

...between thoughts and stillness...

a collection of poems and images relating to specific projects 2011-2020

Judie Waldmann

..between spaces spaces between...

*I am hovering in a space that is between imagination, perception, uncertainty and reality;
capturing places and things whose existence may be transient, unpredictable or strange.*

Exhibition with Claire Christie Sadler (drawings)
West Ox Arts, Bampton 2011







...within reach...

In recognition of the individual who feels 'out of reach' and isolated, yet longs to find a reality where potential strengths and self worth are acknowledged and encouraged. This struggle to come 'within reach' was explored metaphorically through my photographs and words and Claire Christie Sadler's drawings.

The poem has four verses spanning several pages.

We exhibited together at the North Wall Gallery, Oxford in February 2015.

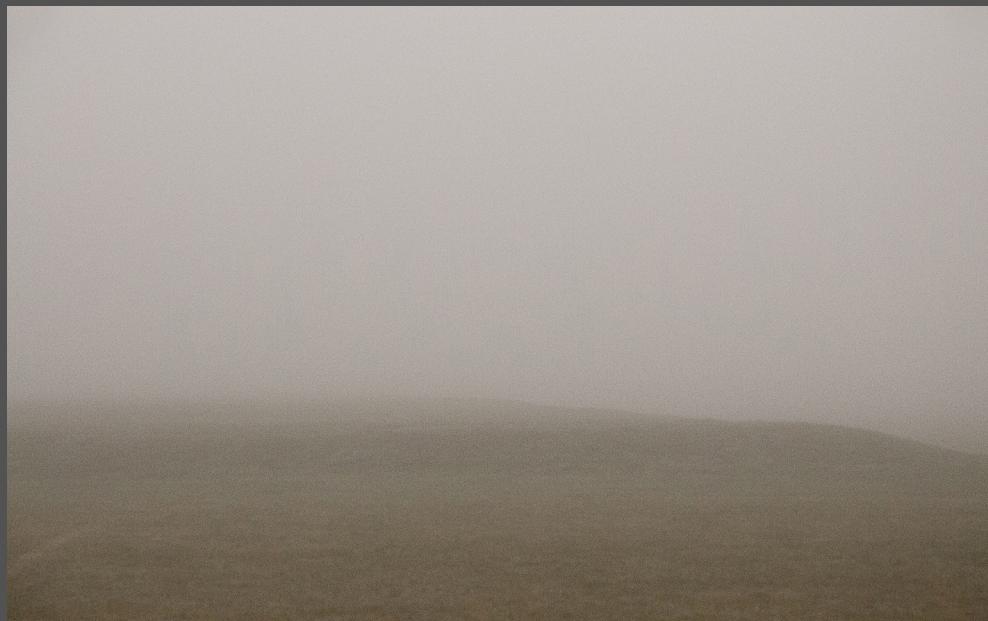
...within reach...

but

*hovering, afraid
not moving,
not developing,
falling inertia
overwhelmed in isolation,
suffocating.*

*thwarted
by changing states
impeding,
blocking, hindering.*







*in need of nuturing, understanding.
the potential, talent, inner beauty all there
waiting...
craves fostering , feeding...within reach if only...*

if only...





*untold narratives
imagination running wild...
distorted, certain perceptions,
colourful nonsense,
significant, intense
trifles
compounding
mistaken mistakes.*

*hidden weaknesses,
concealed strengths,
sore, painful memories
anxious
to be expressed, revealed,
explored,
accepted and understood...*

(reduced opacity of original montage)



(montage)



