

CLIFF MCLUCAS AND MIKE PEARSON (BRITH GOF)

Brith Gof was established in Aberystwyth, Wales, in 1981 by Mike Pearson and Lis Hughes Jones, following their departure from Cardiff Laboratory Theatre. From 1981 to 1988, the company purposefully operated outside of the prevailing theatrical orthodoxies, creating their own circumstances for performance and relating their work to specific locations and occasions in West Wales. In these circumstances, their work became increasingly, and overtly, political, drawing on aspects of Welsh history and addressing experiences of cultural and economic decline and disintegration. In 1988, the company collaborated with the industrial percussionists Test Dept. to create *Goddodin*, a large-scale site-specific performance presented in the disused Rover car factory in Cardiff's docklands. Since then they have completed two more large-scale site-specific pieces. *Pax*, of 1991–1992, based on a descent of angels and concerned with the environmental plight of the planet, was presented at St. David's Hall, Cardiff, the Harland and Wolff shipyard in Glasgow and in the British Rail Station in Aberystwyth. More recently *Haearn*, meaning 'iron', was conceived both as a live work and a television record, and performed at the Old British Coal Works in Tredegar, Wales, in 1993. Brith Gof's work extends across large-scale, site-specific performances, touring theatre performances, installation, video, television, and music, and the company is currently involved in several publication projects. Mike Pearson and Cliff McLucas are Joint Artistic Directors of the company. This interview was recorded at Brith Gof's offices at Chapter Arts, Cardiff, in January 1994. The short texts and statements which punctuate this interview are drawn from 'The Host and The Ghost: Brith Gof's Site-Specific Works', 60 interleaved texts by Mike Pearson and Cliff McLucas concerning the company's approaches to site-specific performance. These extracts are reproduced by permission of the authors.

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What was it that brought about the first large-scale site-specific piece in 1988?

MP: Well, I think it's within the history of Brith Gof not performing in theatre spaces. That's for a number of reasons. One is that there aren't a large number of theatres in Wales. There's a limited circuit—and almost all of those theatres are problematic in one way or another. They were all built

within three or four years of each other, but actually nobody had thought about what theatre might be in Wales. Coupled with that, right at the end of our life within Cardiff Laboratory we went to live and work in a small village in West Wales, and began to think about manifestations of theatre that were not theatre-bound. We were making performances for farmhouse kitchens, for the Post Office counter, and so on. That built somewhat as we began — as Brith Gof — to settle our activity. I think we went in two directions. One was to be increasingly working in non-theatrical spaces — barns, churches, chapels, what-have-you. I think it would be the venues in which a Welsh, particularly a Welsh rural audience, would feel more at ease in — rather than sitting in rows in the dark in a theatre. There are cultural manifestations, like the nosen Lawen, which is an evening get together, which might present easier models to work with. Lis Hughes Jones did a performance for chapel pulpits — an extremely restricted space to address. That was one strand of the work. The other was to build staging units, so performances could come as a unit with their own floor, seating, lighting, which could be put in anywhere, and which would concentrate activity in some sort of way, leading to a perfecting of conditions for the performers. That, equally, was quite unusual. I think we did learn a lot. Things like *Rhydcymerau*, which we did in a disused cattle market in Lampeter, with the audience sitting on two sides where farmers would have looked down onto the beasts when they went through, seemed entirely natural. It didn't seem 'site-specific'. I think that term was only appearing at around that time that we did *Goddodin*, anyway.

CM: I wasn't in this work, but for me the cultural placement of those theatre pieces, that cultural specificity, was exemplary. And the work that Lis did in those chapels — I never saw it, I decided not to go and see it because I was not of that congregation, that audience.

This notion of 'naturalness' seems important.

CM: Yes. In one sense. But it wasn't congruent. Doing a performance of *Rhydcymerau* in Lampeter cattle market was in the grain of the place, but not. And it's the gap between those two that was exciting about that work.

MP: I used to share with Lis Hughes Jones the idea that you're actually working with a congregation — like an aggregation of people with no theatrical expectations at all, but actually a religious one. And using religious subject-matter, but looking at that obliquely, was extremely interesting.

CM: In some of the work there was this tension about who the audience was. In the cattle market show, for instance, there would be the local farmers, who would have sat in that place and bought cattle. But there

MP 2 (SITE)

site specific performances are conceived for, and conditioned by, the particulars of **found** spaces, (former) **sites** of work, play and worship. They make manifest, celebrate, confound or criticise location, history, function, architecture, micro-climate... They are an interpenetration of the **found** and the **fabricated**. They are inseparable from their sites, the only context within which they are 'readable'.

would be other people who would come along, who'd heard about the company from Cardiff or wherever. So the company's audience has always been this hybrid. Hybrid is a key word in all of the practice. In other words, you shouldn't go away with the idea that these pieces of work were in some kind of sense 'natural' in a 'natural' environment.

MP: I think it's mainly only in the past year or so that I felt strong enough to admit that I'm an immigrant. And that, actually, Welsh society will have to take me warts and all. And they can choose to ignore me or embrace me. But I think for a long time there was a feeling that — not least because it's a minority, it's a culture under threat, it's a language under threat — that you have to slip and slide and hide underneath a prevailing orthodoxy, which you mustn't damage. There's a way, if you're not careful, that Welshness presents itself to you as this facade which you have to gaze at and get mesmerised by. But in fact it's not true. Most of that is a middle-class invention, which is no different from an English one, in a way.

CM: The other thing to stress is that, certainly in places like Aberystwyth where Brith Gof was first based, it's a bi-lingual culture. I think in any culture that is bi-lingual you'll find negotiability — hybridisation — as central elements of daily practice. So we're not talking about a Welsh language culture which is one thing. It itself is fractured, and there are people who are disenfranchised from that who are Welsh speakers. So it's very fluid. Because both Mike and I are immigrants — if you like — we've learned to speak the language and to negotiate our path amongst all of this. I think it's a very fertile environment within which to make work. It's apparent what needs to be done here — and that bi-lingualism, that discontinuity within the culture, gives rise to all kinds of political energies. The first large-scale piece came from that background of cultural site-specificity.

MP: I'm not even sure that we ever sought to do 'large scale' — that came from the venue that we found and the way Cliff decided to engage with that particular building. However, it was political. You have to remember

