So yeah, this was on a on a day out. About a month ago took my little lad out to see the animals and he thoroughly enjoyed it.

Yeah, the one on the right is. I think it's a damselfly, rather than a dragonfly. Yeah, that just happened to land on my thumb one hot, sunny day. Picture of it because it's not something that happens every day and I I love you know. Dragon flies and damselflies, it seem kind of quite magical to me. Yeah, I don't know if it's just something about the way they sort of glide through the air in quite an elusive way and never sort of seemed to stay long on any surface and so I felt quite sort of lucky to have this one land choose my thumb as a momentary rest point.

**So obviously the damselflies, like hey. You know, in its way a wild animal and then this this horse. Is is, you know it's domesticated. Breeds, liking, uh, and it's on you know this small bit of field that used to be a gas works. Yeah like are they? What's the? What's the difference between those two? Or is there any difference between those two animals?**

Uhm? Yeah, I mean the this it's interesting. Yeah, hold the fact that the horse is very very much something that you know has been kind of engineered by man over the centuries to for his own needs. And I remember reading that. You know the sort of earlier breeds of horses that existed in nature with quite a lot of smaller, I suppose, more akin to sort of tiny little Shetland ponies. And so you know, I mean, although you can find horses similar to this in the wild, say in Dartmoor, or like you know, in the plains of. Uhm America where they've been set free by man? Uhm yeah, it's an entirely sort of. Yeah, rather like domesticated cattle or or or pets, you know. So it's cats and dogs. It's something that's. Sorry, was that. Yeah, something that would not exist with we're not for human intervention.

Yeah. And that being said. Uhm? You know it's it's kind of, I suppose, in its natural habitat, inasmuch as it can be. You know, horses generally spend their whole life. It's kind of in a paddock, probably usually slightly bigger than this one, but uhm. You know, I mean it, it doesn't know that it's a domesticated thing, does it? It doesn't particularly know or care that it's not out in the world. It's probably just as happy as that. Damselfly on the right is. Yeah, maybe it's not. Anyways, as much as you can know what a damselfly thinks.

I don't know too much about them. I mean obviously they they you see him often around water. What's interesting is I obviously I can't remember exactly where it was, but I wasn't. It looks like I'm. At the side of the road, that's possibly my bike in the background, I've sort of. Got off to take the picture and. Uh, yeah in yeah in in many ways there. You know not too different because of both creatures on this planet we call Earth.

**Yeah, I mean it's funny. You say that about like you know the damselfly being. It's on the street there. 'cause obviously that's not a very natural place. So I wonder what it was doing there.**

I mean, I, I guess The thing is that in London, London especially, there's so few kind of, UM. You know, I mean, there's so much built up, so comparatively few sort of natural. Areas, although we know that that's fraught term in itself and that I guess now and again they've creatures, or, you know, minibeasts, where they are, insects that sit in states like this had to kind of break out of. The. What would be their usual habitat in order to, yeah, go out and sort of find food and come whenever it else it is. They need to find, yeah.

**OK, right? So what are we looking at here, right?**

Well, this is known as a swan, and it's made a nest for itself out of some reeds. I think this was taken in Mile End Park. Pretty sure it was. Or was it? Yeah it was. Uhm and you can see it's it's quite a sort of landscaped environment, UM? I'm pretty sure not 100 cent sure, but you know, I think that redbeds sort of encouraged there by the hand of man. So this is kind of an example of a. Uhm? At bird Native bird to this country. Which is was probably at one time sort of, not as loved as it as it is now. You know. I mean, I know people used to sort of like eat Swans, and there's a shooting and killing them for Christmas dinner.

But you know, we like Swans, 'cause they're so pretty and graceful. And you know they're protected now by royal charter and whatnot. Uhm? Yeah, I just thought this was just a nice. And I seem to walk past or to cycle pass. I think I was cycling around that day just exploring Mile End part yeah. It's not a very natural scene. In some ways, but it's. Again, a blend of, uh, yeah, I've kind of. There are a lot of my photos seem to be kinda. Uhm? Yeah, on some level unnatural and on some level Nashville I guess. Like So what in this? In this it's natural 'cause it's a native British birds, but it's in this unnatural park in this unnatural. Read. Habitat, yeah, but but it's made. You know it's sort of it's made a nest for itself. It's doing it's it's natural thing, so I guess that's kind of natural.

