

Manchester – Florina Exchange

May-June 2020



How do we record experiences of place? This project is an international rural arts residency exchange for students from Dept of Fine and Applied Arts, University of Western Macedonia (Greece), and Dept of Art & Performance, Manchester School of Art (UK).

These two week-long study visits will focus on walking-art and performance practices, in response to borders in north east England and north-west Greece. Participants are invited to develop artistic responses to natural, political and industrial pasts, present and futures.

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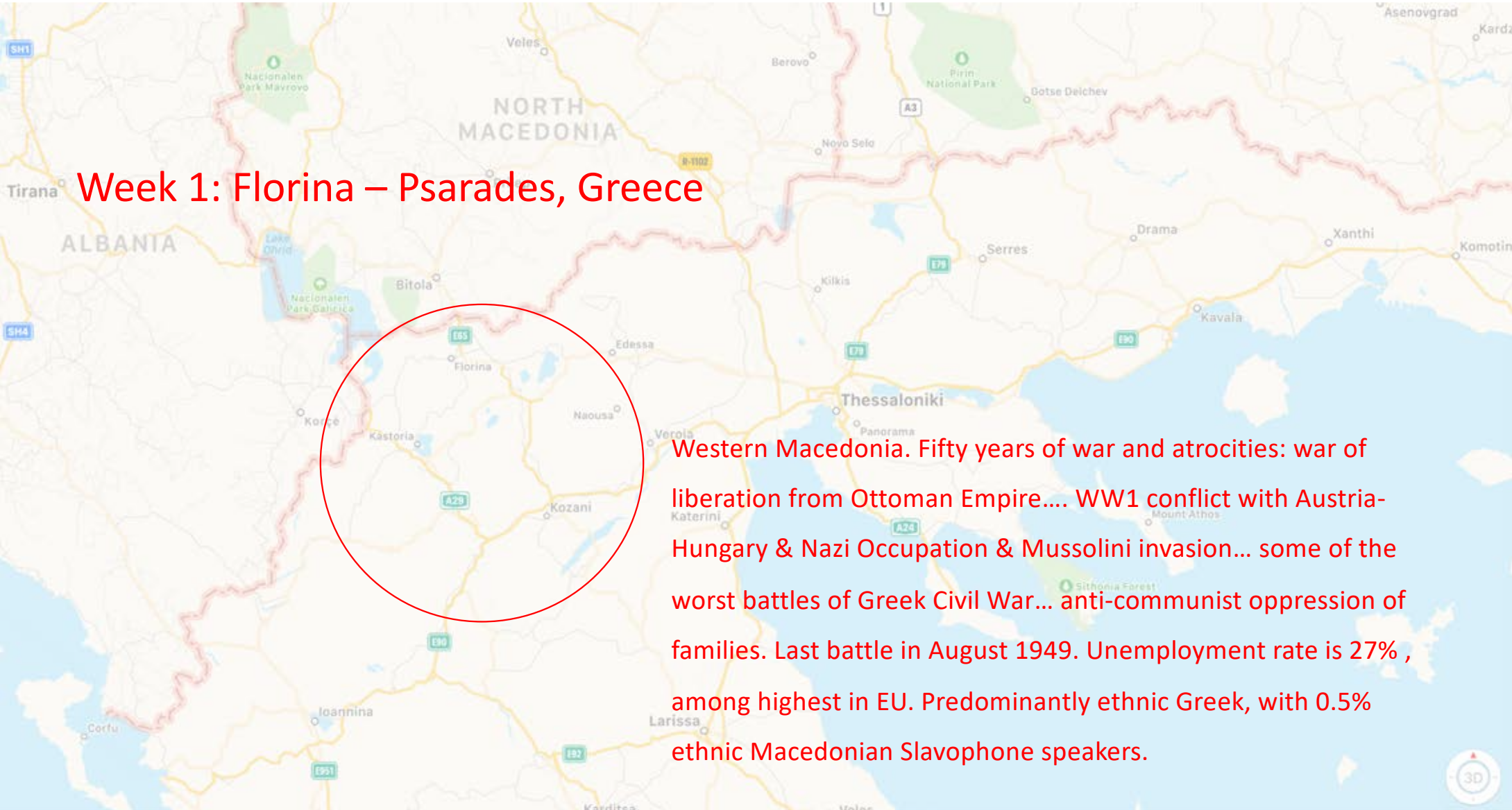


Week 1: Psarades Artistic Station, in Prespes National Park, Greece.

Hosted by University of Western Macedonia (Florina).

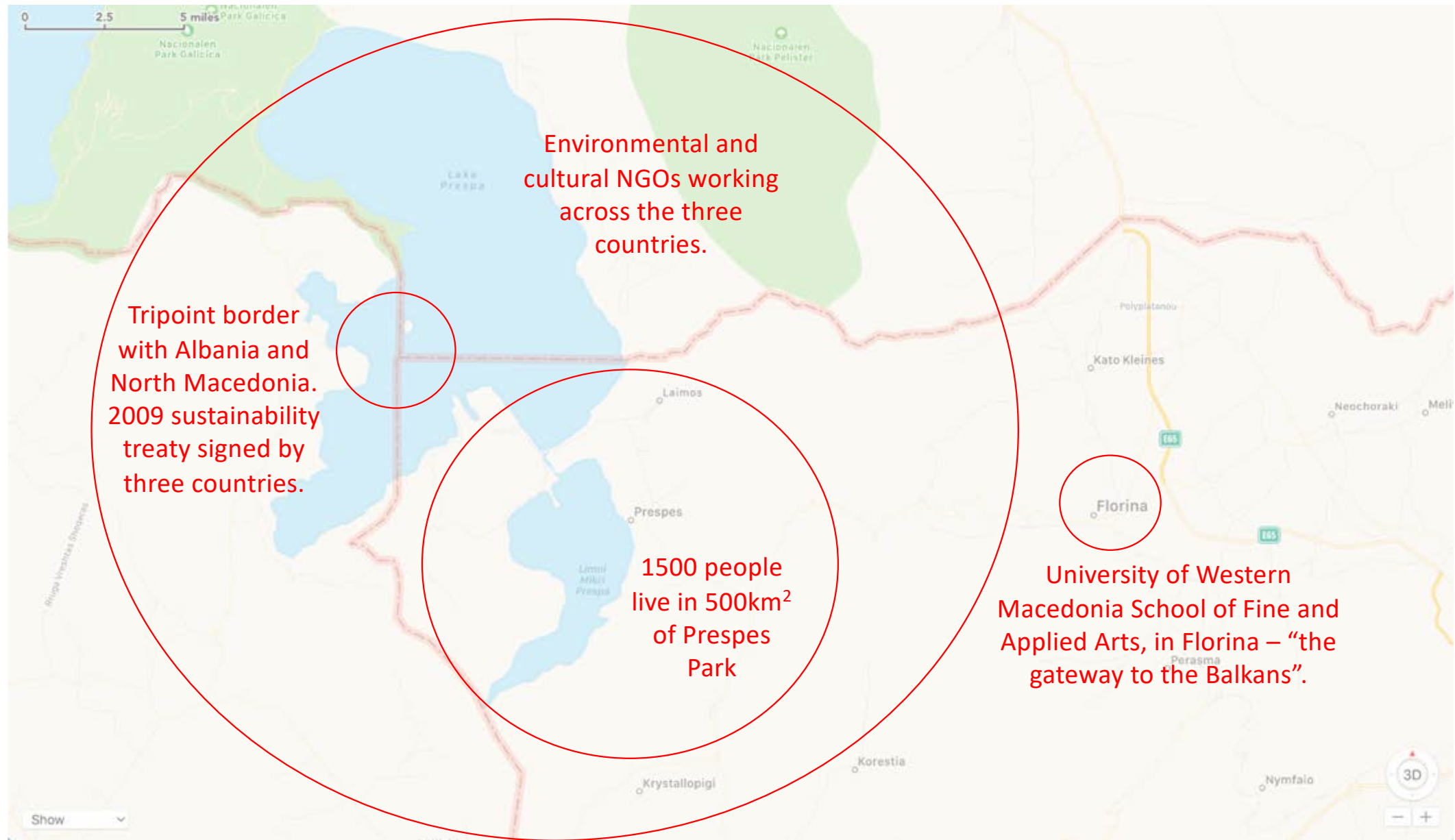
Week 2: Allenheads Contemporary Arts, in North Pennines AONB, UK.

