

# SURFACE TENSION:

exploring surface as a  
metaphor for our  
natural world



Submitted for the  
Master of Fine Art, online,  
Falmouth University

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Project Portfolio

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# Contextual Statement

This project was a highly experimental exploration of clay, pushing fragility to the limits of my imagination whilst focusing on metaphors within porcelain: beauty, fragility and value. The intention was to create fragile surfaces which were both site responsive and site specific. Work investigated new processes such as lithography which added to the narrative and incorporated materials from Blacknest Fields, a rewilding site. This conveyed a sense of place and created tension within the surface of sculptures. It also explored the materiality and history of the [gallery's](#) origins, a former a carpet shop which is the oldest building in the street [\(Allies and Morrison, 2017\)](#) incorporating brick dust, blown seeds and feathers swept from the floor. Plans and elevations of the gallery can be downloaded from the artists' information pack via [this link](#).

The culmination of the project was an exhibition in London from June 28<sup>th</sup> until July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Public engagement included a private view and an afternoon discussion. Additional pages featuring the work, including a recording of a 45-minute discussion in the Gallery, were also added to my [website](#).

The question I wished to address was:

*'How can the precarious interdependence between the human and non-human world be conveyed through the creation of fragile sculptural installations using porcelain and found materials?'*

I see my role as raising awareness and facilitating positive experiences of the existential threats to nature: Art sanctioning discussion without apportioning blame. I want my work to resonate with the viewer, prompt memories and instigate change: inviting them to consider the risks that our behaviours pose to the natural world.

Laity asks how we can '*live with the trouble when we are the trouble*' (2020). My exhibition encouraged visitors to tread lightly amongst our planetary partners. The following quote sums up my concerns for the World:

*'We are the first generation to know we are destroying our planet and the last that can do anything about it. We owe it to those who will inherit our planet to ensure the actions we take account for their impact on future generations.'*

*(World Wildlife Fund, 2019).*

My strategy was to give my audience a sense of place, exploring the gallery's history using underlay and wool for mounting work, and invite optimism for the natural world through a positive encounter with installations referencing species relevant to the rewilding project.

Clay implies renewal. Staubach describes it as the Earth's most primal element (2005). Using clay from Blacknest Fields grounded the project within a narrative of sustainability: optimistic people exploring how to not only stay with the trouble (Haraway) but attempting to reverse its impact. The use of plaster moulds to form work was inspired by the ethereal sculptures of [Maria Bartuszova](#). Titles of the work extended the story.

Collaboration was threefold. The exhibition and the public engagement involved close collaboration with the gallery owners. Artist and lecturer, [Anna Bingham](#), led a public discussion about my context, methodology and methods. The work around Blacknest Fields involved collaboration with Alton Natural History Society (ANHS), particularly Cathy Wilson, botanist and Chair of the Society. Her approach, after seeing my exhibition, [Lepidoptera](#), was the genesis of the project.

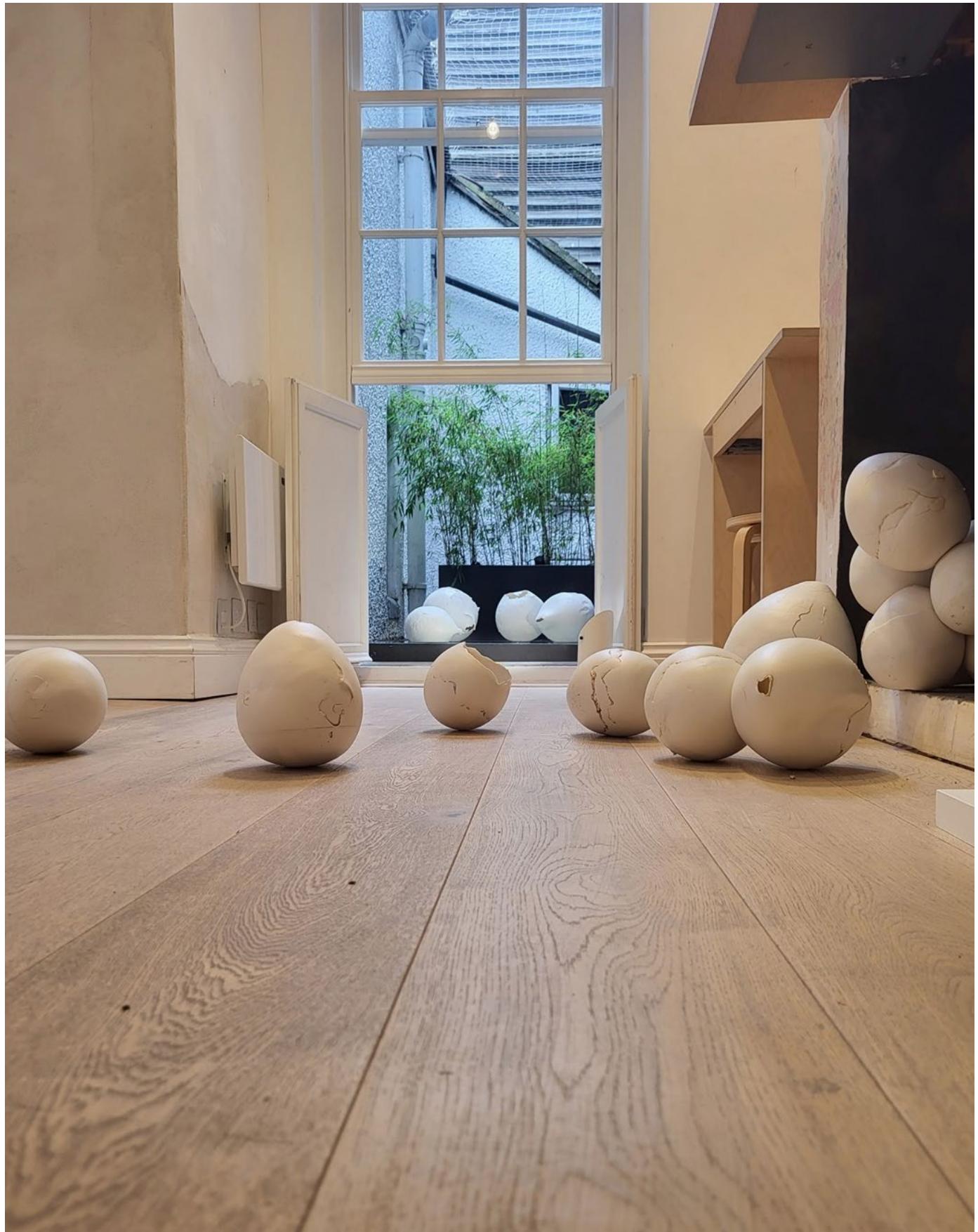
# Project Documentation

## Artistic Outcomes:



*Exhibition: Ground Floor.*

A central plinth bestowed status on a sculpture created from Blacknest clay. The walls featured prints, lithographs and a list of mosses found at Blacknest Fields written in clay.



