In 300 years, what will our local language sound like? Will the same bird be heard, the same leaves rustling? Will there be a town? Will we be thriving or even surviving? How can we project our future in this, our uncertain world?

Sound artist Ela Orleans has been working to capture the sound of the past 100 years of our town and its trees, folks and hinterlands within the present-day framework of her electronic composition. Through the production of electronic music, video and a timeless language of symbols, Lunar Odyssey engages us with our increasingly alien past culture before it is lost, and asks us to consider how we preserve and develop it to survive the unknown journey of our future.

The artwork documents local Scots and Doric language tied to the people and land, a rich tapestry of folk music, and sounds of the ecology - all of which have been threatened as the twentieth century progressed into the present. Political, cultural and environmental factors have shaped the woods, farms, streets and meeting places of our great grandparents; the working sounds of their home, livelihood, and social life have been lost and replaced as change filtered through.

Lunar Odyssey aims to preserve and project our aural culture forwards into the time and space of an uncertain future. As a sort of time capsule, the work contains sounds and images selected to portray the diversity of life and culture that existed and exists in our town, intended for future people or other life forms who may find it.

Taking our White Wood as a starting point – itself a living monument for peace that will not be fully realised for 300 years – Lunar Odyssey provides a platform for discussions, talks, walks and musical events with artists, anthropologists, historians and curators: to make the wealth of North East musical culture visible to the wider public.

The project connects with local musicians and composers, ballad singers and an extensive visual archive, contributing to our cultural place-making by connecting past with present and future, old with modern and new, and historic with contemporary and the unforeseen.

“
You have to know the past to understand the present.”

Carl Sagan
How many harvests? September’s Huntly Haflad, the annual food and harvest festival saw the town square taken over by an extended farmers’ market - and apple trees as part of a preliminary greening of the square. Town is the Garden added a discursive element too, helping folk screenprint calico shopping bags which queried the outcomes of climate change, including the possibility of soil depletion and total crop failure. A fermentation workshop was held which juxtaposed making sauerkraut with the fermentation of alternative political ideas. Lastly an open air public discussion was held with representatives positing alternative models of economy.

Borders, Patterns and Solidarity As part of the Edinburgh Art Festival, we hosted a series of discussions on art, borders and migration. This saw creative practitioners from diverse backgrounds speak of their experiences to examine the role we the arts can play in breaking down political and cultural barriers. A research residency in October will prove that what unites us is always more powerful than what divides us. Through their project Partnerlook! German collective aterhotrieb/B (Gabriele Konsor + Roland Eckelt) will explore solidarity and identity through domestic textile patterns, linking their small community with global projects.

How much waste?
Waste can be an unexpected side effect of economy. For example when I listened to the intricate folk songs I collected in Huntly, I always have to ask people if I can carry on my research in this very ethical way; more random sampling. And I think this will help me to capture stories of food and growing from more cinematic aspect of the town. Gordon McTavish, who has Huntingdon’s filming of things. That’s what happens to people who spend their lives watching movies. That’s what happened to me, except I went to school for that and he didn’t have that chance.

Composer and Lunar Odyssey artist, Ela Oelen took time to talk to Petra Pennington about the project and her time in Huntly.

So, why Lunar Odyssey as a title? Originally it was writing the audiovisual composition as a way of mapping the White Wood. It was supposed to be based on the Calgyri calender, made by the Druids who marked their territory with Oaks. It’s related to the movements of the moon and the stars, and associated with magical symbols. After spending my days meeting people and gathering material, my main editing time was at night. This shaped my view on it, strengthening the lunar perspective. I decided that my final project will be black and white. The music and visuals will be juxtaposed with symbols, but I don’t want to over-intellectualise this - I think I got that from the community of artists here - there will be room for imagination. I want to make something reflective, dreamlike and peaceful, which is ultimately what I aimed for from the beginning, creating the work for the White Wood. Huntly’s living monument to peace.

