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PHOTO ESSAY

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# Production and consumption in *Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene*

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## ABSTRACT

This paper will span a timeline from the online meeting *Art, Ecology, Emergency: Sustaining Practice*, coordinated by the Eden Project, that took place under lockdown in 2020, through to the summer of 2021 and an event in a series of fields on the Lizard in Cornwall. This paper will draw on the methodological development of Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene, which is a performance in the guise of a reading group, a cross between a Quaker meeting and a reconvening of the Dead Poets Society, and subsequently a collaboration with the University of Cambridge's Centre for the Study of Existential Risk. Throughout this paper, the author will evidence how arts practices that are cyclical and performative can embed creativity and democracy into conversations taking place in and around landscape decision-making.

## ARTICLE HISTORY

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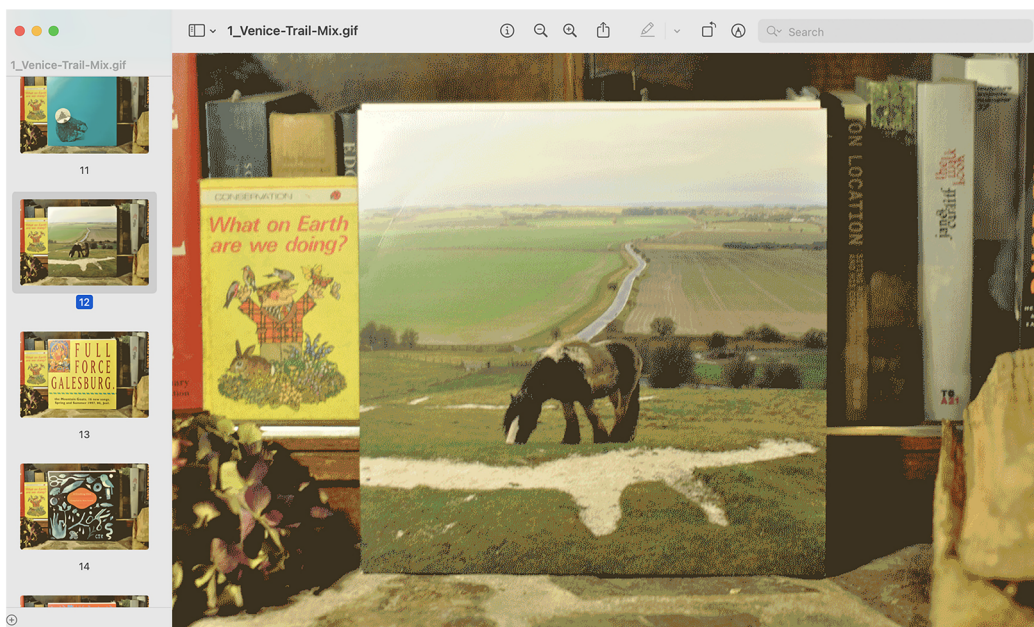


Figure 1. Still from a. gif for Trail Mix[ED].

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## Strata 19.1

'It is so hard to find the beginning, or better, it is so hard to find the beginning and not wish to go further back' (Wittgenstein in Casey, 2000: 20).

For years, I read aloud fragments of text as part of a radio show called Trail Mix[ED]<sup>1</sup> that became the foundational practice and mythology for the work of this photographic essay (See Figure 8 for a sense of the production process of these audio works). Trail Mix[ED] was presented live at the Venice Biennale in 2015, where both Figure 1 and the above quote from Wittgenstein set out a ground upon which the notion of an ecological form of subjectivity could be built. This paper is a practice-based analysis of the processes of production and consumption at work within the work of *Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene*, an iterative performance that takes the form of a reading group hosted by the artist, pedestrian and writer Bram Thomas Arnold (See Figures 2, 5, 6, 10, 11 for documentary perspectives on this event).