*Exhibition: First Floor.*

Ascending the stairs, visitors encountered work at eye level, spilling across the floor.



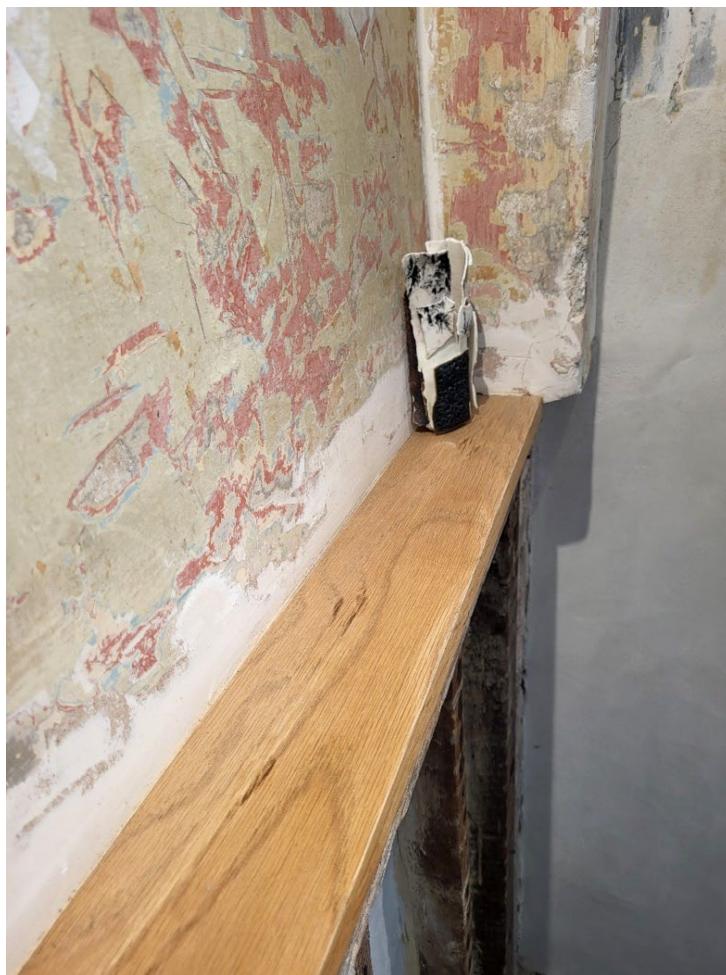
Used Lithographs were strewn among broken moulds.

*Lithographed Vessel (2023)*  
Porcelain, ceramic stains.  
27cm x 25cm



Kiln shelves referenced the impact of unknown materials.

*Eostre (2023)*  
Found clay.  
13cm x 14cm



Small collages inhabited large spaces echoing the colours and textures of the walls.

*Epocene 1 (2023)*  
*Porcelain, ceramic stain, found clay.*  
*15cm x 8cm x 5cm*



A single piece in a Perspex case, referenced the value of our Earth.

*Astera (2023)*  
*Found clay, epoxy glue, gold dust.*  
*15cm x 11cm x 12cm*



Underlay referenced the gallery's history.

*Epocene 2 (2023)*  
Porcelain, found clay, bat wash, underlay, twig with lichen.  
13cm x 30cm



Sheep's wool contrasted the natural and manmade, complimenting the walls.

*Epocene 3 (2023)*  
Porcelain, found clay, sheep's wool, twig with lichen.  
14cm x 32cm



The name comes from the German word for earth, an etymological ancestor of the word 'mould'.

*Molta (2023)*  
Porcelain.  
Image: Robin Shelton.  
28 x 20 x 20cm



Adding 'dirt' from Blacknest Fields lends mystery.  
'Possible Ritual Significance' is an expression used by archaeologists for artefacts whose use is unclear.

*Possible Ritual Significance (2023)*  
Porcelain, found clay.  
Image: Robin Shelton.  
Various pieces, various sizes



*Eostre (2023)*  
Found clay.  
Image: Robin Shelton  
Approx 16 x 13 x 12 cm



The legend of Astraea tells how, seeing no stars on Earth, Astraea wept. Flowers grew from her tears, making the Earth more beautiful. Star shaped scars, using the Japanese technique of Kintsuki, honouring damage, reveal Asteron's life-story.

*Asteron (2023)*  
Found clay, epoxy glue, gold dust.  
17 x 13 x 15 cm



The etymology of Donna Haraway's Chthulucene is the word chthonic meaning Earth Spirits. Chthulhu is mythical leader of a race predating humans. Sleeping under the sea, at R'lyeh, Chthulhu is waiting for suitable conditions for him to return and rule the world.

*The Road to R'lyeh (2023)*  
Porcelain, ceramic stain.  
Approx 22 x 16 x 16 cm



From the Latin 'emergere' meaning 'bring to light'. Minute porcelain vessels enclosed within found clay reference the hope that volunteers are bringing to Blacknest Fields.

*Emergence (2023)*  
Porcelain, found material.  
8 x 17 x 17 cm.



Images and textures layer nature and order

*Weather the Trouble Vessel (2023)*  
Porcelain, found materials, lithographs.  
13 x 13 x 16 cm



Sashiko, the Japanese art of repairing using stitching, honours the story of the piece and extends its life.

*Sashiko Vessel (2023)*  
Porcelain found materials.  
22 x 19 x 19 cm.



Sweepings from the gallery floor mark the surface, hinting at the volume of dust which builds up in an old building, creating something ageless holding a complex story of place.

*Time. (2023)*  
*Porcelain, stain, found materials.*  
*20 x 15 x 8 cm.*



A catapyrenium is an earth lichen. Scott Gilbert explores the notion of biological individuality concluding that no animal is an individual because of dependent relationships with other species: 'we are all lichens now' (2012). These collages, resembling the flaky surface of lichens, reference this idea.

*Catapyrenia (2023)*  
*Porcelain, found materials.*  
*24 x 8 x 9 cm.*



An online workshop offered the calm of working together but separate: entitling me to explore textures more freely.

