this voice; this life; this procession: sensorial journeys and entanglements with lidar and kinect in virginia woolf's writing room

Brass Art:

Chara Lewis
Manchester Metropolitan University
0000-0002-4119-2817

Kristin Mojsiewicz
University of Edinburgh
0000-0001-8696-2216

Anneké Pettican
University of Huddersfield
0000-0003-4792-7199

abstract

This essay positions Virginia Woolf's writing room in the grounds of Monk's House, Rodmell, as an affective spatial threshold, upon which we examine literary architectures, temporality, and worlding. Adopting Woolf's writing methods as an artistic approach to working with light-capture, we explore LiDAR and Kinect as two different forms of non-invasive scanning technology, revealing the multiple, fragmented versions of reality that her literary works imagined.

Situating the immersive video and soundscape *this voice; this life; this procession* in a genealogy of optical and non-optical practices, we attend to the strange overlap between early cinematic perceptions of interiority, and contemporary non-optical technologies that measure and record data. Adopting this apparatus, we use performance, mirrors, and duration to disrupt, enhance, and translate their inherent qualities, which reveal the tactile intensity of data.

In *this voice* the 'sensing body' moves through the windows of Woolf's home as the digital data-layers of her garden and writing room are peeled open. We explore how, through the dissonant relations of different data sets, the fluid journeying of our virtual cameras is disturbed, first by the effects of sinking, tunnelling, and surfacing, and second, by the irruption of lower quality Kinect data. We direct these in ways that align to Woolf's writing methods — pitching tempo and direction in opposition — and discuss this in relation to patterns and chronotopes of time in her novels.

Throughout, we connect the concerns of our practice, as crystalised in this artwork, to broader contextualisation of Woolf's work: worlding, multiplicities, the post-human landscape, literary cartographies, and the theories and registers of visible and invisible light.

keywords

Woolf; LiDAR; Kinect; spatio-temporal; interior

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pilgrimages | thresholds

The immersive video and soundscape *this voice; this life; this procession* (2024) emerged through our long-term engagement with light as a material, a shared interest in Virginia Woolf's writing, and the potential of light-based capture to affectively 'record' and 'translate' heritage spaces with deep literary resonances.[1] This work is situated within moving image practices, spatial non-invasive technologies, and an engagement with heritage or museological sites. This means that in writing through our approach to the interior of Virginia Woolf's writing room we move between literary and art criticism, touching on film theory, architectural writings, and aspects of new media archaeology, through the lens of Woolf's own writing, which has relevance to new materialist approaches. First and foremost, this is an artistic project.

Working with two very different forms of light-based scanning and capture technologies in the grounds of Monk's House, Rodmell, our attention was focused on Woolf's writing room where all her major works from 1922 onwards took form. Through an examination of her writing space as threshold, we situate this immersive work and Woolf's writing in relation to the registers of visible and invisible light, worlding and the threshold as an irruption in the transmission of fluid, spatial journeys. The artwork invites audiences to visualise aspects of the multiple, fragmented versions of reality and time that Woolf herself articulated. As the 'sensing' body of the virtual camera moves through the windows of Woolf's home, the digital data-layers of her garden and writing room are peeled open [Fig. 01]. Through adopting her creative approach to being-in-the-world (streams of consciousness, atemporality, and defamiliarisation), we reveal — using Woolf's words — the 'gradual dissolution of everything.'[2]

The permission to be in a significant interior space occupied by the author has become an important, extended collaborative aspect of our practice. To have the time to think through the dimensions and bearings of a space with the 'felt' presence of our three bodies, and to deliberately act and perform on site using responsive methods, recognises an invisible impetus that propels the work and the connections we make and bring. Through our research trips and work at the Brontë Parsonage, Freud's London home, and Woolf's house at Rodmell, we are highly attuned to the desire-laden literary pilgrimage as part of an authentic experience. However, as Joanna Biggs writes in *A Life of One's Own*, after visiting Rodmell, 'I was in the place where she [Woolf] wrote and I felt as far away from her as ever.'[3]

Biggs's feeling may have been induced by the usual public experience of encountering Woolf's space through a viewing window. We (Brass Art) were permitted by the National Trust to scan inside Virginia Woolf's intimate, creative space and the surrounding garden, using non-invasive light-based laser technologies more familiar to haptic gaming and architectural practices. Through the invisible, reflected light of the Kinect on-range sensors and LiDAR scanner, we carefully explored and occasionally disrupted the interior and exterior spaces using mirrors, performance, and extended duration to generate different forms of time-based cloud data. Acknowledging the challenges for artists working in heritage sites, our captured performances,

> playfully co-ordinate the documented and imagined significance of spaces within a museological context, drawing them into differential relation with what is known about the individuals who were resident within their walls, the contents of their writings, and both the documented and imagined significance of selected items from curated collections.[4]

architectures | affect

Many writers, artists, and architects have focused on the metaphors Woolf herself used about both constructing and reading books, and these are useful to reflect upon for our project. In *A Room*



Figure 01.
this voice; this life; this procession, 2024. Video still. Courtesy of Brass Art.

of One's Own, she claims that, for her, 'a book is not made from sentences laid end to end, but of sentences built, if an image helps, into arcades or domes.'[5] The Woolfs remodelled Monk's House extensively and repeatedly. Victoria Rosner asks what that process of re-making might mean for understanding Woolf's creative process and endless deferrals of meaning — 'If books could be buildings, she was their literary architect; if buildings could be texts, she made herself both their author and their interpreter.'[6] Considering her approach to the use of spatial and architectural frameworks in her narrative structures, we find alignment most clearly on the concept of thresholds. In his discussion of negative space, Allan Johnson reminds us that the second line of *Mrs Dalloway* is both structural and symbolic: 'The doors would be taken off their hinges.'[7] For us, this immediately presents the image of an architectural schematic, opening the building up to exploration, direction, and the flow of bodies, gestures, and objects. The fortress of the patriarchal Victorian home is exploded by Clarissa Dalloway's first two actions in the book of buying the flowers (herself) and requiring the doors to be removed (for the party). This permeability of buildings then, through vertical and horizontal axes, has a direct relationship to our exploration and excavation of Woolf's writing room. We strategically use doorways and mirrors to act as portals to other temporal realities, and to enable a filmic transition to another 'action' and elsewhere, using lasers as film cameras. Johnson also foregrounds 'the affective possibilities of negative architectural space — that is, thresholds, portals, and vast interior voids — in Virginia Woolf's writing.'[8]

In assembling *this voice* we inserted performances, captured previously at the Brontë Parsonage and Freud's London home, into Woolf's writing room. The artists' pixelated monochrome bodies perform within the coloured data clouds of another place and time, through a-temporal dispersal. Although these intimate and original interior contexts are not legible to an audience unfamiliar with our *Shadow Worlds* | *Writers'*

Rooms project, for us they conceptually string together a multiplicity of fluid perspectives at any one time. Situating the concerns of our artistic practice within the tensions of a museological context, Patricia Allmer insists,

> What your work does for me is, it really takes apart — literally it starts to fall apart — this whole myth around presence and it becomes very permeable, and actually what you show very clearly is the absence; of not being able to capture any of this presence.[9]



Figure 02.
Process image, Monk's House, Rodmell, 2018. Photograph. Courtesy of Brass Art.

