

**Submission for Doctorate of Philosophy in Architecture by Research and Thesis**  
Kent School of Architecture  
University of Kent

**Imogen Helen Louise Lesser Woods**  
March 2018

**Literary Language as a Tool for Design:  
An Architectural Study of the Spaces of Mervyn Peake's  
*The Gormenghast Trilogy* and 'Boy in Darkness'**

Word Count: 95,811

## Abstract

The thesis discusses the relationship between the disciplines of literature and architecture. It opens up the potential of literary language to act as a design tool. In order to examine this hypothesis the literary spaces of Mervyn Peake's *The Gormenghast Trilogy* (1946-59) and 'Boy in Darkness' (1956) are examined as latent architectural spaces. The ensuing discussion poses questions regarding what an architectural language, practice or theory (in respect to the thesis) might be. The thesis questions traditional means of literary analysis, the importance of the author within the text and the related conventions.

Spaces extracted from Peake's text form the basis for the analysis. This research uses architectural practice, in the form of maps, sectional drawing and model making, to analyse and render the spaces of the text and their architectural potential. The spatial renditions enable their literary counterparts to be analysed as architectural proposals. An understanding of scale and inhabitation provide the basis from which these spaces can be examined. The positions of author, character, reader and architectural-draughtsman as inhabitants of the text are used to examine the relationship between the self and the other within the text and the architecturally rendered forms.

The concept of poetic inhabitation, derived from Bachelard, is extended to draw the apparently disparate aspects of the thesis together in order to argue for literary language to form a tool for architectural design. The thesis provides a position from which the questions are brought up and new avenues explored.

## Acknowledgements

This research and exhibition could not have taken place without the support from many people.

With many thanks to the following:

Professor Gordana Fontana-Giusti & Dr Paul March-Russell, both fantastic supervisors,

The Kent School of Architecture,

Katie McGown and the Studio 3 Gallery,

The British Library, in particular James Perkins and Zoe Wilcox,

Sharon Rubin the Permissions Manager at Peters Fraser + Dunlop,

Fabian Peake who agreed to the extensive extracts printed at the exhibition,

All my family and friends, who have listened, given much advice, provided transport, kept me going and proofread some rather long documents. You are numerous and wonderful in your variety, I cannot thank you enough and there is not enough space here to do so properly. In particular I would like to thank my grandmother professor emerita Ruth Lesser whose feedback has been invaluable.

And lastly but certainly not least my husband Richard Woods, without whom this thesis would never have been started, or finished.

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## Notes

Within the thesis the 1999 Vintage Books edition of *The Gormenghast Trilogy* is the source of quotations unless otherwise stated. This edition contains *Titus Groan*, *Gormenghast* and *Titus Alone*. In order that the differences between the narratives can be distinguished quotations are marked with the following abbreviations.

<i>Titus Groan</i> (1-368)	<i>TG</i>
<i>Gormenghast</i> (369-752)	<i>G</i>
<i>Titus Alone</i> (753-953)	<i>TA</i>

The source for 'Boy in Darkness' is the 2007 Peter Owen centenary edition and is abbreviated as BiD. It can be found on pages 23-93.<sup>1</sup>

The three books *Titus Groan*, *Gormenghast* and *Titus Alone* are known interchangeably as *The Gormenghast Trilogy* and *The Titus Books*. Whilst the second term may be understood as more accurate, and is preferred by Peake scholars, this research refers to the novels collectively as *The Gormenghast Trilogy*. This is in part due to the author's preference but mostly due to the focus on the physical nature of place.

Throughout the thesis selected terms have been highlighted through the use of their etymology. This is intended to reveal the layering of meanings that these terms have and to demonstrate the care of selected vocabulary. The etymologies used can be found in the *Online Etymology Dictionary* (Harper 2016). They are not referenced directly in the text as the instances are numerous.

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<sup>1</sup> This short story was first published in *Sometime Never: Three Tales of Imagination* (1956) by William Golding, John Wyndham and Mervyn Peake, Eyre and Spottiswoode, London

## Introduction

### i: The Aims and Origins of the Thesis

The roots of this research lie in a personal experience of an architectural education, combined with a love of literature, language and imaginary places. These passions were found to conflict and a frustration (stress) developed in the use of language within the architectural discipline. These conflicts were revealed in the use of terms with no clarified meanings, presented by tutors who believed that an ambiguity of language spurred creativity rather than confusion. This methodology works for some students but alienates others. The development of the thesis also brought to light the conflict between the self-as-writer, exploring themes through the production of a text, and the requirements of a text as set by the other (both the discipline and convention of the doctorate).<sup>2</sup> There is a conflict between the academic-self and the architectural-self and the need to conform to the expectations of each.<sup>3</sup> The primary challenge for this architectural researcher stemmed in from what was perceived to be a general disinterest in writing and its use as a defensive position, as architectural theorist Lorens Holm reveals:

When it is projected, language is wallpaper. Introjected speech has the form of a linguistic bullet. We are assailed everywhere by the armour-piercing speech of other subjects. Architecture defends against its intrusions. [...] Architecture is a symptom of the need to protect ourselves against the proximity of others born on speech, which threatens our imaginary individually. This is the imaginary aspect of architecture (your home is your castle), and it is set against the real need of architecture to defend us against the weather and beasts. Architecture, dreams, fantasies ... they are of a piece. Of course language leaks everywhere, and there is no language-proof visual space. Cities are proof of that. They are inscribed everywhere. The failure of space to screen out language is why we continue to build. (Holm 2010: 31-2)

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<sup>2</sup> See section 5.3.

<sup>3</sup> Cultural critic Matt Hills, suggests that 'academia is nevertheless bounded by its own *imagined subjectivity*' and is a 'system of value' (Hills 2002: xix). The 'value' of convention and coteries is rife within academia and has the potential to limit, rather than extend lines of investigation (see below).

The conflict between the built environment and the 'impurity' of language can be seen in unwanted graffiti and the prevalence of advertising. As Holm discusses, architecture forms a protective barrier against words, whilst simultaneously providing surfaces for symbolic texts – the dichotomy between inside and outside is driven by the tension with language. It is not only the physical manifestation of architecture that has a problematic relationship with language. As with any discipline architecture has its own specific vocabulary and jargon, yet for this profession there is a public perception that this jargon is something other than a technical terminology – it is a deliberate distancing of the architect from others.<sup>4</sup> One aspect of this is that many of the terms used are not fully defined and so cannot be learned without the direct teachings of another – there is no dictionary to provide a key.<sup>5</sup> The other side of this is that architectural language is often only studied in jest, as if to mediate this distancing through self-deprecation.<sup>6</sup>

The starting hypothesis for this thesis is that the form of language used in literature, as an accessible jargon-less form of language, is able to contain imaginary architecture if enough spatial and phenomenological information is provided. From this the premise is put forward that such literary language might be used as an architectural design and communication tool and the aim of this thesis is to examine its potential. In order to study this proposition examples of exceptionally spatial literary works are

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<sup>4</sup> The other here is not only those outside of the profession but frequently those within it as well.

<sup>5</sup> Here the meanings and etymological roots of words are carefully considered. This enables an awareness of resonant meanings and the changing nature of language interwoven in a text (Latin *texere*, to weave, join). The shifting of language is significant; by tracing changes nuance of understanding can be found.

<sup>6</sup> See section ii.

analysed from an architectural position: Mervyn Peake's *Titus Groan* (1946), *Gormenghast* (1950), *Titus Alone* (1959) and 'Boy in Darkness' (1956).<sup>7</sup>

These texts were chosen because of their resonance with this author's imagination and an instinct that they contained spaces that were unique, memorable and architectural. I first read them during, but not because of, my time as an undergraduate architectural student and spatial fragments lodged within my imagination. It is this that leads his work to be examined here. Peake's work, as discussed below, is open to the input of the reader and is not as esoteric as other complex examples of fictional world building: for example J. R. R. Tolkien creates his 'Middle-earth' through thick layers of mythology, invented languages and internal references and in doing so the reader feels that they are being asked to observe the intelligence of the writer. Peake's writing is inviting; it draws the reader into its spaces rather than its intellectual pursuits.

Peake's spaces are richly architectural in their existence as rooms and internal confines. There is a strong focus on individual spaces and their relationship with the character inhabitants. Writers such as China Miéville create strong architectural spaces, which tend towards the urban level rather than at the level of individual inhabitation; for example, in *The City and the City* (2009), the rooms are secondary to the complex relationships of the external spaces they are situated in. Georges Perec's approach, in comparison, is at the level of the room in *Life, A User's Manual* (1978), but his use of lists depersonalises the inhabitation and the space that contains it. Peake's texts create a world which is vast and complex but at the same time intensely personal both for the

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<sup>7</sup> In this thesis these texts are referred to collectively as *The Gormenghast Trilogy*.

reader and the characters that inhabit it. This examination explores the limitations of Peake's literary language to describe space and the process of architecturally rendering literary places.

### *Research Questions*

Within this proposal there are three key questions:

**First, does Peake's literary language, as a vocabulary set with no architectural jargon, have the capacity to form potential architectural space when perceived through a spatially-creative (architectural) imagination?**<sup>8</sup> The thesis does not seek to define architecture, but examines literary space as architectural space *in potentia* (a potential and latent place of power and force: Latin *potens*, powerful) which can be extracted by architectural enquiry.<sup>9</sup> This is derived from the position that both writing and drawing are a practice of mark-making and these inscriptions are intended to convey knowledge. It also comes from an awareness of architectural jargon as a 'veiling of stress', a deliberate obfuscation so the drawing becomes the primary text, directing attention away from language (whether spoken or written).<sup>10</sup>

**Second, what are the effects of architectural rendition and the input of the architectural imagination upon Peake's literary spaces?** The gap between media provides interesting spaces for distortion and discovery, forming a significant aspect of the design process. The thesis examines the limitations of linguistic and visual media as

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<sup>8</sup> Every imagination is unique with an individual focus and interests. This thesis relies on an architectural imagination, trained via a university degree system. See section 2.2.

<sup>9</sup> See section iv.

<sup>10</sup> Language as defined by convention and recorded: vocabulary with an established dictionary identity. See John Alego, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. of Thomas Pyles' *The Origins and Development of the English Language* (2010).

well as the benefits of linking them. In splitting the image from the text, forcing renditions into recognisable architectural forms – as map, section and scale model– the understanding of separation is revealed. The rendition, as precipitate of the text, provides reassurance to the architect in its physicality and can be examined adjacent to its written genesis to form an understanding of the results as an architecture. Limitations of different media are established and the potential of literary language revealed (unveiled) through their scale and capacity for vastness. Alongside this an experiential awareness of the self and other are inherent within the poetic (Greek *poiein*, to make), as is the thesis in its state as an-other-text.

**Third, how does the sensory awareness formed through Peake's descriptions alter in the subsequent architectural renditions and how does this affect imaginative immersion and inhabitation?** Peake's text is examined through the process and results of architectural rendition so that the capacity for spatial transfer might be studied in a form recognisable to the profession. The potential for inhabitation forms a key aspect of architectural space allowing an internal, subjective awareness as well as an external objective analysis. The process of design must enable inhabitation of forms not yet built and if Peake's literary language has capacity for inhabitation then this provides a linguistic foundation from which spatial understanding can be achieved. This capacity enables non-physical spaces to be understood through the imagination and phenomena not physically experienced by the inhabiting body. If Peake's literary language carries the possibility of inhabitation then its potential as an architecture is greatly expanded.

One of the principal sources for the thesis is *The Poetics of Space* (1958) by French philosopher Gaston Bachelard. His approach to poetry is an important foundation for a phenomenological understanding of literature through phenomenological thinking: 'Because of its novelty and its action, the poetic image has an entity and a dynamism of its own; it is referable to a direct *ontology*' (Bachelard 1994: xvi). The ontological (Modern Latin *ontologia*, the study of being) significance of the poetic image enables it to be capable of affecting experience. His belief in the importance of words privileges the poet's (or architect's) ability to exploit nuances of language with finesse:<sup>11</sup>

Words [...] are little houses, each with its cellar and garret. Common-sense lives on the ground floor [...] on the same level as the others, as the passers-by, who are never dreamers. To go upstairs in the word house, is to withdraw, step by step; while to go down to the cellar is to dream, it is losing oneself in the distant corridors of an obscure etymology, looking for treasures that cannot be found in words. To mount and descend in the words themselves – this is a poet's life. To mount too high or descend too low, is allowed in the case of poets, who bring earth and sky together. (Bachelard 1994: 147)

Architecture also aims for this poetic bringing together, the ability to withdraw to the heights and depths of imagination, whilst simultaneously remaining grounded in reality.

Alongside Bachelard's poetics, the exploration of Peake's fiction is informed by the writings of French philosopher Jacques Derrida. His need for a continual (re-)reading is particularly significant, as highlighted by literary critic Julian Wolfreys:

For Derrida, the notion of 'reading' is one that implies a comprehensive commentary on a poem or novel in its entirety, an achievement which is impossible. One can never finally read or claim to have read a text in its entirety. One must continue carefully to read and re-read, because the act of reading is always marked by an ever-receding horizon. It is always to come. (Wolfreys 2007: 8)

This reading establishes contact with the other within the text, an unstable and disconcerting event. Peake's writing can also be usefully explored in terms of Derrida's

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<sup>11</sup> In proposing meaning the author has to share their thoughts, otherwise this meaning is not present.

*trace* (Latin *tractus*, track, course, drawing out) since the fiction plays with the relative subjective positions of *self* and *other*, for example, as object/subject, writer/reader, architect/inhabitant, external/internal, form/content, poetic/prosaic and poetry/prose.

An awareness of the self and its positioning alongside those that are other-to-themselves is inherent in both architecture and literature. These figures enable an awareness of space and events in relation to personal (self) and external (other) factors. The trace forms a connection between the two extremes; each encounter marks the space and reminds the self that others have previously passed through. Traces may be left by the self, but upon re-encountering they become other: the past-self is a distant figure. Here it is Derrida's multi-layered approach to reading that is of primary significance, rather than his response to a particular text.

The nature of the text as an-other voice brings to light its position within the architectural community. This research opens up a discussion about the use of texts within the discipline, not only in design, but also to question the current relationships (gaps) between architecture and language and the implications of particular vocabulary sets.<sup>12</sup> Through the study of literature this research aims to understand the shifting that occurs between media and enable an attitude to language that encourages delight in its use: where accessible vocabulary can be used as a key design tool to provide the basis for crafted, elegant descriptions of spaces, as informative as an equally well-crafted drawing or model. If the stress of the written text can be unveiled perhaps it can be alleviated.

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<sup>12</sup> Architecture as a profession requires the practitioner to be linguistically flexible and able to use appropriate situational vocabulary: for example, theoretical and philosophical within education; technical and practical in the office and on construction sites and evocative, clear and approachable with clients.

Inherent in this proposition is the notion that the relationship between architecture and language is integral. The making of marks not only connects them, it reveals (Latin *revelationem*, to unveil, uncover, lay bare) an admission of trauma or *stress* within the work and author/architect. This *stress* (Latin *stringere*), is a drawing tight, an application of pressure and a *need* to mark the necessity of the work.<sup>13</sup> It is formed through the *act* of writing and drawing (the desecration of the blank page) forcing an exposure of the self and the other within the texts.<sup>14</sup> A text-based discourse runs counter to ingrained perceptions of an architectural education: that the drawing or model forms the primary source of communication. Potential architects are trained to communicate through renditions; essays are required to be illustrated. To move from this to a written thesis is difficult, as this thesis reveals (it is illustrated and so is not a pure-text thesis, research was undertaken through practice as well as research). It requires a new mode of thinking, writing and understanding of the expectations and restrictions. As an integral aspect of academia it does not sit easily within architecture, yet is a significant aspect of the discipline. It is a deliberate manifestation of ideas through language. The understanding that a doctoral thesis in architecture is either a written document or a process of design situates this thesis somewhere between, neither one nor the other. This has led to a position in which the content discusses the accessible nature of Peake's language whilst being in itself less than accessible.<sup>15</sup> The text is an alien space in which

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<sup>13</sup> See section 4.2.

<sup>14</sup> This questions understanding of the doctoral thesis as a form of convention that both creates stress and requires conformity into the notion of the thesis-as-text. The writing of the thesis places the architect in a position of disquiet, forcing them into a written (silent) form of expression through language, rather than through the familiar methods of practice: drawing, modelling and spoken presentation.

<sup>15</sup> See section 5.3.

the architect is not himself. In making the text a more familiar and creative place, analysing its spaces as architectural, this thesis invites the architect to comprehend these spaces through the methods developed in their education and so explore the potential within.

The questions raised provide a structure from which the thesis can analyse the potential of Peake's literary language within the architectural design process. The understanding that Bachelard and Derrida bring to Peake's texts and literary spaces enable the self and the other to be understood as inherently connected, within both the text and the spaces it creates. The remainder of this introduction sets out the principles, methods and theoretical arguments from which this research is derived. It begins by clarifying significant terms used throughout the thesis. The chapter then expands upon the difficulties of the self and other within the text by illustrating the challenging relationship between architecture and language. This enables the founding issues the thesis discusses to be highlighted, so that they can be addressed in the concluding chapter in light of the present research. Subsequent sections of the chapter reveal the resonances and common ground between literature and architecture so that the theoretical methodology used to approach the research can be positioned before outlining the following chapters of the thesis.

### ***Rendition and Locus – A Clarification of Terms***

The following discussion relies upon an awareness that Peake had no architectural training and that this research was carried out as a non-specialist in regards to literature.

This means that there is a lack of learned technical language from these positions.

Selected terms used within the research, are defined here so that their intended meanings can be understood and the thesis might remain as accessible as possible.<sup>16</sup>

The transfer from text to image or model is termed *rendering*: its use here should not be confused with the digital representation process. Digital rendering is undertaken by a software program, creating images from a computer generated model. Here a large portion of the visual study was conducted by hand, so the rendition process has significant differences. No digital three-dimensional models were used to form drawings or models, although two-dimensional digital drawings did form some aspects.<sup>17</sup>

Rendering in this context draws upon its layered connotations. It can be a performance, a translation or a depiction; it is an applying of a layer and an act of surrender. The methods of taking a literary text and forming drawings or models from it can be understood through all of these meanings, the drawing as a depicted version (static performance) of the text, a cross media translation from which one both applies and gains layers of meaning. It is a surrendering to the text, allowing the words to impart understanding. In the etymology of *render* additional meanings can be garnered. Its origins in Old French (*render*) and Latin (*redder*) present implications of giving back, restoring or yielding, concepts of reproduction or representation were added later. It also has the meaning of drawing-out fat from joints of meat. The processes of this study are a rendering: drawn images and physical models are extracted from the text via an architectural imagination. Spatial comprehension is further rendered from the visual

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<sup>16</sup> See section 5.3.

<sup>17</sup> See section 2.2.

explorations of Peake's loci. The rendition process is also an act of drawing-out from the self. It is a process of discovery, as is the thesis-as-text.<sup>18</sup>

The term *locus* (place) is used to describe individual spaces found and drawn-out of Peake's writing. The use of the Latin *locus*, rather than the Greek *topos* is found in the nuances of its etymology. Locus denotes where something is placed, with the root meaning to cause to stand, to place. This deliberate, static act of placing or standing is important. It allows the place/space to be personal to the reader, it is not the *common place* found in the meaning of the Greek, *tópos koinós*, nor the literary theme of topos, but the *individual* space of the imagination that this study examines. The concept of locus is also connected to memory, as explained by Frances Yates in *The Art of Memory* (1966). The use of loci as places within the imagination to aid memory dates back to the Greek poet Simonides of Ceos, the Roman philosopher Cicero, and the text of an unknown author *Ad Herennium* (exact date and author unknown).<sup>19</sup> These loci are usually places within rooms of an imagined building (a mind palace), deliberately arranged in a specific order so that when one visits they trigger recollection. These places are inherently connected to language and their origins lie in techniques of rhetoric. In the words of Cicero in *De Oratore* (55BCE), Yates explains: '*loci* preserve the order of the facts, and the images designate the facts themselves, and we employ the places and images like a wax writing tablet and the letters written on it' (2007: 12).

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<sup>18</sup> See section 5.3.

<sup>19</sup> This may also have been Cicero.

Whilst Peake's loci are not places created to enhance memory, they have the capacity to create space within it.<sup>20</sup> Each individual who has contact with them - author, reader, architect, viewer – finds that these places lodge within the mind. They are sticking points and fragments that become integrated into the imagination. They are the 'spots of time' described in Romantic poet William Wordsworth's 'The Prelude' (1850). The loci identified within Peake's text are named as proper nouns here, for easy identification: Gormenghast Mountain and The Tower of Flints, for example and are thus distinguished from other mountains and towers within the text.

In defining the use of *render* and *locus* with their etymological foundations the reader is invited to be aware of their meaning within this thesis and the connections that extend beyond it. These words have an established *meaning* and this text takes advantage of this, enabling a building-up of knowledge rather than beginning from first principles.

## **ii: Architecture's Problematic Relationship with Language –Text, Self and Other**

There is currently a disconnection between architecture and language, one which this thesis addresses. There is no solution to this difficult relationship, but this thesis provides a position from which language within the discipline can be discussed openly. It does so with the intention of remaining accessible, by using an existing, definable vocabulary set, with a care to the layered meanings that are available. It begins with the notion of literary language as one example where there is no inherent architectural jargon. In order that this might be achieved it is necessary to be deliberate with the

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<sup>20</sup> If so inclined Peake's loci might be integrated into a personal mind palace, whether through intentional design or by unconscious transfer of the qualities he describes.

choice of words to ensure a clarity of meaning and prevent the language of the thesis disrupting its intent. This approach allows the benefits of crafted, poetic and elegant linguistic devices to both (in)form and reveal the text.

This thesis is not the first text to discuss the relationship between language and architecture: there are others who have explored this notion, albeit via different means. Architectural historian and theorist Alberto Pérez-Gómez, in his text *Polyphilo or the Dark Forest Revisited: An Erotic Epiphany of Architecture* (1992) explores the written architectural narrative, and 'the appropriate relationship between words and architecture' (1992: xxii) through the reworking of the Renaissance novel *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* by Francesco Colonna (1499). This reworking 'is composed of the dreams of philosophers, poets, scientists, artists, architects and musicians of the last two hundred years' (1992: 305). Pérez-Gómez's text is not particularly accessible and its spaces tend to the experiential only in their eroticism (as a form of embodied experience) and do not extend poetically, phenomenologically or 'physically' beyond this.

There are academic architects who write creatively as a part of their practice: Shelly Smith uses autoethnography as a part of her current research in Mexico; Alex Selenitsch, uses writing as an integral aspect of his practice.<sup>21</sup> The Writing Place team are also doing research in this area (Symvoulidou et al. 2017). Architect Michel Webb combines text and rendition within his work; his project Temple Island is one such example. However as architect Lebbeus Woods states in his concluding text to Webb's *Temple Island: A Study by Michael Webb* (1987), '[t]he works of Michael Webb are difficult to enter into,

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<sup>21</sup> On speaking to them at conferences in July 2016 both stated that their colleagues were unsure of what to make of their practice-writings.

and none more so than the Henley Project' (1987: 54). The difficulty in projects like this is that both the text and the images are difficult to comprehend, particularly for those outside the profession; whilst they support each other they 'are only dress, a way for him and us to arrive at certain thoughts and feelings' (54). The Italian architect Giuseppe Terragni also used text as a major persuasive component of his design document, the *Relazione sul Danteum*, for the Danteum building, given to Mussolini in 1938 (Schumacher 2004: 35). This never-constructed proposal contained evocative presentation drawings alongside a written description of the symbolic meanings, references and experiences of the spaces in order to 'sell the product' (2004: 56). This text was required in order to reveal and highlight the complexity of the symbolic design for, as Schumacher points out, Terragni 'relied on the observer's knowledge of Dante to fill in the characters and allegories while traversing his abstract spaces' (49). In this project, therefore, the text becomes vital for spatial comprehension.

There is also an interesting discussion at the end of *Architectural Representation and the Perspective Hinge* (2000) by Pérez-Gómez and architect and theorist Louise Pelletier in which they state: 'We must ground architecture and its meanings through its relationship to language, understanding history (as stories)' (2000: 394). The main focus of this text is architectural representation through the image and it is only in the coda that they bring the discussion out beyond the visual.

The architect, like Derrida, continually reads and re-reads the text, space and image and the *trace* is fundamental in their understanding. They must continuously see through the eyes of the other (the future inhabitant, client, builder etc.) throughout the

process of design. The architect inhabits spaces of the text, rendition and place as the other-inhabitant they find within. The other-as-author is present within the marks they leave, yet has no influence beyond these traces. This lack of presence as an author presents a difficult position to the architect as they release the design into the hands of the inhabitant. This results in an urge to maintain control and over compensate, either by declaring the process or by keeping secrets, discussed in detail below. Linguistic communication is imperfect, leaving gaps and creating difficulties and opportunities as architect and theorist Jonathan Hale explains:

when we attempt to communicate in words we end up saying both less and more than we intend, thereby generating both a deficit and a surplus in relation to the thought we were trying to express. The fleeting impression of the passing moment or the 'gut reactions' to unfolding experience can never be captured comprehensively in the ready-made phrases that language, as a pre-existing system, offers up. But the fact that we have to make do with this anonymous language is balanced by the unexpected benefit that arises from the fact that language has been created by others, which gives it a rich collective history. Rather than arriving fully formed, language emerges over time, as a result of people's attempts to make use of it; from previous efforts to capture fleeting thoughts as they continually bubble up and slip away. This means that it also carries more along with it than the present user can ever anticipate, suggesting ideas in the mind of the listener based on their own previous personal experiences. (Hale 2017: 91)

This makes the transfer of ideas through language a tricky task, yet for the architect, there is little advice to follow: as architect and writer Simon Unwin comments: '[t]here is often a rough and ready relationship between architecture and the words through which it is discussed' (2009: 82). In attempting to resolve the difficulties in explaining space and compensate for the fear of language, two contrasting architectural stereotypes have formed, both of which are an attempt at control.<sup>22</sup>

The first is the loquacious architect: they use complex and convoluted language in an assumption that ambiguity allows space for personal interpretation. At best they spur

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<sup>22</sup> The self and other are confused: the architect tries to be one and both stereotypes simultaneously.

the imagination of the others they address, at worst they confuse and distance themselves from their audience. The second is the laconic architect: they believe that drawings and models provide all necessary information and that words are superfluous, or a hindrance to knowledge transfer. This divide not only occurs within those that form and study architecture but is also inherent in its manifestations. Others have commented on this dichotomy: architectural critic and theorist Jeffrey Kipnis states:

In the field of architecture we have today become accustomed to two distinct endeavors [sic] – architecture "itself" and architectural knowledge – taking for granted the difference and the relationship between the two. Architecture (itself), it seems, is the act, the art, the event that manifests a history; it is the thing itself, occurring in plastic materials and "concrete forms": drawings, models, buildings, and the like. Architectural knowledge, on the other hand – theory, history, commentary, and so on – consists of the examinations, the investigations of architecture, the analyses from the outside looking in. This work is concerned with, and thus in the field, yet separate from the thing itself. Knowledge, consisting of abstract functions, is manifest (at least) in words, in writing. (1986: 95)

Although Kipnis names the two positions as architectural form 'itself' and 'architectural knowledge' his comments reflect an awareness that there is a silent (laconic) act of information transfer, through the space (or its representation) and a loquacious method where architectural knowledge is based within the text or spoken discussion and becomes abstracted from the architectural volume/space.

Whilst these contrasting architectural positions, are extreme they are worth scrutinising so that a position of balance might be approached.<sup>23</sup> The first, excess, is an external expression of language, a control through distraction (Latin *distrahere*, to pull apart, separate) of the other-as-reader/listener: the architect Louis Kahn might be seen as one example of this stereotype. The second, brevity, is an internalisation. Control is

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<sup>23</sup> In scrutinising (Latin *skreu-*, to cut) one dissects the subject. Examination via the cut provides the section. It is a dividing to see within.

maintained through retention within the self-as-writer/speaker. This is illustrated by an oft repeated statement of architect Mies van der Rohe: 'Build, don't talk'.<sup>24</sup>

### *An Architectural Language of Excess*

Architect and theorist Robin Evans, in his essay on Peter Eisenman's 1983 project Fin d'Ou T Hou S (1997: 118-51) expresses his frustration with the language that Eisenman uses, and carefully summarises the perceived aims of architectural writings: that of protection by the architect and exposure by the critic. The architect is guilty of:

The reiteration of recondite, technical terms that suck meaning out of any sentence. The claim of support from higher authority (mathematics, linguistics, philosophy). And more recently the resort to deceptions against audiences and readers which will make it increasingly difficult for critics to catch his tail: the smokescreen, the bluff, the dodge (1997: 120-3).

Eisenman is far from being the only culprit, he is merely an example and many others can be found among his contemporaries.<sup>25</sup> This support from a 'higher authority' is also seen in the complex 'mythologies' (Greek *mythos*, story delivered by word of mouth) that are built up around architectural projects. The site is excavated, histories revealed and (re-)invented. French philosopher and literary theorist Roland Barthes describes the ambiguity and otherness inherent in myth:

Myth is a *value*, truth is no guarantee for it; nothing prevents it from being a perpetual alibi: it is enough that its signifier has two sides for it always to have an 'elsewhere' at its disposal. The meaning is always there to present the form; the form is always there to outdistance the meaning. And there never is any contradiction, conflict, or split between the meaning and the form: they are never at the same place. (Barthes 1973: 123)

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<sup>24</sup> Note: van der Rohe may not have taken his advice as literally as others (Schulze & Windhorst 2012: 81).

<sup>25</sup> Eisenman was not guilty of having a fear of language and has approached texts as an aspect of his architecture. *Romeo and Juliet* (1986) examines both the written and the architectural text through the nature of authority, the fragment and architecture representation (Eisenman 2004: 231-2).

The 'perpetual alibi', allows the architect to hide behind and within the narrative and the trappings of mythology and 'meaning'.

This resonates with the first of two theories about the esoteric use of language within architecture in 'How to Speak Architect' (2013: s.p.) by architectural journalist Ike Ijeh, and Lee Monks from the Plain English Campaign.<sup>26</sup> They suggest 'pseudo-intellectualism' arose as a defence mechanism after the decline of modernism and its ideas. This directly led to the rejection of its language (see below). In a time of architectural uncertainty, its vocabulary lacked definition. Language and (transferred) meaning became ambiguous as established (or fixed) meanings were also rejected. This is problematic because, if language is fluid in respect to its meaning then it is the receiver (listener/reader) who creates understanding of concepts rather than being informed by the contributor. The speaker/writer loses any semblance of control over the content. Although the release of the text to the reader is necessary, the uncertainty and fear of the writer when relinquishing a text is compounded by the disintegration of vocabulary.<sup>27</sup> One solution is to create terms and apply meanings so the coiner retains control. The audience must then rely on the provision of definitions.<sup>28</sup> These 'words' do not always have clear meaning (or definition) and so cannot effectively transfer ideas.<sup>29</sup> This leads to alienation of both the listener/reader who is unable understand the ideas discussed and of the speaker/writer who is unable to transfer their thoughts to others.

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<sup>26</sup> The Plain English Campaign, started in 1979, campaigns 'against gobbledygook, jargon and misleading public information'. It aids official organisations to produce documents with clear and concise information (2016: About us).

<sup>27</sup> See section 1.2.

<sup>28</sup> It can be claimed these words are deliberately vague and inspire creativity and reflection. This might be the intention, but without defining the terms of participation uncertainty becomes prevalent.

<sup>29</sup> Colloquially referred to as 'archispeak', there are examples in appendix I.

The second theory Ijeh and Monks suggest is that it was a 'coterie of architects pandering to their peers and using pretentious language to cocoon themselves from public engagement' (2013: s.p.). This coincides with the statements made by architectural theorist Neil Spiller who states that architects are involved in a 'conspiracy' (1998:16) and they 'cannot function without the judicial keeping and telling of secrets, and that this propensity to secrecy is directly linked to the self-replicatory aspirations of the concept of the meme' (15).<sup>30</sup> It is a preservation mechanism. General principles of specialised language use can also be applied. Sociolinguists Lesley Milroy and Matthew Gordon state that 'language constitutes symbolic capital which is potentially convertible into economic capital, and some types of job [...] require more than others' (2003: 97). The architectural education provides a situation where this 'symbolic capital' is understood to be particularly important. Students learn new vocabulary sets, technical and philosophical, in order to belong. This use of language for integration or ingratiation is not unique and is found in all specialisations. This condition is also a direct result of audience uncertainty; if others are not willing, or able to, participate they are perceived as rejecting the speaker/writer. The speaker/writer retaliates and rejects the audience, so the situation perpetuates. The most common method of breaking this cycle is the use of humour and self-depreciation.<sup>31</sup>

It appears it has become difficult to maintain a serious discourse on architecture and language, yet there is a prevalence of flippant examples: light hearted articles

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<sup>30</sup> This keeping of secrets is also relevant to the next section on brevity. However, one can also say a lot whilst withholding information.

<sup>31</sup> Ijeh and Monks illustrate this clearly. Their article finishes by 'translating' statements made by famous architects and scoring them with an 'unintelligibility rating'.

disguise a serious core.<sup>32</sup> Architectural theorists that approach architectural language more soberly tend to focus on dictionaries or guides rather than discussions about the nature of language, Tom Porter's *Archispeak* (2004) and Adrian Forty's *Words and Buildings* (2000) are examples. The website ArchDaily opened a discussion in September 2015 with the online architectural community in *What are the Weirdest Words that Only Architects use?* (Stott 2015a), followed by *150 Weird Words that Only Architects use* (Stott 2015b). Humour is used to mediate, but serious points are made both from within and beyond the profession, highlighting the difficulties of this relationship. One reaction to this is to curtail perceived excess, almost to the point of silence, revealing the second stereotype.

### *A Modern Architectural Language of Brevity*

The tendency towards laconicism is assumed to benefit the architect; a concept reinforced academically by the development of formats like the *Pecha Kucha 20x20*.<sup>33</sup>

The reduction of linguistic opportunity reveals a perceived need for an antithesis to the verbose architect who hides lack-of-content within long, complicated, incomprehensible sentences. In condensing (Latin *condensare*, to make dense, thicken) meaning is, in theory, exposed. It might be that the high anecdotal, occurrence of dyslexia and similar

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<sup>32</sup> See Witold Rybczynski's 'A Discourse on Emerging Tectonic Visualisation and the Effects of Materiality on Praxis. Or an Essay on the Ridiculous way Architects Talk' (2011). Others take this concealment further: see *Speak like an Architect* (Coyote Productions 2013), *Words that Architects Use: Architect Bingo Card #1, #2, #3, #4 and #5* by architect Bob Borson (2010), *Do you Speak Architect* (The Silent Observer 2006) and Eric McNeal's website *Blue Architecture. The rants of an architecturally influenced person with its Do-it-yourself architectural dialogue* (2013).

<sup>33</sup> Created by architects Astrid Klein and Mark Dytham (2003). Twenty images are shown sequentially for twenty seconds alongside a verbal presentation. It was invented 'Because architects talk too much!'

conditions within architecture also drives personal inclinations towards brevity. There is a desire to communicate only through the space; in its incarnations as drawing, model or built form.<sup>34</sup>

Architecture is also discussed as a language which 'speaks' for itself.<sup>35</sup> This is the position of Pelletier's book *Architecture in Words: Theatre, Language and the Sensuous Space of Architecture* (2006). In this text she examines the changes in architectural theory in the eighteenth century through the work of the French architect Nicolas Le Camus de Mézières. This discussion is interesting, however, for whilst Le Camus' 'theory of architecture as an expressive language' (2006: 137) is prominent, he used erotic narratives (both his own and from mythology) and an understanding of the senses within his spaces. Pelletier does not provide many examples of Le Camus' language within her analysis and despite her statement that '[t]he mode of discourse in Le Camus's treatise is far from purely technical' (7), one is left with the understanding that his treatise describes how sensual principles might be applied 'room-by-room' (22) within architectural design, but not through the use of sensual language within the written discourse itself. That the space, or its renditions, will convey all that is required converges with the need for clarity in construction drawings. Here the vocabulary of the architect is controlled, resulting in a purely technical terminology. This phenomenon is

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<sup>34</sup> A laconic attitude does not hinder publishing. The trends in mass market architectural publishing demonstrate this approach to language, with an increasing number of glossy pictures, placing non-academic architectural books largely in the coffee-table category. The disconnection of theoretical texts and project and spatial texts which 'have generally been the object of glossy picture books, in which projects receive only a cursory treatment' is a phenomenon noted by architect Bernard Tschumi (1994: 11) and reinforces the divide between language (theory) and architecture (space) noted above.

<sup>35</sup> *The Language of Architecture: 26 Principles Every Architect should Know* (Simitch and Warke 2014) is just one example. It discusses 26 elements of architecture as the foundations of this language.

discussed by architect and theorist Katie Lloyd Thomas, in 'Specifying Material: Language, matter and the conspiracy of muteness' (Frasconi et al. 2007: 242-52). She notes that the language of specification is an attempt to maintain standardisation of materials and practice. Whilst it may be effective for communicating specifications, a purely technical description is not universally appropriate, although recommended. *The Architect in Practice* (1992) by architect David Chappell and surveyor Andrew Willis advises a need for clarity (2010: 319-20). In the six paragraphs on this topic the authors suggest that the way to counteract misunderstanding is to use fewer words, implying language should only be used where other mechanisms fail to communicate.

The distinction between poetic and prosaic (ordinary, communicative, practical) language is a modern occurrence, as noted by the literary critic Peter Nicholls:

After 1948, writers begin to adopt a kind of self-imposed exile as a necessary condition of creativity, and with that gesture went a new conception of poetic language as something quite distinct from a shared language of communication. (1995:13)

This may explain the reduction in linguistic expression: the ideal of streamlining inherent in modernism became fashionable, significantly changing the nature of architectural language.<sup>36</sup> Descriptions of light, sound, smells and weather were no longer included alongside architectural drawings.<sup>37</sup> Historic architectural vocabulary, terms such as *sweetness* and *mannered*, were replaced by concepts of *form* and *function*, as noted by art historians Georgia Clarke and Paul Crossley, editors of *Architecture and Language: Constructing Identity in European Architecture*, (2000: 129), along with Forty who describes this change in attitude under the heading 'The Horror of Language' (2000:

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<sup>36</sup> See Le Corbusier, *Towards a New Architecture* (1927).

<sup>37</sup> Landscape architect Humphry Repton included a commentary on natural phenomena in *Fragments on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* (1816), for example.

20-2).<sup>38</sup> In modernist literary circles the deceptive nature of words and the imperfection of language became a recurrent theme, provoking a move for change. The imperfect nature of language, discussed by French poet and critic Stéphane Mallarmé's 'Crisis in Poetry' 1886-1895 (Kolocotroni et al. 1998:123-7), influenced other areas of artistic exploration. American poet and critic Ezra Pound, in 1912, emphasised that 'no superfluous word, no adjective which does not reveal something' should be used and 'use absolutely no word that does not contribute to the presentation' (Eliot 1954: 3-4), a sentiment echoed by van der Rohe's statement above.<sup>39</sup> The war against language is clearly demonstrated by the words of philosopher of language Dora Marsden in 1915:

Our war is with words and in their every aspect: grammar, accident, syntax: body, blood and bone. Let none make a mistake: not because men use words to deceive; not even because words incline by capacity to deception and are the natural basis of Civilisation: the inoculators of men's powers with the debilitating serum of "Culture"; not because that can be used, and are used, as readily for ends of diplomacy as of frankness; for hiding motives as much as for revealing them, for alluring and deceiving as much as for guiding and illuminating.' (Kolocotroni et al. 1998: 332)

It may be that traces of this vehemence still linger within architecture, it was certainly present at the time as can also be seen in other architectural notions of the era: for example architect Adolf Loos' 1908 lecture *Ornament and Crime* (1998: 167-75). The reduction of ornament in architecture as well as curtailment of language, to streamline and remove disguising fripperies, can be seen as a modernist counter to the 'disease' Loos described.

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<sup>38</sup> Although Forty's book *Words and Buildings: A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture* is aimed at the student of architecture rather than the academic, it is one of the few books that tackle spoken and written language in direct relation to architecture and modern language. Forty attempts to define particular terms in the manner of a dictionary, yet he has failed to achieve this effectively. This is partly due to the nature of definitions: a dictionary must be regularly updated to reflect the fluidity of language. As the last edition was more than a decade ago this book, whilst useful, is also frustrating.

<sup>39</sup> The date of van der Rohe's statement is unknown: it is assumed after Pound's 'A Retrospect' (1912).

A problem arises in the desire for the architecture itself to be the only form of expression, the ultimate reduction of language. It is incongruous with the education process, of an academic system where theoretical discourse is integral and eloquence is required, both in speech and writing. The places of conflict between architecture and language have created areas of resistance which often lie within the academic aspects of architecture: essays (Middle French *essai*, to trial, attempt), examination by critique and doctoral thesis.<sup>40</sup> The conflicting positions within which architecture attempts to locate itself leads to confusion. There is a need to *make*, to *render*, when examining architectural ideas (a *drawing out* of the processes); a need conform to expected outputs which extend beyond the discipline and a need for consistency to enable fair judgement.<sup>41</sup>

One aspect of the resistance between architecture and language can be found in the nature of production. Architectural writings are frequently produced in a trance-like, transient state that drives creativity (formed by overwork, stress, alcohol, lack of sleep, deadlines etc.). This leaves the architect attempting to describe the inexpressible, capture a *trace* of the otherness they experience in this state. This otherness is present in Peake's texts: in writing a world Peake reveals *stresses* within poetic space. It is a captivation of the imagination expressed not only in the drawing, but also brought forth when reading. Peake's language is conducive to this state.<sup>42</sup> It is alluring to the architect as a form of displacement written poetically in prose. The moments of stillness within the narrative

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<sup>40</sup> Whilst the requirement for essay writing in the academic context is understood, often students do not connect these skills with practice and design. Those who do well in presentations are often dismissed by peers having a gift with (spoken) language rather than a practiced skill.

<sup>41</sup> The PhD by design allows more flexibility but still requires a text output. What this entails has not yet been fully realised, as art historian and critic James Elkin reveals in *Artists with PhDs* (2014). Whilst Elkin focuses on art doctorates much of what he says can be applied to architectural PhDs by design.

<sup>42</sup> See sections 1.2 and 4.4.

mirrors the state in which the architect is creative: a pausing or distancing of the self in order to design. This is also present when writing and a state of otherness is allowed to enter and inform a text. As French philosopher and literary theorist Maurice Blanchot states: 'Writing is per se already (it is still) violence: the rupture there is in each fragment, the break, the splitting, the tearing of the shred - acute singularity, steely point' (Blanchot 1995a: 46).<sup>43</sup> This trauma is not a single event captured, but a repeated, worried-at, continuously exposed and picked apart, stress, coagulated (Latin *cogere*, to curdle, collect) into text. The text and the drawing are parallel creations enabling spatial investigation. No architect truly sits within one or other of these stereotypes; they use language as they perceive it to be required. As the next section discusses, there are inherent connections between literature and architecture and from this common ground this thesis is able to highlight the potential for explorative texts within architecture.