*This is Not a Cat (2023)*  
Porcelain, stains, found materials.  
18 x 9 x 8 cm.



Grouped together in the fireplace, these vessels took on an ethereal air.

*Rough-stalked Feather Moss Vessel (2023)*  
Porcelain, stain.  
27 x 20 x 20 cm.



*Lithographed vessels (2023)*

*Porcelain, stain.*

*Approx 29 x 21 x 21 cm*



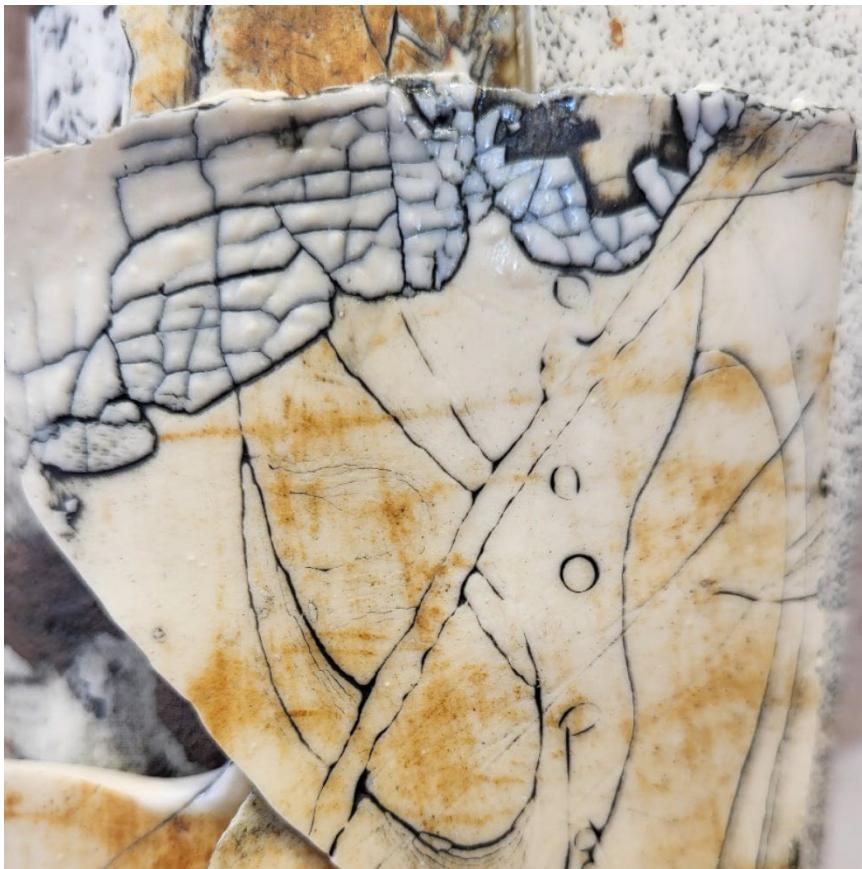
Kohiki is a method of creating texture using two clays. Black porcelain is overlaid with clay from Blacknest Fields which cracks as it dries. Different textures are created by running tools through the top clay.

*Kohiki Bottles (2023)*  
*Black Porcelain and found materials.*  
*Image: Robin Shelton.*  
*Heights: various, Cross section: 8 x 8 cm.*



This name plays with the words epoch and Anthropocene: a physical manifestation of the passage of geological time.  
The layers of texture explore adding a variety of clays at different stages of drying.

*Epocene (2023)*  
*Porcelain, found material.*  
*18 x 6 x 1 cm.*



Surface variety created by rolling clays of different dryness together.

*Close-up of This is Not a Cat (2023)*  
Porcelain, found materials, stains.



Example of surface created by mono printing found clay onto porcelain.

*Close-up of Catapyrenia (2023)*  
Porcelain, found materials.



Surface decoration created by lithographic process.

*Close-up of Rough-Stalked Feather Moss Vessel (2023)*  
Porcelain, stains



At the end of the exhibition, regretting that she had not bought the works relating to the gallery, the owner asked me to create one using dust collected during the exhibition take-down.

*Time II (2023)*  
Porcelain, dust

# Work in Progress



I trialled many ideas at the beginning of the project. I rejected this technique early on as it has been done by many artists so demonstrates nothing new.

*Texture Test.  
Porcelain, copper wire.*



*Glaze Tests.  
Porcelain, glaze materials.*

I explored many glazes. These were all rejected as they are so commonly used.



Removing work from the moulds was difficult - it was so thin. Surfaces became distressed. These marks became the basis for an entire line of investigation.

*Surface Exploration.  
Porcelain, stain.*



Colour was a distraction: good lighting was more effective.

*Casting test development.  
Porcelain.*



Printing onto the clay. Lithographs worked with small images. Larger images creased on rounded surfaces.

*Lithography stage 1.  
stains, linseed oil, laserJet photocopy.*



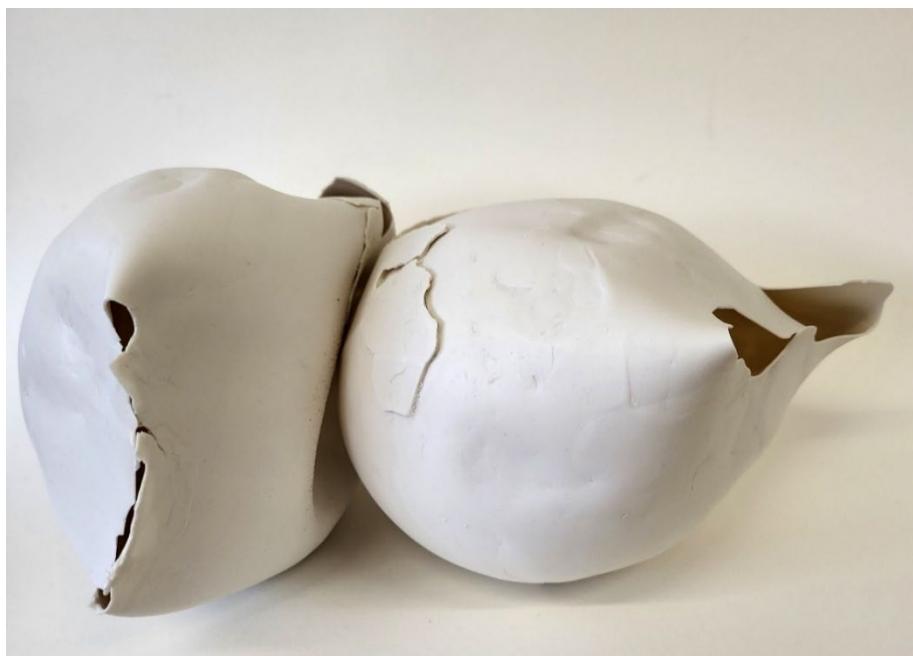
Printing onto leather hard clay enabled better definition than onto bisqueware.