Well, I find quite interesting is sometimes if you're going down the river. You see Swans or little ducks, or coots, that made nests for themselves out of plastic bags and tin cans, and a mixture of you know rubbish and twigs, and it's kind of interesting, you know, because again, that's. To the bird itself, it's just as natural. It probably isn't really differentiating between a twig and a packet of crisps, it's just using whatever it is around it for it's, you know, for its nest.

**But yeah, I saw it and that just kind of just shows that that divide is really in in our own heads.**

Yeah, it's completely in our own heads. 'cause you know, this one just happens to have found this area and. And is chosen it as a likely spot for its nesting ground. And good luck to it, I say.

**So what, uh, what? What is this?**

It's just some. This is about a week ago or a few days ago when we had really heavy rainfall and there were loads and loads of snails in in my garden, sort of. Obviously it brings out the snails. There seems to be a lot more snails when I think about it in in all the gardens I've lived in London than there ever were back in my mom's house where I grew up in in Gloucestershire, and I wonder if it is just because of the sort of UM? A little positive, kinda. Green space for them to go up so you know they're all kind of bunched up together in people's gardens, or whether it's you know, so that for some reason there's like a big kind of. A population boom, I suppose, possibly because of all the sort of you know bits of food that there is lying around as a result of this being a very densely populated city.

But but anyway, on this day there were a lot of. Snails out in the garden so I collected them all up and put them in a pot and take over over the road. Uhm and then. About an hour later, there was just as many again in the garden, so I just thought, well, what's the point? But I liked how, how they were all sort of clambering about all over each other here, like some some sort of. Snail Jamboree uh yeah.

**It's kind of interesting that, like the kind of unnatural landscape here or the gardens or whatever, somehow seem to bring about. But more nature?**

Yeah, exactly, you know there's there's so many, so many birds and snails, and you know all manner of wildlife really, and. It's yeah, it's it's interesting and it is this a few plants out here that they really do. Like one is the UM, we've got strawberry plants, which I've still had to move to a different part of the garden, where hopefully they're not gonna eat all the strawberries before they've become ripe. And I've got some hops growing as well. And yeah, that that and and some Lily of the valley. Those seem to be the ones that the snails are most keen on.

I've also got some herbs out there which should be covered in netting to stop snails getting in, 'cause I've sort of learned my lesson from the past, UM. Well, I didn't have any netting release form of covering over then they just got eaten sort of pretty quickly. But yeah, I mean I, I suppose you could argue that I've sort of encouraged this amount of snails inadvertedly by having some of the plants in the garden that I've got there. Yeah. So it's some you know it's kind of my fault and I can't go around moaning that they're all there, 'cause they're just sort of trying to get on with their lives, I suppose. Just like you and me. And that bee.

The other time, lion, the horse and this one. Yeah, you know all of the myriad and wonderful creatures of this earth.

**Speaking of which. Yeah. Tell me what, what, what are you doing here? Aside from taking a photo?**

Well, this is a human man. This may come out on my walk. Uh, between Royden and some Margaret's the other day, UM. Yeah, I just I thought I'd just put this in here just to sort of demonstrate, uhm. What I like to do on of. Whenever I can, you know I like to get out into the countryside. I go for walks find it really therapeutic performed. Uhm, I can switch off my mind. Uhm, you know sort of, I forget all my troubles and just be focusing in on what I can see around me and the sights and sounds. Uhm yeah, so this is this is me. And uhm what I feel.

It's more of a natural habitat. Uhm? For a person, then maybe a slightly more built up area. I certainly feel more at home in this kind of landscape. So I mean, is it not possible to?

**Why do you have to go to the countryside to get that sort of UM to feel that way or to. Do you know what's the? Can you not? Get the same kind of thing from all the green spaces in Hackney?**

Not quite for me, uhm? It seems like the kind of. Yeah, the vast most of vast the spaces that I have to look out over. Uhm, the more I can. Sort of. Let go somehow and the less I feel sort of hemmed in, uhm? You know, I, I think you know. Obviously, like sitting out in the garden, that's nice and garden isn't quite as nice as sitting out in the churchyard over the road. And that's not quite as good as being in the in the Downs. That's not quite as good as being in the marshes, and that's not quite as good as being out in the field for me and.