Hosted by Manchester School of Art.

A map of North Macedonia and surrounding regions, including Albania to the west and Greece to the south and east. The map shows major cities like Tirana, Bitola, Florina, Kozani, Thessaloniki, and Drama. A red circle highlights the Western Macedonia region, which is the focus of the text. The map also shows national parks like Mavrovo and Pirin, and the Aegean Sea to the east.

Week 1: Florina – Psarades, Greece

Western Macedonia. Fifty years of war and atrocities: war of liberation from Ottoman Empire.... WW1 conflict with Austria-Hungary & Nazi Occupation & Mussolini invasion... some of the worst battles of Greek Civil War... anti-communist oppression of families. Last battle in August 1949. Unemployment rate is 27% , among highest in EU. Predominantly ethnic Greek, with 0.5% ethnic Macedonian Slavophone speakers.



Environmental and
cultural NGOs working
across the three
countries.

Tripoint border
with Albania and
North Macedonia.
2009 sustainability
treaty signed by
three countries.

1500 people
live in 500km²
of Prespes
Park

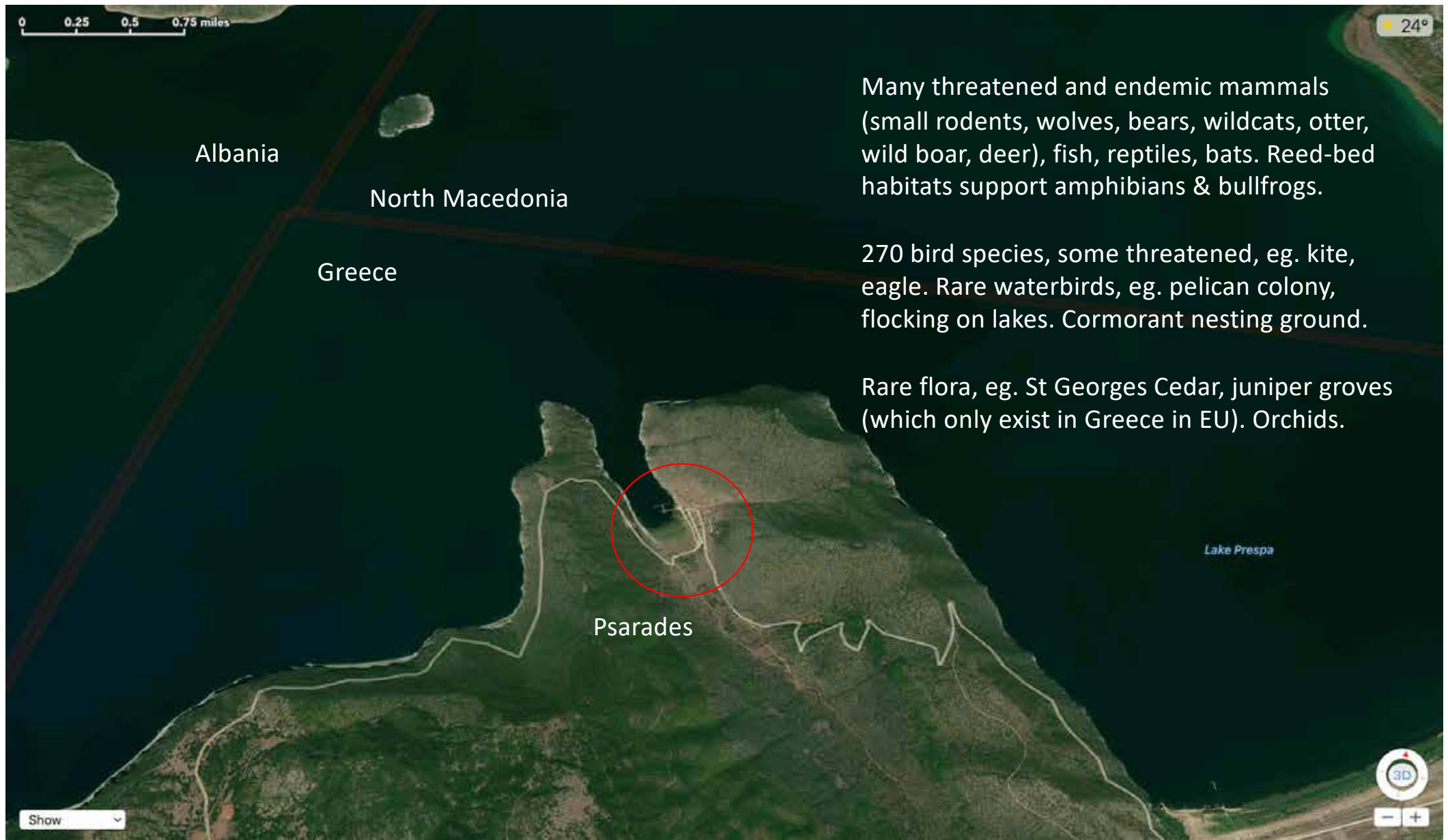
University of Western
Macedonia School of Fine and
Applied Arts, in Florina – “the
gateway to the Balkans”.



Two lakes - Megali Prespa and Mikri Prespa.
Mountains, wet meadows, forests, trail.

Transboundary wildlife and cultural
protection, habitat restoration.

Contrast between heritage battlefield and
natural rewilding & rural regeneration.

