



Figure 1 *Unknown*. ABC Regal Cinema, Paisley (1969) Associated British Cinema Collection

When I initially started the PhD, with the University being based on the West Coast, I remember thinking that it would be a strange experience to revisit Paisley after so much time away from it. The frequent memory of being brought through from Dundee as children, my brother and I, seated in the car for hours to then wake from a sleepy journey, always seeming to time our arrival with a meal being placed on the table, is still powerful. Being jostled back to consciousness and ushered through a steam-filled kitchen, amidst the heady smell of cooking, remains palpable. With my Granny Agnes living in Paisley, and my Granny Jean nearby – not to mention the network of great uncles and aunts – we would arrive with the knowledge that there lay ahead a busy few days of travelling across the town on local buses, broken up by winding car journeys ferrying relatives back and forth from each others homes.

One of my first trips through to the area after the commencement of my PhD involved a drive through such routes, trying to recognise the streets, which had been stored from childhood. In making such journeys I was trying to connect with my research narratives through finding a reunion between these locations and my own relationship to them through these stored conceptions. In terms of understanding the methodological development of this work, I recognised and found confirmation of the

potential for such an experience to impart a sense of situatedness *as part of* the creative research process, with a developing resolve that the layers of these experiences should find place within my layered responses.

A few days after this journey, I was talking on the phone to my dad. Whilst talking, I told him about this investigation of remembered visits. He asked me if I had looked at the area beside the Paisley campus where he had been born and raised, before moving to the outlying area as a young child. For some reason this information had never been passed on to me – or perhaps had but had become quickly forgotten by myself as a child. From the conversation it emerged that after my grandparents were married they moved into a small basement flat, below a doctor's surgery (where my gran had worked as a receptionist), at 91 High Street. They had both my father, and his brother Stephen, whilst living here, before moving to Foxbar to have a house with a garden as they wanted space for the children and ground for my granddad to grow, what would become, prized fruit and vegetables.



Figure 2 Flynn, P. (ca. 1975) Michael Flynn resting (middle right of image) in his garden. Personal Collection.

After looking into the exact location it transpired that 91 High Street was part of the demolition and redevelopment of the university campus in Paisley; the site of this building was now empty ground in front of the main entrance used for parking. Once again, I was struck by this unfolding connection of parts, with the revelation that this significant place in terms of family legacy was now part of the university where I was studying.



**Figure 3 View of the University of the West of Scotland, Paisley Campus (n.d.)**

As I visited the site, and stood in the space of the where the building would have been, I experienced a sense of myself in Agnes' place, looking out onto a space, which she would have looked out onto. I was struck by the thought of what she would have seen from such position. Would she have pictured the views from in front of her home in Glebe, transposing visions of the sea onto the street in front of her as she daydreamed? Using the collection of footage that I had filmed at Tra Na Rosann from my recent visit, I created a video work, which shifted through views taken as I stood in front of Agnes' family home in Glebe at Tra Na Rosann and also of footage of the sea that was crossed to arrive in Glasgow. I wanted to project it onto her site of arrival in Paisley - at 91 High Street. Using the video piece I planned to wait until it was dark, with the campus empty, and project this collection of moving images onto the space where Agnes' home at 91 High Street would have stood.

It was my hope that this projection would not be a formally exhibited work as such, but rather a quiet performed act, gesturing a remembrance. I made the decision to have the projection occur whilst dark and not during a busy period in terms of there being a public presence. The projection would dissolve in slowly, run for a few minutes and then go off. I would have all of this recorded and documented as it happened.

Initially, I had hoped to set up the projector on a timer switch that would be programmed to go off automatically and therefore not need anyone to access the building for it to come on. In a similar fashion to the work performed at Tra Na Rosann – with only myself being on the beach – I felt there would be a heightened communion



between myself and that which I was accessing through such performance; achieved if I could be alone whilst engaged in such.

I set up and rehearsed the projection during working hours, with the projector set up inside a colleagues office which looked out onto the area of the afore 91 High Street. It became apparent from this set-up that I needed more height in order for the video work to project properly. After enquiring with staff at various other levels within the building I found a space on the top floor, which would grant better scope for the images to form on the ground outside.

As I talked with the member of staff whose room I was using, he recounted to me that his grandfather had indeed made a similar migration across from Ireland. Such cross-reference built upon my awareness of the wider resonance and potential for the research work to support others in their own acts of remembrance.



Figure 4 Screenshot from editing stage of 91 High Street video work



Figure 5 Screenshot from editing stage of 91 High Street video work

When creating the video work to be projected, in editing the material recorded at Tra Na Rosann, the contrast between the landscape there and the site upon which it was going to be projected was emphasised. It was easy to conceive the gulf Agnes plausibly felt as she imagined the absence of such views at 91 High Street. As I experienced these emotional responses I attempted to use these registers in order to shape the movement, timing and visuals finding structure on screen. Involved in this creative process I was being able to articulate a relationship and narrative through the creative mode.

There were logistical considerations involved in managing the technical details of the work. As described above, I had initially wanted the projector to go off in the middle of the night unassisted, triggered by a timer, with myself remaining outside the building to witness the screening. Due to building constraints I was unable to do this so, as an alternative, I modified plans to wait until late evening at 10pm when the university would be empty, in the main. Prior to the projection going off I set up two cameras – one beside the projector to capture footage from above, and one from ground level documenting the view seen by myself from below.

I did not want to have the work recognised as a finished work, with the sculptural screening being framed as a cohesive *artefact*, but rather I wanted to recognise the way in

which my experience of performing the gesture – as part of it - stood as an extended sculptural act.



Figure 6 Projection source as seen from ground level



Figure 7 Projection source as seen from ground level



Figure 8 Projection of Tra Na Rosann upon 91 High Street as seen from above