

## Trig Point

Denise de Cordova / Neville Gabie / Freya Gabie

Dear Both,

What are our imaginative lodestones, our trig points that align our hunches and desires?

50°18'54.3"N, 122°47'55.0"W marks the spot of a very attractive rock. It's become a place of pilgrimage for me, of repeated visits in heat and snow in the changing seasons of British Columbia. Not special to others perhaps, but for me, it has the essence of 'rockness' that appeals to me, a marker of stability and fixity in the turbulence of urgencies that flood the mind and life. It pleases me that when I am long gone, it will be still there. I've walked past it with others, who pay no particular regard to its perfection, and nor do I alert them to its attractiveness. I nod to it in passing, pleased that it is still there, and mine to ponder.

So, a souvenir handkerchief, a stitched dreaming that I share with you.

Best wishes,

Denise

Dear both,

You know about the bird. Perfect and up-bellied. Lifelessly slapped against the Regents Street pavement, found on an early morning in December. Its weight and bulk was shocking, what should have been buoyant in the sky was beneath me, exquisite and obdurate and awful.

I've been thinking about its descent, its softness impacting the ground, the crash to 300 million-year-old York stone; once a yielding seabed, petrified now to implacable stone. I, in that early hour, the only witness to the sorrow of this beautiful fallen bird.

No one knows the ark of their orbit. Am I still on my ascent, or has my journey already tipped towards its fall?

I have a meteorite, which I keep in a drawer in my bedroom. Its enduring, uncharted flight culminating in a final plunge to the Sikhote-Alin mountains of southern Russia on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 1947. I cannot know its first connection with land, but I have read that some fragments of this fall were driven six meters below the surface of the ground.

I have touched every part of the stone the bird fell upon, caught it in a drawing of a softer landing. I have reconfigured my space-rock into a piercing nail: to make another hole. This orbit now holds up the passage of the other. Two flights - two punctures.

Freya

Dear Freya, Denise,

Last year walking in the veld in a landscape that has become so familiar, I came across the remains of two baboons. It's not unusual to stumble across a carcass, or the bones of a dead animal. This is a harsh, unforgiving place where weakness of any kind will in all likelihood mean death. What was unusual was that these baboons were almost intact, traces of matted hair still caught in the thorn bushes creating a halo around the bones. What completely captured my attention was just how closely they were entwined, bone to bone, skull to skull with the intimacy one knows between mother and child.

The following day I returned and took the two skulls imagining making a piece of work about mother and child, these were clearly a young female and baby. A few days ago I came across the two skulls again. Still cheek to cheek, but now sitting on a shelf gathering dust alongside other objects I had picked up; the skull of a Jackal, a birds nest and plastic from the beach. They sit, so displaced leaving me wondering about their demise and sure in my own mind that on my next trip they need to be returned to their place in the bush.

Neville