*Bibliotherapy For The Anthropocene* is a performance in the guise of a reading group: it is a cross between a faux-Quaker meeting, a reconvening of the Dead Poets Society (*Dead Poets Society*, Weir, 1989), a space awash with awkward silences, serious jokes and ways of coping with art beyond the end of the world, a proposition established by T. J. Demos who asks 'Given this socioecological crisis how do we conceptualize the aftermath? [... and] Equally urgent, how do we represent the radical potentiality of the not-yet? How do we cultivate and bring into being emancipated futures?' (Demos, 2020, pp. 1–20). It is argued that the processes at work in *Bibliotherapy For The Anthropocene* are some of these ways of coping with living in the Anthropocene. The event is usually undertaken in a locked room, or underneath an open sky in a secluded rural location, and as such you, dear reader, are not currently a participant in a session of *Bibliotherapy For The Anthropocene*, but merely being invited into a journey through some of its processes and fragments. No prior reading is necessary, but you may by now have read the abstract and more information can be found at [www.bramthomasarnold.com](http://www.bramthomasarnold.com).

*Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene* tends to happen in a smallish lockable room, with some willing participants and some tea and some biscuits, and a dictionary. People come to gather together, everyone in a state of reverence, the sort of reverence one might bring to a church perhaps, everyone is there to listen and think and talk and wonder aloud and in silence, at what it is to be alone and together at this time of geological change, transitioning not through choice but by necessity, from one geological epoch to another. I preferred it in the Holocene.

As a beginning, each session starts with a collective reading of a statement built on the work of Buckminster Fuller in his text *I seem to be a verb* (Fuller, 1970):

I know that I am not a category, a hybrid specialization, I am not a thing – a noun. I seem to be a verb – an evolutionary process – an integral function of the universe, and so are you (Arnold, 2017).



Figure 2. *Lectern 1*, installation shot, Back Lane West, 2020.

## 19.2

Produce (production)/vt to bring into being; to bring forth; to yield; to bring about; to make; to put (a play, show etc) on the stage; to prepare (a programme) for broadcasting on radio or television; to be in charge of (a piece of music), making artistic decisions about the finished overall sound; to prepare for exhibition to the public; to bring forward or out; to extend. (Chambers, 2006)

The Anthropocene as a term is something that performed its way into being, falling out of the mouth of Paul Crutzen at a conference in 1999 (Robin et al., 2013, pp. 479–490), expressed in exasperation at the bounded nature of discussion in relation to the climatic reality we find ourselves living in. Since then, it has developed a cultural existence, spawning journals, conferences, definitions (Moore, 2016) conflicts and alternative titles. There is much debate about what one might call this new epoch, concerns about whether the Anthropocene may or may not be the most suitable phrase (Demos, 2017), may or may not occlude swathes of the



population (Yusoff, 2018), alongside the production of other names for it, before the scientists have quite settled on whether they are going to commit to it (Waters & Turner, 2019). These discussions, of how we refer to it, generally shy away from the precision with which we can point at it, and the near-incomprehensible nature of that experience. One cannot burrow down into the Pre-Cambrian and find that name inscribed on the wall there, each name was the outcome of a clandestine meeting of geology scholars at various moments, (Latour, 2017: 113) but never have we had the precision offered by the Anthropocene (Morton, 2016, pp. 7–9).

In my practice, the work emerged out of a much longer engagement with socially engaged practice and the act of reading aloud that I have previously discussed in relation to *The Park Bench Reader* (Naik & Oldfield, 2009: 194). Bibliotherapy, the act of collective reading aloud for wellbeing emerged from an NHS study with the University of Liverpool, outcomes of which subsequently became *The Reader* organisation (The Reader, 2023), and I brought this experimental, yet also ancient form of communication (Boyd, 2010, pp. 209–231) into direct conversation with the unfurling understanding of the notion of the Anthropocene as an art work, presented as a reading group.



Figure 3. Graphic evolution of *Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene*, 2017–2022.

### 19.3

At this point it is necessary to set out a perspective for you, dear reader to consider, as we step through this essay together. Shelley Sacks, an artist, and a pupil of Joseph Beuys, who taught me at Oxford Brookes University, once spoke of aesthetics in relation to what its conventional meaning – as the consideration of beauty and its affects – lacks: a consideration of *feeling* (Harlan, 2004). The geographer Yi Fu Tuan writes that ‘the pervasive role of the aesthetic is suggested by its root meaning of “feeling”, before going on to highlight that its meaning can be further elaborated upon ‘even more by its opposite anaesthetic’ (Tuan, 1993, p. 1). To be anaesthetised is to be numbed, to be dead to the world, so that one could rip a tooth out without pain, or repair an injury or so on, to be *aesthetised* then, to be concerned with aesthetics, is to *feel*.