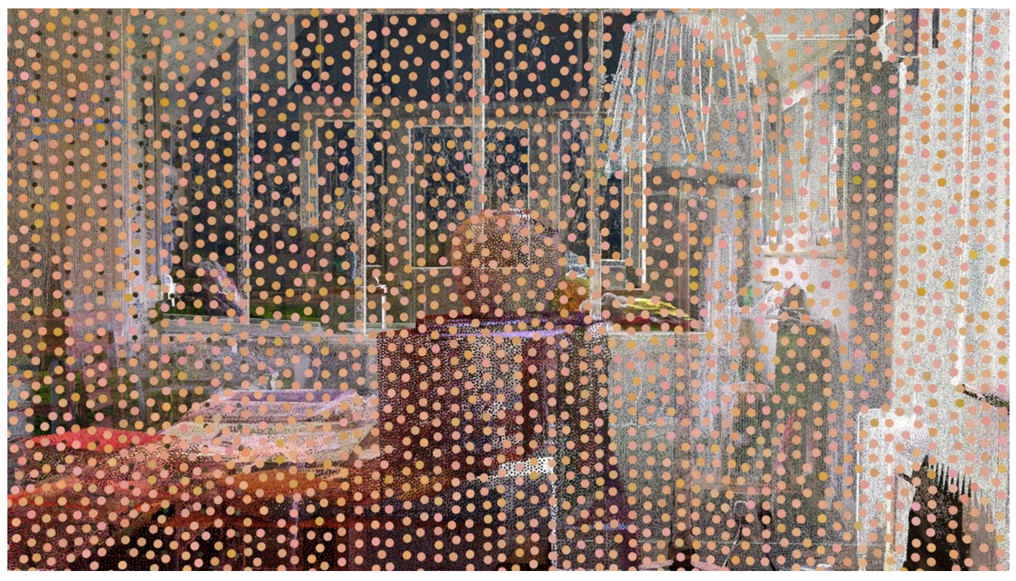


Figure 03.
this voice; this life; this procession, 2024. Video still. Courtesy of Brass Art.

Approaching Woolf's writing room in real life, the visitor first enters an annexe [Fig. 02]. In front of them a large viewing window offers a portal into the original wooden shed and the writing desk at its centre, presented as if Woolf herself has just downed tools and left the room, as Biggs experienced. The desire to step across the threshold between one spatial and temporal condition into another is frustrated in order to conserve both the artefacts and a sense of her continued, and simultaneously arrested, presence. In *this voice* spatial thresholds are traversed in ways architecturally unconventional and humanly impossible. For example, our virtual camera ascends and descends through the branches of trees, it rises from under the church graveyard to approach the writing room from below [Fig. 01], it views her desk from the roof shingles above [Fig. 07] and below [Fig. 08], and, in a reverse tunnelling or burrowing, the viewer is pulled through the membrane of pixels as the camera retreats from the shed into the darkness of the garden [Fig. 03].

Directing the virtual camera, we deliberately foregrounded the visual disorientation of being beneath or above a permeable surface and then passing through that fundamental threshold. This movement from external to internal, of passing through the glass of a greenhouse, the flint garden walls, the sessile linden tree, or to breach the writing room itself, speaks of Woolf's deep sense of time and worlding. The slower movements in the work allow space, breath, and anticipation while the quickening tempos, invoked as thresholds, are punctuated by the camera and draw attention through a rushing or bursting in. This fluid journeying of the camera is interrupted in two ways — first where the camera is dragged rather than plotted through the point-cloud data, and second by the introduction of lower quality Kinect data, in which the captured artist performances disturb the spatial context [Fig. 04]. These interjections of motion capture bring in our performing bodies as apparitions, partially apprehended as shell-like forms that reveal the hollowness of their carapace and revel in an impish haunting of this other space, turning, kicking, and dancing, or hiding beneath Woolf's desk.



Figure 04.
this voice; this life; this procession, 2024. Video still. Courtesy of Brass Art.

The void beneath her desk seemed to offer itself as a space we could occupy. The desk is the central feature in a room already full of artefacts carefully placed as if she had just left, or in anticipation of a summer soirée (doubling as storage for deck chairs and boules). Exploring this negative space with our bodies and documenting our presence with Kinect scanners felt like a suitably transgressive act. This occupation was redolent of the nursery experience Woolf references and wrestles with in *Sketch of the Past*, imagining her infant world-building beneath a different table — 'Looking back [...] I cannot recover the proportions of the external world — how large for instance was the space beneath the nursery table.'[10]

temporality | worlding

It is impossible to do justice to Woolf's radical approach to writing about, through, and with time in short form. Jean Mills acknowledges the reader's disorientation within her worlding, stating that 'Time bends and transcends in a Woolf text.'[11] In her writing we often encounter a singular experience of perception through multiple temporalities. This resonates with the modernist temporal concepts affected by mobility and time-space compression: first, by analogy to Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity of time as a flow rather than an absolute; second, of each individual experiencing time according to their own internal clock; and third — to different observers moving at different speeds relative to each other — time flows at different rates.[12] Among Woolf's many writing methods, some are particularly pertinent for our working within a heritage or museum context: structures of temporality (harlequinade); diurnal cycles (day); narrative time (tunnelling); interior time (stream of consciousness); and circular time (female time). Although literary critics are in agreement that Woolf does not equate the landscape with the female form, her writing does reveal cyclical and circular female modes of time, partially through what Rachel Bowlby describes as 'discontinuous temporalities of the various characters and the double time which they live.'[13] These temporal themes pattern our work as artists.