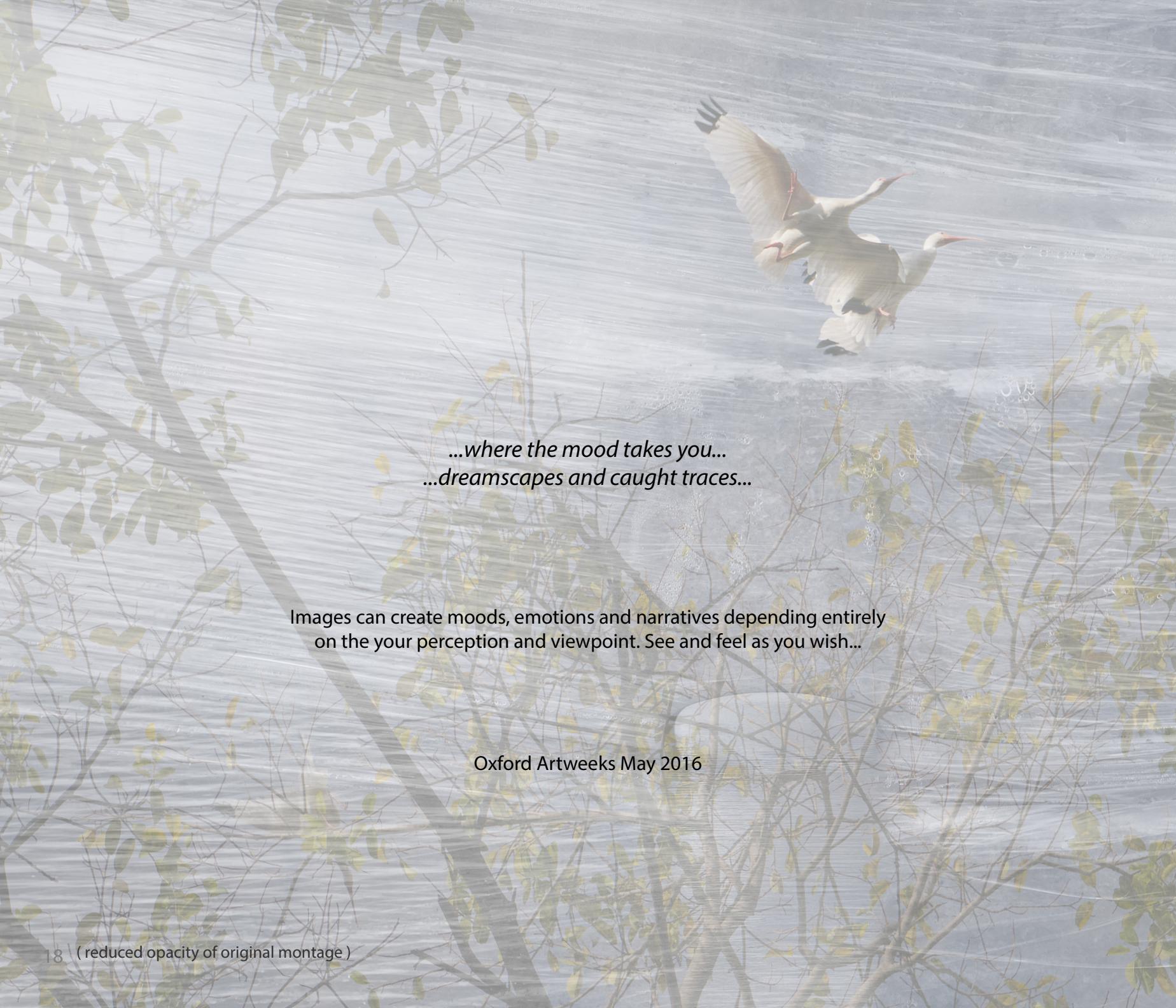


A photograph of a person from the waist up, wearing a light-colored, possibly white, long-sleeved shirt. They are reaching upwards with their right arm, their hand near a window or glass pane. The background is dark, and the window frame is visible.

*all within reach when recognised...
extend just a little further...*

*stretch
and*

*propel self
beyond.*



*...where the mood takes you...
...dreamscapes and caught traces...*

Images can create moods, emotions and narratives depending entirely
on the your perception and viewpoint. See and feel as you wish...

Oxford Artweeks May 2016



dreamscape 2 (montage)

