



UOA D32

ART AND DESIGN: HISTORY, THEORY AND PRACTICE



RESEARCHER

Jane Hyslop

OUTPUT TITLE

The Gardens, Edinburgh

OUTPUT TYPE

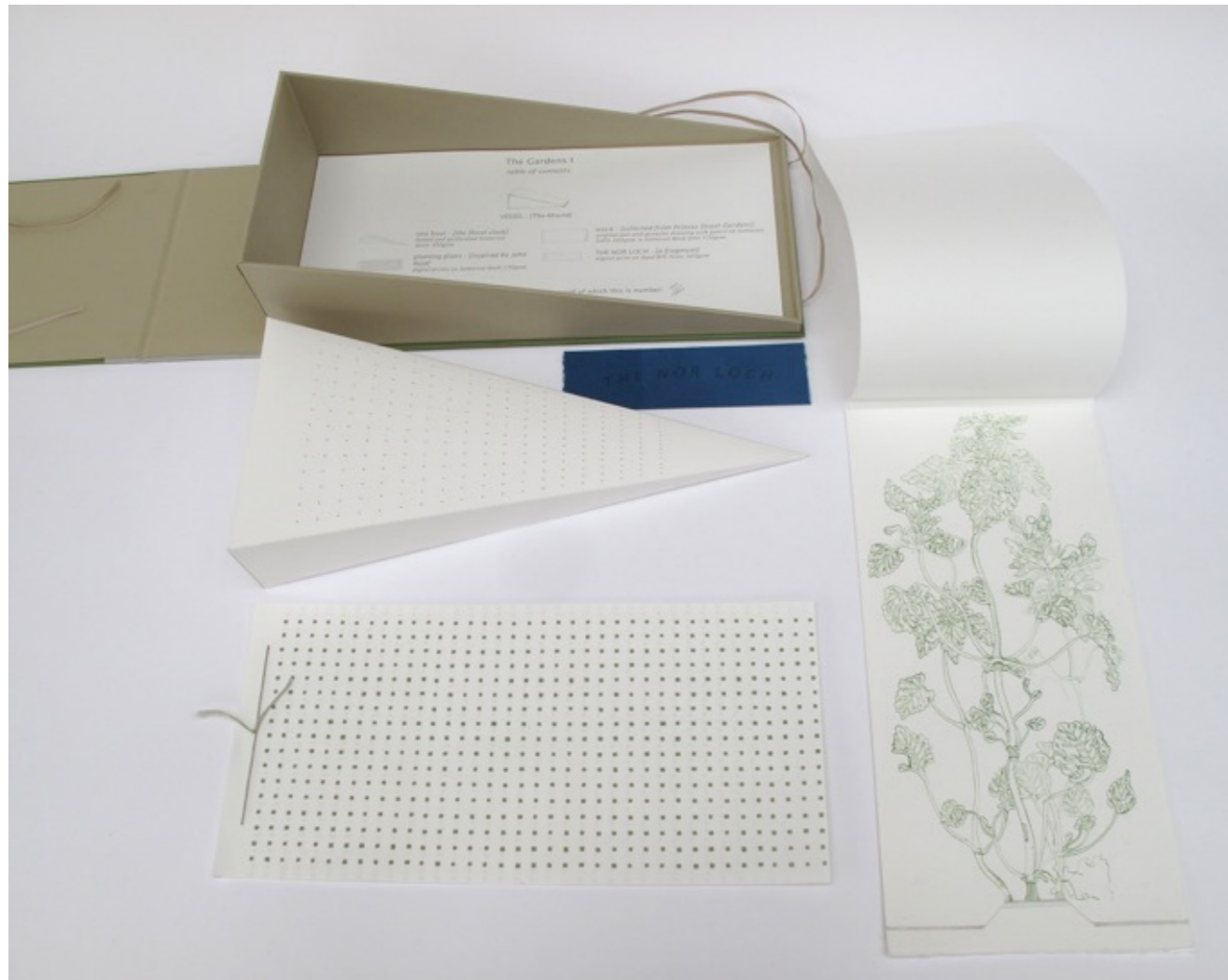
Artefacts: Group of Artist's Books

DATE

2015

FIG. 1

Jane Hyslop, *The Gardens I*. Boxed set of objects, 31 x 15 x 8cm, edition of 5, each including an original drawing, 2015. Photo Jane Hyslop.