### **iii: Spatial Investigation Through Speculative World Building**

#### ***Making Marks: Lines and Text as Space***

The construction of speculative worlds (from the Latin *speculationem*, contemplation, observation) is common to both architecture and literature as a testing ground for ideas. Jorge Luis Borges' writing, for example, shows how this spatial speculation is able to manifest in literature: 'The Library of Babel' (1941) combines recognisable space with

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<sup>43</sup> See section 5.2.

infinite replication.<sup>44</sup> Within architecture student designs consider possibilities (on numerous theoretical levels) with little expectation that they might be constructed and the percentage of competition schemes that are physically realised are relatively few. Speculative world building allows the interrogation of imagined potentials, with few limits on this conjecture.<sup>45</sup>

Literature is not exhaustible, for the sufficient reason that no single book is. A book is not an isolated being: it is a relationship, an axis of innumerable relationships. One literature differs from another, prior or posterior, less because of the text than because of the way in which it is read (Borges 2000: 248-9)

Whilst literature is physically speculative, as it does not expect spaces to be constructed, architectural world-building shows an intent to change places and presents potential designs as if they are to be built. Spatial design contains an assumption of reality-in-potential. Hypothetical projects create self-contained parallel universes in which designs exist so that their impact can be interrogated: these theoretical spaces might then be integrated with the physical world, if constructed, or they might remain speculative fictions on what might-have-been. Whilst the media of literature and architecture differ, both contain a desire to record (mark) speculation and explore via creative production.<sup>46</sup> Not all speculative designs are intended to be constructed, yet they still show this intent to change, even if only on paper: the work of Russian architects Alexander Brodsky and Ilya Utkin is one example. Their 'paper architecture' is 'a visual commentary on what was wrong with social and physical reality and how its ills might be remedied' (Lois E. Nesbitt, in Brodsky & Utkin 2015: 7). Many of their drawings are reminiscent of book

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<sup>44</sup> See section 4.6.

<sup>45</sup> See sections 4.5 and 5.3.

<sup>46</sup> Auditory postulations differ in this, although they may be recorded as an aspect of creation or later.

illustrations, continuing glimpses of possibilities that could not physically be built.<sup>47</sup>

The text that is an integral part of their work also reaches out to the imagination, increasing its narrative content and poetic nature.

The exploration through mark-making is one in which there are no prescribed rules, as French philosopher and literary theorist Jean-François Lyotard states: 'Those rules and categories are what the work of art itself is looking for [...] working without rules in order to formulate the rules of what *will have been done*' (Lyotard 1993: 46).<sup>48</sup> However there are traditions, conventions, within the architectural discipline, through which space is perceived: the section, with its single cutting plane for example. This cut, a monoscopic vision of space, belies the three-dimensional experience of inhabited space. This veiled vision of perspective, discussed by architect and theorist Penelope Haralambidou, is one in which the 'other' eye has been forgotten and must be closed (Haralambidou 2007: 38). In closing one eye a part of the imagination is also closed. These conventions limit the speculation and exploration that takes place within the processes of design.<sup>49</sup> Yet through mark making and the imagination there is an infinite space to create. This thesis uses conventional rendition techniques in order to illustrate their limitations through exploration.

In exploring through mark-making (pictograms, ideograms, logograms, images), thoughts reveal themselves and are recorded, as Peake's musings on drawings reveal:

What is drawing? It is making marks. Marks on paper. Marks that form some kind of equivalent to something comprehended. For to make a drawing is to record an idea. An idea

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<sup>47</sup> The work of illustrator and writer Shaun Tan is very reminiscent of their work.

<sup>48</sup> In limiting written creativity, architecture loses a means of exploration. See section 5.3.

<sup>49</sup> See section 5.3.

of a particular breed that can only be expressed in terms of lead. It is for the artist's passion to rescue from oblivion some fleeting line or rhythm.

For the pianist his keyboard: for the writer his vocabulary: for the draughtsman a stick of graphite. A pencil ranges from the frailest of greys to the black of the tomb. Hell in a cedar-tunnel. The scope is total. A line as thin as a hair, or as thick as a broom. It is a medium capable of a hundred moods, from delicacy to violence. [...]

To draw is to make marks that are the equivalent of a discovery. It is the smashing of another window pane. A letting in of the light. (Peake 1957: s.p.)

The revelation and discovery that Peake discusses is not only of the mark that is made but also its effects upon the world. Marks speculate and in so doing change the ideas they are formed from. Comprehension is gained from the mark *and* its making.

There is no clear distinction between what forms a text and what makes an image: what is legible in one language is incomprehensible in another.<sup>50</sup> Mark-making is inherent in communication and there is a direct link between the body and the mark: the body inscribes upon the page, it moves and uses force to in-scribe. The mark can be read through its tactility and relief (or lack of) as well as its content. The physical act of inscribing thoughts (through drawing, making or writing) feels like a permanent act: the page is forever marked, the act cannot be undone. Yet it is tenuous, the thought is changed through the mark, it becomes something other than it was. There is a fear of the blank page and its potential to be marked with an infinite number of thoughts which are not exactly as intended.<sup>51</sup> Peake's manuscripts show the exploration of his narrative by a process of marking and re-marking, methods familiar to the architect.<sup>52</sup>

In *The Truth in Painting* (1978), Derrida questions the nature of the line, with reference to the work of Valerio Adami. The boundaries between the word and the image come under scrutiny: 'the regulated exchange of the two elements (lexical and

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<sup>50</sup> See section 5.3.

<sup>51</sup> See sections 1.2 and 5.3.

<sup>52</sup> See sections 1.2 and 1.4.

pictural), [come] close to piercing a hole in the *arthron* [joint] of discursive writing and representational painting' (1987: 160). He asks if this event is 'wild', yet surely it is a deliberate act of interrogating the nature of the line itself. In piercing (Latin *pertundere*, to thrust, bore through), the hole forms a route of circulation: within the text the image-picture is both representational and symbolic. The architectural rendition sits within the breach between text and image. Literary texts are also within this gap, on the opposing side (if there is a depth), the pictorial forming within the imagination rather than upon the inscribed surface. Derrida reveals (via text) that the speaker/writer is a painter; the language used does not represent and is determined by the viewer (3). The line has the *potential* (power) to become anything; inscription fixes it in position and the viewer/reader interprets it. The mark itself is an event, one in which the maker (marker) is inherent in the final image even when they are not present.<sup>53</sup> The drawing-text is the remnants of the event which marked the paper. The line opens up the space of the page beyond its physicality; it forces revelation within the imagination as the reader-viewer draws from what has been left by the author.

The making of marks between the architectural and the literary enables architectural theorist Jennifer Bloomer to weave motifs and spaces within *Architecture and the Text: The (S)Crypts of Joyce and Piranesi* (1993).<sup>54</sup> They create space (visually and within the imagination) and motifs threaded through the text, allowing connections to

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<sup>53</sup> See section 1.2.

<sup>54</sup> This text was written with her students in mind (1993: x). The setting of poetic and fictional texts as a part of architectural study was more common in the 1980s and they were therefore more connected.

be made that go beyond the linear reading dictated by the text-as-book format.<sup>55</sup> Within this text Bloomer identifies that both Joyce and Piranesi construct space: it is not the medium that drives this but the relationship the reader/viewer has with its contents. The linguistic structures formed by Joyce in *Finnegans Wake* are revealed, through a process of 'operations upon the text that can be described as digging, peeling away, cutting, and dissecting' (21), as geometric, whilst the etchings of Piranesi 'approach the literary in their ambiguity and invitation to a kind of narrative interpretation' (Bloomer 1993: 6).<sup>56</sup> Bloomer's text has been deliberately 'written other-wise' (3), rejects 'the conventions of research founded in what is called "scientific-method"' (5) and interweaves the personal with her explorations' (ix-xi; 166-7). This thesis is not, for a number of reasons: self-protection, a need to conform to the expectations of the thesis as convention and an acknowledgement that one cannot analyse everything simultaneously. Bloomer focuses upon allegorical aspects of representation, delving into hidden and symbolic meanings that occupy the formed spaces. This thesis opens inscribed marks in a different poetic manner, to reveal a true, inhabitable space within, rather than an allegorical one.<sup>57</sup> However there are resonances with her definition of a 'minor architecture [which] should embrace a collection of practices that [...] operate critically on the dominance of the visual' and is a 'revolutionary architectural criticism, a "criticism from within"' (174).

Architect and theorist C. J. Lim uses explorative texts as a part of his architectural practice, many of which are reminiscent of Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities* (1972). For

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<sup>55</sup> Bloomer also comments on the relationship between speech and writing, linking the privileging of the former over the latter in architectural circles to a misunderstanding of Derrida (1993:8).

<sup>56</sup> See section 3.2.

<sup>57</sup> See section 1.3.

example, his project *Virtually Venice* (British Pavilion, Venice Biennale 2004) takes the story of Marco Polo's meeting with Kublai Kahn as a starting point to explore the connections between Venice and China through the medium of three-dimensional paper forms; 'My Kind of Town' (2006) is a short narrative about the Alhambra which provides tantalising glimpses into an (existent) place, seen (remembered) through his eyes; whereas *Short Stories: London in two-and-a-half dimensions* (2011), written with Ed Liu, explores London through collage techniques combining written narratives with diagrams, maps, photographs and architectural drawings. His use of fictional, mythical and invented narratives is reminiscent of the work of Iain Sinclair.<sup>58</sup> The prologue of this text holds a great deal of promise in the explorative use of text:

Text is an often overlooked tool in the description of architectural propositions and when used, tends towards the explicative rather than the expressive. The written word is usually limited to specification and the justification of design decisions rather than contributing to creative or conceptual design. (2011: 11)

However, on reading the stories one finds that it is often the images of the collage rather than its text that provides spatial awareness, the text holds the narrative but lacks a 'physical' description of the inhabitation of space.

The examination of the qualities of literary space is not new and the theorists of the 'spatial turn' have influenced many critics.<sup>59</sup> These spatial analyses are usually of social contexts rather than the personal: the wider human context takes precedent over the

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<sup>58</sup> See section 4.3.

<sup>59</sup> Geographers Rob Kitchin and James Kneale use mapping as an analytical tool, with literary novels providing geographical data in *Lost in Space: Geographies of Science Fiction* (2002). As a geographical text there is no architectural presence and the scale of analysis is primarily of landscape. Cultural theorist and literary critic Andrew Milner examines the literary format in respect to connections with the real world in *Locating Science Fiction* (2012). He links fictional places with their time in 'real' history. Anthologies like *Inner Landscape* (Peake, Ballard and Aldiss 1969) allow the reader to draw parallels between selected texts, with landscape and imaginary space as a focal lens. Conversely the contributors of *Red Planets: Marxism and Science Fiction* (2009) analyse the science fiction genre and its spatio-political implications.

individual understanding discussed in this thesis. For example, literary theorist Joseph Young's doctoral thesis, *Secondary Worlds in Pre-Tolkienian Fantasy Fiction*, argues that literary worlds are subordinate capsules within which the rules are different. These fantastic worlds may be more or less connected to the physical world, depending on the perceptions of the writer and reader. Young states:

our *inability* to see Faerie and the *requirement* that we use our imaginations to perceive it probably made it considerably *more* real than the primary world. Reliance upon the imagination freed the perceiver from the garbling demands of the rationalistic intellect and the experiential and empirical contingencies upon which our perception of the primary world inescapably depended. (Young 2011: 82)

This perception of reality is inherent in architecture and Young's comments echo Holm's, for whom reality is 'a bit of a red herring for architecture' and that it 'is primarily concerned with housing the subject in its fantasies' (Holm 2010: xii-xiii), and Bachelard's where: 'if a house is a living value, it must integrate an element of unreality. All values must remain vulnerable, and those that do not are dead' (Bachelard 1994:59). Architecture is simultaneously real and unreal, its vulnerability creating its strength. The most convincing and alluring imaginary worlds are rich in sensory stimuli: tastes, sounds and smells can have a profound effect even when they exist only as language. A well written or vocalised description can elicit physical responses (although each individual will experience them differently). The formalist critic Victor Shklovsky states:

art exists that one may recover the sensation of life; it exists to make one feel things, to make the stone stony. The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. (Shklovsky 1988: 20)

Architecture strives for this 'recovery of sensation'. Each rendition drawn from the imagination aims to capture a phenomenological understanding of physical space that does not (yet) exist physically. Each design begins as a speculation of what might be and

is both 'real' and 'unreal'. Architectural spaces are designed to capture and enhance qualities of the places (site) they are designed for: in doing so they alter the place and its phenomena through spatial intervention. As the mark alters the thought, the design alters the conditions of its site. It reveals latent potential and sculpts phenomena. Architecture uses these phenomena to encourage inhabitation of the present moment. It allows occupants to experience and feel qualities that they could not without the architectural intervention. It is a mark upon space that opens up the event of inhabitation.

### *Phenomenology and Synaesthesia in Understanding Space*

French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty describes phenomenology as 'the study of essences', a philosophy which is 'an account of "lived" space, "lived" time and the "lived" world' (2012: Ixx). It is personal and subjective, based on perception and external stimuli. An understanding of inhabited environments is formed through experience, via the senses, as Hale explains:<sup>60</sup>

It is only by virtue of the body's own materiality that we are able to have this encounter with material things: a disembodied mind, if there could be even be such a thing, would have no means of access to the world. In other words, rather than saying that one thing (the body) perceives another things (the object) – or even vice versa – it would be more correct to say that they are both partaking equally in the phenomenon of perceptibility' (Hale 2017: 13)

The experience of the body allows space to be understood beyond the components directly connected to experienced phenomena. Vision gives us more than just an awareness of what we can see and unconscious knowledge of acoustics provides awareness of the size, materials and permeability of a room: a door indicates a spatial

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<sup>60</sup> Also explored in fiction, for example in the *Prelude to Dune* series (Herbert & Anderson 1999- 2001).

presence beyond what is seen; the back of an object does not cease to exist when it is not visible. The connection between vision and tactility is biologically inherent, as architect and theorist Harry Mallgrave discusses in *The Architect's Brain* (2009):

tactile sensations stimulate areas of the visual cortex associated with visual imagery, and vice versa. We "feel" out tactile memories and this first hand (so to speak) knowledge of the world contributes in a large way to our visual experience and understanding of things such as our built environment. (Mallgrave 2011: 203)

Whilst this awareness is learned from physical experience it becomes internalised and embedded within the memory. Merleau-Ponty referred to this as a 'body schema' (Hale 2017: 14).<sup>61</sup> The body schema is not fixed; experience changes it as do the (temporary) addition of tools.<sup>62</sup> The imagination uses this collated, inbuilt knowledge in the inhabitation and exploration of non-physical space. There is a direct connection between the body and comprehension (Latin *comprehendere*, to take together, unite, seize, perceive). Mallgrave explores this and reminds us that 'the brain is an embodied organ' and each nerve is an integral part of both the body and the brain: they cannot be separated (Mallgrave 2011: 135). This influences perception, understanding and imagination. As he states: 'Architects may like to rationalize the variables of design, but people largely perceive buildings emotionally through the senses' (2011: 188).<sup>63</sup>

A part of spatial and event comprehension comes from the inherent connection between seeing and doing, created through 'mirror neurones'. These are 'neural circuits involved in the production of bodily movement [which] are also active during the observation of movement in other people.' (Hale 2017: 50). This process might be

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<sup>61</sup> First described in 1911 by English neurologists Henry Head and Gordon Holmes (Hale 2017: 14).

<sup>62</sup> See section 4.4.

<sup>63</sup> The remainder is through imagination. See below and sections 2.2, 4.2 and 5.3.

extended to imagining seeing someone doing something and the mirror neurones becoming active.<sup>64</sup> It would also explain the capacity for the architect's imagination to physically understand spaces which only exist as renditions.<sup>65</sup> Merleau-Ponty discusses the connections between the body and its experience of the world and the explorative processes that enables spatial understanding: 'the world is inseparable from the subject, but a subject who is nothing but a project of the world' (Merleau-Ponty 2012: 454). His 'phenomenology of perception' connects experience with bodily understanding and, as he explains, comprehension does not have to rely on the sense it is derived from:

A wooden wheel lying on the ground is not, *for vision*, the same as a wheel bearing a weight. A body at rest because no force is being exerted upon it is not, for vision, the same as a body in which opposing forces are being held in equilibrium. The light of a candle changes appearance for a child when, after having burned him, it ceases to attract the child's hand and becomes literally repulsive. Vision is already inhabited by a sense that gives it a function in the spectacle of the world and in our existence. The pure *quale* [experienced property] would only be given to us if the world were a spectacle and one's own body a mechanism with which an impartial mind could become acquainted. Sensing, however, invests the quality with a living value, grasps it first in its signification for us, for this weighty mass that is our body, and as a result sensing always includes a reference to the body. (Merleau-Ponty 2012: 52)

The weight of the load upon a wheel is perceived visually: the body is aware of the burden without physical contact. This synaesthetic capacity to merge memory with reality allows experiences to be felt when not directly applied.<sup>66</sup> This is not only true of directly experienced stimuli but also those represented: the loaded wheel might be a photograph or drawn image, yet the knowledge of weight remains viable. Represented tactility, formed by shading, is remembered by the body and felt in the imagination.

This is not a new concept in the arts as historian Stephen Kern states:

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<sup>64</sup> This is plausible: a study showed that if one imagined moving muscles, through mental imagery training, it directly affected muscular strength (Clark et al. 2014).

<sup>65</sup> See section iv.

<sup>66</sup> Synaesthetic may also, rarely, be spelt synaesthetic. The American English spelling omits the a.

Beside breaking old forms, painters and musicians as well as playwrights found it necessary sometimes to reach out beyond the confines of their respective genres for effective expressive techniques. The term "synaesthesia" began to appear in psychiatric literature in the 1890s to describe a sensation such as color, produced by a stimulus, such as sound, generally associated with another part of the sensory system. The idea was not new. The Romantics associated painting and music, and Baudelaire used such "correspondences" in a poem of that title that subsequently became an inspiration for the Symbolists. Wagner sought to achieve sensory correspondences of light and sound in his creation of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, and Appia tried to stage them for him. Odilon Redon called himself a *peintre symphonique*, and around 1905 the mystical Lithuanian musician M. K. Curionis turned to painting to depict colored compositions conceived as symphonic movements. (Kern 2003: 202)

The crossing over of the senses, and genres, is not only found with the visual, although this might be the most commonly recognised form. Merleau-Ponty explains that an event known only through sight 'speaks to all of our senses at the same time as it speaks to vision' (Merleau-Ponty 2012: 238): literature (language) can provoke corporeal awareness of phenomena that are not physically present. Individual words or sounds may also be associated with phenomenological qualities. One example is the kiki/bouba effect (Ramachandran & Hubbard 2001:18-23), where there is an association between sound and shape. When participants (no matter their primary language) are shown two shapes (Figure 1) and asked which corresponds to each 'name' the most common response is that the angular shape is kiki and the rounded shape is bouba. The drawn line is shown to contain phenomenological qualities. How these are associated depends on context: they might be understood as objects, sounds, spatial forms or physical attributes. The capacity for sounds to provide sensory information, that kiki is sharp (hard) and bouba is rounded (soft), provides an understanding of the phenomenological capability of language. These qualities, most easily recognised in onomatopoeic words and poetic texts, are integral to language.

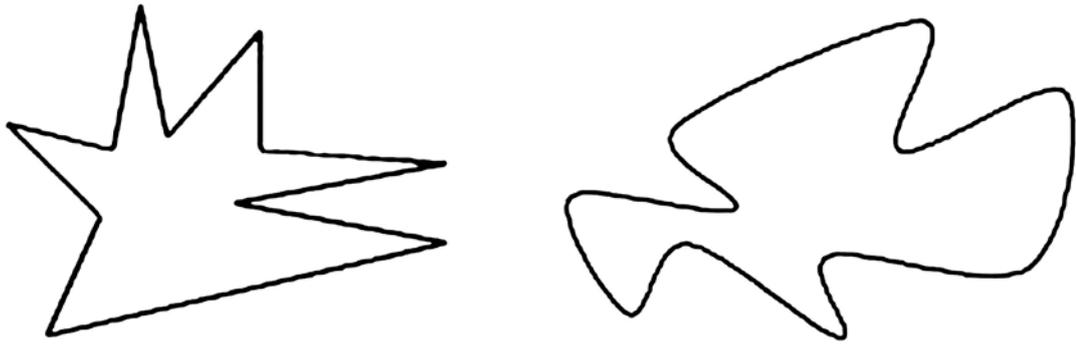


Figure 1: Kiki and bouba shapes from Ramachandran & Hubbard 2001:19. When these forms are asked to be connected with the labels kiki and bouba it is usual for the left to be named kiki and the right as bouba

Poetic stimulation allows the imagination to expand provided stimuli and in doing so asks that the senses be overlapped: as one reads a text (a visual experience) it asks the reader to *feel* what is described, to taste, hear or smell things not physically present and to colour these senses with the timbre of the poetic image. Poetry is a synaesthetic medium: it evokes sensation. It is common to both the text and the drawing and through imaginative input inhabitation of any space can take place: prompting a return to the living nature of Bachelard's houses, with their facets of unreality and imagination (1994: 59). The thesis argues that this understanding must be expanded to apply to all architectural space and that poetic language has the capacity to enhance architectural speculation. In particular the temporal nature inherent in literary worlds (its sequential revelation of information) is often lacking in traditional architectural representations of space, yet is fundamental to physical spatial experience. Whilst digital imagery takes steps towards this, the results are often more clinical than experiential.

Stimuli that form experience are phenomena perceived through the senses and the body, but they require the imagination in order to be understood. There is no clear division between each sense, something taken advantage of by the architectural

rendition. The rendition aims for a synesthetic response. The thesis examines literary language as an alternative means of introducing sensory and temporal aspects into architectural renditions and to increase its sensory capacity. Whilst it may be argued that phenomenology is based only on physical sensations, this thesis looks to *The Poetics of Space* to provide a starting methodology for examining poetic space phenomenologically through its connections with the imagination and inhabitation.

#### **iv: A Rendering of Literary Space as a Means of Analysis**

##### ***The Poetics of Space as a Guide to Literary Phenomenology***

The final section of this chapter sets out the principles from which the methods of research and its resonance with the thesis are derived. It begins with Bachelard's understanding of poetic phenomenology and ends with an overview of the thesis. In *The Poetics of Space* Bachelard makes several points pertinent to the thesis. It is from this text that the position that literary space can be regarded as architectural space is derived. It provides the primary springing points for the subsequent study of Peake's space. Whilst Bachelard specifically refers to poetry rather than literature, the same principles may apply to any written or spoken image if it is evocative and poetic enough.

**The first point drawn from *The Poetics of Space* is that *images are different from metaphors* and images are valuable in regard to phenomenology and experience, whereas metaphors are not (1994: 74).** This is important in regards to literary criticism.<sup>67</sup> The distinction between *image* and *metaphor* is one made by the reader

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<sup>67</sup> See section 1.2.

rather than the author.<sup>68</sup> Here the spaces and events of Gormenghast are understood to be *images* and so are worthy of phenomenological examination. As Blanchot states the author (architect) relinquishes the work. It is transferred and detached from their intent:

a disconcerting ordeal begins. The author sees other people taking an interest in his work, but the interest they take in it is different from the interest that made it a pure expression of himself, and that different interest changes the work, transforms it into something different, something in which he does not recognize the original perfection. For him the work has disappeared, it has become a work belonging to other people, a work which includes them and does not include him [...] the writer cannot disregard this new stage. As we have seen, he exists only in his work, but the work exists only when it has become this public, alien reality, made and unmade by colliding with other realities. So he really is inside the work, but the work itself is disappearing. (Blanchot 1995b: 305-6)

The ordeal of transformation occurs each time a reader-as-inhabitant experiences a space; imagination takes the work and alters it.<sup>69</sup> This is as true of architecture as literature: if 'author/writer' were to be replaced with 'architect' in Blanchot's statement the effect would be identical. It is only with consent of the reader/inhabitant that metaphors have significance: if they do not understand, or choose to reject, hidden meanings and layers of references, only the image remains.<sup>70</sup>

The second point derived from Bachelard is that *pauses and interruptions in narratives which explore 'insignificant confidences' are both joyful and deeply meaningful* (1994: 71; 162). These instances should not be curtailed or dismissed as purely self-indulgent but explored and inhabited. As will be shown, Peake frequently pauses the narrative in his texts to allow the reader to inhabit spaces with characters and

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<sup>68</sup> The metaphor provides a contradiction because with physical space, as with literary space, it can exist in parallel to the image. Yet if the inhabitant is not party to understanding then meaning is not transferred.

<sup>69</sup> See sections 1.2 and 5.3.

<sup>70</sup> There are attempts to reinforce conceptual ideas through secondary material published beyond a work, but this does not guarantee the reader/inhabitant will read, understand or care.

events.<sup>71</sup> Peake's inclusion of episodes external to the narrative provides invitations to (day)dream and they are significant for the author-architect and the reader-inhabitant.

Thirdly, *language is able to influence the body in a physical manner*. In *The Poetics of Space* this is asserted several times: about physical exertion when the imagination uses muscle memory (11), temperature (39), light, smell and sounds (60-1), taste and, again, smells (174). The understanding that one can use the entire range of senses when the imagination is engaged poetically allows for the text, and subsequent renditions, to be analysed phenomenologically. The acting of imagined stimuli upon the corporeal and mental awareness of a reader/viewer places them in an environment not physically present. This connects the imagination to the body and reinforces the concepts of inhabitation and exploration, as does the following principle.

*One is able to inhabit (live in) the spaces that language creates*. The textual or visual representation of the house (space) is able to evoke understanding of inhabitation:

I go to live in the "literary prints" poets offer me. The more simple the engraved house the more it fires my imagination as an inhabitant. It does not remain a mere "representation." Its lines have *force* and, as a shelter, it is *fortifying*. It asks to be lived in simply with all the *security* that *simplicity* gives. The print house awakens a *feeling for the hut* in me and, through it, I re-experience the *penetrating gaze* of the *little window*. But see now what has happened! When I speak the image sincerely, I suddenly feel a need to underline. And what is *underlining* but *engraving* while we write? (1994: 50-1)<sup>72</sup>

As with muscle memory, which understands the physical act and the weight of an object, the memory of inhabitation allows a representation to act upon the imagination shifting consciousness to within the depicted space. It is not just the *feeling* that Bachelard describes but the comprehension and certainty that this representation

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<sup>71</sup> See sections 1.3, 3.3 and 4.4.

<sup>72</sup> The act of engraving and marking literary inhabitation parallels Peake's ideas. See sections iii and 4.2.

awakens that this space is somewhere one can *exist*. This inhabitation can be of places which are impossible on a purely physical level – the corner, spider's web or moulding (145) – but nevertheless the understanding of what it would be like to be able to inhabit and be contained by these spaces is inherent in the imagination.<sup>73</sup> There are conditions which create '*realities of the imagination*' (158) this thesis focuses on these situations.

**The final point is that *descriptions are not enough to provide a complete accounting of (imaginary) space, enrichment is inevitable. All the spaces we occupy, whether physical or not, become personal through the act of inhabitation.*** This is true in the distortions of space provided by the imagination (10) and in enrichments provided by memory.<sup>74</sup> We never wholly exist in physical space and in inhabiting any situation spatial augmentation is encountered:

memory and imagination remain associated, each one working for their mutual deepening [...] they both constitute a community of memory and image. Thus the house is not experienced from day to day only, on the thread of a narrative, or in the telling of our own story (5).

Memory and imagination are important and significant in spatial understanding.<sup>75</sup>

Through remembered experiences the imagination is able to construct an awareness of inhabited spaces. Experiences are collated within the memory and acquired knowledge brings expectations of what a space might be: which may, or may not, be accurate.

Although Bachelard states that there would be no use in providing detailed descriptions or drawings: 'What would be the use, for instance, in giving the plan of the room that was really *my* room' (13) here architectural principles digress. The thesis

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<sup>73</sup> See section iii.

<sup>74</sup> It is not only memories of 'true' places that augment inhabited environments. Spaces in linguistic and visual media, with strong resonance to the imagination, also inform inhabitation and spatial awareness.

<sup>75</sup> This may be speculation about what is behind a closed door in a room, or in regards to the unseen and mythical; like the monster under the bed which is culturally present in many childhood bedrooms.

counters this notion: if drawn, or written, poetically, architectural drawings can enhance inhabitation, imagination and spatial experience. In contrast, Bachelard's statement (when discussing the addition of data to enrich understanding of images) that: 'We must even be careful lest the too vivid colors of the illustration make the being of the image lose its original light' (232-3) indicates that the spirit of the work must be handled with care. As Peake's comments about illustrating also reflect:

The intangible magic – the un-drawable magic. It's all in the words that hang together and glitter on the open page.

It's a somewhat sobering thought when you realize that the more vivid the description of the characters or scenes as they rise up and under Lewis Carroll's pen – or under anyone's pen for that matter – the more vivid they are, as I say, the less they need illustrating. It's the unanswerable paradox. The more vivid the author, the less need there is for the artist and yet, at the same time, the more vivid the description the more the artist's pen will itch for ink.

Praise be that books are illustrated nevertheless in spite of logic. What a lot of wonderful drawings would never have been born if logic had had its way!' (Peake 1954: 1)

The architect must also contend with this paradox – the need to explore (usually through rendition) the aspects clearest to the imagination. However, often it is the architect's own imagination and intent they are illustrating rather than that of another (although a client's input also has an effect). Bachelard demonstrates that there is great potential within the poetic image. This has significant meaning for the architect and if the capacity to form images within the imagination through description was to become a stronger, more considered aspect of the design process then this would have the potential for a combination of language and image to trigger the kind of burning response that Peake had to Carroll's words. This is what this thesis examines, through Peake's texts.

### ***Summary of Thesis***

The architectural examination of Peake's literary space is formed of two aspects: the renditions and the thesis. These two forms of describing architectural space work in parallel to form a discussion about what architectural space might be and how it can be formed through language. They are processes of revelation and discovery and conclusions are drawn both through the written text and more literally in the formation of drawings and models as architect, theorist and historian Jonathan Hill explains:

Sometimes a building is not the best way to explore an architectural idea. Consequently, architects, especially influential ones, tend to talk, write and draw a lot as well as build. The relations between the drawings text and building are multidirectional. (Frasconi, Hale & Starkey 2007: 210)

In order to examine the connection between language and architectural space through Peake's work the thesis first introduces the texts and their author in chapter 1. The nature of the text is revealed alongside Peake's simultaneous creation of the text with drawings and the distance between the author and the text discussed. The narratives of *The Gormenghast Trilogy* and 'Boy in Darkness', the manuscripts and the opera manuscripts are introduced and considered. This chapter positions the work and its analysis, setting the parameters for document use so that the methods of extracting and rendering the loci can be discussed and the effects of rendition put into context.

Chapter 2 outlines the methods employed in this research. The progression from text to architectural rendition is demonstrated to clarify the capacity of Peake's text to form space and in order to make the data used comprehensible. It begins with a discussion of the architect's imagination; an overview of the techniques used to approach Peake's text and positions these practices alongside others who have also used atypical

analytical methods. There is an overview of the rendition principles and processes, which allows for an understanding of the resultant renditions in relation to the text and their architectural qualities. It also highlights areas of inference and knowledge derived from Peake's text. There is an introduction to and discussion of the exhibition produced for this research and practical aspects of curation.

Chapters 3 and 4, counterpoint each other in their analysis of the renditions and the architectural qualities of Peake's spaces. Chapter 3 examines the loci and renditions from an external and 'objective' architectural position in regards to scale. This allows the spaces to be discussed architecturally so that the examination of the effects of rendition and architectural imagination can be analysed. Chapter 3 is driven by the scale of Peake's work through an awareness of the sublime and the beautiful and their alteration as loci move from literary text to architectural rendition. The chapter is brought to a conclusion by the discussion of the effects of the exhibition both on the loci and on those who inhabit the physical gallery space.

In comparison, chapter 4 acts from within the loci, positioning the analysis alongside the characters, readers and architectural-draughtsman as inhabitants. It discusses the limitations of Peake's spaces as potential architecture and the capacity for inhabitation as text and as rendition. The methods of occupation are defined and explored as separate and integral components of the text. Complex spatial arrangements within the text reveal the capacity literary loci have to create multifaceted spaces and connections. Three aspects of space are used: folded, looped, and theatrical event. Rendered examples provide the basis for an analysis of the architectural-draughtsman's

inhabitation: loci of the East Wing of Gormenghast, rendered as a long section, examine the capacity for expansion and indeterminate event-time; loci of imprisonment provide the basis for an analysis of confinement within modelled renditions. These examples form an understanding of the ephemeral aspects of Peake's spaces as potential architecture.

The final chapter draws the threads of the thesis together. There is a brief summary of the discussion and the questions asked in the introduction are returned to. The concluding section examines the potential for literary language within architecture and the broader ramifications of altering the present attitudes to language within the field: the personal is interwoven with the critical as the processes of the thesis are resolved. It highlights the need for the creative text to act within the processes of architectural design, not only as a description of space once it has been designed but as an inherent aspect of the process of forming and imagining spaces that are not yet existent. It discusses the potential for literary language to act as a tool for design.

## Chapter 1: Peake, *The Gormenghast Trilogy* and Manuscripts

### 1.1: Summary

Placing the thesis in the wider architectural context, this chapter introduces Mervyn Peake, his creative work and the texts examined in the thesis. It illustrates why the selected texts are apt for architectural spatial analysis and provides a framework for the methods of forming and analysing the architectural renditions, via the architectural imagination.<sup>76</sup> The chapter establishes the relationship between the author, text, manuscripts and architectural-draughtsman-as-reader.

A brief overview of Peake's oeuvre and working techniques begins the chapter so that his spaces can be examined through the image, rather than the metaphor. This establishes *The Gormenghast Trilogy* and 'Boy in Darkness' as unique literary environments, from which architectural understanding can be derived.<sup>77</sup> The poetic nature of Peake's texts is revealed alongside his writing methods, showing the unique understanding that comes from the creation of text in parallel with drawings. His linear narrative writing and minimal editing is shown to be an influencing factor in the forming of his spaces, narratives and characters. The deliberate act that separates the work from its author highlights the gap between the creator and the work, positioning this examination in relation to other analytical positions.

An introduction to *The Gormenghast Trilogy* and 'Boy in Darkness' allows the loci to be drawn-out and contextualised, along with the manuscripts of the trilogy and the

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<sup>76</sup> See section 2.2.

<sup>77</sup> See section iv.

operas of the same narrative. In response to these original documents the nature of editing the text alongside images is discussed and the issues occurring in printed editions. The poetic nature of Peake's prose is established as fundamental in forming the architectural potential of the texts. Information found within the manuscripts about the debated form of the Tower of Flints draws this chapter towards its conclusions. It is from these foundations that the thesis progress to the architectural study of the spaces within *The Gormenghast Trilogy* and 'Boy in Darkness'.

## 1.2: Mervyn Peake: Artist, Illustrator and Writer

### *A Brief Introduction to Mervyn Peake*

Mervyn Peake (1911 – 1968) was an illustrator, artist, and writer. He used many media in his work including pencil, pen and ink, charcoal, oil and watercolour paints. He wrote poetry, nonsense rhymes and plays, narrative and poetic prose and radio plays. He designed theatrical costumes.<sup>78</sup> He was named 'the greatest illustrator of the '40s' by Pete Bellotte (Peake & Beetles 1994: Introduction) and the 'most fashionable [illustrator] in England' of his time by Quentin Crisp (Winnington 2006a: 13).<sup>79</sup> Peake illustrated well-known works of other writers, such as *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) and *Through the Looking Glass, and What Alice Found There* (1871) by Lewis Carroll and *Treasure Island* (1883) by Robert Louis Stevenson, along with as his own published texts.

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<sup>78</sup> One such costume for the 1938 production of *The Insect Play* is reproduced in Winnington 2009:74.

<sup>79</sup> It will be noted that there are frequent, and different, references for Winnington. G. Peter Winnington is the 'world authority' (Winnington 2013a) on Peake and has written a great deal about his life and work. He edits *Peake Studies*, a twice yearly periodical (it is not peer reviewed and is therefore not used as a source, except for radio transcripts published within, which are not available elsewhere).

Much of his work, unpublished in his lifetime, has since been published due to increased interest. He was prolific: his wife, Maeve Gilmore, wrote that when he died he left:

behind him 10,000 drawings, 200 oil paintings, books, poems, short stories, illustrations, plays, film scripts, stage designs, and ideas that are as radiant in conception and execution as they were from their inception. (Gilmore & Peake 1999: 300)

Although he considered himself an artist, 'above all things that he did he wished to be a painter, and I think it was perhaps the medium in which he was least sure' (Gilmore 1970: 64), he is now best remembered as the author of *The Gormenghast Trilogy*.

Through his work Peake studied humanity, often emphasising the grotesque. He created caricatures highlighting and exploring aspects that interested him, including facets of madness. It is worth noting the conversation in the 1945 radio discussion *The Reader Takes Over* (Peake 2011d: 37-8) in regards to this, although it becomes somewhat ironic in light of his later illness and its consequences. In this conversation he describes an ever increasing need to diagnose what he calls 'extreme individualism'. He also states that his characters of *Titus Groan* are not neurotic, but that they would be if they were unable to be themselves.<sup>80</sup> These novels inspired the misconception that his 'books were so darkly complex that writing them had sent him mad' (Winnington 2006a: 13).

This 'madness' has since been re-diagnosed as a form of Parkinson's disease, combined with the effects of some of the treatments. It caused his decline, halted his work and ended his life at the age of 57. Doctor and theorist Demetrios Sahlas identifies Peake's condition as likely to be dementia with Lewy bodies, a condition associated with Alzheimer's and Parkinsonism. This was not an established condition until the 1980s

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<sup>80</sup> See section 4.3.

and consequently was untreatable during Peake's lifetime.<sup>81</sup> The unknown nature of his illness, and its effects on his behaviour, led to a perpetuation of the madness myth. Greater knowledge of his condition allows for a better understanding of the effects it had on his work, particularly upon *Titus Alone*, the third Titus novel. His symptoms first appeared nearly twenty years before his death, although he continued to teach until 1961 and, with the aid of his wife, to illustrate and write until a year before he died. There have, to date, been nine biographies and memoirs about Mervyn Peake's life; written by his family, friends and biographers. They are each accurate, detailed and sentimental to different extents and have been received in a more or less positive manner. There are two websites and a twice yearly periodical dedicated to him.<sup>82</sup>

Peake was a skilled poet and his collections explore a plethora of emotions, as seen in the titles of his publications. His first poetry collection, *Shapes & Sounds* (1941), was published five years before *Titus Groan*. Others were published in his lifetime; *Rhymes Without Reason* (1944), *The Glassblowers* (1950); *Poems & Drawings* (1965) and *A Reverie of Bone* (1967). Another two collections were published posthumously; *Selected Poems - Mervyn Peake* (1972) and *The Rhyme of the Flying Bomb* (1973).<sup>83</sup> He was more prolific in his poetic writing than novels, suggesting he was more practiced in expressing himself in this medium. Much of his poetry is spatial and evocative not only in visual imagery but in all the senses. The descriptions in the following poem are poetically rich.

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<sup>81</sup> Sahlas relied on documentation to make this diagnosis, stating '[t]here is abundant bibliographical evidence that he exhibited all of the core features (only two of which are required for a probable diagnosis of DLB)' (Sahlas 2003: 892).

<sup>82</sup> An official website, run by Peake's estate (Eldred 2013), and a Peake Studies site (Winnington 2013a).

<sup>83</sup> Publication dates do not indicate time of writing. The dates for poems reproduced in *Peake's Progress* (Gilmore 1978) are more indicative of their development: *A Reverie of Bone*, 1941 (1978:257) and *The Rhyme of the Flying Bomb*, c.1947 (445), for example, are both early in his career.

It evokes tactile material awareness, the sense of London both as an anthropomorphic personification and as a place of inhabitation:

LONDON, 1941

Half masonry, half pain; her head,  
From which the plaster breaks away  
Like flesh from the rough bone, is turned  
Upon a neck of stones; her eyes  
Are lid-less windows of smashed glass,  
Each star-shaped pupil  
Giving upon a vault so vast  
How can the head contain it?

The raw smoke  
Is inter-wreathing through the jaggedness  
Of her sky-broken panes, and mirror'd  
Fires dance like madmen on the splinters.

All else is stillness save the dancing splinters  
And the slow inter-wreathing of the smoke.

Her breasts are crumbling brick where the black ivy  
Had clung like a fantastic child for succour  
And now hangs draggled with long peels of paper,  
Fire-crisp, fire-faded awnings of limp paper  
Repeating still their ghosted leaf and lily.

Grass for her cold skin's hair, the grass of cities  
Wilted and swaying on her plaster brow  
From winds that stream along the streets of cities:

Across a world of sudden fear and firelight  
She towers erect, the great stones at her throat,  
Her rusted ribs like railings round her heart;  
A figure of dry wounds – of winter wounds –  
O mother of wounds; half masonry, half pain. (Gilmore 1978: 164)

It describes the *feeling* of breathing hot smoke and being scorched by fire. The reader is able to *experience* this literary instance of London via the text. There are nuances of Gormenghast throughout this example; the descriptions of decay and melancholy arouse something beautiful.<sup>84</sup> Peake experimented with technique and genre in all his media. He wrote comic and tragic poems, brief and tantalising and long and complex, nonsense

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<sup>84</sup> See section 3.2.

rhymes and poetry of war. He explored places, events and quests, the poetry of love, death and decay: all themes found in his novels, interwoven and expressive in their constructs.

Peake's work reveals a desire for others to participate. His methods are familiar to the architect; use of different media; awareness of others and constant re-evaluation. An acceptance and encouragement of others' involvement, with the inevitable relinquishing of control (see below), along with an inherent understanding of space, makes his work suitable for this research. He wrote in *Craft of the Lead Pencil* (1946) that '[t]here are no accidental shadows. It is best to think of a shadow as a *result*' (in Gilmore & Johnson 1974: 55): a statement as relevant to architecture as to drawing. Whilst he thought of himself as a painter 'first and foremost' (Winninton 2000: 55) there has been debate by reviewers, students and biographers about whether he was writing as an artist, or was an artist with a writers eye (Winnington 2006b: 33-6). Yet, this does not fundamentally matter. Peake states in his talk *The Artist's World* (1947):

We do not see with our eyes, but with our trades. And so it is that though we stare in the same direction we all see something different. To a poet, it may be that a tree is a green fountain. To a farmer, this same tree may be his enemy casting its hurtful shadow on his crops. To a carpenter it is seen as potential timber and to a child it is a world of boughs, somewhere to climb alone secret leaves.

And so it is with everything. We only see what we understand; and we are thus very nearly blind.

[...] the marvels of the visible world are not things in themselves but revelations to stir the imagination – to conduct us to amazing climates of the mind, which climates it is for the artist to translate into paint or into words. When I say the marvels of the physical world, I do not mean to curtain off the sordid, the horrific, the ghastly. (Peake 2011b: 5-7)

His written work has synaesthetic qualities with sounds, physical phenomena and tactile experiences, as well as visual descriptions.<sup>85</sup> These qualities enable a creative imagination to connect with and delight in his work. It is an aspect of his work he was aware of: he

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<sup>85</sup> See section iii.

comments in *The Reader Takes Over* (1945), that his characters have particular colours and their voices different shades and tones (Peake 2011d: 31). He also remarks in his talk on *Book Illustration* (1947) that books have different smells, not only in the embodied sense but also in our understanding of them (Peake 2011c: 17).<sup>86</sup> His paintings and illustrations capture character and personality; they are not mere representations of beauty but explorations of human qualities. His observations of the world provide the foundations for his work, with the unique quality of space and sensory perception that comes from intelligent, complex thought, a visual artistry and an eye for un-noticed details. His commentary on London offers further insight:

But for the fact that the eye can cease to respond, the brain to absorb, the heart to miss a beat, the spirit to launch itself on a hazard of speculation, then, surely in the weird creatures that make up this dark hive called London, or for that matter the world, there would lie spread before us every day such a scene as thwarts the brains of madmen, a delirium of heads and fames and hands, a cavalcade hardly to be suffered for the very endlessness of its inventive fantasy. (Peake c.1946: D F01r)

This sensitivity to detail and physical sensation makes the spaces of Peake's texts interesting for architectural study. He had no known specific interest or training in architecture, yet his literature describes places and spaces in a highly detailed and eloquent manner: as an artist he must have been aware of space as something more than a background. Material affects acoustics, void and mass, shape, space and light: whilst he may not have thought architecturally, space is inherent in his work. Peake's broad scope of interests, media and techniques is an approach that the architect is familiar with. His work steps beyond the traditional boundaries of his media. He drew his awareness of the word together and this forms an expansive and sensitive body of work.

