Derek Jarman’s Prospect Cottage: an hyperarchived life
“Busie old foole, unruly Sunne, / Why does thou thus / Through windows and through curtaines call on us? / Must to thy motions lovers’ season run?”

“[…] one lone volume lies untouched at Prospect Cottage still waiting for Derek to fill its pages.”

“Our name will be forgotten in time / And no one will remember our works:” yet the work of the English film-maker, designer, writer, gay-right activist and artist Derek Jarman (1942-1994) seems also in line with *exegi monumentum* or the Benjminian “to live is to leave traces.” Benjamin’s aphorism is key to archiving performance: it alludes to the temporal oxymoron that underlines the archive, *living being* in the present and *leaving traces* hinting at both past and future temporalities. As Peggy Phelan underlined, the temporality of performance is the present and “its being […] becomes itself through disappearance.” Traces in turn are the remaining objectal referents, a loss without a lost object.

Performative elements abound in Derek Jarman’s body of work (most of his films, in fact, are recorded performances). 2014 marked the twentieth anniversary of his death from AIDS and saw a plethora of exhibitions taking place in London, showcasing his films, paintings, writings and his sketchbooks: an hyper-archival moment. The books are precious photo-albums, assemblages of sketches, drawings, photographs, writings, quotes and “things of sentimental value.” As objects, they are arguably the purest archival form in his work, as well as being integral to his process:

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1 John Donne’s *The Sun Rising* quoted on the façade of Derek Jarman’s garden, *Prospect Cottage*, in Dungeness.
2 Jarman’s partner and collaborator Keith Collins from ed. S. FARTHING, E. WEBB-INGALL, Derek Jarman’s Sketchbooks, Thames & Hudson, 2013.
3 Jarman’s partner and collaborator Keith Collins from ed. S. FARTHING, E. WEBB-INGALL, Derek Jarman’s Sketchbooks, Thames & Hudson, 2013.
6 This is comparable to Blanchot’s writing as disappearance, see M. BLANCHOT, *L’Espace littéraire*, Gallimard, 1955.
8 Even before his first feature film *Sebastiane*, Jarman was at the heart of London’s theatrical scene: scholars often dismiss his participation in Andrew Logan’s *Alternative Miss World* in 1972 and 1975, when he won the contest as Miss Crêpe Suzette.
9 See Bibliography > Exhibitions, films and other material.
10 The albums, from Italy, cost 100£ – the curators of the exhibition stress how Jarman always envisaged them as hyper-aesthetic objects; see *Inside Derek Jarman’s sketchbooks*, Thames & Hudson, via Youtube.
"For Derek, everything was fused together in a kind of living Gesamtkunstwerk that included painting, stage design, published diaries, pop videos and his garden at Dungeness… The sketchbooks are an integral part of this total art work."\(^{10}\)

Both aesthetic artefacts and archival documents, they show how his work and his life blended seamlessly into a mythopoeic superstructure.\(^{11}\)

Homosexuality hugely contributed to Jarman’s mythopoeia and what Jon Savage termed his “martyr complex,” a central leitmotiv of his films, often a reworking of Catholic iconography offset by gay imagery.\(^{12}\)

"A personal mythology recurs in my writing […]. For me this archaeology has become obsessive, for the "experts" my sexuality is a confusion. All information received should make us inverts sad. But before I finish I intend to celebrate our corner of Paradise, the part of the garden the Lord forgot to mention."\(^{13}\)

\(^{10}\)Jon Savage writing in ed. S. FARTHING, E. WEBB-INGALL, Derek Jarman’s..., ibid.

\(^{11}\)Michael Charlesworth sees Jarman’s body of work as mythopoeia, or personal mythmaking, in M. CHARLESWORTH, Derek Jarman, Reaktion Books, 2011, p. 7. See also Tilda Swinton in T. SWINTON, In the Spirit of Derek Jarman, a keynote speech at the Edinburgh International Film Festival, Saturday 17th August 2002: "Bring it from home. Bring it out from under your bed. Your own bed. Your own life. That’s – eventually – what you did, Derek, and measures your highest contribution as an artist, in my opinion: that you made your work out of the soup kitchen that was your life."