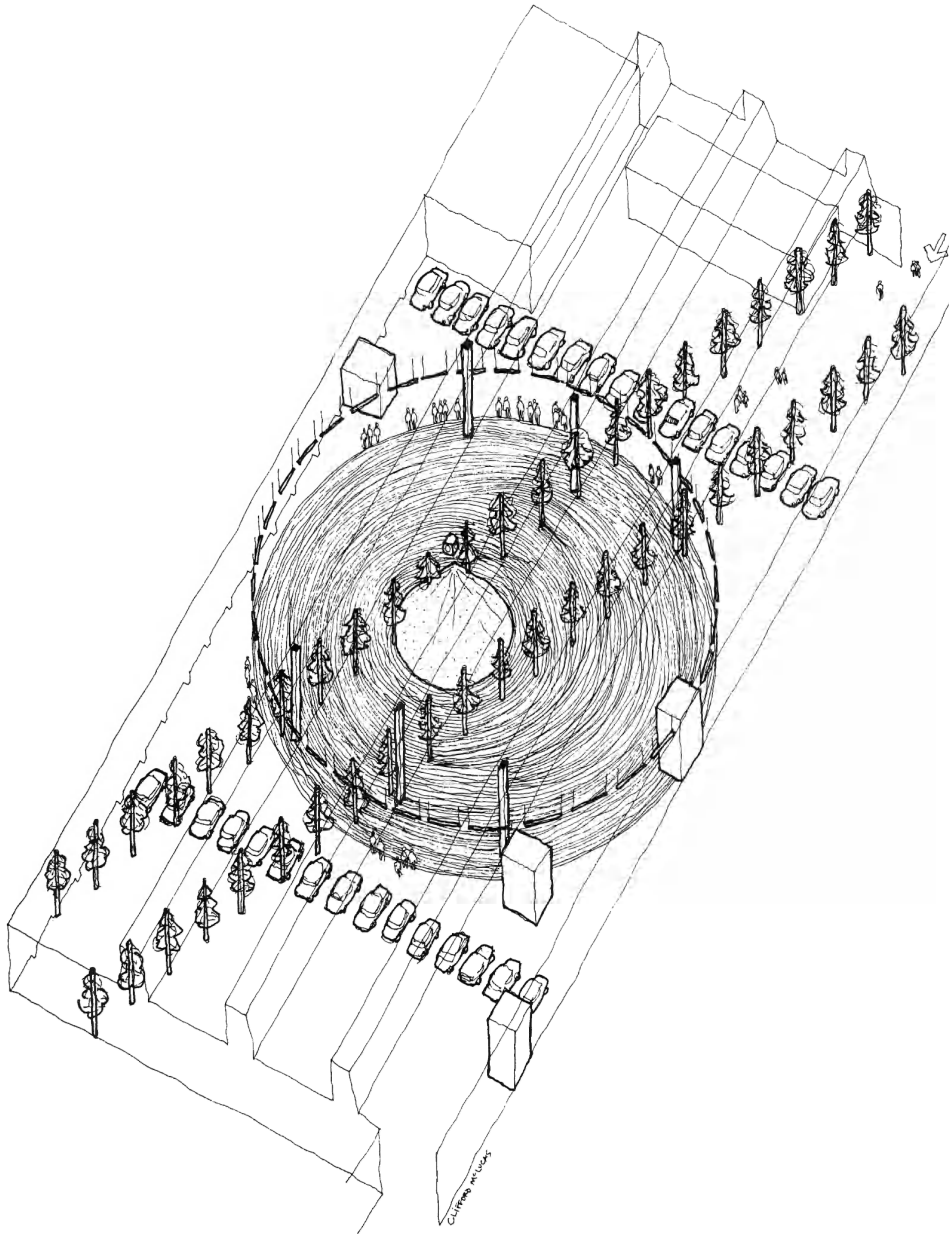


Figure 51 Clifford McLucas *Goddodin* (1988) in Cardiff at the old Rover car factory in the docks (courtesy of the artist).

what it was like in 1988. I felt that Test Dept. were amongst the few people within the artistic community in Britain who were willing to stand up and be counted about what they thought was going on in society. And I wanted to be associated with them. I think scale came in through the door when we started to work with them. Test Dept. wouldn't be content working in a small space. They expect in their concerts the number of people that eventually came to see the show and they had already done a number of events of some scale.

CM 13 A host site might offer a number of things

- a a particular and unavoidable history
- b a particular use (a cinema, a slaughterhouse)
- c a particular formality (shape, proportion, height, disposition of architectural elements etc)
- d a particular political, cultural or social context
- c a particular kind of 'halfway house' for event and audience to meet (a workplace, a meeting place, a street, a church)

In other words, deciding to create a work in a 'used' building might provide a theatrical foundation or springboard, it might be like 'throwing a six to go', it might get us several rungs up the theatrical ladder before we begin.

CM: I think also the subject matter must have been in your mind. *Goddodin* is an epic poem about the slaughtering of Welsh warriors. And all kinds of metaphors are carried within it about cultural decline.

MP: Cliff uses the word epic, but there's no narrative in *Goddodin*, so it's an elegy. There's no story being told. You can construct a story out of odd details of the poem, but if you take a slice of *Goddodin*, it's the same as any other slice.

CM: In the docks in Cardiff there's this whole 'regeneration' of post-industrial areas of South Wales taking place. We did *Goddodin* in the building which had been the Rover car factory. Just by doing it in that building — by doing it in a place where there were no longer cars being manufactured — all kinds of resonances about cultural, economic and regional decline are brought in. That was what excited me about the site, apart from the actual building itself. It was in a wasteland. When people came they caught a bus at Chapter Arts and were driven down into this wasteland. They would get

dropped off in the middle of a rain-swept car park and directed over to this industrial building that's kind of falling down, then in through the door to this really quite unique environment. All those things were charging the event up aesthetically and politically.

MP 4 (NARRATIVES)

site specific performances **recontextualise** site: they are the latest occupation of a location where occupations are still apparent and cognitively active. They are extremely generative of signs: the **denotative** and **connotative** meanings of performance are amended and/or compromised by the **denotative** and **connotative** meanings of site. Such performances are a complex overlay of **narrative**, historical and contemporary, a kind of **saturated space**, or a scene of-crime, where, to use forensic jargon 'everything is potentially important'.

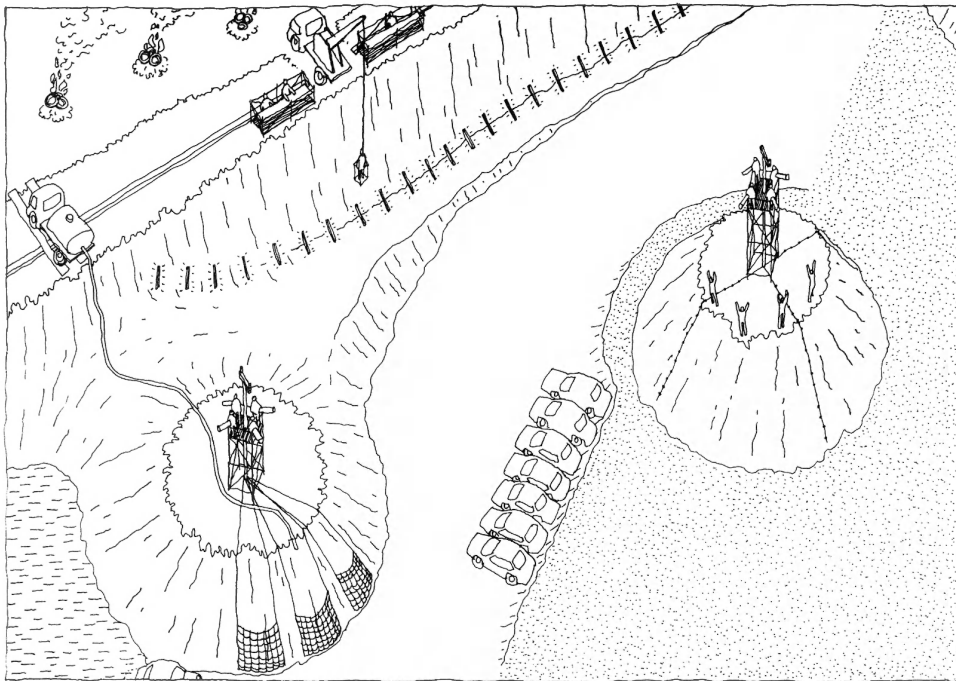


Figure 52 Clifford McLucas Goddodin (1988) in Polverigi, Italy (detail) in a working sand quarry (courtesy of the artist).

I'm very interested in the emphasis you place upon 'found' materials and the politicising of work through the attention to site —

CM: You can either use the word 'found' or 'chosen'. We choose these places.

There are two things I mean by that. One is to do with the idea of the 'found', conventionally, as an element which resists being perceived as something represented.

CM: Yes. That's right.

The other is to do with why you chose those spaces in particular.