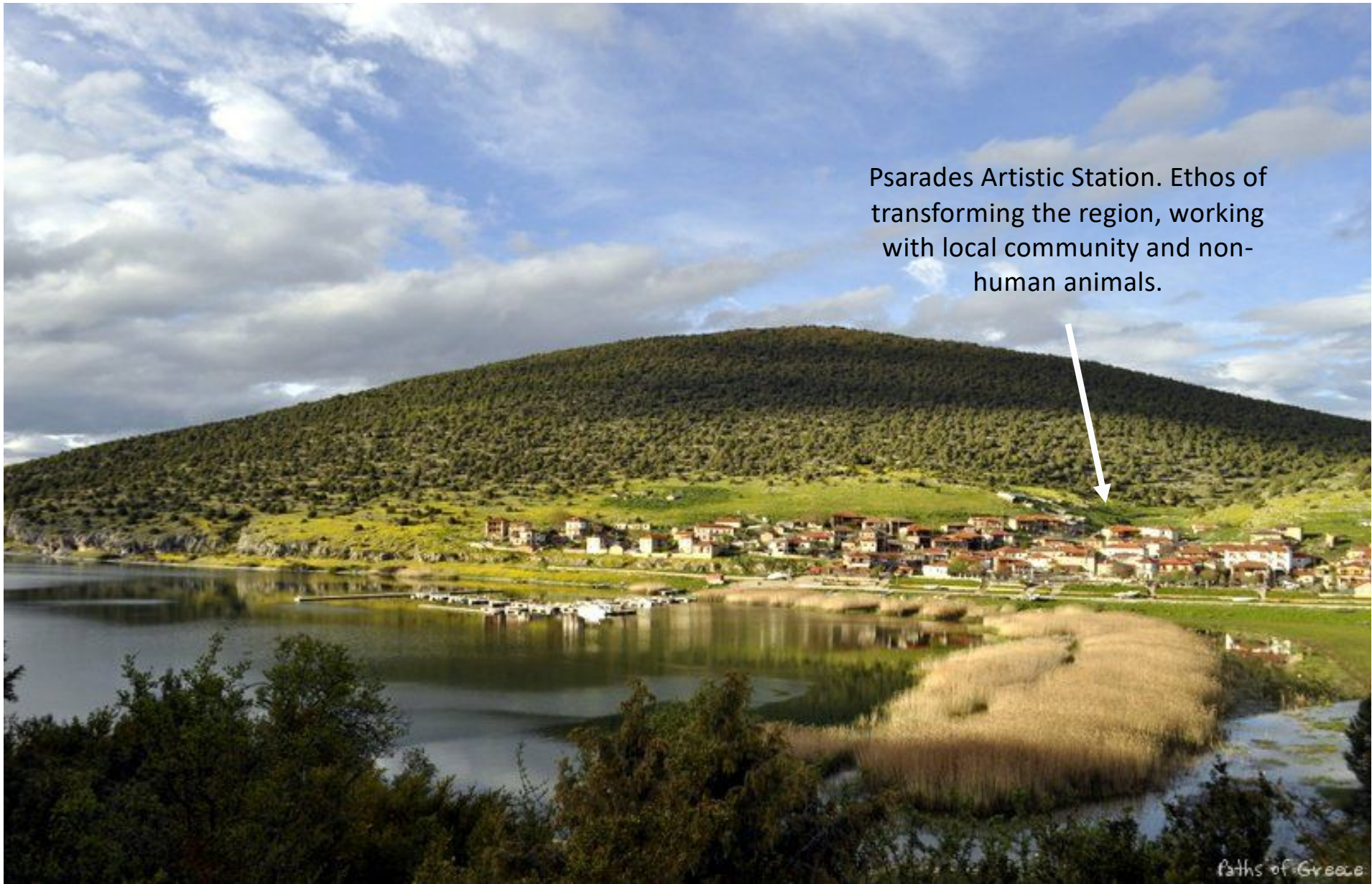


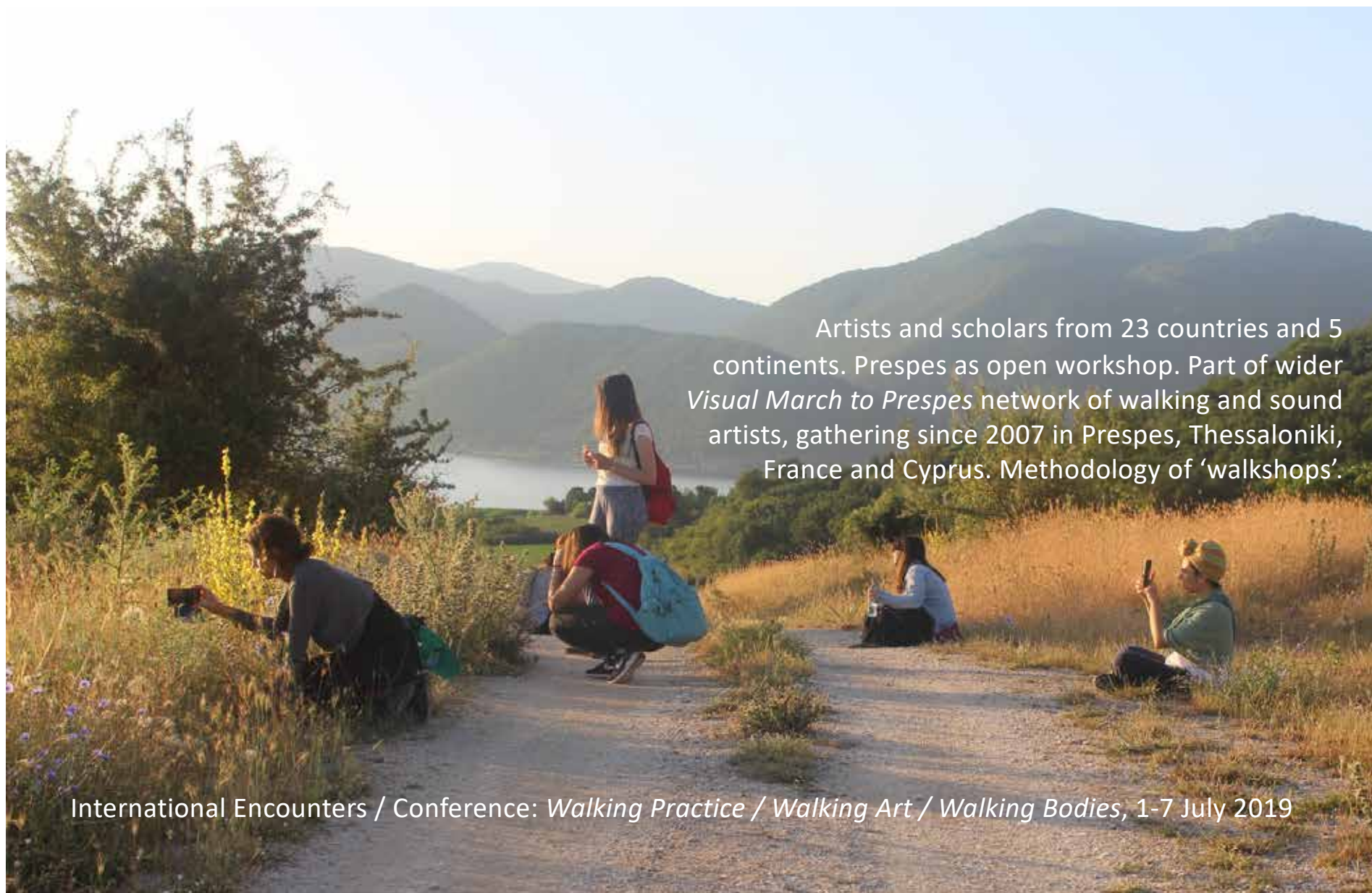
Many threatened and endemic mammals (small rodents, wolves, bears, wildcats, otter, wild boar, deer), fish, reptiles, bats. Reed-bed habitats support amphibians & bullfrogs.

270 bird species, some threatened, eg. kite, eagle. Rare waterbirds, eg. pelican colony, flocking on lakes. Cormorant nesting ground.

Rare flora, eg. St Georges Cedar, juniper groves (which only exist in Greece in EU). Orchids.

Psarades Artistic Station. Ethos of transforming the region, working with local community and non-human animals.