*Lithography stage 2.  
Porcelain, stains, linseed oil, laserJet photocopy.*



'Repairing' broken forms became an additional line of enquiry.

*Exploring repair.  
Porcelain, fabric, found clay, copper wire.*



I nestled multiple pieces.

*Distorting forms.  
Porcelain.*



I discovered that it is possible to reuse the remnants of a mould to build the next generation. The resulting piece carries the scars of earlier moulds. I was able to make 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation pieces.

As the project progressed, I considered leaving the vessels white and scattering the lithographs around them.

*3<sup>rd</sup> Generation vessel with lithographs.  
Porcelain, stain, paper.*



Using carpet underlay as a background referenced the history of the gallery.

*Testing different backgrounds.  
Porcelain, stain, paper, carpet underlay.*



*Testing different layouts.*

Having planned to use swathes of underlay and wool across the floor I decided that, in the small space, it seemed overwhelming. Used behind collages, it complimented the colour and roughness of the walls.



I tried reusing parts of earlier moulds to create new ones. This had the benefit of reducing waste and caused scarring on subsequent sculptures.

*Unfired clay showing scarring from re-using parts of moulds.*



Firing clay which was touching resulted in fused forms.

*Fused vessels.  
Porcelain.*



Small pieces were dried in a different way to large ones.

*Drying small vessels.*



Untried techniques caused high failure rates.

*Failed sculpture.  
Unfired porcelain can be recycled.*



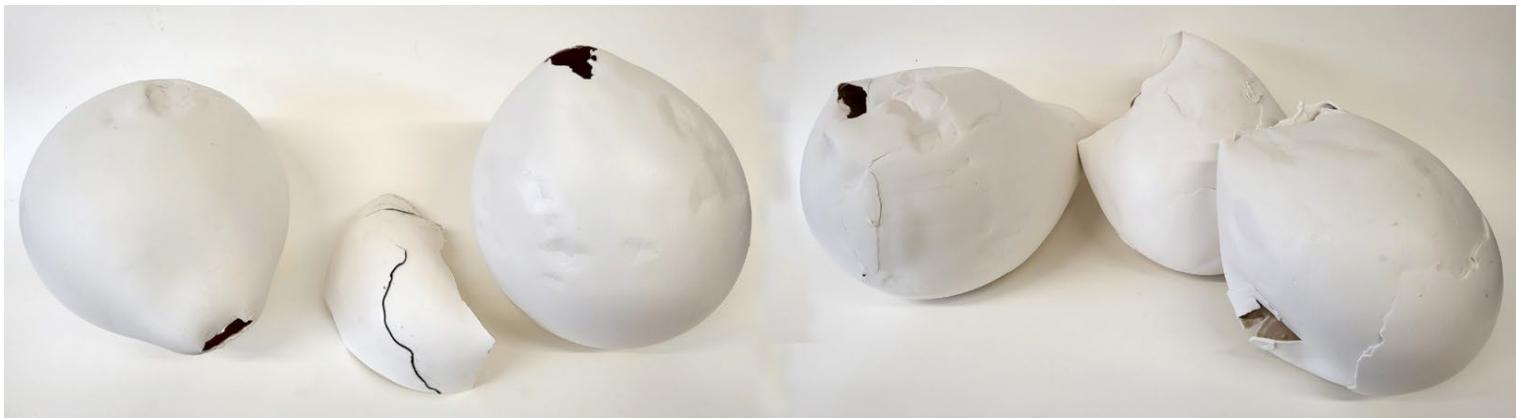
Discovering how to make casting slip from found clay and learning to control shapes during firing led to exciting developments. After an accident with a dropped kiln prop, I almost discarded this piece. Later, I repaired it using the Kintsugi method sending a stronger message.

*Astera (2023)*  
*Blacknest clay.*



Firing Blacknest Clay to 1300°C caused it to collapse.

*Eostera (2023)*  
*Blacknest clay.*



Early experiments on layout involved photoshopping images together to create enough pieces. This was the inspiration for work spilling across the floor upstairs in the gallery. I tried several ideas including placing work on plinths and on hessian sheets. These led to the ultimate decision to place work on the floor.

*Exploring layouts.*

# Audience Encounter



*Private View: 29.06.2023*

Audience Encounter took three forms: Private view, Artist's talk and daily visits to the gallery. How the audience was attracted to these three is covered in the next section.

Printed notes enabled visitors to explore the exhibition chronologically, following the story, or aesthetically, according to their sense of the space. Visitors received printed text which explained the story and the names. Interpretation was also on an A1 poster (Appendix 3)



*In Conversation: 15.07.2023*

Seventeen people attended an artists' talk introduced by Paul Appleton, the gallery owner. It was followed by a discussion about scale, the exploration of found clay, optimism, other artists working in the same field and what might follow the exhibition. A link to a video clip can be seen [here](#).



Liked by katprou\_art and 27 others

onepavedcourt Surface Tension by Bridget Macklin.  
Thank you for the great reel @astritevula

View all 3 comments

charlottepiper\_studio Visited yesterday. One of OPC's best exhibitions .. i loved it

1 hour ago



Screenshot of Instagram Reel (01.07.2023)

Love the exhibition - beautifully curated against the beauty of this gallery space. A lovely tactile aesthetic.  
Charlotte, Leeds.