At the beginning I was this person who just came and pushed myself into this community; this very gentle life, with my recorder and big headphones. I had to introduce myself and explain what I was trying to capture with my project, which kind of reaffirmed to me that I was doing was important. Having been aware of how many people you meet to film, places you recorded, how many hours of sound did you end up with? I think around 20 hours. And then there’s visual footage. For example I have lots of beautiful home-shot film from Gordon McTavish, who was Huntly’s projectionist from the age of 17. I thought meeting him may help me realise a more cinematic aspect of the town. Gordon was extremely generous and gave me insight into his career not only as a projectionist but as an amateur filmmaker, because he was always interested in filming things. That’s what happens to people who spend their lives watching movies. That’s what happened to me, except I went to school for that and he didn’t have that chance.

This work forms part of your PhD, would you be able to put Lunar Odyssey into that context for us? My PhD is about investigating the moral rights in using archival images; how I can use film from official archives, family archives, old photos found in the charity shops - respectfully, without hurting anybody’s feelings. In dealing with living artists during my time in Huntly, I always have to ask people if I can photograph, if I can film them, if I can use the song. I made detailed notes about every song, and was very diligent about that, so there is no random sampling. And I think this will help me to carry on my research in this very ethical way, more considerate even than I have been in the past. Although I’m an artist, in this project I’m more like an archivist. No, a documentalist; this was a study of life, of musical life, of musical texture of the area. I was looking for things I would otherwise probably not hear. For example when I listened to the intricate music of the forest - the birching, the trees. I thought “Jesus Christ, this is just the most amazing music, ever.” There are no author rights for that, but I will orchestrate it, and write music to it. It will be surrounded by songs that are very of this place - by contemporary artists like Rachel Ashton, and a lot of traditional folk, where both artist and writer will be attributed.

You spent hours collecting traditional music. As an archivist and composer you were looking back and also thinking forwards - what do you see as the next phase in the evolution of folk music? I think to go forwards, it needs to look back actually. I think you need to bring more and more serious musicians here, to play and teach workshops, going back to the roots. The texture of the sound is so original, it’s not invalid because it’s old. But it has been slightly forgotten. When I worked with the Gordon Schools, we asked kids to bring traditional songs, but their take on that was kind of oscillating around folk pop.

Folk music has the same problem, I think, that Country and Western has. When you go to Austin, you have pockets of real old folk music and that’s fantastic, that’s brilliant. And then you have this really horrible Western music which is a mélange of rock and pop just to bring more people... I believe that having a smaller crowd of people who are genuinely interested is more valid - it has a long way to go that can be carried from generation to generation. I feel that these poppy ‘folk’ songs are the enemies of authentic folk, the original. We can have a copy of the Mona Lisa in our house but it’s nicer to go to the museum to see the real thing.

Ela is now back in Glasgow, preparing to work on an epic project drawing from 20,000 hours of official NASA footage from the moon landings. Ela Oelen’s film will be formally screened in Huntly as part of Lunar Odyssey Conference: Explorations in Time, Space, Sound and Place in 2019.
/ October

Wednesday 3, 10am, 8 Castle St
Breakfast - first of a series of regular monthly discussions

Thursday 4, meeting 9:40am Bin Forest carpark, or 10am the White Wood
White Wood Forestry Maintenance Session
Help us look after the young trees in our living monument to peace, with Forester Steve Brown

Friday 5, 1pm, Friday Lunch, Brander kitchen
Al Reveris, Managing the threat of non-native species to our local river ecology

Saturday 6, 9am - 1pm, Huntsy Farmers Market
Seasonal cafe - Community apple pressing with Pressing issues discussion on climate change and the EU

Monday 8, 10am-6pm, 8 Castle St
Community Crockery workshop
Join us to craft some serving ware to extend the set
Booking essential

Tuesday 9, New Moon

Wednesday 10, 8am, 8 Castle St
FN-SF - first autumn session in this series of fortnightly reading groups

Friday 12, 1pm, Friday Lunch, Brander kitchen
Partenonique!, an artist project on local patterns

Saturday 13, 10-11:30am, Huntsy Hotel
Donc Fly Cup, Tea, coffee and Donc language Part of Across the Grain festival of Donc culture