CM: Well, I mean, first of all *Goddodin*. You know, things to do with the Rover car factory no longer being there. I think also it's worth saying that by that time Brith Gof had moved to Cardiff. We felt that there was a kind of Cardiff audience that we hadn't engaged with and which was quite different from the West Wales audience. After that, when we did re-stagings of *Goddodin*, the sites chose us. At some points we were simply given a site — and asked, can we do it here?

Where did you do it?

CM: First of all we did it in a quarry in Polverigi, Italy, then in a crane factory in Hamburg. In Frisland in the Netherlands it was in an ice hockey stadium, and then in the Tramway — the old tram depot — in Glasgow. Each time with all the problems of an interface with a new place. I think the word place is important rather than site.

MP: The interesting thing that Cliff does, is that within the materials that he's chosen to work with he makes an incredible negotiation with site — and in a way in which the work can begin to remake itself. In Frisland in the ice hockey stadium, we had 8,000 sandbags. We built sandbag islands for the audience to stand on, then flooded the whole arena. You can put a lot of water into an ice-hockey stadium. Curiously, the one place that the show didn't work — for all sorts of reasons, I even think on a conceptual level — was in Hamburg. Cliff did a design — a concept — for *Goddodin* in a large hall. Then at three weeks notice we weren't allowed to do it and we had to do the show outside, in a different site. But the problem was that when you get semi-naked men and fire in Germany it means one thing. And that's really where our problems lay.

CM: It was all touching on very sensitive things in Germany at the time. We were simply unaware of the potential for those readings of the piece.

MP: I don't know. One must have been aware — I think.

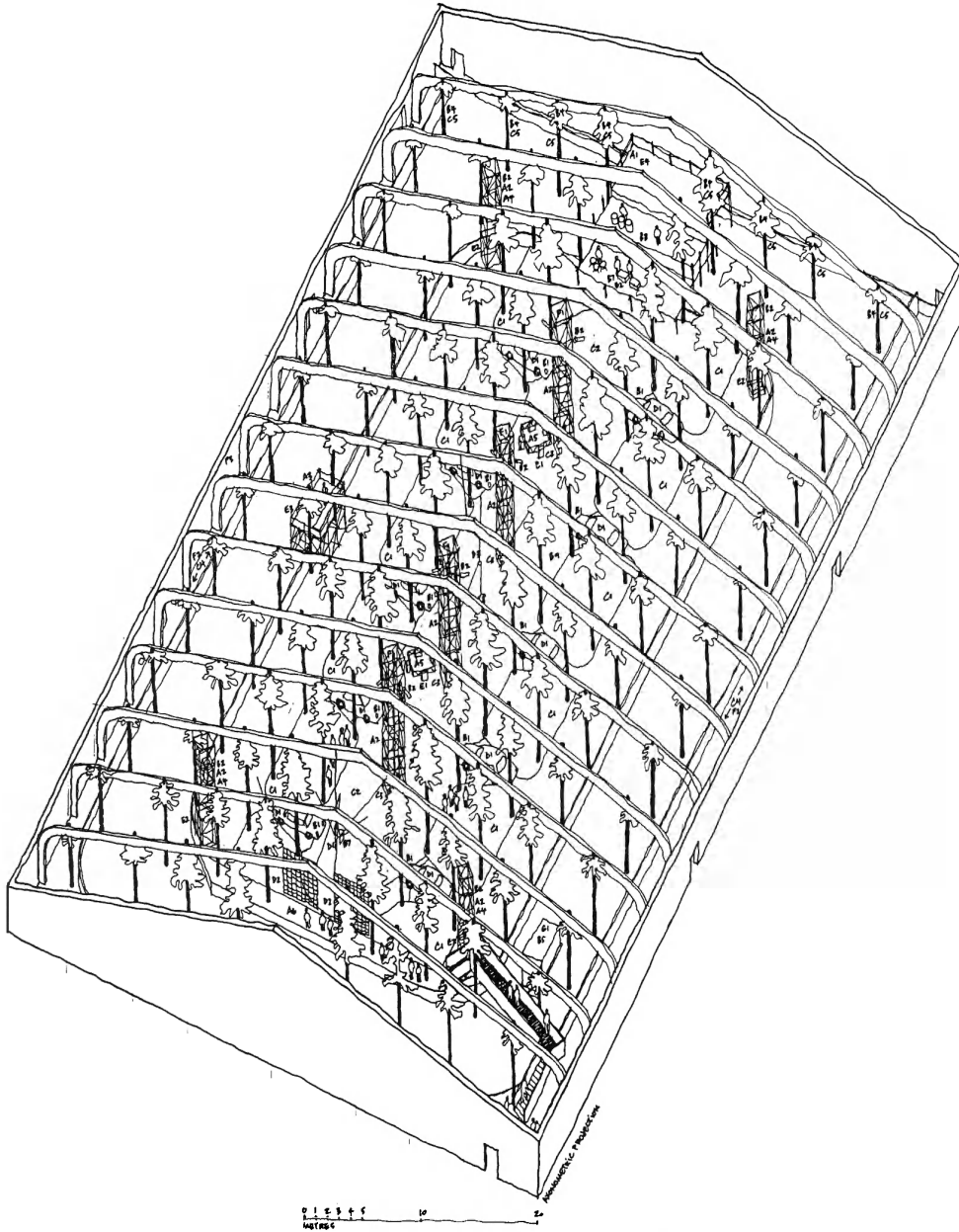


Figure 53 Clifford McLucas Goddodin (1988) in Frisland at the Ice Hockey Stadium in Leeuwarden (courtesy of the artist).

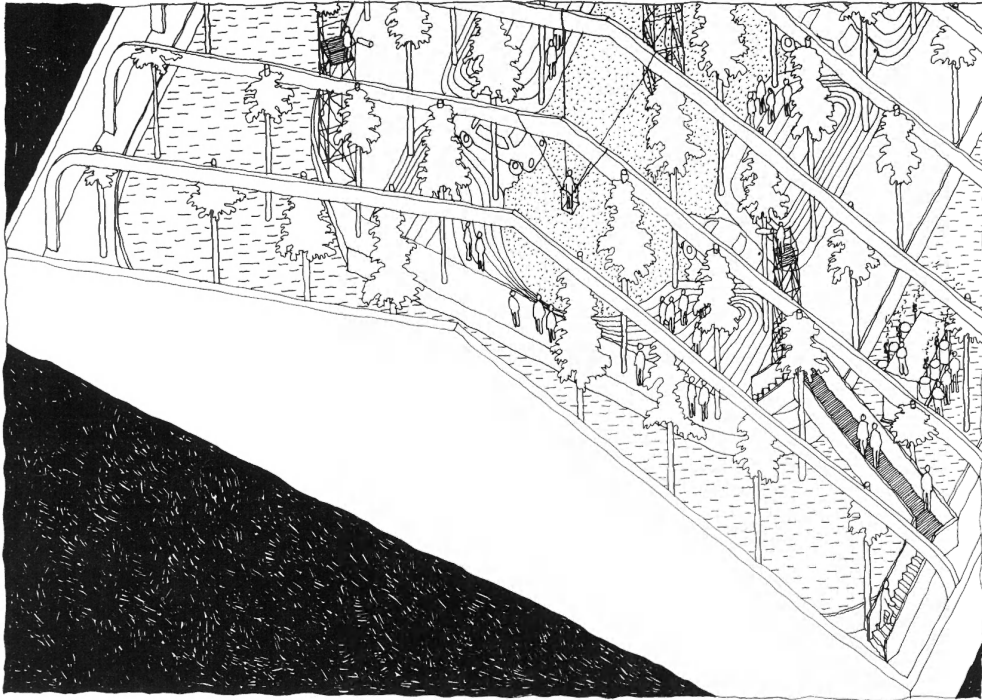


Figure 54 Clifford McLucas *Goddodin* (1988) in Frisland at the Ice Hockey Stadium in Leeuwarden (courtesy of the artist).