In her autobiographical *Sketch of the Past*, Woolf recognises 'that the whole world is a work of art' — a pattern.[14] She also defines the relationship between being and non-being, as well as acknowledging how childhood observations led her to appreciate the inter-connectedness of all things, the leakiness of boundaries, and the porosity of matter. Recognising these connections in *The Waves*, as 'circuits of vibration', Carrie Rohman paraphrases Elizabeth Grosz's description of these refrains as 'transmuted and transferred from cosmos to earth, from animal to animal, from animal to human and back, etc.'[15] Rohman continues that these refrains 'oscillate between the living and the cosmic, that open life onto excess and the artistic.'[16]

Sierra Senzaki connects Woolf's writing to new materialist theory and the relations between humans and their entangled connections with a shared environment. She defines non-human moments of being as operating 'upon the same rhizomatic logic, the same removal of distance and hierarchy to reveal that we exist in companionate relation to others as members of the same ecosystem or actants in the same assemblage.'[17] In Woolf's articulation of the inter-connectedness between all things, the tactile, sensing body is open to atmospheric and atomistic conditions: 'The quality of the air above Talland House seemed to suspend sound, to let it sink down slowly, as if it were caught in a blue gummy veil.'[18]

This sense of worlding and the 'myriad material connections between the human and their surroundings' is excavated through our decision to capture not only the writing room as originally intended but also the whole scene, partial house, expansive garden, and, unexpectedly, the neighbouring churchyard.[19] This is vital to a reading of *this voice*. In our appreciation of the laser's touch, and through our interpretation and manipulation, the human and the more-than-human have been enmeshed by the permeability of the point cloud. The data is visualised through prismatic dots; the camera 'sees' or reveals the human-made through the natural and vice versa, and our bodies' data is integrated into that vital flow. Having arrived in Rodmell with the intention of scanning ourselves and the situated writing room, we found instead that the operational processes had captured a milieu of temporal, physical, natural, and human-made things as accidental actors in a much wider *mise-en-scene*.

We have described the effect of the slow-moving camera appearing to register the whole scene from beneath the surface, noting that 'peripheral forms come into view and form unexpected and significant relationships. Within this earthly "critical zone" of organic matter, roots, rock and water, the humus — invisible to the laser — signals the entanglement of all things.'[20] Woolf herself poetically articulates this entanglement in *In the Orchard*:

> The uprush of the trees was tied down by these movements; the whole was compacted by the orchard walls. For miles beneath the earth was clamped together;

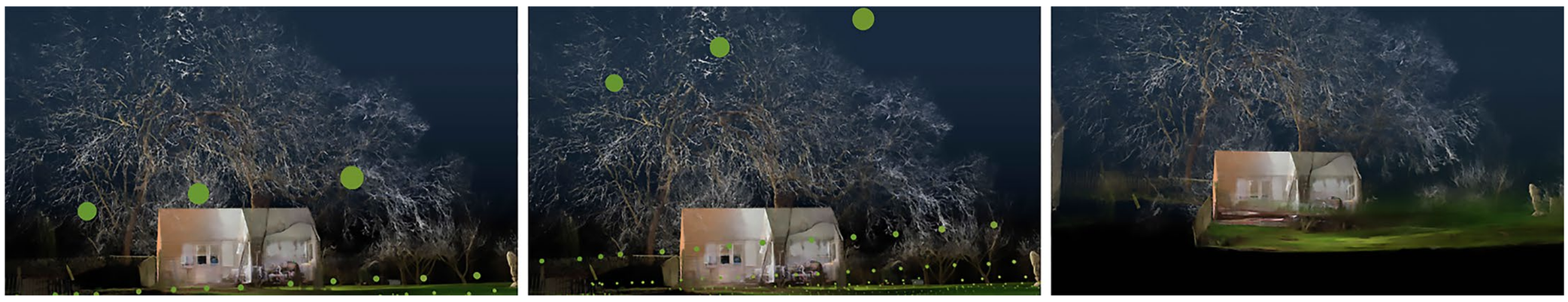


Figure 05.
this voice; this life; this procession, 2024. Video still sequence. Courtesy of Brass Art.

> rippled on the surface with wavering air; and across the corner of the orchard the blue-green was slit by a purple streak.[21]

intensities | flashes

Our collective responses to Woolf's writings centre on the ways in which she writes through visual or tactile intensities, long durational flows of time, quick flashes of images or sound or temperature, and a scrutiny of the atmospheric particularities and complexities of interior lives in dialogue with the conditions of modernity. In *Sketch of the Past* Woolf recalls,

> The little platform of present time on which I stand is, so far as the weather is concerned, damp and chilly. I look up [...] I look up and see, as if reflecting it, a sky the colour of dirty water. And the inner landscape is much of a piece.[22]

The spatial and temporal infrastructures of Woolf's writing appeal to our sensibilities — a novel contained within the parameters of a single day; the Great War occurring in parenthesis; the imagined deep-time flow of a collection of object-detritus. These narrative limits propose a visualisation of time and space interacting (in the novel), which can thus be mapped and, crucially, re-read. We returned to Mikhail Bakhtin's literary proposition that space responds to narrative, just as narrative responds to its spatial conditions and imagination — 'Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history.'[23]

Maggie Humm notes that 'much of the narrative weight of the novel is sustained in images which act as visual analogues to plot developments.'[24] Woolf herself drew her plan for the 1927 novel *To the Lighthouse* as two blocks interconnected by a narrow channel: a day — [10 years] — a day, which could also be read as two burrows connected by a tunnel. Robert Talley writing on Literary Cartographies, proposes that 'map-making is what narratives do: they are "mapping machines"'.[25] Meanwhile architect Andrew Carr's chronotopes map the different characters, locations, and temporalities in Woolf's novels — attempting to plot the conflicting tempos, motifs, connections of thought, and specific threshold moments in the text, which look backwards as well as forwards. In Carr's chronotope of *To the Lighthouse* he visualises a window, a knitted brown stocking, a lost brooch, an easel, a boat, the lighthouse, the cycles of the moon, the span of time and weather conditions, alongside Woolf's phrases anchored in the book's chronology [Fig. 06]. Carr concludes that,

> Small, incidental moments, such as moving across a room, knitting a stocking or cutting pictures from a magazine form physical notches for interior monologues that wander from viewpoint to viewpoint, recalling past events and projecting imaginary futures, from multiple perspectives. Each excursion occupies a disproportionate duration compared to the external time frame that holds it.[26]

The visual repetition and echo of these symbols lay bare the patterns and tempos like a performance score; the black dots representing each character's occurrence in the text appear like perforated lines or code. The symbols slip from small gesture to lunar cycle or weather front, to a moment of introspection and interiority. Finally, the eye is drawn to the bottom right of the page and to the line from the book, 'it was done, it was finished.'[27] This translation of book into graphic form both obscures and reveals aspects of its own condition, and questions how to present the temporality of reading narrative, in the process of reading the chronotope.