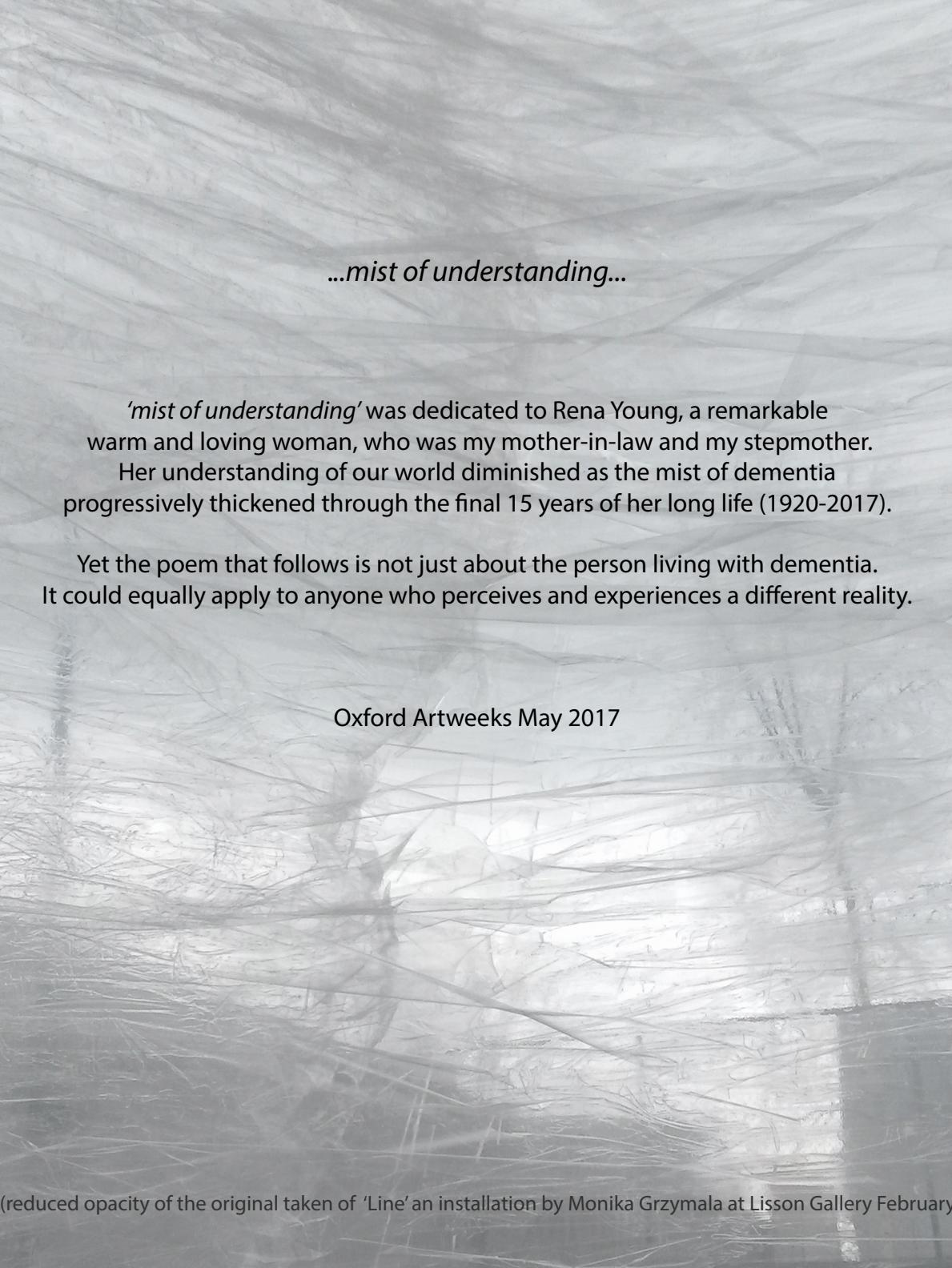


caught traces 1,2,3,4





dreamscape 3 (montage)



...mist of understanding...

'mist of understanding' was dedicated to Rena Young, a remarkable warm and loving woman, who was my mother-in-law and my stepmother.

Her understanding of our world diminished as the mist of dementia progressively thickened through the final 15 years of her long life (1920-2017).

Yet the poem that follows is not just about the person living with dementia. It could equally apply to anyone who perceives and experiences a different reality.