CM 17 Real architectural sites (hosts) such as British Coal's Tredegar Works encourage us to think formally in 3 and 4 dimensions, as well as, or instead of, 2. This has major implications for the concepts at the heart of the work, and the contracts at the heart of theatre. It may rewrite or problematize the nature of the relationships between all components of the event:

- a** between audience member as individual and audience as mass
- b** between audience member as individual and performer
- c** between audience as mass and performer
- d** between performer and performer
- e** between performer and architecture and so on

This inevitably broadens the deep, structural possibilities of theatre.

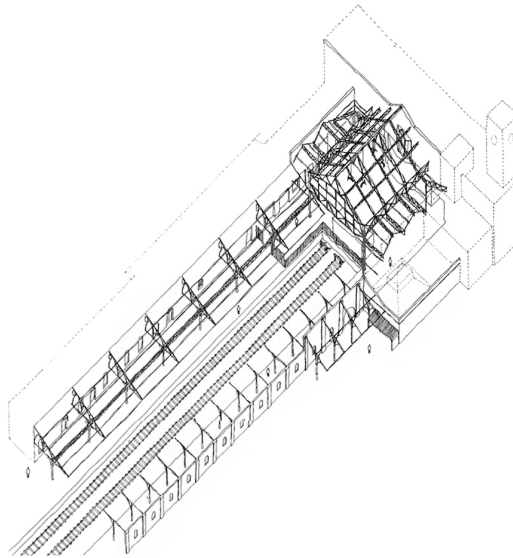


Figure 55 Clifford McLucas *Pax* (1991–1992) in Aberystwyth at the BR Railway Station (courtesy of the artist).

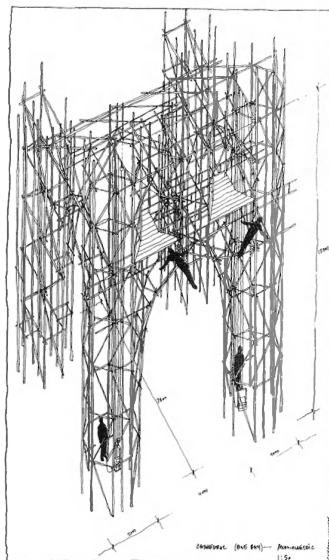


Figure 56 Clifford McLucas *Pax* (1991–1992), component of scaffolding cathedral with angels (courtesy of the artist).

CM: Even now with hindsight it would be interesting to speculate on what we could have done to foreclose that reading. It would be quite difficult. The central problem is that a piece of work within Wales which is about 'nationalism' takes on entirely different meanings when transported into Germany. It's a different kind of nationalism. If we're talking about a defensive nationalism, a kind of nationalism which comes from centuries of abuse and move that into a place where there was actually an expansionistic, destructive kind of nationalism — it's the same word, but not the same thing.

For me, an important part of my experience of Haearn in Welsh was one of becoming aware of my otherness from what I was watching and who I was sitting with.

CM: Absolutely. I'm pleased about that discomfort. I'm pleased about the fact that — Well, that's the problem. If we go to France or to the Netherlands, people accept that we are other and they are other to us. It's not really a problem. Within the dominant discourse of theatre in the UK, though, it's, well — why are you using Welsh? A lot of our pieces have Welsh and English in them. A piece like *Patagonia* (1992), which is a piece for a proscenium-arch auditorium, carries with it aspects of Welsh culture which we take for granted and are engaged with. How an English audience is engaging with that is very difficult to judge. It's very difficult to construct the work in such a way that an English audience is getting this thing but at the same time another audience in Wales — which is a bi-lingual audience — is engaged enough with its sophistication. One way of overcoming it is to drain pieces of work of any kind of cultural or political specificity or issue.

MP: I do think that this cultural specificity means that our work is often very problematic in, kind of, 'Euro-theatrical' terms. I think we often consciously use naivete and all sorts of 'non-U' techniques which are problematic in relation to air-brushed 'Euro-products' that can move anywhere.

With Haearn, and although not following the Welsh text, I had a strong sense of the different elements clashing against each other in a way that would be challenging for any audience. To me there seemed to be a resistance within the piece to a reading which would synthesize its elements into a single statement.

CM: I suppose it's my interest in trying to make a kind of Frankenstein work with an arm from here and a head from there and a brain from here. That emerged from wanting to do a large-scale piece of work that had an audience extracted from the middle of it. With both *Goddodin* and *Pax* the audience had to be in amongst it. That was very exciting, but by the time we'd done *Goddodin* in five places — and we did four performances in each place — I wondered what it would be like to make a piece of work which was slightly more formalised. I am interested in taking that a stage

CM 19 The Ghost — the large scale site specific theatre work **Haearn** — was conceived as a fractured (and incomplete) work. Like Frankenstein's creature, it was constructed from a number of disparate vital organs and parts.

Like all ghosts, **Haearn's** body is not solid — the host can be seen through it.

The Host and the Ghost, of different origins, are **co-existent** but, crucially, are not **congruent**.

further. I think what excited me about that was precisely materials sitting next to each other but not being embedded into each other.

MP: I also think Cliff's idea of the 'host' and the 'ghost' is interesting. That there are a number of narratives attached to the host building — economic, cultural, political, and so on. Then within that we're constructing at least seven architectures of narrative in one way or another. Within those two the performers are then almost guided into what they should do, because there are ways to move in all of that stuff. Equally, I think for an audience — to answer your question — there are all sorts of ways to move around in that material. From time to time you may suddenly be leaping all over the place and it may seem very confusing, but equally you can find orientations.

What is the place of text within these architectures?

MP: Lis Hughes Jones and Paul Jamrozky could use text quite freely within *Goddodin* because there wasn't a lot of information to be given. So the grain of the voices was as important — and where their voices sat in the music was as important — as what they were talking about.

CM: *Goddodin* was a very singular piece of work for me. It was very big — it was like a great boulder, and that was its strength, that was its power. It bowled you along emotionally. When we did *Pax* I think Lis, particularly, was concerned that the text should carry information, meaning, idiom, politics, all the rest of it. The way which she did that was to develop four voices within the text. Now, in seeing *Pax* I suspect most of the audience probably wasn't aware of that. I think it's a pity they weren't. It's our fault for not making it obvious. But there were four voices for four different characters who were all either sung or spoken within the piece. I think that really excited me — that you're coming at a set of issues from four points of view. In the small eleven-minute video that we made, those four voices were represented on screen — their texts are kind of