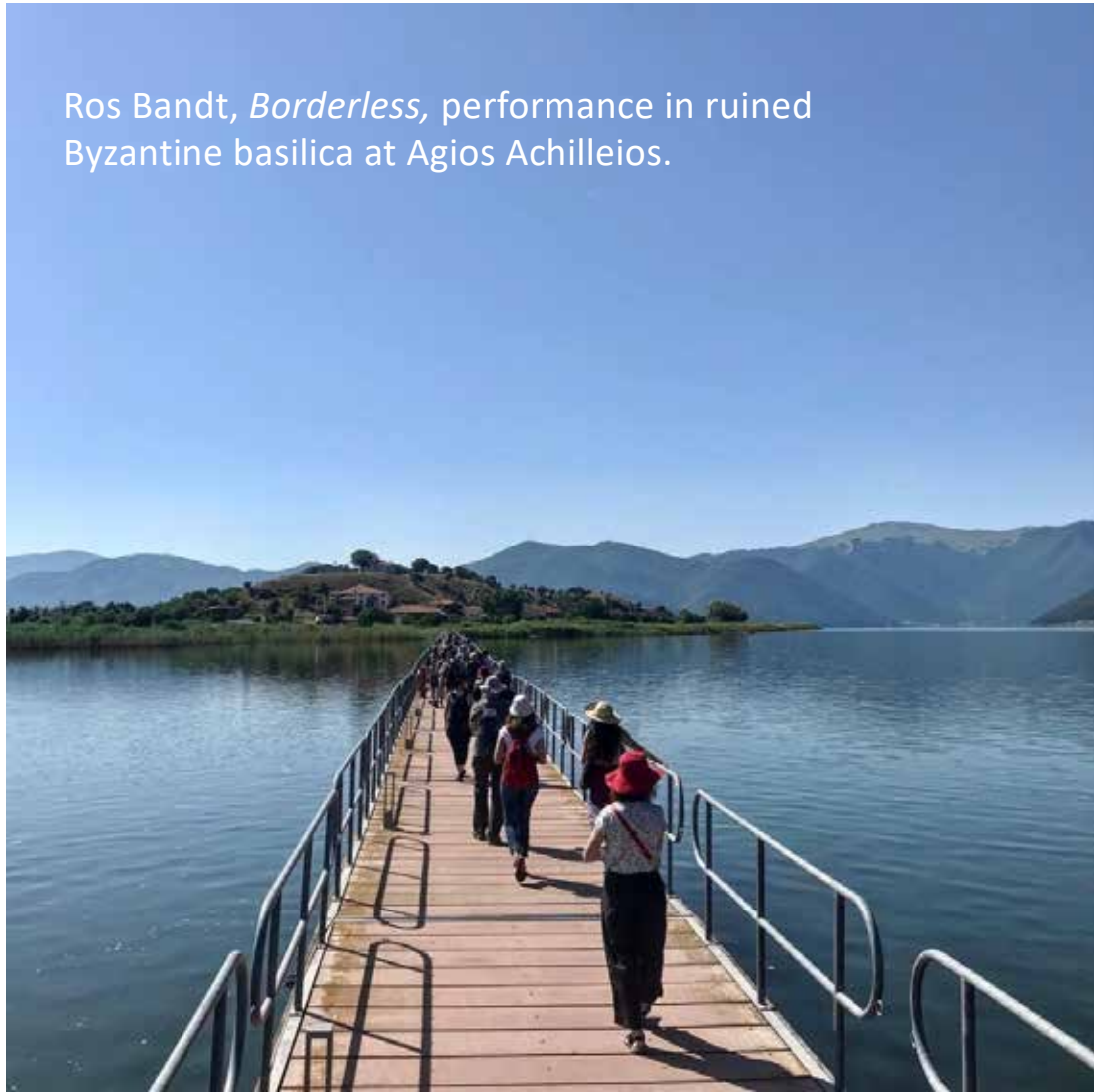




Artists and scholars from 23 countries and 5 continents. Prespes as open workshop. Part of wider *Visual March to Prespes* network of walking and sound artists, gathering since 2007 in Prespes, Thessaloniki, France and Cyprus. Methodology of 'walkshops'.

International Encounters / Conference: *Walking Practice / Walking Art / Walking Bodies*, 1-7 July 2019

Ros Bandt, *Borderless*, performance in ruined
Byzantine basilica at Agios Achilleios.







Ana Villas Boas & Geert Vermeire, *Triple Borders*, June 2019, swimming performance along the tri-point border line





Panaghia Eleousa Hermitage

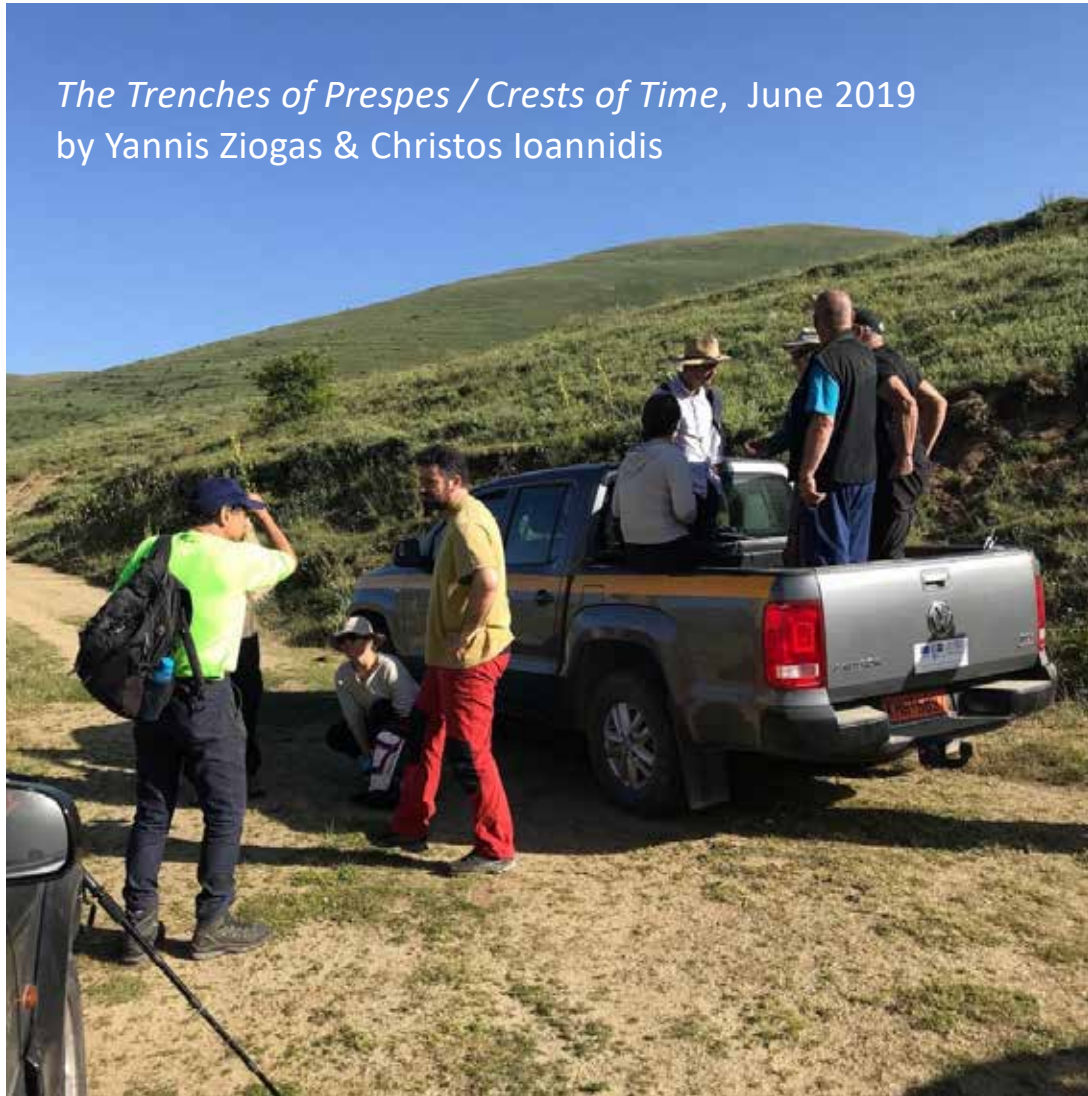


Yannis Ziogas,
University of
Western Macedonia



Many roadside & village statues commemorate Greek democratic army civil war heroes, eg. Petros Kokkales - a communist guerrilla medic who established cave hospital & command centre in Vrontero (on Albanian border), then died in exile in 1962.

The Trenches of Prespes / Crests of Time, June 2019
by Yannis Ziogas & Christos Ioannidis



Walking memory - WW1 border trenches with former Yugoslavia, constructed by Greek, Russian, British and Indo-China armies. Ho Chi Minh and other Vietcong elite trained here. 1950s-80s, a NATO militarised border.