Oxford Artweeks May 2017

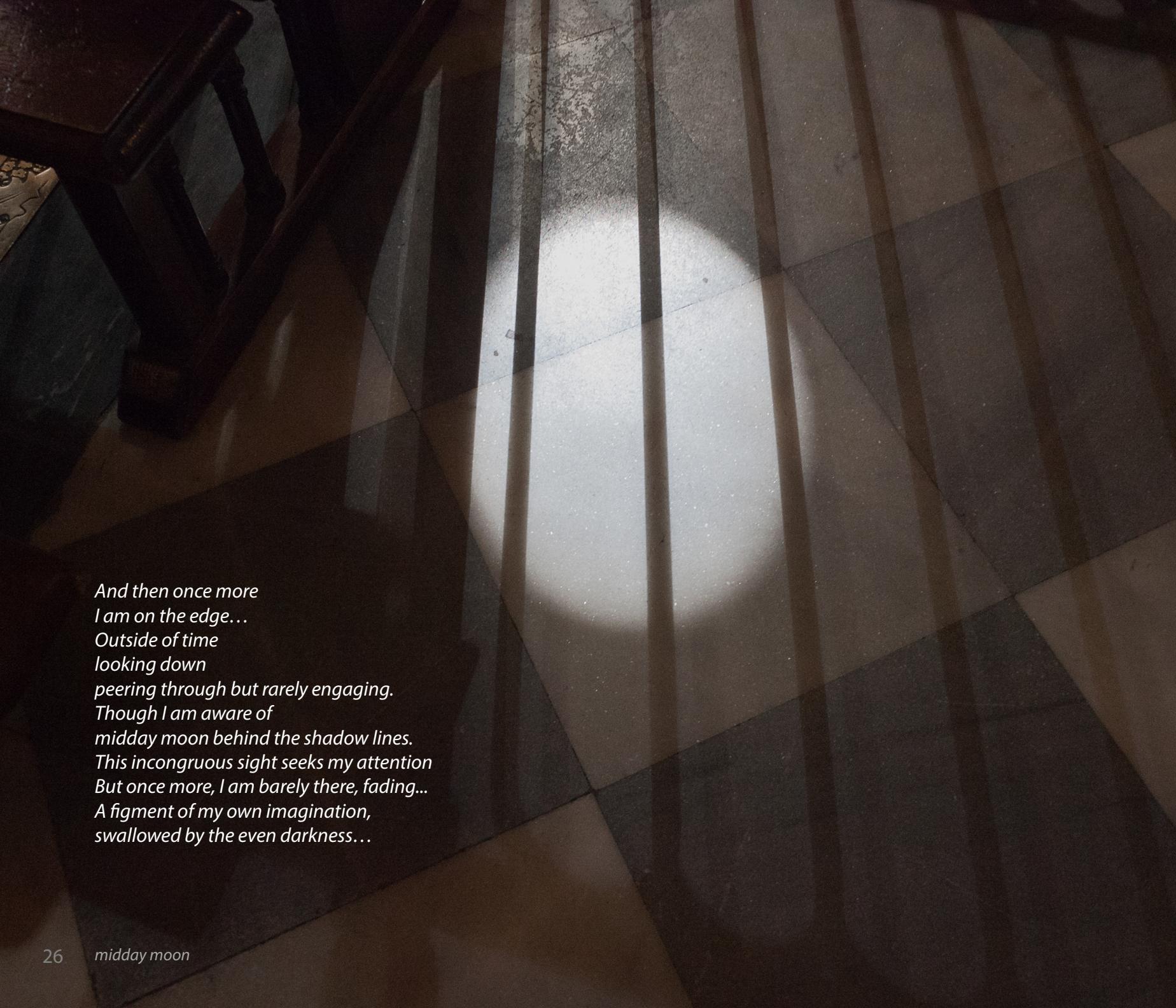
...mist of understanding...

still there in nowhere night.