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<sup>86</sup> See section 1.3.

### ***Peake's Consideration of Language and Approach to Writing***

Peake's approach to writing was instinctive and does not always follow established convention. As an illustrator he was aware of the visual aspects of text in its printed or autographed form: the graphic impact of making marks as well as linguistic meaning.<sup>87</sup>

In one of his few public expressions about his work, the introduction to 'Drawings by Mervyn Peake' (1949) he explores the connection between mark-making and vision:

It is all a matter of making marks, marks that correspond to an inkling of leaden or inky or pigment vision. The vision may be weak, confused, or obtuse, but it must be vision. A loaf of bread is not worth drawing, and nor is anything else unless it is seen, as it were, for the first time. (Gilmore 1978: 239)

The act of drawing is also that of writing and as an author his tools were not only pens and pencils but also vocabulary. In his appearance on *The Reader Takes Over*, he describes his method of understanding the characters he created:

I suppose under the heading of the method would come this business of trying to make one's character's [sic] talk. The actual character, the look of the character, I think, would be considered very bizarre and grotesque; and the difficulty of making them speak in the same world, as it were, [as] that [in which] they appear physically. In other words, if they have a certain colour, say they are a kind of dark green or pale blue, physically, as against the normal grey, then their voices have to be either dark blue or pale green. And that I found awfully difficult. One of the things I did was to make drawings of them and check the things they said by the drawings, trying to imagine if that kind of remark could possibly come from that terrible mouth, for instance. (Peake 2011d: 31)<sup>88</sup>

Peake's prose in *The Gormenghast Trilogy* tends towards the poetic not only in imagery but also in its written structures. It is not the prose of the traditional storyteller in which the narrative drives the text, keeping the action continuously moving.<sup>89</sup> Peake's prose is shaped by a poetic awareness and knowledge of the patterns used in poetic writing.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> See section iii.

<sup>88</sup> The parentheses are present in the transcription of this text.

<sup>89</sup> See Lodge 1979.

<sup>90</sup> Although this thesis focuses on the prose and manuscripts of *The Gormenghast Trilogy* and 'Boy in Darkness' much of what is discussed can also be applied to Peake's other literary works.

Peake's consideration for the words, sounds and textures of language creates a prose which is self-conscious and deliberate. As literary critic and theorist Terence Hawkes explains, poetic language is removed from prosaic language through this self-awareness:

it characteristically draws attention to itself and systematically intensifies its own linguistic qualities. As a result, words in poetry have their own status not simply of vehicles for thoughts, but of objects in their own right, autonomous concrete entities. (Hawkes 2003: 48)

The act of poetic writing forces deliberation over individual words and this form of writing becomes more instinctual over time. Peake's prose reveals his practice in poetry; his prose is less refined and more poetic. His texts are raw in their writing and limited editing and this is manifested in different ways through the trilogy. *Titus Groan* in particular clearly shows Peake's instinctual method of writing.

Sebastian Peake's comments on his father's relationship with books reveal that Mervyn Peake 'was not a great reader, but possessed many books' (Gilmore & Peake 1999:203) and that he 'could quote from books verbatim, could recite complete poems if only given the first line' (1999: 224).<sup>91</sup> This suggests he had a strong internal awareness of literature but that it was a visceral understanding. The literary techniques he used feel instinctual to the reader, rather than overly honed. His narratives are explorations of the imagination as Gilmore comments:

Sometimes, whenever he was reading [to Sebastian], he would go off on flights of his imagination, unable to stop himself. So Peter Rabbit might start off in Mr McGregor's garden, and would end up on the beach with lots of local Sark or Kent or Chelsea friends, frying sausages over a roaring fire; or he would set out on all kinds of marvellous wanderings that would be quite at a tangent to his usual life. (Gilmore & Peake 1999:181)

Peake's explorative writing methods parallel the architectural design process.<sup>92</sup> His autograph manuscripts reveal that as he wrote, the spaces, characters and plot developed,

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<sup>91</sup> Peake's also designed the logo for Pan Books, a figure playing the pipes (Gilmore & Peake 1999: 205).

<sup>92</sup> See sections 5.2 and 5.3.

as might be expected, but also that he did not often go back and reverse engineer sections in the editing process.<sup>93</sup> He used various pens and pencils throughout the notebooks, often using the same for both text and sketches at any given time. They also included dates; clearly show the progress of his writing and his method of sketching as he wrote: the way the text and sketches fit together, each formed around the other, attests to this (Figure 2). The narrative progression is remarkably close to that of the printed editions and it is clear Peake wrote the story broadly in the order it was intended to be read.<sup>94</sup> This linear process allows Peake to develop the narrative as the reader encounters it.<sup>95</sup> So whilst it leads to skipping between events it also makes connections that might not otherwise be clear.<sup>96</sup> His texts demonstrate the constant evolution of his imaginary worlds. A text is a *process*, like any creative work, a 'finished' piece might be considered an arbitrary stopping point. As Jonathan Hale states this:

implies that becoming an artist involves behaving as an artist does, learning to perceive the world through the act of making art, rather than simply learning how to make paintings. We might also usefully think of an architect as operating in a similar way, perceiving the world through the process of redesigning it. (Hale 2017: 89)

Where a reader might expect the novel to read as though it had emerged into the world as a gestalt (due to careful re-working and editing), with Peake's text the process remains visible.<sup>97</sup> The process of design is important and contains the need for continual

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<sup>93</sup> The typescript manuscripts play a lesser part in this research as they do not contain sketches.

<sup>94</sup> It might be argued that as only his existent manuscripts can be studied there were unseen editing processes. However, war-time rationing and his circumstances would have limited the discard process associated with the 'dramas' of writing. As he generally wrote in notebooks his manuscripts remain bound together, including the early editing process.

<sup>95</sup> See section 4.3.

<sup>96</sup> It can also be assumed that he used these techniques in his other literary works and this can be observed in other manuscripts within the Peake archive held at the British Library.

<sup>97</sup> The appearance of spontaneous existence can be applied to any creative process: paintings are usually exhibited after 'completion'. Architectural design is publicised as 'finished'. Although the design process

reassessment of design criteria and site qualities. In allowing his work to reveal its own development Peake's prose contains a potentially potent addition to the architectural process in its capacity to narratively document the changes that occur.<sup>98</sup>

The truth of these observations can be observed in the Gormenghast manuscripts. They show an integration of drawing and writing as a processing of thought.<sup>99</sup> Drawings are placed within and around the hand-written text, (some of which appear in later, illustrated editions), alongside countless other not-related sketches and abstract doodles.<sup>100</sup> These drawings are powerful and evocative and work alongside his continuous testing of words. Often, these sketches appear during passages of speech and seem to be linked to the (re-)writing of spoken text (Figure 2). This process of experimentation and development through images as well as text (to create *voices* as well as character descriptions) is one of the reasons why his creations are recognisably human, for all their grotesqueness, within all his work.<sup>101</sup> Peake uses sketches to capture the *otherness* of his characters.<sup>102</sup> It is not only the text's inhabitants that appear in these sketches; aspects of the architectural qualities of Gormenghast (and beyond) are also revealed. The stones and brickwork of the castle-city appear frequently, along with large objects, candlesticks, bookstands and pieces of furniture, both with and without human figures (Figure 3, Figure 4). There are a number of atmospheric sketches, of built structures and natural features, in which the characters are almost secondary (Figure 5).

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is revealed to clients and selected others, it is not often fully revealed in its final outcome and space continues to change through inhabitation. The thesis also relies on the illusion of whole-ness.

<sup>98</sup> See section 5.3.

<sup>99</sup> See section iii.

<sup>100</sup> See section 1.4.

<sup>101</sup> See section 4.3.

<sup>102</sup> His characters do not feel, taste, or smell like facets of the author or reader (self) but distinct entities.

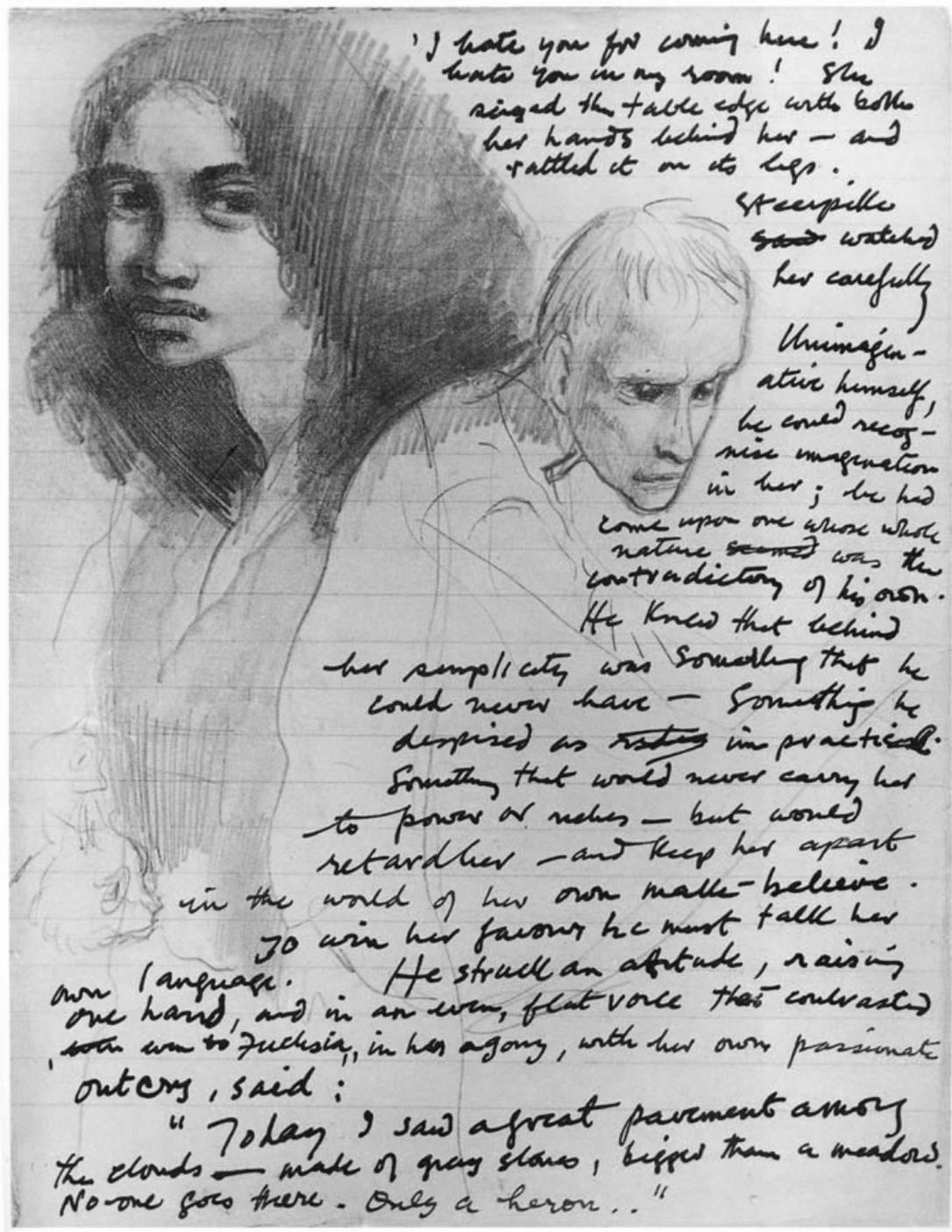


Figure 2: Sketches of Fuchsia and Steerpike with dialogue. Pencil and ink. In manuscript Add MS 88931/1/3/2, folio 70r. Original: 202mm tall by 160mm wide.





Figure 4: Figure sketch of Barquentine showing furniture and crutch. Sepia ink. In manuscript Add MS 88931/1/3/18, folio 4v. Original: 120mm tall by 110mm wide

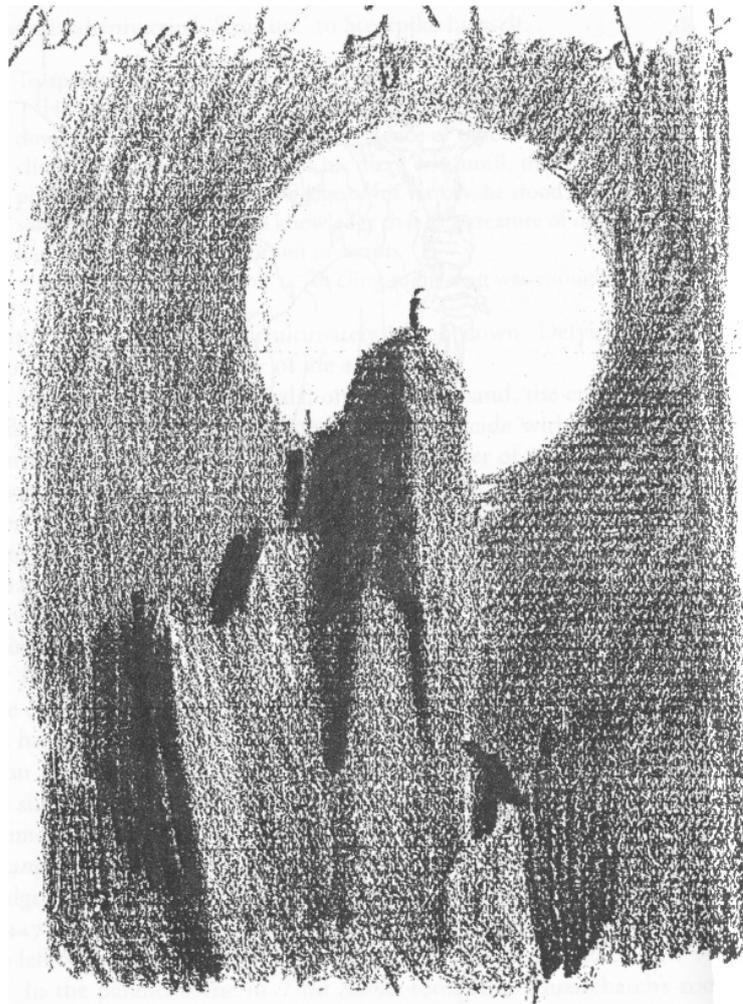


Figure 5: Keda on the Mountain. Pencil. In manuscript Add MS 88931/1/3/10, folio 11v. Original: 80mm tall by 60mm wide

Zöe Wilcox, curator of the Mervyn Peake Archive at the British Library when this research began in 2012, has analysed the drawings in the Gormenghast manuscripts.<sup>103</sup> She documents occurrences of characters' sketched depictions and analyses how these images contribute to Peake's writing. She states that '[f]or Peake, then, drawing was sometimes 'a method of problem solving'' (Wilcox 2013: 177). This 'problem solving' not only relates to his characters but also the spaces they inhabit. There are examples where it is clear he was trying to work out how events took place within a particular location.<sup>104</sup> There are many potential reasons for Peake's use of sketches and it may be that each drawing was done with a different intent: certainly the images of his children are not for narrative purposes but capture a moment. As many sketches appear to have little relation to the story, or are more in the way of doodles than compositions, it is easy to dismiss them as a creative thinking mechanism, automatic reflex or distraction. Yet, on closer inspection some of the most innocuous drawings are inherently connected to the narrative, providing additional information, or replacing edited-out text. They are poetic moments and fragments of thought, which contribute to the texture of events. One of the conclusions Wilcox has is that '[t]he evidence in the notebooks suggests that at times he did indeed abort passages of visual description in favour of drawings' (183), suggesting that those images, or fair copies, are integral to the narrative and, once publishing was considered, were intended to be included in printed editions.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> In this article Wilcox refers to the documents as the Titus manuscripts.

<sup>104</sup> See section 1.4 (Figure 13).

<sup>105</sup> John Watney, in his biography of Peake, states: 'Scholars have analysed and re-arranged the *Titus* books, in an effort to find in them an overall plan or intention, but if the two people most closely concerned, Mervyn Peake and his wife, can be believed, this never existed and there was never any thought of publication' (Watney 1976: 97).

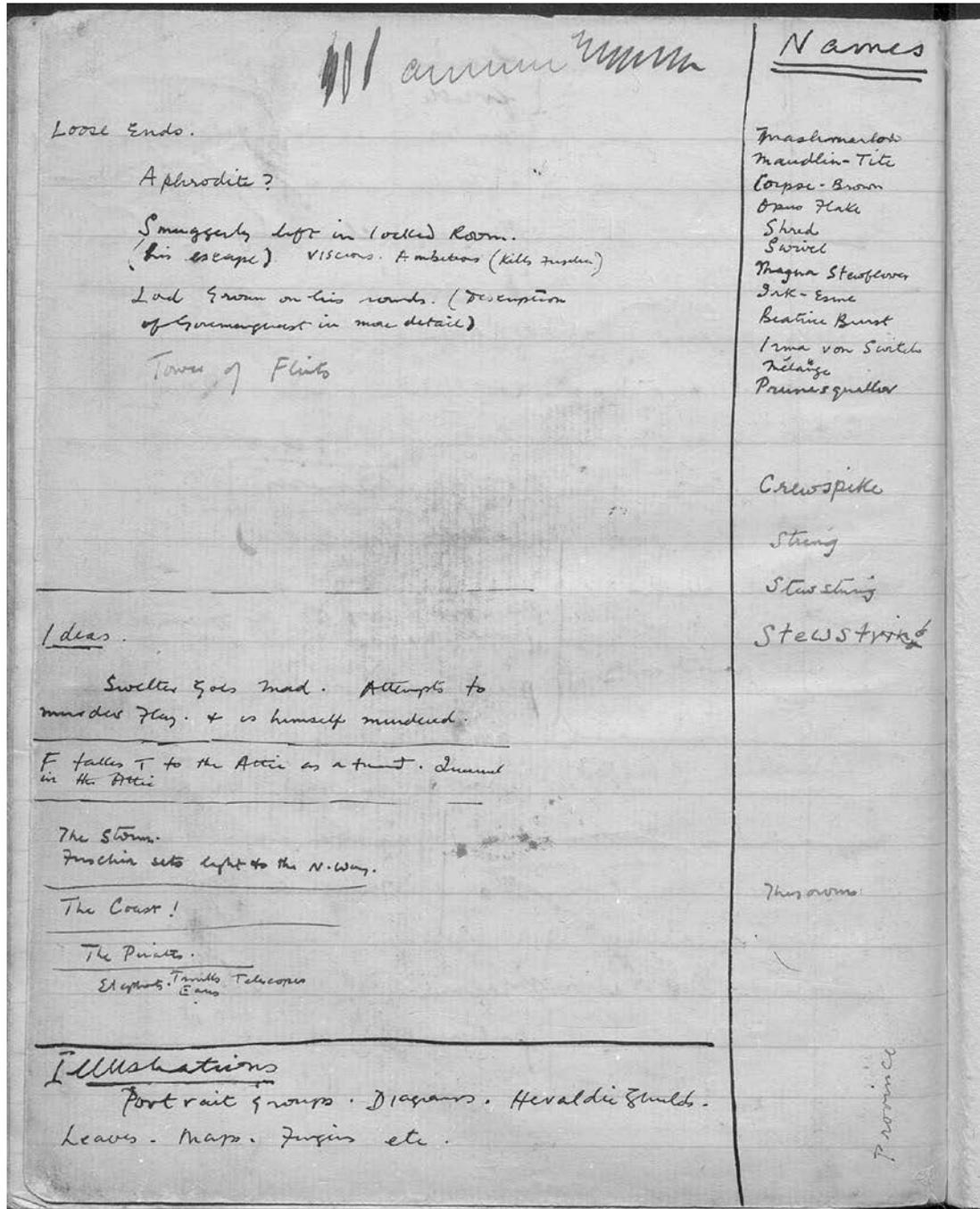


Figure 6: List of illustrations, bottom left, and list of names, top right. In manuscript Add MS 88931/1/3/2, folio 66v. Original: 202mm tall by 160mm wide.

As an author Peake was also concerned with the never-produced illustrations that might have been published.<sup>106</sup> Both John Watney's and G. Peter Winnington's bibliographies state that Peake intended the books to be illustrated, but the publisher dismissed the idea on the basis that it would 'be placing [the book] apart from 'fiction' and making a sort of Ivory Tower of it' (Watney 1976: 97).<sup>107</sup> Winnington notes that a letter from Peake to the Society of Authors, dated 12<sup>th</sup> April 1944, states his intention to reserve the right to make an illustrated edition of *Titus Groan* (2009: 129-30). He also comments that it was at an interview with the managing director of Eyre and Spottiswoode on the 21<sup>st</sup> July 1943 that the publishers dismissed this idea (195).<sup>108</sup> The manuscripts also provide evidence that Peake intended to include illustrations, at least for *Titus Groan*. At the back of Add MS 88931/1/3/2 there are several pages of notes. At the bottom of f66v there is a box labelled *Illustrations* with a list of images: 'portrait groups, diagrams, heraldic symbols, leaves, maps, figures, etc.' (Figure 6). This confirms that, at least at some point, illustrations were an integral part of Peake's ideas. It also implies he envisaged that the landscapes, castle-city and other aspects *could be mapped*.

Another question in regards to illustrations is whether Peake intended to produce them himself. Winnington comments that the descriptions in the text are not clear enough for an artist to illustrate without much personal interpretation; which might suggest Peake was intending to illustrate the work personally. Winnington also notes:

He couldn't have been intending to illustrate *everything* [sic]. So I think it's just part of his technique that, however clearly -- or vaguely -- he saw what he was writing about in his own

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<sup>106</sup> Once publishing became an option.

<sup>107</sup> An extract from a letter by Peake to Graham Greene dated 22nd July 1943.

<sup>108</sup> The original sources for these statements cannot be located.

mind, he offered no photographic descriptions. He was Peake, not "Mr. Mirror, reflecting the minutiae of all things in helpless reverence before Nature's multifarious face?"<sup>109</sup>

Although for some this may suggest there is not enough information for an illustrator, it might also indicate Peake's acceptance of another's input.<sup>110</sup> Peake wrote about the process of illustrating others' work and his comments on the vividness of descriptions and the artist's paradox are worth remembering (Peake 1954: 1).<sup>111</sup> Elsewhere he described the need for the illustrator to have 'the power to slide into another man's soul. The power to be identified with the author, character and atmosphere' (Peake 2011c: 16). This *potential* also enables a capacity to identify with the reader/viewer and create spaces for them within the text and image. It can be argued that Peake deliberately left space for the imagination within his evocative descriptions and for inclusion of illustrations within his texts in order to trigger the (unknown) artist's *need* to illustrate.

The exact nature of Peake's intentions cannot be verified, although illustrations and drawings were certainly inherent in all his written work. As *Titus Groan* began as a personal project with little intention of publishing, it is easy to envisage its illustration as a part of its creation, rather than to be provided by another. There have now been several illustrated editions: the first was the 2<sup>nd</sup> American edition of *Titus Groan* (Weybright and Talley 1967); followed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> English Edition (Eyre and Spottiswoode 1968). Published shortly before his death, there is little doubt Peake was too unwell to provide significant input into the choice and placement of illustrations.

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<sup>109</sup> From emails between Winnington and Lesser Woods (08.04.2014). 'Mr Mirror' is a reference to the introduction to 'Drawings by Mervyn Peake' (1949), reproduced in *Peake's Progress* (Gilmore 1978: 236-41). Here Peake asks what one's elemental artist name might be, listing several; including 'Mr Turgid', 'Mr Filigree' and 'Mr Reverie'. Some of this is repeated in *What is Drawing?* (1957)

<sup>110</sup> Belied by the specific and extraordinarily particular descriptions found for some loci and inhabitants.

<sup>111</sup> See section iv.

It was not only the visual aspects of the text that Peake was interested in; he also spent time considering the language and vocabulary he used, as friend of Peake Gordon Smith discusses:

[Peake] was not a 'literary' writer, like Tennyson, who knew how words would behave for him. He had to discover words (hunting them even in Roget's *Thesaurus* for his treasure) and find out what the poem itself demanded as it grew. Of course during composition the words came spontaneously, or seemed to; and sometimes phrases came first, fully-fledged. (Smith 1984: 98)

Such was the care that Peake took in finding appropriate words from existing language that he often used unusual or archaic vocabulary. When writing as the narrator of *The Gormenghast Trilogy* he did not coin words – although his characters, with their separate voices do (see below and Mills 2005: 74). This attention to vocabulary selection, using the most appropriate, evocative and interesting word for each situation, demonstrates a love of language. It may stem from a poetic sensibility and practice, where words have to be more efficiently and effectively used, but it extends into his playwriting and his prose. His love and appreciation of words is confirmed by the manuscripts. There are often vocabulary lists of appealing words in the back of his notebooks (Figure 7). They are not all correctly spelt and some are borrowed from Latin: for example caucus, chicanery, fecund, friable, incultus,<sup>112</sup> nexus and putrescent. There are words in published editions that are uncommon (scrannel,<sup>113</sup> TA 772) or appear to have been created by Peake (see Winnington 2013a: FAQ). However, most of these 'creations' can be attributed to misreading Peake's handwriting (never particular clear and which deteriorated with illness), poor spelling or errors in typing or typesetting: 'He was not the first, or probably the last, writer to consider spelling unimportant' (Watney 1976: 12).

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<sup>112</sup> Latin, overgrown, unkempt, rough, uncouth.

<sup>113</sup> Uncertain origin, slight, thin, lean, poor.

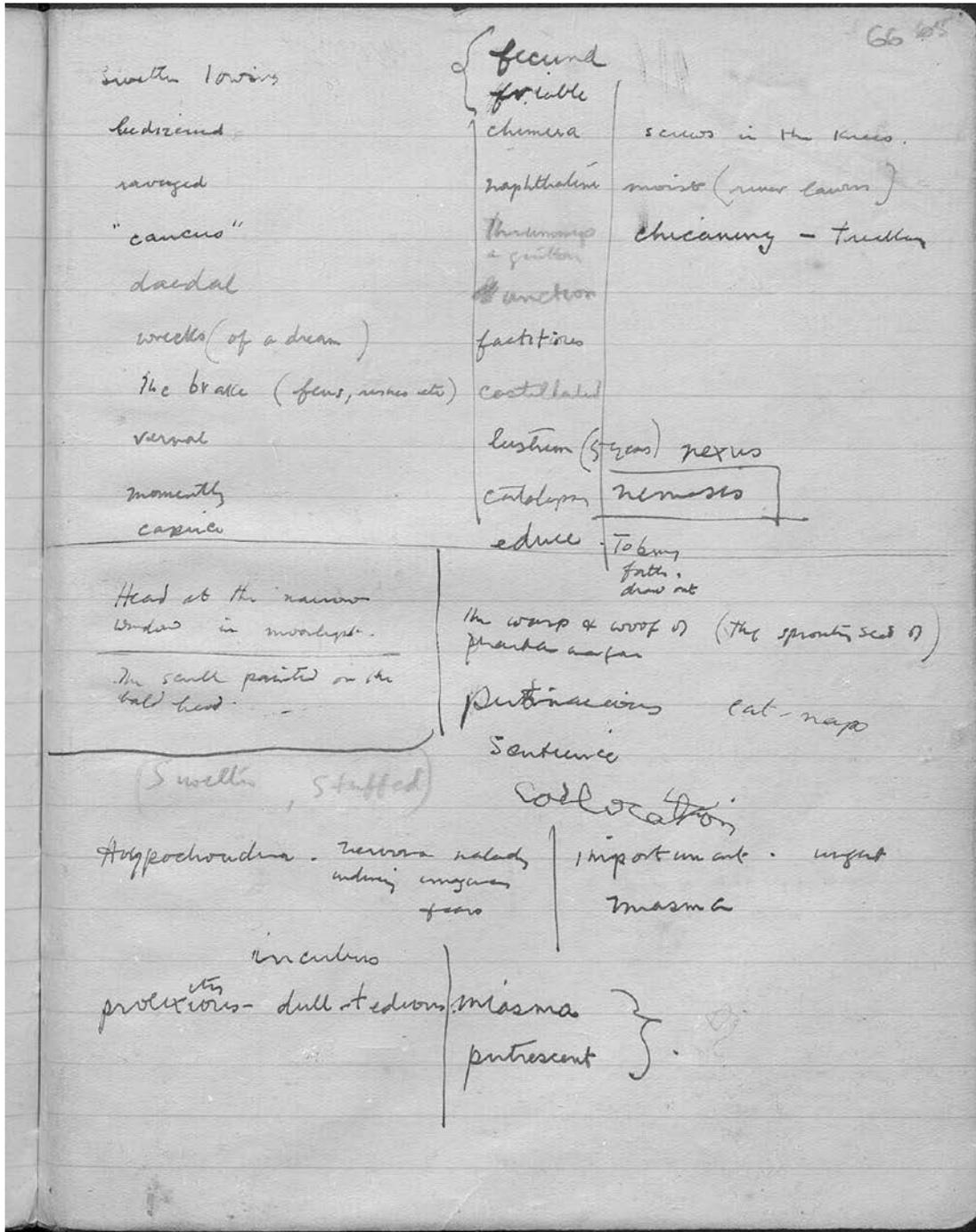


Figure 7: Lists of interesting words. In manuscript Add MS 88931/1/3/2, folio 66r. Original: 202mm tall by 160mm wide.

There are, however, words coined by characters. Although it is Peake writing it is, in effect, not him speaking: it is the voice of the character and shows his attention to individual voices and differences. Peake not only caricatured through illustration but also the linguistic tendencies of the inhabitants of his texts. Each has a distinct voice and Peake was careful to ensure that each has the correct sound and colour. The created words, spoken by characters, can therefore be taken to be deliberate and knowing errors. Examples of these, spoken by Nanny Slagg, are 'tempestable', 'ignorous' and 'querail' (*TG* 213). This character, old and small of stature, is querulous in person, vocabulary and knowledge. It was not only the author who took notice of words, his character Muzzlehatch reflects Peake's own attitude towards language in his comments:

Words can be tiresome as a swarm of insects. They can pick and buzz! Words can be no more than a series of farts; or on the other hand they can be adamant, obdurate, inviolable, stone upon stone. (*TA* 863)

It is not inherent in particular words to be more or less tiresome than other, but in their use. Peake took care to ensure that the language he used was interesting as well as evocative. He used words that intrigued him and he experimented with them as he did with his visual media, not only in meaning but also in taste and texture. His character names illustrate this point (see Figure 6 for a list of Peake's potential character names) and, as his son Sebastian Peake relays, Peake and Gilmore 'would try out sounds to see if they suited the character's nature, and jettison hundreds in the process' (Gilmore & Peake 1999: 181). This playful use of vocabulary not only has the capability to express an understanding of space and phenomenological qualities but also to evoke pleasure in the language itself. The exploration demonstrated in Peake's manuscripts show that the *process* of his work is mirrored in the methods of the architect: there is a constant testing

of ideas and experiences, drawing from external sources and experiences via instincts and imagination. This visceral understanding is that of space and events.

### *The Distance between Text and Author*

The capability to express space through language is the driving force behind this thesis. As Bachelard wrote, when studying the phenomenology of poetic space, the purpose is to examine the images within, rather than the individuals who created them. He states that 'psychological or psychoanalytical explanations concerning the author of the work of art can lead to a situation where problems of the creative imagination would be posed wrongly, or not at all' (1994: 175): a notion this thesis concurs with. As the author is inevitably disassociated from the text once it is transferred to the possession of the reader, further influence is removed. Only the text remains and is able to provide stimuli for the imagination. The author no longer exists within the writing and the work is left to speak for itself.<sup>114</sup> The absence of the author within the work is discussed by Merleau-Ponty. As Hale explains, for Merleau-Ponty the drawing (mark) illustrates both the absence and the presence of the author:

Merleau-Ponty was also concerned with the extent to which the drawing itself could be considered as an 'event'; for example, where the marks on the paper act as a kind of witness to the presence of another person, recording the story of their encounter with the materiality of the medium of the drawings. (Hale 2017: 74)

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<sup>114</sup> Blanchot discusses the ordeal of removal the author has with a text in *The Work of Fire* (1949). This disappearing act transfers possession of the text to the reader. He states that the author 'exists only in his work, but the work exists only when it has become this public, alien reality, made and unmade by colliding with other realities. So he really is inside the work, but the work itself is disappearing. [...]The reader makes the work; as he reads it, he creates it, he is its real author, he is the consciousness and the living substance of the written thing.' (Blanchot 1995b: 306)

This other-person is not physically present; they created the marks but are not able to explain them. The reader-viewer must decipher the drawing or the text without guidance. This means that Peake is not present within the text he wrote, nor is it (still) a part of him. It was written by him and he left traces of himself within it but these traces are lost within each reader. The awareness of Peake as the author is created by his name as a signifier, but this word does not signify awareness of Peake as a person, unless one knew him – it only signifies the reader's individual idea of Peake.<sup>115</sup>

Peake's reluctance to theorise about his own work makes it particularly suitable for this research. He published very little of his thoughts about his own art and so the reader (and the critic) must form their own conclusions.<sup>116</sup> *The Craft of the Lead Pencil* (1946) was the first text published on his working process. Although on the subject of drawing, his attitudes can be transferred to other media. In this book he emphasises the discovery of art and the act of capturing a unique quality of a subject. When he made his infrequent appearances on the radio he was reluctant to discuss the method or reasons for it.<sup>117</sup> There is no attempt by Peake to burden (or enlighten) the reader with hidden meanings, complex metaphors or hidden messages for excavation: if the reader wishes the image can remain intact and they can remain unaware of his intent.

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<sup>115</sup> Even then it is only the memory of Peake that is evoked, rather than the living man.

<sup>116</sup> Peake left behind few written pieces about his processes most of which have been collated and (re)published by others: *Mervyn Peake: Writings & Drawings* (Gilmore & Johnson 1974), *Peake's Progress: Selected Writings & Drawings of Mervyn Peake* (Gilmore 1978) and *Mervyn Peake: The Man and His Art* (2006a) are the most significant.

<sup>117</sup> Recordings of these radio appearances no longer exist. Transcripts were made and were once held by the BBC, most of which have not been found, and are believed to no longer exist. Those available are held by the British Library. Others have been published in *Peak Studies*, Volume 12 no.2 and no.3 with corrections made to punctuation and spelling (Peake 2011b, c & d).

In *The Reader Takes Over*, discussing *Titus Groan*, Peake stated that he had no method or 'preconceived plan' when writing and that he had not thought about placing the book into any category or genre. In the same discussion when asked directly whether there was any psychological basis to his books, he categorically denied that there was:

And, no, I can't claim anything like that; it really was a case of self-indulgence, the whole book – I enjoy the fantastic – I enjoy the fantastic and the sheer excitement of having a piece of white paper and a pen in one's hand and no dictator on earth can say what word I put down – I put down what I want to put down (Peake 2011d: 32)

Peake does not reveal a fear of the blank page but reveals its potential.<sup>118</sup> He allows the reader to be creative and to imagine the world he describes. Peake has tarnished the page for the reader and so begins the creative process. The reader is unknown to the author but Peake has a high regard for this person's imaginative skills.<sup>119</sup> He provides complex and detailed imagery through his writing, inviting them to enter absolutely into this non-physical world. He assumes the reader is capable of grand feats of imaginative world building and shows a remarkable faith in those he will never meet.

Although Peake did not theorise on his work others have. Literature on Peake and his work frequently makes comments to the effect that his early childhood in China had a significant impact upon his work.<sup>120</sup> Observations range from noting that the surroundings and lifestyle inspired and encouraged Peake from a distance (Winnington 2006a: 25), through to claiming that the majority of *The Gormenghast Trilogy* can be read as a description of this time of his life, with varying levels of symbolism, allegory

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<sup>118</sup> See sections iii and 5.3.

<sup>119</sup> Literary theorist Tanya Gardiner-Scott also recognises Peake has high expectations of his readers (1989: 98). However, she also sees the reader as passive in his environment, which this research questions.

<sup>120</sup> This may, or may not, be true. One could spend a great deal of time attempting to extract every influence upon an author in order to understand what effect their life had had on their work, with, no guarantee of accuracy unless documentation exists on every action they took and place they visited. Even then mistakes can be made as the numerous variations in Peake's biographies demonstrate.

and metaphorical interpretation: literary critic Colin Manlove (1975) is one example.

Some do this whilst quoting passages and directly link them to actual events (Watney 1976 for example). Poet and literary theorist Gay Clifford questions whether the trilogy can be called novels, preferring the term 'narrative' (1974: 91).<sup>121</sup> She perceives only allegory within the text, focusing it upon the spaces. Yet, Peake deliberately removed Gormenghast from the physical world. Winnington notes that 'particularly [in] the Titus books, Mervyn generally eliminated all reference to China [...] This ensured that his stories gained in universality by being linked to no specific time or place' (2000: 58).

The ubiquitous aspect of Peake's work is important and can be understood to be one reason for Peake's popularity with readers: the removal from a particular world, time or place gives scope to envisage the environments in relation to one's personal history, experience and perspective.<sup>122</sup> The writer can be understood as anonymous and a ghost within the text. Peake gives his work willingly to the audience. He relinquishes control. The reader can be considered *unknowing*, with a lack of awareness of the author and his intentions. However, Peake's texts have a different relationship with literary critics than with those who read for pleasure.

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<sup>121</sup> This is topic adjacent to the thesis but is worth noting and is relevant to the architectural discussion.

<sup>122</sup> The thesis assumes a typical reader does not generally read biographies and commentaries on the authors they read. This means that particular personal events are likely to go unnoticed unless directly referenced in the text (other than significant world or cultural happenings). This does not assume an ignorant or uneducated reader but one that enjoys a good story without having to interpret or analyse it. This has changed somewhat due to social media, but the premise of absence still remains.

### 1.3: Literary Criticism, Narratives and Spatial Qualities of *The Gormenghast Trilogy* and 'Boy in Darkness'

#### *Literary Criticism of The Gormenghast Trilogy*

Literary criticisms on texts produced in the 1940s involve the War and as a difficult period in history it gives another complexity to studying and analysing work of the time. Cultural historian Robert Hewison, in his account of the literary life in London during this period, gives the impression that no literature was produced that did not directly connect to the War, possibly as it would have been considered too frivolous or impossible to contemplate. He does mention, however, that only those 'manuscripts that were set in type' can be judged and that the caution of publishers may have been a factor restricting the type of material published, as well as a reduction in the number of manuscripts (for numerous physical and psychological reasons) to select from (1977: 83).<sup>123</sup> There is, therefore, a broad assumption that anything produced in this era is either a direct result of the War or a deliberate attempt to avoid it (itself a direct consequence): *The Gormenghast Trilogy* is no exception. *Titus Groan* was written whilst Peake was on military service, although he never participated in battle. These events contribute significantly to others' analysis of this text (see Hindle 1996 and Gardiner-Scott 1989). *Gormenghast* was written after Peake was discharged, as was *Titus Alone*, of the three the most easily perceived as a war novel, but furthest from WWII by date. However, there are those who contest this approach. Peake's contemporary C. S. Lewis, for example, when writing to Peake in 1958, comments:

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<sup>123</sup> Peake is mentioned in relation to his illustrations of Coleridge's *The Ancient Mariner* and their 'Apocalyptic horror', with a note that he was also a poet (153). There is no mention of his prose.

What one may call "the gormenghastly" has given me a new Universal; particulars to put it under it are never in short supply. That is why fools have (I bet) tried to interpret it as an allegory. They see one of the innumerable 'meanings' which are always coming out of it (because it is alive and fertile) and conclude that you began – and continued – by putting in that and no more. (Various Authors c. 1938-1960s)

Anthony Burgess, another of Peake's peers, also separates the novel from its war-time situation, stating its importance in the post-war environment. In his introduction to the 1968 edition of *Titus Groan* he stresses the separation and differentiation of the Gormenghast world from our own, as well as its resistance to the 'shelling-out of a central sermon or warning' (*Titus Groan* 1968: Introduction). Others also take this view. Biographer John Batchelor, in his discussion of *Titus Groan*, states his opinion to the contrary to the common position that it is a book about the war-time experience:

The suggestion that the book reflects war-time experience seems to be wrong. It is clear that the book was made possible by the war, but that is very different from saying that Peake the soldier was writing about the war as a public event, however cryptically. (1974: 82)

Whether these books are part of a process of coming to terms with, are about, or a retreat from the War is only of concern to readers who wish the books to be. As the text's exact relationship to these events does not affect spatial or phenomenological understanding here it is not considered in detail. In analysing the sensory and descriptive nature of the literary spaces the 'physical' qualities and environment are important, rather than any potential connections to external events (which in effect occur in a different world). Only if the reader brings external events with them when they enter Gormenghast and its surroundings do they have a direct impact.

Whilst this thesis does not examine psychological aspects of Peake's writing or life, circumstances enabled the writing of *Titus Groan* and *Gormenghast*. Concessions were made so Peake could write whilst on service: *Titus Groan* formed a part of his medical

leave after a nervous breakdown in 1942 (Winnington 2006b: 65).<sup>124</sup> Gilmore relates that *Titus Groan* 'had not been conceived as a whole, it was a book that grew under duress' (Gilmore 1970: 31) This statement not only provides an insight into Peake's processes but also its nature as an outcome of *stress*.<sup>125</sup> It was written because *it had to be*:

It was, or seemed, a miracle that a book written on compulsion, with no idea of publication, written as only, I think, true things are written, because it *had* to be, with no sense of future, past or present, that the message of interest came as a shock. (Gilmore 1970: 46)

It is a displacement of the imagination and the pauses in the text might be considered attempts to slow, or step outside, the passage of time. It may have been the need for an expressive outlet with the capacity for the length, detailed exploration and capability of creation that literary prose has that drew Peake to this, less practiced, medium.<sup>126</sup> In a situation where he was out of his comfort zone and was using familiar media to depict the events he was experiencing, the less familiar became a means of escape.<sup>127</sup> Where others might turn to poetry, with its structures and controlled forms providing a framework to shape complex thoughts and emotions, it can be argued that Peake turned to prose as medium of unfamiliarity. Writer Katherine Mansfield wrote about the potential of prose that she felt had not yet been explored, stating: 'People have never explored the lovely medium of prose. It is a hidden country still' (Mansfield 1987: 343). Whether Peake was consciously writing for the purpose of exploring prose is unknown, nevertheless his texts are poetic. This can be seen in the raw writing of the manuscripts

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<sup>124</sup> Peake had already begun *Titus Groan* in 1940 but he must have found writing useful in order for it to form a prescribed aspect of his treatment.

<sup>125</sup> See sections i and 5.3.

<sup>126</sup> Notebooks and pencils are more easily transported than canvases and painting equipment, which may also have influenced his choice of media for personal projects.

<sup>127</sup> For example, his work for the British Ministry of Information included two oil paintings, *The Evolution of the Cathode Ray (Radiolocation) Tube* (1943) and *The Glassblower* (1944).

and his lapses into poetic rhythms at points of heightened emotion which can be understood as an instinctual return to familiar poetic techniques (see below).

The extended writing of *The Gormenghast Trilogy* allows for longer periods of immersion, not only by the reader but also the writer. The writer Edgar Allan Poe states, to the contrary, that the length of the text has an effect on its capability to immerse:

If any literary work is too long to be read at one sitting, we must be content to dispense with the immensely important effect derivable from unity of impression — for, if two sittings be required, the affairs of the world interfere, and every thing like totality is at once destroyed. (Poe 1846: 163-4)

One may not easily be able to read Peake's novels in one sitting, yet they capture the imagination in a manner that holds it. So whilst the 'totality' may be broken the chance for continuous reflection is not and in providing a longer poetic text its richness can be extended.<sup>128</sup> The potential to develop a more complex environment, elsewhere to reality, may have been one of the features that led Peake to use extended prose for this narrative.