28/6/23  
Your work reminds me of Bartuszova's delicate work. Excellent body of work. Jennifer O'Neill

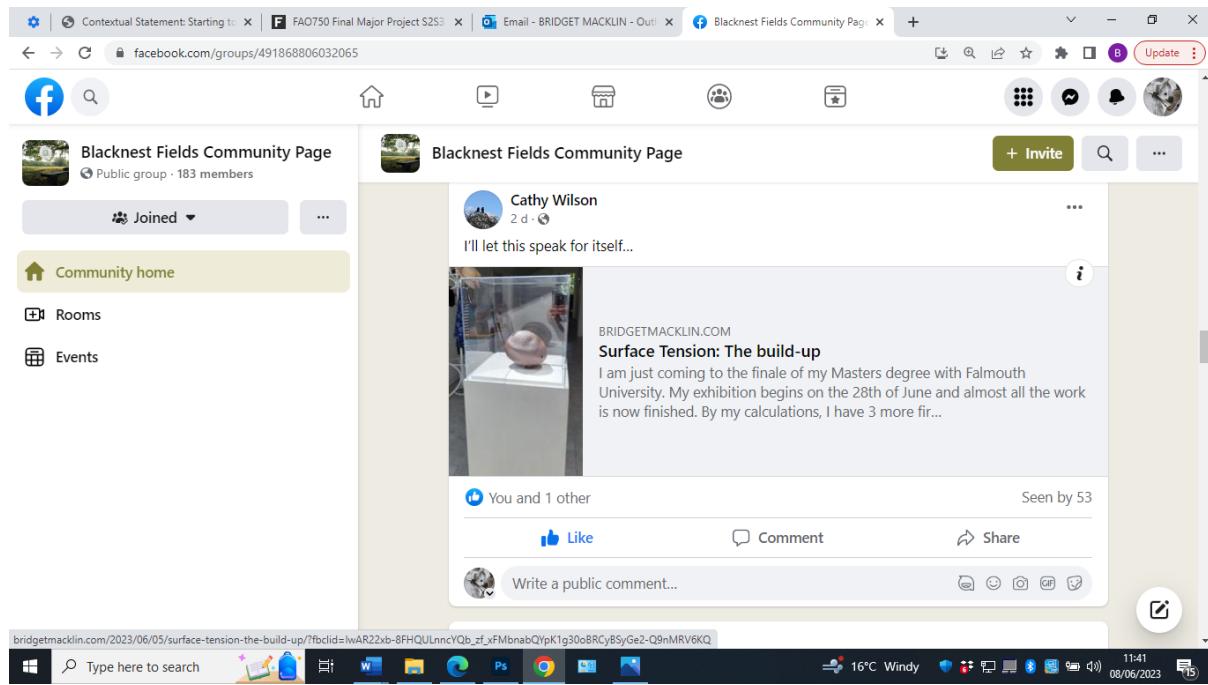
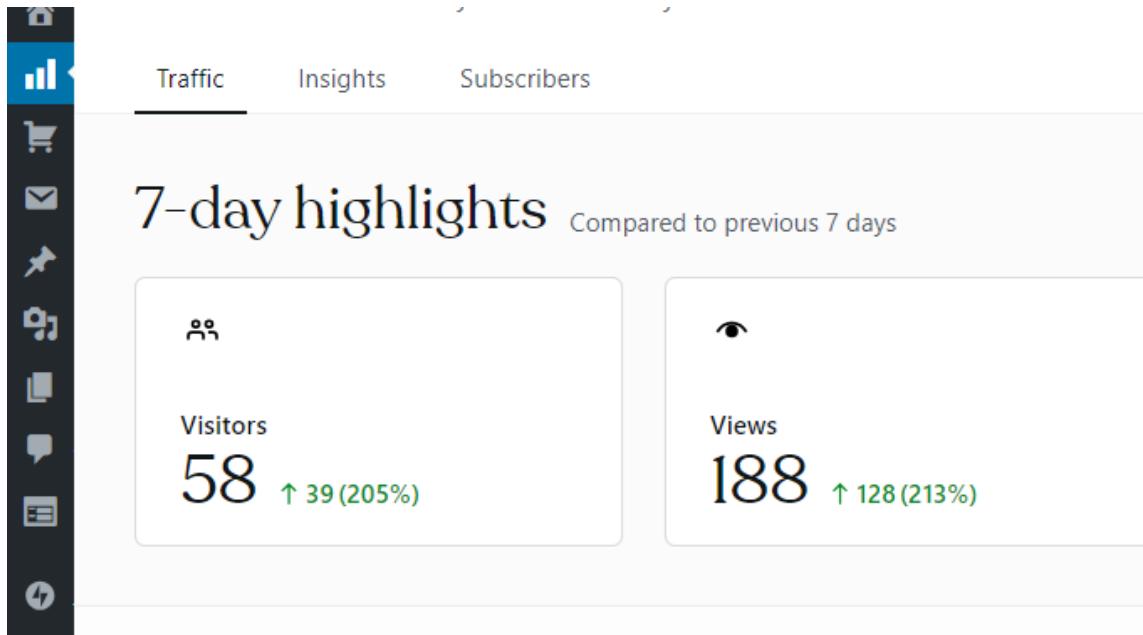
29/6/23  
Your work is astonishingly beautiful: its fragility makes me think about raw earth, & how work comes from an fragile earth: your sensitivity is evident in your work xGillian

29/6/23  
Absolutely magical - all so delicate and some of the works feel as if they have come straight from the earth, unchanged, untouched. Beautifully presented too. Loved the accompanying notes. The depth of your work is so inspiring. Tom Cx

Extract from Comments Book. (28.06.2023)

One reel, posted by a visitor, was reposted by the gallery and described by another visitor as 'one of the One Paved Court's best exhibitions'. More than one visitor commented that the work reminded her of Maria Bartuszova's. Her exhibition at Take Modern was the inspiration for this work.

# Public Engagement



08.06.2023

My strategy for Public Engagement was threefold - promotion: by me (personal emails, blogging, Instagram posts and physical fliers), by agencies (gallery, Design Nation, local media, ANHS) and by third parties (visitor responses).

new.evnt.com/?form\_data%5Btitle%5D=Surface%2520Tension%252C%2520exhibition%2520of%2520cermics&form\_data%5Bvenue%5D%5Bplace\_id%5D...

**Richmond Twickenham TIMES** How It Works Pricing F.A.Q. Log In / Sign Up Update

Plan Your Event Select Package Secure Checkout

Your Event

**Surface Tension, exhibition of cermics**  
June 28th 2023, 12:00 pm  
Location: Richmond  
Category: Galleries / Art

**Surface Tension, exhibition of cermics**  
June 8th 2023, 3:56 pm  
Location: Richmond  
Category: Galleries / Art

Promote your event to 2 relevant event listing sites, calendars, industry publications, online magazines, specialized press, local radio & news sites within 24 hours to reach a large audience, access insightful reporting and engage with new targeted customers.

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17°C Haze 08/06/2023 15:56

Screenshot of online listing: 08.06.2023



**bridgetmacklinceramics**  
One Paved Court

open from 12 - 5 today. Do drop in and escape the rain. One Paved Court, Richmond. This piece is called Gollam's Last Riddle and used dust from the floor of the gallery to create a lasting impression of time passing.