Yeah, it's something that, uh. Only really discovered or rediscovered when moving to London. I sort of realized, oh God, I really missed the countryside. 'cause it? So I didn't really think of that much being a kid, but you know, we'd go for walks and things and I just sort of take it all in my stride. I was lucky to live in a part of town which wasn't too far from the countryside. Uhm? And yeah, I I miss it and so for me it's getting out into the country is. Possibly a way of sort of connecting with my younger self as well. Uhm?

And yeah, as I say, I mean it's it's amazing on so many of these walks. So I I find myself doing, you know I'll be out in a kind of footpath or brideleway for hours at a time and I won't see another person. You know that I might maybe see one person walking their dog or something, UM, and it's just incredible when you think of the population of London. Still kind of crammed in and some housing estates and. You know highly built up areas, highly populated areas. Uhm, you just thought they'd be more than more people wanting to ramble, but I mean, I, you know I like doing it for that effects.

And you know the fact that I don't see many other people master master. This makes me feel a bit more sort of special. And in in significant in, you know, faced with all that sort of, you know, the vast difference keeps me before me.

**How about? I mean, it's kind of similar to what you're saying about the. This is the City Park. Farm sorry the farm. Yeah it's like. I mean, it's probably. Is it important to? Traveling with you feel like you should be kind of getting people on the bus and bringing them out to places like this or UM.**

Yeah, I mean possibly. I mean, you know, I know that come there is such a thing as sort of nature therapy isn't there? You know where where that very thing is done. Those people you know put people out. Take people out for country walks and things people that might not necessarily otherwise experience it. And for somebody like me, you know there's nothing I hate more than. Being out, walking and then suddenly seeing a group of you know, sort of like an organized group of 20 or so ramblings that really sort of spoils things for me. I remember I went to. Place in Epping Forest called, which is known as the Lost Pond as a really really tranquil spot. Uhm? And there's one other person actually over the other side of the lake, kind of meditating and. And then all of a sudden, yeah about 20 or so. Sort of Gray haired. Chattering Ramblers showed up and it really sort of spoilt the illusion of calmness.

Uh, so. But then you know that's just that's just sort of me. Maybe being a little bit so selfish, wanting to like sort of. Have a bit of country to myself, which is a strange thing that that humans do, I guess because you know it's like. On one level, you can't really. You know you can't own the land anymore than the land owns us. Uh. Yeah, so I'm so rambling away. Little bit rambling about rambling, yeah exactly

**no it's but it's better the more the sort of less that I sort of asked questions and the more that everyone just pontificate, it's really yeah…**

I'm glad you put these two together because some. The one on the left is, UM, it's a sort of UM. What's the outside of the kind of footpaths sloping bit of ground on Cecilia Rd? Just around the corner from where I live and also from where you live. Uh, I walked past it quite a lot. I like to walk on that side of the road 'cause it just it feels like the remnants of some old country lane. And I wonder if it if it is in fact, you know I've had to look at it on an old maps and it was. This road was certainly there before lots of the housing was built, uhm. It was. It's also a place that, UM, during the lockdown I would visit from time to time, or I deliberately sort of go there on my walks just to sort of experience and a bit of pseudo nature. I suppose.

**Why is it pseudo, because it's surrounded by roads and housing?**

So yeah, and it's it's. It's not kind of as. Uhm? Yeah, like it goes back to what I was saying about sort of wanting to be in, UM, you know, the open countryside rather then kind of a tiny. Block of greenery but that you know this being the only thing available to me I suppose, UM. But yeah, it's an interesting mix of sort of wild weeds and grasses and flowers there as well, and there's quite a lot of mugwort, so I'm not sure if there's any in that picture.

