

a visceral place

film, drawing & photography by **George Harris**

Concigrated spaces of contemplation, discussion, foundations, knowledge,
remains of the future...

Underlying faiths within structure, undisclosed actions within the sublime...
Portals to another conversation regarding time...

A dissection of urban space...

intuitive - gut - factual - primeval - instinctive - primitive - animal ...

situate - location - consign - status - plan - site - blueprint - map...

historical - archeological - geographic - momentary - movement...

“Historically our perceptions of faith are about certainty, but societies notions of certainty have become particularly narrow. In George Harris’s work the quasi-religious imagery is imbedded in spaces of change; those no-mans lands where the old structures/landscapes have been destroyed and the new not yet built, thus re-examining a concept of western faith, prevelant in more uncertain times...i.e. the idea of survival through faith in a world which we have no hope of understanding”

Jerry Hope (writer / lecturer / musician) - Derby 2007

‘A Visceral Place’ consists of three parts that incorporate elements of series produced as part of Islands (2002) & Avenue (2003); new interpretations of previous works (including dvd film ‘The Journey’ and ‘Super 8’ projection, photocopy and drawing) and a brand new series of photographs that delves into the City of Derby’s reconstruction, taken over a period of three years.

displacement - meaning - facts - myths - tales - structure

The works within A Visceral Place develop an untold story of interaction between nature and the man made, a moment of the unexpected plays inside and outside the photographed subconscious.

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a visceral place part 3



Scene I: Night

(In a high-vaulted Gothic chamber, Faust, in a chair at his desk, restless.)

Ah! Now I've done Philosophy,
I've finished Law and Medicine,
And sadly even Theology:
Taken fierce pains, from end to end.
Now here I am, a fool for sure!
No wiser than I was before:
Master, Doctor's what they call me,
And I've been ten years, already,
Crosswise, arcing, to and fro,
Leading my students by the nose,
And see that we can know - nothing!
It almost sets my heart burning.
I'm cleverer than all these teachers,
Doctors, Masters, scribes, preachers:
I'm not plagued by doubt or scruple,
Scared by neither Hell nor Devil –
Instead all Joy is snatched away,
What's worth knowing, I can't say,
I can't say what I should teach
To make men better or convert each,
And then I've neither goods nor gold,
No worldly honour, or splendour hold:
Not even a dog would play this part!
So I've given myself to Magic art,
To see if, through Spirit powers and lips,
I might have all secrets at my fingertips.
And no longer, with rancid sweat, so,
Still have to speak what I cannot know:
That I may understand whatever
Binds the world's innermost core together,
See all its workings, and its seeds,
Deal no more in words' empty reeds.
O, may you look, full moon that shines,
On my pain for this last time:
So many midnights from my desk,
I have seen you, keeping watch:
When over my books and paper,
Saddest friend, you appear!
Ah! If on the mountain height
I might stand in your sweet light,
Float with spirits in mountain caves,
Swim the meadows in twilight' waves,
Free from the smoke of knowledge too,
Bathe in your health-giving dew!
Alas! in this prison must I stick?
This hollow darkened hole of brick,
Where even the lovely heavenly light
Shines through stained glass, dull not bright.
Hemmed in, by heaps of books,
Piled to the highest vault, and higher,
Worm eaten, decked with dust,
Surrounded by smoke-blackened paper,
Glass vials, boxes round me, hurled,
Stuffed with Instruments thrown together,
Packed with ancestral lumber –
This is my world! And what a world!
And need you ask why my heart
Makes such tremors in my breast?
Why all my life-energies are
Choked by some unknown distress?
Smoke and mildew hem me in,
Instead of living Nature, then,
Where God once created Men,
Bones of creatures, and dead limbs!
Fly! Upwards! Into Space, flung wide!
Isn't this book, with secrets crammed,
From Nostradamus' very hand,
Enough to be my guide?
When I know the starry road,
And Nature, you instruct me,
My soul's power, you shall flow,
As spirits can with spirits be.
Useless, this dusty pondering here
To read the sacred characters:
Soar round me, Spirits, and be near:
If you hear me, then answer!



(He opens the Book, and sees the Symbol of the Macrocosm)

Ah! In a moment, what bliss flows
Through my senses from this Sign!
I feel life's youthful, holy joy: it glows,
Fresh in every nerve and vein of mine.
This symbol now that calms my inward raging,
Perhaps a god deigned to write,
Filling my poor heart with delight,
And with its mysterious urging
Revealing, round me, Nature's might?
Am I a god? All seems so clear to me!
It seems the deepest works of Nature
Lie open to my soul, with purest feature.
Now I understand what wise men see:
"The world of spirits is not closed:
Your senses are: your heart is dead!
Rise, unwearied, disciple: bathe instead
Your earthly breast in the morning's glow!"

(He gazes at the Symbol.)

How each to the Whole its selfhood gives,
One in another works and lives!
How Heavenly forces fall and rise,
Golden vessels pass each other by!
Blessings from their wings disperse:
They penetrate from Heaven to Earth,
Sounding a harmony through the Universe!
Such a picture! Ah, alas! Merely a picture!
How then can I grasp you endless Nature?
Where are your breasts that pour out Life entire,
To which the Earth and Heavens cling so,
Where withered hearts would drink? You flow
You nourish, yet I languish so, in vain desire.

(He strikes the book indignantly, and catches sight of the Symbol of the Earth-Spirit.)

How differently it works on me, this Sign!
You, the Spirit of Earth, are nearer:
Already, I feel my power is greater,
Already, I glow, as with fresh wine.
I feel the courage to engage the world,
Into the pain and joy of Earth be hurled,
And though the storm wind is unfurled,
Fearless, in the shipwreck's teeth, be whirled.
There's cloud above me –
The Moon hides its light –
The lamp flickers!
Now it dies! Crimson rays dart
Round my head – Horror
Flickers from the vault above,
And grips me tight!
I feel you float around me,
Spirit, I summon to appear, speak to me!
Ah! What tears now at the core of me!
All my senses reeling
With fresh feeling!
I feel you draw my whole heart towards you!
You must! You must! Though my Life's lost, too!

(He grips the book and speaks the mysterious name of the Spirit. A crimson flame flashes, the Spirit appears in the flame.)

text above from ‘Faust’ by Goethe

