



Green

Autumn 2025



Open College of the Arts

Issue 15 of edge zine – Green – is now live.

For those unfamiliar with edge zine, it is a non-profit, student-led, art publication showcasing various artistic approaches. It was founded in 2016. It supports crossdisciplinary works of an international collective of students and alumni of the Open College of the Arts.

We consider edge zine as an evolving and developing publication and a platform for creative approaches.

This edition explores the word "Green" through a variety of creative lenses. Our contributors used this prompt to delve into the concepts of narrative, roots, and growth, while also examining the cultural and literary associations of the colour.

You'll find work that interrogates broader issues like sustainability, environmentalism, and climate change, alongside pieces that represent the literal colour and more abstract ideas around science, harm, and dystopia. Some of the featured artists even collaborated directly with nature, using organic and recycled materials in their work.

This issue features photography, creative writing, photomontage, textiles, painting, and collage—each a unique interpretation of the word that started it all.

Thank you to our student selection team Roro Craig and Rachel Turpin for volunteering their time too.

To best experience the zine we've collated clusters of work together and they are followed by their accompanying text and statements from our contributors. Look at the work and read the information that follows a little further on in order 1 to 4.

Congratulations to everyone featured! Your comments and suggestions are very welcome, as well as your contributions for one of our next editions – stay tuned.

Your edge zine support team,

Joanne & Hollie
OCA

CONTRIBUTORS

Nina Cruse-Vallard – Short Course Alumna

Emily Everard – BA Hons Graphic Design

Henry Johnson – BA Hons Creative Writing

Jonathan Lamb – BA Hons Photography

Karen Allen – BA Hons Textiles

Rachael Grundy – BA Hons Painting

Holly James – Foundations Painting

Bad Soup – BA Hons Illustration

Tate Francis – BA Hons Creative Arts

Lisa Gray – Fine Art Alumna

Cathy Freeman – BA Hons Textiles

Jan Stevens – BA Hons Drawing

Lisa Marie Sealey – Short Course Student

Viv King – BA Hons Fine Art

Alyson Macdonald – Short Course Alumna

Rhianna Jones – BA Hons Creative Arts

Mary Galbraith – BA Hons Painting

Ruth Jones – BA Hons Painting

Richard Thorn – BA Hons Photography

Bethany Gale – BA Hons Visual Communications

Mirjam Lorek – BA Hons Photography

NINA CRUSE-VALLARD

A FEW OF MY FAVOURITE GREENS

Adam Green. Listen to Adam Green at <https://adam-green.bandcamp.com/> Minor Love is the album I had on repeat the year I moved to Brighton. I discovered Adam Green via the Moldy Peaches, who are known for the Anyone Else But You song that was in the movie Juno. I was very excited to be moving to Brighton, and I threw myself into a millennialcore way of life. The music of Minor Love feels quirky and moody, and just feels like a party I never want to leave.

Graham Greene. OK, a Green with an e but I cannot help but feel such an affinity with this writer. Graham Greene is probably best known for Brighton Rock but my favourite book was The Heart of the Matter. Interestingly the Libertines were fans of Graham Greene and Carl Barât is also friends with Adam Green. I like that connection. I bawl like a baby when I read The Heart of the Matter. I feel a leaden hopelessness in the final chapter.

Olive. I am not a fan of the food, but the colour is my third favourite shade of green. I also adore the leaves of olive trees, and I could happily spend weeks of my life walking through an olive orchard. My niece was very nearly named Olive. When I remind her of this, she scowls at me.

Fiddler's Green. In the Sandman graphic novels Fiddler's Green is a place in the Dreaming, but it also takes human form. Fiddler's Green in human form is named Gilbert, and just seems like a comforting chap. I think my admiration for them stemmed from my fear of another character called the Corinthian who had mouths for eyes. Gilbert helped some characters escape the Corinthian and, as a result, they feel like a safety blanket in my mind. I have a lot of love for beacons of hope in difficult times. Sea green. Named because it looks like seawater. I learnt to swim this year, and the tones I see in the water thrill me. I have always been drawn to water symbolism, and dream of sea foam. I read that sea green is the emblematic colour of the Levellers. My husband gave me a book about the Levellers the second time we met.