There are some other things I've picked from there and taken home and made into herbal teas before. Which is nice. UM yeah, and it struck me when I was taking this picture, which I actually just took today and I was just wondering if any of that had been sort of planted there by the Council. You know, this kind of thinking? Have they sort of like scattered certain sort of seeds and and then on my sort of travels around the, uh, I took the photograph on the right, which is the railway line just behind Ridley Rd market. As it just before it descends into the tunnel under Dalston Lane, and I notice there were a lot of the same sorts of wild flowers and weeds as the picture on the left. So it sort of confirmed for me that you know, it's probably a naturally occurring bit of a scrub land and after all, UM, which the Council would just just sort of left to to go wild, I suppose. Uhm, I'm glad that they have 'cause it's it's, you know, a nice. Kind of survivor, I suppose. From the landscape in a quite heavily built of area. So even though it is like it's, it's not managed or it's. Or it is actually kind of genuinely what like wild or whatever.

**But it's still not. It's still pseudo in nature because of its location?**

Yeah. It's called yeah, kind of or it's 'cause it's small. Or yeah, I think to me. Yeah, for me that's that's what makes it sort of pseudo. Nature, I mean it's depends like. For the purposes of. Going somewhere to experience nature is, you know it's not kind of. It doesn't tick all the boxes for me, but it will do I suppose. Uhm, that's why I kind of. That's probably why I called it pseudo nature. Yeah, uhm.

And yeah, again, like the the railway line on the right, you know railway line is very interesting, a bit like motorway verges because they're sort of unchecked bits of landscape where anything can flourish. Kind of completely down to chance. I suppose you know very few. Uh, of those plants or trees would have been deliberately placed there, but they are the result of, UM. Yes, seeds being dropped in the the wind from the train trains carrying seeds along and so forth. And you know. And they are the beneficial in their way to come. Yeah, it's it's a wildlife habits and insects and bees and whatever else. Foxes probably, uhm. You know there's a lot of railway lines in London, so you know, I suppose. Although this isn't these aren't really bits of nature that can be sort of got to and experienced sort of 1 to one by the average man in the streets. You know there's still kinda. Yeah no uhm. Still beneficial I guess.

**What do you mean to to people or to?**

Well, probably more to, uh, you know to other species than to people. Well, like I said in the piece, well, you know it's it's. It's nice to look out of a train window and see you know a bit of grass, isn't it? It's it's nice to see that and some concrete to me it is anyway. Maybe not to everybody. You know I'd be interested to to hear how many people you've interviewed sort of mentioned things like that.

OK, moving swiftly on this was looking the entire opposite direction from the previous photograph. This is. Uhm, just the other side of the road from that railway photograph. And there's like big apartment, yeah, so new build apartments on the beginning of Dalston Lane. Uhm, yeah. To me this represents a very sort of deliberate uhm man made. Natural. Or pseudo natural environment that just to me. It just doesn't look very pleasing aesthetically. Or or otherwise. You know you just you got these thin spindly little trees, uhm? And. Ah, I don't know like the mix of plants that it doesn't seem like they'd be ones that you would really find growing next to each other in. If you were to go out to you, know an ancient forest or ancient woodland or anything you know you got firms and sort of fir trees. Uh, and the other side that was added to something else, UM got silver Birch and I did not quite sure what that one is in the in the background, and it's all hemmed in by sort of a seating area and to me it just smacks of the kind of landscaping that. Isn't really that well thought out. It's just kind of plunked there, and it probably appeals to the sort of people that would want to live in, UM, these sorts of buildings where they're probably not too bothered about having too much greenery to look at and.

But for me it's just, you know, this is not a patch on the railway over the road from it. Look at what it's 'cause like it. It just doesn’t compare. It's hard to describe it's. It's like the same reason why. You know you might sort of like prefer. Uhm? A really realistic painting to sort of just like some bit of modern art or like some Jackson Pollock thing or something. It's just to me isn't as aesthetically pleasing. Probably because it's not a. It it kinda. It isn't something that. You would inherently encounter. In nature, so for me it doesn't. It doesn't rouse the same, sort of. Feelings or emotions? As yeah, as some of the other photos that I've taken and shown you, yeah, there's some. Yeah and again not knowing too much about kind of plants and you mentioned that most things here, are Evergreen. Uhm, I suppose that's probably you know so that they don't kind of need be as well looked after and. Uhm?

Yeah, you know you you kind of got a bit of green space the whole year round. But it's yeah, it just looks crap to me. Sorry, Hackney council.