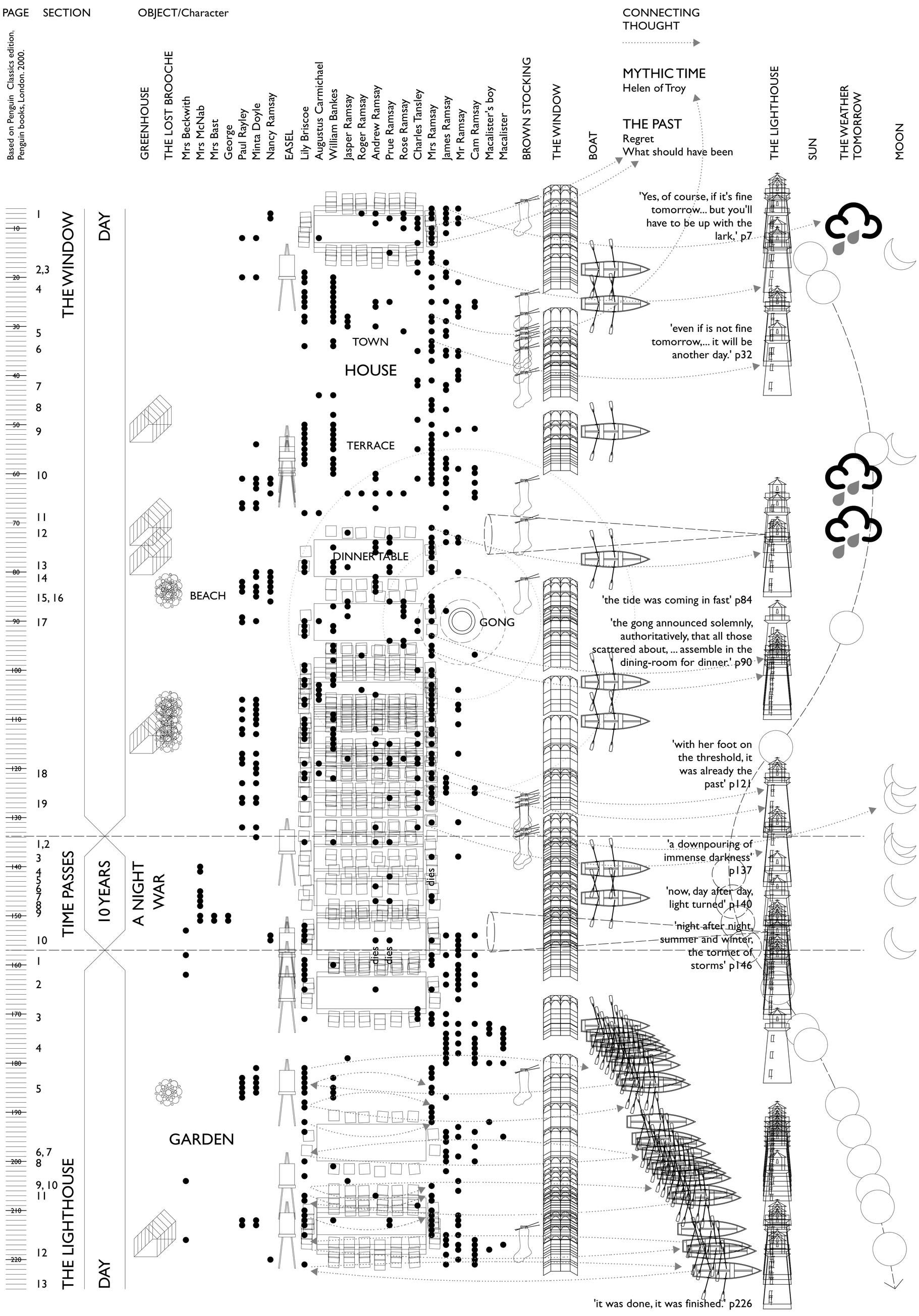


Figure 06.
01 To the Lighthouse. Andrew Carr, 2023. Diagram. Courtesy of the artist.

prismatic | luminous

The temporal cycle is clearly visible in *this voice* — the saturation of the grass and glow of the shed were captured at the brightest point of the day, whereas purple hues signal the low light conditions towards the end of the day — and at moments in the film when this is all simultaneously visible, it has an intensely prismatic effect. Noting how Woolf uses the violet end of the spectrum to signal a return to shadowy invisibility in *The Waves* (1931), J. F. Stewart claims, 'Color [sic] in the novel is not only an equivalent of feeling, it is also a component of form. The variously tinted streams of consciousness interconnect, so that "geometric colour" becomes a structural principal.'[28] Other Woolf scholars such as Jane Goldman draw attention to the use of photological metaphors in her descriptions of characters and interiors, how patriarchal shadowing is represented in moments of chiaroscuro.[29] Stewart continues that Woolf's art 'advances from fragmentary impressionism of Jacob's Room to the luminous structure of the Lighthouse. There revolving lights and colors [sic] play on the sensibility like light waves on the retina.'[30]

We have had countless moments of reading Woolf's short stories post-production and finding incredible resonances between her description of looking through, and moving from, exterior to interior and vice versa; looking deeply at dark, merging objects and shadowy occlusions. In the posthumously-published short story *The Moment: Summer's Night*, Woolf presents this crepuscular setting that speaks strongly to the 'strange, diaphanous scanned quality of light' in our film:[31]

> But this moment is also composed of a sense that the legs of the chair are sinking through the centre of the earth, passing through the rich garden earth; they sink, weighted down. Then the sky loses its colour perceptibly and a star here and there makes a point of light. Then changes, unseen in the day, coming in succession seem to make an