So *feel* this paper, this photo essay, try not necessarily, to think it. What follows are, much as what has come before, short extracts of writing and images brought together from five years of practice based research in the far south western corner of England, from fields, from

galleries, but also from journeys further afield, from the Dasgupta Review into the Economics of Biodiversity, from an ongoing collaboration with land owners on the Lizard and from work with Dr. Lauren Holt at the Centre for the Study of Existential Risk at the University of Cambridge. A final source we are drawing from here would be the paper performed at *Creative Reflections*, a conference hosted by the AALERT network at the RSA, London in November 2022 (See Figures 3, 7 and 12, which each featured as slides in a live version of this paper).



Figure 4. Still from *Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene*, Back Lane West, 2020.

## 19.4

*Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene* began at some point in a basement in Plymouth, in late 2017, it is intertwined by the crackle of conversation that happens in a room when rules are explained, when texts are read aloud to a new geological epoch that we may or may not be living in, and how experimental performance can play a part in widening the participants of that conversation, and subsequently how that conversation might lead to decisions taken on the land, in the corridors of power and the white walled sanctuary of the postmodern cathedral, otherwise known as the gallery. This iteration (see Figure 4), at Back Lane West was commissioned by the Eden Project and University of Exeter's Environment and Sustainability Institute, in collaboration with Culture Declares Emergency for an event called *Art, Ecology, Emergency: Sustaining Practice* during the first Covid-19 lockdown in 2020.

The basement in Plymouth I referred to belonged to the Athenaeum, Plymouth's own version of the Royal Society building, somewhat more decrepit, and somewhat more liberated for that, you just had to be nice to Owen and the keys to the whole place could be yours. Once a month for a period of six months I would convene an event there with an open invitation to members of the public and the society, to come together for a reading group composed of one endless text that we never got to the end of, drawn from multiple sources and broken into *strata*,



somewhat like the paper you are now reading. Fragments of text from the great stone book of the earth that offered ways of conceptualising or coping with the dawn of a new geological epoch (Tsing et al., 2017). Different sources, different voices, different fragments of knowledge, wisdom, beauty and information for the Anthropocene, and for those of us who are having to handle it, live amongst it, set out on one of its innumerable possible trajectories in the pursuit of our own version of geomythology (Braidotti & Hlavajova, 2018: 178). The performance's one precondition is that you only read or spoke if you felt moved to do so, and that to be moved was to acknowledge the experience of wider forms of perspective, beyond the social conventions of the human (Braidotti & Hlavajova, 2018: 339). *Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene* set out and continues to attempt to be, a closing loop of production and consumption, a thing that is only ever made for as long as it happens and once it happens, it is gone, consumed in the moment and packed away, folded into the memory and strata of the lives of those who came, it leaves no trace. It is a form of work that meets Claire Bishop's definition of participatory art: 'first-hand experience in the social field: sharing the artistic space with others' (Bianchini & Verhagen, 2016: 797), by which we can intuit she invites the perspectives of the more-than-human others one might happen upon whilst contemplating the Anthropocene.

And then, after a while of this quiet existence in Plymouth, *Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene* began to branch out, it got commissioned, galleries wanted it to happen, landowners wanted to be in the room, it wanted to explore other rooms and fields of enquiry. Perspective along with production and consumption entwined themselves around this format, this set of instructions for making an event, this score. And it set out, to the Lizard initially, to work as part of a collective called Agri/culture 2.0, to unpick our relationship with the land and draw the audience closer to the processes of production both in and beyond conventional demarcated notions of agri- and -cultural activity.



Figure 5. Documentation of *Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene*, Kestle Barton, 2021.

