Field Work
Ten Years of Photography
by Liza Dracup

Exhibition Guide
Please replace after use
The starting point for *Re:Collections* (2013) was the Natural Science and Zoology Collections of Bradford Museums & Galleries. Liza Dracup spent time with the vast collection, identifying subjects with regional significance acquired over the past century. Local residents donated many of the specimens, which were often the result of an unfortunate encounter with the family cat, or found lying by the roadside.

Dracup focuses her attention on vertebrate mammals and birds, some of which can be seen in display case No.1. She presents each as a still-life, made timeless by both taxidermist and photographer. Her images reveal distinctive markings and hidden detail, offering both scientific and artistic insight into each subject.

Dracup says, “These collections can directly reflect our historical and current connections to the landscape and it’s natural history. Photography allows use to revisit these connections. My aim is to raise questions about our personal relationship to British wildlife and its conservation”.

The captions below are based on information from the original tags that identify each specimen with its Latin name, and when and where it was found.
Badger
*Meles meles*
Road casualty, Keighley Rd. Harden, Bingley on 15 July 1981.
Coll. J. Scott
NS.20.84

Brown Hare
*Lepus capensis*
NS 2005.4

Fox
*Vulpes vulpes*
Died in Bolling Hall grounds, Bradford, on 16 Nov. 1972.
Coll: K. Pratt
NS.154.76

Green Woodpecker
*Picus viridis*
Coll. J. N. Shuttleworth
NS.22.95

Red Kite
*Milvus milvus*
Collected in 1906 as part of a pair.
CC.241-05
Wild Cat
*Felis silvestris*
From Aberdeenshire, Scotland, 17 Nov. 1966.
Coll. Mrs J. P. Smith
CC.157.66

Magpie
*Pica pica*
Found dead, no collection data, 1983.
Coll. Martin Stone
NS.93.83

Barn Owl
*Tyto alba*
Found dead on front of lorry on run from Edinburgh to Bradford on 1 Nov. 1974.
NS.83.74

Kingfisher
*Alcedo atthis*
Found dead at Gargrave, N.Yorks on 9 Nov. 1990.
Coll. William Mitchell
NS.18.91

Greenfinch and Weasel
*Carduelis chloris*
Coll. J. Topham
NS.31.95

*Mustela nivalis*
Coll. Geoff S. Hogg
NS.30.95
Starling
*Sturnus vulgaris*
Found dead behind Cavendish Street, Keighley on 4 April 1988.
Coll. Carla Holmes
NS.48.88

Pink-Footed Goose
*Anser brachyrhynchus*
Coll. D. Farr
NS.21.99
Chasing the Gloaming


Dracup traces his footsteps, following his colour palette to create photographs in her signature night-time style from the Whitby coastline to inner-city Leeds. ‘Gloaming’ is an old, poetic word meaning ‘twilight’ or ‘dusk’.

She noticed that Atkinson Grimshaw employed a great deal of artistic licence in his work, often tweaking elements of his landscapes and distorting reality. In response, Dracup adapted her approach, using analogue and digital layering to create her own fictitious composition in her work Green Circle (Tree and Moon).

Dracup discovered a wealth of lesser known still life studies by Atkinson Grimshaw, and made repeat visits to view his painting A Dead Linnet (1862) at Leeds Art Gallery. Her interest and investigation into taxidermy animals eventually led her to Bradford’s Natural Science and Zoology Collections, paving the way for her 2013 work Re: Collections.

The Pheasant

Green Circle

Leeds Bridge (night)
The River Wharfe, detail (night)

St Ives II, Yorkshire (night)

St Ives Snow, Yorkshire (night)
Loaned by The Mercer Art Gallery, Harrogate Borough Council

The Sea, Whitby (moonlight)

Sea and Cliffs, Whitby (moonlight)

The River Wharfe (night)
In *Landmarks* (2016), Liza Dracup responds to historical landscape photographs in the Harrogate Fine Art Collection. She was inspired by well-known Victorian photography pioneer Roger Fenton, as well as experiments by anonymous photographers.

Dracup was particularly drawn to stereoscopic photography, a nineteenth century 3D technique used to visualise landscapes through a special viewing device. Some vintage stereoscopic cards can be seen in display case No. 2.

With her leaf studies, Dracup states that she wants to play with our perception of the term 'landmark'. She believes that “the great oak, interloping sycamore or traditional fern can be just as significant as a marker of our environment as a river, bridge or the coastline”.

*Plate I*

*Plate II*

*Plate III*

Loaned by The Mercer Art Gallery, Harrogate Borough Council

*Plate IV*
Plate V

Plate VI

Plate VII

The Bridge, Knaresborough (night)

The Strid Wood III

Ilkley Moor (night)
Sharpe’s Wood

*Sharpe’s Wood* was first shown in 2007 as Impressions’ very first exhibition in Bradford. The four lightboxes on display were originally shown on the exterior walls of the building prior to opening, as part of the Illuminate Festival in 2006.

Dracup photographed woodlands during the hours between dusk and dawn, at times in almost total darkness, using moonlight, fleeting car headlights and the glow of nearby streetlamps to create her scenes.

Dracup has visited Sharpe’s Wood - a real place - since childhood. She says that, as a child, “the landscape inspired fear and curiosity and gave rise to fairytale, magic and mystery”. Years later, Dracup still regularly goes back this place of childhood memory, making work “to reawaken the imagination”.

Pushing the boundaries of traditional landscape photography, Dracup uses her camera as an experimental tool. She aims to reveal the vibrant hidden landscapes that lie beyond what can be seen by the human eye.

Framed works (all untitled)

![Framed works](image1)

![Framed works](image2)

![Framed works](image3)

Lightboxes (all untitled)

![Lightboxes](image4)

![Lightboxes](image5)

![Lightboxes](image6)

![Lightboxes](image7)
Lister’s Mill: A Topographical View

These photographs were made as part of Liza Dracup's work with photography collective Bradford Grid, a group of photographers that seek to map and document the city.

Her images feature the recurring motif of the iconic, now defunct, chimney of Bradford’s Lister’s Mill - once the world’s largest silk factory - seen from various viewpoints in the post-industrial city landscape.

The series also has personal significance. The artist’s great-great-grandfather worked at Lister’s Mill for over 60 years and received considerable recognition for his long service.
Acknowledgements

Study skin specimens in display case No.1 loaned by The Natural Science and Zoology Collections at Bradford Museums and Galleries.

Vintage stereoscopic images in display case No.2, St Ives Snow, Yorkshire (night) (from Chasing the Gloaming), and Plate III (Landmarks) loaned by The Mercer Art Gallery, Harrogate Borough Council.

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