\(^{12}\)See n.10 and J. ELLIS, Derek Jarman’s Angelic Conversations, University of Minnesota Press, 2009, Jim Ellis also argues that Jarman’s late life was a "performance of illness," and the film a performance of "the story of Christ now, seeing contemporary lives in the life of Christ, and Christ in those lives." Both gender and illness shaped not only Jarman’s production but also external documentation of it.

\(^{13}\)D. JARMAN Modern Nature, ibid., p. 23. Everything in italics in quotations shows the broader lexical field of the archive; I will employ this notation from now on.
Perhaps in answer to the "accelerated, foreshortened or borrowed time" of his illness, Jarman has, I will argue, hyper-archived his life. More specifically, Prospect Cottage and the three works surrounding it – the book Modern Nature (1991), the film The Garden (1990) and the cottage garden – are the apogee of Planet Jarmania, through excessive autobiography and authorial presence, though in non-diegetic form. As Jim Ellis underlined, time is the basic concern of all three works – I see them, in fact, as time-based archives and performance texts.

Over 250'000 'pilgrims' visit Dungeness every year, where Jarman bought an old fisherman's house, Prospect Cottage, in 1986. Though his second home, "it was the cottage which became synonymous with him and was much photographed, viewed and visited (especially after the posthumous publication of Derek Jarman's Garden in 1995)."

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14 J. Ellis, Derek Jarman’s..., ibid., p. 183. See also D. Esch, In the Event: Reading Journalism, Reading Theory, Stanford University Press, 1999, p. 128: "Of course, readable throughout Jarman’s work is a keen and consistent awareness of the ephemerality not only of the hated “debris of inaction” but of his own production, likewise destined to pass away."
15 See J. Ellis, Derek Jarman’s..., ibid., p. 170. ‘Planet Jarmania’ is Tilda Swinton’s expression, see T. Swinton, In the Spirit, ibid.
16 See J. Ellis, Derek Jarman’s..., ibid., p. 170. See Della Pollock’s Performing Writing in ed. P. Phelan, J. Lane, The Ends of Performance, NYU Press, 1998, p. 80: "Performative writing is evocative. It operates metaphorically to render absence present [...] what I want to call performative writing [...] collapses distinctions by which creative and critical writing are typically isolated."
17 Figure from I. Julien, T. Swinton, D. Jarman, Derek Jarman: Brutal Beauty, Koenig Books, 2008, p. 6; also: "his work reached a large audience through the garden he created there, which incorporated found objects from the local landscape." See also R. Wymer, Derek Jarman, Manchester University Press, 2005, p. 132 and T. Swinton, In the Spirit..., ibid.
18 M. Cook, Queer Domesticities: Homosexuality and Home Life in Twentieth-Century London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, p. 227; Cook also mentions that Jarman’s lover, HB, kept his furniture, his objects and his books preserved behind glass after Jarman’s death (thus conserving the archive). See also p. 237, on Prospect not being a home for HB, who bought another cottage nearby. Again we face Jarman’s over-authorial presence.
Jarman was "always a passionate gardener. Flowers sparkled in my childhood as they did in a medieval manuscript." He lovingly recorded the work at Prospect Cottage within Modern Nature, "the diary-memoir of his garden, childhood, and illness," a collection of journals started in 1989, and the posthumous Derek Jarman's Garden (1996). Despite their often calendrical form, the seven books of Modern Nature are a complicated palimpsest of Bachelardian rêveries, personal discourse (diary entries, family memories, work anecdotes, queer advocacy) and academico-practical glosses ("cascades of quotations" on botanic, history of plants, gardens and garden design) cut and pasted into a first-person collage of prose and poetry.

Keith Collins, his partner and editor, wrote that:

*Derek extensively re-edited and re-ordered the text, scrubbing out the past, inverting meanings... a process of revision and re-invention that was characteristic in his painting, writing, film editing, and personal history.*

This is crucial: Modern Nature is not a straightforward testimonial document, but rather a collection of poetic traces.

"It's only now I realise what a delirium I have been in for the last five weeks, no sense of time. This diary gives the wrong impression, it's much too focused. I'm emerging from a strange dream. Today time seems to have some measure of form."