## 19.5

There is a lot of walking and reading and writing going on in the background of this work which has its roots in my engagement with the Walking Artists Network (2024), which was launched with 'institutional support from a university and a major UK funding body' in the guise of the University of East London and the AHRC in 2011 (Morris, 2019: 80). WAN was founded through a meeting that took place in Chelsea, London in 2011 and the network became a fundamental testing ground and sharing space for the development of *Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene* which can be said to have relational aesthetics, a notion coined by Nicolas Bourriaud who positions it thus: 'an art taking as its theoretical horizon the realm of human interactions and its social context, rather than the assertion of an independent and private symbolic space' (Bourriaud, 2009: 14) and socially engaged process at its heart. Claire Bishop, in her most recent work concedes that she is fiddling on the edges of a problem whilst Rome burns, in the sense that she cites the work of Yves Citton who develops a place where we could 'unite an ecology of attention with attention to the ecology' (Bishop, 2024: 26).

I would argue that *Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene*, through its material praxis – reclaimed material, found text, the voices of participants and their silence – and its socially engaged experience, utilises socially engaged processes and ecologically minded materials to engage an audience in a ritualised moment of sharing, being and feeling, and as such can be said to align with certain elements of Bourriaud's composition (2002: 33). *Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene* is also a space that comprises a multitude of journeys, the gathering of people brings together their own journey's to the place of performance amidst the stratigraphic and cultural journey that the readings bring to the room and as such this work also touches on a later notion developed by Bourriaud referred to in *The Radicant* as the journey form wherein 'A journey-form may refer to one or more absent elements, which may be physically distant, past, or yet to come'. (2002: 118).

These two notions, alongside the WAN, bring us into contact with the work of Dee Heddon and Misha Myers, who, under the moniker *The Walking Library* create situations where audiences walk together reading from selected texts that are carried with the group as a mobile form of library. Heddon and Myers state 'the idea for The Walking Library was prompted initially by our encounter with repeated references to books carried on long walks during the nineteenth century' (Heddon & Myers, 2017) and this aligns itself with notions from *The Park Bench Reader* which sought to bring together 19th century notions of reading as a public act with the invention of the Park Bench (Naik & Oldfield, 2009: 194).

Alongside *The Walking Library*, I was a participant in the 2012 festival Sideways which over the course of a month traversed Belgium from West to East whereby artists staged iterative performances (Arnold et al., 2015), exhibitions and ephemeral moments along the course of the 400km long journey.

If we are looking for the roots of things, as Wittgenstein suggests, we can always go further back so I also want to reference here the work of Ania Bas and The Walking Reading Group that was founded by her in collaboration with Simone Mair and Lydia Ashman. The 'project that facilitates knowledge exchange in an intimate and dynamic way through discussing texts whilst walking together' ('Walking Reading Group (2013)', 2020), and as such shares a kinship with the ideals of *Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene* that seeks to engage readers in texts tending not to their disciplinary context, but in their relation to the world as an active presence in the process. Walking is very much in the foundations of my experience and process as an artist (Arnold, 2016), Blake Morris's work *Walking Networks* also offers an excellent overview of the field and emergent practices (Morris, 2019).