Greentea Peng. Listen to Greentea Peng at <https://greenteapeng.bandcamp.com/> Man Made reminds me of my years in Kent. I hadn't intended to move away from Brighton, but my situation had changed, and I felt like the city outgrew me. So, I found myself in another part of country and the psychedelic funky sounds of Greentea Peng calmed me as I tried to rebuild my life.

Pistachio. Many of my favourite greens are shades of chartreuse. My tastes have changed over my life; I used to love mints and neons when I was younger but now, I like earthy hues. I think I'd feel right at home in a 1970s avocado bathroom. I like the dullness of pistachio. (And a good pistachio gelato is the best!)

Green Cross Code. Speaking of the 1970s, the Green Cross Code Man came to my school and it was a glorious day. Last year I was taking part in a marketing focus group in my workplace, and we had to identify someone who personified art schools. Typical answers were David Bowie and David Byrne. But I said David Prowse (in retrospect, did we have too much of a David focus?). When asked why, I said he reminds me of my roots.

EMILY EVERARD MOVEMENT



HENRY JOHNSON TURN GREEN

i turned green
for the climate
polluters make
me sick;

i turned green
for the logging
Amazon stokes
my burning wick;

i turned green
at melting ice
the footprints
in the snow;

i turned green
reef placed my
hands where
the corals glow;

i turned green
each night and
every day we
lose to a degree;

i turned green
and raised my
voice the planet
on its knees.

JONATHAN LAMB
FOLLY BRIDGE, CHELWOOD VACHERY
FOREST GARDEN



Pages 1 - 4

1 - Lately I have been experimenting with humour in my writing, and I enjoy when answers and descriptions go off-piste. I had previously been working on a series of poems inspired by the music of Adam Green, so when the theme of Green was suggested by Edge Zine I was inspired to write about greens that having meaning for me. Green links to growth, so I wrote my piece in the style of a listicle because it felt appropriate for the era in which I was inspired to reflect on, but I ended with comments about my roots because that's where my thoughts often end up.

2- This piece was originally created in response to the theme Movement, and features a green plastic army man toy. I chose this subject because of its strong association with animated movement in pop culture—particularly films like Toy Story, where these figures come to life and move. Although they are physically static in real life, they represent movement through posture, storytelling, and cultural memory. The army man is almost always green, which made it an ideal subject to also explore the theme of Green. Rather than relating to nature or sustainability, this interpretation focuses on how colour can hold strong visual and cultural associations. The green plastic is instantly recognisable and symbolises play, childhood, and a kind of manufactured, nostalgic world. The creative process involved photographing the toy in various poses, then exploring ways to exaggerate or suggest movement through drawing, layering, and sequencing. I was interested in how a still object could appear animated—how the illusion of movement could be created through composition. While the piece wasn't originally created for the Green theme, its subject, colour, and concept are strongly connected, showing how one idea can naturally lead into another.

3 - My challenge was to write a poem off the cuff, and show how we need not wretch yet at the state of the climate!

4- This bridge acts as a portal to one of my favourite places on Ashdown Forest. It was built in the 1930s by FJ Nettlefold as part of an elaborate garden, which also featured a gorge from stone transferred from Cheddar across the Forest by private railway and rare plants from expeditions he commissioned to the far corners of the globe. A wide palette of greens washes across the scene due to the unusual variety of vegetation. The photograph appears almost too verdant, yet viewing it is an accurate representation of the intense yet calming green experience in which the visitor bathes, particularly after rain. These tones extend to the bridge itself. The garden fell into neglect during WWII and a landslide following unusually wet weather in the 1950s destroyed much of it. It has now been partially and somewhat artistically recovered from nature. Once the bridge carried Nettlefold across his land without having to descend to the level of the public footpath which passes underneath. Today the garden has been reclaimed for the public yet it remains a local secret, not easily found by visitors to Ashdown Forest but protected by its Conservators.