#ceramics #porcelain #fragileplanet #fragileworld #fragile #foundmaterials #exhibition #onepavedcourt #mfa #falmouthmfa

3 w

**lizzleandjean** I love it too, it seems peaceful but at the same time loads to look at, intriguing! 2 w 1 like Reply

**bridgetmacklinceramics** Sold during the private view. 2 w 1 like Reply

**View Insights** **Boost Post**

Like by sararadstone and 42 others

JUNE 29

Add a comment... Post

Screenshot of Instagram account: 20.07.2023

The event was published in the local press. Invitations were sent via the gallery's and my mailing lists. Fliers were delivered to local businesses, hotels and the library.  
43 people liked the above post.

# Critical Reflection

My project proposal listed five outcomes (Macklin, 2023). I believe I successfully met them all:

*'By any reasonable standards, the [project] was a success.'*

(Morse, P. 8)

My intent, stemming from my premise that contemporary British ceramics lacks fragility (Macklin, 2022), was to develop unique, delicate work. My experimental, risky approach led to some exciting discoveries.

Concerns over use of large quantities of plaster led to exploration of reusing parts of moulds. Discovering that this was possible, and that subsequent sculptures bore interesting scars, led to an entire body of work (p.24). Whilst 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation sculptures worked, 4<sup>th</sup> generation pieces failed: too many undercuts formed preventing pieces from being extracted. Further investigation, outside the scope of this project, might resolve this issue.

Having decided on 'single use' moulds, I was anxious to explore recycling the plaster. I was able to grind it down and use it for subsequent moulds but found this very time consuming. In teaching establishments, where large quantities could be ground by machine, this practice might cut costs and save materials.

Extracting the work necessitated hammering to break the moulds: the critical timing for removal took some while to establish as it seemed that the mould/clay boundary needed to mature before the plaster would release the clay: Ingold considers that, in making a brick in a mould, the outcome is a result of

*'the contra position of equal and opposed forces immanent in both the clay and the mould'*

(Ingold: p.25).

Creating casting slip from found clay was a seminal discovery and I adjusted the recipe using trial and error. The resultant pieces, manipulated during firing, formed intriguing shapes. This development has potential for a study into the behaviour of found clays fired to a range of temperatures which might slump differently and develop a fascinating range of colours.

Cathy Wilson's timely approach gave the project focus. Working with her images was technically challenging, added a level of interest and supported an environmental message. Wall Kimmerer describes mosses as

*'a vehicle for intimacy with the landscape'.*

(Wall Kimmerer: p.2)

By highlighting these heroes of fragile ecosystems, the exhibition considered man's impact on his surroundings. Richard Mabey asks,

*'What is it that gives visual fascination to untidy tangles of roots, clean trunks gashed by lightening, sodden mounds of antique moss?'*

(Mabey: p.144)

Mabey suggests that it is in wild places that we find spirit and liveliness: I explored wild places and our relationship with them without relocating them. My idea, going forward, is to explore placing work within those wild places.

The exhibition layout received supportive comments about how the space worked. Sculptures on the floor appeared to control the space. My choice of collage mounts: man-made underlay and natural wool packaging, one hard to dispose of and toxic to the environment, the other infinitely recyclable, seemed only partially justifiable although finding the underlay in a skip helped alleviate my sense of guilt. I wonder how [Olafur Eliasson](#) rationalises using natural materials taken from the wild for installations within a gallery setting. My use of a single plinth for found clay was intended to imply significance but that went largely unnoticed by visitors. However, many visitors commented on the beauty and fragility of the work, and I was delighted that several identified connections with Maria Bartuszova's art.

My intention was to explore the encounter between art and the Anthropocene and wondered, as David and Turpin ask:

*'how can aesthetic practices address the social and political spheres that are being set in stone?'*

(Davis and Turpin P.17).

Exhibition visitors seemed keen to discuss environmental issues: consensus during the Artists' Talk was in favour of being invited to consider what could be done rather than being berated for harm already perpetrated. Timothy Forsyth explores whether we should blame environmental degradation on industrialised society (2002): regardless of where blame lies, we are in an era of biodiversity loss (Ceballos et al), but positivity is an effective learning tool (Noble and Magrath) and highlighting the Blacknest re-wilding scheme invites hope, facilitates debate and supports efforts to reverse trends.

Sales were good but I found two-dimensional works sold better than my three-dimensional pieces. I need to consider how much this matters and explore creating work which is likely to sell thereby supporting a sustainable practice.

Having developed an excellent understanding with my partners, this project has evolved further into a collaboration with the Allen Gallery, Alton, and volunteers from Blacknest Fields for an event in 2024 that will include installations on site and workshops with schools. In addition, lessons learned about methods and methodology, will directly inform my work for the Penwith Gallery in October 2023. I envisage that the environment will be my constant collaborator moving forward.

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## Image credits:

Images: Bridget Macklin unless specified.

Moss images: Cathy Wilson

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# Appendix 1:

## Terms and conditions, One Paved Court.

### **Full Terms and Conditions for Artist led Exhibitions for up to 2 Artists (from 01/09/2022)**

Individuals or groups of 2 artists (the Artist) agree to the following terms and conditions, as set out by One Paved Court Ltd (the Company), for the purpose of putting on artist led exhibitions.

The Company offers the Artist a 3 week slot to put on an exhibition. Exhibition slots run from Tuesday 10.30am (Week 1) to Monday 12 noon (Week 3), inclusive of installation and take down days. Exhibitions are **fully open to the public** on Wednesday (Week 1) to Sunday (Week 2) and then the Artist may choose to **open fully or by appointment** to Sunday (Week 3).

#### **Fees for Artists**

The artist's fee for both ground and first floors of the Gallery is £980.00 for 3 weeks inclusive of installation and take down days. In addition, the Company charges a 10% commission on all sales.

A 25% non-refundable deposit is required at the time of booking. The remainder of the fee, together with a £250 refundable damage deposit, is due 6 weeks before the start of the exhibition.

#### **Gallery Services and Facilities**

The Gallery comprises a ground floor and first floor.

Plans can be provided on request or downloaded from the website [Gallery plans and elevations](#).

Further information about using the building safely is in the **Artist's Pack**.

The Company is not responsible for ensuring that the facilities are suitable for the Artist's purposes.

The space must only be used for the purpose agreed in advance between the Artist and the Company.