Many abandoned homes and buildings
in underpopulated villages, still
recovering after C20th conflicts.



Walking praxis as both medium and outcome.

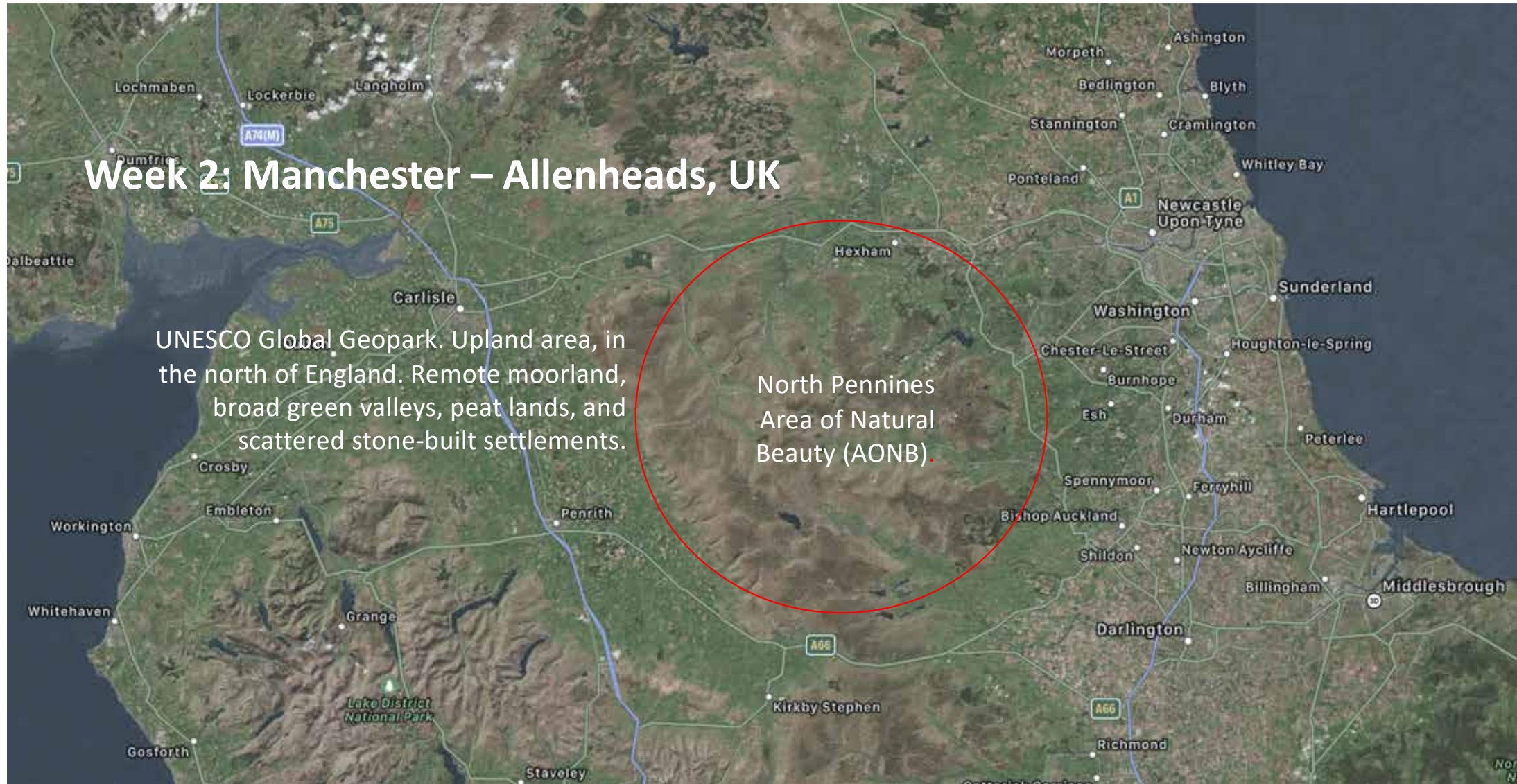
Triadic encounter between practices, art and bodies; topoi (places) where people walk become an open field - sites of visual research and artistic expression.

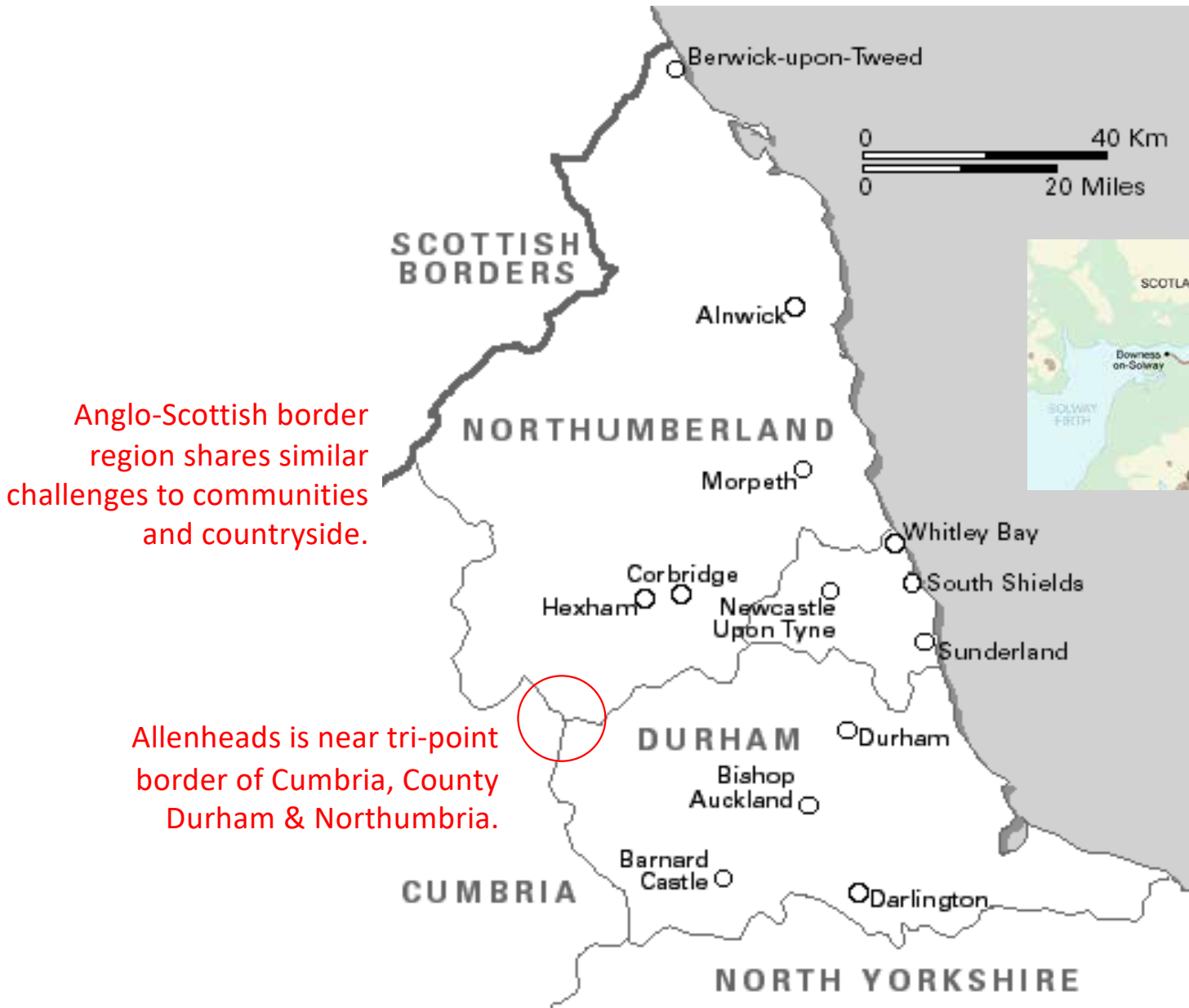
Meeting points of cultures, history, society and environment that interact with the Walking Body's energy.