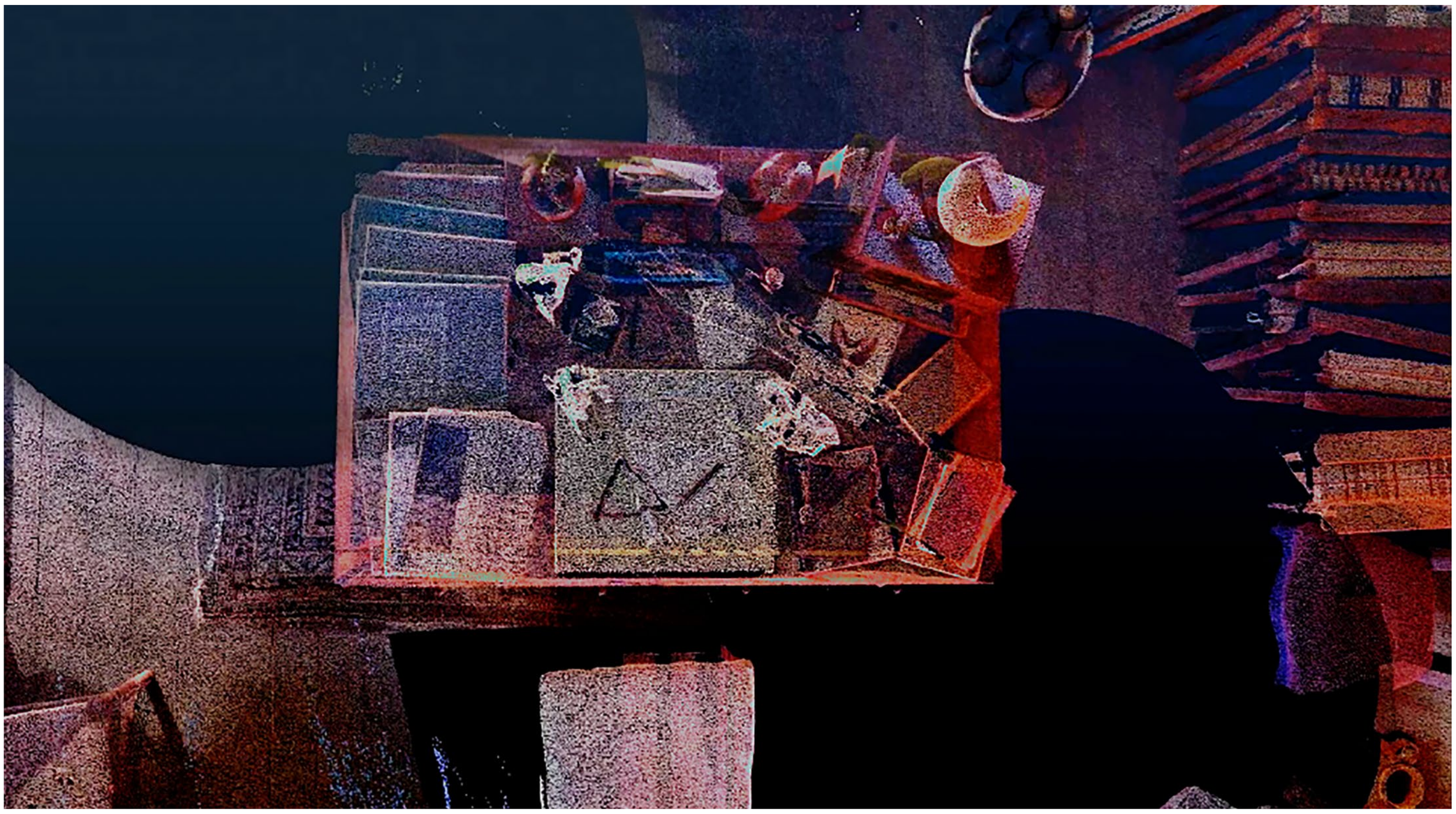


Figure 07.
this voice; this life; this procession, 2024. Video still. Courtesy of Brass Art.

order evident. One becomes aware that we are spectators and also passive participants in a pageant. And as nothing can interfere with the order, we have nothing to do but accept, and watch.[32]

These moments foreground the importance of intensity and sensation in Woolf's writing. Architect Marko Jobst claims that '[these] extreme perceptual renderings lead to radical transformations of what is seen, moving beyond what is known of the object and enabling the merging of various objects.'[33] For us this suggests what Woolf's methods might offer to our art practice, and to writing about both site and architecture. Such moments, where shadows congeal to produce unrecognisable forms, haunt our work with scanners. For the unsuspecting viewer, the scanner's veridical capture creates new psychodramatic amalgamations, from occlusions and mergings, to absorb and apprehend. Allmer returns to the theme of writing through space and with data, noting in our work that 'data here as an artistic tool also sets a fascinating counterpoint to writing, and specifically to the manual act of writing.'[34]

over-seeing | signals

The literary techniques of Woolf and fellow modernist writers were notably cinematic in light of emergent editing techniques such as montage, the close up, flashback, and fadeouts, which explored the potentials and intensities of the medium at the time.[35] *This voice* proposes that Woolf draws attention to a problem of objective representation that typically forms technological modes of representation, as though questioning the value of a photographic indexicality that cannot in some way also index memory, imagination, and subjective, internal life. Our initial Kinect moving-image work, employing the relatively crude motion capture capabilities of early Kinect sensors, is described as 'machinimatic expressionism' by Spencer Roberts. He notes an overlap with the cinematic expressionism of F. W. Murnau's film *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari*, that 'the encounter with each of these technologies in their appropriate temporal milieu, provided access to a machinic way of seeing that was highly affective in character, being generative of a certain degree of awe, and wonder, seeming to merge the mathematical and the dynamic sublime.'[36]

There is an aesthetic affinity here with Woolf's own writing on the affect of early cinematic viewing, producing highly charged psychological spaces. Specifically, Woolf describes a moment of fear seeing a black shape bulging at the edge of the screen during a screening of Murnau's 1920 film:

> It swelled to an immense size, quivered, bulged and sank back again into nonentity. For a moment it seemed to embody some monstrous diseased imagination of the lunatic's brain. For a moment it seemed as if thought could be conveyed by shape more effectively than by words.[37]

This rupture, for Woolf, signals the potential for cinema to show thought or emotional intensity beyond superficial, representational shorthand, in order to do some of the interior work that novels already performed.