01 / STATEMENT

The Gardens, Edinburgh is a group of five artefacts – consisting of three folios of drawings, a set of paper objects in a wedge-shaped box, and a publication made from linen. It was produced as an investigation into the history of the Royal Scottish Academy and the adjacent Princes Street Gardens in Edinburgh, and originally exhibited at the Royal Scottish Academy in 2015.

The output was commissioned by Visual Art Scotland 2015, for their annual exhibition at the Royal Scottish Academy. It combines drawings, paper folding techniques and digital printing with historical and contextual research to investigate two key aspects of the site: first, the development of the linen industry in Scotland during the eighteenth century; second, the layout of the gardens, particularly the relation between the formal design arrangements and the growth of indigenous plants that infiltrate planned spaces.

These interests tie into Hyslop's longstanding research into the social and industrial history of Scotland and its impact on the land.

Works from the exhibition were purchased and exhibited by the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art and the National Library of Scotland. Further dissemination through publication includes an essay by Hyslop in *The Blue Notebook*, Volume 11, No 1, 2016 (see Appendix, page 24).

The drawings in *The Gardens* contrast carefully rendered pencil diagrams inspired by existing and historical planting in Princes Street Gardens with fluid linear studies of weeds collected there to reflect the tension between imposed planting systems and the indigenous plants that infiltrate the gardens.



FIG. 2
Jane Hyslop, *Drawing IV* from *The Gardens*. Gouache and pencil on Somerset Satin, bound in paper and Scottish linen, 57cm x 40cm x 3.5cm, 2015. Photo Jack Luke.



FIG. 3
Jane Hyslop, *Drawing V* from *The Gardens*. Gouache and pencil on Somerset Satin, bound in paper and Scottish linen, 57cm x 40cm x 3.5cm, 2015. Photo Jack Luke.

02 / RESEARCH DIMENSIONS

The Gardens, Edinburgh is a series of five artefacts:

- *The Gardens* (FIGS 2–3) is a folio of drawings, gouache on Somerset Satin, bound in paper and Scottish linen (40cm x 57cm x 3.5cm).
- *The Gardens I* (FIGS 4–8) is a wedge-shaped boxed set of books and objects (15cm x 31cm x 8cm).
- *Planting Plans for Scottish Gardens* (FIGS 9–11) is a folio of drawings, gouache on Somerset Satin, bound in paper and Scottish linen (21cm x 31cm x 3.5cm).
- *Diagrams for Weaving* (FIG 12) is a folio of drawings, gouache on Somerset Satin, bound in Scottish linen and paper (21cm x 31cm x 3.5cm).
- *The Picardy Weavers* (FIGS 14–15) is a linen book with digital embroidery, (50cm x 31cm x 1cm).

The Gardens, Edinburgh was a commission by Visual Arts Scotland (VAS) for their 2015 annual exhibition. The aim of the exhibition was to re-establish VAS's role as supporter for art and craft in Scotland with an emphasis on the conversation between these areas. *The Gardens, Edinburgh* examines the site of the RSA Galleries and its historical role as home for the Board of Manufacturers for Scotland, which in the 18th century was tasked with improving Scotland's economy by stimulating the linen industry.

The work was exhibited in the main gallery of the Royal Scottish Academy in three bespoke vitrines designed by Hyslop in collaboration with artist Eric Schumacher.

Alongside these particular themes, the research is motivated by the following questions:

- How can the form of a book be utilized in innovative ways to effectively explore and share information about garden environments?
- How can studies of history, topography and material be brought together in the creation of tactile objects?

The output attended to these questions through a combination of contextual and practice led research. It brought together historical and site-specific research into the Royal Scottish Academy (RSA), with book-making techniques to explore place and the shifting flora of Edinburgh's past.

The Gardens 1 box containing the book represents The Mound – a man-made structure which was extremely controversial when it was built to enable movement between the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh. The grey at the book's hinge represents the grey stone of Auld Reekie's Old Town; the green represents the grass on The Mound itself.

The Gardens I focuses on Princes Street Gardens as the location of the RSA Galleries and is concerned with the contrast between the formal nature of the planting within the gardens, which is taken to extreme in the famous floral clock, and the infiltration of unwanted species, the weeds, into the gardens.



FIG. 4
Jane Hyslop, *The Gardens I*.
Boxed set of objects (closed),
31 x 15 x 8cm, made in an edition
of 5, each including an original
drawing, 2015. Photo Jane Hyslop.