Whilst there may, or may not be, a connection between his experiences and the contents of the novels, it can be assumed that his circumstances produced the *need* to write.<sup>129</sup> His relative inexperience in novel writing enables an instinctive approach and allows the incorporation of the poetic, making his literature and the spaces contained within, rich and immersive. The text was partly produced through a form of therapy (Winnington 2009: 182) and therefore a legitimised form of self-indulgence. However, the delicacy and care taken to form this world provides inherent capacity for it to be poetic, without becoming overly crafted or refined enough to impose a style typical of a single literary genre.

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<sup>128</sup> See section 4.1.

<sup>129</sup> Mirroring Bachelard's *need* to underline (see section iv) and Peake's *need* to illustrate (see section iv).

A separate discussion of literary critics regarding *The Gormenghast Trilogy* is that of its genre: a notion tied to literary and architectural style. As Batchelor states in his biography of Peake: 'Contemporary responses support the view that part of the attraction of *Titus Groan* was that it was difficult to place and without 'meaning'' (Batchelor 1974: 81). It has, in part or in full, been described as Gothic, romantic, fantasy, science-fiction, fairy tale and outside all genres by literary theorists and critics. It has been left out of some fantasy or science-fiction compendiums on the grounds that it is not of the genre but included in others. Tanya Gardiner-Scott places Peake's work firmly in the Romantic tradition, whereas Rosemary Jackson, in a brief commentary on the trilogy in *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* firmly rejects this in favour of a Gothic classification (1981: 95). Edmund Little places Peake among the great fantasists, as suggested by the title of his book: *The Fantasts: Studies in J. R. R. Tolkien, Lewis Carroll, Mervyn Peake, Nikolay Gogol and Kenneth Grahame* (1984). However, he is also deliberately careful and flexible with his definition of fantasy.<sup>130</sup>

Both Watney (1976: 130) and Winnington (2000: 186) attribute the derivation of the Gothic vision of Gormenghast to publishers' and critics' desire to pigeonhole the work. Whilst Watney does not specify its origins, Winnington places the blame on the 1946 American edition of *Titus Groan* which declares 'a gothic novel' on the front cover and title page. This debate may seem to be unconnected to the nature of the loci, but the assumption that the literature is of a specific genre dictates readers' expectations. Gothic literature brings with it connotations about space and architecture, as do other

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<sup>130</sup> Even in the same publication there may be uncertainty: Peake is included in *Twentieth-century Science-fiction Writers* but is in the 'Major Fantasy Writers' section by Colin Greenland (Smith 1981: 632-3).

genres. The un-classifiable approach is defended by Winnington in *The Voice of the Heart* and he criticises those who try to categorise the novels and those who attempt to "explain' the work by the life, or to prove some preconception about it' (2006b: 3). He finishes this statement by saying: 'All too often, the secondary literature tells us more about the critics than about the works they study.' Literary critic Alice Mills also agrees with this standpoint and notes that the few sections of the novels that may be categorised are the weaker parts of the narrative and prose (2005: 9). The uncertainty of classification may be the cause of the difficulty that critics have with these books, as well as the appeal that they have with pleasure-readers. The lack of determined genre is an advantage to this thesis, as an absence of discernible style or period. This makes the work both timeless and flexible. The reader (and architectural-draughtsman) can bring their own interpretation and imagination to the spaces with ease.

The third area of debate that surrounds *The Gormenghast Trilogy* (or as might be argued the *Titus Books*) is whether they can truly be regarded as a trilogy. The third volume is in some ways very different from the preceding two and the publication of Gilmore's *Titus Awakes: The Lost Book of Gormenghast* (2011) introduces further discussion. Within this is contained the question as to whether Peake had an overall plan for the narrative and what his intentions were for its continuation. It is known that he left notes for a fourth novel. It seems likely that if he had remained well enough he would have continued writing. Whether the books can be considered a true trilogy or not does not make a significant difference to the thesis, only that they are understood to be inherently connected to each other (see below). Critics and scholars would perhaps

like to believe that there was a grand vision, but Gilmore states categorically in her memoir that there was not (1970: 31; 46) and this has been re-iterated by others including Watney (1976: 97). Certainly the statements made by Peake in *The Reader Takes Over* support this:

I had no preconceived plan; I really wanted to make a kind of pantechnicon book, in which I could shove in any mental furniture, however horrible – or however beautiful – if I could do so. (Peake 2011d: 31)

The 'pantechnicon' approach allows *Gormenghast* to be comprehended as constructed as it was written.<sup>131</sup> Although it may appear fully formed upon commencement of *Titus Groan*, having been first created by Peake, it is continuously re-constructed as it is read, in different locations by numerous readers. The spaces of the novels come into existence in a similar way to physical places. There is continuous, organic change, rebuilding and discovery of it is unique; every reader-inhabitant remembering different aspects and mapping it according to personal experience. It is akin to the architectural rendition, where each layer adds understanding and shifts the image towards 'completion'.<sup>132</sup>

The final aspect of these books requiring clarification is the question of *Titus Awakes*. Peake had begun a *Titus 4* and died in its early stages: the little he wrote was not substantial or complete enough to form a short story.<sup>133</sup> Gilmore continued Peake's work following his death and her notebook of *Search Without End* was later found and published as *Titus Awakes: The Lost Book of Gormenghast* to coincide with the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Peake's birth. The published story may not be the version intended by Gilmore. It has been firmly connected to Peake's novels when she had, in another

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<sup>131</sup> See section 4.3.

<sup>132</sup> See section 2.3.

<sup>133</sup> The published edition states 'based on a fragment by Mervyn Peake' on the cover.

version, removed all reference to his characters and events within his books

(Winnington 2013a). However accurate this account, it does not alter the fact that *Titus Awakes* was not written by Mervyn Peake and as such is not analysed here.<sup>134</sup>

This raises the question of authenticity. Whilst Peake wrote the manuscripts he did not type all the pages sent to the publishers: Gilmore typed the manuscripts of *Titus Alone* and describes the process of deciphering his handwriting in order to do so (Gilmore 1970: 139). Moreover each text has been edited as a process of publication; *Titus Alone* more than once (see below). At every stage the text is altered. Whilst it may seem that the line drawn between *Titus Alone* and *Titus Awakes* is arbitrary, there is a difference between editing and creating text – no matter how well one might know the style of the original author. Its context and citations are altered. As Derrida discusses, the text is haunted by and inherent to its relationship with the other.

the possibility of extraction and of citational grafting which belongs to the structure of every mark, spoken or written, and which constitutes every mark as writing even before and outside every horizon of semiolinguistic communication; as writing, that is, as a possibility of functioning cut off, at a certain point, from its "original" meaning and from its belonging to a saturable and constraining context. Every sign, linguistic or nonlinguistic, spoken or written (in the usual sense of this opposition), as a small or large unity, can be cited, put between quotation marks; thereby it can break with every given context, and engender infinitely new contexts in an absolutely nonsaturable fashion. (Derrida 1982: 320-1)

This displacement of context and introduction of an-other's text (and meaning) into the thesis not only disrupts the thoughts expressed by the author-architect but also haunts the act of communication, written or drawn.<sup>135</sup> Peake is citing events he is unaware of, those of the reader, without connection to them. As an author he shapes this otherness and the editing and publications process increases the marks of the other within the text.

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<sup>134</sup> This may seem contradictory when stating that the research is not about the author, however the manner of writing and the coherency of Peake's work are important, even if he as a personality is not.

<sup>135</sup> See sections ii, iii and 5.3.

The editing of Peake's text is not perfect; errors were introduced and inconsistencies remain.<sup>136</sup> In *Titus Groan* and *Gormenghast* these can be attributed to typing errors or Peake's handwriting.<sup>137</sup> Some mistakes originate from Peake (the first name of Dr Prunesquallor varies).<sup>138</sup> For *Titus Alone*, however, later editions were considerably re-worked in comparison to the first edition of 1959, in which large sections are edited out as well as, paradoxically, including text that Peake had removed. A note in the 1999 edition attests to this (Peake 1999: 757).<sup>139</sup> The 'reconstruction' took place in 1970 and in a longer, more detailed description, about the process Langdon Jones describes it as 'a largely mechanical exercise' (2006a: 198-209). This suggests that it was a process of sorting through Peake's original work, rather than creating new sections: reassuring for this thesis. Printed editions are the version accessed by readers and as such are important to the literary existence of the narratives. Whilst authenticity might be discussed in greater detail, regarding the capacity for an awareness of the author's intent and the use of his texts in an unexpected manner there is always a shifting of the text as the reader approaches it. No text can be truly authentic if read.<sup>140</sup>

### ***Previous Studies of The Gormenghast Trilogy***

The problematic nature of analysing, categorising and interpreting these texts is an advantage to this research. As there have been few in-depth analyses of the works as a

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<sup>136</sup> These have been included, rather than corrected, in the extraction process.

<sup>137</sup> See section 1.2.

<sup>138</sup> See section 4.3.

<sup>139</sup> This note does not have a date or name but is attributed to Langdon Jones in the 2011 Kindle edition.

<sup>140</sup> See section 5.2. Douglas Adams' approach makes each version unique. *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* is different in every medium: even its name has variations in punctuation and spelling.

whole, or in part, there is no 'correct' or expected manner of approaching them, from a literary perspective or any other. The lack of critical material, in combination with the little that Peake provides, allows a phenomenological approach and the imagination of the architectural-draughtsman the benefit of study without a significant burden of other opinions. It is, however, worth noting the few studies of significance.

*Mervyn Peake: The Evolution of a Dark Romantic* (Gardiner-Scott 1989) originated as a PhD thesis (1986) and was revised before publication. She addresses Peake's work as part of the Romantic tradition. Although she does take the reader's perspective for a portion of this study and recognises the spatial aspects, as well as time and the seasons, her focus is on categorising and defining his work.

*Stuckness in the Fiction of Mervyn Peake* (Mills 2005) also began as a PhD thesis (2003) and was revised before publication. Mills sets out with the intention of bringing "stuckness" into play as a new critical category for psychoanalytical literary criticism, with Mervyn Peake's fiction as a prime example' (2005: Preface). This is a psychoanalytical work, but she does not analyse Peake as a writer but only his writings and characters. There is, necessarily, a great deal of analysis and discussion of symbolism.

*The Voice of the Heart: The World of Mervyn Peake's Imagination* (Winnington 2006b). This attempts to encompass all of Peake's work and focuses on the use of metaphor throughout this analysis. His chapters are titled with symbolic aspects of the work and draws from all areas and media of Peake's work.

*Miracle Enough: Papers on the works of Mervyn Peake* (Winnington 2013b) is a collection of essays from a conference held in 2011 at Chichester University. The

contributors range widely in backgrounds and expertise. Several essays within this text reflect on the trilogy's genre and a variety of conclusions are drawn. Manlove, a literary critic and Edward Cary, a playwright, illustrator and novelist, both examine space in regards to *The Gormenghast Trilogy* but not from an architectural perspective. Each regards the castle as disconnected private spaces (shells) with the characters contained within. Cary acknowledges there is no knowing what architectural style the castle-city is: 'it is all architectures and none' (125), a rare and significant understanding.

*The Titus Novels of Mervyn Peake: A Critical and Contextual Study* (Hindle 1996) focuses on three aspects of *The Titus Books*: the world (Gormenghast), the society (its inhabitants) and the individual (Titus). One interesting aspect of this research is that it suggests that Gormenghast takes on a sentience and acts as a parent and deity to those who live there. There is also mention of the castle as a metropolis. The architectural and spatial consequences of this are not taken further.

*The Salvaged Image: A Study of Fairy Tale, Mervyn Peake and the Creative Process* (Bell 2011) discusses the narrative and illustrations of fairy tales. This aspect of Peake's work is the focus of this discussion and very little of *The Gormenghast Trilogy* is discussed. There is a clear focus on Peake's childhood as a strong influencing factor, as well as psychoanalysis and opinions on the impact of the War on his later work.

*Secondary Worlds in Pre-Tolkienian Fantasy Fiction* (Young 2011) discusses the function of world-building in regards to the literary fantasy tradition (therefore classing *The Gormenghast Trilogy* as fantasy). He describes the need for the creation of worlds in

regard to literature and the focus of his argument is that world building is a key aspect of it with Peake's work as an example.

*The Child in Gothic* (White 2012) mentions *The Gormenghast Trilogy*, in relation to 'notions of legitimacy, transgression, evolution theory and madness' as well as discussing *The Woman in White* (1860); *Dracula* (1897), and *The Castle of Otranto* (1764). She places Peake's work decisively in the Gothic tradition.

There have also been a number of doctoral theses, fifteen at the time of writing in five languages from eight countries, which include or focus on Peake's work.<sup>141</sup> Many of these are unavailable and two have subsequently been published as monographs (see above). By placing *The Gormenghast Trilogy* in the context of its formation it can be seen that it is the critical analysis rather than Peake's input that encloses the text. The trilogy has the potential to be universal if it is allowed to be. It is a very human text and as such resonates strongly with the architectural discipline. None of these studies explore Gormenghast architecturally or spatially or as an example of an imaginary but existent (imaginary) place. 'Boy in Darkness' has not been critically studied in the same manner as the trilogy and is a much less well known text; it therefore requires an introduction alongside the other narratives.

### ***An Introduction to the Narratives of The Gormenghast Trilogy and 'Boy in Darkness'***

So that the context of the narrative might be understood this section contains an introduction and a brief overview of the texts. The three novels *Titus Groan*,

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<sup>141</sup> This number comes from *Peake Studies* (Winnington 2013a) where a list of all (provided) mentions of Peake can be found online.

*Gormenghast* and *Titus Alone*, which form *The Gormenghast Trilogy*, are broadly orchestrated around the life of Titus Groan, the heir to Gormenghast castle-city. The short story 'Boy in Darkness' focuses on a brief period within the *Gormenghast* narrative and an adventure that Titus (known as the Boy) has outside of the castle-city. The primary characters in the first two novels are Titus' family: his father Lord Sepulchrove Groan, mother Lady Gertrude Groan, sister Fuchsia Groan and identical twin Aunts Cora and Clarice Groan; Lord Sepulchrove's manservant Flay; ex-kitchen boy Steerpike; Titus' wet-nurse Keda and her illegitimate daughter the Thing. The structure involves considerable variation in chapter length, driven by events.

*Titus Groan* begins with Titus' birth, heir to the castle-city of Gormenghast. This triggers a series of events involving the antagonist Steerpike, who breaks free from the servitude of the kitchens and begins to work his way up the castle hierarchy. Much of this book takes place on a single day. It ends with Titus' 'Earling' as a child not two years old' (*TG* 356). The text is 360 pages long in the 1999 Vintage edition. Throughout the novel the castle-city and its surroundings are the subject of detailed descriptions and these narrative pauses form one aspect of its warped timescale. There are events which occur at the same time but are narrated sequentially, due to the linear nature of a text. This distortion of an expected narrative structure provides opportunities to describe loci in great detail. It is not just the story of the characters that is important for events; it is also the spaces they occupy (hence the focus of the thesis).

*Gormenghast* begins with Titus aged seven and ends with him aged seventeen.<sup>142</sup>

This narrative remains within the bounds of the castle-city of Gormenghast and the near-by landscapes. In this text Titus grows up, attends school and discovers the existence of the Thing. There is further plotting by Steerpike to gain power, involving the burning of the Library and a number of murders. Yet whilst this book covers a larger period of narrative time than *Titus Groan*, the physical length of the text is comparable at 379 pages. Once again Peake takes the opportunity throughout to describe the spaces of the castle-city, introducing new ones when required and allowing the reader to explore as they wish. *Gormenghast* relies on the reader's memory of *Titus Groan*. Often novels within a series have a resume, or memory aides within the text to support it. Peake does not. He assumes the reader remains aware of events that have gone before throughout his later texts.<sup>143</sup> In this respect it might be considered that the trilogy is a duology with the first book spilt into two. The architectural spaces are also inherently interconnected. Peake maintains and enriches the vast majority of the spaces of *Titus Groan* in *Gormenghast*, abandoning a relatively small number as the narrative progresses. He does not reintroduce or reiterate details of shared spaces, as might be expected (and would greatly increase the narrative length), the reader must remember and internally build complexity, rather than rely on repeated information. The numbers of individual spaces show the shifting densities: there are thirty-eight loci that only occur in *Titus*

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<sup>142</sup> It is not known how long Titus has been seven for at the start of *Gormenghast*. It is late spring at the end and as Titus' birthday is on the 8<sup>th</sup> of August he is about three months shy of his eighteenth birthday at the close. Therefore the calculation of ten years is only approximate; it could be closer to eleven years if he has only just turned seven, or nearer nine if he is nearly eight when the book commences.

<sup>143</sup> Printed editions which contain the three novels bound together therefore enable the reader to connect the narratives more easily than when each novel is published as a single volume.

*Groan*; sixty-one in *Gormenghast*; they share fifty-six loci. As a continuation *Gormenghast* introduces more loci, loses few and builds upon those already described.

In *Titus Alone* the character set changes as Titus leaves Gormenghast behind. Muzzel hatch, Cheeta and Juno are primary additions. The narrative begins with Titus aged twenty. A number of years have passed since the end of *Gormenghast* of which the reader knows nothing.<sup>144</sup> Titus has left the confines of the castle-city and events provide proof that there is a world beyond. Gormenghast is not forgotten, however, by either the reader or Titus. The narrative duration of this book is uncertain, there are several points at which it is mentioned that months have passed, but with no numerical values. There are no references to Titus' age, birthdays or changes in the calendar year (he is described as having become a man at the end of the book). The penultimate chapter in particular adds numerous, uncountable months. It is probable that a number of narrative years have passed within the text but perhaps less than the ten years of *Gormenghast*. This unknown timeframe is covered in a considerably shorter format than the previous novels at 194 pages. It is an important addition to the trilogy because it moves beyond the confines of the castle-city environments. It confirms that the world is not stagnant, medieval or set in a forgotten, mythological history: Gormenghast is just technologically underdeveloped. There are thirty-three loci introduced in this novel and eight are shared with the previous novels (generally in passing or reference to previous events rather than

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<sup>144</sup> As with the previous novel it is not known how far through the year events begin so it is uncertain whether Titus has just turned twenty or if he is approaching twenty-one (whether the gap between narratives is just over two years or over three).

detailed descriptions). Whilst *Titus Alone* may be the most debated episode of Peake's trilogy it is spatially significant because of its contrasts.

'Boy in Darkness' is a short story set during the period of *Gormenghast* although not contained within the collected editions. Titus is fourteen and leaves the castle on an adventure separate to any within the main body of the work. At 70 pages (in the 2007 Peter Owen edition) it details a substantially shorter literary as well as narrative duration, indicated only as 'a long while' (BiD 93). The events in this story are quite unlike those of the trilogy, suggesting mythical or magical happenings and are much darker in tone. Although the narrative is much swifter, as is necessary of a short story, the reader is still able to observe the details that make Peake's work compelling. The places of 'Boy in Darkness' and their descriptions are generally separate from the novels due to the format. Six loci are shared with the other texts and five are introduced. These spaces require the capacity to stand alone as the story may be read in isolation.

Within each of these texts Peake reveals details that other authors might consider unimportant or irrelevant to an interesting or progressive plotline. His description of the Heron Room, for example, (*G* 421-4) takes up an entire chapter.<sup>145</sup> It is eloquently and descriptively written but does not further the plot. He describes a series of finite, captivating events; the picking out of a feather by a sunbeam, qualities of light and decaying structures of the location. It is a place that only the reader inhabits and solely for the purpose of watching the momentarily passing by of the Thing, but despite this it is not unimportant. Peake includes episodes directly *other* to the narrative and these

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<sup>145</sup> See section 4.4.

fragments leave *traces* throughout the text and the imagination of the reader (and architect). The distinctive qualities of description, time and perspective give the reader a unique view of the spaces contained. In allowing the reader to stand with the characters in their world, the reader is privileged with exceptional perspectives. They are able to see through the eyes of the characters, observe them from close by and from a distance and are given the ability to see angles that would be impossible in the physical world. By experiencing these events through the text, the reader is able to comprehend them through their imagination: the 'mirror neurones' are activated.<sup>146</sup>

Peake does not fix the reader's eye, but shifts from close, detailed visions of minutiae to vast panoramas, along every scale between. The texture of his writing is immensely rich and with these shifts in perspective he gives *scale*, from the miniature to the vast.<sup>147</sup> He applies measurable features, such as the length of a character's stride, to provide the reader with recognisable distances and time periods. He even includes quantified (imperial) measurements of some spaces, or elements within, and this information permits the reader to physically inhabit the space, as one might inhabit an architectural drawing, by placing an imaginary vision of oneself within.<sup>148</sup>

Batchelor states that '[t]he strongest stimulus in *Titus Groan* is the visual stimulus: One can tell immediately that the writer is not accustomed to linear narrative' (1974: 75), but this is not accurate. It is not only visual aspects of space that Peake describes, he includes a wealth of other sensory information, and it is this that makes the reader's

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<sup>146</sup> See section iii.

<sup>147</sup> See section 3.3.

<sup>148</sup> See section 4.6.

inhabitation of the text feasible (Latin *facere*, to do, make, perform). Whilst scale is important so is texture, sound and air quality. Knowledge of sensory phenomena not only enhances the reading experience but provides the capacity for immersion, even if these details are only unconsciously registered. Winnington highlights an aspect of this in *Voice of the Heart* (2006b: 25) but whilst doing so also laments the lack of architectural style provided in the description of the Tower of Flints and claims that there is 'remarkably little to instruct the eye', which is not true of much of the trilogy and in direct opposition to Batchelor's statement. The examples Winnington gives include 'shaking, 'grip', 'tilt', 'hollowed', 'thrown', 'taut'. They are indeed physical descriptors, but they also provide a graphic description: the line of a taut object or one under stress is visually very different from something slack or flaccid. The arc of a thrown object is known both by observation and physical movement. Literal, deliberately graphic descriptions are not necessary to provide visual images; there has to be a synaesthetic imagination in order for words on a page to mean anything visual, aural or physical.<sup>149</sup> As has been previously noted, Peake remarked on this interweaving of senses through text: 'One might say that books have different smells. [...] It is for the illustrator to make his drawings have the same smell as the book he is illustrating' (Peake 2011c: 17).<sup>150</sup> This is where Bachelard's phenomenological analysis of imaginary spaces is particularly relevant. He writes:

But what a joy reading is, when we recognise the importance of these insignificant things, when we can add our own personal daydreams to the "insignificant" recollections of the

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<sup>149</sup> See section iii.

<sup>150</sup> These comments, and others quoted above (see Peake 2011b: 5-7; 2011d: 31) allow for speculation that Peake may have been a synaesthete. This may also explain his care over vocabulary and names, as words may have caused in him more than just aural sensations (see Gilmore & Peake 1999: 181).

author! Then insignificance becomes the sign of extreme sensitivity to the intimate meanings that establish spiritual understanding between writer and reader. (Bachelard 1994: 71)

What might be considered 'insignificant confidences' in Peake's texts, his pausing of the narrative in order to show the reader a space, a feather dropping or a sunbeam, are an aspect of his writing that gives pleasure to the reader and make them apt for architectural analysis. As Bachelard allows himself to be caught within the moulding of a corner in this passage, Peake's writings could easily be its subject:

It is easy for a rhetorician to criticize a text like this. Indeed, the critical mind has every reason to reject such images, such idle musings.

First of all, because they are not "reasonable," because we do not live in "corners of the ceiling" while lolling in a comfortable bed, because a spider's web is not, as the poet says, drapery – and, to be more personal, because an exaggerated image is bound to seem ridiculous to a philosopher who seeks to concentrate being in its centre, and finds a centre of being a sort of unity of time, place and action.

Yes, but even when criticisms of reason, the scorn of philosophy and poetic traditions unite to turn us from the poet's labyrinthine dreams, it remains nonetheless true that the poet has made a trap for dreamers out of his poem.

As for me, I let myself be caught. I followed the moulding. (Bachelard 1994:145)

Readers are captivated by Peake's text and given the opportunity to explore the cracks, spiders' webs and fissures that form Gormenghast (shrinking the self or expanding the other, the inside becoming an outside which one inhabits from within).<sup>151</sup> Breaks in the narrative coincide with Bachelard's daydreams; they 'are invitations to verticality, pauses in the narrative during which the reader is invited to dream. They are very pure since they have no use' (1994: 162). Their absence of purpose in progressing the narrative does not mean that they are useless. They are the solicitations that Bachelard describes and Peake incorporates: they contain the synaesthetic qualities that allow Bachelard's phenomenological understanding and enhance the reader's experience.<sup>152</sup> They are not

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<sup>151</sup> These are not always comfortable spaces to inhabit. See sections 4.4 and 4.6.

<sup>152</sup> See section iii.

merely a collection of beautiful and elegant descriptions, nor purely a multifaceted and creative narrative with *potential*. As discussed in later chapters, the spaces formed by Peake are neither uniform nor mediocre; they are complex, elegant and poetic. There is a huge range of settings, atmospheres and spatial qualities described. Differing scales from the minuscule to the vast and the detailed interlinking of spaces create an infinitely rich architectural environment. Peake was excited by his writing and this emerges in his spaces and his writing.

### *The Poetics of Peake's Literary Language*

Peake's slips into a poetic mode of writing are a distinguishing characteristic of these texts and the shifting styles allows the tempo of the words to add another layer of information about spaces, events and the world created. Poetic moments provide places with a strong rhythmic beat and reading these passages become, like poetry, a time driven experience. All language is time based, as Hawkes describes (2003: 13).<sup>153</sup> Poetic rhythms set the pace of linguistic unfolding more directly than prose. In Peake's text the poetic qualities do not have a strict metering of syllables or other temporal device, instead the pace is set by the reader and their emotions, as well as inherent rhythms:

it seemed as though the clouds had ceased to move, and how, instead, the cluster of the stars and the thin moon had been set in motion and were skidding obliquely across the sky. Swiftly they ran, those bright marvels, and, like the clouds, with a purpose most immediate. Here and there over the wide world of tattered sky, points of fire broke free and ran, until the last dark tag of cloud had slid away from the firmament and all at once the high, swift beauty of the floating suns ceased in their surging and a night of stationary stars shone down upon the ghostly field of flags.

Now that heaven was alive with yellow stones (*TG* 94)

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<sup>153</sup> See section 2.4 and 5.3.

In this passage the descriptions of the elements create momentum, not only in their 'physical' progression but also in the manner Peake phrases the text. He uses numerous commas, breaking the text and pausing motion in a 'skidding' halting way. Longer unbroken runs of description allow momentum to be created, which is then stopped or paused again by punctuation. Poetic moments like this occur more frequently in the manuscripts than the printed editions, due to editing: a process of clarifying the desired fictional truth.<sup>154</sup> Hale describes poetic text as a:

kind of 'thickening of the surface' of language, in the sense that – as with a technically articulated architecture – it draws attention to its own 'materiality' rather than any obvious semantic reference. This is also a useful reminder of the limitations of the so-called 'language' of postmodernist architecture, which also tended towards banality in its fixation on simplistic figurative references. Instead, by resisting the easy conversion of signs into stereotypical meanings, a more abstract and ambiguous approach to formal expression offers a way to maintain the potential to express new meanings – a benefit which is, of course, also tempted with the risk of being dismissed as meaningless. (Hale 2017: 95)

This 'thickening' of language and an awareness of the material nature of the text, which forms a poetic truth, is inherent in Peake's work. The printed editions relate the narrative in a series of jumps and short chapters, in parallel to a poetic text but at the scale of the novel. There are similarities with epic poetry: short bursts of action, a dense narrative and explorative and considered, coagulated language.<sup>155</sup> These qualities create the capacity for architectural analysis but, as discussed below, the rhythms and pacing of

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<sup>154</sup> Editing hides the nature of the text as a process, not spontaneous creation. There is, perhaps, an underlying fear of texts and their authors. This may be why the rumours of Peake's 'madness' were so easily spread and are not yet fully dissolved. The potentially hallucinatory quality of a novel, particularly one labelled as 'fantasy', is an insight into the author's imagination. If the imaginative state is not comprehensible it may be perceived as a kind of madness (see section ii on the *stress* of creativity). Interpretation of a work may be a way of removing anxiety. The editing process is another step in the removal of the writer from the reader: a protective barrier keeping the 'madness' at arm's length. The disorder of creation is concealed from the reader, propagating the image of the book as finished and finite, reaffirming the power of the book-as-object, a gestalt containing a unique universe.

<sup>155</sup> Peake wrote several lengthy poems. The first of which, *The Touch o' the Ash* (1929), is a narrative poem (Gilmore 1978: 45-61). They differ distinctly from the novels in their used of stanzas, rhythms and rhymes but are typical of Peake's written work in their exploration of imagery and vocabulary.

events are altered once they are rendered. Peake's particular form of literary language consists of different densities of poetic instances, woven deftly into a narrative.

Whilst *Gormenghast* is more refined and confident in its writing than *Titus Groan*, the prose and descriptions in *Titus Alone* return to a rawness, in which narrative events are more urgent and less lugubrious. Here passages of time are curtailed when Titus is ill or travelling. In comparison to the previous novels, Peake's use of expansive poetic passages, which draw the reader into experiencing longer periods of time, is reduced. The text contains more movement and fewer dramatic pauses but still has a poetic sensibility. The prose of 'Boy in Darkness' is also inherently poetic.<sup>156</sup> These texts have strong rhythmic and linguistic timings and are densely packed with poetic imagery. What might be thought of as an indulgence on the part of the author may also be considered a form of extended poetry, although not constructed with the framework and constraints of traditional poetic form (which can be attributed to Peake's greater familiarity with the structures of poetry and an instinctual approach to writing extended prose, see above). When he describes his tendency to become immersed within his own writing and to follow his inclinations, he also comments on the consequences:<sup>157</sup>

I think the word poetry is the one that I appreciate, because I found that I was actually writing in five-foot lines over a large part of the book – in other words, when I was most excited by what I was writing (sounds rather awful, doesn't it?), I was writing rhythmically; in other words, the higher the tension the more I found myself writing in poem rhythm rather than prose rhythm. (Peake 2011d: 36)

His aside that this 'sounds rather awful, doesn't it?' acknowledges an expectation that the writer is in control and is not too deeply involved with imagined (speculative) worlds.

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<sup>156</sup> See section 3.3.

<sup>157</sup> See section 1.2.



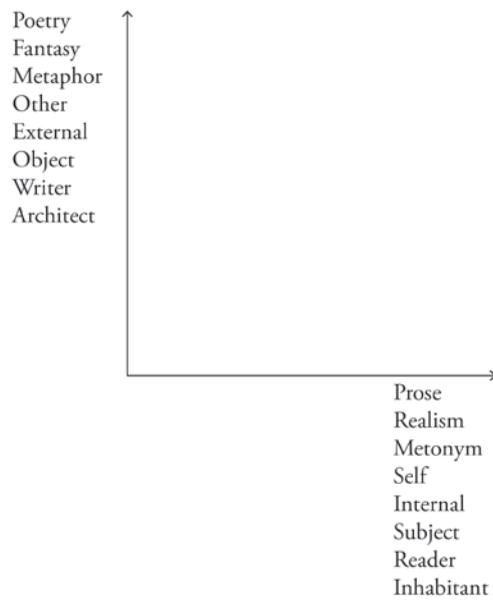
**Figure 8: Linear poetic continuum placing Peake's work between poetry in prose and traditional prose**

The distance between the writer and the text acts in contrast to its intent towards the reader: the reader-other should become captivated but the author-self should not. Yet self-entrapment allows the author to inhabit the spaces, shifting the relationship between the self and the other. The otherness of the author in respect to the reader is reduced. It allows the author to share his joy in writing. Comments made by writer and literary theorist Toby Litt on the differences between poetry and prose are revealing:

The typography of a poem is more excitable; it gives itself away, advertises itself in advance. There are of course exceptions to this: blank verse offers equally as much opportunity as prose for feeling lost in the page. [...] To make an analogy, prose is a forest, poetry is an ornamental garden – if one gets lost in a poem it is likely to be a maze rather than a thicket. (Litt 2003: 57-8)

Peake's prose contains the excitable elements of the poetic as well as being inherently forest-like in its format. It is the poetic excitement, lack of restraint and conformity to the 'rules' of extended prose that both separates Peake from other literary writers and allows his spaces to contain the essences from which architecture can be derived.

Peake's familiarity with poetry and visual art influenced his prose, with the expression and rhythmic tendencies extrapolated into a lengthy narrative. The novels are akin to the prose poem, a step between pure poetry and pure prose. Whilst prose poetry falls on the side of the poem, Peake's novels, as a form of poetic prose, sit closer to prose, yet there is overlap between them. There are no clear distinctions between poetry and prose, it may be perceived as a continuous scale (Figure 8). Baudelaire, an early writer of prose poetry, describes the potential of this form of text:



**Figure 9: Poetry-prose diagram in which one might place Peake's prose as a combination of any of the facets of writing, adapted from the table in author and literary critic David Lodge's *The Modes of Modern Writing: Metaphor, Metonymy and the Typology of Modern Literature* (1979: 81).**

Which of us has not, in his ambitious days, dreamt the miracle of a poetic prose, musical without rhythm or rhyme, supple enough and striking enough to suit lyrical movements of the soul, undulations of reverie, the flip-flops of consciousness. (Baudelaire 2009: 3)

There are sections of Peake's prose that fit this description. He has passages which are musical, lyrical and reflect his 'undulations of reverie'. This understanding of poetic prose also shows that the connection between poetry and prose is not linear and the above diagram is too simple in its illustration of this relationship: Figure 9 illustrates it more effectively. This second diagram illustrates connections between the themes that run through the thesis.

The poetic and prosaic are not the only 'dichotomies' Peake blurs. Each pair (architect/inhabitant, writer/reader, object/subject etc.) may appear to be directly opposing, however, there is a sliding scale between the extremes and parallel elements: the architect is also an inhabitant, as they design they are both within and without the

space as they consider other-future-inhabitations.<sup>158</sup> It would be possible to mark the diagram where elements of Peake's work sit, however, there is constant flux and these points would only define specific moments.

The fluctuation between the poetic and prosaic allows Peake's text to explore space in a manner familiar to the architect, who aims to capture both poetic and prosaic elements within the drawing: yet it is when they speak (well) that they are able to evoke ephemera. The architect can learn from Peake's weaving of poetic qualities through his texts. His texts show that there is no single way to approach the creation of poetic space and that an instinctual awareness can be as powerful as a deliberately honed one. Poetic pleasure enables a creative and explorative text. Whilst Peake's narratives were written in a significant era, their categorisation is not straightforward. This is beneficial to the thesis because the lack of a definable place or time allows loci to be analysed purely through space, rather than as metaphors of the physical world. Peake creates a separate world and his writing processes can be seen in both the printed editions and his manuscripts.

#### 1.4: Positioning the Manuscript Sketches

##### *The Manuscript Sketches and the Text – The Problem of the Opera Manuscripts*

The archive documents containing *The Gormenghast Trilogy* manuscripts is of a series of 36 notebooks hand-written by Peake containing *Titus Groan*, *Gormenghast*, and *Titus Alone*; six *Titus Alone* typescripts; two *Titus Four* manuscripts and a typescript of 'Boy in

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<sup>158</sup> See sections 4.6 and 5.3.

Darkness'. The first of the manuscripts, thought to contain chapters one to eleven of *Titus Groan*, is not present and may no longer exist. Its contents remain unknown.

As discussed above, Peake's intention in regards to the use of images within printed editions is not clear. The sketches contained in the manuscripts may have been intended to be used in publications, and shared with readers, or simply a personal method of extracting thoughts from his imagination: the expected relationship with the reader remains uncertain. This poses a dilemma for the thesis. As the majority of these images are unpublished an *unknowing* reader is not aware of them.<sup>159</sup> It might, therefore, be argued that the only pertinent images are ones reproduced in printed editions, no matter their origin (see below). In this situation every edition, each with a different set and use of Peake's sketches (or those of another illustrator), provides a different perspective. This would preclude the examination of the manuscripts until after the rendition process.

A different position allows the sketches to form part of spatial understanding. If Peake intended the novels to be illustrated, even if they never came to fruition, then it is worth examining existent drawings. This becomes even more relevant if, as Wilcox suggests, text was edited out or 'aborted' in favour of particular drawings (2013: 183).<sup>160</sup> This research examined the manuscripts before the rendition process, so there are aspects influenced by Peake's sketches.<sup>161</sup> The majority of the sketches are character based, so there is not a significant quantity of spatial detail provided: the results of a visual exploration of the text are, therefore, not skewed by large amounts of illustrated

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<sup>159</sup> See section 1.2.

<sup>160</sup> See section 1.3.

<sup>161</sup> This 'contamination' is also caused by conversations with others who have read the texts and other versions in different media. The influence of traces cannot be removed. See sections 1.3, 4.3 and 5.3.

data. Some features such as material, object or spatial details and diagrammatic narrative sketches provide indications but very little that is concrete. Peake did not draw the entirety of, or every, space; there are few interior sketches and the majority of spatial images focus on landscapes or key features; he did not produce true architectural drawings or detailed images which allow the complete understanding of a locus without the text (see below). His drawings are usually specific rather than general and whilst they add information, the text carries the burden of spatial creation: sketches usually act as a confirmation of an idea or memory-aid, rather than a pre-description. Architectural rendition alters loci by 'completing' and visualising aspects that Peake does not reveal.

The spaces chosen for detailed spatial analysis are those with the greatest written potential: due to Peake's methods they are usually loci with few manuscript images. This means the renditions are not overly influenced by images readers have not seen.<sup>162</sup> There are general aspects of the castle-city confirmed or reinforced by manuscript sketches. Described details such as stone floor and wall constructions are repeated in sketches: for example the wooden platform of the Refectory can be seen in an image depicting the characters' positions at the dark breakfast; the brick arches of the Professors' Quadrangle are illustrated in drawing embedded within the text (Figure 10). The manuscripts also contain images outside of the main body of text. There are frontispiece or cover sketches which, although do not necessarily directly relate to particular scenes, provide further indications of the less than coherent construction techniques, lack of specific style and overgrown and weathered state of the structures of Gormenghast.

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<sup>162</sup> Where drawings occur in the manuscripts it has been noted in the table of loci. See appendix X.



Figure 10: The Professors' Quadrangle. Brown ink image. In manuscript Add MS 88931/1/3/15, folio 25r. Original: 75mm tall by 70mm wide

Along with the novels and short story, Peake also set out to write an opera based on the Titus story. There are three manuscripts of this: *Gormenghast Opera Part One*; *Gormenghast Opera Part Two* and a *Titus Groan Opera*.<sup>163</sup> These manuscripts contain a great many sketches depicting stage sets and theatrical structures. There is a significant difference in the images drawn whilst writing the novels and those produced for the purposes of a theatre production: yet, many of these images are reproduced in published editions of *The Gormenghast Trilogy*. Their origins are not emphasised in these reproductions and their association with the text is frequently misleading.

Book illustrations should enhance a text, not distract, remove from, or confuse it. Peake was aware of this in his own illustration work and he used this knowledge whilst sketching in his manuscripts. 'It's up to the illustrator to get as close as he can to the spirit of the text. To be as gentle as a lamb if the book's gentle or as vile as a vampire if

<sup>163</sup> There is also a typescript, radio adaptation of *Titus Groan* in the archive.

the book's vile' (Peake 1954: 2). Sketches and designs for the theatre have a different purpose: they are intended to be constructed and form physical space for events which occur in a specific form of self-contained, limited environment. Sets are built to create views for the audience and perspectives are both constrained and distorted by this. There are views that can be described or drawn, that cannot be realised in a theatrical setting. Theatre design must comply with the limits of physical space whereas an illustration has an infinite potential to depict scenes from physically unrealisable angles. These differences have not been taken into account in the latest illustrated editions.

The 2011 Kindle edition, *The Illustrated Gormenghast Trilogy*, has an increased number of images than the 1999 paperback edition (both Vintage Books). Many of these images are taken from the opera manuscripts and so do not accurately illustrate events of the text. One of a number of examples can be found on page 36 of the 2011 edition (Figure 11). This image shows Steerpike and Flay standing before the main doors to the Great Kitchen, with the chef Swelter in the background. This situation never occurs in the novel: Steerpike and Flay first meet some distance into the Stone Lanes, beyond the Great Kitchen.<sup>164</sup> The use of this image in printed editions is therefore misleading and inaccurate.<sup>165</sup> Whilst it may appear to be a minor issue, these images cannot be what Peake had in mind to illustrate his text as they confuse rather than enhance the narrative. The Kindle edition images are discussed by Sebastian Peake:

This exciting edition brings together over one hundred drawings by Mervyn Peake; from the visual aide memoires which were sketched in the margins of the original manuscripts, to stage designs for an opera based on *Gormenghast*. (Peake 2011: 2)

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<sup>164</sup> Theatre productions also require abbreviation and so events become altered to ensure narrative fluency.

<sup>165</sup> If the text was a script they would be appropriate.



**Figure 11: Steerpike and Flay outside the Great Kitchen. The text reads 'Swelter seen through doors of Great Kitchen surrounded by apprentices. Flay and Steerpike in foreground' Original image in opera manuscript Add MS 88931/4/1/2, folio 23r. Reproduced in Peake 2011a: 36**

He goes on to state that the images chosen are an 'eclectic range', but there is no rationale noted for the use of images which do not illustrate events as they occur. In this research the opera manuscripts are not used. Only the manuscripts of *Titus Groan*, *Gormenghast* and *Titus Alone* are studied: the typescript of 'Boy in Darkness' contains no sketches and there is no available manuscript.

Peake's manuscripts illustrate that his process of sketching as he wrote allowed him to develop characters with a constant voice and brings coherency to the spaces they inhabit. The sketches do not illustrate the places as extensively as the characters that live within this literary world, but provide consistency and add information, particularly in places where he may have wished to include an illustration in printed editions. The proof of *process* is significant and shows an approach to text, image and space that

resonates with architectural practice. In the manuscripts there are images that have never been published, which illustrate previously unknown details.

*The Squaring of the Tower of Flints and Sketches Drawn in Plan, Section and Elevation within the Gormenghast Manuscripts*

A clear example of a revelation provided by the manuscripts is found in a frontispiece image of the Tower of Flints. This is a significant architectural feature of Gormenghast, yet Peake never completely describes it.<sup>166</sup> Only its silhouette and height form an image:

In the haze to the extreme north the Tower of Flints arose like a celluloid ruler set floating upon its end, or like a water-colour drawing of a tower that has been left in the open and whose pigment has been all but washed away by a flirt of rain.

Distance was everywhere – the sense of far-away – of detachment. What might have been touched with an outstretched arm was equally removed, withdrawn in the grey-blue polliniferous body of the air. (TG 300)

This has created an intrigue: Peake 'does not tell us if the Tower of Flints is round or square, or whether the arches of Gormenghast are roman or gothic' (Winnington 2006b: 25). The description of it as having a 'throat' and the following passage may indicate, tenuously, that it is circular in plan:

and my throat is growing taut and round round like the Tower of Flints and my fingers curl and I crave the dusk and sharpness like a needle in the velvet. (TG 292)

One manuscript illustration provides an answer, not discussed elsewhere. It appears in the first manuscript: the binding is labelled II and inside is written 'Goremenghast continued – Part two'.<sup>167</sup> It is the first draft of chapters 12 to 16 of *Titus Groan*. The first page has a frontispiece (Figure 12); in the centre is the Tower of Flints.

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<sup>166</sup> See section 4.6.

<sup>167</sup> Note the change of spelling from Goremenghast to Gormenghast as the narrative progress.