Although Humm states that 'Woolf's modernism is in urgent dialogue with the technologies of modernity – cinema and photography,'[38] we are also interested in the archaeologies of the non-optical laser-scanners central to our practice. Jussi Parikka's genealogy of experimental techniques for measurement describes making visible what is not immediately apparent to the naked eye — 'detecting data from the wavelengths and other realms through extended practices of light.'[39] We are attentive to these extended practices through our use and misuse of interior (Kinect) and exterior (LiDAR) scanning devices. Their emergent histories, failures, glitches, pulses, and blind spots materialise through a discourse rooted in visual culture. It still speaks to the apparatus of photography and film — through signals, flashes, sensors, and sound — despite the roots, and continued development, of the technology for military surveillance purposes.

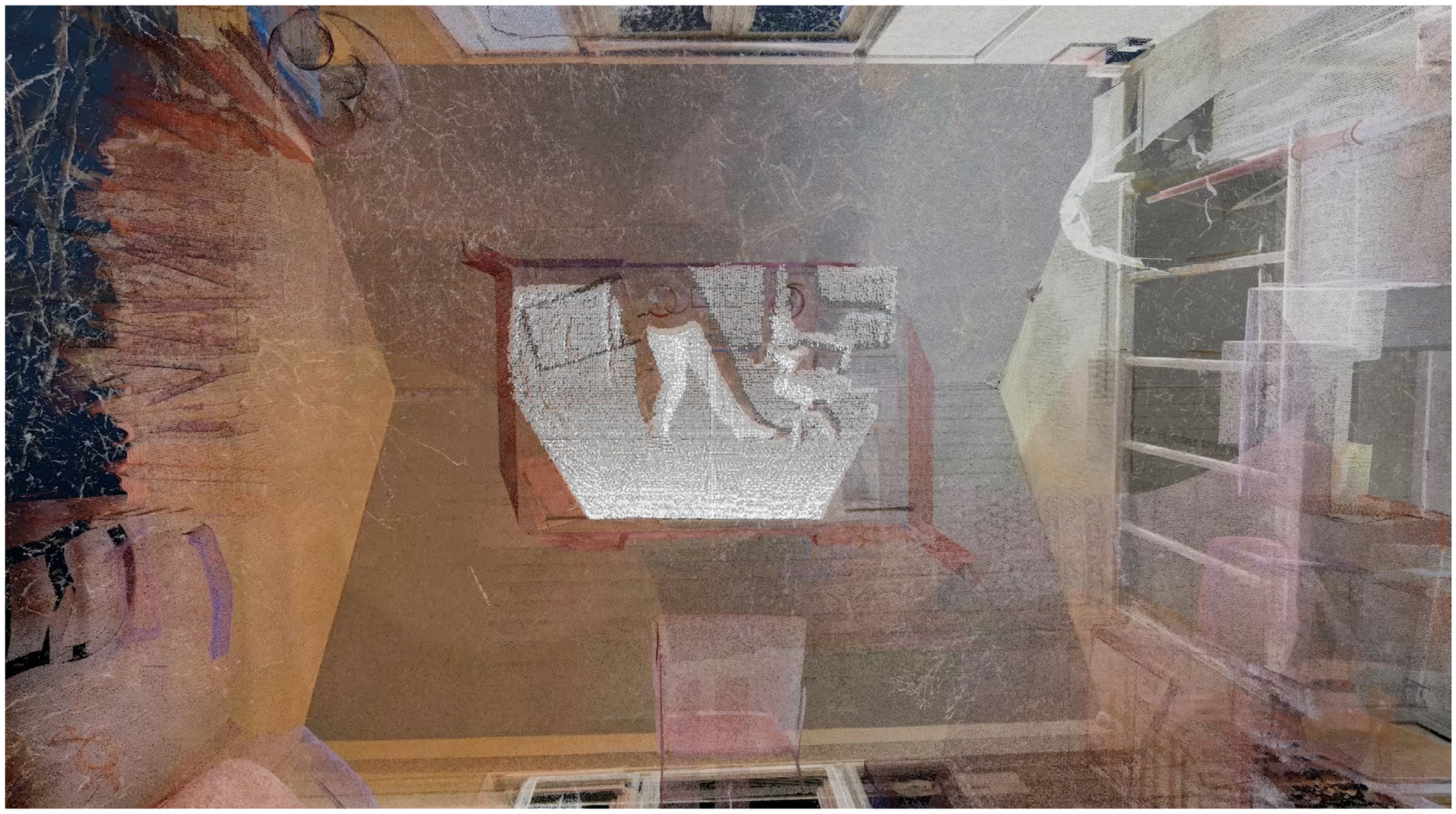


Figure 08.
this voice; this life; this procession, 2024. Video still. Courtesy of Brass Art.

Further, non-optical, post-photographic or 'post-lenticular' (ScanLAB) image-capture technology is frequently harnessed for motion-capture in gaming or accurate scanning and measurement of territory.[40] We process these 'in-visual' point cloud data scans, or 'operational images' (Farocki), which we then synthesise, navigate, and animate.[41] *This voice* is peppered with myriad portals induced by both surprising and intentional material disturbances. We extrapolate from what is occluded or can be hidden to reveal something vital about human experience and perception, beyond the scope and capacity of the technology.

tunnelling | irruption

Returning to Woolf's structures of temporality, her 'harlequinade' offers 'an assortment of conflicting allusions which, in their different directions and tempos drove her narratives forward.'[42] Through this method, we observe the way Woolf's writing inspired Deleuze and Guatarri. Introducing the concept of the rhizome, they insist that writing is not a measure of something else, but instead has everything to do with 'surveying, mapping, even realms that are yet to come.'[43] In other words, by overlaying and pitching ideas and metaphors against each other, a procession of images is held together in the narrative landscape. These fragmented and contradictory allusions, their interference with pace and tempo, produce a coherent patterning through the amplitude and intensity of the scene. In *this voice* we present this rhizomatic structure in relation to 'tunnelling' — a mode Woolf describes in her diary as a method to 'tell the past by instalments, as I have need of it.'[44] Her rhizome-like, non-hierarchical tendencies enable her to pull apart the characters and reveal past thinking, events, or actions within the over-arching narrative. Literary critic Pelagia Goulimari excavates the entangled genealogies of tunnelling (and shredding) as method, suggesting that Woolf's intertextuality (in conversation with Kafka's concept of the burrow) anticipates and influences Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the rhizomatic. Goulimari writes that in Woolf's diary entries around the time of writing *Mrs Dalloway* she is thinking

of characters as in 'shreds' — shreds that are rhizomatically connected. She keeps returning to a language of tunnels and channels, describing her 'discovery' of a 'tunnelling' method — a method applied not only to characters but also to temporalities.[45]