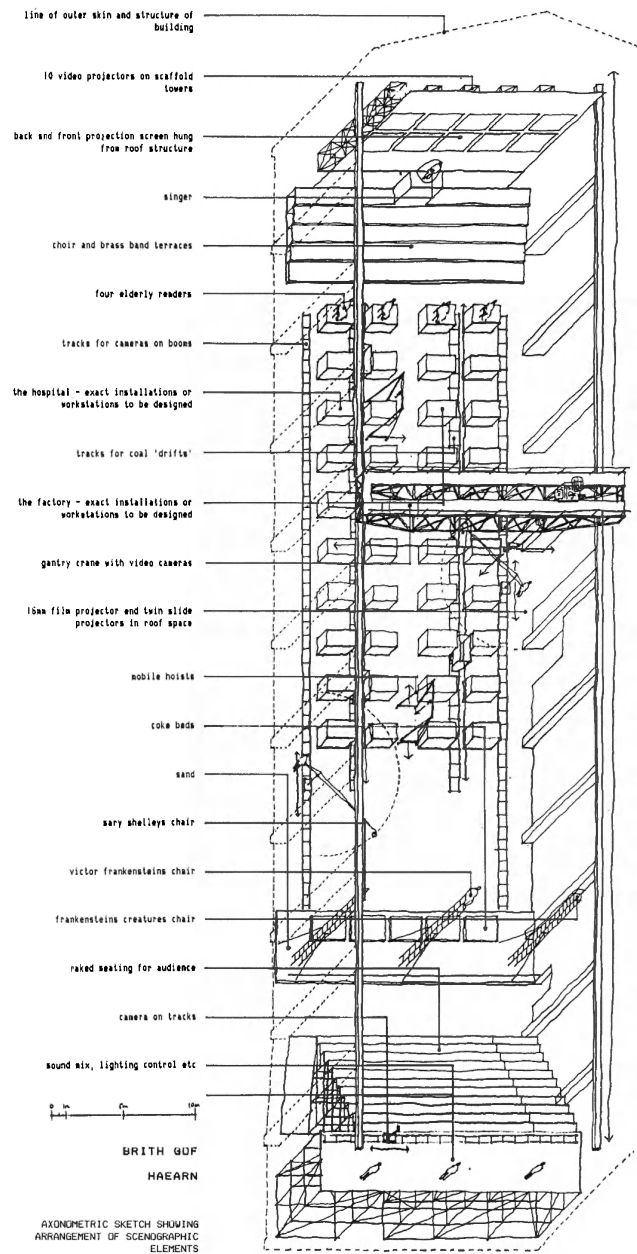


Figure 57 Clifford McLucas, scenography for *Haearn* (1992) at the British Coal Tredegar Works (courtesy of the artist).

CM 23 The first of **Haearn's** architectures is **The Valley/The Mirror** and is composed of two reflecting components:

- a** the audience — from Tredegar and South Wales
- b** (i) the Choir and Band — from Tredegar and South Wales
 - (ii) the Steel Industry's historical film archive of men and women at work in the steel works of South Wales

The Valley/The Mirror marks the architectural parameters of, and contains, the work.

rolling across all the time. I think what I was interested in doing in *Haearn* was taking that a stage further. So you've got stuff from the industrial revolution, you've got Mary Shelley, and in it — well, somewhere in the middle, hovering in it — there's this hologram. You take a chance because you fabricate things, these architectures, these elements, and you try to make this thing live in the middle.

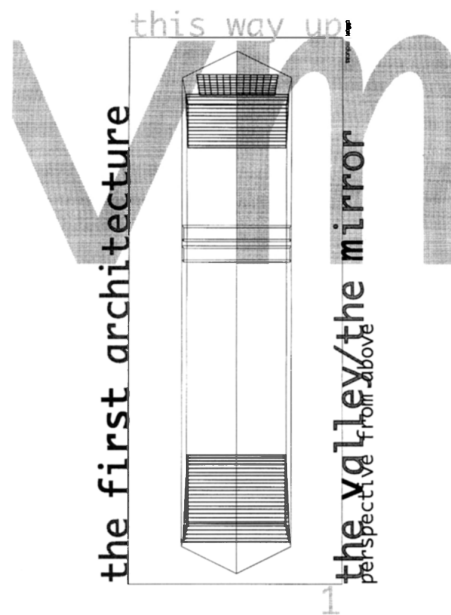


Figure 58 Clifford McLucas *Haearn*, the First Architecture, *The Valley/The Mirror* (courtesy of the artist).

CM: I don't know if it's the same thing, but I went to see the Wooster Group's show in London — *Brace Up!* — and it was wonderful the way that *Three Sisters*, this 'conventional' piece of theatre, hovered in the middle of this matrix of stuff going on. I don't think I'd seen that anywhere else. It's a wonderfully exciting artistic strategy. It was as if no individual invested any energy in bringing this theatre-piece, this play, about, yet somehow through the composite of what they were doing this thing started to emerge.

The emphasis on 'found' site and 'found' materials raises questions about how the performer might effectively find a place amongst such elements.

MP: One of the things that I'm interested in is trying to draw out the idea of an 'active' environment, which is barely possible in auditoria. The idea that you should use materials like wind, rain, which we're currently doing, so that the environment itself is an active one. And when one is watching the performers one may not be watching the conventional theatrical sign — you may be watching their symptoms — simply their symptoms. If they overblow it and try to turn their symptoms into a sign, then that doesn't work. If they're cold, they're cold.

This kind of engagement by performers can affect an audience in a very direct way, can't it?. But it can also be quite disturbing.

CM: Absolutely. I think from *Goddodin* — I can remember discussions Mike and I had about *Goddodin* — I came up with these scenographic ideas. You know, at some point the water will start filling up — first of all you operate on this sand area — and sand is a certain kind of material, you can run on it in certain ways, you can do this, you can do that. Then it starts filling up with water — it turns into mud. Then it fills up with more water, and everything you're doing is in six or nine inches of water. That agenda — that physical agenda — avoids a whole load of problems in one sense. It means the performers don't have to pretend to be exhausted, they are exhausted. They are cold.

In Haearn the performers seemed to take up some of the overpowering aspects of that place — the freezing cold, the impact of the industrial machinery — by the sheer extremity of what they were doing.

MP: That's absolutely right. I do think, though, that the physical engagement of the performers with place is not necessarily on the performing level. It's the technical levels which emplace them. They need to know what speed this crane is going to move at and where they're going to end up. For the performers *Haearn* was a strange experience on one level, because for acoustic reasons we were in a sound blackout. All of the

CM 25 The second of **Haearn's** architectures is **The Two Women**.

The two prime 'solo' voices are given to two women — one, **The Actress**, 2 metres from the audience; the other, **The Singer**, 100 metres from the audience.

Their two voices, and the narratives they deliver ride over, and are supported by, all the other materials. They are the first voices the audience hears.

The Actress, during the work, plays the parts of **Mary Shelley** (reading materials from her diaries, letters and journals written during the years between 1814 and 1822 — when she miscarried, lost two of her children, and wrote her novel, *Frankenstein*), **Mary Shelley's** creation, **Victor Frankenstein**, and her creation's creation, **The Creature**.

The Singer relates the stories of Greek demigods, **Hephaestus** (the crippled god of the forge, who cast golden women assistants) and **Prometheus** (the god who created man from clay) and their godly project to create a man and a woman.

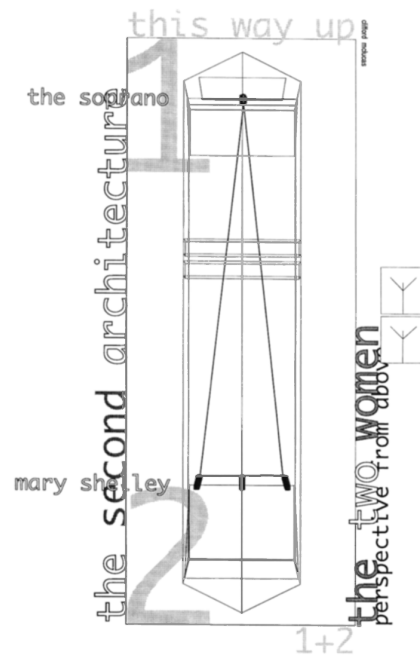


Figure 59 Clifford McLucas *Haearn*, the Second Architecture, *The Two Women* (courtesy of the artist).

CM 27 The third of **Haearn's** architectures is **The Narratives**

- a The Mythical (the stories of Hephaestus and Prometheus)
- b The Historical (first person accounts of the Industrial Revolution)
- c The Novelistic (Mary Shelley's novel Frankenstein)
- d The Personal (Mary Shelley's letters, journals and diaries)

Each of these four operate within significantly different narrative architectures, and constitute significantly different audiences.