FIG. 5
Jane Hyslop, *The Gardens I*.
Boxed set of objects. Installation
in progress, RSA Galleries, 2015.
Photo Jane Hyslop.



FIG. 6
Jane Hyslop, *The Gardens I*.
Installation view, Visual Arts
Scotland, Royal Scottish Academy
Galleries, Edinburgh, 2015. Photo
Jane Hyslop.



FIG. 7
Jane Hyslop, *The Gardens I*. Boxed set of objects (open), 31 x 15 x 8cm, made in an edition of 5, each including an original drawing, 2015. Photo Jane Hyslop.



FIG. 8
Jane Hyslop, *The Gardens I*. Boxed set of objects (open), 31 x 15 x 8cm, made in an edition of 5, each including an original drawing, 2015. Photo Jane Hyslop.

Planting Plans for Scottish Gardens was inspired by diagrams in John Reid's book *The Scots Gard'ner* of 1683, the first book to be written specifically centred on gardening in Scotland that advocated a measured, controlled manner of planting and laying out of a garden.

FIGS. 9-10
Jane Hyslop, *Planting Plans for Scottish Gardens* and extract from *Diagrams for Weaving with Linen*. Folio of drawings, gouache and pencil, folio bound in paper and Scottish linen; 30 x 20.5 x 2.5cm, 2015. Photo Jack Luke.

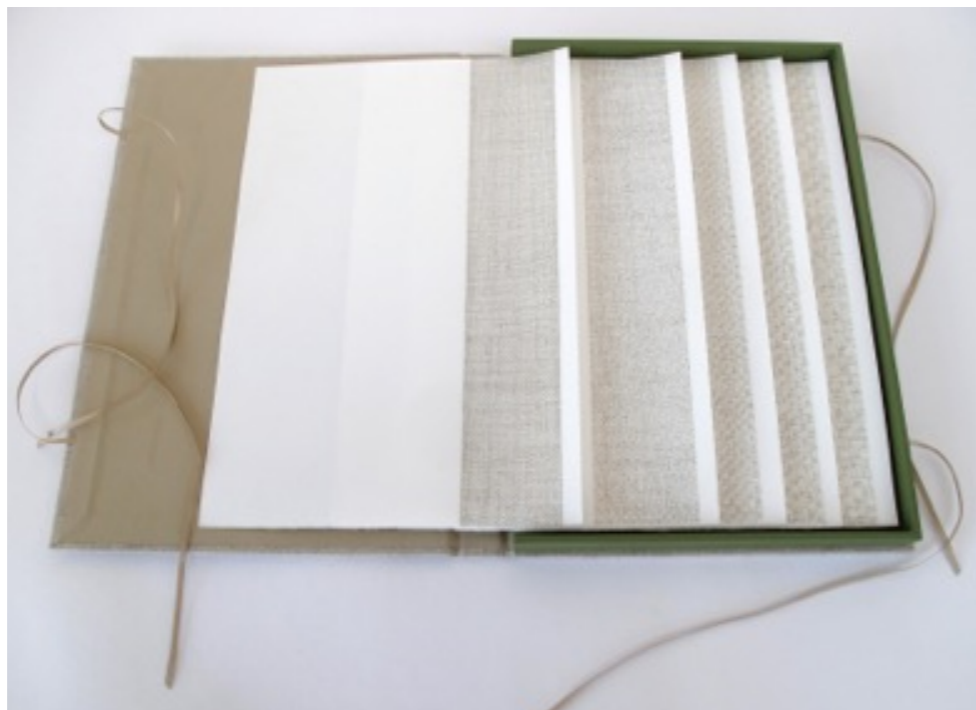


FIG. 11
Jane Hyslop, *Planting Plans for Scottish Gardens*. Folio of drawings, gouache and pencil, folio bound in paper and Scottish linen; 30 x 20.5 x 2.5cm, 2015. Photo Jack Luke.

Diagrams for Weaving are a series of geometric pen and gouache drawings that explore the refinement of Scottish weaving following the Board of Manufacturers and Fisheries push to improve the industry and strengthen Scotland's economy.

FIG. 12
Extract from *Diagrams for Weaving*. Folio of drawings, gouache on Somerset Satin, bound in Scottish linen and paper, 21cm x 31cm x 3.5cm. Photo Jack Luke.