Tunnelling is apposite for thinking about *this voice*. We want to consider how laser scanning might relate to Deleuze and Guattari's suggestion that 'spatiotemporal relations, determinations, are not predicates of the thing but dimensions of multiplicities', specifically through the processes of scanning and the layered temporal cloud data we gather, treat, and transform.[46] In our work we can relate the scanner's beams — seeking points to reflect spatiotemporal relations — to both 'lines of articulation' and 'lines of flight'.[47] In presenting their book as an assemblage, Deleuze and Guatarri (in their multiplicities) offer a way to consider our processes of making. Their insistence on the fluidity and layered intensities invoked through literature helps us to describe not only the captured LiDAR data cloud but also the data gathered in our multiple performances made on location in selected writers' rooms (like those of Brontë, Freud, and Woolf) over many years. The relationship between these travelling lines and strata of bodies, furniture, artefacts, detritus, interfuse in *this voice*, just as in Woolf's 1925 novel *Mrs Dalloway* the characters' journeys through London accumulate the recent past, the deep past, the present, and the future taking shape.

In a pivotal scene that embodies this accrual and resonates with Goulimari's observation on shredding, Woolf's character Peter Walsh is walking through Regent's Park. He is replaying past events, as if linking and layering atomised feelings. Through these vibrating lines of articulation and flight, his thoughts slip from a ship's cabin and his betrothed, to the drawing room of Clarissa Dalloway's London home, where he is sitting on the sofa, considering her gestures, and their connected interior lives. As his attention focuses on his passions, his tears, the stirring sounds of a woman puncture and invade his introspection, bringing him back into the world. Woolf writes,

> a frail quivering sound, a voice bubbling up without direction, vigour, beginning or end, running weakly and shrilly and with an absence of all human meaning [...] the voice of an ancient spring spouting from the earth.[48]

The origin of this sound is defamiliarised: a tall, quivering shape, a funnel, a rusty pump, a wind beaten tree, a battered woman. But, what Walsh discerns, is that it sings of love: 'love which has lasted a million years'.[49] The primeval bubbling song offers an extraordinary irruption that is both visceral and sonic. It reveals Woolf's engagement with deep time and her sense of worlding as the sound bursts and seeps. The novel *Mrs Dalloway* presents the forces that permeate all things in daily life and create ruptures in our attention, which require us to tunnel this way and that, from interior spaces out into the world and suddenly back again. Julia Briggs proposes that 'Woolf formulates and re-formulates her various breaks and spaces in time because it is across time's chasms, its gaps and fissures, that she must cast her art.'[50]

In *this voice*, the spatial-temporal relations of the surveyed, mapped, and assimilated scans, made in Woolf's garden and writing shed, form a data cloud as each laser beam registers a point in time and space where it touches another surface. The resulting data cloud, created from the touch of a laser on the surface of our skin, has affinities with a sculptural 'cast'; however, in this scanning process we think of this more precisely as creating a 'light-cast'. In our research for *this voice*, we extended the reach of the scanning and making process through our desire to bring different forms of light-cast together. We instinctively decided that scanning should continue when the sun was sinking and light was low (not suitable for traditional light capture) because we wanted to see what this would yield.

We also explored how we might transmute the usual visual aesthetic of data clouds to intensify the sense that Woolf's interior literary space had been bathed and cast in light. We found new ways to intermingle our Kinect-captured bodies with the light-cast, to echo the intensities of her worlding.

Treating the light-cast data clouds as a felt form, something to be handled with care and sensitivity, is important in our approach to heritage settings. Yet we are deeply aware that while we see our process as something more akin to a caress, there is an ambivalence to the idea of touch and gesture. The hand is capable of both tenderness and control — which Woolf herself attests to in *Moments of Being*. In our work we handle the data, the whole scene and everything contained within it, while attending to its resonances and intensities. Consequently, *this voice* invites each audience member into an as yet uncharted connection with this heritage space, as their multiplicities meet the rhizomatic lines of our chosen camera paths through and under the data clouds. In observing our intention to tunnel into and under the data, audience visitor and artist Rowland Hill wrote that reading Woolf's fiction and encountering *this voice*,

> gives me the sensation of floating between inner worlds and physical perspectives. To me, this floating sensation is so visual that it often feels like watching contemporary cinema with advanced camera technology. It was a pure delight, then, to watch your film and see some of these thoughts and feelings reflected — albeit in a totally novel and unexpected way.[51]

sinking | surfacing

In the opening scene of *this voice* Virginia and Leonard Woolf's house sinks slowly into the frame [Fig. 09]. The virtual camera journeys through the purple-tinted haze of small, coloured spots of light, orientated towards a tentatively outlined window — a threshold — as if dreaming of escape. In *this voice* the camera observes thresholds, but it also ignores them, puncturing walls that are usually