#### **Included in the fee**

Specialist gallery lighting

Low level heating (winter months only)

Burglar and fire alarm system

Specialist hanging system

Kitchenette with sink, dishwasher, fridge, kettle, 30 wine glasses

Toilet

Free Wi-Fi but no computer or printer

Marketing your exhibition on our website, our e-newsletters, social media and free local on-line listings

Please note the premises has no TV or music licences

#### **Chargeable optional extras**

One Paved Court Ltd is registered in England as a limited company number 10714354.  
Registered office: 1 Paved Court, Richmond, TW9 1LZ.

# Appendix 2:

## Budget review.

### Visitor Numbers and Sales:

Date	Visitors	Sales (£)
28.06.23	7	145
29.06.23	23 (incl PV)	340
30.06.23	18	115
01.07.23	18	115
02.07.23	16	405
05.07.23	9	0
06.07.23	8	0
07.07.23	5	0
08.07.23	8	150
09.07.23	19	100
12.07.23	11	0
13.07.23	6	0
14.07.23	11	662
15.07.23	50 (incl Artist's Talk)	105
16.07.23	26	0
Totals	235	2137

### Copy of budget estimate from proposal.

ITEM	Amount (£)	Evidence
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
Fee to the artist	Project fee	3810:00 Pro rata fee based on Artists Newsletter guidance on fees. Daily rate £254 x 3 weeks
Fee to collaborator		600:00 3x day rate at £200
Cost of overheads / admin / other expenses	Power, light, stationary, phone	100:00
	Insurance	30:00 Annual with Artist Newsletter
Cost of material/equipment purchase	Clay and stains	250.00 Based on invoice (Appendix 1)
	Firing	90:00 30 firings @£3:00 each

Any other costs	Transport to and from London:	232:00	258 x 2 = 516 miles @ 00:45 per mile
	Technical assistance:	250:00	1 x day rate
	Accommodation: staying in own van	00:00	
	Professional photography	150:00	As per invoice (Appendix 2)
Fee to Gallery		980.00	As per terms and conditions (Appendix 3)
Private view supplies		50:00	Hire of glasses, wine, soft drink
Contingency		650:00	10%
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>7192:00</b>	
<b><u>INCOME</u></b>			
Cash Income	Sale of work (individuals)	3700.00	Based on previous sales during exhibitions
Other sales	Sale of collection of work to a major gallery	4000.00	Based on originality of this work and recent evidence from National collections to purchase innovative ceramics by adventurous emerging artists such as Rebecca Appleby (CoCA, York).
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>7700.00</b>	
<b><u>NET BALANCE</u></b>		<b>508.00</b>	

## Zettle Report:

10:36

VoIP LTE2 87%

### ≡ Reports

BY DAY

BY MONTH

This month's sales

**+ £1,502.00**

from last month



**2023**

July £1,537.00

9 sales, 0 returns

June £440.00

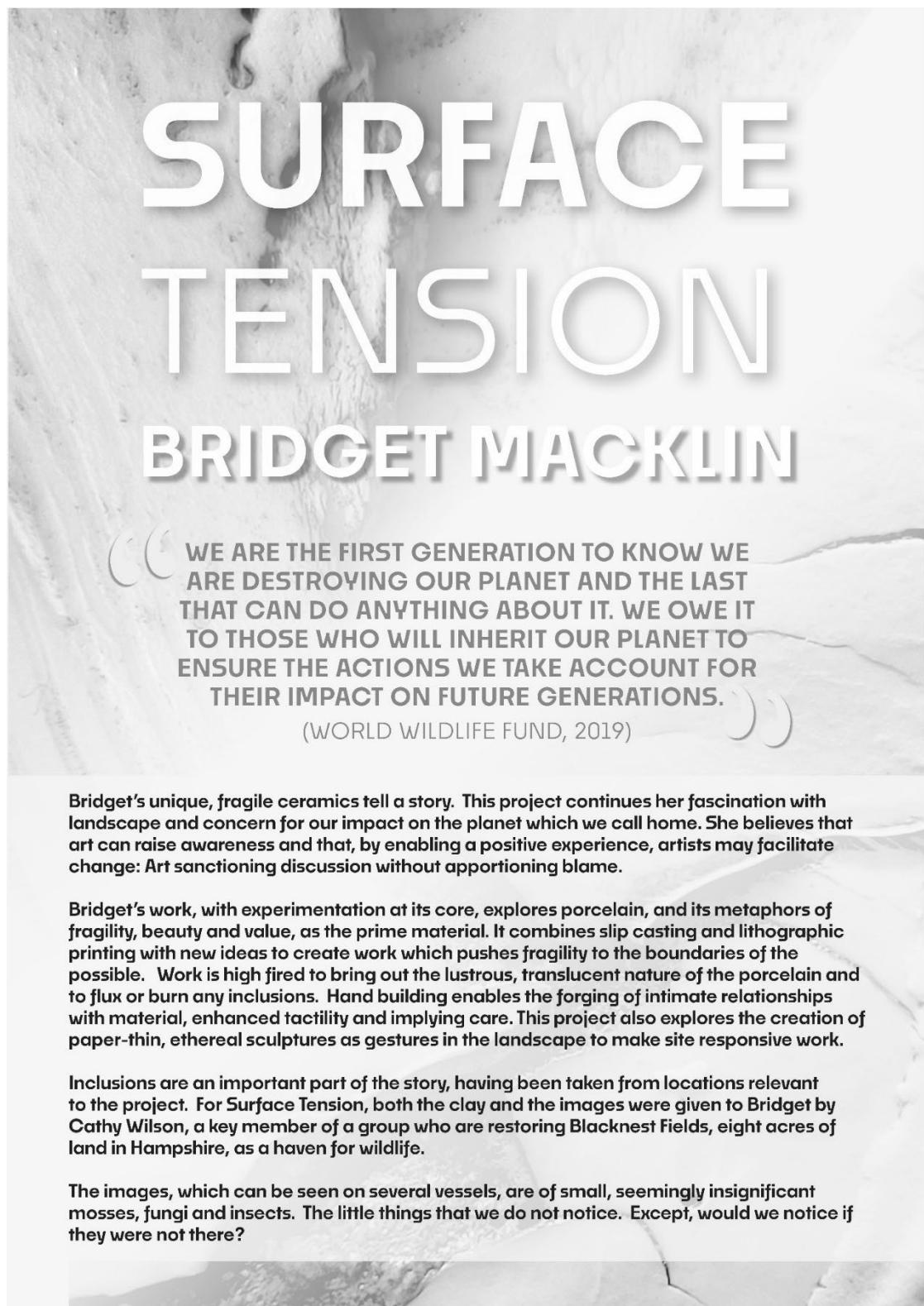
4 sales, 0 returns

## Financial Outcome:

Item	Amount (£)	Evidence
Expenditure less fees	1885	Based on budget in proposal
Sales	1977	Zettle report of sales: June/July 2023
Cash sales	160	
Total Sales	2137	Zettle + cash sales
<b>Net Balance</b>	<b>252</b>	2137 - 1885

# Appendix 3:

## A1 Information.



# Appendix 4:

## Stories Behind the Names.

### Explanatory Notes.

Beginning with an intention to create work unlike anything else, the work in this exhibition considers our relationships with place and our ideas of interdependence and value. The names of the pieces explore ancient words and new techniques. The exhibition ends on a lighter note so that visitors may take away a more cheerful message.