**Yeah, the other thing I wanted to ask you about is when you said probably the people that live in those flats. The kind of people that live in those flats probably don't care. Why is your impression is that your impression that that those people will be different to you and or there or that there, they won't have the same importance?**

Uhm, I don't know. I mean, I'm probably being massively presumptuous, but. I think they're probably more concerned with money and having a good job making more money because you know, those flats are sort of. You know, I'd imagine the rents are a lot more than what I. What I pay here, and you know, so you'd probably be a certain kind of person and and also. None of them have got gardens of their own, so you'd be the kind of person that wouldn't really. Kind of care too much about not having your own bit of green space to lookout over UM. And I'm just I just, I just can't really think of anything worse than living in one of those new build flats.

I've always lived in kind of old houses. And and it, I think it just it goes hand in hand with kind of wanting to have some sort of connection to the past and to something that's bigger than myself. Uh, you know to be in in an old building. Yeah, and. Yeah, it's some yeah, I just think. It's kinda. In general, the social people that would live there are quite different from from me. Because they're kind of. Gentrifiers or yeah, I think it's got different values from what I have. You know, and again, I'm being massively presumptuous, but that I've all I've got to go on is my own instincts really, so that's what I'll go on.

**Yeah, yeah. And do you think those people would value like this thing on Cecilia Road, or does that sort of stand for like something something different?**

Yeah, I think they would probably. See that and I think it was a bit of a mess and that the Council should trim it and plant some nice like a nice floral clock there. Or, you know some some ferns with some little Christmas trees. I don't know and. You know, I mean, it may well be the the the. Kind of people living in that building just passed by that they agreed and don't even don't think about it at all or it doesn't affect them in any way. I mean to me. You know, walk around London I often see places like that and I just can't wait to get out of them, really. 'cause it it just seems so false and fake. And then yeah, it's just it. It looks like it's just leapt from a kind of, UM, designers computer screen into real life.

And also I I just I can't really, I can't see it lasting for some reason. It's not as though if you I didn't really quite get the scale of the picture, but you know, I was thinking the the tree in the distance and if that was to sort of carry on growing for a few 100 years. It's so close to the building it's yeah it would surely have some sort of it would inflict some kind of structural damage. I would have thought. Yeah, or at least it would, upon the little kind of bench area where it's sitting. And I don't think a lot of architects or town planners really think about this kind of stuff. Maybe they do. Maybe I'm wrong and. But it's yeah, I just it feels like flimsy, right? Yeah, those it doesn't feel like it's it's. It's designed with any sort of thoughts of the future or any kind of. Idea of permanence. Somehow it feels like a kind of fleeting building that will be replaced. You know, within the next century by something else that will come along. But then, on the other hand, is if something is more natural or like nature, that is something which feels more inherently solid or permanent. Uhm? In a way, yeah, although it's ever shifting, it's you know, it's kind. It's always there isn't it's. I suppose it's like like a river. It's like the Hackney Brook and you know it's not the same sort of trees and plants that are there, but it's generally.

You know it's I mean natural - my idea of nature and the kind of green things taking over buildings. I mean you know they'll be here probably long after we've gone. Uh. It's yeah, I remember watching a program years ago that had a quite a profound effect for me. It's all about sort of what would happen to the world if humans just suddenly ceased to exist and it was kind of going. You know, it's sort of OK in the first sort of few hours. Most household pets would have to. We would either die or they'd have to kind of escape out of the house. And, you know, find food and then within a few weeks they become feral, etc etc. UM?

You know and. Really only within a few months plants would sort of start taking over buildings. You know you'd get kind of creepers and Ivy and whatever starting to pull down brickwork and it kind of. It makes me it fills me with. I sense that you know everything will be alright even if the human race completely sort of fuck it all up and. You know nature will hopefully find a way to return. Uhm, yeah, and I kind of think about these things when I encountered the landscapes such as this one. Because you know, I mean, I wonder what would happen to these trees and these ferns and everything. You know, were they not sort of kept an eye on by man. You know how soon they would kind of break out and take over the, UM, the modern buildings around them. It's an interesting notion, I think.