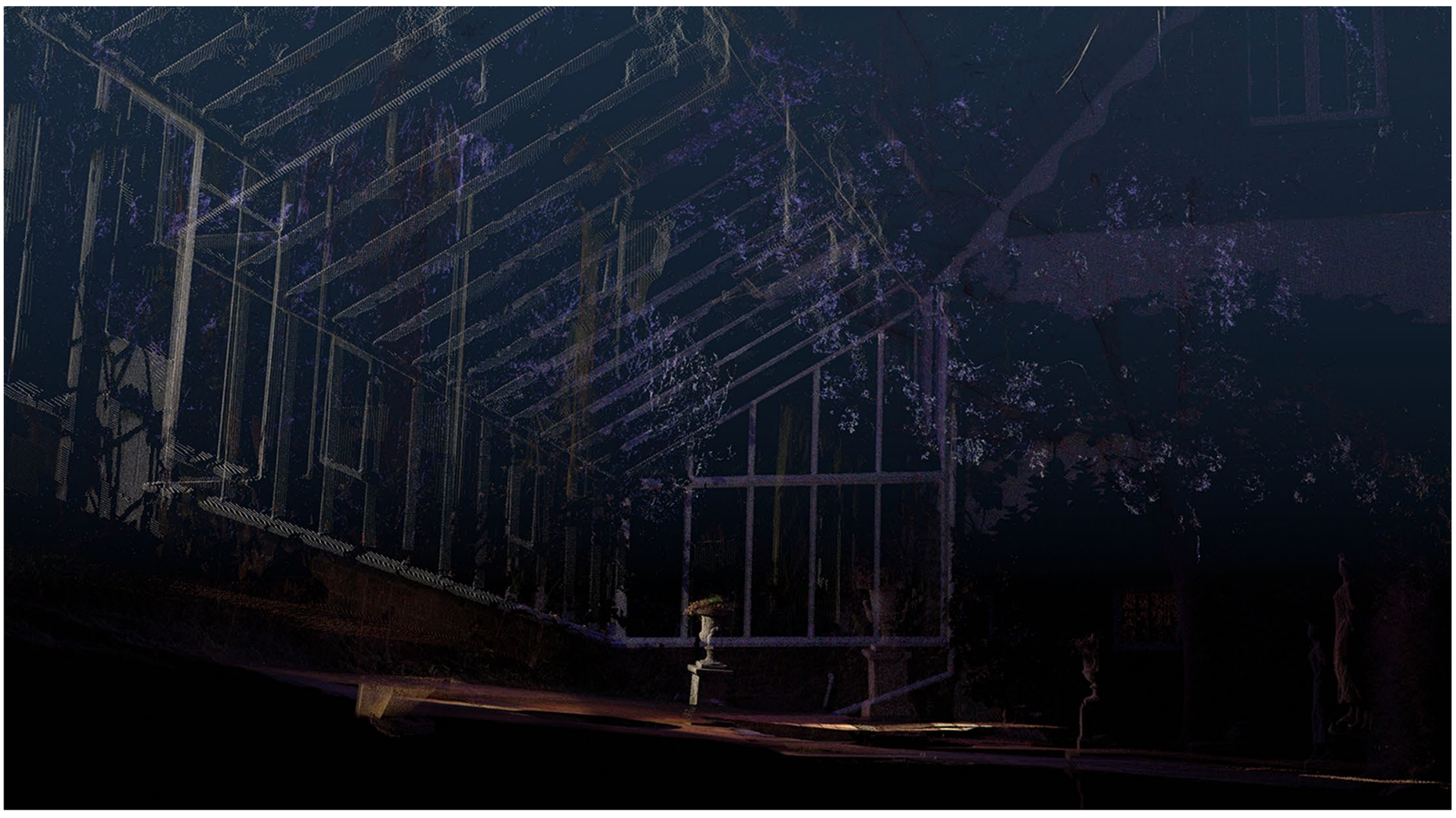


Figure 09.
this voice; this life; this procession, 2024. Video still. Courtesy of Brass Art.

obstructive to movement. Throughout the film, we direct the camera to orientate ourselves in relation to Woolf's writing space and her worlding. In doing so we continually mine the light-cast and in particular the architectural form of her writing room — tunnelling under it, travelling through it, sinking beneath it, viewing it from afar — making it float. These falling and rising points of view are amplified by composer Annie Mahtani's acoustic palette. The intimate small sounds collected and extrapolated by Mahtani incorporate field recordings and crackling cellophane lighting gels to create an immersive and intense soundscape. Mirroring the camera's 'agency' to move on a vertical axis, Mahtani composed the sound to echo this flow, allowing the fluid transmission of sonic intensities to ascend in space.

In one sequence the camera's movement punctures the dark ground under the writing shed, revealing a gravestone and Woolf's writing desk captured as a Kinect apparition. Sinking and turning on its axis, the desk appears to pin the legs and feet of a still figure lying beneath it. This moment is brought into sharp relief as the camera suddenly retreats, thrusting the observer back into Woolf's writing room through an atomised haecceity; a digital veil of milky, incandescent hues. This rupture demands the re-orientation of the writing desk in space and ignites a new sequence of camera movements that further reveal 'dimensions of multiplicities.'

Writing through Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* and the 'thisness' of haecceity, Deleuze and Guattari propose, 'Taking a walk is a haecceity; never again will Mrs. Dalloway say to herself, "I am this, I am that, he is this, he is that".[52] These same multiplicities continue:

> She felt very young; at the same time unspeakably aged. She sliced like a knife through everything; at the same time was outside, looking on [...] She always had the feeling that it was very, very dangerous to live even one day.[53]

Most importantly for us apprehending Woolf's temporality, Deleuze and Guattari conclude, 'A



Figure 10.
this voice; this life; this procession, 2024. Video still. Courtesy of Brass Art.

haecceity has neither beginning nor end, origin nor destination; it is always in the middle. It is not made of points, only of lines. It is a rhizome.'[54]

In our re-apprehension of this work — in writing through *this voice* and further engaging with scholarship on Woolf in the post-production phase — we can have a different relationship to the time taken in the making of this work. Ten years elapsed between our initial approach to Monk's House to scan the writing room and the production of *this voice* for exhibition. Over the course of a single day in December 2018 we were able to finally capture it. Within 15 months the Covid pandemic spread and fundamentally shifted our perceptions of connectivity and time. Our interior lives had a different temporality and rhythm, and external connections took on new importance and intensities. The spatial data produced at Woolf's house was large and unwieldy. Processing it as sensorial journeys was slow and time-consuming with many renders, revisions, and editorial decisions.

What is at stake for us as artists and academics are the 'moments of being' that emerge from *this voice* — a consciousness of intense moments of perception, where time flows seem to shift for an audience. Apprehending these multiple, inner and outer, temporal realities questions what we think we know and whether there are other ways of 'knowing' what we know. In our hands the digital spatialising tools, used to measure and record data, reveal intensities of experience and affect that alter our perception of the world we live in, and our interconnectedness to different temporalities and oppositional rhythms. The temporal rhythms we achieve in *this voice* via the pushing through or dragging back of the camera also allow a shift in pace where the camera slows, mimics breathing, pauses its trajectory, and pulls back, or surfaces [Fig. 10]. Through introducing subtle camera movements that present the writing room and the garden landscape as if they were breathing, we bring life and vibrancy to the light-casts [Fig. 05]. Significantly, towards the end of the film we use careful camera alignment to reveal the oppositional falling and rising of the fading dancing figure, enmeshed in the Linden tree, as the film propels us towards the gradual dissolution and suspension of everything.

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author biographies

Brass Art is the long-term collaborative art practice of Lewis, Mojsiewicz, and Pettican. Their work spans drawing, writing, photography, moving image, digital technologies, sculptural installation, and interventions in heritage sites. Their Writers' Rooms series captures performative transgressions in the museum-homes of the Brontë sisters, Sigmund Freud, and Virginia Woolf.

notes

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