Though manipulated, it is not fictionalized in the spectacular sense of the word: "the terrible dearth of information, the fictionalization of our experience, there is hardly any gay autobiography, just novels, but why novelise it when the best of it its in our lives?" Instead of a typical autobiography, Modern Nature is an archeology of soul, performed:


20T. LAWRENCE, AIDS, the Problem of Representation, and Plurality in Derek Jarman's Blue in Social Text, No. 52/53, Autumn-Winter 1997, p. 242; Jarman was obviously aware of archival concerns as he "always intanted the diary for publication," see J. ELLIS, Derek Jarman's..., ibid.


24D. JARMAN, Modern Nature, Ibid., p. 56. See also p. 113: "History fascinates me, letters, autobiography."
"To whom it may concern
in the dead stones of a planet
no longer remembered as earth
may he decipher this opaque hieroglyph
perform an archeology of soul
on these precious fragments
all that remain of our vanished days."  

This quote epitomizes the whole book’s concern with memory, space, time and ruins. Ellis offers the noteworthy interpretation that the book is a garden, "like the Renaissance herbal [...] an assemblage of useful and salutary knowledge." This becomes more poignant in light of Jarman’s illness – he was diagnosed in December 1986, shortly after buying the cottage; innumerable passages record his medical condition, see for instance:

"Ten days later I pick up a pen, my appetite lost for recording and writing. It’s six months since I became ill. I’ve lost a stone and a half and the razor bumps across my face again."

Writing, recording, archiving became reasons of life, performed in parallel to gardening work. Therefore, accounts on the atmosphere and the weather (and the wind more specifically) turned into allegories of illness:

"Full dusty orange moon glimmers over the sea, climbs over the house. [...] A house burns down at Lydd."

Modern Nature is thus a hyper-authorial exercise, infused with the voices of gardener, designer, performer, patient, doctor, specialist, etc.: all Derek Jarman’s. Yet the author is also fragmented in a postmodern, pathless narratological structure.

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26 Much like the garden itself, Modern Nature stands at the intersection of space and time – just like the word prospect, as mentioned by J. BIRKSTED in Relating Architecture to Landscape, Taylor & Francis, 2004, p. 245.
27 J. ELLIS, Derek Jarman’s..., ibid., p. 180; see also p. 183. Jarman was diagnosed on the 22nd of December 1986. He called Prospect Cottage both “therapy and pharmacopoeia.”
28 J. ELLIS, Derek Jarman’s..., ibid., p. 180; see also J. HILL, Weather Architecture, Routledge, 2013.
30 See D. JARMAN, Modern Nature, ibid; see also D. ESCH, In the Event, ibid., p. 120 and J. HILL, Weather Architecture..., ibid.
31 D. JARMAN, Modern Nature, ibid., p. 310; see also for instance p. 18: "A grey windy day, cold too. The winter we nearly forgot arrived last night and is set to circle around us for a few days."
32 Hill, quite to the point, adds the weather to the authors of the garden. Jarman is here an author in the Foucauldian sense, as individualized though modified (following Barthes’ death of the author).
33 I mean narratological in the Genettian sense, see G. GENETTE, Figures III, Seuli, 1972.
"... I offer you a journey without direction
uncertainty and no sweet conclusion
When the light faded I went in search of myself
There were many paths and many destinations."  

This voiceover opens *The Garden* (1990), the second hermeneutical and intertextual companion to the garden; it already hints at the picturesque garden structure of the film (many paths and no direction). Critics have stressed that garden imagery appears in all of Jarman's films, yet crucially *The Garden* was filmed in Dungeness itself and records both three days of 'performance' in and near Prospect Cottage and three years of filming in the surrounding landscape: again, opposing temporalities.