Week 2: Manchester – Allenheads, UK

UNESCO Global Geopark. Upland area, in the north of England. Remote moorland, broad green valleys, peat lands, and scattered stone-built settlements.

North Pennines
Area of Natural
Beauty (AONB).





Anglo-Scottish border region shares similar challenges to communities and countryside.

Allenheads is near tri-point border of Cumbria, County Durham & Northumbria.

Hadrian's Wall: ancient northern border of Roman Empire : tariff barrier, military control, security.





Allenheads Contemporary Arts: The old schoolhouse



View from the old schoolhouse

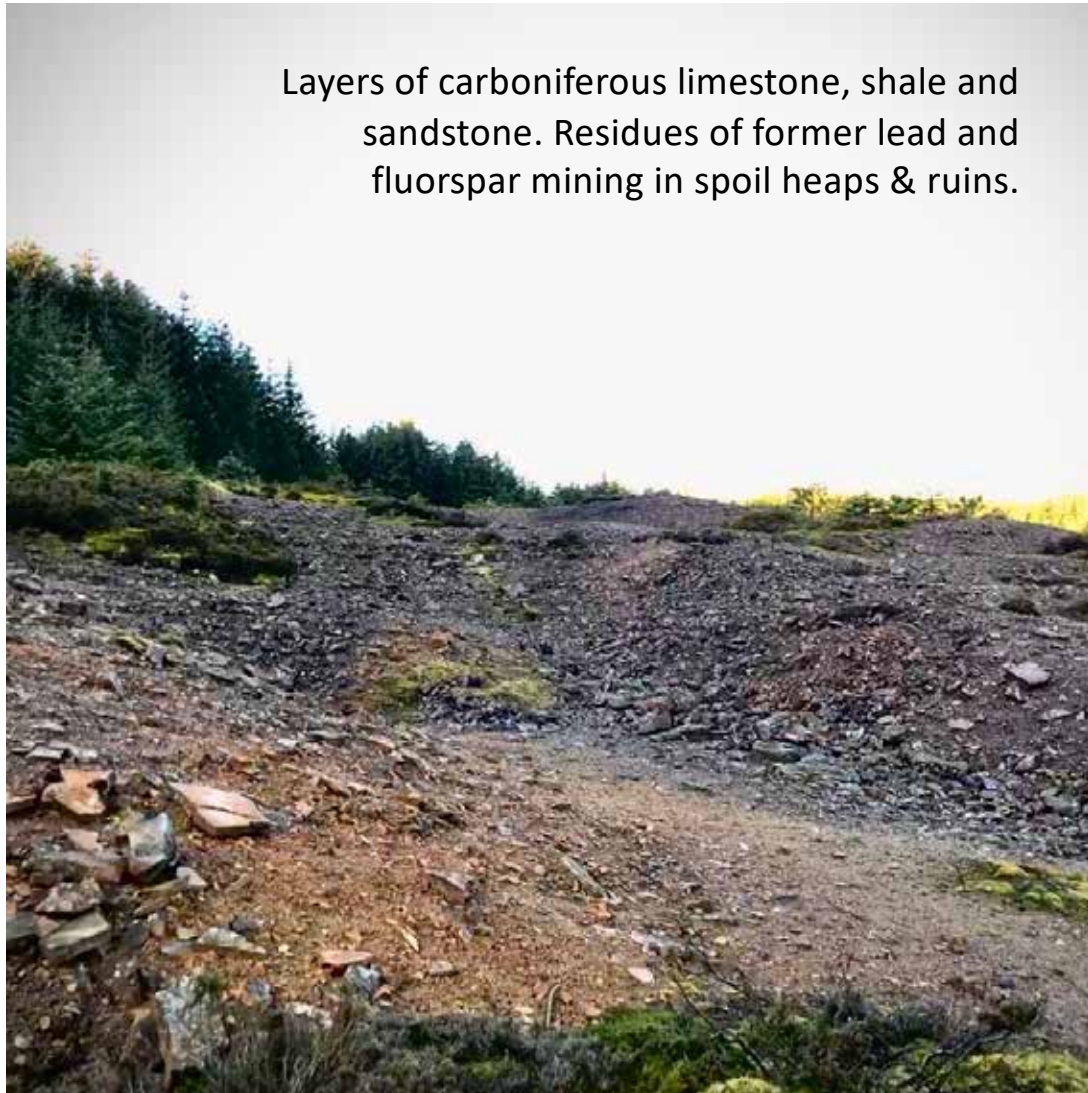


Pine crops

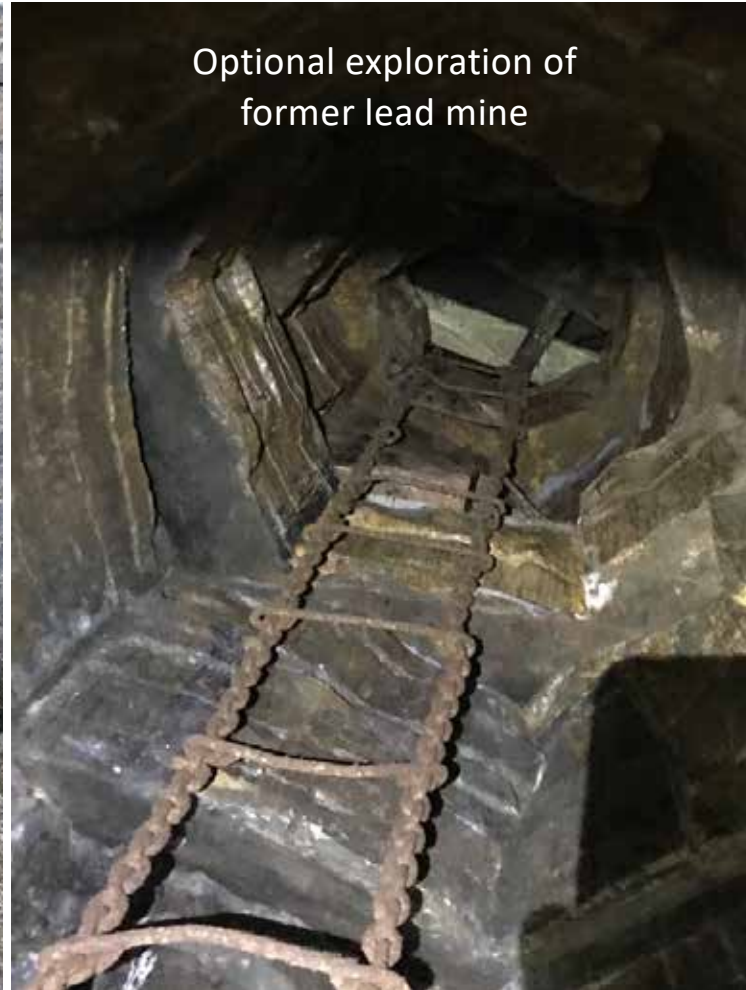


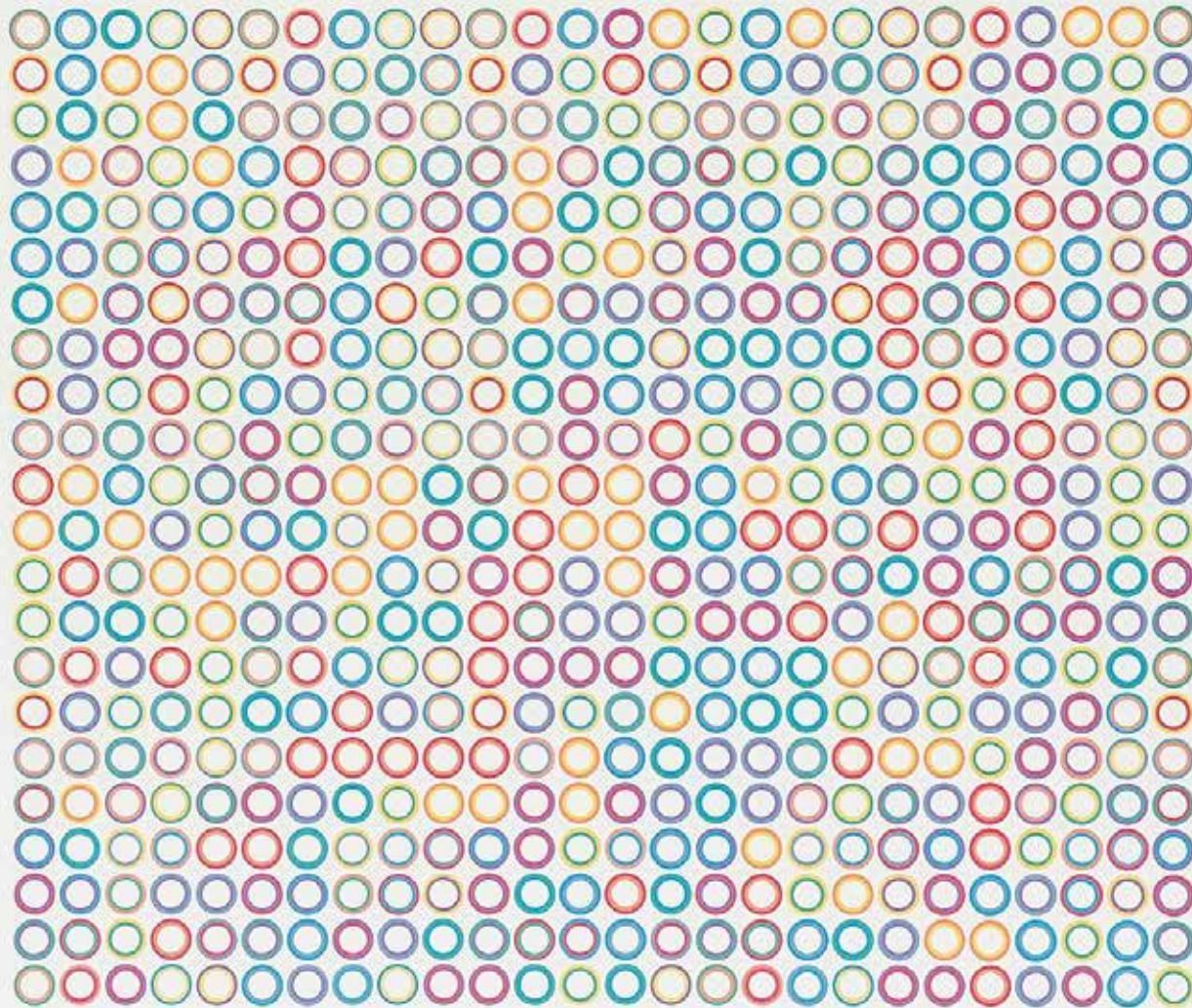
Grouse shooting moors

Layers of carboniferous limestone, shale and sandstone. Residues of former lead and fluorspar mining in spoil heaps & ruins.