Monday 15, 8-9pm, 8 Castle St
Making Local Mincemeat workshop
Booking essential, bring clean jars

Thursday 18, 7pm, 8 Castle St
Film screening: The Last Season, a film exploring the lives of matsutake mushroom hunters

Friday 19, 1pm, Friday Lunch, Brander kitchen
Bob Donald, One Seed Forward: saving our heritage varieties of potatoes

Saturday 20, 7pm, Central London and Huntsy square
People’s Vote March - hundreds simultaneous marches
Join us as we add our voices to the call for further public consultation prior to Brexit

Sunday 21, 11am - 2pm, Community Orchard, Meadows
Apple Day Picnic

Wednesday 24, 24, Full Moon

Friday 26, 1pm, Friday Lunch, Brander kitchen
Karen Collins, Changing our relationship with death

Sunday 28, Clocks go back

November

Thursday 1, 7pm, 8 Castle St
Film screening & discussion
In Our Hands, a film about British farmers seizing the Brexit moment to outrage the industrial food system

Friday 2, 1pm, Friday Lunch, Brander kitchen
David Ward, Selected opera

Saturday 3, 9am - 1pm, Huntsy Farmers Market
Seasonal cafe - BrEGGsit - do you like yours soft or hard? Egg rolls and discussion

Wednesday 7, New Moon

Friday 9, 1pm, Friday Lunch, Brander kitchen
Claudia Zeitske, Walking the WW1 comic on the Austro-Hungarian border

Friday 16, 1pm, Friday Lunch, Brander kitchen
Lyra Sevenoaks, World Believance and the American Tribal Style

Saturday 17, meet 9am, Huntsy Library steps
Town Collection Guided Walk
Join Town Collection Curator, Aki Rothnie, to explore selected works and hear about their stories.
Booking essential, tea and treats afterwards

Friday 23, Full Moon

Friday 25, 1pm, Black Friday Lunch, Brander kitchen
Town is the Garden, Alternative economies - experiments in not buying things

Saturday 24, 7-10pm, Inverurie West Parish Church Hall
Cultural Exchange Community Ceilidh
An evening of Syrian and Scottish music and dance

Monday 26, 6-8pm, Brander kitchen
Food Chain cooking workshop
Rapé Marcus, Traditional American Thanksgiving
Booking essential / £15

Friday 30, 1pm, St Andrews’s Day Friday Lunch, Brander kitchen
Lindy Cheyne, Garlich Women for Change: working towards a more positive, engaged Scotland

December

Saturday 1, 9am - 1pm, Huntsy Farmers Market
Seasonal cafe - How mobilisation is your mincemeat?
Serving mulled wine and local mince pies

Friday 7, New Moon

Friday 14, 1pm, 8 Castle St
Small Business lunch
People's Vote March
Promoting awareness and understanding in our community

Friday 7 & Saturday 8: Community Orchard Meatswale Orchard Planting Session
All welcome

Saturday 14, 1pm, 8 Castle St
Small Business lunch
People’s Vote March
Promoting awareness and understanding in our community

Friday 21, 7:30pm, meet at Huntsy Mart
Winter Solstice Walk
Join us in our annual walk up the Clashmach hill to mark the darkest day and to celebrate the days getting lighter again.

Saturday 22, Full Moon

Merry Yuletide from us at Deveron Projects: we look forward to seeing you for more fun and debate in 2019

/ Regular events

- Friday Lunch
  - Weekly lunches (vegetarian) with speakers from a wide range of backgrounds. £2 donation.