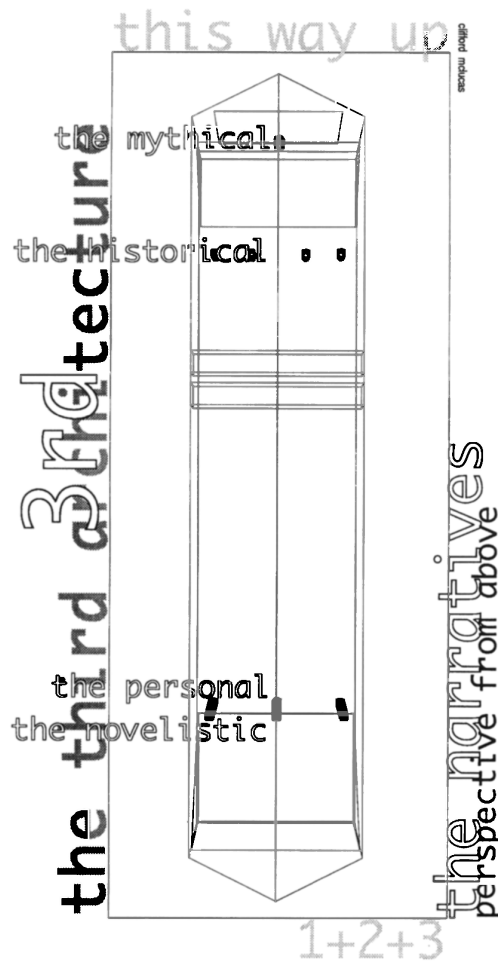


Figure 60 Clifford McLucas *Haearn, the Third Architecture, The Narratives* (courtesy of the artist).

CM 29 The fourth of Haearn's architectures is **The Body**

The parallel emergence of 'medical' and 'industrial' sciences during the Industrial Revolution represented the body in new ways:

- a the biological/mechanical set of components — pumps, circulatory systems, hydraulics, heat engines etc
- b the 'body of man' — in particular 'the work force' or 'the working classes' — monolithic servicers of the Industrial Project

Scenographically, these are represented by **The Hospital**, and **The Factory**. The man's body is constituted in the hospital, and the woman's in the factory.

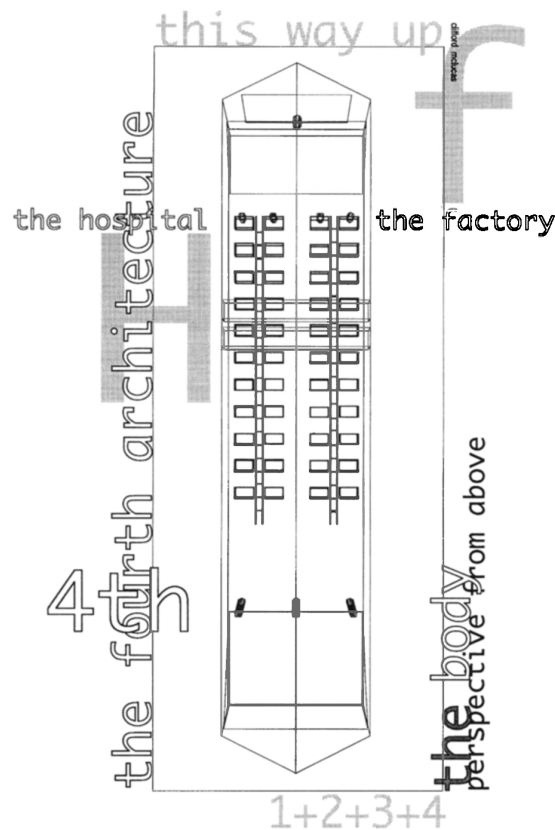


Figure 61 Clifford McLucas Haearn, *the Fourth Architecture, The Body* (courtesy of the artist).

amplification was in front of the performers, so there was this great sound thing that was coming at the audience but the performers could talk to each other. There was an unearthly quiet out there. That was actually very difficult.

CM: In these pieces of work, any one of the components doesn't necessarily know what other components are doing — and that often causes a kind of anxiety. Because that sound wasn't bowling them along, I suspect the performers in *Haearn* felt kind of naked and exposed, more than they did in, say, *Goddodin*. For me, sitting out the front, for instance, it's OK — it's good. They're really difficult pieces to make work — really difficult. We've done three now and whilst I think they've moved forward as a kind of artistic form, they are more and more difficult to pull off. You've got to rely on so many other people and so many technologies.

In writing about the form of Haearn you've referred to a 'field' of activities and set it in opposition to the notion of an 'object'.

CM: I think there's a question in our work — it's something that Mike and I have talked about — at the end of the day we make a theatre show that's an hour-and-a-half long and that an audience pays for, comes and watches, and goes away again. That form brings with it a number of things that we've either got to go with or deny. I can remember at one point we were talking about *Pax* and we talked about doing it as a twelve-hour performance in order to break the back of that kind of hour-and-a-half, you know, you do this, the graph goes like that, and then it goes like that. In these pieces of work which have all these aspects of — 'field' — and 'hybrid' — and all of those kinds of words which are not about narrative, not about lines — there is a kind of conflict between the form that we've chosen — the hour-and-a-half show — and the materials we're addressing.

Some long performances seem to be tyrannical in their use or abuse of the audience's time, but some manage to create a sense that members of the audience can leave and come back.

CM: Yes. Well, you see, if you can leave and come back, if people are kind of dipping in to this thing and dipping out of it, then the whole structure of how these moments are tied together internally within the piece goes out of the window.

Is there not also a connection with certain archaeological practices? You've written about the approach to site in terms of reading clues, reading signs, of 'forensic evidence', 'scene-of-the-crime', and so on.

MP: I think it's something I'm thinking a lot about at the moment, largely through being in contact with archaeologists who question the whole

CM 31 The fifth of **Haearn's** architectures is that of **The Climate**

- a** temperature
 - (i) the environment — all-over cold
 - (ii) the coke beds — localised intense heat
- b** rain
- c** snow
- d** wind

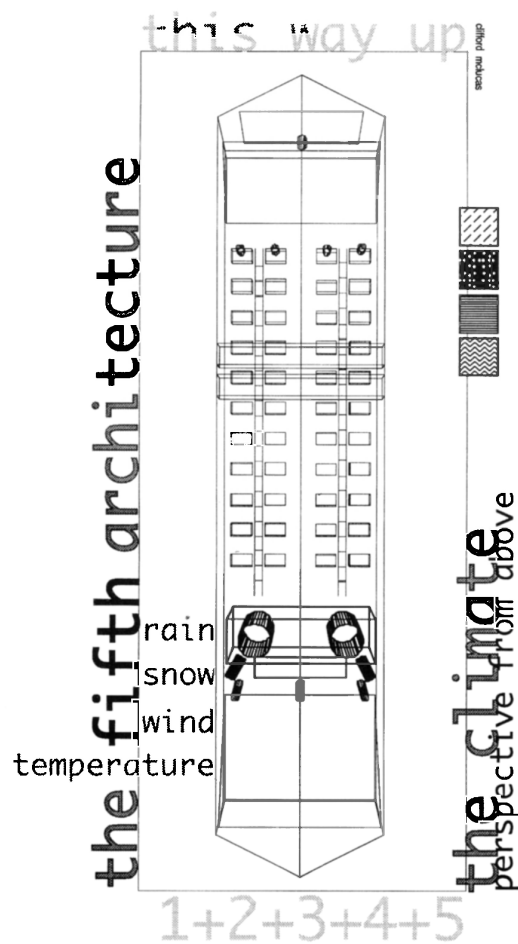


Figure 62 Clifford McLucas *Haearn*, the Fifth Architecture, *The Climate* (courtesy of the artist).