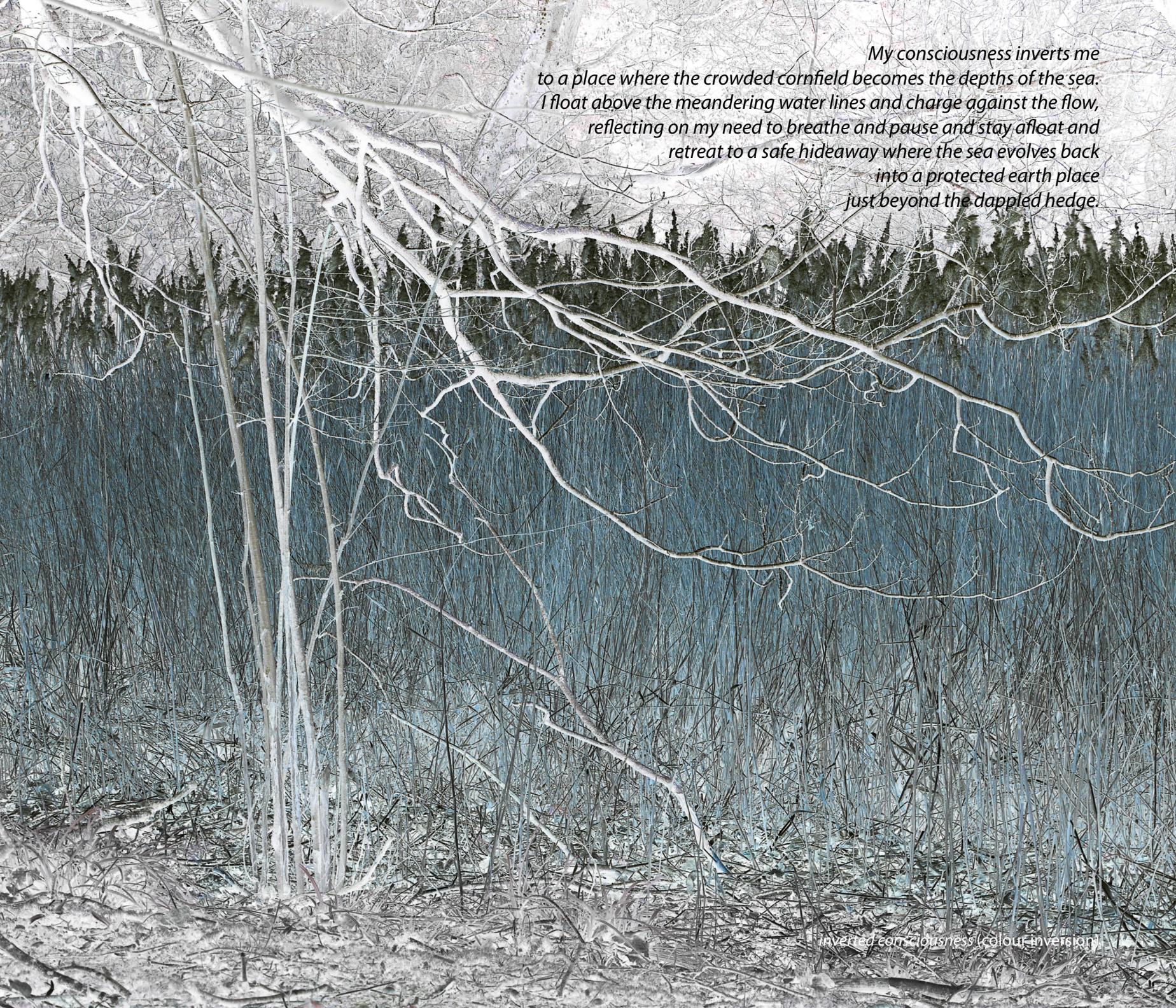
*Balanced precariously between the cracks and the fall,
dim light shining to my descent...*

I stay there briefly...

*Then leave the open silence,
as the brightness touches my eyes but not my soul.
I hold onto hazy and hazier memories
of places that disappear over the horizon.*



*And then once more
I am on the edge...
Outside of time
looking down
peering through but rarely engaging.
Though I am aware of
midday moon behind the shadow lines.
This incongruous sight seeks my attention
But once more, I am barely there, fading...
A figment of my own imagination,
swallowed by the even darkness...*

A surreal landscape featuring a cluster of bare, white-barked trees in the foreground. Behind them is a dense hedge of dark green, spiky bushes. Further back is a dark forest of tall evergreen trees. The sky above is filled with wispy, light-colored clouds.

*My consciousness inverts me
to a place where the crowded cornfield becomes the depths of the sea.
I float above the meandering water lines and charge against the flow,
reflecting on my need to breathe and pause and stay afloat and
retreat to a safe hideaway where the sea evolves back
into a protected earth place
just beyond the dappled hedge.*



*I can curl up there, pass the time.
I have found my halfway shelter.
No longer
(just for the moment)
a shadow of my former self.*

A fine mist of understanding embraces me.

shadow of my former self

*absence and presence...presence and absence...
spaces, interludes and connections*

As with all the other projects in the book I have been inspired by the people I have met doing community work and by my own personal experiences. Most of us at some point in our lives experience the loss of people we love. We grieve and find ways to continue living but we do not forget or lose that void. 'absence and presence' acknowledges that state of being .