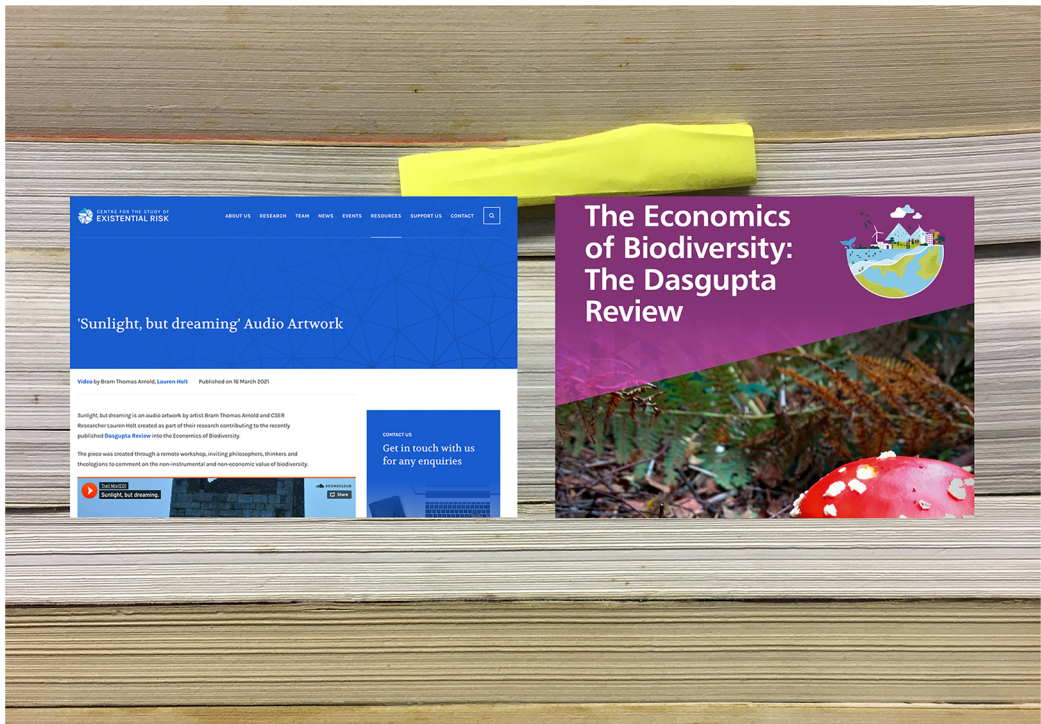
Figure 6. *Lectern 2*, installation shot, Back Lane West, 2020.

## 19.6

Amongst other things one of the purposes of the events engagement with processes of ritual and performance is an interest and belief in the notion that a certain levelling of the playing field is required to truly collaborate in the space of participatory arts and landscape decision making. To move the earth as it were, one must first be moved and develop a resonant sense of perspective with one's collaborators. *Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene* is a performance on the edge of becoming a cult, a series of jokes that take themselves seriously, part stand-up comedy routine, part quasi-religious experience. Breaking down conventional patterns of decision making requires unconventional methodologies, but also humour, and tea, blankets and fires to create forms of comfort and trust amidst an acknowledged sense of uncertainty, whilst also being held in that space.

The artist and writer James Bridle notes that '[m]ore information, even for the most advanced information-processing organisations, does not correspond to more understanding. Rather, it confuses and conceals, becoming a spur to further complexity' (Bridle, 2018: 181). *Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene* is a performance that seeks to acknowledge that there will always be more to read, more to digest, more to know, but that it is possible to navigate towards being comfortable in the acknowledged uncertain spaces made by such acknowledgements. The performance has emerged from a hypothesis that more information is not necessarily what is required: perhaps what is required is more feeling, more sensations, more togetherness, tactics for such things even (Nesbitt, 2023). The purpose of creative process in the vicinity of landscape and decision making is to open that process up to the amateur as well as to the professional, to dig in to the etymology of that word amateur, we end up at the 'past participial stem of *amāre* to love' (Chambers, 2006), to be someone who *loves*, in order to become someone who cares.





**Figure 7.** Collaboration with Centre for the Study of Existential Risk (CSER), University of Cambridge, and the Dasgupta Review into the Economics of Biodiversity.

## 19.7

The *Review* makes clear in no uncertain terms, however, that we cannot rely on technology and human ingenuity alone, we need also to change our production and consumption patterns. The human economy is bounded, so it would be entirely counterproductive to seek economic growth that damages Nature in order to provide the necessary finance for investment in R&D (Dasgupta, 2021: 489).

*Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene* was invited by Dr. Lauren Holt at the Centre for the Study of Existential Risk at the University of Cambridge to think towards a methodology for engaging a group of international scholars in thinking around the notion of intrinsic value in relation to biodiversity as part of a contribution to the production of the Dasgupta Review into the Economics of Biodiversity (Dasgupta, 2021).