KAREN ALLEN MISS TEXTILE LANDFILL SITE



RACHAEL GRUNDY
MAE KEANE (RADIUM GIRLS SERIES)



Instagram, Facebook and Tiktok-
@portraitsbyrachaelgrundy

**HOLLY JAMES
GREEN DESERT**



Instagram - @hollyj_writer

BAD SOUP THE RECLAMATION PROJECT



Instagram - @bad.___.soup

Pages 5-8

5 - Following research for my degree I discovered a huge amount of data relating to textile landfill sites and the effect these are having on the environment. To try and inform the public and especially the younger generation, I used a wedding dress to show the decomposition rates of different materials. I chose a wedding dress as it attracts attention, is usually worn once and then discarded. I used cotton that I rotted in my garden contrasted against purple polyester and plastics. I hope my work will encourage others to consider how they can play their part in reducing the enormous amounts of waste garments ending their days in landfill. In this respect I contacted the local Brownie group and gave a talk on the dress. We had a long discussion on various ways they can help reduce garment waste. All this will be used as evidence for their Zero/Eco badge. I have since been approached by other organisations to exhibit the dress and currently it is being exhibited in our local library. It has produced a lot of interest and more importantly, discussions on green issues and what people can do to make a difference, however small.

6- I have been fascinated by the story of the Radium Girls for quite some time and wanted to honour their memories by creating a series of paintings relating to them. I believe they fit perfectly with the 'Green' theme due to the intense green glow emitted from the deadly radium paint these poor people were misled in believing to be harmless and, worse, even beneficial to health. Mae Keane was able to live to a relatively good age despite being one of the many people exposed to the radioactive material.

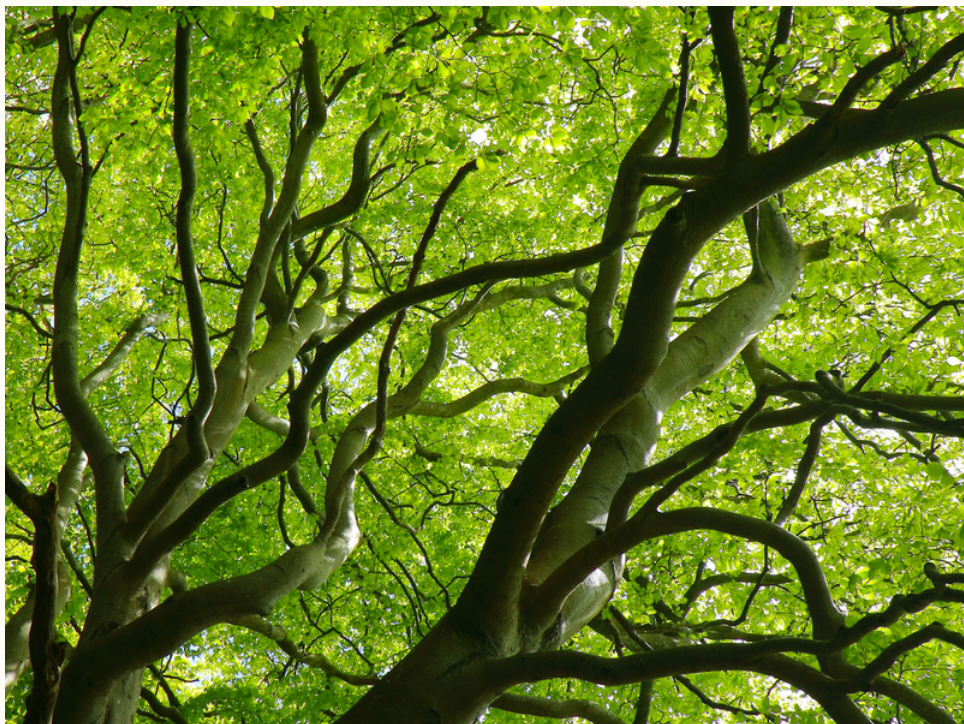
7 - Green Desert depicts a barren, leafless tree alone in an expanse of desert, extending towards the hills on the horizon. When presented with the theme 'Green', I considered the oppositions of what initially came to mind. When thinking of Green I immediately saw a lush green hillside in Britain, the opposite of which I assume to be a barren desert filled with sand. Using exclusively green-toned oil pastels, I recreated this desert scene to see what it would look like transformed, and what resulted was an almost otherworldly landscape, which to me echoes the consequences of climate change, and the lichen and moss of which were some of the first plant forms that grew on Earth.