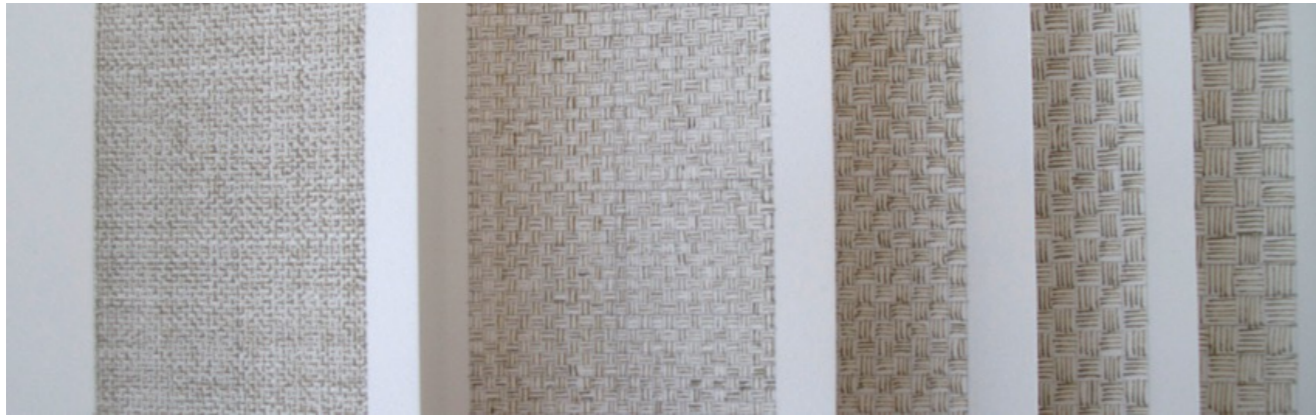


FIG. 13
In progress installation shot, RSA Galleries, 2015. Left: *The Picardy Weavers*. Linen book with embroidery, 26 x 30 x 1.5cm. Right top: *Diagrams for Weaving*, with linen spool. Bottom: *Planting Plans for Scottish Gardens*. Both folios of drawings gouache and pencil, bound in paper and Scottish linen, each 20.5 x 30 x 2.5cm. Photo Jane Hyslop.

The Picardy Weavers is a simple book made from Scottish linen that symbolises the refinement of weaving techniques in Scotland which was stimulated by the Board of Manufacturers and Fisheries by inviting French master-weaver, Nicholas d'Assaville to deploy teams of French weavers across Scotland to teach their craft. An element from the historical Edinburgh Incorporation of Weavers is also included.

FIG. 14
Jane Hyslop, *The Picardy Weavers*, linen book with digital embroidery, 50 x 30 x 1.5cm, 2015. Photo Jack Luke??.





FIG. 15
Jane Hyslop, *The Picardy Weavers*
(detail), linen book with digital
embroidery, 50 x 30 x 1.5cm, 2015.
Photo Jack Luke??.

FIGS. 16–17

Hyslop testing paper folding techniques and geometric forms relating to John Reid's book *The Scots Gard'ner*, as well as shapes inspired by topography of The Mound and the Floral Clock in her studio, Bonnyrigg, Midlothian. Photo Frances Munro.



03 / ORIGINALITY

Hyslop invests the book form to interrogate how knowledge can be given tactile presence. The research manifests as an artist's book, experimentally engaged with form and design, and informed by historical accounts, maps and archives, that proposes a new type of visual historiography.

Central to Hyslop's research is the concept of place, which she defines as 'the convergence between art and geography'. Her research expands the possibilities of the book and its form by bringing together techniques that include illustration, documentation, diagrams, three-dimensional design, alongside archival research conducted at the National Library of Scotland and Edinburgh University's Centre for Research Collections into eighteenth and nineteenth-century maps, city planning diagrams and garden designs for Edinburgh.

Two publications influenced this process. The first, John Reid's *A Scots Gard'ner* (1683) with its account of formal and regimented garden layout, was key to guiding Hyslop to explore imposed planting patterns in contrast to natural organic growth. The second, James Grant's *Cassel's Old and New Edinburgh* (1884) with its descriptions of the history and geology of Edinburgh, spurred Hyslop to investigate how to evidence layers of history in relation to topographical detail. These historical, social and geographical details led Hyslop to an exploration of traditional book making and materials alongside experimental digital printing processes and paper folding techniques.

Hyslop's techniques pare down the textual complexities uncovered in the archival research to offer simple and effective expressions of place.