Lauren and I undertook a pair of walks, mine undertaken in Redruth, Cornwall (See [Figure 9](#)), each walking our lockdown hours break, to think about the intrinsic value of biodiversity, to make a recorded text that would act as an invitation to a group of internationally dispersed philosophers, thinkers and scientists to consider the intrinsic values of biodiversity. Each of the contributors took a walk local to their own location and subject to the conditions of their countries approach to Covid-19 and lockdown management. Theologians, philosophers, policy makers and academics from the UK, US and Canada contributed their spoken thoughts to the production of a 2hour audio work composed and edited by myself and delivered to Partha Dasgupta and HM Treasury (Arnold, 2023).

**Bram:** Hello, how are you, I hope you are sitting comfortably, or are perhaps out, on foot somewhere, taking your daily lockdown exercise. I'm Dr Bram Arnold, and we were meant to be together, we were due to be in the same room, we were due to be sat in a circle, in some oak panelled room at a prestigious

Cambridge college. We were hoping to engage you in a happening which would have been something like a reading group, made up of other people's writing and our own wide-ranging conversation. But instead alas, here we are, or rather there you are, listening to us, say these things we have already said into a microphone some hundreds of miles away, in some place you have never seen. So how to get from where we are to where we want to be...

**Lauren:** I'm Dr. Lauren Holt from the Centre for The Study of Existential Risk. Sir Partha has invited me to convene you, the listeners of this recording, to contribute to the Dasgupta governmental review on the economics of biodiversity. After coronavirus upended the world, I invited Bram to help formulate this method of gathering wisdom and thoughts from you, our diaspora of scholars. We would like you to go somewhere quiet with this recording, to listen to it, to take it for a walk, or to listen to it and then take yourself for a walk.

After listening to this audio file of our thoughts and prompts, perhaps take a few days to think, make sparse notes, perhaps in pen or pencil, and, in whichever way you find most comfortable, as meditation, as peripatetic thought, as meander, take a dictaphone, or press record on your phone, and consider aloud your response to the question...

What is the non-instrumental or intrinsic value of biodiversity?

You might need things like a cup of tea or a biscuit, a pencil, faith and hope, and some time and a cushion.

**Bram:** We, Bram and Lauren, have gone through the same process and will share with you our preliminary thoughts on the intrinsic or non-instrumental value of diversity. You are welcome, as we have done, to talk about personal anecdotes, or take as a starting point some quotes or extracts from texts that speak to you of this, but we are hoping you can share your greatest truth about how you understand the non-instrumental value of biodiversity. To answer it from within yourself, from your own perspective, from your own position on this planet, rotating as it is at 1,108kph whilst orbiting our nearest star. To realize that your feet are stood on the accumulative matter of 4.6billion years of evolutionary process, and that the sun today rose (here, at least) at 05:06 and will set 14hours 51minutes later, and that in that time we will have moved a little further around the sun, and a little closer to the end of the current lockdown, and that in that time 250,000 people will have been born, 168 billion emails will have been sent, 10,000 hectares of virgin forest will have been lost and yet, in spite of all this Mars, Jupiter and Saturn will still align themselves in the southern sky come tomorrow morning, the swallows will continue to arrive from Africa, and the tide will still rise and still fall.<sup>2</sup>

Lauren and I leant on Arne Næss's Deep Ecological framework (Næss, 2016) whose first two principles are:

1. The flourishing of human and nonhuman beings has value in itself. The value of non-human beings is independent of their usefulness to human beings.
2. Richness of kinds of living beings has value in itself.

Principle 2 concerns diversity and complexity. From an ecological standpoint, complexity and symbiosis are conditions for maximising diversity. So-called simple, lower, or primitive species of plants and animals contribute essentially to the richness and diversity of life. They have value in themselves and are not merely steps towards the so-called higher or rational life-forms. The second principle presupposes that life itself, as a process over evolutionary time, implies an increase of diversity and richness. It is this multifaceted quality that is of value, in contrast to a bare dead planet or a sterile city. And it is in the natural world that it is found.



Figure 8. Still from the studio of production of Trail Mix[ED] audio work for CSER.