8 - Working within the city centre there are a plethora of spaces that we have taken from nature; some have been repurposed into green spaces, others into constructed waterways, and yet more into building and roads. There are small corners of these spaces where nature is trying to take back control and, given enough shelter from the public eye, it is succeeding. Locked in a delicate balance between discarded bottles, seekers of quiet spaces, and pollution, it is succeeding. This is the balance I have tried to capture, as fleeting as it may be. I have taken these images using half frame camera on budget film stock to embrace the imperfections of these places.

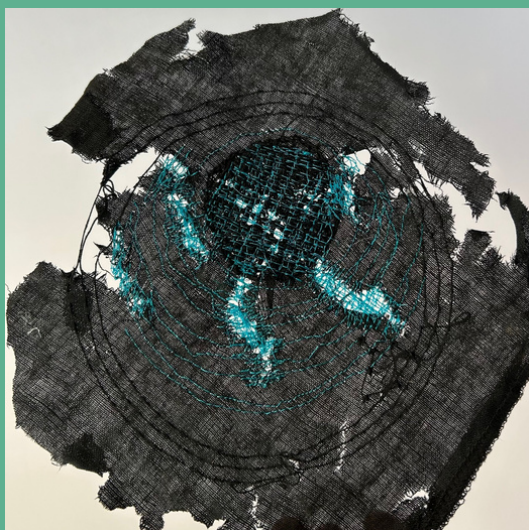
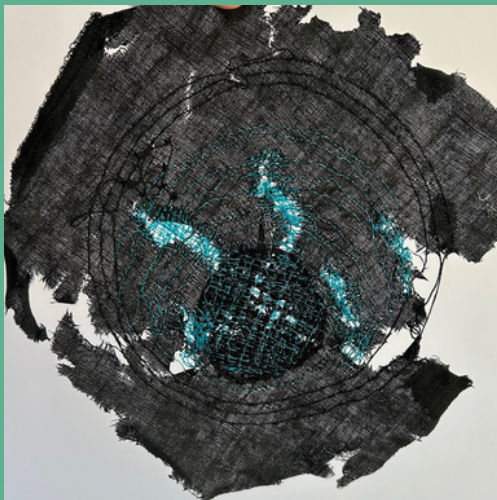
TATE FRANCIS FRIVOLOUS THINGS



LISA GRAY
NATURE'S LUNGS



CATHY FREEMAN
LINEN BURIED IN THE GARDEN



**JAN STEVENS
DRAWING PAINT**



Pages 9-12

9 - Inspired by the classic novels *Anne of Green Gables* by Lucy M. Montgomery and *Little Women* by L. M. Alcott, I created a series of portrait images intended to evoke the same dream-like, nostalgic, quality. The images involve my partner and I lying in a field, a book in tow. Frivolous things is about being unashamedly in-love (as a queer couple), finding harmony with nature, and an adoration for classic books - combined with the technique of film photography, this shoot summarises my passions and interests quite well. Green is the most dominant colour throughout this series of images, helping to promote the nature themes of both classic novels and our own relationship with nature.

10 -Canopy of an ancient beech tree at the crossing of trails. Green leaves stretching towards the sunlight in photosynthesis, beginning another year afresh. [Canon EOS 80D DSLR] Image capture from low angle the bottom of bank which gives the canopy a more hemispherical perspective and captures the translucent quality of the new leaves. Image resembles the structure of the human lungs and thus is indicative of the delicate balance of our own existence and the health our natural environment.

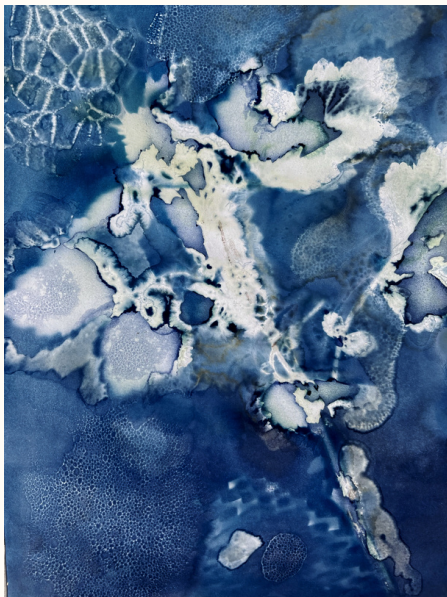
11 - This is a piece of linen fabric that I buried in the garden as part of a project for my Foundation Textiles course. I was researching clothing fabrics and other materials to see how long they take to degrade, especially as a large percentage of our clothing ends up in land fill. Nylon and polyester take between 40 to 200 years to biodegrade. Linen is meant to bio-degrade in as little as 2-3 weeks. After 6 months the fabric has really degraded and has become very brittle and delicate. This is just an experiment to see how the linen would look once it had started to degrade and if I could do anything with it. Could I sew on it or even repair it? I have hand stitched in simple chain stitches and then machine embroidered on this as well. The stitching is just random. It was very difficult to work with, even washing it caused tears and holes. I was surprised how fragile the fabric has become and this made sewing on it quite difficult. I think I was hoping to create something 'pretty' but this has not really worked.