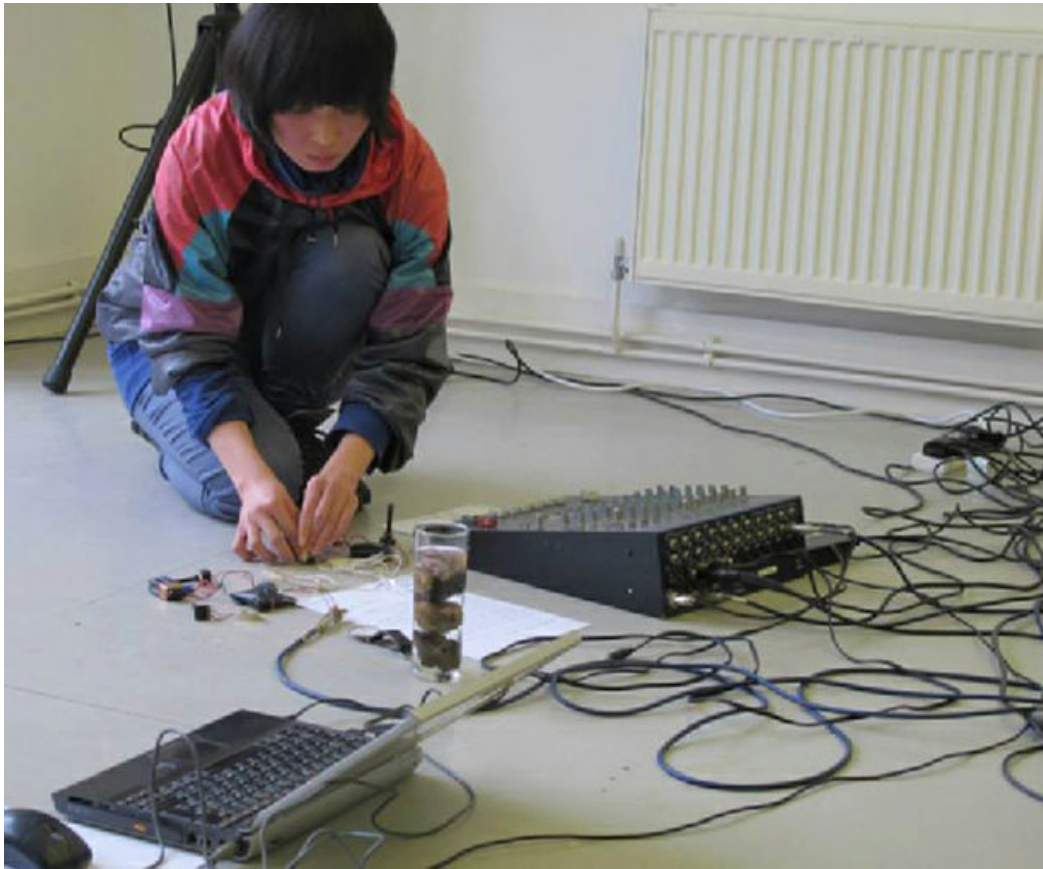




Rachel Clewlow, *Seven Walks Seven Gates in Seven Colours*, 2013



Hollington & Kyprianou,
The Future residency



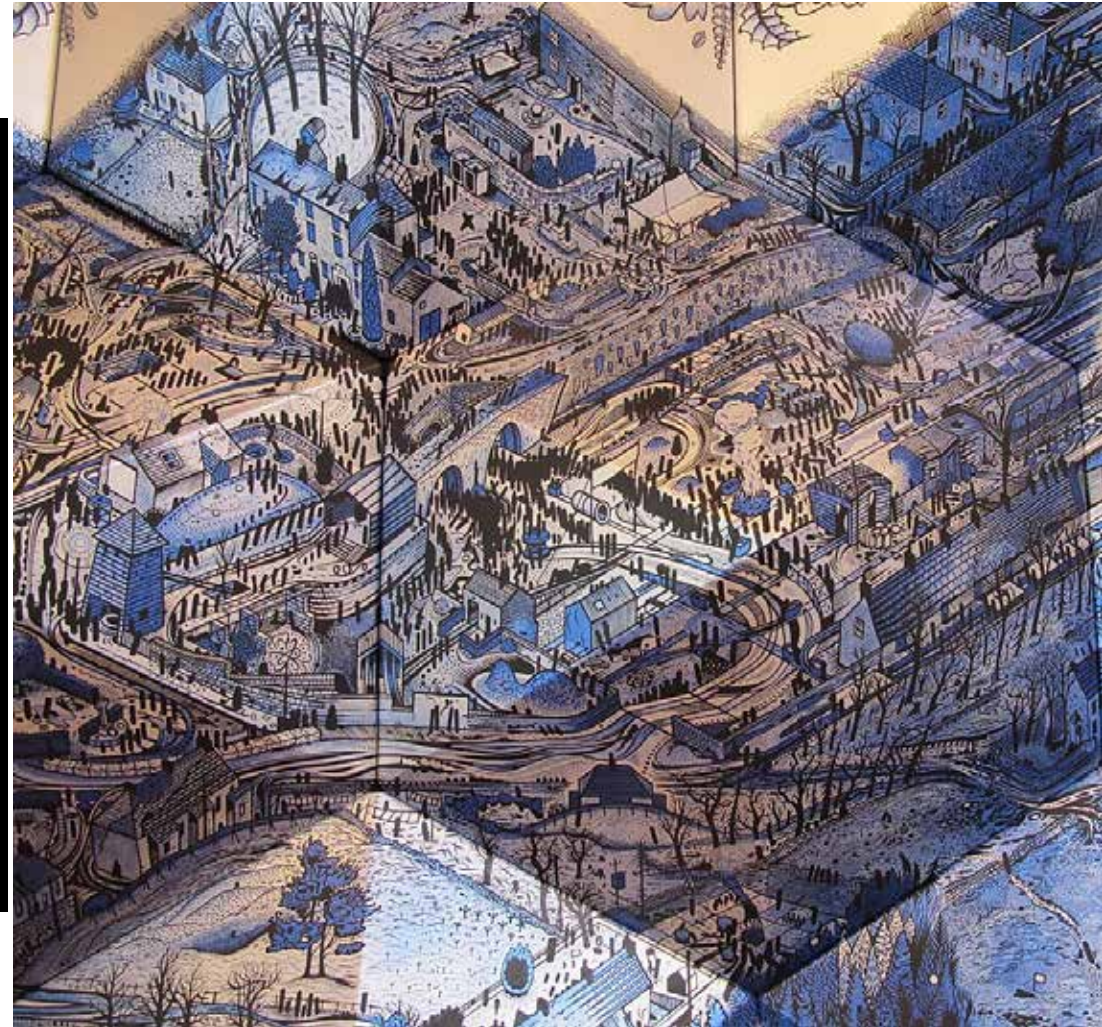
Ji Hyun Park, *95% as far as the eye can see residency*



Liam Murray, *Hypotheses Non Fingo/ I Feign No Hypotheses*, 2012



Tod Hanson, *Tectonic Plate*

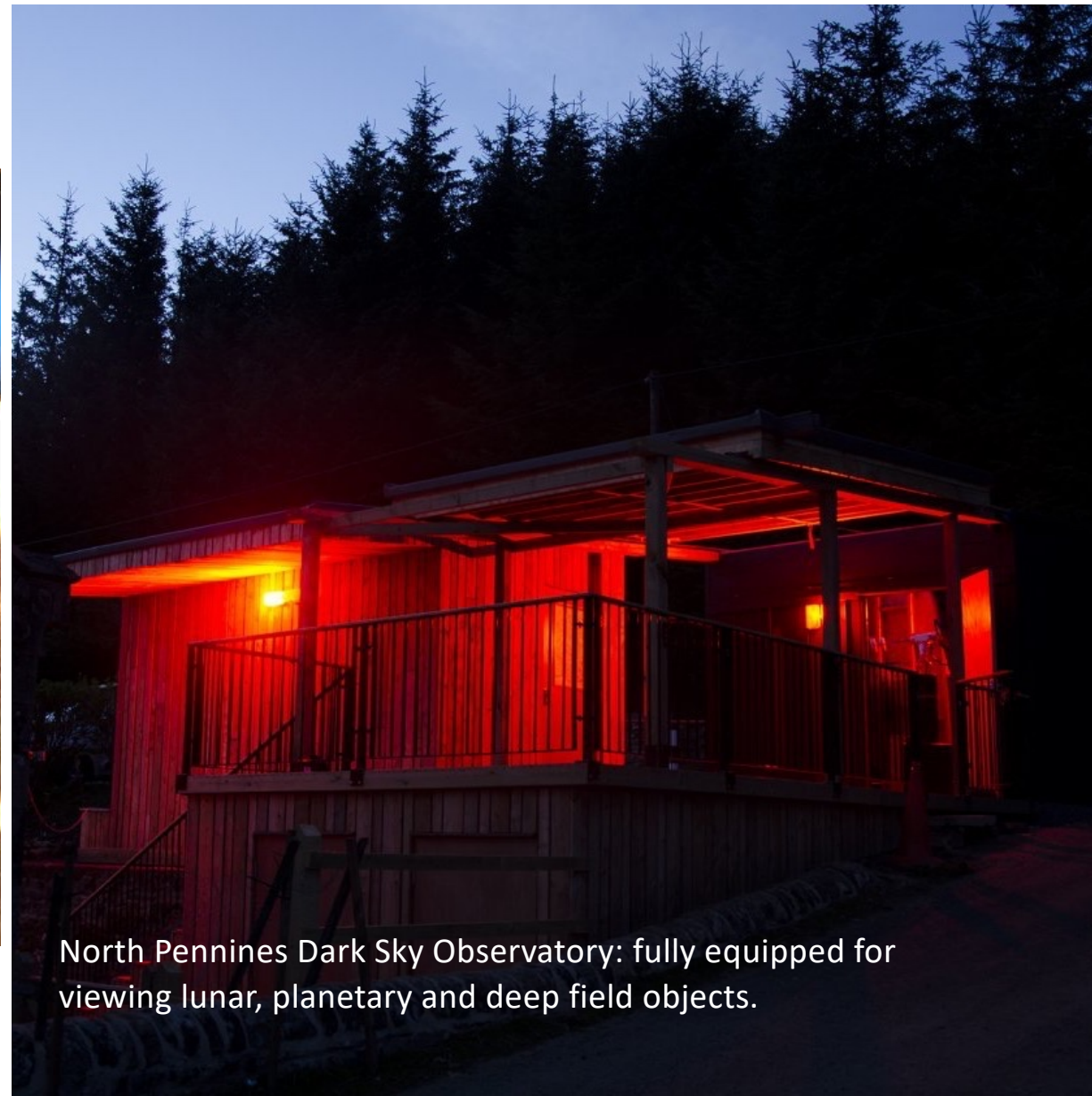




Alan Smith, *Chthonic*, 2017



Communal studio with equipped screening & performance space. Bring all materials and fieldwork equipment.



North Pennines Dark Sky Observatory: fully equipped for viewing lunar, planetary and deep field objects.



Accommodation in dorms & twin rooms, plus camping and caravan.



Communal living space in old schoolhouse

Walking art

- walking as autonomous art form
- since the 1960s: Land Art, Ephemeral Art
- aesthetics
- psychogeography, mapping, spatial narrative
- gendering, queering
- borders, migration, trauma
- nomadism
- environmentalism, re-wilding, commons, Anthropocene
- ethnography
- music, dance, song
- pedagogy
- performance art
- media art
- activism and collective memory

More info:

www.spp.gr

icowaf.eetf.uowm.gr

walkingart.interartive.org

www.acart.org.uk

www.northpennines.org.uk

Society for Protection of Prespa

International Encounters /
Walking Conference

“Walking Practice / Walking
Aesthetics”: *Interartive* special issue

Allenheads Contemporary Arts

North Pennines AONB