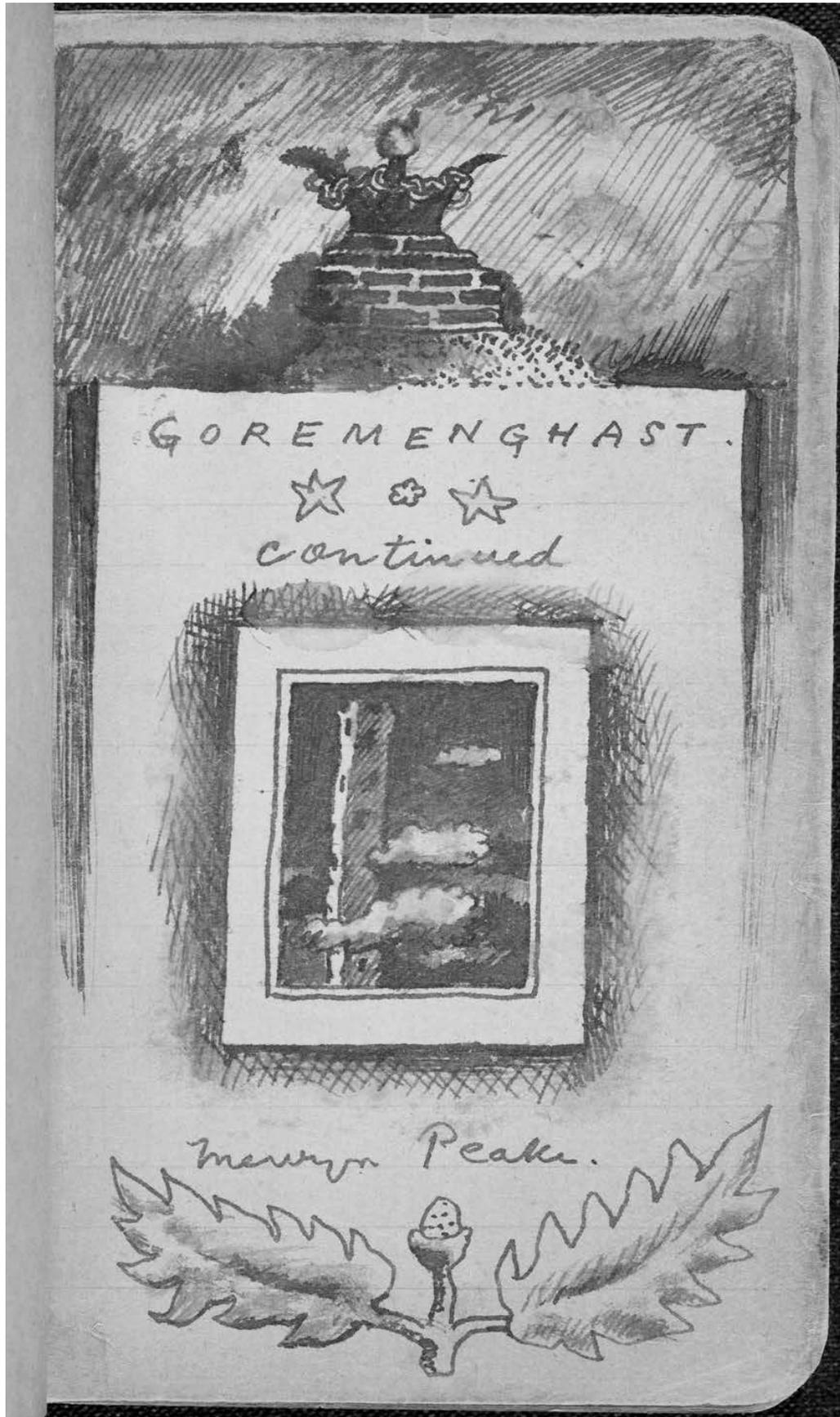


Figure 12: Frontispiece piece from. Add MS 88931/1/3/1, folio 01r. Original: 160mm tall, 100mm wide

The tower depicted here is square or rectangular in plan. It is identified as the Tower of Flints due to its unique description and prominence: it is singled out for depiction; its height (no other buildings can be seen); its 'detachment' and its importance to the novels. As this image has not been included in published editions the reader is not privy to this information. It is important, however, that Peake had considered the tower and held a clear image of its design in mind when writing. Perhaps this is why he never described it: it was too obvious to mention.

Some manuscript sketches are frequently reproduced, others have never been: images of Steerpike are repeatedly used. This is unsurprising: passed-over sketches are, at first glance, less visually exciting and immediately alluring than the detailed and evocative character sketches. These forgotten sketches range in size from a little over one centimetre across, tucked into a margin, to a whole page of a notebook. The following examples provide an insight into the spatial decisions Peake made when writing about Steerpike's discovery and exploration of the Stone Sky-Field in *Titus Groan*.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> For a typewritten copy of the text on the pages reproduced see appendix II.

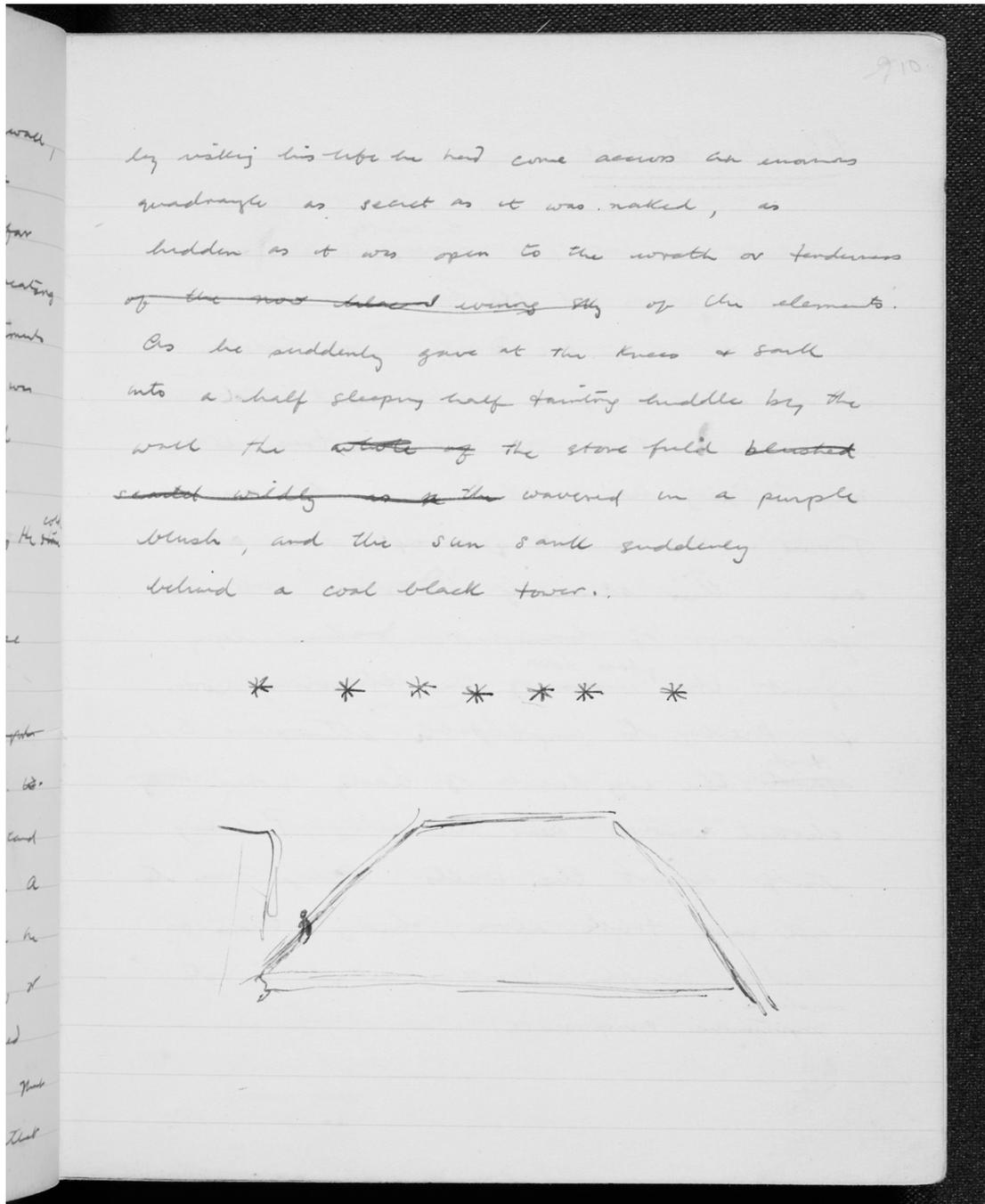


Figure 13: Manuscript page from Add MS 88931/1/3/2, folio 10r. Sketch shows perspective of the Stone Sky-Field and figure of Steerpike. Black ink. Original size of image: 40mm tall, 100mm wide. Original: 202mm tall by 160mm wide

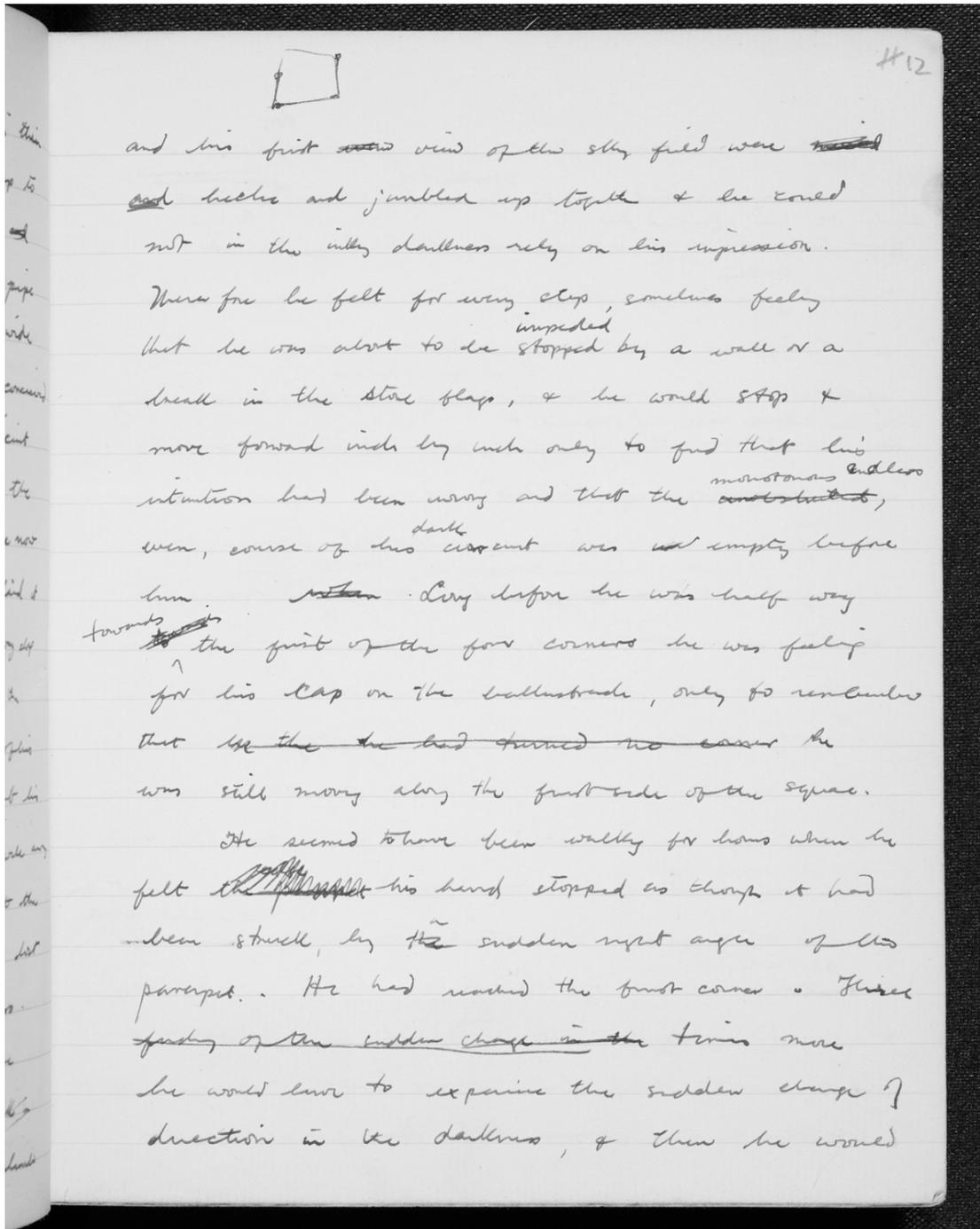


Figure 14: Manuscript page from Add MS 88931/1/3/2, folio 12r. Sketch shows plan of the Stone Sky-Field. Black ink. Original diagram: 11mm tall, 10mm wide. Original page: 202mm tall by 160mm wide

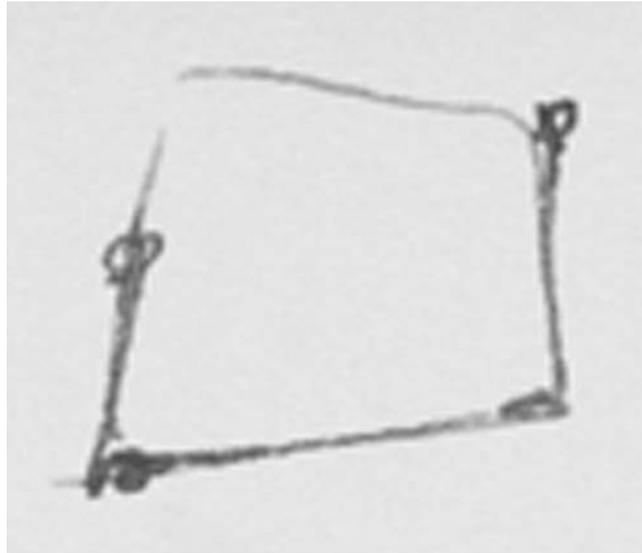


Figure 15: Detail from manuscript image Add MS 88931/1/3/2, folio 12r. Plan view of Stone-Sky-Field with circular figure of Steerpike moving anticlockwise. Original diagram: 11mm tall, 10mm wide.

Figure 13 shows the Stone Sky-field in perspective with a figure standing to one side. The text surrounding the image narrates Steerpike coming to the Stone Sky-Field and, on the next page, describes the sunset over Gormenghast and its landscapes. The text has been revised and edited in the published versions. Overleaf on folio 12r the next image is in the top margin (Figure 14). This small square is easily missed, but is the same locus. The text below this image describes Steerpike making a circuit of the Stone Sky-Field in the dark. This contextualises the sketch as a diagram of this journey with Steerpike as the circular figure, starting on the left of the image and moving anticlockwise, pausing at each corner as he does in the text. Whilst the diagrammatic images are not as elegant as the character sketches, they are significant. They demonstrate that Peake was creating his loci through drawings, as well as text. He considered locations spatially and was aware of the movement of characters within space: his environments are not static and provide more than just a platform for events. This sketch also suggests that although Peake had no architectural training he was 'thinking in plan' for this locus.

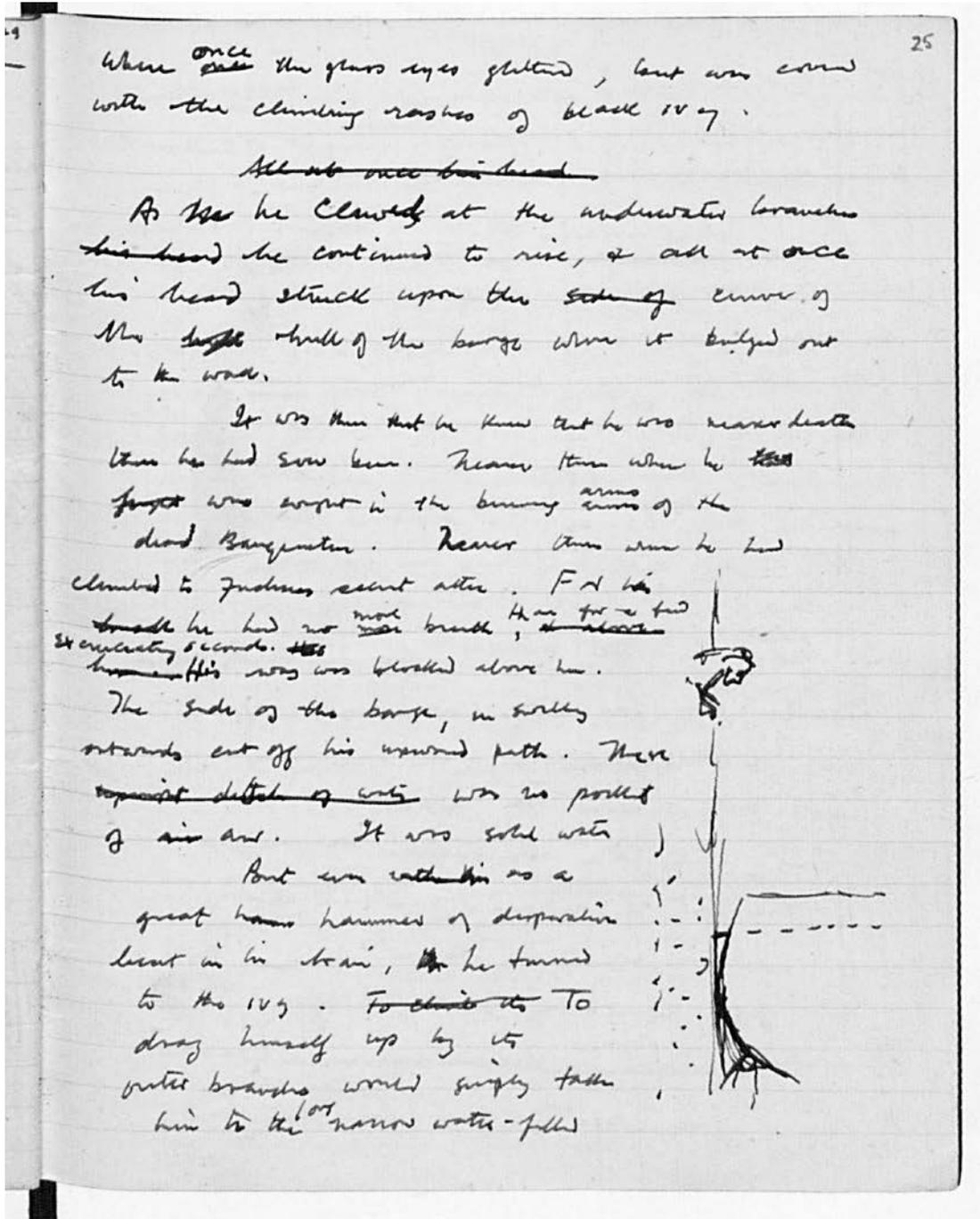


Figure 16: Manuscript page from Add MS 88931/1/3/22, folio 25r. Sectional sketch showing Steerpik hiding beneath a boat as Titus looks out of a window above. Sepia ink. Original image: 95mm tall, 45mm wide. Original page: 200mm tall by 160mm wide

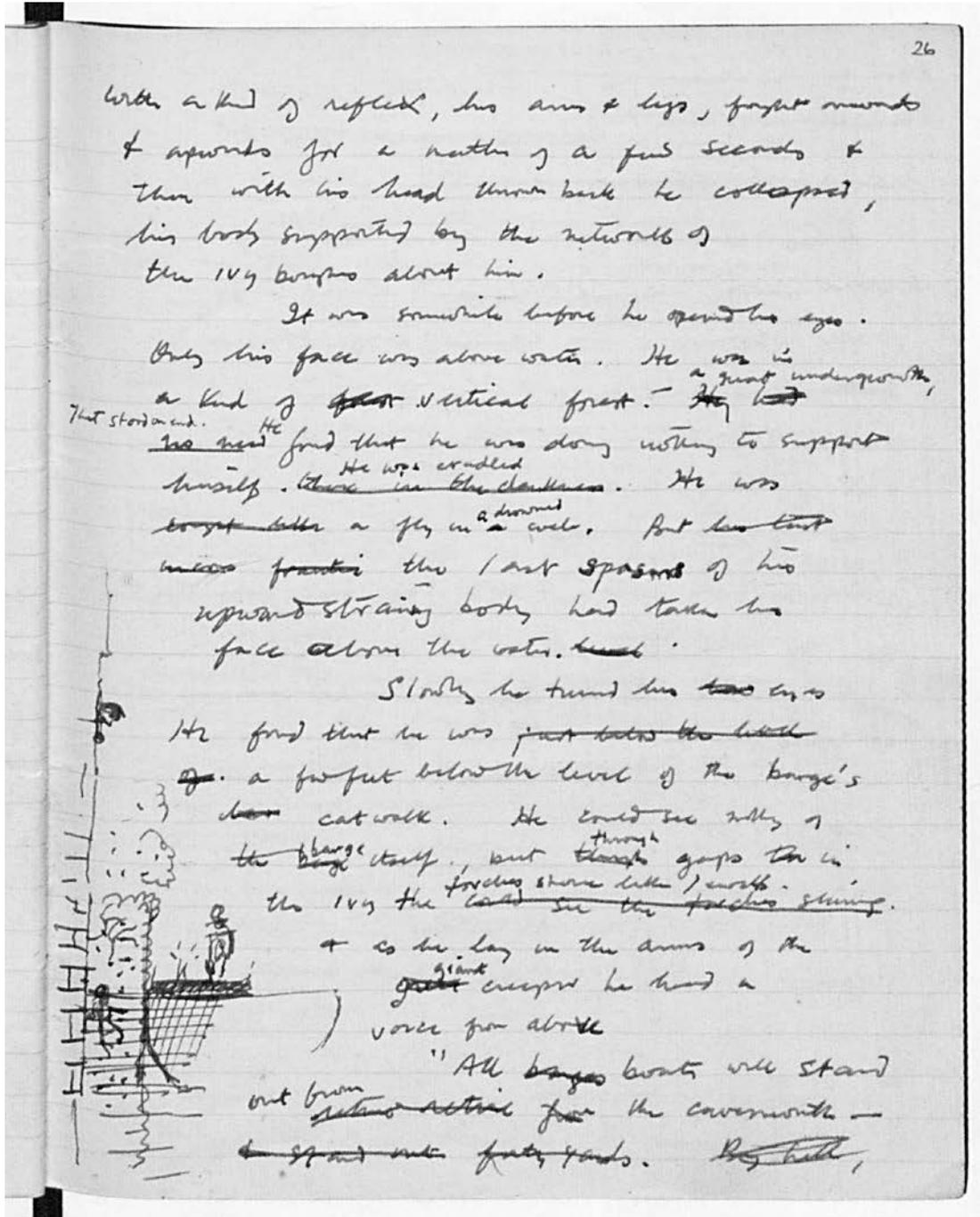
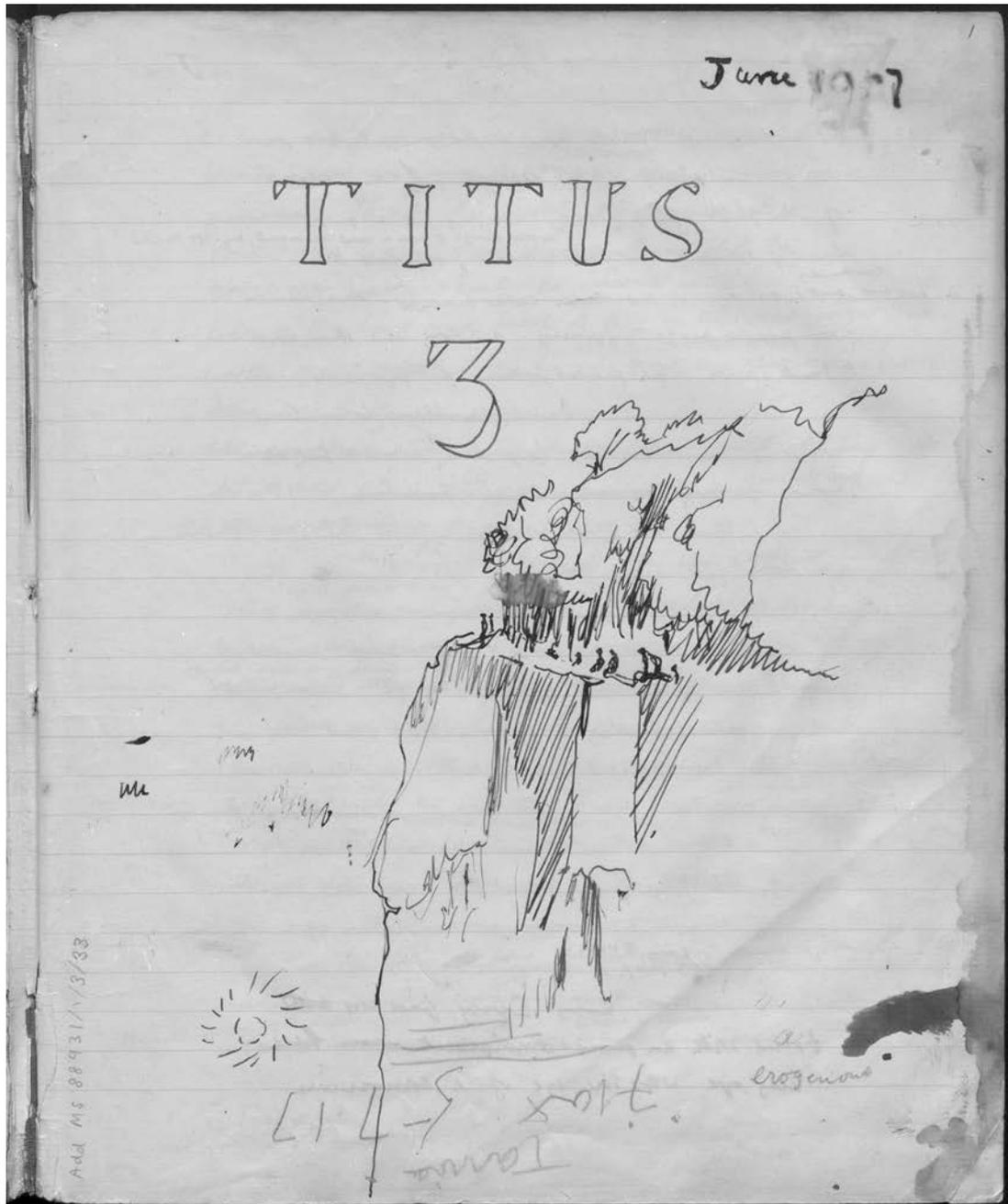


Figure 17: Manuscript page from Add MS 88931/1/3/22, folio 26r. Sectional sketch showing Steerpikie hiding in the vine as Titus looks out of a window above. Sepia ink. Original image: 105mm tall, 50mm wide. Original page: 200mm tall by 160mm wide

There are also sketches which suggest Peake occasionally 'thought in section'. In *Gormenghast* in an episode in which Steerpike is trying to escape execution the castle-city has been flooded by a great storm and the water level is many stories above ground. During the events of this section two manuscript drawings illustrate Peake's thought process as he wrote the adjoining text. In the sketch shown in Figure 16 he ensures that he can describe the reason for Steerpike's lack of air as he swims beneath the boat: the text describes his sensations and emotions. On the next page Peake sketches the position of the characters once again (Figure 17). This image is closely linked to the action of the text. Peake is once again checking that his imagination correlates to the image he creates via the text and the text describes the events in his imagination. These images are recognisable as sections to the architectural eye, even without architectural drawing conventions: the lack of detail in the building, the view of Titus seen through the wall, the profile of the boat. In the second image, the vine and the building are the only parts in section, the window and the boat are no longer cut through and the figure less visible.

The traditional triptych of architectural orthogonal drawings, plan section and elevation is almost complete. Whilst the intention is in no way to prove that Peake was thinking and drawing architecturally, it is interesting to note that there are also examples of elevational type drawings in the manuscripts. Figure 18 is a sketch of the Sunset Viewpoint in *Titus Alone* where Muzzlehatch goes after leaving the City. Here he witnesses a spectacular sunset that reminds him of all he has lost and sets him off on a course to re-find Titus. This image is a frontispiece sketch so the text relating to it is not positioned with it in the manuscript. The following description is the published version:



**Figure 18: The Sunset Viewpoint.** Brown and grey ink. Frontispiece to Add MS 88931/1/3/33, folio 1r. Original image: 105mm tall, 50mm wide. The text for this event occurs in the preceding manuscript Add MS 88931/1/3/32. This image has been erroneously captioned 'f.1: figures on cliff-top [Gormenghast Mountain]' in the British Library catalogue. However, the events in this manuscript occur outside of Gormenghast and the image directly correlates to the Sunset Viewpoint.

On the other side of these woods lay stretched a grass terrace, if such a word can be used to describe the rank earthwork upon whose western side the land dropped sheer away for a thousand feet to where the tops of miniature trees, no longer than lashes, hovered in the evening mist. [...] the terrace with its swathing vistas spreading like sections of the globe itself away and away into a great hush of silence and distance mixed, as though to form a new element, they [...] took their seats on one of the cedar benches. These benches, forming a long line, from north to south, were placed within a few feet of the edge of the precipice. Indeed there were those whose legs were on the side and whose feet, as a result, hung loosely over the edge of the terrifying drop. (*TA* 871)

The sketch and the description align, each contributing aspects that the other does not.

The parallel exploration through text and drawing is a powerful combination.

There are not many drawings in the manuscripts that can be perceived as architectural orthogonal drawings. There are, however, other spatial images that Peake as an artist would have been familiar in producing. Fragments of rooms can be observed behind characters, indicating materials or observable construction methods. The shape of the mountain occurs frequently, viewed from different angles; there are strange landscapes and an undecipherable map. The wide range of drawing types is paralleled in the text: each situation is depicted in the way it requires, on an individual basis, often with little regard to convention. Peake was utilising his visual depiction skills to aid him in his writing and is flexible in his techniques in order to highlight the most significant aspects of place, event or character. This aids the formation of space within the text and the experiential and phenomenological qualities of his writing. The inherent flexibility enables the imagination to be drawn in and expand upon the world Peake creates.

### 1.5: Conclusion

This chapter highlights the combination of skills Peake used to write his novels and the effect that these synaesthetic applications have on both the texts and the sketches he

produced of Gormenghast and its surroundings. It is these sensual qualities that he deliberately attempts to capture with his choice of vocabulary and poetic sensibilities. Peake's care and attention to his writing is shown through his conscious and considered selection of words and simultaneous explorative sketching. Peake was not tied to the conventions of novel writing and allowed his literary language to be directed by the emotions, characters and spaces he created. His texts are unique in their descriptive and evocative properties. Although for some his texts are challenging to read, Peake's work creates rich and stimulating environments: he integrates sensory details throughout.<sup>169</sup>

Whilst a consideration of detail forms a crucial aspect in creating this literary world the reticence of Peake to theorise or elaborate on his processes provides opportunities to explore this imaginary environment without a weight of author input or literary criticism upon it. It remains ambiguous in many respects; style or time period of architecture, the narrative setting, genre and the relationship between the component texts that form the trilogy. His work might be perceived as self-indulgent, but in publishing the text his ideas become collective. This state also applies to the architect, each design is personal, yet it is open to criticism by others and the architect becomes removed from 'their' spaces. Peake's absence within the text dislocates him from the reader in space and in time: the architect, rightly, fears the same will happen to them.<sup>170</sup> The writer/architect must be willing to submit the text to the reader/inhabitant and it is both a loss and a gain. The removal of the author occurs in all spatial descriptions and renditions. Peake deliberately removes his influence from *The Gormenghast Trilogy* and

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<sup>169</sup> See section 3.3.

<sup>170</sup> See section 5.3.

'Boy in Darkness' at the point of publication. He allows readers to form their own opinions and theories. He did not provide tenuously hidden secrets, connotations or motivations, only an expectation that the reader has a willing and curious imagination.

The intersection of Peake's artistic spatial understanding with his writing creates spaces within the text that warrant the pauses in the narrative that forms them. The synesthetic capacity of Peake's imagination is integrated into the text and its methods of production.<sup>171</sup> The imagination, as a comprehending skill, of the reader is anticipated and encouraged by Peake in these pauses and the environments created are brought to life by details formed by the text and the imagination. Whilst these qualities, along with a lack of specific stylistic details, have proved to make the texts difficult to classify and therefore analyse via traditional means, they do not hinder the imaginative reader.

Although the printed editions are flawed in their editing, typesetting and use of images, they provide a format that is accessible to the reader, as illustrated by the reproduced manuscript pages which are significantly harder to comprehend. Typed text is easier to read than Peake's hand written documents, its setting out is much clearer and the format is easily reproduced and stored (particularly when digital and font sizes are, ideally, alterable). Typed text is more easily lost to the gaze. The manuscripts and their images may hold information that Peake intended to share, through re-worked illustration of the novels, or the answers to long debated questions, like the Tower of Flints. However, they are fragile and neither easily legible nor reproducible. The transition from manuscript to book allows for refinement of the reading experience. An

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<sup>171</sup> See section 1.3.

analysis of the manuscripts demonstrates the integral links between writing and drawing in Peake's processes and the collaboration between these skills in finding a voice for his characters and complexity in his environments. This is significant for the architect as it coincides with the design process. It is an exploration of ideas through praxis.

Awareness that design is formed through making, drawing and a constant re-evaluation of the spaces is inherent in the architectural education. In drawing as he wrote Peake uses the marks he makes to examine his thoughts and clarify them. The process of shifting from text to image that this research takes was begun by Peake. It is not only a matter of inscribing musings upon a page, by doing so they become altered and this change develops them – just as the architect's sketch develops in its making. Peake's explorative sketches do not work without his texts and the text would not have been the same without the drawings. The architect sketches to find solutions, they can extend this process out of the drawn text and into a written one. They need not be mutually exclusive (one for design practice and one for necessity), as Peake's techniques demonstrate. Speech, writing and drawing are exercises in thought:

'my spoken words surprise me myself and teach me my thought' [Merleau-Ponty *Signs* 1960]. Merleau-Ponty was suggesting something here that goes against our common sense assumptions about language: the commonly accepted notion that thoughts must exist fully formed in the mind prior to our attempts to communicate them. He showed that, in fact, this is only a small part of the story because language itself is also able to bring thoughts to our minds. In other words, thought is realized through the act of speaking, as opposed to being simply represented by it. Thinking, in a sense, 'reaches out' for language in order to express itself more precisely (Hale 2017: 29)

In this way the text emerges, the drawing is inscribed and the model cast. It comes from the mind, through the hand and onto the page causing a feedback loop. It is not an entirely conscious process but it is from this that a richness of mark-making is created.<sup>172</sup>

It is the density of Peake's text that provides the basis for an architectural analysis of his environments and the isolation of individual loci within the places of Gormenghast and beyond. These potential spaces formed through text allow the architectural-draughtsman's imagination to be stimulated and exploration through architectural rendition. An understanding is formed of how Peake's careful choice of vocabulary and poetic phrasing is able to construct detailed imaginary spaces. In the next chapter the isolation and extractions of the loci found within the text and the methods of their analysis are discussed. An understanding of how Peake's *potential* spaces are rendered into architectural loci, along with the necessary assumptions and processes required to do this, show how Peake's environments are able to be understood as a real-imaginary space by the reader. A closer examination of the errors and inconsistencies touched upon in this chapter shows the effects these have upon the formation of imaginary space in textual, mental and physical renditions.

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<sup>172</sup> See section 5.3.

## Chapter 2: Extraction and Architectural Rendition of Loci

### from Peake's Texts

#### 2.1: Summary

This chapter outlines the rationale and methodology of extracting spaces from the four texts *Titus Groan*, *Gormenghast*, *Titus Alone* and 'Boy in Darkness'. The processes used in rendering a selected number of extracted loci are illustrated, as are the different methods of rendition. This enable Peake's loci to be examined as *potential* architecture and the effects of the rendition process upon the spaces discussed. The chapter allows the practice of examining Peake's literary spaces through the architectural-draughtsman's imagination and subsequently as architectural loci to be analysed on an architectural basis in subsequent chapters. The primary forms of rendition are discussed; mapping, long sectional drawings and cast plaster models; along with other lines of visual investigation, the secondary images and fragment drawings.

The chapter sets out the methods used for this research to analyse the spaces of Peake's text. It discusses how this methodology differs to the traditional means of literary analysis highlighted above. There is an introduction to other works which analyse literary texts by uncommon methods to contextualise the unconventional study of literary language here. There is a brief discussion on the architectural imagination. The chapter illustrates the processes and working principles for each stage of analysis; the principles of extracting loci from the texts; the assumptions made in order to position the spaces in respect to architectural spatial understanding and the general methods of rendition. This allows the possibility that the process might be extended to other literary works.

The methodology begins with the extraction (cutting/sectioning) of loci from the text. It examines the relationships between, and environments of, the loci, through diagrams and mapping. This positions each locus so its environment forms an integral part of spatial analysis. An example of the logic used in this process illustrates the methodology and enables potential replication of the process by others. Variations of the rendered maps conclude the section, enabling the rendition aesthetic to be established.

The discussion then moves from the landscapes to individual loci. This begins with the long sectional drawings of interconnected loci, before increasing in scale to the models of single spaces. The selection process is demonstrated before the production techniques of each form of rendition are discussed. The use of models as a basis for digitally manipulated images follows; examining their production techniques and the limited discussion of the images within the thesis. The fragment drawings produced for the exhibition are then discussed. The last section introduces and positions the exhibition of the renditions in the Studio 3 Gallery at the University of Kent.

In setting out the foundations for this research later chapters are placed within a theoretical context. The architectural thesis is not only the text but also the spaces from which the theoretical concepts are derived. For this thesis these spaces had to be first constructed within a recognisable framework so that theoretical aspects and knowledge could be examined. This chapter allows the subsequent chapters to analyse the loci and their renditions architecturally from outside and within the spaces.

## 2.2: Methods and Principles of Extracting Spatial Data from Peake's Texts

### *An Analysis of Literary Spaces through an Architectural Imagination*

The architectural imagination is a learned and practiced awareness of space. It is unique to each individual, as is all imagination, moulded and focused by life experiences with the addition of an education in architecture. It is a creative imagination, developed from the first stages of childhood and which tends towards a visual and visceral understanding of space, with an awareness of learned academic practices.<sup>173</sup> The 'education' of this imagination is one in which academic practices have been the focus during certain stages and so it has, to some extent, been normalised to the discipline.<sup>174</sup> This means that the outputs are inclined towards forms considered architectural – plans, sections, elevations etc. – which are not necessarily instinctive to others outside of the discipline.<sup>175</sup>

These practices, as Mallgrave pessimistically argues, are moving towards a predominance of digital tools over manual ones, which affect more than just visualisations produced. He expresses three concerns in the concluding chapter of *The Architect's Brain* (2009) about originality, sensory experience and creativity (Mallgrave 2011: 214). He discusses the tactile experiences when drawing and model-making, both manually and digitally, the differences these processes have in the brain and the way in which we think (2011: 214). Mallgrave explores the inner workings of the architectural

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<sup>173</sup> Assuming the architectural education took place in an academic environment.

<sup>174</sup> It is not the intention to discuss the development of the imagination (there are others better placed to do so, psychoanalysts Melanie Klein and Donald Winnicott for example), but to highlight the influence of architectural training. In learning and practicing the traditions of any discipline the imagination is affected. As science fiction and fantasy writer China Miéville states: 'One gets asked, if you're into the sort of thing I'm into, how did you get into it, and my response is always: how did *you* get out of it? You look at a class of six-year-olds, they're all reading about witches and aliens and spaceships and magic spells' (Jordan 2011 s.p.). Experience and education changes the imagination.

<sup>175</sup> See section 5.3.

imagination and its development through education and experience. It is likely a physical as well as cognitive change:

Through a series of discoveries (the last being made as recently as 2005), we know that spatial understanding is mediated through groups of specialized cells in the hippocampus and the surrounding region, and it has been demonstrated that London taxi drivers, for instance, have an enlarged hippocampus. Given the spatial abstractions involved in design, we might expect this also to be the case with regard to architects. (Mallgrave 2011: 131)

The taxi driver has a mind unique to their experiences of space and education so, it can be argued, does the architect. The brain is immensely malleable and this enables the architectural imagination to use experiences and knowledge to explore possibilities that do not yet exist through design and problem solving. It perceives what is in existence (site) and how, through the lens of design criteria and restrictions, a future space (design) might be formed and inhabited. It is a process of speculative and imaginative world-building.<sup>176</sup> The thesis relies on the personal imagination of the architectural-draughtsman, which sits within a broader awareness of an architectural imagination. This means that the work is personal, yet, as with all architectural design, it has come from an awareness of space, phenomenology and practical knowledge, with a synaesthetic imagination. In rendering through the architectural imagination Peake's literary spaces are altered by the architectural-draughtsman and the material qualities and processes of rendition.

The principles and methods used for this research are not traditional in respect to literary theory and the text. This is partly due to the architectural position of the thesis but also in regards to the meaning of the text for the reader. The first chapter outlined the need for the *image* rather than the *metaphor* in the phenomenological analysis of

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<sup>176</sup> See section iii.

poetic space. This position is reinforced by the need to keep the text intact in its meaning and purpose as a work of imaginative fiction. Geographer and theorist

Jonathan S. Taylor describes how over analysis can deaden the imagination:

By analysing texts of imaginative fiction through rigid predetermined categories we may reduce a text which previously worked by acting upon the imagination to a sterile prose whose effect upon the imagination is largely deadening, closing possibilities rather than opening new ones as it decides what the author is really up to. (Taylor 2002: 93)

This type of analysis also contains the potential to be an examination of the creativity of

the interpreter, rather than the work of its author. Philosopher Kendall L. Walton

discusses the perception of fictional truths by the appreciator in comparison to the critic

in *Mimesis as make-Believe: On the Foundations of the Representational Arts* (1990). He

notes the difference between acts of illocution and fiction:

Authors and other artists may be surprised at where extrapolation from the fictional truths they intentionally generated leads. This need not make any particular difference to the appreciator – unless he is concerned with what the artist might be asserting in producing the fiction, what illocutionary actions she might be performing in the process of, and in addition to, producing it. And it does not justify a judgement that the action of fiction making was defective or did not come off at all, the notion of accidental fiction making is not problematic in the way that of accidental assertion is. (Walton 1990: 88)

This is significant here because it allows an 'extrapolation from the fictional truths'

without damaging the reader's (appreciator's) pleasure. It also separates the author and

their intent from the work without stating that it is not a part of its (unknown) truth.

Writer Susan Sontag in *Against Interpretation* (1967) notes the aggressive nature of some interpretation methods, through which the work 'excavates' the text and damages

it as a method of translation. This notion of *translation* underlies interpretation and that

the ostensible meaning of a work is not enough, or is not appropriate. There is always

'dissatisfaction' on the part of the observer. She states this in terms of 'revenge' (1964:

7). Writer and philosopher Umberto Eco also discusses this in *The Limits of*

*Interpretation* (1990) extending beyond the literary into all art forms. Eco uses less emotive language to discuss the role of the author and their intent: which cannot be known unless clearly stated by the author and even then 'certainty' remains an optimistic position. He links back to the conventions of language and its structures. He reminds us that it is only through mutual agreement on meanings and signs (language) that we are able to convey or understand information. Although Evans praises literary theory in his introduction to *The Projective Cast* (2000: xxxvi) stating that architecture can learn a lot from it, in many ways the traditions of literary theory provide more barriers than instructive paths for this thesis. The study of metaphors within spatial descriptions is contradictory to the spatial analysis taking place here and is best left to those of a literary background.<sup>177</sup> Although the specific methods used for this thesis, discussed below, are thought to be particular to this research there are connections with the work of others. This is not the first unconventional literary analysis.

Architect and theorist Gordana Fontana-Giusti uses a similar extraction method in her book *Foucault for Architects* (2013) by taking 'Foucault's statements about space and architecture out of their original context in order to cross-examine them' (2013: 1). This approach, where component parts of the text are isolated in order to allow for a deliberate dislocation, parallels the first stage of the process for this research. However the compilation of loci after extraction differs both in purpose and principles.

Cultural historian Lawrence Rainey, in *Revisiting The Waste Land* (2005) takes a forensic approach to reconstruct the chronology of writing T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*

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<sup>177</sup> See section iv.

(1922). This scientific approach to literature involves analysis and documentation of the various types of paper used by Eliot for the poem and positioning their use by connecting them to his letters and other dated documents: it is a highly detailed system, recording the weight and sizes of each sheet, along with distinguishing watermarks or chainlines so as, where possible, to match the paper Eliot used. Rainey describes this process as akin to that of a classical detective (2005: xii). This approach has connections to the work of this thesis in its step by step iterative methods, although the outcomes are different.

