

Proposal for Punk Scholars Network 6th Annual Conference

'Hiraeth' – a collaborative project

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This paper will present the ideas behind 'Hiraeth', a collaborative artwork currently in development by S. Mark Gubb and Tom Cardwell, which proposes an album and performance for an invented Black Metal band. 'Hiraeth' is an untranslatable Welsh word that describes a sense of longing for home.

The album will comprise of songs based on a series of Welsh, pre-Christian, tales called 'The Mabinogion'. First compiled in the C12th-13th, they are the source of much Welsh folklore and, for many years, were never written down, being passed on through the oral tradition of the bards. For the artists, this relates to the fiercely underground early Black Metal scene – a scene remarkable for its conscious adoption of noise and lo-fi recordings - and how it was developed through word-of-mouth and fan-to-fan exchanges. It also places this Celtic mythology in a relationship with the Norse mythology so often referenced in the lyrics and ideologies of early exponents of Black Metal.

It is envisaged that the completed project will centre around a live performance of the album, complete with stage costumes and sets, as well as further visual outcomes including record sleeves, patches, etc. which will subsequently be shown in an exhibition context.

In specific relation to the conference theme, we also draw influence from Hugh Lupton's historical fiction 'The Assembly of the Severed Head'; a fictitious account of the first transcription of the tales by monks and their transgression of the, by then, dominant Christian moral position.

Both Gubb and Cardwell share a research interest in art practice that responds to metal and punk subcultures. Previous projects include 'Metal Militia' a live music performance at Berwick Visual Arts (Gubb) and 'Still Life and Death Metal' a battle jacket research project (Cardwell).

Artists' websites:

<http://tomcardwell.uk>

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S. Mark Gubb – 'Metal Militia', commissioned by Berwick Visual Arts



Tom Cardwell – 'Bad Patch' solo exhibition at Wimbledon Space, March 2017