FIG. 18

Samples of drawing tests and folded forms with pencil, gouache and thread along with tools. Various sizes. Photo Jane Hyslop.

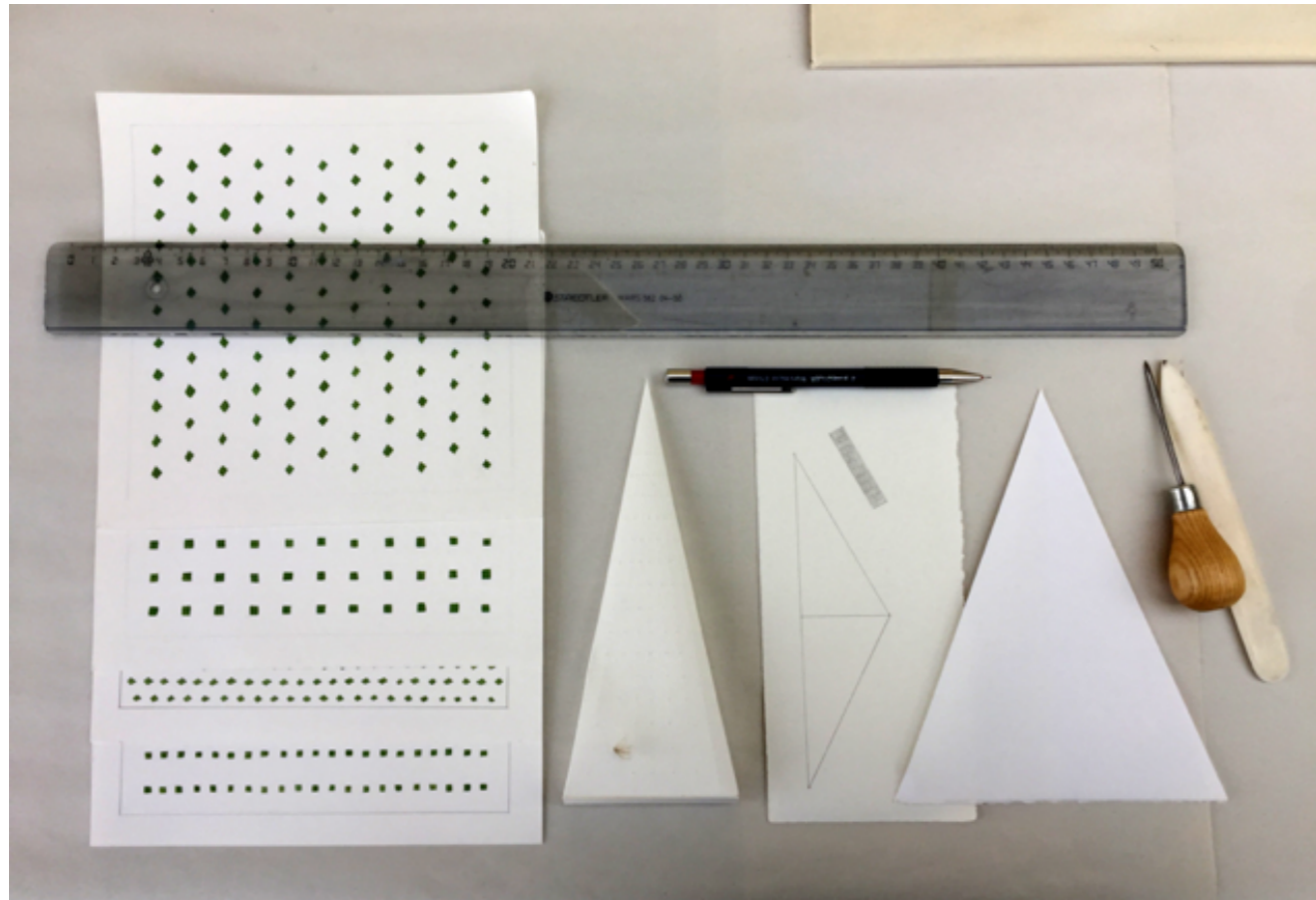


FIG. 19

Folded form test, Somerset
Satin paper, 6 x 6 x 3cm.
Photo Jane Hyslop.