12 - I was drawing green paint. I chose a mixture of green and blue paint and then, using a large blob on a brush, swept it across the paper in a quick motion. After that I spent around 15 hours drawing the details of the paint line on A2 paper.

**LISA MARIE SEALEY
COLLABORATION WITH SNAILS**



VIV KING
ARE WE ALL RESPONSIBLE?



ALYSON MACDONALD
LADY MACBETH



Instagram - @leith_lens

RHIANNA JONES
THE NATURAL WORLD. PHOTOGRAPH. 2025



Instagram - @Rhianna_jonesss

Pages 13–16

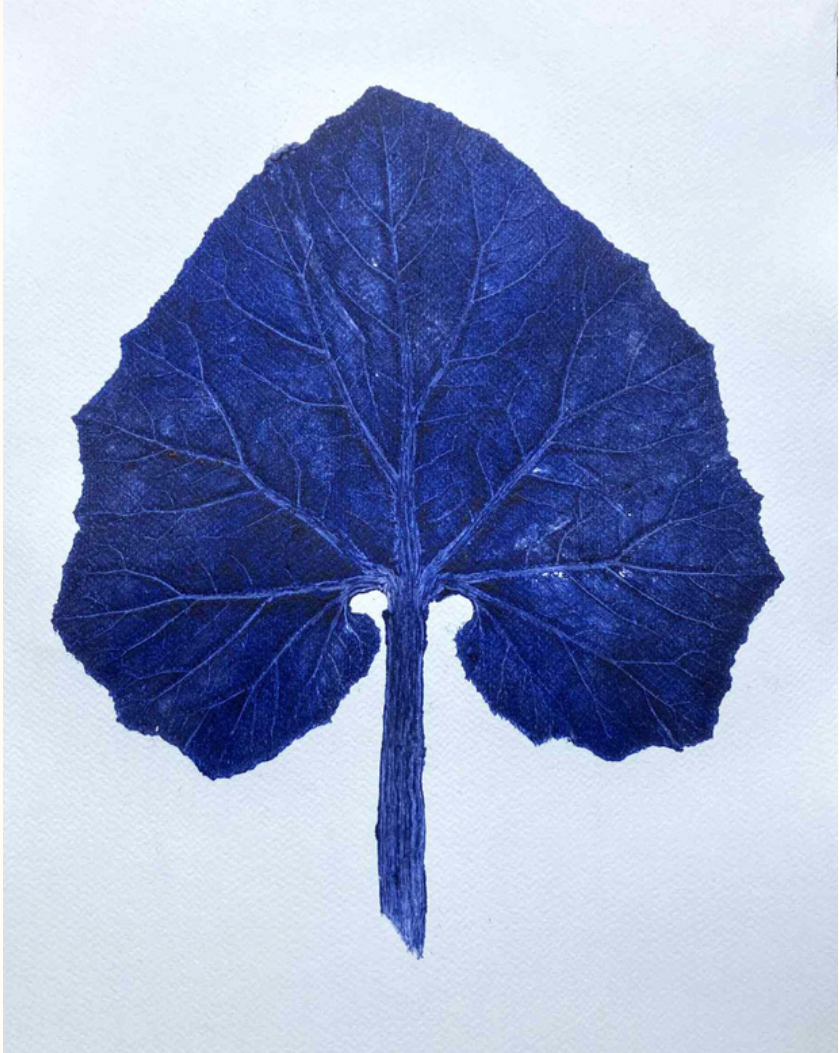
13 – My work captures the imagination of the viewer by highlighting the small, seemingly insignificant things that surround us in the natural world. Using plants and flowers as inspiration, my work is underpinned by feminism and the fragility of life. Focusing on the unpredictability of nature, my watercolour monotypes combine spontaneity and delicacy, giving semi abstract results. I aim to raise awareness of the intelligence and magic of plant life. A lifelong passion for old fairytale books has also influenced my work, bringing an ethereal, dreamlike quality. The collaboration with snails occurred when I painted watercolour onto the glass of my greenhouse, only to discover that patterns were being gradually added. The snails were eating the calcium in the white (non-toxic) paint in order to strengthen their shells. This in turn was adding interest and detail to my painting. It was an extraordinary turning point in my practice. Through my work I aim to increase awareness of our responsibility to the environment and show how we can offer hope and healing.