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35 The title is itself both tautological and allegorical.
36 There were also six formal days of shooting in studio; see R. GRUNDMANN, D. JARMAN, *History and the Gay Viewfinder: An Interview with Derek Jarman* in *Cinéaste*, Vol. 18, No. 4, 1991, p. 25; Jarman mentions in the interview that it was the cheapest British film of the year by far. See also M. CHARLESWORTH, *Derek Jarman*, ibid., p. 11.
*Your last film, The Garden, is a visual essay... a collage of disjointed, almost lyrical segments.*

The visuality of The Garden brings it closer to the garden itself, while its lyricism – what Steven Dillon calls "lyric cinema" – mirrors the poetry of Modern Nature; the three works are indeed inextricably associated: though using different media, they are but one work documenting the life of the garden as well as life in the garden. In the film, Jarman is seen en abyme, gardening and writing the script, then "sleeping at his desk among his creations [...] the dreaming poet." Photography is a fourth medium disguised within the filmic text: first, The Garden is a collection of heavily theatrical tableaux; second, many scenes, again according to Dillon, "link Jarman, as a camera-wielding director to hyperbolically aggressive paparazzi."

This is ironically ambivalent, for he was the constant target of conservative tabloids: "The People has a lurid article: Movie Boss with AIDS. - Glad to die in a shack! What people do to sell newspapers!" – "I've been on the radio not about my films but about being HIV. It's very complicated." Yet he was "very attached to getting attention" and "a great spokesman." Though too easily labelled a film about AIDS

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38 S. DILLON, Derek Jarman and Lyric Film, The Mirror and the Sea, University of Texas Press, 2004, p. 162; see also pp. 166, p. 190 and 188: "As so often in Jarman's films, the creation of mood and atmosphere is primary, and here, to a greater degree than in many of Jarman's film, the audience has time to think, to consider. A garden itself is an artificial space in which we have time to reflect, and The Garden is probably the most contemplative of all his films." Nature versus artifice are equally at the core of Modern Nature. See also M. CHARLESWORTH, Derek Jarman, ibid., p. 11.
39 S. DILLON, Derek Jarman, ibid., p. 185; see also W. PENCAK, The Films, ibid., p. 31.
40 S. DILLON, Derek Jarman, ibid., p. 185. This leads us to Auslander and the impossibility of a distinction between documentary and theatrical documentation, see P. AUSLANDER, The Performativity of Performance Documentation in Performance Arts Journal, Number 84, 2006, pp. 1-10.
42 According to both Tilda Swinton and Andrew Logan, see T. SWINTON, In the Spirit..., ibid. and I. JAKOB, E. SOUSLOU, An interview with Andrew Logan parts I, II, III in 160g Magazine, 2013.
and "the persecution and martyrdom of gay men," it is indeed political activism carried through poetic autobiography.\textsuperscript{43} Jarman recalls Tilda Swinton's experience:

"It was as if she was 'trapped' in my dream. She found the film intensely personal ... I feel the same way, can't really talk about the film. It's like talking about yourself."\textsuperscript{44}

The film makes constant use of antitheses: the garden is shown as both Eden and Gethsemane – Arcadia and Persephone's garden, the idyllic time of childhood and the awareness of mortality, the \textit{locus} of both Eros and Thanatos.\textsuperscript{45} Christic iconography and narratology abound, but within a homosexual frame, "Jarman's own version of the passion."\textsuperscript{46}

Biblical and contemporary collide, similarly to the \textit{coincidentia oppositorum} of quotation and diary, artifice and nature in \textit{Modern Nature}. Violence and the sacred are also topoi of the film, pleasure and martyrdom being the oxymorical constituents of paradise:\textsuperscript{47}

"The word paradise is derived from the ancient Persian-'a green place.' Paradise haunts gardens, and some gardens are paradise and mine is one of them."\textsuperscript{48}

\textsuperscript{43}S. \textsc{Dillon}, \textit{Derek Jarman}, ibid., p. 162; see also \textsc{N. Richardson}, \textit{The Queer Cinema of Derek Jarman: critical and cultural readings}, I. B. Tauris, 2009, p. 6: "As usual, Jarman is first in line to emphasize the hermeneutic potentiality of his own films, and he constructs his own readings in script notes, journals and autobiographical commentary."

\textsuperscript{44}D. \textsc{Jarman}, \textit{Modern Nature}, ibid., p. 297.