I like the way images and words can combine to create metaphors and maybe new ways of thinking. Although in earlier projects I have used untitled images, here the titles are very important.

'absence and presence' is dedicated to all those significant people whom we hold dear but unfortunately can no longer hold.

Oxford Artweeks May 2017







memory of place slips away

My Late Brother

*Late implies
I am still waiting...*

*And I am
Still waiting.
Waiting to see him
To talk to him
To tell him again
I love him.*

*But the lateness
Is continuous
And he is infinite...*

When did 'dead' become 'late'?



the long sigh



Her Last Breaths

Waiting
We are waiting...

Chair creaks

She lies there still breathing...

Soft exclaim
rapid, regular, dry breaths
I count...
2 3 4 in
2 3 4 in

mmmm

Un cross legs
Recross legs

mmmm

twitch,
in out
in out
rattle

Ahhh

faster breaths
gurgle
pause
breathe
cough

Ah...ah

bounding, shallow short breaths
cough

mm

We are waiting, watching,
listening to her
quiet breathing,
soft exclaim,
dry breaths
in out
in out

See her pursed white lower lip

mm
mm

body twitching
cold nose
cold feet

faster breaths
gurgle
pause
sunken eyes
cough
long pause...

We look up

shallower breath, burble
She stops

We look up again
She stops?
She is quiet...
Our hearts skip a beat...

Colour sinks from her face
Has she gone?

But, her breathing suddenly continues

ah ah
mm

deep hollow cheeks

*another
endless
pause.
Where's her breath?*

Ah ah

Watching her is
like birth in reverse
no knowing when.
*Her 4 beat breath barely continues
Heart running
just...
her last marathon*

Surely any moment now,
But...

Hours pass, and more hours still

*She continues
barely there
'til we depart.
It's 1.30am
Leaving her with a friend
is hard...*

We sleep...
for minutes.
Our friend rings us
'her breath stopped at 2.30 am.'
I return.

(her final verse)

*At this moment she really has come to an end.
Nearly 97 years close.
Time stops.*

*...Yet still warm,
though she is definitely silent now
as we wash and caress her stiffening body
for the last time.*

*But she will not cease completely,
for her spirit and energy fly...
and our nerve endings
will embibe her soul.*

*For our forever
we will memorize,
cherish and hold onto
her
Exceptional Being.*



transform absence

'when I first heard you were leaving'

And how do we make sense of this?

No guilt

Don't pass the parcel

Guilt.

Love means

You let go

You let grow

Create flow...

But secretly holding onto

the space,

the vacuum

left behind.

Absorb that hole

Transform absence.

Invent my own path

for me.

And watch

Enjoy

Revel

Embrace delight from afar...

Too bloody far.

Positive thinking

sometimes stinks.

...between thoughts and stillness...

Sometimes we feel that the continual chatter that fills our heads needs to be quelled. These images explore that idea, suggesting that a detailed awareness and engagement with nature may be calming.

The images tend to be poetic and at times strange. They may induce feelings of composure but they may also raise questions in the viewer's mind, creating more thoughts. They do reflect on time, movement, our relationship with our world and the stillness of looking.

This year I needed most of the images to raise a smile of gratitude, appreciation and wonder. The simple form of haiku poetry with a few of the images, delves just a little deeper.

As with all the images in this book, post digital processing is very limited. They tend to capture what I viewed through my lens (even the one opposite).

Any montages are clearly labelled as such, so are colour inversions. Double exposures, over exposure and blur are all deliberately done in camera.

Each included project shows just a selection of images. Many more were exhibited.

My sincerest thanks go to all the people with whom I exhibited, especially Claire Christie Sadler who has been such a close friend and colleague for many years.

This book is dedicated to my dearest Herman and our sons.





*the empty building
fooling with pale pink colour
sheds untold secrets*



*the light slumbers through
the ivy clad opening
breathe in damp soft mist*





only yesterday



*barley golden field
fallen sheaves hugging each blade
as wind hurled straight through*

*beneath the dark bridge
lies the tethered wooden boat
staring at sunlight*





to see and to feel (colour inversion)



*delicate details
emerging from the blurred hues
deep crown crimson sings*

(double exposure)



stillness



Designed using Adobe Photoshop Lightroom