

Jon Butt  
*Fieldcast*

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**CREATIVE**  
VICTORIA



## *An Ersatz Eye*

*As superterrestrial translation technology is still in early stages of development, and highly affected by radiation, please note aberrations may be present in the following transcription:*

### 1. *Eight Electron Microscopies*

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They knew each occurrence was about to begin when they heard the sound -- for it was always the deplorable noise that they experience first. It would begin with a throbbing in the belly, a prickling behind the eyes, as if the body could feel the sonic waves before their ears could detect a thing.

#### *A Curious Transgression*

The sky wheeled above us, limestone arches slicing through the blinding white.

As we stepped further down, further inside, the darker, cooler it became. A stone womb. Its pungent mossy stench growing more and more overwhelming- like a mask of algae was stretched taught over our mouths and noses. An eternal botanic universe strewn with craggy rocks.

Deeper we climbed. Through layers soft clay that engulfed our limbs, past fossils of some spiralled mollusc, one that swam up from the midst of our prehistoric past...





## 2. A Funeral for Images

The air in the library was thick, dust inflaming her skin, seeping into her nostrils, making her eyes stream. A dull noise throbbed in the distance: an aeroplane, a factory, a construction site perhaps? She looked out the window, out onto the garden dotted with ruined gothic pillars: casting dazzling, precarious shadows in the buttery sunlight.

## 3. Parabolic Reflectors OR The City of Glass

Evidence of the earliest manufactured mirrors were pieces of polished stone such as obsidian, a naturally occurring volcanic glass found in Anatolia in 6000 BC<sup>1</sup>. It was Early Renaissance Venetians who perfected the manufacturing of mirrors, achieving a superior method of coating glass with a tin-mercury amalgam, producing an amorphous coating with better reflectivity than crystalline metals and causing little thermal shock to the glass. The Victoria and Albert Museum –prior to the schism and its subsequent demolition – was known for having an abundant collection of antique mirrors –visitors could peer into their mercurial depths, and see their surroundings transfigured into eerie poltergeists, shimmering in the dappled light.

*4. I don't know if you can hear this, and if you can, whether you can understand me, but there is a comfort in speaking aloud...*

Murky shadows cast in erratic directions, creating grainy trilateral planes. What could be a badly printed Malevich reproduction, is actually the steep awning of a shingled roof, a haystack and six windows. But what better image to be left behind, than the very first? The First Photograph<sup>2</sup>, or more specifically, the earliest known surviving photograph made by a camera, was taken by Joseph Nicéphore Niépce in 1826<sup>3</sup>.

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1 Or roughly 8000 BS- [Before the Schism]

2 View from the Window at Le Gras OR Sun Drawing

3 One must allow for the possibility that between languages, there is a high possibility of mistranslation...

The image depicts the view from an upstairs window at Niépce's estate, Le Gras, in the Burgundy region of France.

### *5. A Tower for H. G. Wells*

The beehive sits at the side of the sprawling house. A child runs out into the garden, unwittingly stepping in to the hive's frenzied territory. For a second, she stands still, unable to comprehend this simmering cloud that has consumed her – bees land on her downy cheeks, they nestle into the lengths of her hair. Later in the day she is found relatively unharmed, albeit with some nasty stings that are forming lilac welts on her arms and legs. She gazes down at the clusters of lifeless bees that lie at her feet. This instance will stay embedded in her memory as she ages, becoming increasingly preoccupied with the notion that the bees came to their death, having stung her: destroyed doing the very thing for which they were created.

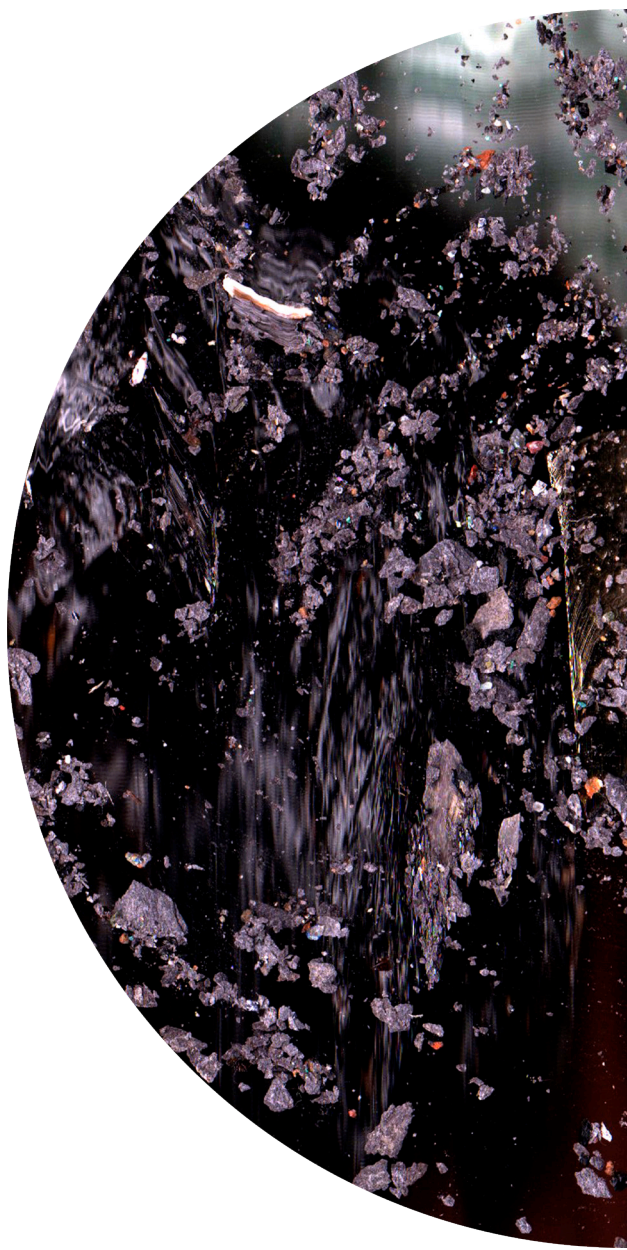
Electromagnetic trajectories. 1.5 centimetres of bone marrow.  
Radiation pulsing, mapping out space in diverging arcs.