- FN-SF
  - Town is the Garden fortnightly reading group
  - Every other Wednesday, 8-9am, 8 Castle St.
  - First Wednesday of the month (3 Oct, 7 Nov, 5 Dec)
  - Booking essential / £5

- Breakfast
  - A breakfast meeting bringing together local political representatives to discuss how we can prepare locally for the changes that Brexit will bring.
  - First Wednesday of the month (3 Oct, 7 Nov, 5 Dec), 10am, 8 Castle St.
  - All welcome, breakfast provided

- The Barter Shop
  - Redistributing surplus produce
  - 8 Castle St, open Mondays 9am-5pm
  - Wednesdays 8:30am-12:30pm

The Town is the Garden is extremely concerned creating space and opportunity for dialogue and creative about the impact the UK leaving the European Union action that addresses the uncertainty Brexit poses on our will have on all aspects of our society. Much of the debate multi-species environment, on nature-culture. We are around Brexit so far has been dominated by a few issues, particularly concerned about how it will affect how we mainly around the economy and freedom of movement. Deal with the climate crisis. We believe Art, Culture, has a However, currently 90% of our environmental issues come vital role to play in helping us to make sense of this time from the EU, so what will happen to these laws if we of uncertainty, challenging those stories that deny the leave? Through our programme we are committed to crises exist, and pointing us towards whatever is emerging.
Deveron Projects is based in the rural market town of Huntly, Scotland. We connect artists, communities and places through creative research and engagement. The town is the venue describes the framework in which we work and contribute to the social wellbeing of our town. We have engaged with local people, and their clubs, choirs, shops, schools, chuches, bars and discos since 1995.

Welcome
Gabriele Konsor, Artist
Robyn Wolsey, Project Manager
Alix Rothnie, Town Collection Curator
Lauren Campbell, Intern
Laura Henry, Intern
Pauline Burmann, Board Member

Goodbye
Ela Orleans, Artist
Rachael Disbury, Project Manager
Alix Craig, Intern
Lauren Dixon, Intern
Clyde Williamson, Young Intern

SAVE THE DATE!
SLOW MARATHON 2019
Weekend of 20/21 April
Local early bird tickets available through www.deveron-projects.com

Our Guests
Barry Peter Ould, Percy Grainger Society / Sophie Lindsey / Ellie Turner, Ethical Gift Shop / Alasdair Campbell, Counterflows Festival / Matt Altkenhed, Hutton Institute / David Foubister, Wots.it / Clea Wallis and Paul Roux, Dudendance / Matt Donaldson, Bike Shack / Amanda Catto, Creative Scotland / Roderick Buchanan / Ania Bas / Alexandra Stein / Dr Duncan Cockbum, Robert Gordon University / Karen Collins / Amir Koldicz, Counterpoint Arts / May Murad and Rachel Ashton / Samir Mehanović / Iman Tajiik / Zozan Yasar / Sarah Morbey, Coldwells Farm / Clyde Williamson, Young Intern / Peter Fraser, Rosa Quinn and Connie Sim, Young Volunteers / Al Reeves, Deveron, Bogie & Isla Rivers Trust / Gillian Daly, SGSAH / Nicola Singleton and production crew, BBC Radio Scotland / Eleanor Brown, Forager/Fermentor / Christina Grasseni, University of Leiden / Deborah May, Küche / Vanessa Gilpin, Chef / Katie Rose Johnston / Paria Goodarzi / Tom McWilliam, Grain-treatment specialist / Finda Dwi Putri, Chef / Jane Craigie, Farmer/Commnicator / Ayman Jamal, Chef / Pam Johnston / Gwyn Ashton / Dave Whitehead / John Malster, Wild Horticulturist / Ice Cream Architects / Vikki Trefler, Scottish Land Fund / Christine Steiner, Forest Educator / Magdalena Trifonova, Climate Change Fund / Chris Pepper, Horticulturist / Vicky Flood, Horticulturist

People's Vote March
Saturday 20 October
Join us in London and Huntly to call for further public consultation prior to Brexit

Friends of Deveron Projects
... LETS MAKE IT OFFICIAL ...

Benefits include:
- Vote on the direction of Deveron Projects
- Your quarterly Deveron Express
- Advance notice of ticketed events
- Dip into our extensive library
- Borrow our Walking Institute equipment

Email your full name, postcode and 'I want to be a friend' to info@deveron-projects.com

We were a Green Butterfly Award!
Huntly was recognised for the Community award by Aberdeenshire Environmental Forum, received on behalf of the town by representatives from Deveron Projects, Huntly & District Development Trust, Networks of Well-being and other local community organisations.

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