CM 33 The sixth of **Haearn's** architectures is that of **The Grid**.

In contrast with the sophisticated and continuous 3-d space generated by contemporary robotics, the key mechanical components of the Industrial Age such as the wheel, the track, the pulley, and the lever all generate limited and reduced movement in three dimensions — up and down, left to right, forwards and backwards.

All movements in **Haearn** arise from this mechanical agenda.

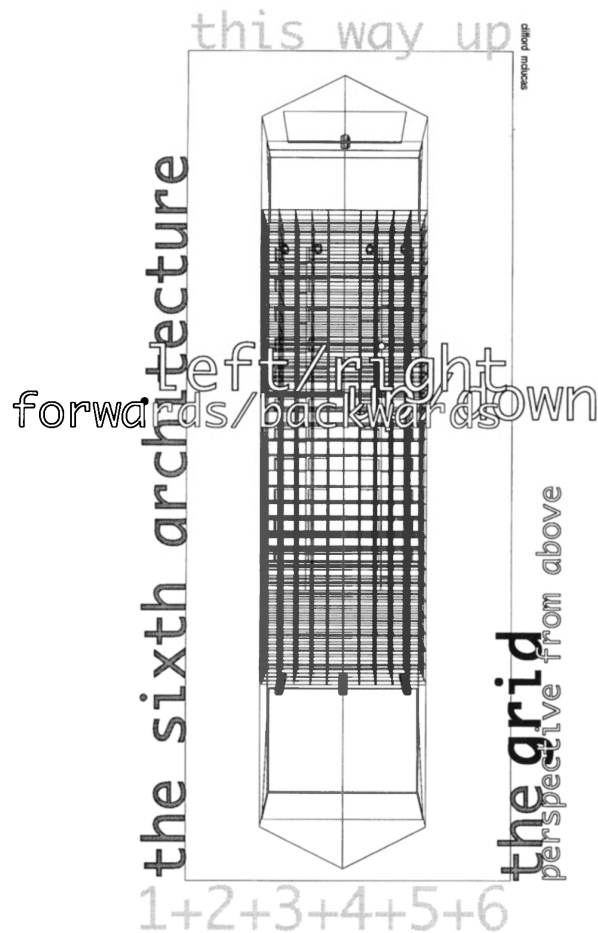


Figure 63 Clifford McLucas *Haearn*, the Sixth Architecture, *The Grid* (courtesy of the artist).

notion of the 'material record', of the archaeological record as a text that can be read and from which meaning is self-evident. That was the tradition I was brought up in. I think that the so-called post-processual thought about archaeology is really throwing that away. And exciting things come out of that. I even heard my great friend John Barratt in the Theoretical Archaeology Group conference (Newcastle, December 1993) saying — well, let's play around — let's think of the neolithic as a kind of playground. I think that the whole question of excavation itself and what diggers are doing is also extremely interesting.

One issue which both excavation and site-specific performance raise is that of the nature and value of 'documentation', of precisely what you can take away from a 'site' and the purposes such 'documentation' might serve.

CM: The interesting question about documentation for me is whether it's actually the recording of something you've done or something else, another thing. Or whether, actually, it can be both. I'm playing around with those things at the moment. If somebody reviews a piece of work and that's the only material that exists about a show, it seems a bit odd. Nobody else would do that. An artist would photograph their work at the very least — so I think we've got a responsibility to be taking care of documentation which is arising out of our work.

MP: I think the documents we pass on have to work. And they may need to be completely other to the performance itself in order to be useful.

Are you in the process of documenting work?

CM: Yes. The University Press in Cardiff wanted to publish a series of plays written by Welsh playwrights. They came to us and said, look, we'd like to do a *Brith Gof* one. I suggested *Haearn*, but I also suggested we'd like to do it graphically. To try to make a score of a piece like *Haearn*, which is a large-scale, symphonic kind of work — how do you do that? Neither the music nor the text nor the physical actions alone kind of carry the piece. So we've been thinking about a kind of A3, A4 width, so you can read the music off it and the text is kind of placed accordingly, with technical and background information.

So it would consist of a notation of the materials necessary to a remaking of Haearn.

CM: Absolutely. That's the conceit. That someone could pick up this book and go and make *Haearn*. And to do it in that way is exciting — it's a very dense and complex score.

CM 35 The seventh of Haearn's architectures is **The Times**

Four distinct time scales are stretched or compressed into the same span:

- a Mary Shelley's personal and novelistic writings from 1814 to 1822
- b first hand accounts of key developments in Industrial Science and Medical Science during the century 1760 to 1860
- c the 'never never' time of Greek Myth
- d the 90 minutes 'real time' of the event

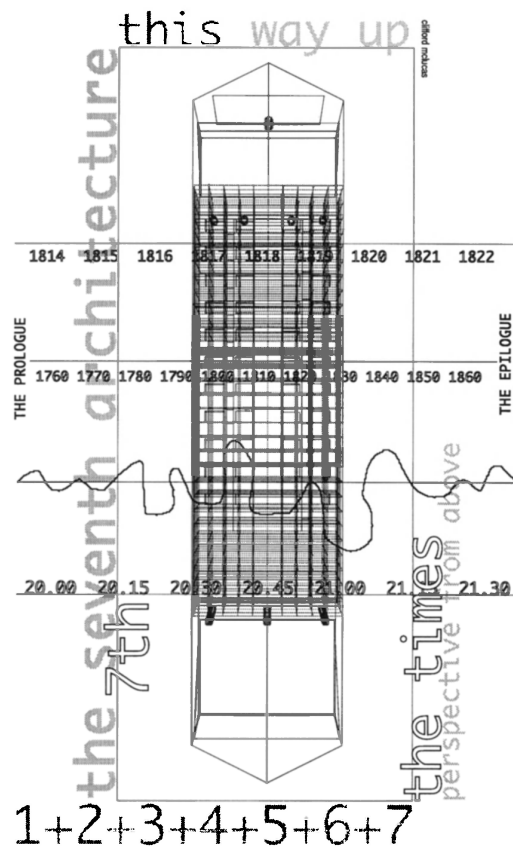


Figure 64 Clifford McLucas Haearn, the Seventh Architecture, *The Times* (courtesy of the artist).