### *6. The Spectre of History*

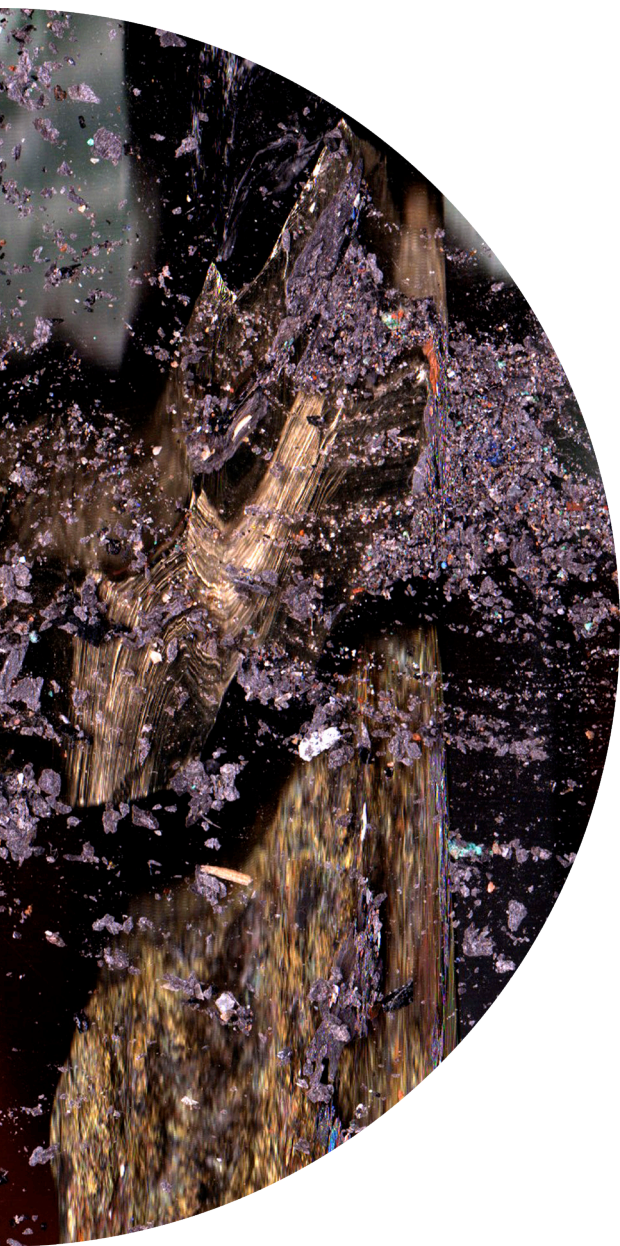
Traversing the frontier between one body and an other... Lilac membrane as fine as a ream of gossamer lace...

----- [Language here is entirely inscrutable] -----

At night I have dreams of cities inhabited with shrouded figures – they turn to face me: plague doctors, the cruel curve of their beaks slicing through the air with a terrible shriek.







*7. Sonar bleeps reverberate throughout the chasm: searching, searching, searching. But there is no response. They continue on their solitary aquatic trajectory with a glum perseverance*

*8. The pain of foresight. If only someone had seen it coming.*

Wilhelm Röntgen discovered the medical use of X-Rays [For x is known to signify an unknown quality] in 1895 when he made a picture of his wife's hand on a photographic plate formed due to the radiation. The photograph of his wife's hand was the first image of a human body part using the machine. When she first saw the picture, she was recorded to have exclaimed: "I have seen my own death."

The subject of early Victorian photography was expected to sit for great lengths of time, therefore, the same was inevitably presumed for taking an X-Ray. What resulted was a deluge of people marred by scathing burns, radiation sickness and horrible swelling.

*9. Fleeing From Inherent Vice*

A fluorescent totem, a blue icon that saturates all in a parched, sterile haze: and yet, when a neon beacon blinks in the distance, we all are flooded with relief at this sign of an other.

Time passes, but they can never tell how long. For them, out from this undulating marine universe, a new kind of time has been born. In their homes, time was once marked by the changing of the seasons, a new harvest, the birthing of cattle, the churning of butter and the threshing of wheat. An ancient time harking back to an age before Roman invasion, before written chronologies: a time of druids and pagan rituals. For others, each hour was marked by a distant tolling of bells, the early morning rasping yelps of a town crier, the months marked by a mother's pregnancies, or a father's rare visits- stumbling into a cramped dwelling late at night.

Now they live in a realm cocooned from the lives they have left behind. Though they know naught of the cosmos, their days pass by the whirling of the planets, the moon pulling at the tide, the hand drawn arcs of a sextant.

A flare of white light wanders the terrain of a perplexing tableaux. With each facsimile image The Ersatz Eye generates, comes the security of having stolen a tiny segment of time, however fleetingly.

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*We recognise the traditional custodians of  
the land and water of the Wurundjeri People  
on which we work and live.*

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