Literary scholar Franco Moretti uses cartography and statistical analysis to study 'space in literature' and 'literature in space' in *Atlas of the European Novel, 1800-1900* (1999), noting his own surprise at the results. He looks at locations within novels and how they dictate narrative structure; the issues of the complexity of the urban setting and how the novels themselves, as objects, were distributed in c.1850. Each chapter approaches a different problem through a constant use of maps, as a visual analytical tool, throughout the book. This visual practice may not be widely used in literary analysis but Moretti has influenced other critics: cultural theorist and literary critic Andrew Milner, for example. In *Locating Science Fiction* (2012) he analyses science fiction takes through an historical and cultural context. Milner discusses the genre's location in time and place, whilst exploring its nature in literature and other media.

For this thesis several stages were undertaken in the formation of the visual and physical renderings. Peake's text was the primary source of data and only when evidence was not available from this source was the architectural imagination used. Much of the

information from the text had to be extrapolated in order to be of use (dimensions from strides etc.). In doing this assumptions and calculations made were recorded.<sup>178</sup> The first stage of this process was the systematic extraction of descriptive passages of text to form locus documents. This is a cutting of the text in order to extract space from the narrative and collate it in a usable documentary format. Each contains only text relevant for its locus, arranged in the order the reader encounters them.<sup>179</sup> The extracts are colour coded as a part of this process to indicate the season the extract occurs in and the time of day or night.<sup>180</sup> The sections of text range from lengthy paragraphs to short phrases and provide the primary data for locus analysis. They contain physical and visual descriptions, some with dimensions, combined with more ephemeral qualities such as sounds, resonance and air quality. In this way each locus can be understood through its descriptive manifestation and how it changes through the text. Spaces are rarely defined entirely in a single episode as they are developed concurrently with the plot. These documents reveal the complexity of Peake's world and the interweaving of narrative traces and poetic detailing that cannot be separated from the loci.

204 unique loci were identified within *The Gormenghast Trilogy* and 'Boy in Darkness'. They include internal and external environments, differ greatly in size, location and scale and many encompass other spaces: for example the individual wings of the castle-city are each a separate locus but contain within them many identifiable spaces. The loci were first split into two categories: those with information (175 loci)

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<sup>178</sup> See appendix V.

<sup>179</sup> The reader is unlikely to pause during *Gormenghast* to read 'Boy in Darkness' in order to position it in its chronological narrative position as there is no trigger within the text to prompt this.

<sup>180</sup> See appendix III for an example document.

and those without. Twenty-nine loci exist only as a name and therefore cannot be analysed.<sup>181</sup> Not all loci have enough information to be studied in detail and only the richest were selected for rendition. However, each reveals information about other loci and their spatial relationships. Some of the spaces cannot be easily separated from their connecting loci:<sup>182</sup> the level of discreteness is variable.

Category	Sub Categories			
Functions	Designed Purpose	Used Purpose	Public / Private	Used / Unused
Spatial Qualities	Limits / Boundaries	Enclosure	Orientation / Position in Space	Links to Other Spaces
	Relationship to the Ground	Geometric Arrangement	Known Measurements	Scale
Material Qualities	Materials	Construction	Condition	
Sensorial Qualities	Light Qualities	Textures	Colours	
	Sounds	Acoustic Qualities	Air Quality	Air Movement
	Temperature			
	Smells			
Weather	Climatic Conditions	Named Phenomena		
Time of Day	Light	Dark	Cusp	
Seasons	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter
Notes	Other Notable Features			

Figure 19: Categories for the table of loci produced in this research

<sup>181</sup> A list of these loci, in order of appearance, can be found in appendix IV.

<sup>182</sup> In order to avoid numerous loci with limited properties and the same name corridors are generally included as a part of another connected locus.

Once the loci had been identified a system of categorisation and collection of data was developed. Features of each locus were identified in relation to spatial categories, shown in Figure 19.<sup>183</sup> This collated information provides a detailed overview of each locus, which is easily compared and brings the data into an accessible form. These documents provide a framework which locates loci and highlights spatial qualities. They alter the contact the reader has with loci, shifting from narrative structures to a data based understanding. By collating information to render, Peake's spaces are changed.<sup>184</sup>

After the table of loci was produced, it and the locus documents, were used to examine the relationships between spaces. Initial connections were established through the production of nesting diagrams. From these a trio of maps were drawn. Individual loci were isolated for modelling and small groups of connected loci were used for long sectional drawings, with fragment drawings produced for each rendition. Whilst the medium of rendition changed and the methods of production between the sections, fragments and models also changed, the general principles remained the same. The following suppositions were applied: first, there is a truth within the text, no matter that it may be a fictional truth (Walton 1990: 53); second, that Gormenghast is a possible, believable and understandable structure, a 'fact of the imagination' (Bachelard 1994: 116), no matter that it may not always conform to 'standard' architectural rules; third, 'poetic faith' and a 'willing suspension of disbelief' (as outlined by the poet and philosopher Samuel Taylor Coleridge (Coleridge 2005: 145)) are important aspects of both the imagination and for creating architecture. The architectural imagination is

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<sup>183</sup> Information, points of note, dates and seasons are in appendix V. The completed table is in appendix X.

<sup>184</sup> See section 3.3 and 5.1

altered through education. This enables a methodology that steps outside traditional means but follows others who have also done so, through a logical step by step process.

### *Assumptions of the Renditions, Contradictions and Inconsistencies within the Loci*

In order to construct the loci architecturally assumptions are required. As with language, these prevent the need to start from first principles for every given instance.<sup>185</sup> They follow, or are inferred from, the text as far as possible:

- Gravity, space, time and other physical phenomena apply in accordance with the real world: all materials behave and exhibit properties as expected.
- All flora and fauna are Earth natives, unless stated otherwise.
- Gormenghast is situated in the equivalent of the northern hemisphere of (a) planet Earth and equivalent locational phenomena can be applied. This extends further to assume that a European culture and philosophy are applicable as are the seasonal tendencies and other environmental factors.<sup>186</sup>
- Etymological conventions of word usage and descriptors apply.
- Seasons can be understood to run roughly with the calendar months (i.e. spring is broadly March, April and May) as specific seasonal variation is unknown.
- All materials used in construction, maintenance and repair are found locally.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> See section 4.6 and *The Limits of Interpretation* (Eco 1990).

<sup>186</sup> Species of trees, for example, described can generally be found in Europe (oak, ash, chestnut etc.). These 'locate' the castle-city to some extent although exceptions apply, like the Outer Dwellings cacti. However, as non-native plants are often grown elsewhere it can be assumed they can grow in the climate described. They may indicate Gormenghast was not always as isolated as it is in Titus' time.

<sup>187</sup> Trees, mines and the mountain and surrounding landscape, as described, would provide resources for the population of Gormenghast, including stone, metal (minerals) clay, wood, nourishment and water.

- Traditional, standard construction methods and use of materials apply: no impossibilities. The technology of Gormenghast is assumed to be pre-steel as it is not noted in the text. The technology in loci beyond the realm of the castle-city is generally more advanced and considered to be post-steel. Where no materials are stated location and features are used to infer the most likely combinations.<sup>188</sup>
- Building regulations do not apply. A lack of handrails, a large number of risers in staircases and a lack of insulation are examples shown in renditions.
- There is no overriding architectural style. Gormenghast has existed for 77 generations so it is assumed that aesthetic preferences have changed over time.<sup>189</sup>
- Many of the castle-city's walls are of great thickness and potentially hollow (*TG* 491). The hidden stairway to Fuchsia's Attics attests to this.
- Courtyards and quadrangles are rectangular in plan, unless stated otherwise.
- All rooms are cuboid and have at least one door, unless stated otherwise.
- Where bodily measurements are used average heights are taken from the *Architect's Pocket Book* (Baden-Powell 2003: 65) unless the text supplies details.
- Stair risers and goings are based on averages of 190mm by 250mm but discretion is used for each. Spiral staircases are assumed to ascend clockwise direction.<sup>190</sup>
- All furniture, fittings and room components are human scale and an appropriate size, unless stated otherwise, with tendencies towards the grand: i.e. room, sill and lintel heights. The status and function of spaces affect dimensions in the

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<sup>188</sup> See appendix V for calculations. In the castle-city this is generally Gormenghast stone for exterior walls and timber and/or lath and plaster for internal walls and ceilings.

<sup>189</sup> There is no indication that the castle is entirely of a Gothic style. However, as flying buttresses are mentioned (*TG* 57), parts of the castle may exhibit aspects of it.

<sup>190</sup> This is the traditional method of defensive orientation. It hinders ascending, right-handed attackers.

same manner as might be expected. Hierarchy and typical usage of space also affect features such as decoration, furnishing and maintenance.

- No mention of man-made or controlled, electricity is made in reference to Gormenghast. It does occur in *Titus Alone*. Lights within Gormenghast are either candles or oil lamps and are 'lit'. The lights in the Olive Palace are 'switched on' implying electricity, indicating that at least some of the City has electric lights.

This, and technology like lifts, suggests electricity is also used for other systems.

Each reader experiences Peake's spaces differently, because of personal history, perspective, generation and era. Each individual situates the books in their own derived understanding of time and technology. It is assumed here that the reader experiences Peake's texts at the time the thesis was written. This, for example, adopts an understanding of current technology, whereas Peake would assume his readers were contemporary, with a similar technological understanding. However, Peake's writing does not dictate the time frame of his texts. Gormenghast is less technologically advanced than Peake's era and the City in *Titus Alone* is hard to identify; it is easily more familiar to the present-day-reader than the post-war period in which it was written.<sup>191</sup>

There are measurements present in the text and these are, where possible, used in the rendition process. They were converted from imperial to metric to do so (both are used for dimension labels) and taken literally, whether directly from the text or inferred.

Although in the imagination dimensions are flexible, rendition changes their state,

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<sup>191</sup> Items not yet invented at the time of writing, like smart-phones, do not directly appear in the text but this may reflect a different use of technology, rather than an absolute non-existence within this world. Drones exist and the Factory indicates a significant technological capacity.

fixing it bit by bit, as space becomes more architectural. These numeric descriptions become the structure upon which the rendition is constructed. Where distances between points form a range (usually for inferred measurements) a probability area was created to reflect the shifting potential of space within the imagination.<sup>192</sup>

Due to the length of Peake's texts and time it took to write them, it is inevitable that contradictions exist. These variables are noted and the implications understood. They have not been 'corrected' as this would require decisions concerning Peake's intent. Discrepancies are included in the analysis: layering information increases the accuracy and depth of analysis rather than hinders it. Space can distort in non-physical media and it would be inappropriate to force these complexities into strictly buildable space. Contradictions become a tool in the literary, imaginary and architectural understanding of the loci.<sup>193</sup> Below are three examples of contradictions which relate to Gormenghast Mountain (known to be west of the castle-city, see below).

In the first instance Nanny Slagg has been described as walking north at sunset through an avenue of trees. Shortly after the following description occurs:

The acacia trees, silhouetted on her right, cut patterns against the mountain and on her left glowed dimly with a sort of subterranean light. Her path was striped like the dim hide of a zebra from the shadows of the acacia trunks. (*TG* 61)

The trees ought to be silhouetted on her left for a westerly sunset and would then 'cut patterns against the mountain'. There are several ways of viewing this inconsistency: her path is not straight and she doubles back and walks south for a time; the mountain and

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<sup>192</sup> See appendix V.

<sup>193</sup> See Robert Venturi's manifesto *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (1966).

sunset has momentarily moved to the east; or the reader's point-of-view has moved to face Nanny Slagg and it is their left and right that Peake refers to.

Another incident occurs on a dark April morning. Titus is riding with the sun on the back of his neck, travelling in a westerly direction, towards the mountain. He climbs the lower slopes and regards the following scene:

Away to the west the roofscape of his heavy home floated, as lightly as though every stone were a petal. Strung across the capstone jaws of its great head a hundred windows, the size of teeth, reflected the dawn. (*G* 444-5)<sup>194</sup>

Gormenghast was hidden behind a rise in the ground to the west. To the east and behind him the slopes of the mountain climbed in ugly shelves. (*G* 447)

It might be assumed on the basis of these examples that the mountain is to the east of Gormenghast. However, it is stated by Peake that the sun sets behind the Mountain when viewed from the castle-city (*TG* 60), so logically it is to the west.<sup>195</sup> Yet, the mountain shifts again in the description of an engraving and appears to be to the north:

This engraving, a large and meticulous affair, was of the Tower of Flints. The artist must have stood to the south of the tower as he worked or as he studied the edifice, for beyond the irregularity of turrets and buttresses that backed it and spread almost to the sky like a seascape of stormy roofage, could be seen the lower slopes of Gormenghast Mountain, mottled with clumps of shrub and conifer. (*G* 491)

The Tower of Flints is known to be approximately in the centre of the East Wing (*TG* 144). This suggests that the mountain is very large and that the artist who painted the image was not standing directly due south but south-east of the tower.<sup>196</sup>

Inconsistencies within the text are an inherent aspect of Peake's work, whether intentional or not. They provide additional layers and form gaps which allow the

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<sup>194</sup> This extract also demonstrates the difficulty of representation or physical construction of poetic notions: to make stone appear light as a petal and float. The mirage-like image is more easily understood by the imagination than rendered in ink.

<sup>195</sup> It is known that the sun rises in the east: *TG* 41 & 46 provide the time of day and position of the sun.

<sup>196</sup> See appendix V.

imagination to penetrate and explore. Whilst the contradictions are derived directly from the text (from Peake as author and other) assumptions are formed by the reader (as author of the thesis, architectural-draughtsman and self) and are personal to them. The inconsistencies lie somewhere in-between, they are a collaboration between Peake and the reader, the other and the self, what might have been clear to Peake may not be to the reader and vice versa. Each participant in the text (an other) brings something new to it (the self) and whilst most of these variations remain unrecorded and ephemeral, here they are rendered and made perceptible to others. The (architectural) imagination has the capacity to maintain inconsistencies as an aspect of spatial understanding.

### *Digital and Manual Techniques used to Render Extracted Loci*

For this research two primary forms of rendition were produced: long sectional drawings of connected loci and cast models of single loci. The physical models did not use digital technology so that flexibility became inherent in their formation. Combinations of two-dimensional digital and manual techniques were used for the drawn images: the maps, sections and fragments. This allows duplication, iteration and the infinite space of the digital page to be combined with the fluidity and enigmatic qualities of hand drawing. The digital platform is a crisp and sometimes over-accurate tool for drawing, and often the image is read as finished when it is still in progress.<sup>197</sup>

A digital computer program was used to form the foundations of the drawings, in order to use the beneficial capacity of replication; shifting positions; expansion of the

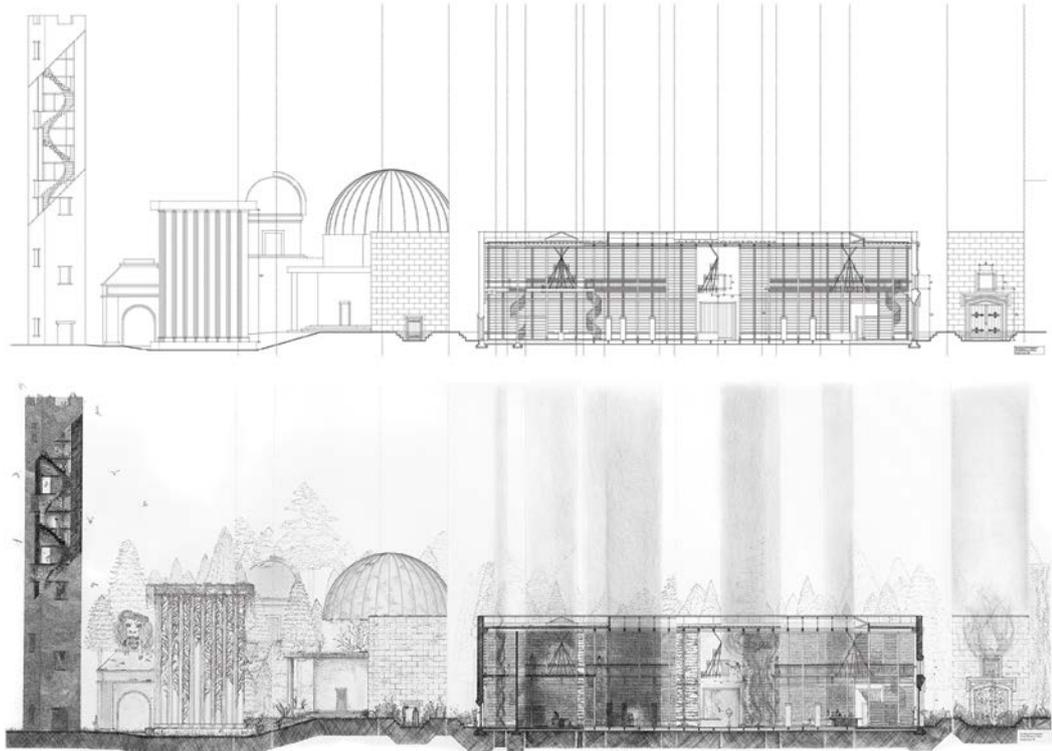
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<sup>197</sup> This is also applicable to text: a printed, typed manuscript appears more definite and 'finished' than an autograph one. It is perceived that the act of printing is one of finalising, even when the opposite is true.

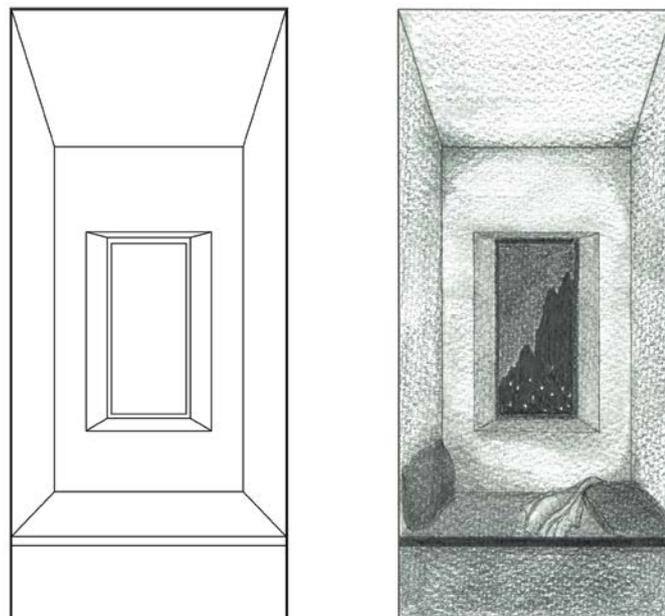
drawing without the limits of a physical page (useful for unknown extents); ability to return to previous versions and continually alter drawn lines. The landscapes of the text are of an unknown magnitude, only limited by the imagination of the reader, guided by Peake; it is known the City is a significant distance from Cheeta's House, but it is only truly realised when the potential boundaries are calculated through an analysis of the time taken to get there and the modes of transport used. The infinite space a digital program provides is advantageous: with no physical limits there is no dilemma of scale or page layout. One can zoom in and out, pan and extend the drawing in any direction without running out of space, paper or ink.

The constructed digital framework was printed, fixing both scale and page size, so that hand-drawn elements could be added as another layer. The digital lines show more certainty than the finished images (with less visual information), depicting known aspects of loci, measured distances and permanent features, but they contain little of Peake's atmosphere. Whilst the digital drawings might be considered more 'correct', due to their unfinished state and description (Latin *describere*, to transcribe, copy, sketch) of probability, they lack the life and poetry of the texts. Hand-drawn layers contribute these facets in a medium sympathetic to Peake's richness and detail. Ambiguity is left within the traces left by the thought process:

One benefit of the hand-drawn sketch over that of the hard-line CAD image is precisely this ability to retain the traces of previously abandoned lines. This allows the designer to compare a number of alternatives while perhaps working on different areas of a drawing, literally providing a space to thinking 'between the lines' (Hale 2017: 103)



**Figure 20: The East Wing of Gormenghast before and after hand-drawn overlays**



**Figure 21: Titus' Bedroom window before and after hand-drawn overlays**

The resultant images are a personal interpretation, formed through the architectural imagination, with lines directed by the hand and imagination. They will not align with everyone's vision; nevertheless they provide qualities that the digital images cannot. The hand drawing softens crisp digital lines, disrupting the certainty they portray and replaces it with shifting features, qualities of light, texture, an awareness of dilapidation, material qualities and human inhabitation.<sup>198</sup> There is a pleasure in the hand drawing not present in the digital process. The physical feedback, grain of the page and staining of the fingers is a sensory and tactile process, which can be read in the physical drawing.

In the drawing processes the combination of digital and hand work was different when producing the maps than for the long sections and fragments. For the rendered maps the hand-drawing was produced separately with a temporary, version of the digital lines to act as a guide. These lines were then digitally (re)superimposed onto a scan of this hand drawing. This allows the text to remain crisp and alterable (for further, potential iterations) and for digital lines to remain unsullied by the hand work, showing the arcs and routes clearly. This process is a building-up from a potential to an existent space, with decisions shown by fields outlined by digitally drawn lines.

For the long sections (Figure 20) and fragments (Figure 21) the hand drawing was drawn directly onto a printed copy of the digital lines.<sup>199</sup> This keeps the digital lines integral to the drawing and allows hints of a 'perfect' form to emerge through the hand-

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<sup>198</sup> This softening describes the synaesthetic understanding of the line. See section iii.

<sup>199</sup> The drawings were all printed onto watercolour paper in order to have a visible, tactile grain.

drawn lines.<sup>200</sup> They highlight the transitory nature of the atmospheres, mobile objects and the characters that, as fleeting moments, appear ghost-like with crisp lines revealed through their forms. This process is destructive in its working: creative decisions are not shown and a clinical 'ideal' is distorted by the over-drawing. Just as materials are degraded by time, the hand drawing leaves traces of what once was and questions the certainty of the digital lines. Pencil and ink force the once-crisp digital spaces into new and dilapidated architectures. They are less definitive, requiring a different form of imaginative input.<sup>201</sup>

In the production of cast renditions there was no digital or pre-mould drawing stage. All of the formwork components were drawn and cut by hand. This method, less accurate than a digitally manipulated cutting tool, allows movement of the formwork and creates distortions. The shifting materials allow areas of excess plaster to form as it forces its way through gaps and imperfections in the moulds, altering the spaces of the loci and introducing fluidity to the fixed plaster spaces. What might have been crisp if created digitally, using different materials, or methods, is warped by manual techniques. Digital aspects were introduced in later stages, through photography and image manipulation, combined with hand-drawn overlays. The methods of rendition affect its outcomes. By allowing flexibility and ambiguity the sensory and phenomenological potential for the depicted loci are extended. It is only through an awareness of process that an analysis of the renditions can take place.

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<sup>200</sup> It would have been possible to physically remove these digital lines, with the aid of a scalpel blade, but this would have affected both the surface of the paper and the visual understanding of the drawing.

<sup>201</sup> This less-defined nature is also reflected in the non-standard hatches. Industry symbols could have been used; however, this would have presented a statement of 'fact'. Non-standard shading allows for a vagary of structure, providing appropriate densities but no definitive answers: they are evocative, not prescriptive.

### 2.3: Identifying Spatial Relationships between Loci, through Diagrams and Mapping

#### *Spatial Nesting Diagrams Formed from Extracted Information*

The first stage of positioning the loci in space is to identify their connections and understand the nature of each relationship. In order to do this a series of nesting diagrams were constructed (see the following five figures).<sup>202</sup> Diagrammatic orientation of the loci allows places to be connected physically (solid lines) visually (dotted lines), or embedded within each other, without situating them in a specific environment or defining their properties. These diagrams have no geographical information, distances, vertical positioning, orientation indicators or spatial descriptors; generic rectangular forms indicate the presence of boundaries. For loci with no information this indicator becomes uncertain and broken (see the Plateau, Figure 22). These diagrams are limited in their description of Peake's environments; yet clearly show complex relationships. They shape perceptions of Peake's spaces, indicating that they are spaces with boundaries and links, connecting loci without fixing distance.

Figure 22 shows the overall scheme of the landscapes contained within the texts. The loci are situated in three areas: those within the walls of Gormenghast, those immediately surrounding it and those which are unconnected or a great distance away. The distinction between the latter two categories depends on whether or not there is a visual link and/or a known relationship between the locus and the castle-city, as well as indicating a general understanding of distance. In this diagram the division between the

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<sup>202</sup> See appendix VI for larger reproductions of the nesting diagrams.

loci of individual books becomes clear: in *Titus Alone* the spaces generally lie beyond; those in *Titus Groan* and *Gormenghast* are predominantly in the first two areas; loci of 'Boy in Darkness' span all three fields. Certain loci span boundaries either because they are so large that they are situated in two categories or there is uncertainty about their positioning. Loci that could not be located are listed in the most probable area (the majority of these are known to be within the castle-city) but some are not easily placed.

From this first diagram a series was created, for the spaces within each area. Five nesting diagrams were formed for Gormenghast, (see Figure 23, Figure 24, Figure 25, which illustrate the loci of the four wings of the castle and its heart. Loci that appear in more than one diagram, like Gormenghast Mountain, allow relationships between diagrams to be perceived. These duplicated loci also provide reference and orientation points, used later in the mapping process. In these images the level of detail for each locus is dependent on the information provided by Peake. For some quadrangles (like the Servants' Quadrangle, Figure 23 and Figure 24) there are a number of other connected or embedded loci and so they appear larger than those more isolated. In each of these diagrams the formatting of the spaces is related to the relationships between loci. Loci that are duplicated across diagrams often change formation. These changes reflect the shifting understanding of the loci at this stage and the flexibility of space within the imagination. The tenuous and unknown nature of some connections can be seen in the different types of dotted lines (see Figure 24: the connection between Nanny Slagg's Room and Fuchsia's Room is a physical route of unknown length).<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> This can also be seen in the positioning of the Lake (Figure 25).



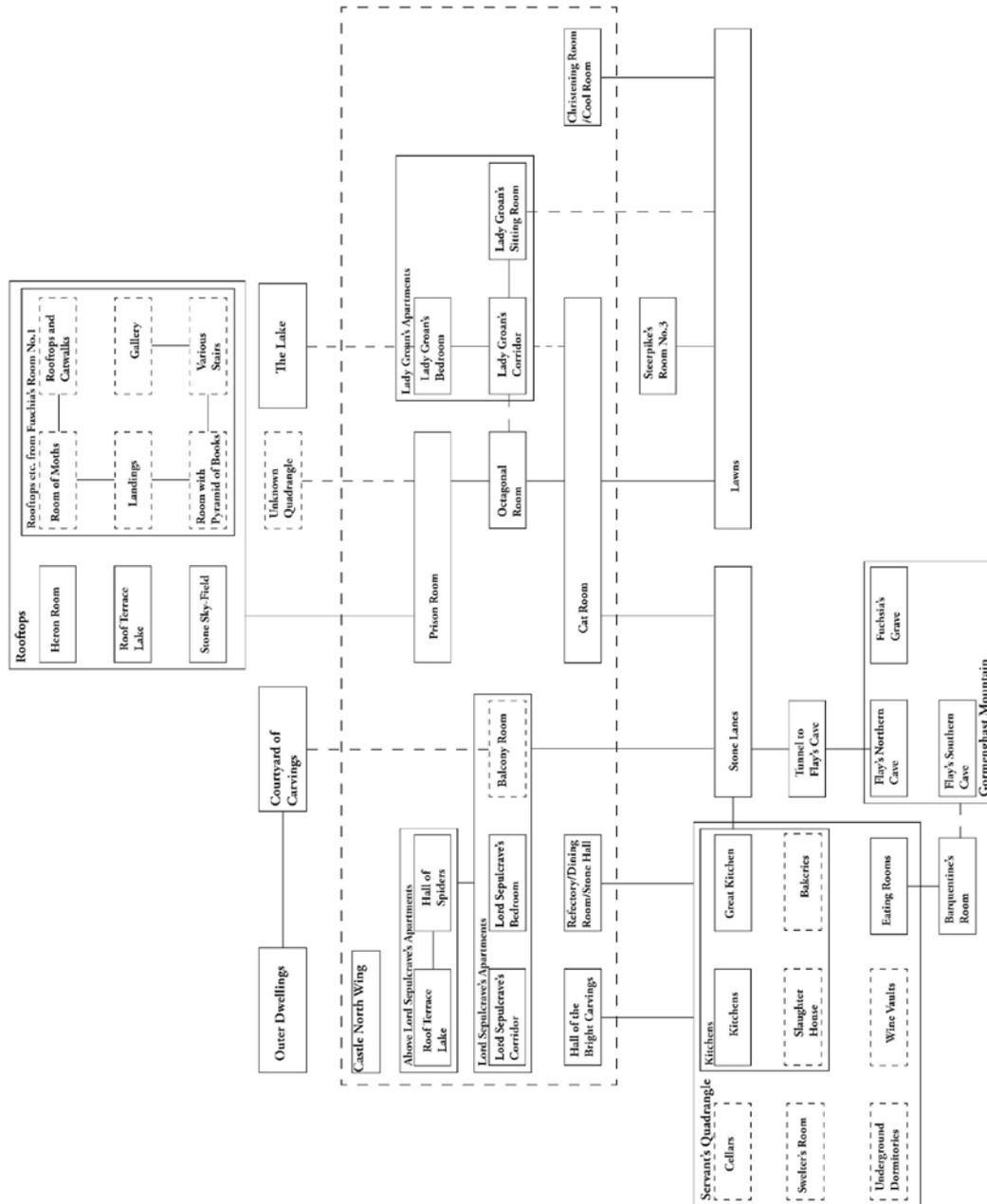


Figure 23: Nesting Diagram 2. Loci of the North Wing of Gormenghast

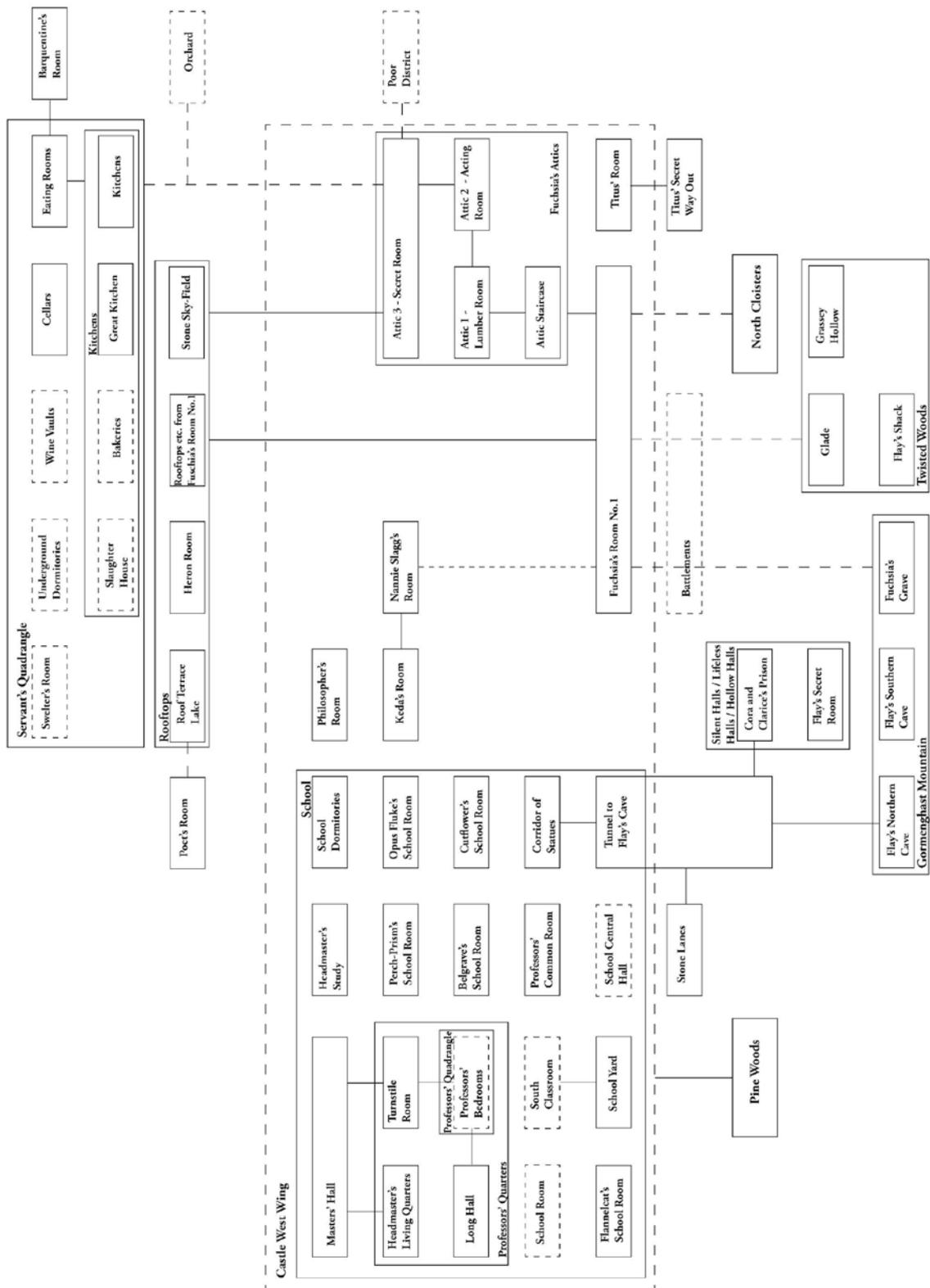


Figure 24: Nesting Diagram 3. Loci of the West Wing of Gormenghast

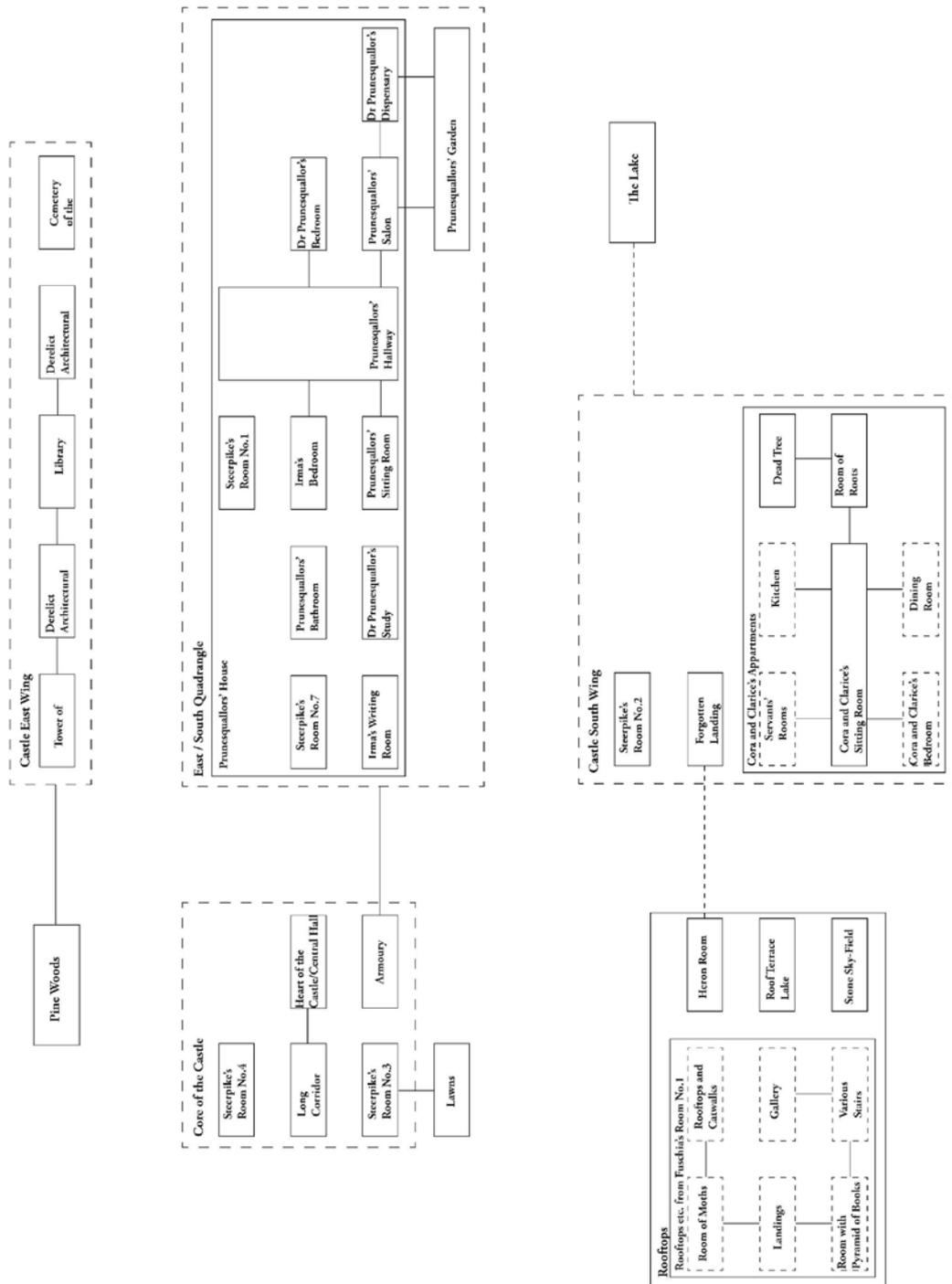


Figure 25: Nesting Diagram 4. Loci of the East Wing, the East/South Quadrangle and the South Wing of Gormenghast

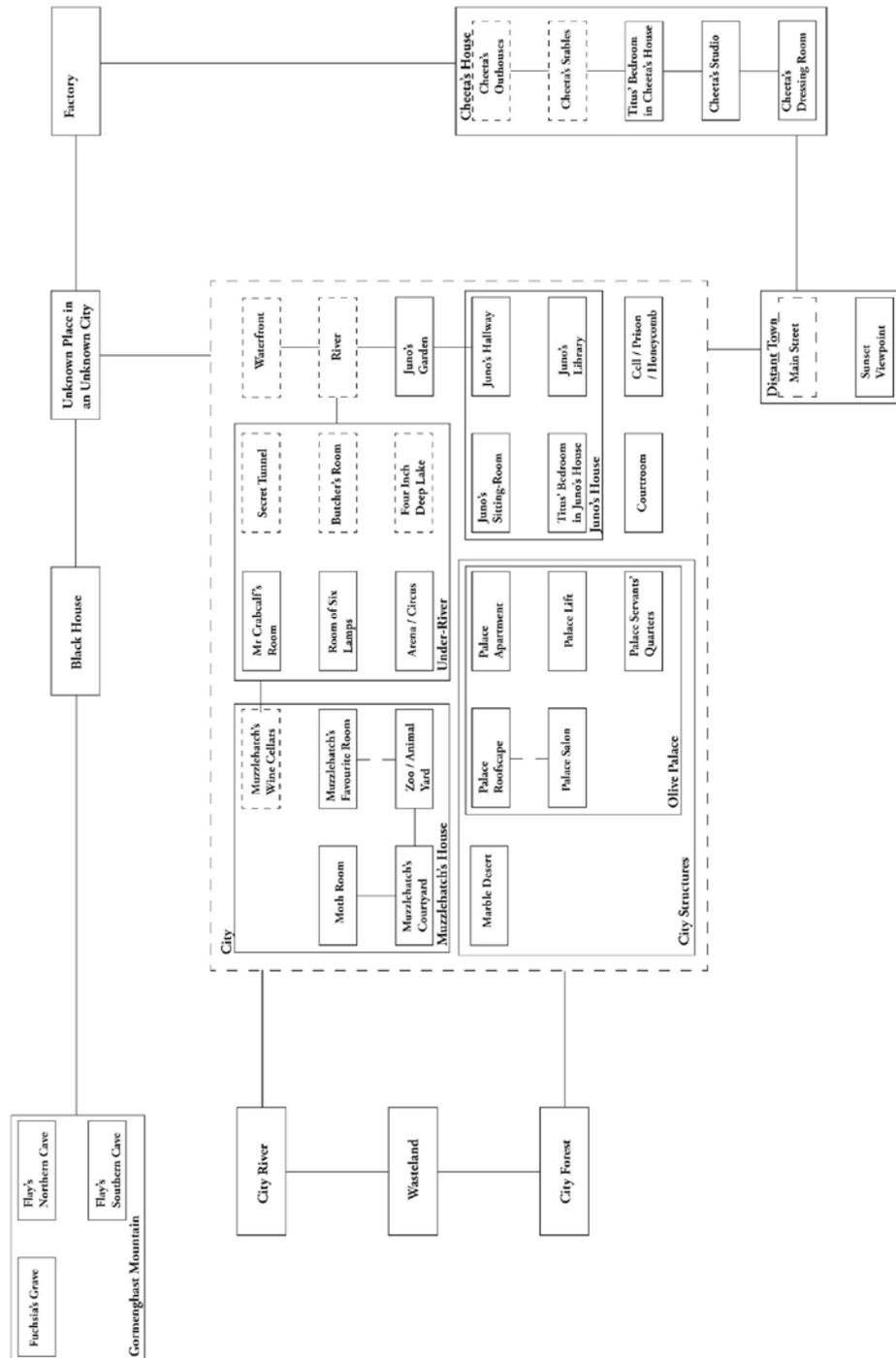


Figure 26: Nesting Diagram 5. Loci of *Titus Alone*

The last of this series of images (Figure 26) explores the loci of the City and their links with others of *Titus Alone*. This illustrates the comparatively simpler relationships between these loci when compared to those of Gormenghast. As they feature in only one book there is less opportunity for development: there are fewer in number and embedded levels. However, the ambition of these spaces is apparent: Peake did not reduce the scale or scope of this landscape despite his illness.<sup>204</sup>

These diagrams, whilst limited in their response to the complexities of the text, provide an indication of how spaces are linked. They demonstrate the layering of the loci, how they are connected and nested, how links are not always physical and how the characters and narrative provides connections that may not be immediately obvious. They form the initial step from which the architectural imagination can illustrate the loci. A reader performs this connective process intuitively within their imagination, where connections can distort and change as needed: physical connections, like corridors, can be infinitely long with many changes of direction, whilst remaining a simple-to-understand route from A to B. The nature of an image is that it restrains the locus network, locking it into place. As a starting point to navigate the loci and their relationships, the diagrams illustrate that Peake's connections exist in a manner akin to the architectural: it is a network as complex as might be found in a physical environment and spaces are locatable in relation to each other and to geographical features.<sup>205</sup> They provided a basis from which to construct maps of Peake's work.

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<sup>204</sup> See section 1.2.

<sup>205</sup> It would also be possible to illustrate the spaces of an apartment, building or city as a similar diagram.