14 – My practice is illustrated with the layering of organic and found materials from the river, and the river's edge, evoking the natural ebb and flow of the water to illustrate the river's unpredictability and the emotional weight it is carrying. Through marks and silhouettes, I try to tell my story, one that is made up of beauty and unease, revealing the hidden depths of what the river holds beneath its surface. These traces speak of personal memory as well as the larger ecological narrative. The work becomes a reflection on the fragility of our ecosystems and on a wider scale, the whole of our environmental and global climate crisis. Our rivers and waterways are vulnerable to pollution, drought and flooding, all of which continue to accelerate the impact of climate change. These pieces are cyanotypes made using found objects and collaborating with the open water through the process of these developing.

15 – This photograph was created to express ideas around personal responsibility for climate change. I wanted to use oil as a symbol because it is so integral to modern life, whether used as fuel or to create plastics, so I experimented with different substances to create the appearance of oil. I eventually settled on treacle, and was reminded of how old horror movies often used food substances (often chocolate syrup) in place of stage blood because it looked better in black and white. This sparked the idea of using the treacle to symbolise both blood and oil, coming together as the metaphorical blood on my hands. The image was created in my living room, using a tripod, on-camera flash – and a remote trigger because my dominant hand is in shot, covered in treacle.

16 – I have been constantly inspired by nature– plants, grass, trees–anything found within natural spaces– especially during this year of my studies. It has become a focal point for my work, creating a real intimate relationship between myself and the different green spaces I have around me. Throughout, I have been creating work with a variety of materials (drawing, oil pastels, printing), but still find the most comfort in using photography– even if I am going to rework and recreate it later down the line. Challenges faced have been mainly time related; struggling to go to as many natural spaces as I would like. However, I feel I have been able to use this to my advantage, instead being able to deeply focus on one space in more detail– getting very involved and using my eyes and lens as a means to capture the tiny elements of the expanse. The images I have been able to take have become a love letter to the environment– the natural elements of the world we may have forgotten, and despite them representing a very minute space in the grand scheme of things, they are more an idea, a question, an appreciation for what we already have surrounding us in such huge quantities, but what we take for granted or forget about, daily.