1. **The Moltae**, so called because multiple single use moulds were used and remade multiple times in the creation of each of the individual molta. The name Molta comes from the Old High German word for dust or earth which is an etymological ancestor of the word mould. In a project which focussed, among other things, on the creation of moulds as formers for telling the story of moulds as fungi it seems appropriate to call the purest of the forms created after an early version of the word.
2. **Possible Ritual Significance.** This installation takes some of the moltae and adds colour in the form of 'dirt' from Blacknest Fields. They seem to be Molta which have been excavated and whose importance is not fully understood. Possible Ritual Significance is an expression which is used frequently by archaeologists for artefacts whose original use is unclear.
3. **Possible Ritual Significance, a Shared Fragility:** As individuals, each part of the installation, wherever it may be, continues to have a connection through the shared fragility of the whole and the fact that they all share the same found clay. The '*Law of Like*' suggests that even when removed from the group, they are still part of a whole.
4. **Lithographed Vessels:** The little things, those which we hardly noticing, often form a vital role. Many species depend upon mosses and fungi for food; for homes; for sanctuary. By highlighting these invisible heroes of fragile ecosystems, the exhibition considers the impact of man on his surroundings.
5. **Butterfly Wing Vessel**
6. **Eostre:** The Pagan goddess of fertility, cited by Jacob Grimm in his 1835 *Deutsche Mythologie* as '*the divinity of the radiant dawn, of upspringing light, a spectacle that brings joy and blessing*', lends her name to these vessels because of their egg-like shape and their origin: pure 'dirt' from Blacknest Fields.
7. **Asteron:** Asteron is the old Saxon equivalent of Eostre. This piece, constructed as an Eostre has been repaired using the Japanese technique of Kintsuki. Star shaped scars enhance its life-story. The Greek legend of the *Starry Maid, Astraea*, tells how she wept when she saw that there were no stars upon the Earth. The star shaped flowers which we call Asters grew from her tears, making the Earth more beautiful.
8. **The Road to R'lyeh:** The etymology of Donna Haraway's Chthulucene era is the word chthonic meaning 'Earth Spirits': of, or relating to, the Earth. Coming after the Anthropocene, Haraway describes the Chthulucene as an '*elsewhere and elsewhere that was, still is, and might yet be*'. Cthulhu is mythical leader of a race which predates humans on Earth. To look upon Cthulhu is to risk one's sanity. Sleeping deep under the sea, at a place called R'lyeh, he is waiting for suitable conditions for him to return and rule the world.

9. **The Guide to R'lyeh:** Whilst each individual R'lyeh vessel maps some clues, if one were to study the entire group, one would possibly begin to know R'lyeh; and to understand its dreadful oozing shores and weed smothered buildings.
10. **Weather the Trouble Vessels:** Collaged images and strange textures cover these pieces layering nature and order in such a way as to suggest that nature might ultimately be the victor.
11. **Sashiko Vessel:** Sashiko is the Japanese art of sewing using 'little stabs' to create a running stitch. Like Kintsuki, repairing a piece with stitching honours the story of the piece and extends its life: a vessel is made more wonderful through the repair.
12. **Eostre, R'lyeh and Scraffito Bowls:** Bowls made using the same moulds and techniques as the larger vessels, one in found clay; one resembling a map for the city of R'lyeh; and one exploring the marks made by damage to a surface. These small vessels seem reminiscent of bowls for ritual offerings.
13. **Time: Gollum's Last Riddle:** Collages made using sweepings from the floor of the gallery hint at the volume of dust which builds up daily in an old building. Splinters of wood, feathers and scraps of paper all made their way onto the surface of the clay. The result is something ageless, but which holds a long and complicated story of place.
14. **Epocene:** The name of these pieces plays with the combination of the words epoch and Anthropocene: a physical manifestation of the passage of geological time.
15. **Catapyrenia:** A catapyrenium lichen is an earth lichen. The Biologist Scott Gilbert explores the notion of biological individuality concluding that no animal is an individual because of the relationships with other species upon which they depend: '*we are all lichens now*'. He is considering both the microbes in our gut and the entirety of life on earth. These collages, resembling the flaky surface of lichens, reference this idea.
16. **Emergence:** This word has its origins in the Latin '*emergere*' meaning '*bring to light*'. This piece has minute porcelain vessels enclosed within the found clay of Blacknest Fields. Is this a manifestation of the hope that the volunteers are bringing to these eight acres? Does it suggest what is possible?
17. **Sanctuary Vessels:** After finding a tiny blue egg and being inspired by how such a fragile thing could hold and nurture life, I began hand building egg-shaped pieces which fit into a pair of open palms and hint at something being nurtured. Each vessel is made using pure white porcelain and found material from the Blacknest Fields sanctuary.
18. **Kohiki Bottles:** Kohiki is a method of creating texture on clay by using two different bodies which dry differently. The lower clay in these bottles is a black porcelain, the upper body has been made using clay from Blacknest Fields. Before constructing the bottles, the slabs of clay are distorted so that, as they dry, the texture becomes apparent.
19. **Lithograph Paper Collages:** The process of lithography on clay results in single use photocopies which, altered during the work, take on a story of their own. Instead of disposing of them, they have been used to create collages of the mosses, fungi and other *small things* which call Blacknest Fields their home.
20. **This is Not a Cat and Also Not a Cat:** A recent online university symposium included a day's workshop for drawing cats. It didn't take me long to give up on the drawing but the atmosphere created by the calm sense of everyone working together but separate enabled me to relax and play with clay, creating surface textures and collages which would not have arisen through planned making.