## 19.8

The end game of this particular iteration of *Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene* was a 2 hour audio narrative, composed of fragments submitted by a pandemic infused diaspora of scholars, that set these thoughts in conversation, delivered to Partha Dasgupta and presented at HM Treasury in Whitehall, as part of the only creative intervention into a document that will set the standard for how the government will consider, value and process our ongoing relationship with the natural world through notions such as *Natural Capital*. (See Chapter 1, pages 33–49 of the Dasgupta Review for a discussion of this term in context and *Ecosystems Services* See Chapter 2, pages 62–79 of the Dasgupta Review). The consents taken from participants in the CSER iteration of *Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene* precluded being able to include them here.





Figure 9. Carn Brea, Redruth, at dawn.

## 19.9

The Dasgupta Review notes that ‘One may doubt [...] that hard-nosed cost-benefit analysis could be the right language in which to express all our values.’ (Dasgupta, 2021: 309), going on to acknowledge that this is rare language to encounter through a governmental paper dealing with notions of economics. It is in this section of the report that influence from *Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene* can be felt, Holt and I ‘produced an arts collaboration output that was part podcast, part immersive report, which was shared with the review team’ (Holt & Arnold, 2021). It is here worth noting that the report is a starting point, it is in regard to how we could proceed from here, and I liken this to the thinking inherent in *Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene* wherein the notion is suggested that we are just at the outset of the Anthropocene, and that through these engagements we can contribute to how it is lived and felt, as opposed to what it is called or by whom.



Figure 10. *Lectern 3*, installation shot, Back Lane West, 2020.

## 19.10

A buzzard circles above me with mild interest, it veers away. The buzzard does what it wants. Language is conditional, it is always good for someone and bad for someone, something can have intrinsic horror, intrinsic beauty, intrinsic usefulness, purpose, sensibility, disposition, the role of an artist is sometimes as a prison guard of prisms, a perpetual attempt to keep tabs on who is looking through what prism at who and what and when and how.

I have become interested in listening to conversations fade into the background of the landscape and disappear completely like Nightjars on a limb. Nightjars are not just ground nesting, they are ground *living*, they are quickly flushed from a nest, they are eager to flee, they are delicate, they are important, they look like leaves, mashed into the ground by too many feet, they look like lichen, enjoying itself, happy in the clean air, they sound like goats, dying in the night. We too often roam a landscape and talk about what it is best for, or what we think is best for it, what might be best for it, what was it,



what is it,  
 and the orchid just blooms, regardless,  
 the cuckoos just rob nests, regardless,  
 the nightjars, squeal like goats in the night, regardless,  
 the mycelium spreads beneath us, regardless,  
 time becomes deeper, regardless,  
 the brown trout in the river, recover from environmental pollution, regardless,  
 the beech trees, brought over in the 1500's, keep growing, regardless,  
 but landscape becomes wild, best, when regarded less.<sup>3</sup>



Figure 11. *Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene*, from an event at Back Lane West Gallery, Redruth, 2021.

## 19.11

Words have their own methods, abuses and uses. *The Natural World* for example, just what is that, pray tell. Is this *The Natural World* that I am walking in now? Are you walking in the natural world out there? I feel I must tell you where I am briefly, for I am walking round the post-industrial landscape of West Cornwall, I am stood near an old mine engine house, where the engine would have been kept to pump the water out of the ground so that the miners could go down there and burrow their tunnels, beneath me. There are hundreds of miles of tunnels burrowed into hollowed rock to extract copper and tin, and so exactly which bit of this world is the natural bit that our dictionary so lightly speaks of? In which bit of it does biodiversity have a value or a non-instrumental value, the water in the glass is muddled, I cannot take my hand away anymore, I notice its attachments, the atomic perforations in the skin and my own beings ever-changing status in the strata of our being and time.

This engine house, is now filled mainly with Ravens and Ravens twigs, the things the Raven has thrown down from its nest at the top of the chimneystack down into the chamber, the pigeon, the jackdaws, the sparrows, this engine house, this wind tunnel, is this the natural world? Over here, under a gorse bush is a bird's nest, I have been watching these Song Thrushes since they were four little blue eggs, a mere two weeks ago, and now there are four new Song Thrushes in the world, they fledged this morning, and I will never know for certain that I have seen them again.