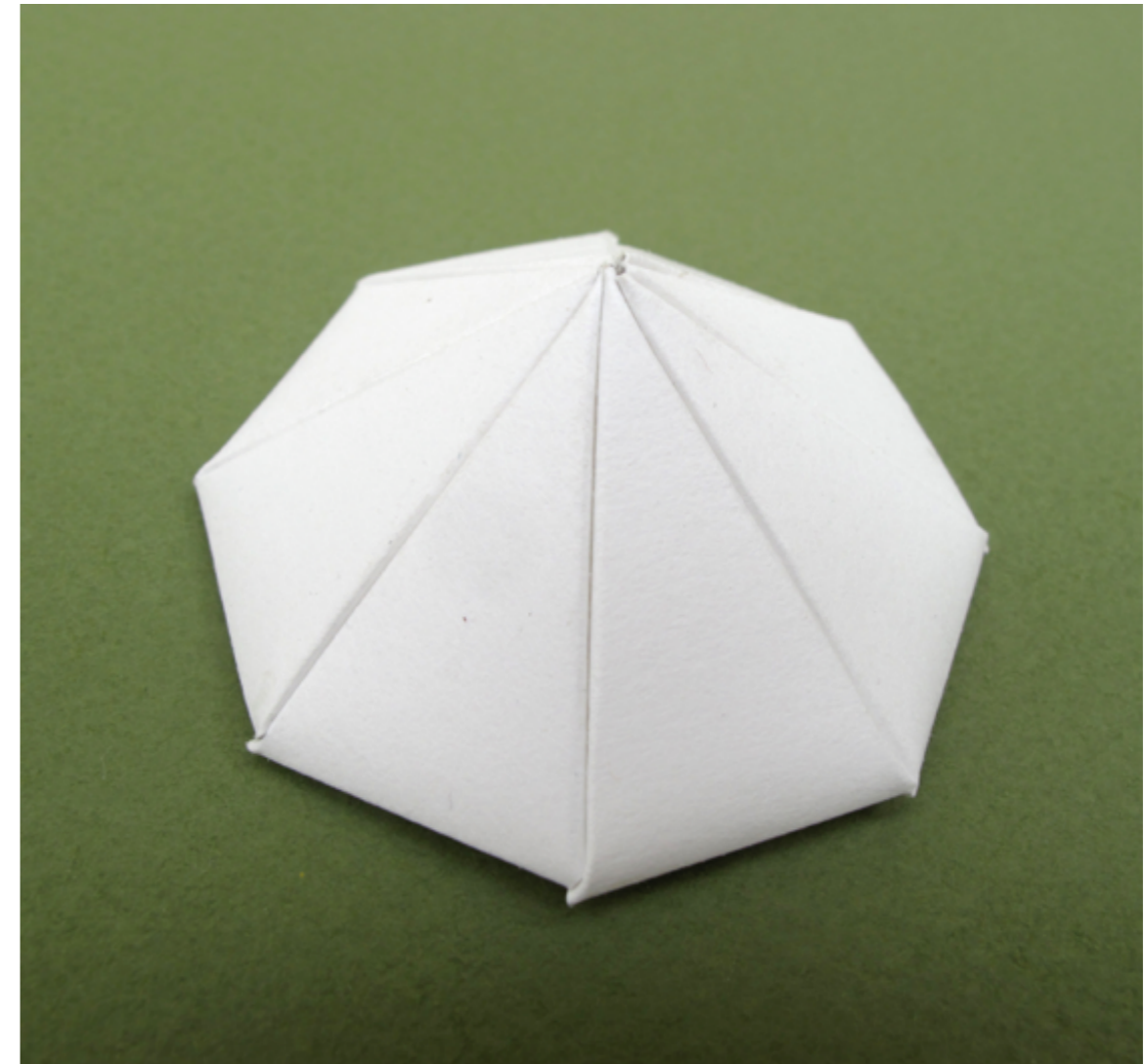


FIG. 20
Studio work in progress. Pen and
gouache drawing technique test,
12 x 23cm. Photo Jane Hyslop.



04 / RIGOUR

The Gardens, Edinburgh forms part of Hyslop's ongoing research into the history of Scottish gardening and the linen industry. The research explores tactile and design-based approaches into the communication of knowledge from specific historical sites.

Traditional book-making techniques are combined with experimental digital printing processes to evoke a range of sensory responses to contemporary understandings of the changing interactions between society, history and site.

To explore the book as form, Hyslop tested materials to investigate the topography, history, layout and natural properties of the site through visual, material and structural means, without using text.