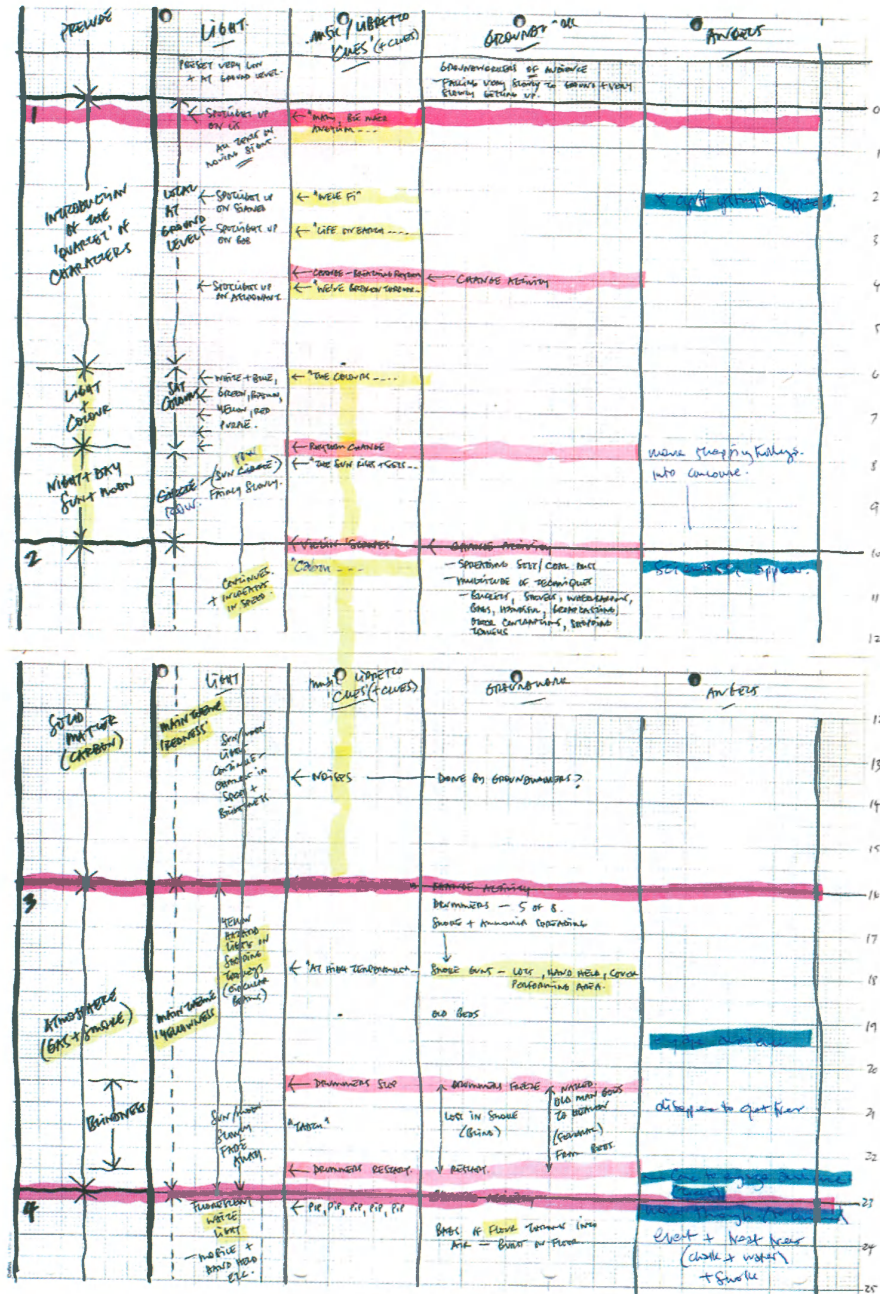
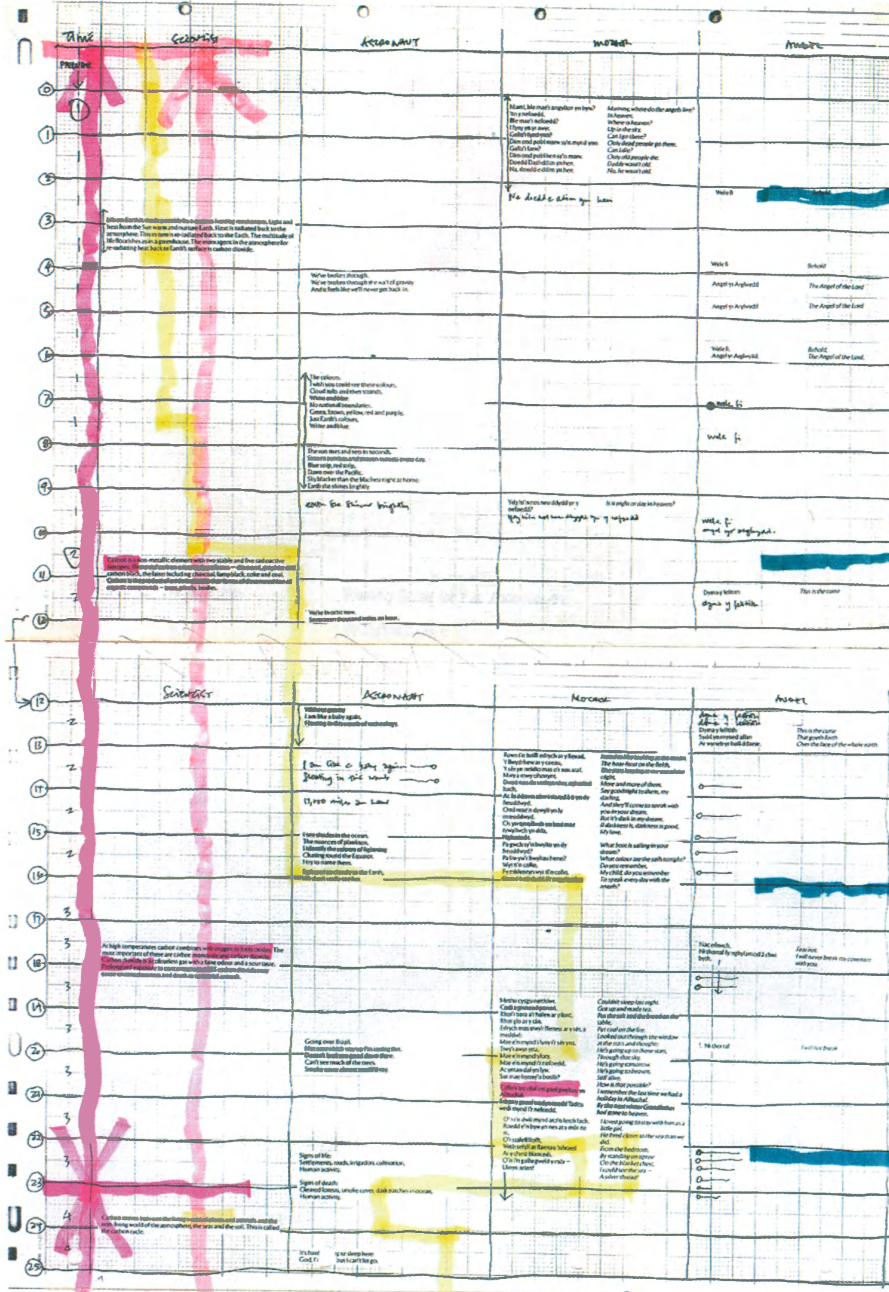


Figure 65 Clifford McLucas, working score for *Pax Aberystwyth* (courtesy: Brith Gof).



It's interesting that the score deals with all those materials that you used in the place, but not the place itself.

CM: Absolutely. It's unavoidable. You've got to accept the fact that a site-specific work is site-specific. I think it's quite a challenge for those of us working in this field, where the work exists in real time, in real space — the work doesn't exist on the pages of a script. And because of that kind of reaction away from pages of a script we've left ourselves empty handed in terms of the work existing in any other media or in any other context. And that's where the whole impulse of — what is documentation? And you suddenly start thinking of sliding things along cultural strata and of having an effect which is quite disconnected, I think, to the original kind of event. I suppose the thing about the *Haearn* publication and the *Haearn* score is that it will be all of the materials that were there, but with none of the life or the liveness of the event. It can then only be brought to life by somebody else doing something with it. In principle it would be possible to do a site-specific work like *Haearn* in somebody's bathroom — and to take that score and to do that would be very exciting. We always used to talk about *Goddodin* as being — well, we could do *Goddodin* — it doesn't have to be *big*. And so you've got to loosen your grip on that actual event — there are all kinds of ways in which you have to do that.

MP: At the Theoretical Archaeology Group conference, it was interesting that in her paper Heike Roms pointedly said that the German word for 'theatrical presentation' and 'conscious memory' is the same one. I'm actually quite interested in the way that a score like this can help to create performances in the imagination. Not necessarily physically, but you can create pictures, or extended, enormous pictures for people to work with. In a way, it doesn't actually need a physical manifestation of the event itself.