And yet,

I love,

that I know,

that they exist,

& there is no economic equation that can render love, nor emotion.<sup>4</sup>



**Figure 12.** *Production and Consumption in Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene*. Powerpoint slide from a performed paper at Creative Reflections, RSA, London, 18<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

## 19.12

The work at work in this iteration of *Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene* is built on an aspect developed in the methodological foundations of my PhD research into *transecting* as a gerund, a noun become a verb through enacting something in the world (Arnold, 2016). Lauren and I were *transecting* our cultural positions and understandings of the potential for biodiversity to have intrinsic value and inviting our collaborators to do the same. The walk was an invitation to prospect on whether there was room in that consideration for the more-than-human world, a world which we are very much a part of, as opposed to separate from. As Dasgupta notes in the review, 'our bodies are not, in fact, just one organism, but an entire microbiome in which non-human cells outnumber the human cells by quite a margin'. (Dasgupta, 2021: 310).

*Bibliotherapy for the Anthropocene* is about inviting this multi-species perspective into consideration when embarking on actions that may affect changes in landscape management and decision-making, it is also a performance, an artwork and is available for hire.

The Oxford English Dictionary starts its definition of Consumption as 'The action or fact of destroying or being destroyed; destruction. Also: an instance of this.' (OED: 2024), so here we are at the consumptive, destructive end of a thing that is really neither a beginning nor an end, we are now in the *Anthropocene*, and caught in the middle of somehow, trapped between our human and geological temporalities, whilst the powers that be continue to discuss and deliberate on the particular nature of this transition, stating that the 'currently informal term 'Anthropocene' has already proven highly useful to the global change and Earth System science research communities and thus will continue to be used', whilst it is 'not currently a formally defined geological unit within the Geological Time Scale; officially we still live within the Meghalayan Age of the Holocene Epoch' (Waters & Turner, 2019), which is a relief, because *I preferred it in the Holocene*.

## Notes

1. Trail Mix[ED] began as a break from my PhD, a fortnightly live radio show on Source FM in Cornwall, and went on to become an integral part of my research and practice as an artist and a human in the world.
- 2,3,4. Extracts from Sunlight, but dreaming. A collaborative paper for a project commissioned by the Centre for the Study of Existential Risk at Cambridge University. A pair of walks, taken in lockdown 1, to think about the intrinsic value of biodiversity, to make a recorded text as an invitation to a group of internationally dispersed philosophers, thinkers, and scientists to consider the intrinsic values of biodiversity.

*'Biodiversity is the grand mass of everything in that short stretch of atmosphere between the floor and the edge of the sky...*

*Biodiversity is the collective outcome of 4.6billion years of experimentation, without aims, hypothesis, methods or madness...*

*Biodiversity is wrens, and blackbirds, and blackcaps and bullfinches, bramble and celandine, songthrush and gorse, mineshaft and wasteground, high street and high summer...*

*Biodiversity is everything between you and me...*

*Biodiversity has no moral position, no intention, no doubt, no plan, no hope, but rich fecundity...*

*Biodiversity is everything you have ever seen and indeed the very possibility of seeing itself...'*

The Transcript is available in full as a PDF via the artists website: <https://bramthomasarnold.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Sunlight-But-Dreaming.pdf>

## Ethical approval and consent

Written consent has been obtained from Dr. Lauren Holt to refer to the work undertaken in collaboration with her at the Centre for the Study of Existential Risk at the University of Cambridge.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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## Notes on contributor

**Dr. Bram Thomas Arnold** is an artist who started with walking and kept going into performance, drawing, installation, writing, academia and broadcasting: he is currently lecturer in Fine art at Falmouth University. He studied the world's first MA in Arts & Ecology at Dartington College of Arts, and in 2016 finished his PhD at the University of the Arts London. A practice-based study into autoethnography through walking, writing and performance, developing an ecological form of subjectivity: a way of being in the world whereby an individual exists within and amongst places; ones social, geographic and political contexts. This philosophy continues to express itself through a practice, romantic in its outcomes and conceptual in its methods, that does not restrict itself to traditional boundaries, mediums or modes of practice, a responsive way of being and making that is composed of and by its present context.

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## Data availability statement

Any data supporting the findings of this study are available within the article and its notes.

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