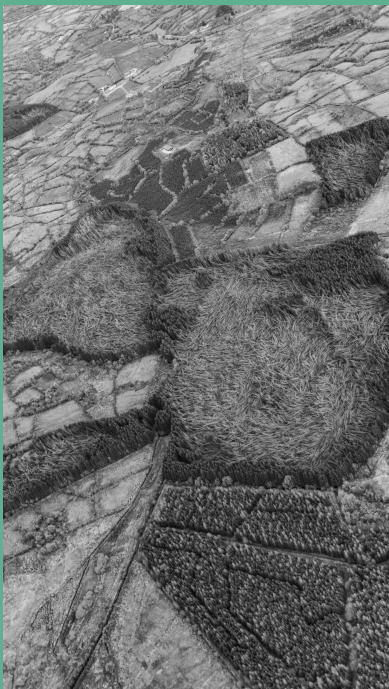
**MARY GALBRAITH
FIELD NOTE IN BLUE**



RUTH JONES OPEN SPACES



RICHARD THORN
STORM ÉOWYN



BETHANY GALE
DRAGONFLY 3D COLLAGE



Instagram - @bethany_illustrates

Pages 17–20

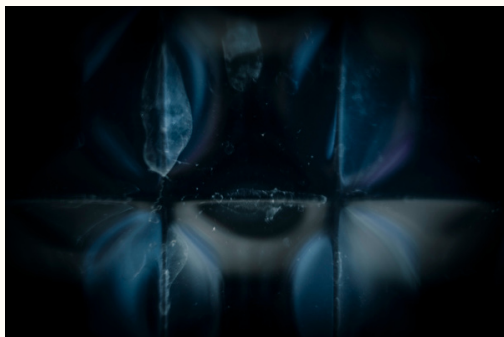
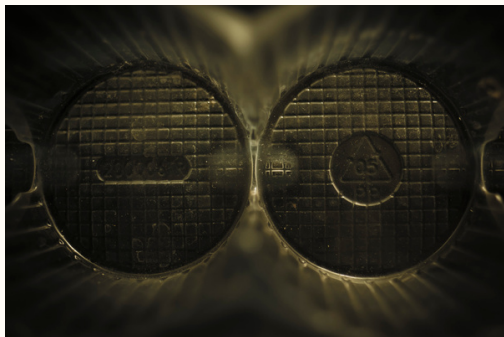
17 – This print was made using a butterbur leaf gathered from the riverbank near my home. It forms part of an ongoing practice of documenting and responding to the natural world through direct engagement with landscape, working in print, sketch, and paint to explore memory, place, and transience. One of the challenges was how to work with natural materials without overwhelming their fragile, organic character. I resolved this by limiting the palette and using sustainable, environmentally friendly inks, allowing the form and texture of the butterbur to speak for itself. The theme is present in both method and material: the leaf was collected during a walk, pressed, and printed using blue ink to echo the shifting light and seasonal mood of the riverside. Field Note in Blue sits within a wider body of work rooted in the landscape, aiming to hold onto fleeting encounters with place as the seasons and landscape changes.

18 – My work relates to the topic of 'Green' because my creative process is concerned with exploring my environment and the open spaces found in the natural world. My preferred way of working is to go for walks in nature and take photos, working from these images in my studio at home. I enjoy the flexibility this gives me without being dependent on the weather and light conditions. Whilst working, I enjoy connecting to the memory of being in the actual place itself. Sometimes I work from photos my friends have sent; however I prefer to have visited the landscape myself. Recently, I have been exploring using thin paint and a limited colour palette. A restricted palette has enabled me to focus on the application of the paint rather than being distracted by an abundance of colour. This has enabled a greater sense of freedom and spontaneity when painting. Moving forward, I would like to further develop the ideas and concepts behind my work. This will include researching the area I choose to paint as well as investigating artists such as Martyn Cross and Per Kirkeby.

19 – On the 23rd January, 2025 the Irish met office issued an all-island red weather warning. On 24th January the worst storm since digital records began hit the country. Almost one million people lost power, some for weeks; many households lost water supplies for days; communications were badly hit for months and there was widespread damage to buildings. Storm Éowyn also caused carnage to forests and trees. Almost 24,000 hectares of forests were destroyed. The destruction of quick growing commercially planted conifers is upsetting but the loss of many healthy deciduous trees is heart-breaking. While powerful storms like Éowyn cannot be linked unambiguously to climate change global warming makes their possibility more likely.

20 – As a paper collage artist I create a lot of scraps as I work. I love to recycle and use this as a part of my creative process. I keep a bag of interesting scrap papers and old book pages to create new artworks. I also work with paints, and I sometimes mix too much to use. I don't like this to go to waste so I usually use this extra paint on papers and save them for my collage work. This artwork is made using these recycled papers. I hardly generate any waste in my studio which is something I am proud of because nature is one of my favourite themes so its nice to give back to the planet as I work.

MIRJAM LOREK PLASTICS



21 - Plastic is a terrible material from an ecological perspective. Just the thought that it will outlive us, buried somewhere in the earth, in the sea, or on landslides, is terrible. But as a working material (photographing with trash), it allows me to experiment with light and reflections and discover abstract forms with real material, a tactile and sensory experience—not just digitally manipulated. Thus, plastic is one of my main materials. In its horror, a bit of beauty that should nevertheless be a wake-up call.