\textsuperscript{45}See \textsc{R. Wymer}, \textit{Derek Jarman}, ibid., p. 134 and \textsc{D. Jarman}, \textit{Modern Nature}, ibid., p. 171, where 'et in arcadia ego' is the property of the gardener: "The gardener digs in another time, without past or future, beginning or end. A time that does not cleave the day with rush hours, lunch breaks, the last bus home. As you walk in the garden you pass into time - the moment of entering can never be remembered. Around you the landscape lies transfigured. Here is the Amen beyond the prayer."

\textsuperscript{46}See \textsc{S. Dillon}, \textit{Derek Jarman}, ibid., p. 186; \textsc{R. Wymer}, \textit{Derek Jarman}, ibid., p. 2 and \textsc{M. Cook}, \textit{Queer Domesticities}..., ibid., p. 236; Cook views the figure of Jesus as prominent of homoerotic desire in \textit{The Garden}, as well as an autobiographical reflection on AIDS.

\textsuperscript{47}See also \textsc{J. Hill} in \textit{Weather Architecture}, ibid., about the \textit{pain and pleasure} of home in Jarman's cottage.

\textsuperscript{48}D. \textsc{Jarman}, \textit{Modern Nature}, ibid., p. 55. Famed garden historian John Dixon Hunt traces the etymology of 'paradise' to old Persian \textit{pairi} (around) and \textit{daeza} (wall): as such paradise, and by extension the garden, is closely associated with boundaries, like the Old English \textit{geard} (fence) and the vulgar latin \textit{gardinum} (enclosure), see \textsc{J. D. Hunt}, \textit{Approaches (New and Old) to Garden History}, Dumbarton Oaks, 1999.
Jarman, the gay minority and HIV sufferers are Girardian scapegoats, canonized by violence under the shadow of Dungeness’ power station – a contemporary resetting of the Golgotha. See the title of another of Jarman’s autobiographies: At Your Own Risk: A Saint’s Testament, or the “canonization of Saint Derek” performed in Dungeness in 1991 and shown in the film: Jarman’s life was, or at least was seen by himself as a saint-martyr’s performance.

The garden is both the literal and the figurative ground of the two other works. They are physical archives that could outlive it, while evidently all three survived Derek Jarman himself. Book and film preserve the memory of the garden through fixed given moments in its history – against gardens’ present ontology, its constant being in progress and decay – and abstracted, a-temporal visions. The two artworks

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49See W. PENCAK, The Films..., ibid., p. 38 and R. GIRARD, La Violence et le sacré, Grasset, 1972. Girard posits that with Christ’s crucifixion, violence is the sacred.

50See L. BERSANI, U. DUTOIT, Caravaggio, British Film Institute, 1999; S. DILLON, Derek Jarman, ibid., p. 191 and M. O’PRAY, Derek Jarman Dreams of England, British Film Institute, 1996.

51J. ELLIS, Derek Jarman’s..., ibid., p. 177.

multiply Jarman’s authorial voice as well as dividing it further in ‘many pathless directions.’ For however important film or writing was for Derek Jarman, he always argued that the most vital activity to him was gardening.\textsuperscript{53} The act of gardening, especially as seen in \textit{The Garden}, is performative. Hence why Prospect is an archive of practices, as well as a hyper-archival practice through writing, filming and gardening. Gardening itself becomes \textit{enacted archiving} – at the same time performance and archive. The garden is again an \textit{assemblage} of man-made elements from the local landscape and of sculptures (in Japanese, Roman and Renaissance garden tradition) “consisting entirely of found metal objects and driftwood, which testify to processes of decay.”\textsuperscript{54} Authorship is blurred at Prospect, as the cottage colours were black and yellow before Jarman bought it (as opposed, to, simplistically, black as a signifier of mortality), though he made some alterations to the house.\textsuperscript{55} He left the interiors spare, sourced antique gardening tools and remains (siumultaneously props and \textit{objets trouvés}), created a hybrid between traditional cottage and landscape gardens through the use of native features and postmodern ha-has.\textsuperscript{56} The garden has indeed no physical boundary, and as such blends in the surrounding landscape, which in turn becomes the garden, thus blurring Jarman’s authorship on Prospect Cottage and Dungeness.\textsuperscript{57} This spatial instability emphasizes a peculiar dichotomy between \textit{heimlich} and \textit{unheimlich} (which, as Freud has proven, are etymologically synonymous despite being antonyms) that recalls the Derridian \textit{archive fever:}\textsuperscript{58}