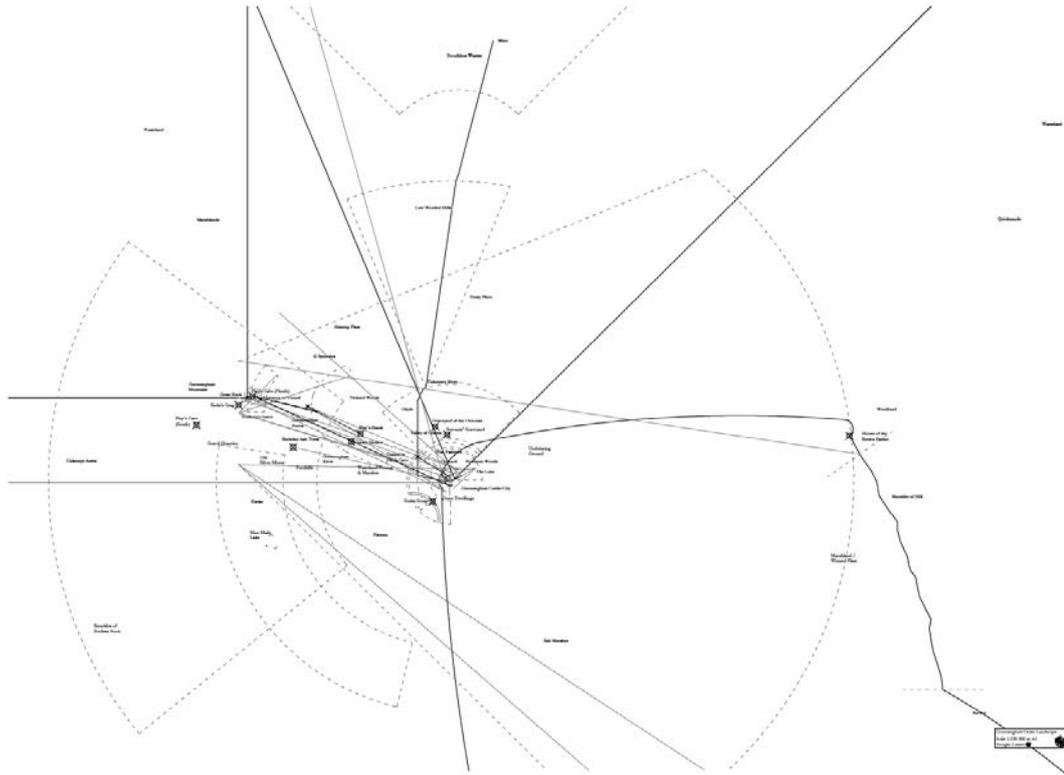
### ***Mapping Gormenghast and its Landscapes – An Example of Logic***

The mapping phase forms a significant part of understanding the loci within their environment. Whilst detailed spatial analysis focuses on individual or small groups of loci it is important to locate these places in space. Much of the information about orientation and environmental qualities comes from the relationships between loci and their relationships. The digital stage is effectively a series of logic puzzles. Known relationships are used, along with orientation factors and distances (stated by Peake or directly inferred), to produce a structure which shifts with each new addition.

The first step locates major geographical features of the landscape. Peake's texts were not used in narrative order and at early stages the physical aspects of the loci were drawn as indicative placeholder shapes (removed before overdrawing by hand).<sup>206</sup> This digital stage consisted of locational probability: areas for loci were marked by dotted arcs and lines, indicative shapes drawn within these boundaries, and known routes taken by characters. Figure 27 illustrates the final stage of this digital process and the various marks can be seen, although for clarity indicative shapes of large loci are absent. The following contains an example of the logic used to produce the digital maps. The process begins with a two-dimensional drawing surface, north at the top. The images below were drawn by hand as a representation of this process at an early stage; once key features were located the remainder of the process was digital.

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<sup>206</sup> Another method of mapping would take the narrative and identify features one at a time in the order they occur in the text and construct a map as the narrative reveals itself. Here memory played a part in mapping as the text was already known. A comparison between these methods would prove interesting.



**Figure 27: Digital print of Gormenghast Outer Landscape before the addition of hand drawing, indicative shapes removed. 1:250000 at A1**

First the Mountain is located (Figure 28):

As she hurried along, the sun was setting behind Gormenghast Mountain in a swamp of saffron light and her shadow hurried along between the acacia trees. (*TG* 60)

The character is inside the castle-city walls on a late summer's evening. The mountain is located (depending on its size, shape and distance) to the west (see above). It is

established elsewhere in the text that the sun rises in the east (*TG* 41; 46).

the house of Gormenghast and lord of those tracts of country that stretch on every hand, in the North to the wastelands, in the South to the grey salt marshes, in the East to the quicksands and the tideless sea, and in the West to knuckles of endless rock. (*TG* 221)

The next quotation locates other key features, which are added to the map (Figure 29):

Between the castle and Gormenghast Mountain the land was desolate, for the main part empty wasteland, with large areas of swamp where undisturbed among the reedy tracts the waders moved. [...] To the east of Gormenghast Mountain, but detached from the trees at its base, spread the undulating darkness of the Twisted Woods. To the west the unkempt acres, broken here and there with low stunted trees bent by the winds (*TG* 196)

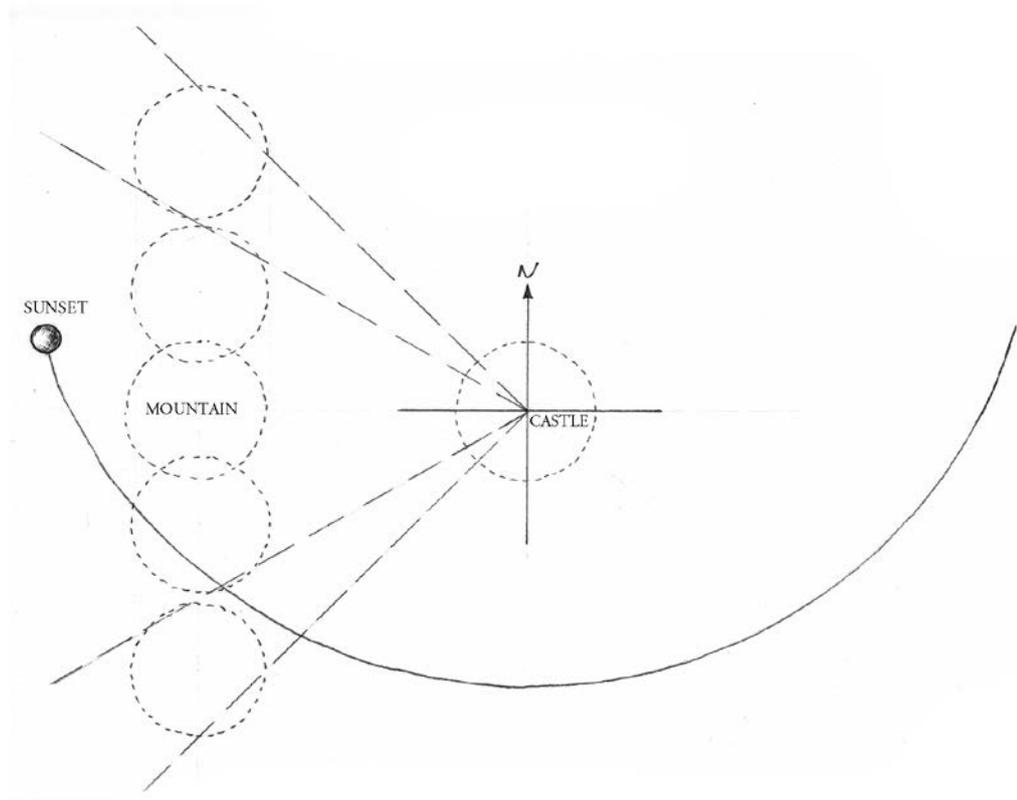


Figure 28: Mapping Process 1. Location of Mountain, not to scale

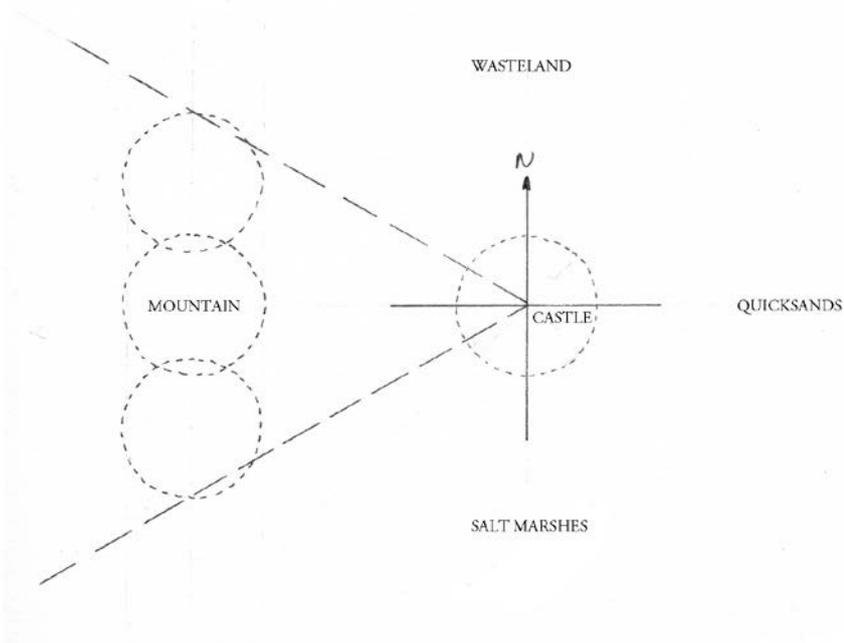


Figure 29: Mapping Process 2. Location of large landscape features, not to scale

This description is from within Fuchsia's bedroom No.1 located in the centre of the West Wing (*TG* 46). It therefore looks roughly north or south (not yet determined and dependent on the exact orientation of the castle-city). Between the West Wing of Gormenghast and Gormenghast Mountain is the Wasteland Swamp. Also to the east of Gormenghast Mountain are the Twisted Woods. So the Mountain must be either more northerly or southerly than due west. There are trees at the base of the Mountain and beyond it, to the west, are the Unkempt Acres (Figure 30).

At this point the location of the Twisted Woods is important, determined by using different viewing positions.

Keda in her room in the northern wing was watching the sunlight as it moved across the twisted woods. (*TG* 70)

The two triangular windows [of Fuchsia's Bedroom] in the opposite wall gave upon the battlements [...] Beyond the battlements the flat pastures spread and beyond the pastures were the Twisted Woods (*TG* 46)

This shows the Twisted Woods are to the north, beyond the Flat Pastures. These pastures may be part of the Wasteland Swamp or may be a more fertile area (Figure 31).

Between this dreary province [Unkempt Acres] and the pine wood that surrounded the West Wing of the castle, a dark, shelving plateau rose to a height of about a hundred to two hundred feet [...]. It was beyond these cold escarpments that the river wound its way about the base of the Mountain and fed the swamps [...]. Fuchsia could see three short stretches of the river from her window. (*TG* 196-7)

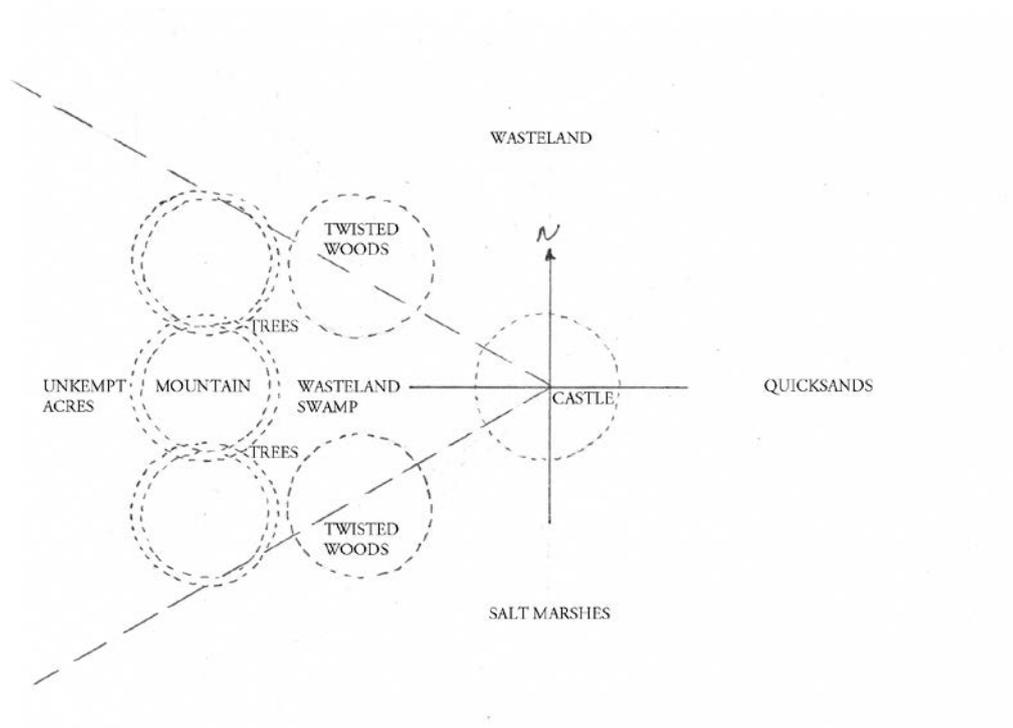


Figure 30: Mapping Process 3. Early location of other landscape features, not to scale

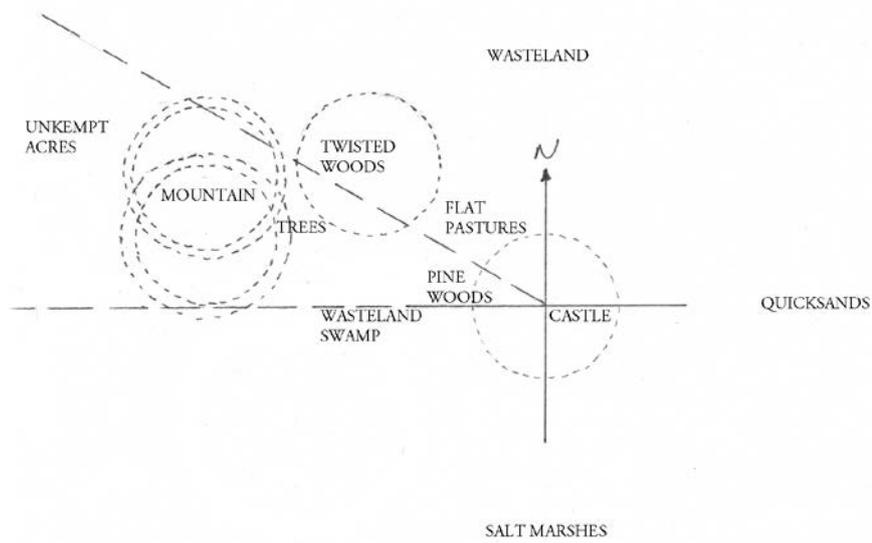


Figure 31: Mapping Process 4. Location of the Twisted Woods, not to scale

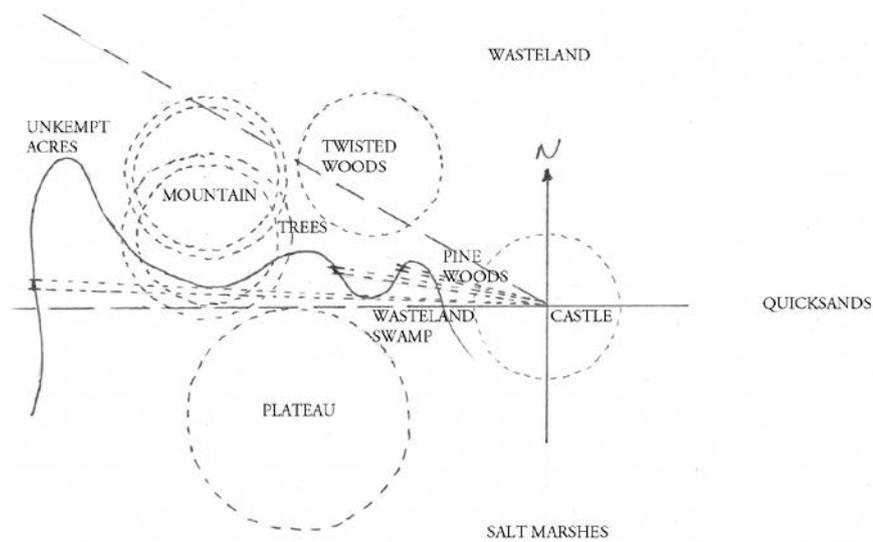


Figure 32: Mapping Process 5. Location of the Plateau and River, not to scale

The 'dreary province' refers to the Unkempt Acres, mentioned immediately before, which lie further west beyond Gormenghast Mountain. This places the Plateau south of the mountain and towards the castle-city. The swamps that the river feeds have previously been located between the castle and the mountain so the river terminates within this swamp after winding around the base of the Mountain (Figure 32).

Through this step-by-step methodology each locus was placed, initially as a general location, then refined with measurements and inferred distances.<sup>207</sup> Due to the nature of the narrative the above extracts are all from *Titus Groan*. Peake assumes readers remember details from this book in subsequent novels. Detailed descriptions in later books are usually of new spaces or ones which previously had little detail.<sup>208</sup> The

<sup>207</sup> For a longer account see appendix VII.

<sup>208</sup> See section 1.3.

landscapes of the castle-city are most elaborately described in *Titus Groan*. The process is iterative: each additional locus affects those previously placed. It requires constant referral to Peake's text and a logical approach to its information. This method produces a version of Peake's landscapes that fits with the text, but is not the only solution: the order of placing loci, as well other personal interpretations would result in alternate versions, just as each reader creates different forms within their imagination.

The digital line drawings do not illustrate the artistic, environmental or spatial qualities found in Peake's text. They are pragmatic and lack legibility. It was known when this process began that the digital drawings would not meet all the challenges of the texts and a hand drawn stage would be required. An important part of the rendition process is following Peake's text diligently so the maps (Figure 33, Figure 34, Figure 35), and other renditions, reflect his descriptions. The (architectural) imagination makes assumptions which align with provided information to varying degrees. For this reason the methods of creating renditions are significant. The hand-drawn line can be more uncertain in its depiction and provide indications that it is an interpretation rather than a certainty. The questioning line is able to illustrate the imprecision of landscapes and depict natural environments. It is a *tracing* of the thought process and of stages left behind. Lines duplicate and alter the trace; fragments are retained from each iteration.

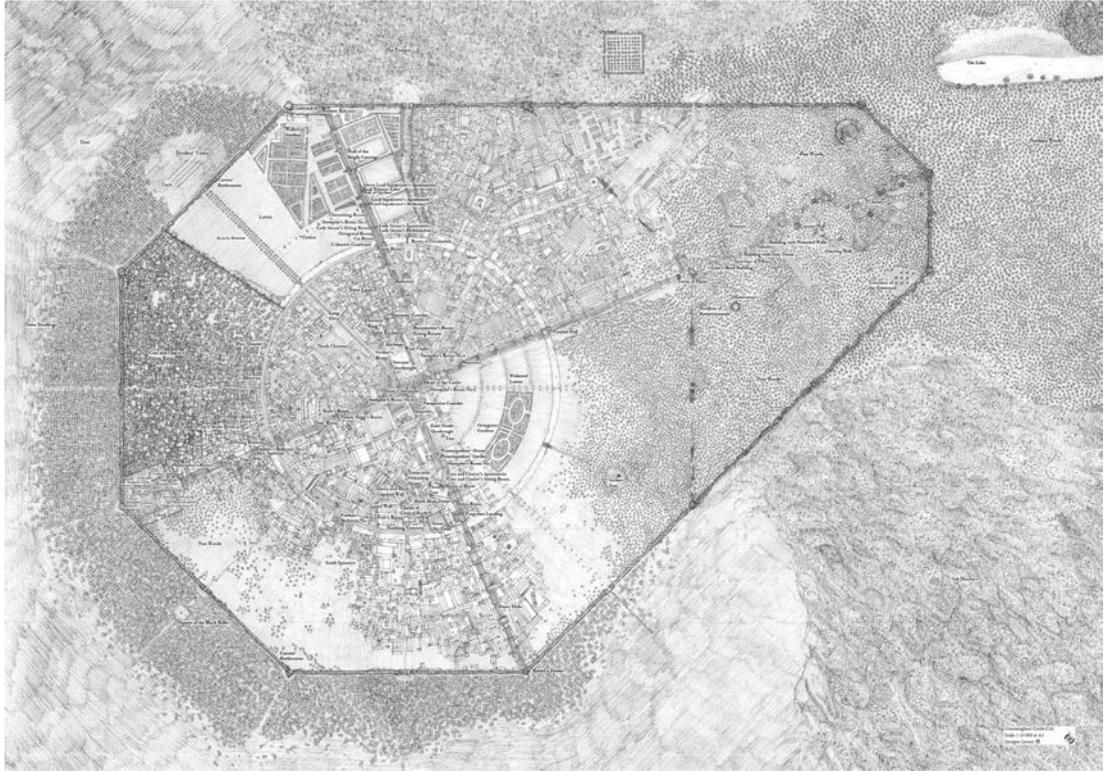


Figure 33: Gormenghast Castle-City after addition of hand drawing and digital overlay, based on Peake's texts. 1:10000 at A1

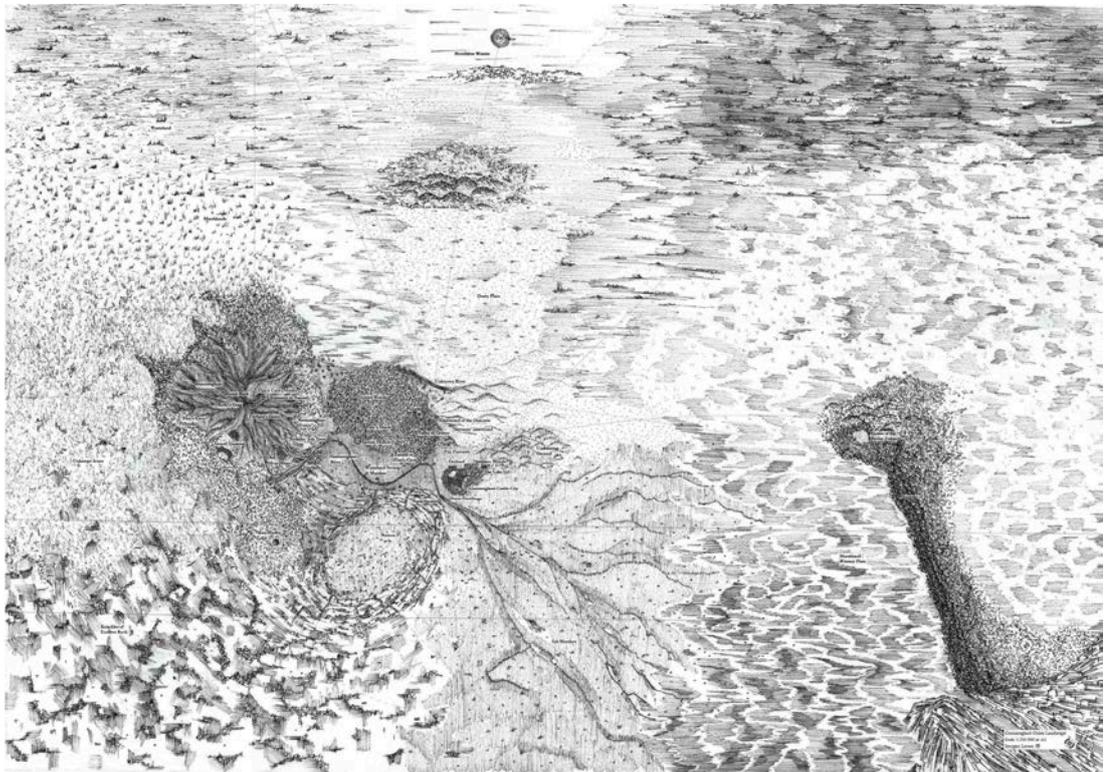
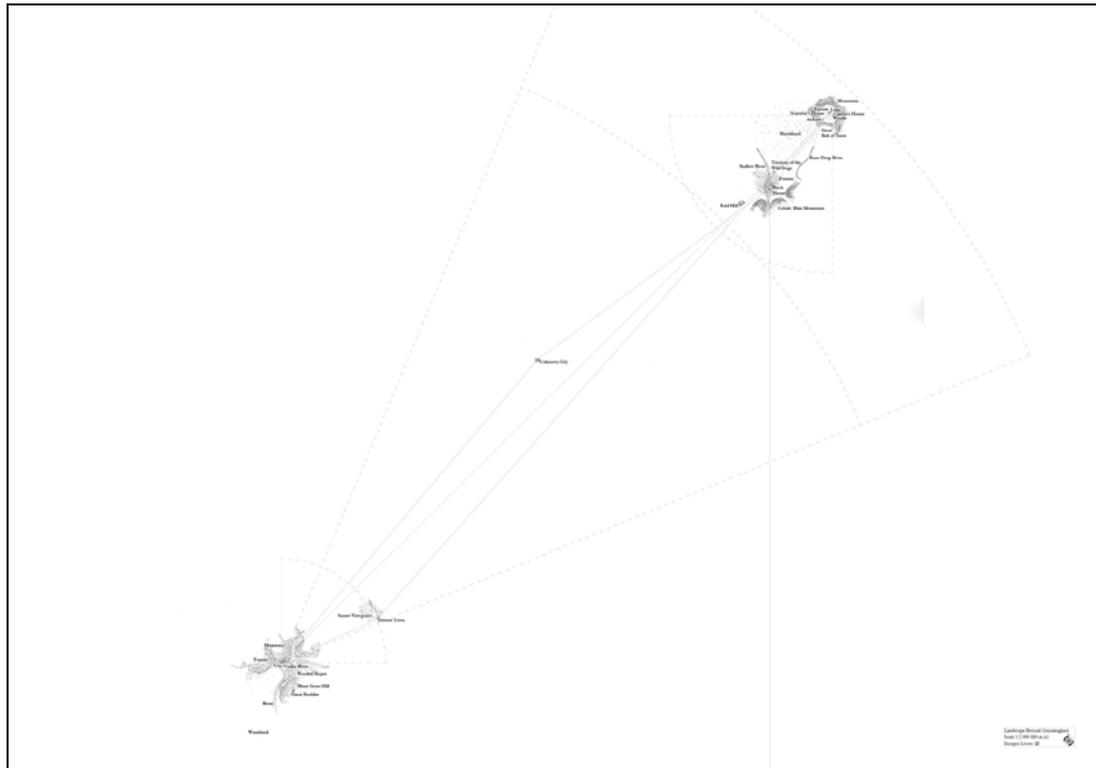


Figure 34: Gormenghast Outer Landscape map after addition of hand drawing and digital overlay, based on Peake's texts. 1:250000 at A1



**Figure 35: Landscape Beyond Gormenghast, based on Peake's texts. 1:2000000 at A1**

During the hand drawing phase renditions inevitably became more personal. Peake did not provide a detailed description of every aspect of the landscapes, nor a location for each and every tree, so interpretation is required. These drawings demonstrate that Gormenghast and its landscapes can be mapped and that Peake provides a wealth of information for his readers to work with. This is not possible with many literary texts. Whilst there are a few spaces which have no locational data and are therefore placed via educated guesswork, most have enough descriptive information to be located with a level of surety. Although the information comes from the text the maps are inevitably different to ones that Peake would have drawn. This does not necessarily make them less correct than his might have been, for authors are not infallible.

### ***Variations of the Rendered Maps – Colour and Shading***

The final versions of the maps consist of the hand-drawn lines with a digital and text overlay. However, these were not the only images produced and colour and shading techniques were tested in order to find the most appropriate aesthetic for the subsequent renditions. Alteration of these aspects of a drawing can significantly change the way an image is read: focal points shift and features become accentuated or concealed. In order to consider how colour might affect these maps a rough digital process was used. This is quicker than colouring by hand and, again, has the advantage of remaining infinitely changeable. The original paper image was not affected in this process, allowing a permanent colouring to be applied later if it was deemed appropriate.

The predominant atmosphere of the texts is grey. Gormenghast, its stone, the Mountain and its atmospheres are grey. Even the vegetation has a withered quality that comes across as grey. This strong theme influenced the use of colour in the early mapping stages. It is not that Peake does not use colour. The most vivid colours are those of the characters: Cora and Clarice's purple dresses; the reds of Fuchsia's dress and Lady Groan's hair. There are highlights of colour in the architecture too: the azure window smashed by Steerpike and the coral plaster of Fuchsia's bedroom walls.<sup>209</sup> However, no landscape is truly grey and so a more verdant approach was tested.

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<sup>209</sup> The City in *Titus Alone* is more vibrant than Gormenghast, however, the maps cannot show this due to the scale.



Figure 36: Gormenghast Castle-City coloured map, based on Peake's texts. 1:10000 at A1

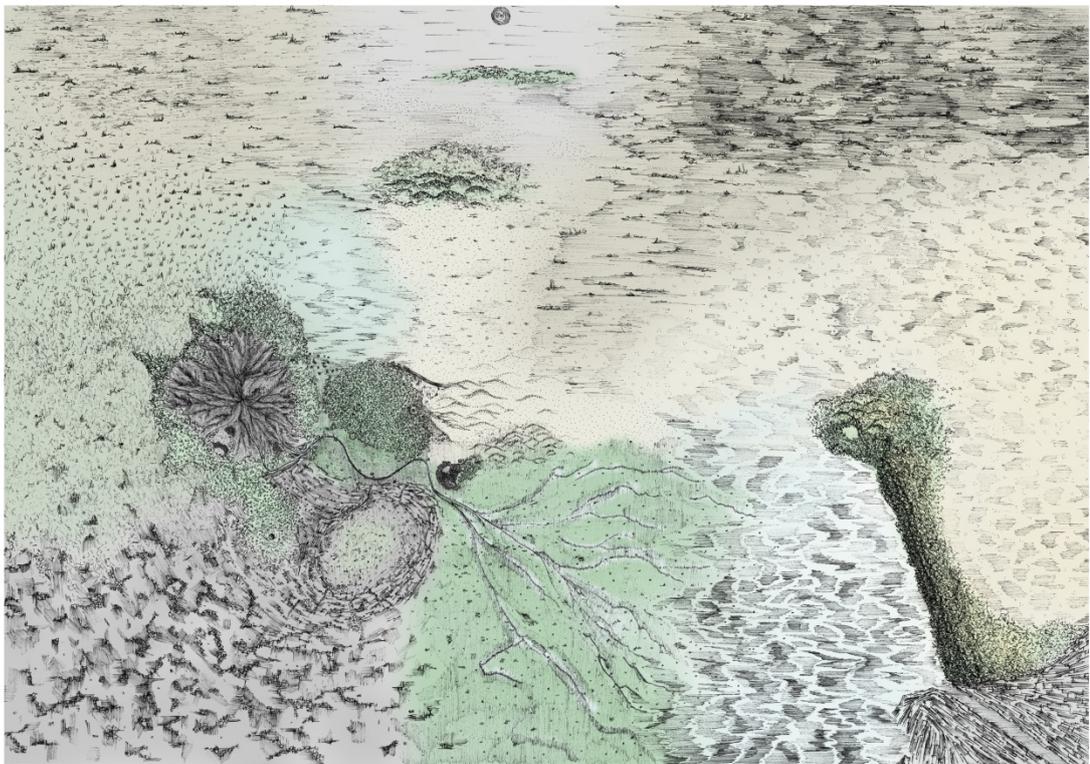


Figure 37: Gormenghast Outer Landscape coloured map, based on Peake's texts. 1:250000 at A1



Figure 38: Landscape Beyond Gormenghast coloured map, based on Peake's texts. 1:2000000 at A1

Seasonal variance like long settled snow, spring vegetation, or drought would dramatically alter these images, as would the flooding that occurs at the end of *Gormenghast*. These variations are too verdant to show seasonal dryness or the wetness of the swamps: they are limited in season and weather. They remove the capacity to change, as the coloured map fixes the climate in a way the line drawing does not. Figure 36 illustrates the intrusion of trees into the structures of Gormenghast and the contrast between the open spaces and built forms. Edifices become clearer and the confusion between the natural and constructed is clarified. This is not necessarily advantageous: the ambiguity of the line drawing allows for a greater collaboration with the imagination. Figure 37 shows the barren nature of much of the Gormenghast landscape. The ratio of vegetation to rocky, dusty or wasteland areas is small. Gormenghast sits in

an oasis, formed by the Mountain's rivers, in a parched landscape.<sup>210</sup> The final image in the set (Figure 38) shows that the known areas of *Titus Alone* are fairly verdant. But the vast empty spaces reduce these places to islands in this void.<sup>211</sup>

This series has some interesting features, some of which improve the clarity of the images as maps; the variants in the landscapes become more obvious and strong features such as the Mountain become defined. However, as these maps are not for physical navigation, this form of clarity is not required and it reduces the ambiguity that invites imaginative exploration. The flatness of the colour, caused by the rough nature of the digital process, is not satisfactory. A different medium or technique would allow more ease of variation. If colour was felt to be more beneficial then these images would have been developed further. The next testing was of greyscale versions of the maps.

This second tryptic (see the following three figures) is more fitting to Peake's text, the monochromatic images reflecting the greyness he describes. Again this was a quick, digital exercise to study potential. These grey shaded images have the advantage of a more subtle seasonal declaration, in comparison to the coloured maps (snow and flooding excepted). However, the unshaded drawings retain a clarity of line and ambiguity of space, that these versions lack. The line drawings allow the viewer a greater imaginative input: uncertainty provokes exploration. With both the coloured and shaded forms the digital lines become lost. Whilst it would be possible to make the lines more prominent, subtle qualities would be marred. For this reason these map variations were not refined further and remain the experimental images reproduced here.

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<sup>210</sup> This may be why the castle-city was constructed in this location and its consequent isolation.

<sup>211</sup> See section 3.4.

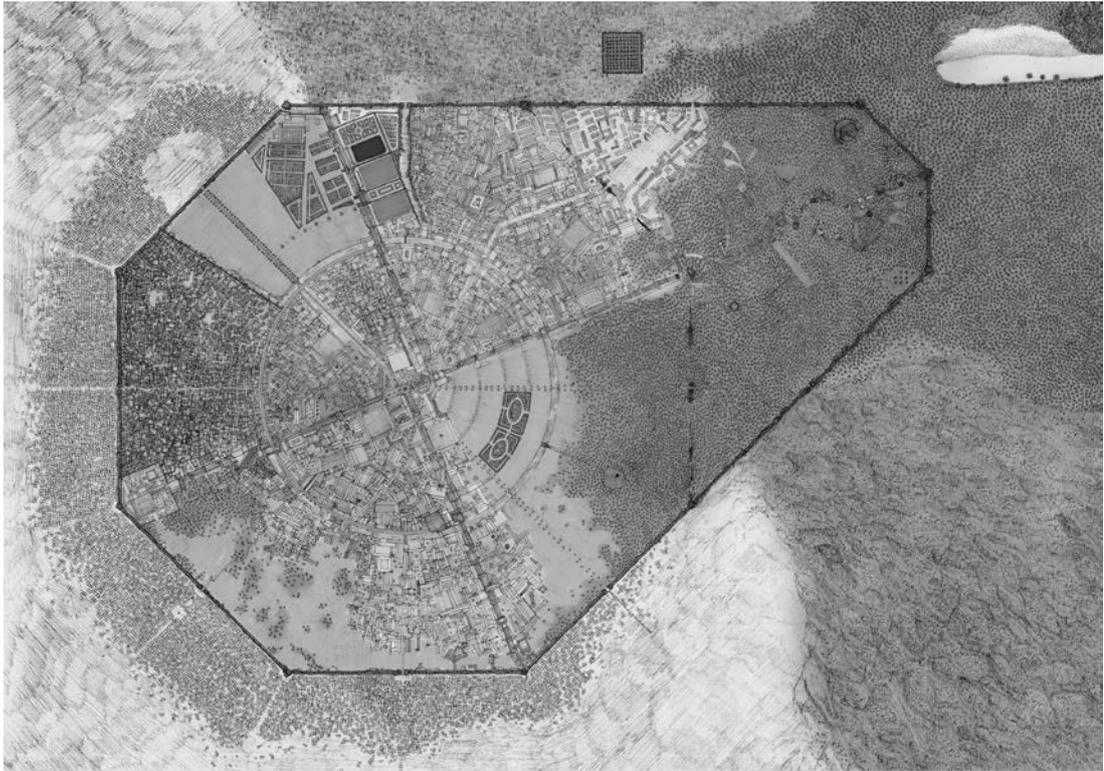


Figure 39: Gormenghast Castle-City greyscale map, based on Peake's texts. 1:10000 at A1



Figure 40: Gormenghast Outer Landscape greyscale map, based on Peake's texts. 1:250000 at A1



Figure 41: Landscape Beyond Gormenghast greyscale map, based on Peake's texts. 1:2000000 at A1

The examination of colour and shade provides a basis for the aesthetic of subsequent renditions. They allow the imagination to explore, changing perceptions of the loci. An important part of the decision to use greyscale images is instinct. Peake's text describe qualities which are not easily captured and so, as with illustration, the architectural-draughtsman must rely on the taste, feel or smell of the text and in so doing Peake's processes are extended.<sup>212</sup> For the long sections a similar foundation of digital drawing, printing, pen and ink was used but with shading, overlaid by hand, to depict atmospheric conditions relating to space and events such as smoke or different periods of the diurnal cycle. Cast renditions are dyed to alter the base whiteness.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> See section 1.2 and Peake 2011c : 17.

<sup>213</sup> This also led to one blue model, as the dye split, so greyscale was not entirely achieved.

## 2.4: Rendering Small Groups and Individual Loci

### *Identifying Loci for Further Analysis as Long Sections and Modelled Renditions*

A detailed elimination process was used to identify loci suitable for rendition as drawn sections or cast models: loci were removed from the list of potential spaces through the application of a series of criteria. These differed when selecting for sections or models, but the principles are the same. The following criteria were used to eliminate loci so that the remaining small number of connected groups could form the long sections:

1. All of the locations identified as having no information.
2. Landscapes and natural spaces; these are assumed not to have designed architectural qualities (including gardens). Some spaces not eliminated here section could be considered natural but were deemed at this stage to have had enough human intervention to be considered designed.
3. Significantly large spaces with comparatively little detail in the text to be drawn at a suitably large scale.
4. Remaining spaces with too little information.
5. Nested spaces where the containing space might be drawn, but individual spaces contained would not be drawn separately (as, for example, some had been previously eliminated due to a lack of information).
6. Isolated spaces with little connection to other places. These spaces could be drawn but for sectional drawings connected spaces provide more information.

This left seventeen potential narrative groups, from which the most interesting were chosen. For each phase of rendition it was important to ensure an even distribution of

loci across the four books so that differences between the texts, their loci and the renditions could be established.<sup>214</sup>

The long sections examine interlinked sequential loci (a common feature of Peake's narratives). These loci are connected physically and through linear narrative progressions. Six sequences were selected with a strong architectural and narrative structure which leads inhabitants through a journey, changed from its origins-as-text.<sup>215</sup> The methods of construction for these drawings was similar to the mapping logic; an iterative process constructed a digital drawing which was then printed and a layer of hand drawing added to supply ephemeral aspects.<sup>216</sup> Where the maps can be comprehended as complete, covering large areas to illustrate the landscape as fully as possible, the sections are fragmentary.<sup>217</sup> They depict the nature of Peake's text; existing as isolated fragments never showing the space as a whole. The progression, scale and cutting points of each section are dictated by Peake's narrative. Some have a single unidirectional route (Titus Secret Way Out), whereas others have a more complex interweaving of space (The East Wing of Gormenghast). The drawings twist along section lines with no indication of direction, to disorientate and provide access points for the imagination, and cut both the horizontal and the vertical: the height of the Tower of Flints is compressed; the large ground-level discrepancy in Fuchsia's Bedroom and Attics remains unclear.<sup>218</sup> The staggered and cranked cutting planes highlight spatial

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<sup>214</sup> There remains a great deal of potential in the texts as there are many loci not analysed in detail.

<sup>215</sup> Each drawing contains only one physical route but where possible, contains several narrative sequences.

<sup>216</sup> See sections 2.2 and 2.3.

<sup>217</sup> The maps were also required to be as complete as possible so that the loci could be positioned.

<sup>218</sup> It would be an interesting exercise to take the same drawing and alter the sectional cuts to fit different pages sizes and aspect ratios to compare the visual impact and what information becomes prominent.

and narrative connections. The loci are spatially finite, but are not drawn as such. None of the usual supporting drawings are provided; the expected triad of plans, sections and elevations is broken.<sup>219</sup> The renditions are not intended as a solution to Peake's loci but another entry point for inhabitation and an exploration into their spaces and events.<sup>220</sup>

The sections reflect the literary format, information is provided gradually of a world in which character-inhabitants are rarely seen to perform commonplace (human) actions. Architectural and literary depictions cut out aspects of living.<sup>221</sup> This sectioning acts in both space and time, a feature made clearer by the hand-drawing. The visual presence of the loci upon the page is dictated by physical size and narrative duration. Physically long corridors are curtailed in their rendition, as they are within the narrative. Loci with a greater narrative presence are extended on the page as the drawing reveals different sectional cuts of the same space. Sequences of different events are interwoven, rather than depicting a single instant formed by a single slice that a standard section enables. This makes these sections more akin to Peake's narrative routes, where spaces are revealed as characters inhabit them, or events are described, as Hawkes discusses:

Since language is fundamentally an auditory system, the relationship between signifier and signified unfolds during a passage of time. Where a painting can display and juxtapose its elements at the same time, verbal utterance lacks that kind of simultaneity and is forced to deliver its elements in a certain order or sequence which is itself significant. In short, the mode of the relationship between signifier and signified can be said to be essentially, albeit minimally, sequential in nature. (Hawkes 2003: 13)<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> There were very few architectural sketches created to form the sections.

<sup>220</sup> See section 4.6.

<sup>221</sup> Not a single toilet is mentioned in Peake's text. Interestingly, the nature of the facilities, or lack of them, would provide an important indication of the technology and 'geographical' location of Gormenghast and provide an anchor point for speculation. Perhaps this is a reason for not providing such information, for without it this world remains disconnected from reality.

<sup>222</sup> See sections 5.2 and 5.3.

Unlike Peake's text, in the sectional drawings narrative events are concurrent on the page. Characters appear in more than one location and event sequences are disrupted, leaving space for interpretation by the viewer. The exact nature of the spaces and events remains uncertain and unresolved. This fragmentation allows loci to remain indeterminate; Peake rarely provides all the dimensions for a space and the exact nature of each locus remains unclear in a number of respects.<sup>223</sup>

The models contain a single locus, or part thereof. They are a physical sectioning of space (volume). The loci are cast from different, dyed plasters. This allows examination of the solid physical mass of Peake's spaces via the fluidity of the plaster medium before it set. Moulds constructed from greyboard were waterproofed and cut by hand. The density of the card resists the pressure of the plaster, but allows flexibility. An important aspect of the renditions is distortion caused by the weight and moisture content of the liquid plaster. The level of plasticity built into the moulds (through waterproofing, void size and internal supports) allows undirected warping of space to be integral to the finished casts. These distortions were induced to provoke the imagination and question the static nature of the loci. Spaces of the imagination are not rigid and the models attempt to render the unfixable. The act of making directs the results. The solidity of set plaster counterpoints its previous fluidity; the space is both solidified liquid and frozen events. The final pieces were finished and refined with a removal of areas of excess plaster. Some of the surplus was fortuitous, others were trimmed to stream-line the casts. The refinement of the casts is reflective of the rendition process (and of editing).

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<sup>223</sup> See section 4.6.



Figure 42: The warped walls of the Cell / Honeycomb, based on Peake's texts. Model 1:20

Understanding of the loci starts as an amorphous, transitory comprehension which is gradually fixed and held in a form of (semi) permanence (Figure 42). The loci are changed through the rendition but by outlining the processes alterations are made visible and can be analysed. Additional images were also created to provide context or detail. Formed from photographs of the casts and fragment drawings, drawn using similar methods, the manipulated digital images allow analysis of events not shown in other renditions.

### *Spatial Differences between Loci of The Gormenghast Trilogy and 'Boy in Darkness'*

A significant factor in the choice of loci to be rendered is the need to examine spaces from across the texts. Whilst the differences between the novels are broadly due to the nature of the loci themselves, see below, the difference between the novels and the short

story requires further discussion. For the spaces of 'Boy in Darkness' the level of detail experienced by the reader is dependent on whether or not they have previously read the novels. If they have encountered the trilogy, its weight is added to the short story: the context of Gormenghast is within the imagination.<sup>224</sup> *The Gormenghast Trilogy* as an object-book provides a physical connection to the mass of the castle-city: the text and its contents adding magnitude to the loci. If one reads 'Boy in Darkness' before the trilogy, this context is absent and the landscapes and characters are not filled out by the novels.