These tests included working with a range of papers, threads and Scottish linen samples. Paper tests sought to achieve a matt finish with inkjet printing tightly embedded into the selected paper. The paper also needed to fold well once printed. The process revealed that Japanese papers were inadequate for this and so Somerset Satin and Pescia paper were chosen. These are typically not designed for use for digital printing due to their material qualities. Linens with different weights, gages and weaves were sourced and tested, each obtained from Peter Greig's, the last working mill in Scotland (est. 1825).

Hyslop used the selected materials to create folded paper objects, drawing folios and linen bound items.

For *Gardens I* Hyslop sought to create a publication where the form echoes the topography of the site as folded paper references the shapes found in the garden. *Planting Plans for Scottish Gardens*, *Diagrams for Weaving* and *The Picardy Weavers*, all bound in linen, evidence the refinement in weaving techniques encouraged by the Board Manufacturers and Fisheries in the eighteenth century.

This was further explored via intricate drawings using pen and gouache, a technique used to enable fine lines to be drawn with a matt finish whilst allowing colours to be mixed. The use of a writing dip pen achieved the detail required. Finally, common water-based paint with watercolour was deployed to achieve solid colours, and chosen over more acidic types of paint. The synthesis of techniques and formats – from traditional bookmaking to digital printing – offer insights into the material ways in which the past can be brought into the present.

FIG. 21

Studio work in progress.
Exploratory tests using a range of papers for folding, drawing and digital printing: Somerset Satin, Somerset Book, Pesca Book, Lambeth Cartridge, Murano; stitching and drawing tests, various sizes. Photo Jane Hyslop.



05 / SIGNIFICANCE

The Gardens, Edinburgh, commissioned for the Visual Art Scotland Annual Exhibition (2015), attracted over 14,000 visitors. The work opens possibilities for the way the book form can serve as a mode of cross-disciplinary investigation.

It further evidences how drawing and traditional book-making techniques can be reworked in conjunction with historical and geographical research to create artefacts that bring new knowledge of forgotten histories within contemporary contexts. By analysing the site-specific environment of the RSA galleries in a new form, the history and purpose of the buildings and their role in the development of Scotland's economy, art and design, education and culture are considered and brought to a new and broader audience.

Selected artefacts from *The Gardens, Edinburgh* were exhibited at The Fruitmarket Gallery Bookmarket, Edinburgh, 21–22 February, 2015 and the London Art Book Fair, 11–13 September, 2015.

The Gardens I was purchased by the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art (SNGMA) and the National Library of Scotland for their collections. This work exists as a limited edition of five. Each edition includes an original drawing. SNGMA included the piece in their exhibition *Places Real and Imagined*, SNGMA, (2017), alongside works by Richard Long and Hamish Fulton.

Scholarly interest in the work has led to published articles and conference papers on the artist book, architecture and design. Printmaking scholar, Ruth Pelzer-Montada, contributed an essay to the catalogue for the Visual Art Scotland annual exhibition (2015) which was extended and subsequently published in *Art in Print* (2015) and Pelzer authored a further essay on *The Book Work of Jane Hyslop* for Italian art magazine *Carte d'Arte Internazionale*, 2015 (see Appendix, page 24).

'Her display of beautiful botanical drawings, garden plans and historical linen patterns is notionally linked to the origins of the RSA, the National Gallery and Edinburgh College of Art.'

Duncan MacMillan,
The Scotsman, February 2015.

06 / APPENDIX

Related publications

Jane Hyslop, 'The Gardens, Edinburgh and La Géométrie Pratique', *The Blue Notebook*, vol. 11, pp. 24-33.

This essay provides an introduction to the ethos of Hyslop's work, its key themes and research context and details of the two major artist's book projects that were made for exhibitions in Scotland in 2015.

<https://www.research.ed.ac.uk/en/publications/the-gardens-edinburgh-and-la-g%C3%A9om%C3%A9trie-pratique>

Ruth Pelzer-Montada, 'Knowing your Place? The Book Work of Jane Hyslop'. Catalogue Essay, VAS:T (Visual Art Scotland: transforming) 2015, pp. 44-48. ISBN 978-0-9931810-0-9.

Ruth Pelzer-Montada, 'Knowing One's Place, Jane Hyslop's Entangled Gardens'. *Art in Print*, Vol. 5, No.1, 12-15.

Ruth Pelzer-Montada, 'Jane Hyslop, L'Opera Libro', *Carte d'arte Magazine Internazionale*, Autumn 2015, 26-31.



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