*It is thus, in this \textit{domiciliation}, in this house arrest, that archives take place. The dwelling, this place where they dwell permanently, marks this institutional passage from the private to the public, which does not always mean from the secret to the nonsecret.*\textsuperscript{59}

Though Jarman spent much time alone in Dungeness and “made his presence felt at Prospect... [with] art, props, memorabilia” the garden, more than the house, came to represent him before and after his death, as Matt Cook observed.\textsuperscript{60} The unbarred

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item See M. CHARLESWORTH, \textit{Derek Jarman}, ibid., p. 11.
\item Prospect Cottage also refers to Elizabethan, picturesque and cottage gardens. D. O’QUINN, \textit{Gardening, History...}, ibid., p. 117. See also J. ELLIS, \textit{Derek Jarman’s...}, ibid., p. 169 and M. CHARLESWORTH, \textit{Derek Jarman}, ibid., p. 11. Dungeness is the largest shingle formation with Cape Canaveral, see D. JARMAN, \textit{Modern Nature}, ibid.
\item See J. HILL, \textit{Weather Architecture...}, ibid.
\item J. BIRKSTED, \textit{Relating Architecture...}, ibid., p. 242; see also M. COOK, \textit{Queer...}, ibid., p. 236.
\item For spatial instability, see J. BIRKSTED, \textit{Relating Architecture...}, ibid., p. 248. I am using \textit{heimlich/unheimlich} in the Freudian and Vidlerian sense.
\item M. COOK, \textit{Queer Domesticities...}, ibid., p. 237; by shelving props, Jarman was literally archiving practices (or traces thereof). See also Jarman in R. GRUNDMANN, D. JARMAN, \textit{History and...}, ibid., p.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
garden shows the potential for spectatorship, as though he already conceived his
garden as a metaphoric cemetery, a place of remembrance. Indeed he wrote, "my
garden is a memorial [...]," foreseeing its future as a place of pilgrimage for members
of the LGBT community, Jarmanians, garden and architecture historians, and, most
paradoxically, photographers. In fact, Jarman contributed to make Dungeness a
neo-picturesque site, authoring the village itself through his boundless garden.

We are once again facing antitheses though as the memorial (destined for visitors) is
set in a place of extreme loneliness: Dungeness, in the furthest Southeast of
England, is a shingle waste with harsh weather and metaphysical light, with scattered
seamen’s houses, boats, a rescue station, a dead-end train track, a lighthouse, a
military post and an out-scaled nuclear station just east of Prospect Cottage.

"The bleakness of Prospect Cottage was what had made me fall in love with it," wrote
Jarman echoing the Burkean theory of the sublime.

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27: “I, for myself, like to be in Dungeness. [...] I wouldn’t survive in Hollywood.” See also J. HILL, Weather Architecture... ibid.
61M. COOK, Queer Domesticities..., ibid., p. 247. Though the garden is, by definition, indifferent to its viewer; or, it could be argued in this context, constantly performing itself.
62D. JARMAN, Modern Nature, ibid., p. 55. Pencak goes as far as to compare Prospect Cottage to art made in the concentration camp of Terezin, both "monuments to indomitable human spirit," W. PENCAK, The Films... ibid., p. 42; there is also a clear parallel with the Chernobyl accident of 1986, which Jarman himself mentioned, see R. GRUNDMANN, D. JARMAN, History and... ibid., p. 26. When I visited the garden in 2010, HB told us how annoyed he was at fashion photographers using it as a neo-picturesque background; though the garden has no boundaries, it is an invasion to the privacy of the memorial.
63See J. ELLIS, Derek Jarman’s..., ibid., p. 183, also p. 169: Ellis underlines how many plants, birds and insects are only to be found in Dungeness, adding to the otherworldly feel of the place.
64E. BURKE, A Philosophical Enquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful, Penguin, ed. 1998: Burke defines the sublime as the juxtaposition of fear and awe (in the eighteenth-century sense of the word). See
In this desolate landscape, the corporeal performance of his life (and illness) evolved in parallel to the miraculous efforts to garden on such a difficult soil. The garden evidently evokes death, yet its future seasons are metaphors of life:

"The day of our death is sealed up. I do not wish to die... yet. I would love to see my garden through several summers."65

"My gilly flowers, roses, violets blue,
sweet garden of vanished pleasures,
Please come back next year.
Cold, cold, cold, I die so silently."67

"As I write, the little steam train of the Romney. Hythe and Dymchurch Railway rattles past, sending out plumes of grey smoke. The smell of fire and hot ash drifts across the landscape. The scent of my childhood, waiting for the train to take me back to school from Waterloo.