**OK, that brings us onto this last yeah one here.**

Yeah well this is. This is a good one this is this is on the walk again. The one on the left is it place could never haul in just outside. Royden in Essex. It's a the remains of a Tudor gatehouse to a mansion. Uhm, or just part of part of the mansion somehow? And you can see it's been sort of, you know, taken over somewhat by a trees and plants, and it's you know, I would imagine it's slowly eroding. What's quite interesting about it is it's it's not open to the public. It's on a private bit of land. You know I had to sort of trespass essentially onto somebody's driveway to take this photograph. You know and. It's it's amazing that it hasn't fallen down sooner. When you think of it. I mean, it's it's Tudor it. So what's that like 600 odd years old?

Uhm, and there's still quite a lot of the brickwork and the windows and everything there. Uhm, so I guess it gives you an idea of the kind of timescale of how long. Nature would take two UM envelope, UM, man-made? Yeah, the man-made environment. But yeah, and it's it's nice this this to me is an aesthetically pleasing shot. Uhm, you know. Unlike ruins, I've always like going to ruin castles and things. It's a nice thing to encounter when you're sort of out out for a walk. Uhm?

She's yeah I guess for that reason because it's sort of somehow kind of puts man in it in his place and shows the UM, you know eventually. The Tudors probably probably thought that their dynasty was going to go on forever, just just like you know, the Roman Empire and just like sort of, you know, whatever epoch we're living in now and. But you know, eventually all the buildings that we see around this, and the ones that we live will sort of no doubt turn into nature. Yeah, so there we go. Lovely uhm.

And then on the right. This is on the same walk as well I guess yeah. Not much to say about this really, although I just I liked the the kind of patterns that the footpath. Made through the fields. You've got to kind of. Ploughed field on the on the right. I think its onions or some other kind of crop growing on the left maybe beetroot, and it's I don't know. Uhm yeah, this is a very much a kind of. Man made landscape you know, patchwork of fields in this country is entirely sort of unnatural. But yeah, it, uhm, you know, I think just the fact that it's kind of so vast and so open the fact there was nobody else around makes it more sort of conducive to. A feeling at being a feeling of being at one with nature to me. Yes, so that's that's why I liked it.

Was just it was a nice part of the walk and a nice sunny day and the footpaths we stretch it out in front of me and. Oh, it's it's kind of, as I say, I just I liked the interplay of colors in the landscape. And just that bigness.

But Big Sky, yeah the the Big Sky looking down all the people that look it up at the Big Sky. Uhm, yeah it is. I mean that song by the kinks. If you listen to the lyrics, it's very true really. The Big Sky, UM, hasn't got time to sympathize. And we've kind of humans petty problems, and I guess for me that's why I like to go out into the country and. Yeah, so feel and in some ways feel very small as a human being, but feel like I'm part of, you know, this sort of vast. Vastness, which stretches far far beyond the horizon and far beyond the visible bit of sky that you can see here into the depths of infinite space. And I, I think you know you can. Just if you're lucky, capture a little bit of that when you're out on a country walk, but not in the city. Uhm, not too. As much of an extent. Uhm, because in a city I feel like this too much kind of white noise and too much too many other distractions. Kind of. Uhm?

Yeah, too much else that is kind of. Trying to make you buy things and. At this, yeah, just distract you in some way from. Uh, yeah, so some sort of like. Spiritual connection with whatever it is. Uhm? No, I don't think cities are sort of the best environment. I think they've kind of. Grown up as a sort of answer to a problem of economics whereby you know you originally needed a sort of a large workforce in one area because that would be where the factory would be. You know, which would make the money for this sort of rich landowner. Uhm? I think we've sort of found ourselves living in these. Crazies of. Mega metropolises, if you will. I think that's the right term

**Possibly**

And to some people, that that's fine. For me, I feel like I just need to escape from it every now and again, although there must be something holding me here. Otherwise I would have escaped from it long ago. Maybe the The thing is that without sort of, you know the the other side of, you know, without the kind of the opposite of being out in the countryside, you can't really appreciate. How good it is being out there? Maybe that's that's the thing. It's the sort of the young and the young and the situation. Yeah, it makes sense. Yeah, cool.

**Well, I guess we're done, yeah. Well, thank you very much**