And we end in deathly grey."68

also J. Hill, *Weather Architecture...*, ibid., p. 297: "Typical of some romantics, the industrial landscape repelled and fascinated him but he only had distaste for the manicured gardens of the National Trust and the chocolate-box town of Rye, close to Dungeness."66

Only specialist plants could grow in Dungeness; Jarman would design with plants such as sea kale, which other gardeners would weed out, see N. Richardson, *The Queer...*, ibid. and Derek Jarman's last words in D. Jarman, H. Sooley, *Derek Jarman's Garden*, Thames & Hudson, 1995: "the seaweed's back." See also D. O'Quinn, *Gardening, History...*, ibid., p. 124. The blend of wild, human and designed spaces reminds of the Renaissance concept of three natures, all present at Prospect Cottage. Another triad we can read very clearly in the cottage is Frances and Hester's division of the garden in "idea," "place" and "action," see M. Francis, R. Hester, *The Meaning of Gardens*, MIT Press, 1990.


As his life's archive, the garden died with Jarman; yet as the archive of his life it is, for us, the purest Mnemosyne.

"Words forget their sweet meaning, drowned by time, no one remembers the old story."

Gardens, and Jarman's in particular, are readable spaces; throughout his life, we have seen it, Jarman had an acute awareness of the importance of both traces and decay. Gardens have no archives; documents are poor, only metaphors – in this case, The Garden records what happened in the garden (practice and performance) more than the garden itself. Gardens are a form of art without archives: therefore, the only possible archive of the garden is the garden itself, though a time-based archive because of its mutability. Hence, the garden-archive is inherently metonymical, a sign of loss, and it "begins with the knowledge of its own failure, ..." obeying the Derridian archive fever: "the archive always works, and a priori, against itself."

Derek Jarman thus created a set of atypical archives in response to their inevitable decay; each in turn archives and performs the other; of all, the garden is the culmination, the Gesamtkunstwerk that comprises garden(-ing) as life, practice, performance, memory and death.

"... I offer you a journey without direction uncertainty and no sweet conclusion When the light faded I went in search of myself There were many paths and many destinations."

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69 The garden is Jarman's own's Nachleben in the Warburgian sense, yet inserted in a looping self-mythology. Like Warburg’s Mnemosyne, it is an archive based on melancholy. See M. A. HOLLY, The Melancholy Art, Princeton University Press, 2013, for a comprehensive study of melancholy in art; a history of aesthetics ab negativo has also been explored by, among countless others, Julia Kristeva, Maurice Blanchot, Giorgio Agamben.

70 D. JARMAN, H. SOOLEY, Derek Jarman’s..., ibid.

71 See M. JAKOB, Paysage et temps, Infolio, 2007, and J. D. HUNT, Gardens and the Picturesque: Studies in the History of Landscape Architecture, MIT Press, 1992. A garden designer/poet who Jarman is often compared to is Ian Hamilton Finlay; his Little Sparta is also an extremely inter-textual garden.

72 The Heideggerian paradigm of difference and repetition is at work here, as well as a resolution of the classic conflict of world and earth in Heidegger’s definition of a work of art: quite literally in the case of Jarman’s garden an ex-position of the world and a pro-duction of the earth. A parallel with the Deleuzian theory on cinema, time-image and movement-image would be fascinating, though beyond the scope of this essay.

73 P. PHELAN, Unmarked: The Politics of Performance, Routledge, 2003, p. 156; see also M. A. HOLLY, The Melancholy..., ibid.: “these material objects provoke a sad and romantic yearning for something that has long ago passed away,” on aesthetic artefacts.
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