It is not only the physical separation of the texts that affects the loci of the short story but also the nature of the writing and its format: 'Boy in Darkness' is, in effect, a literary fragment of *The Gormenghast Trilogy*. The difference between a short story and novel is not only word count: a novel can explore concepts beyond the scope of a short story and have greater complexity in its narrative structure; a short story has a greater focus and tends towards implication. *The Gormenghast Trilogy* has the capacity for elaboration, detailing and pauses in the narrative to enable spatial description, 'Boy in Darkness' does not have the same opportunities (although Peake does still employ this tactic to some extent), and the reader is shown more and told less. 'Boy in Darkness' contains poetic and spatial descriptions but the majority of the foundation information for the renditions comes from the novels – typical materials, conditions and general knowledge of Gormenghast's construction, for example. The differences in the level of information can be observed when a comparison is made between the Derelict Hall of Gormenghast (Figure 43) and the Mine far beyond it (Figure 44, Figure 45). Although

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<sup>224</sup> This encounter may be through reading the texts or may be through adaptations in other media, which adds a different awareness of the loci than discussed here.

the medium of these renditions is different (partly due to the level of detail), affecting how the spaces are comprehended, the Mine has a significantly lower level of detail and the scale of rendition was chosen appropriately. As it has no connection to Gormenghast all spatial awareness is derived from the descriptions in 'Boy in Darkness'. If a similar rendition of the Derelict Hall was formed, using only information from the short story, then there would be a significantly different level of information available:

Now he was on some kind of a landing, and a moment later he was pounding his way down flight after flight of stairs until he came to a derelict hall.

At the Boy's approach a husky shuffling sound suggested that a number of little creatures had been startled and were making for their lairs.

The floor of the one-time hall was not a floor in the ordinary sense, for the floorboards had long since rotted away, and where they should have been the grass grew luxuriantly and a host of molehills filed the place as though it were an ancient burial ground.

For a few moments, not knowing why, he stood still and listened. It was not the kind of place for racing through, for there is a certain grandeur in decay and in stillness, which slows the footsteps. [...]

He turned to his left where there was once the door, and at the far end of a corridor he saw the small square of light no bigger than a fingernail. He began to make his way down this corridor (BiD 32)

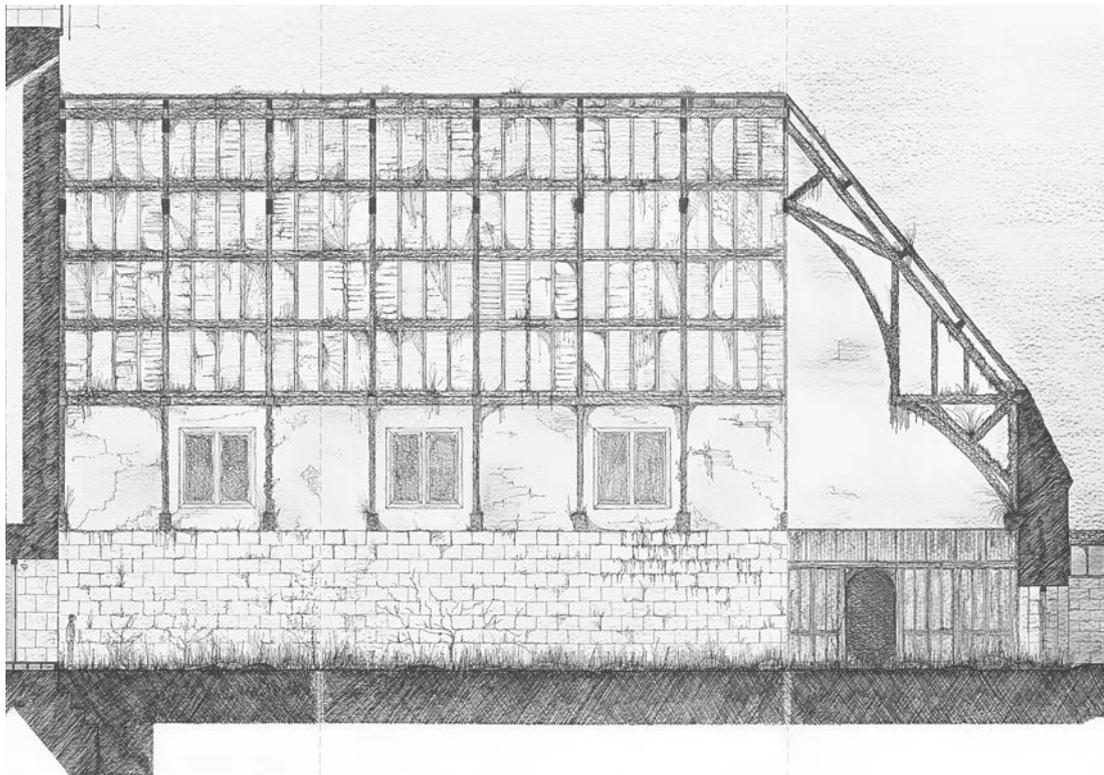


Figure 43: The Derelict Hall. Detail taken from the long section rendering of Titus' Secret Way Out, based on Peake's texts. 1:50 at 2000mm by 750mm



Figure 44: Cast of the Mine from 'Boy in Darkness', based on Peake's texts. Model 1:200



Figure 45: Detail of the Mine from 'Boy in Darkness', based on Peake's texts. Model 1:200

The above passage is the extent of its description and so the outcome of this proposed second rendition would be significantly different. A greater level of inference would be required in order to render the space and more created by the architectural imagination. Whilst the novel texts do not directly mention this particular Derelict Hall, a great deal of secondary knowledge is gained from them and similar spaces within.

This does not mean the text of 'Boy in Darkness' is not useful to the architectural conversation. Its shorter format means that it contains different linguistic qualities to the novels, many of which might be more easily perceived as compatible with architectural design processes.<sup>225</sup> The short story format is more approachable than a novel length piece of writing, particularly for those limited on time. A balance between length and detail is required in architectural descriptive writing. In order to explore this balance the renditions work with Peake's text to find limitations and opportunities within architectural design. One aspect of the research into this was the use of secondary images and experimentation with the renditions once they were complete.

### *Other Rendered Images: Manipulated Digital Images and Fragment Drawings*

Manipulated digital images, formed from photographs of the modelled loci and layered with text and hand drawings, explore the abstraction of loci.<sup>226</sup> They introduce life into the models without the use of plastic figurines and examine the relationship between text and image.<sup>227</sup> The process of visually linking the text to images of the models affects

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<sup>225</sup> See section 5.3.

<sup>226</sup> See appendix IX.

<sup>227</sup> Some of these images were later reworked as fragment drawings as they were important to spatial understanding in the exhibition. See section 2.5 and appendix X.

the visual component of the text: format is changed and reader immersion altered.

Through abstraction of Peake's words and fragmentation of his text, key words and phrases are isolated and meaning altered. The condensed text creates focal points, examines details of the loci and highlights Peake's choice of vocabulary. The images consider Peake's language removed from its original context; an entity cut from the bulk of the narrative, leaving only the space and depicted items behind. They provide connections to the locus and a foundation for explorative thought.

Limitations were placed on these images: a single font and use of only greyscale; the text could be extended beyond the page unless a particular boundary was found; placement and order of phrases would not relate to Peake's prose; ellipses were used to indicate removed text and form part of the rhythm of the image.<sup>228</sup> Varying lengths of text extract were used: there are occurrences of a single word, of short phrases and entire paragraphs. Some of these extracts are repeated, either as a single unit of text, or combined with other phrases and repeated as a group. The images chosen tend towards the abstract: each used more than once with different versions of text, along with a version with both, if appropriate. These images were examined both with and without the base photograph (Figure 46).<sup>229</sup> The separation of the text allows an examination of the graphics formed only from Peake's words and spaces. Some of these images are reminiscent of concrete poetry, like *Silencio* by Eugen Gomringer (Figure 47). Others are reminiscent of architectural concept drawings: Figure 48 has qualities which evoke the angular sketches of Daniel Libeskind (Figure 49).

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<sup>228</sup> In repeated portions the cut text could be read differently in each situation or as identical.

<sup>229</sup> With an appropriate alteration of the font colour where necessary.



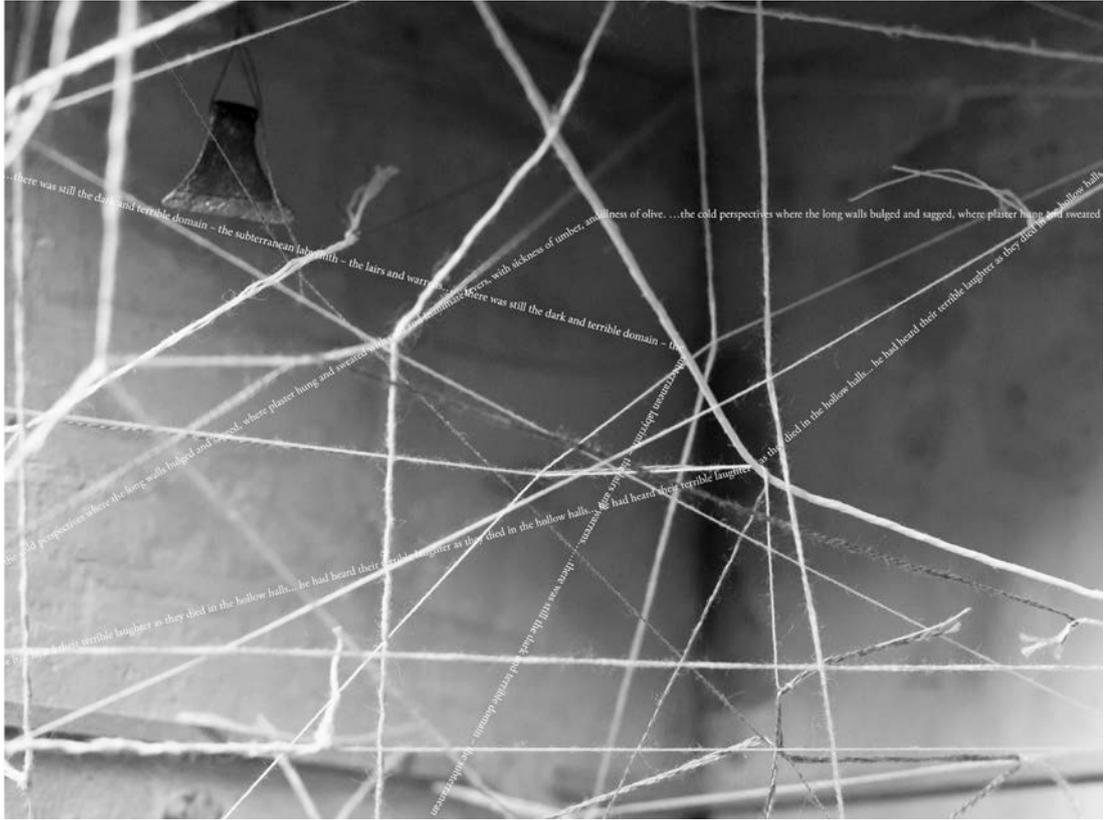


Figure 48: Text and Image Manipulation of Cora and Clarice's Prison Room, not to scale

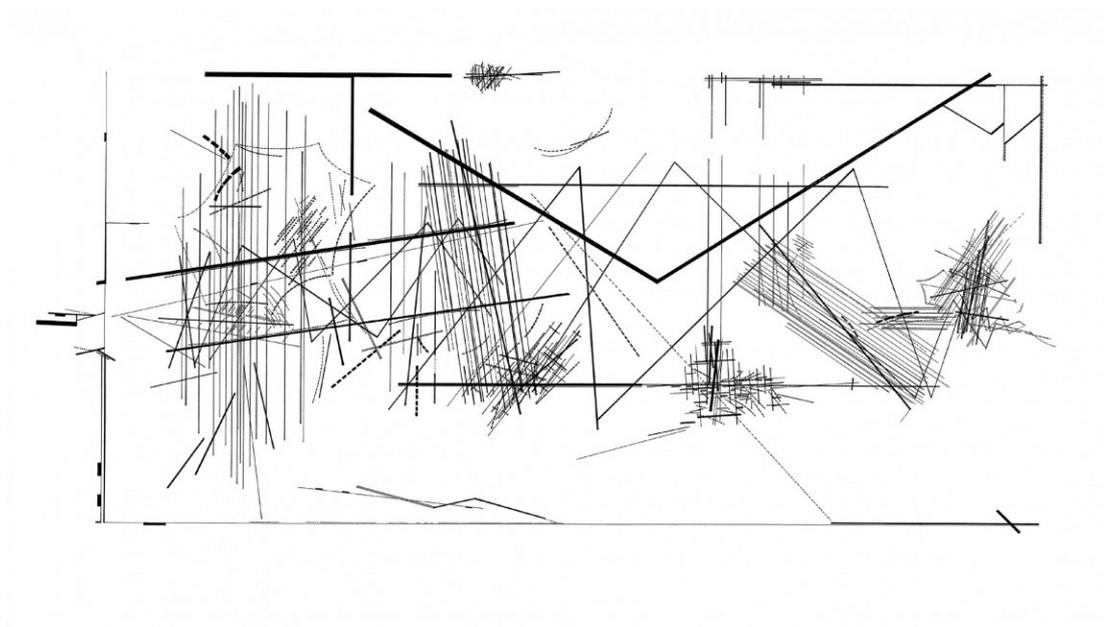


Figure 49: *Chamber Works* Daniel Liebskind (1983)



Figure 50: Hand-drawn over figures on photograph of Arena/Circus, based on Peake's texts

The flattening of space that occurs in photographs and the layering of text upon the image removes it from the physical casting it is derived from, itself a space extracted from text. When the photograph is detached, leaving only text, it comes almost full circle. The cycle is not quite complete and the gap between the original narratives and the abstracted text is the same gap formed in the cutting of the sectional drawings and the placement of images on gallery walls: it is an entry for the imagination. The images provide an entry into the abstraction and fragmentation of Peake's loci, which could be further developed. The other set of images not developed further or presented at the exhibition were the overlay drawings. For these digital photographs were combined with hand drawn figures to test the modelled spaces by introducing events from the narrative (Figure 50).



Figure 51: The Under-River Symbol from Peake's text (*TA* 835). 1:1 at 320mm x 240mm

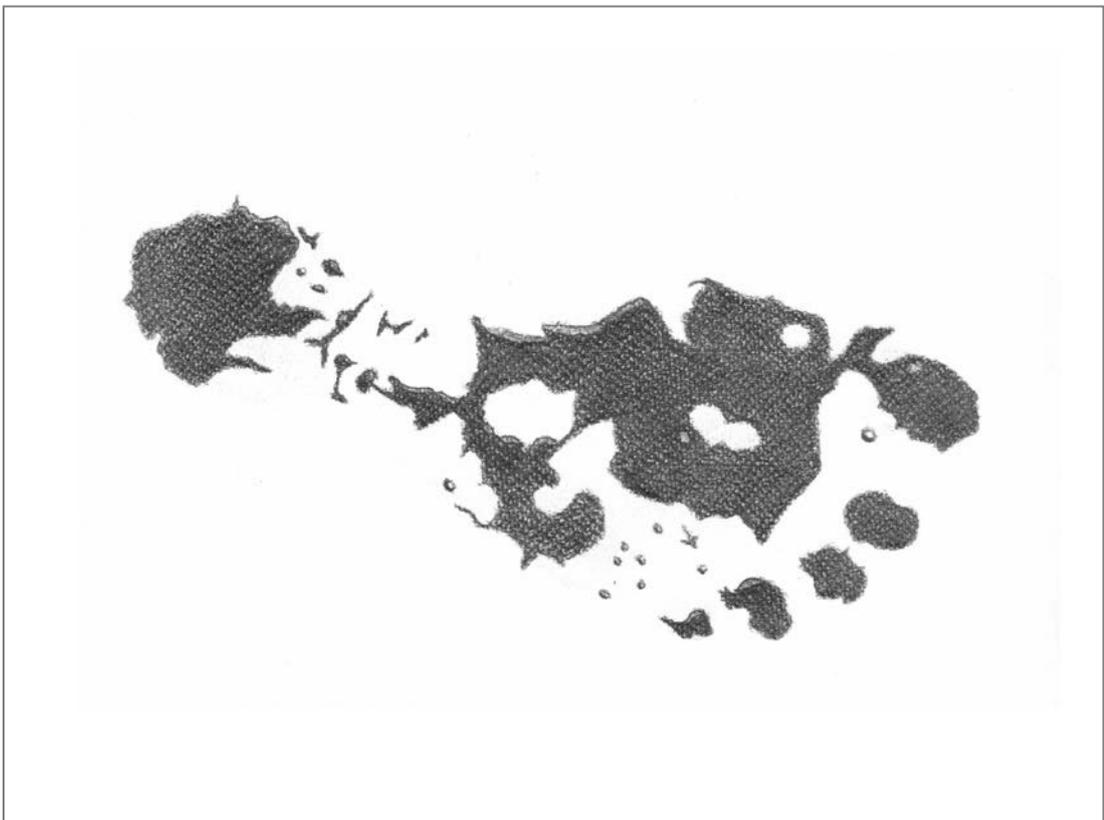
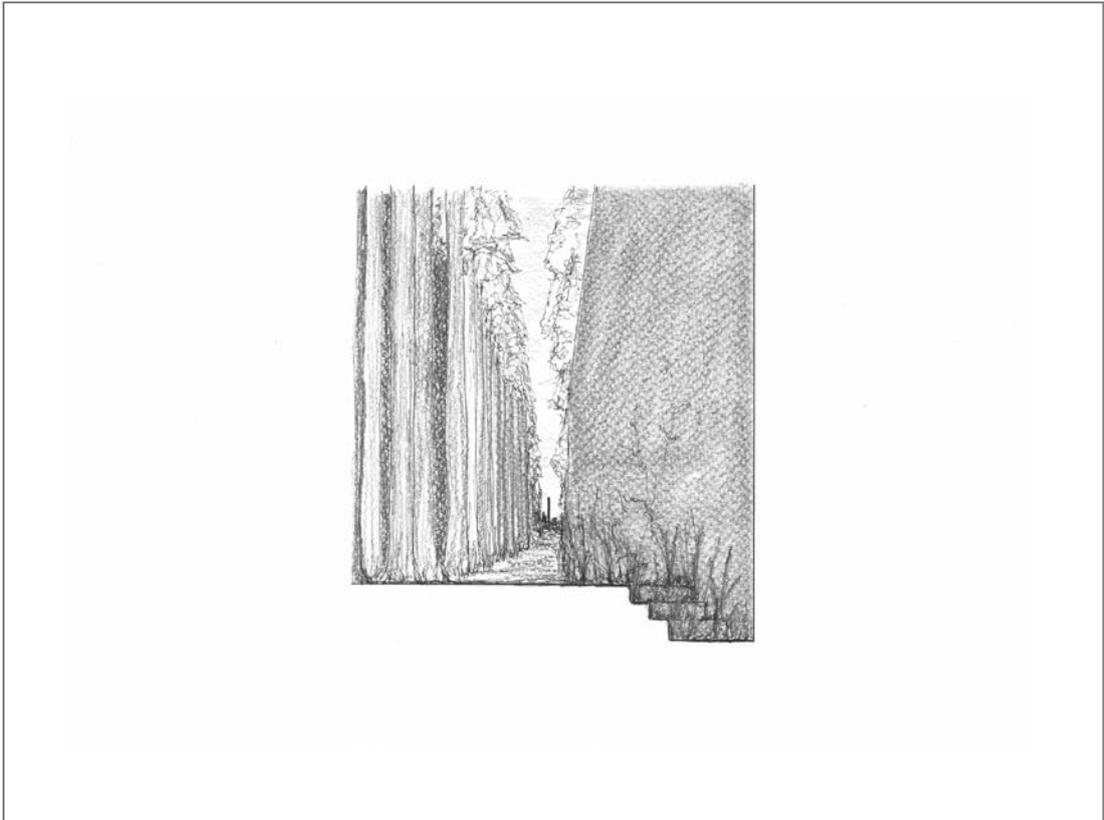


Figure 52: Titus' wet footprint. 1:1 at 320mm x 240mm



**Figure 53: View down the East Wing of Gormenghast looking towards the Tower of Flints, based on Peake's texts. 1:50 at 320mm x 240mm**



**Figure 54: Fragment drawing of the egress of the Under-River, based on Peake's texts. 1:2 at 320mm by 240mm**

Four fragment drawings were produced for each primary rendition (including separately for the Octagonal Room and Prison Room).<sup>230</sup> The images were hand-drawn, some with a digital base layer. Scale varies from 2:1 to 1:10,000 at 320mm by 240mm (the majority between 1:1 and 1:50). Each image takes a single event and isolates it, in a similar manner to a photograph. These fragments of narrative are episodes that stick in the memory, not adequately shown in other renditions.<sup>231</sup> They are not focused on spatial aspects (like the models and sections), they work with their related rendition to provide a greater understanding of the complexities of the spaces and the life within. Some show a specific view, but many are details woven into the narrative: Under-River symbol (Figure 51) and Titus' wet footprint in the Olive Palace (Figure 52).

The development of different explorative images illustrates the potential left in these texts and the opportunities for different forms of architectural analysis. They are not dead ends but avenues not yet fully developed. Different forms of rendition are needed for different situations, as the fragment drawings show. The perspective fragment drawings (which have a digitally drawn base) are constructed so that the front plane is at scale, receding to a single vanishing point. These perspectives, unlike fragment sections, are views that inhabitants experience directly: the East Wing of Gormenghast looking towards the Tower of Flints (Figure 53); up the steps to the exit of the Under-River (Figure 54). These offer a more human perspective than the long sections. They are an important addition to the exhibition and provide narrative context, particularly for visitors with no pre-existing relationship with the texts.

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<sup>230</sup> See section 4.6 and appendices VIII, IX and X.

<sup>231</sup> See section iv.

## 2.5: An Exhibition of Rendered Loci – Its Purpose for the Thesis and Curation

A significant portion of this thesis is the visual and physical exploration of Peake's work, via the architectural imagination, architectural techniques and the results of this process. In order to analyse the results as a whole it is necessary to view the work together, as well as each piece individually. As with a text, aspects can be taken and understood separately but without the relationship to the overall work meaning may be lost or altered. The renditions cover a small portion of Peake's spaces and there are inherently large gaps between them, however, these voids are also important. In placing the renditions in a physical space, decisions are made about the relationships between the loci, the renditions and the gallery. The white-box of the gallery was influential, as was the relationship between the renditions and the other, unrelated work, of the exhibition.

The Studio 3 Gallery is a dedicated gallery space in the Jarman building of the University of Kent's Canterbury campus. It is regularly used for exhibitions and has worked with leading artists, as well as hosting exhibits curated by students. The season displaying the renditions was the first to include work produced by students of the university and was initiated through an open call. *Transcribing Spaces: Projects from the Intersections of Literature, Architecture and Art* took place between the 13<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of July 2015. It was the second of two exhibitions forming *Takeover: A Season of Student Exhibitions* organised by Studio 3 coordinator Katie McGown. The other four exhibitors were students of architecture, fine art and English; each focused on different aspects of political, social and physical space, in a range of media.





**Figure 57: Long sections with their associated title blocks. The Under-River's block (at the bottom of the image) extends past the rendered image in both directions**

During this event the gallery space experienced various levels of humidity, affecting the material properties of the work. Whilst the casts remained stable, the paper renditions and supporting pages became indicators of the atmospheric qualities (Figure 55). This was not planned, however the mounting methods allowed for the shifting of paper and physical warping. The framed maps remained unaffected, contrasting with the unframed drawings. This warping separated the physical medium of the paper from the walls of the exhibition, where once they were visually merged, and warping the loci. The physical effects are interesting: the distortion was not consistent, each day the conditions were different, altering the rendered loci, shifting the paper to greater or lesser extents. This acts to remind the viewer that the drawings are only a representation of space: the surface of the page becomes curved, without gaining physical depth.

Observation and inhabitation become disturbed and the event shifts both in the instant of viewing and in its memory. The exhibition allowed for the renditions to be altered, as well as connecting them within curated space. The exhibition served to tie the thesis work together and enable greater analysis of the outcomes. The display of the renditions enables different perspectives on the text and its spatial capacity. It is an aspect of the research more accessible to a wider audience than the written thesis.<sup>232</sup>

The spaces within the gallery were allocated by the coordinator, allowing the two long walls (north east and south west) for this research, plus floor space for the models. The exhibition material from the thesis was: the table of loci (Figure 58) as six A0 pages (2378mm by 2523mm); six long sections (2000mm by 750mm) three framed A1 maps; 52 fragment drawings (320mm by 240mm) and six casts.<sup>233</sup> Curation required a consideration of the phenomenological and physical qualities of the space, the other work and the practical implications of displaying large unframed images. The narrative of the work, both Peake's and of the thesis, was an important aspect of setting out the wall space, as was the physical distance between the two walls. Title blocks (Figure 56) form a significant aspect of the legibility of the display, which included segments of Peake's text and an uncut image of each locus at a fixed scale to provide a consistent reference point (Figure 57).<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> See sections i and 5.2.

<sup>233</sup> See appendices VIII and X for copies of the renditions. The table of loci is huge and compromises were required: body text was reduced to 9pt, with 14pt for locus names and headings. This is small for an exhibition setting. This was done to confine its area and allow its entirety to be displayed, to indicate of the vastness of Peake's world, as well as display its contents for reading. Framing of the long sections was considered but not undertaken for various reasons.

<sup>234</sup> Permission was granted on behalf of Peake's estate by Peters Fraser & Dunlop.

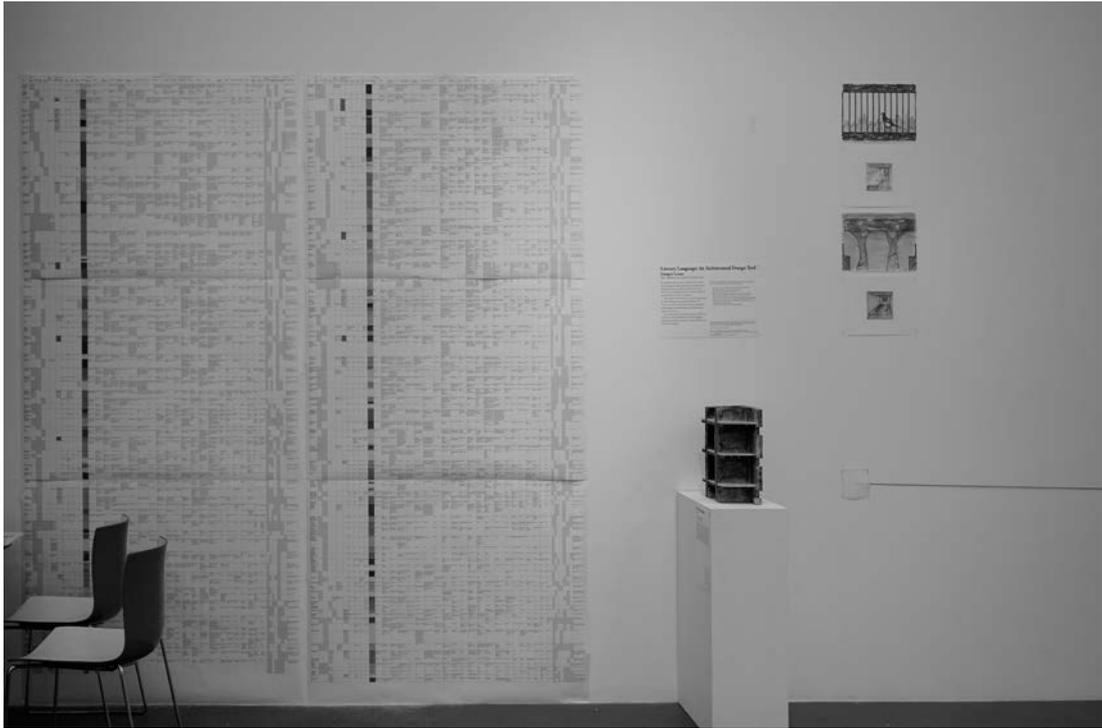


Figure 58: The table of loci at the exhibition on the south west wall



Figure 59: The south-west wall of the exhibition showing, from left to right, the table of loci, the Cell Honeycomb model, the City Structures long section, the Under-River long section, the Arena Circus model, the Landscape Beyond Gormenghast map and all the associated fragment drawings



**Figure 60:** The north-east wall of the exhibition showing, from left to right, the Octagonal Room/Prison Room model, the Gormenghast Outer Landscape map, the Gormenghast Castle-City map, Flannelcat's Classroom model, the Professors' Quarters long section, Fuchsia's Bedroom and Attics long section, the Mine model, Titus' Secret Way out long section, The East Wing of Gormenghast long section and all the associated fragment drawings. Cora and Clarice's Prison Room is just off this photograph on the right

The maps, as a formative part of the visual research were the starting point for the curation. The placing of the two Gormenghast landscapes in close proximity is important. The positioning of the third map, the Landscape Beyond Gormenghast (Figure 59), makes a statement about the unknown relationship of this landscape to Gormenghast. It is in a northerly direction from the castle-city, but in order to provide an appropriate gap the map would need to be placed at great height, making for uncomfortable viewing. The maps were separated, placing the Landscape Beyond Gormenghast directly opposite the Gormenghast Outer Landscape, disassociating them.

The physical distance between them physically realised the disconnected nature of the landscapes in Peake's texts. In framing these images, they remain visually connected

to the other drawings but become objectified: their finished nature highlighted, in comparison to those left unframed.<sup>235</sup> The long sections were then configured. The two drawings derived from *Titus Alone*, the City Structures and Under-River, were placed with the relevant map (Landscape Beyond Gormenghast) and the other long sections with the maps of Gormenghast (Figure 60). The spaces are connected by location: the distance between the landscape of *Titus Alone* and that of *Titus Groan*, *Gormenghast* and 'Boy in Darkness' is made physical.

In order for the narrative of the exhibition to follow that of the texts the Gormenghast loci would have had to be placed upon the first wall encountered (the south west) closest to the entrance, allowing a clockwise path around the gallery to coincide with the narrative of the texts. However, the placement of the largest piece, the table of loci, at the beginning of the exhibition route, acting an introduction to the work and Peake's loci at a point where people might linger and read, prevented this.<sup>236</sup> The positioning of the two groups of loci became dictated by the area of available wall space. As the renditions of the loci of the Landscape Beyond Gormenghast are fewer in number they were situated on the same wall as the table of loci, with the others opposite. The vertical positioning of the sections was dictated by their approximate heights in the narrative, as well as the restrictions caused by the title blocks containing uncut locus drawings at a scale of 1:2000.<sup>237</sup> Casts were positioned in relation to their location. Those with a direct connection to the long sections were associated; the Mine

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<sup>235</sup> See section 2.3.

<sup>236</sup> The potential of this was somewhat limited by the positioning of the chair and table in the space for the invigilator. However, this behaviour was observed.

<sup>237</sup> The ground level within Gormenghast is known to vary dramatically so the levels of the drawings could only have acted as an indicative statement rather than an expression of certainty.

with Titus' Secret Way Out and the Arena Circus with the Under-River. Those not directly connected were placed in relation to their position on the maps, on plinths determined by size. The fragment drawings were arranged according to available space and their associated loci.

The exhibition was a unique event. A different iteration would provide a different understanding of the loci and their connections, even if the gallery space and curation were to be replicated. The placement of the renditions and their interaction with the other work in the space provides insights into Peake's spaces which would shift in another setting or a different arrangement of the pieces. In curating an exhibition the presentation of the work provided a finishing point to the rendition process and it is from all these stages that the thesis derives its conclusions.

## 2.6: Conclusion

The methods used in forming architectural material for the thesis attempt to produce renditions of Peake's spaces that are derived from and complementary to his texts, reveal the complex nature of his spaces and can be understood to be a part of the architectural tradition and discipline. The renditions not only question the text as a form of spatial construction but also the use of traditional architectural techniques, distorting them by re-cutting and allowing materials to dictate the final form: just as the act of writing influenced their formation.<sup>238</sup> The notion of 'accuracy' is considered through the use of digital drawing methods and subsequent over-working by hand.

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<sup>238</sup> See section 1.4 and 5.3.

The selected loci are a sample of the most detailed and interesting spaces to be explored from across the four texts. Decisions were made by setting out known aspects first and adding ephemeral and ambiguous qualities later. This was to ensure that it was Peake's spaces and language that were being studied and not a personal set of non-literary imaginary spaces. In order to produce visual interpretations of the loci and reveal them as architectural places it was important that the environments Peake describes were understood, as well as the individual loci. Each stage of the rendition process, (collating, organising and visualising the data that Peake provides) forms a different understanding of the spaces within the text and their various relationships. Each step adds to the architectural qualities of the loci, building up layers of spatial awareness.

The table of loci shows the same spaces as the maps, yet these two depictions result in a very different spatial understanding. The nesting diagrams connect loci in a way the table does not, indicating boundaries between spaces but with little illustration of the nature of the spaces that are connected. As the renditions process progresses the loci are removed further from their narrative, text-based origins. They become more familiar to the architectural imagination and less familiar to the reader (and the author) of the texts: they remain recognisable but the forms they take are new, having been created outside of the imagination (through the hand). Each stage reveals new information but in doing so aspects are set aside. In early stages narrative events are a significant loss, although they are re-introduced at later stages. For the architectural-draughtsman the loci are familiar, as they are derived from their imagination, yet the media also de-familiarise them. Each individual both gains and loses aspects of spatial recognition in this process.

The detailed study of connections between spaces, resulting in the maps contextualises each locus. The maps allow for spatial connections to be comprehended as landscapes and provide a framework which positions loci in relation to each other and their events (although these events remain unseen in the maps). It was not purely an intellectual exercise to see if the landscape could be mapped: this context is inherent in the texts that form the loci and provide a world for the imagination to inhabit.

The mapping of Gormenghast produces a striking image of a metropolis with a central core and four radiating wings, not typical of a European city. It might be speculated that this is derived from Peake's childhood in China.<sup>239</sup> However, there is a second possibility (to which the architectural imagination is more inclined), not mutually exclusive to the first. Gormenghast may have begun as a single building, or small collection with a central structure (Heart of the Castle). Then expansion, perhaps due to population growth, created the cruciform structure Peake describes. Whether Peake envisaged the development of his world before the narrative cannot be established but it forms an interesting architectural position.<sup>240</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> See section 1.2. The city of Tientsin (Tianjin) where Peake spent most of his childhood has a strongly fortified historic core and follows the traditional layout of ancient Chinese urban planning, with courtyards and buildings rather than a predominance of roads and access usual in European cities.

<sup>240</sup> In the first chapter of *Titus Groan* the description of the Hall of the Bright Carvings implies that this room takes up most of the attic of the North Wing. This is hard to reconcile with the maps: although the number of carvings it contains does require a vast space. There are other possibilities regarding the layout of the city which may fit more easily with this aspect of the text (although not with others) it is possible that the scale of Gormenghast changed as Peake was writing, expanding to a state in which the Hall of the Bright Carvings had become many miles long.



**Figure 61: The Outer Dwellings.** Black ink image with grey shading, originally found in manuscript Add MS 88931/1/3/4, folio 90r. Original: approximately 160mm tall by 180mm wide

If the city was based on Peake's imagined image of an ancient Chinese city, the maps do not satisfy his vision: the geometry and urban hierarchy are wrong; the city walls should be rectangular, the urban morphology different. Whether this is true, or not, it does not change the thesis. Peake did not describe the urban morphology or the geometry of the boundary wall in the text. Only one sketch by him shows the Outer Wall (Figure 61). This image is replicated in the Kindle edition (Peake, 2011a: location 519) where it is incorrectly associated with the Hall of the Bright Carvings.

The rendered version of Gormenghast is a city of imagination that reflects the text as well as the architectural-draughtsman. It is assumed to have changed over time, as it would if it were physical: it is a stagnated city fallen into disrepair but still inhabited and therefore subject to change. Cities are constantly in flux, even if this is not made explicit in the novels, and structures change even if the inhabitants' society does not. The act of rendition emphasises that all drawings and models are personal, as a written text

indicates and reflects the author. Even in a digital platform each draughtsman has their own quirks and style of production. Personal (phenomenological) understanding is crucial in spatial comprehension.<sup>241</sup> Space fluctuates with the hand that depicts it.

The shifting of space is captured by the rendition methods. In the drawings the decline of space is shown; from newly built, to the dilapidated structures characters inhabit in the narrative. The contrast between the digital and the hand-drawn lines that distort them, reveal structures that were once new: burned library shelves show traces of an unburnt state; broken or missing tiles remain where light passes through gaps; solid horizontal ground lines are clear after undulating vegetation has distorted them; figures appear ghost-like, fleeting moments in an ancient space, as their bodies reveal structures behind. These contrasts provide an insight into the differences between the literary constructions of space compared with architectural representation. While both formats are created for inhabitants (the literary action that is to occur and the act of shelter in architecture) the architectural rendition begins with an absence of people, where the literary begins with the characters and narratives. The architectural model or drawing typically situates inhabitants within the structures at the end of the process (if at all). The architectural rendition is formed through a process of inhabitant removal and reintroduction, rather than a nucleic crystallisation. It is rare that renditions of space starts with figures and builds out, particularly in digital media where it is easy to place figures on a separate layer (which can be hidden).<sup>242</sup> In this way architecture and

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<sup>241</sup> See section iii.

<sup>242</sup> Some digital drawing tools begin with a figure, SketchUp for example, yet these manifestations are not indicative of humanity or inhabitation but a scale reference.

literature work opposite to each other: although both may start with inhabitants at their conception, it is literature that constructs with them and architecture that creates in their absence, before placing idealised forms in as a finishing touch.<sup>243</sup>

The following chapters are an analysis of the results of the rendition of Peake's spaces. Each locus selected for rendition is unique; there are no generic places in the text. They do, however, illustrate qualities which are representative of general characteristics Peake describes: there is a heavy, stark presence to the majority of his descriptions, whether they are within Gormenghast or beyond. There are exceptions, where more lightweight materials are used (like the City Structures) but these are also more ephemeral in their details. Chapter 3 begins the spatial analysis of the loci from an external position. The vastness of the imaginary world, created by the text, is the positioning point of this analysis. It examines the flexibility of the imagination that comprehends this immensity and the contrasts inherent in architectural renditions that are limited to a fixed scale. It does so with the purpose of studying the loci as complex architectural spaces. This enables the following chapter to examine these spaces as places of inhabitation and so analyse the life they are able to contain.

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<sup>243</sup> See section 5.1.

## Chapter 3: Scale in Peake's Literary Spaces and the Architectural Renditions

### 3.1: Summary

The second half of the thesis examines the maps, sectional drawings, models and fragment drawings as architectural space through two counterpoint discussions which form chapters 3 and 4. Here the architectural and phenomenological qualities of Peake's spaces are discussed from an external and 'objective' point-of-view, in contrast with chapter 4 in which subjective areas are considered. Quantifiable and poetic aspects of architectural understanding, inherent in the physical and phenomenological qualities of Peake's texts – vastness, scale and the miniature – provide the basis for this discussion. The literary daydream allows an examination of magnitude and the comprehension of size in the scale-less medium of text.

The chapter begins by defining vastness and the sublime in order to position these principles as a part of the thesis and connect them to the architectural imagination. These concepts are then examined within Peake's texts, which establish three categories of vastness: *detailed*, *vacant* and *variable*. These categories are discussed in relation to the literary fragment and its qualities as a trigger for the imagination, before the chapter shifts from the literary text to the architectural renditions.<sup>244</sup> This allows for an architectural understanding of vastness within the texts: the examination begins at the smallest scale and progresses through to the largest scale of rendition.

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<sup>244</sup> See section iv.

The maps are the first renditions discussed and form a reference point from which the intrinsic distortions that both the visualisation and the imagination of these landscapes possess. The scale at the level of the landscape forms a lens through which vastness is inscribed upon the space of the page through a process of miniaturisation. By examining spaces where Peake folds space upon itself, the miniature is shown not only to be contained within the vast but also to contain vastness within it.<sup>245</sup> Reproduction of the landscapes as maps, as well as the distortion this causes, forms the basis for analysing the landscapes' inherent vastness, along with traces left by the hand (and imagination) of the architectural-draughtsman. The maps contain a different spatial understanding of vastness than the other renditions and this leads the chapter into the analysis of two long sectional drawings.

The rendition of Fuchsia's Bedroom and Attics (found in *Titus Groan* and *Gormenghast*) is examined as an architectural section, along with the transition from literary space to architectural depiction. The three attic spaces of this locus are each shown to contain one of the aspects of vastness previously defined. Each is discussed in turn so that contrasts can be examined and examples provided of how Peake's spaces can be understood through their vastness. The discussion of the vastness contained within the secondary spaces of this rendition contextualises that of the primary spaces: the relationship between the unknown mass of the castle-city below and the void of the sky above positions the loci not only in space but also in density and vacancy, highlighting Peake's use of detail and void within interconnected spaces.

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<sup>245</sup> This is developed further through the discussion on inhabitation: see section 4.5.

The second section discussed, the Under-River, allows for an examination of Peake's use of distances and measurable features and provides an example from *Titus Alone*. The discussion of quantifiable distances such as height and depth, along with mass, resolve Peake's vastness into an identifiable architectural quality, even when he is numerically vague. Vastness again forms the structure for this analysis, followed by the contrasts of detail and void, vacancy and intimacy provided by this locus. Within this locus a single major space is analysed further through modelling: the Arena/Circus. This provides the basis for an examination of the indeterminate vastness which connects the fragment and the model as parallel renditions, from which the differences in media can be discussed. The chapter finishes with the effect that exhibiting has on the comprehension of vastness. This is explored through the physical space of the gallery and the scale of rendition in relation to the experience of the body.

In highlighting the fluid nature of vastness contained with Peake's text its nature can be understood as derived from its context. This context is not only supplied by the text but also the reader's imagination and this personalisation of space is discussed in the following chapter. The limits of different media are discussed, as is the architectural knowledge which Peake supplies as a non-specialist. This chapter takes the themes of scale, density and magnitude found in architecture and explores them through Peake's texts and the architectural-draughtsman's renditions. It does so through an examination of the other inherent in the spaces as text and as renditions. Chapter 4 steps into the spaces to analyse the act of inhabitation from a subjective position, in doing so the self becomes integrated into the spaces of the thesis and Peake's spaces are (re)inhabited.

### 3.2: Defining Vastness and the Sublime

Peake's loci are inherently complex: they contain immense folded space collapsed within details; vast landscapes inscribed upon ceilings; infinite networks of passages behind doors and places of inhabitation tucked into tiny corners. The contemplation of vastness and the immensity of imagination, as Bachelard states, appear inherent in imaginary space. Even the most minute details are presented as grand in attitude:

One might say that immensity is a philosophical category of daydream. Daydream undoubtedly feeds on all kinds of sights, by through a sort of natural inclination, it contemplates grandeur. And this contemplation produces an attitude that is so special, an inner state that is so unlike any other, that the daydream transports the dreamer outside the immediate world to a world that bears the mark of infinity. (Bachelard 1994: 183)

Vastness, encompassing an understanding of greatness and majesty, is an aspect of immensity. It contains an inherent awareness of the other-ness of space. This immeasurable quality, lacking defined boundaries, is intrinsic to Peake's texts and language. His sublime and often impossible spaces, discussed below, are reminiscent of the visual work of Piranesi (Figure 62) or M.C. Escher. Although Escher was a contemporary of Peake (born thirteen years before in 1898 and out living him by four years), it is not known whether Peake was aware of his work. However, the tradition of the romantic sublime and the etchings of Piranesi would have been well known to Peake, as would the work of Edmund Burke. Burke defined the sublime as vast, great and rugged, requiring it to be 'dark and gloomy', solid and massive. In comparison the beautiful is miniature, 'light and delicate', 'smooth and polished' (Burke 2005: 122).

The magnitude and unquantifiable nature of the landscapes of this tradition (Figure 63, Caspar David Friedrich's 1818 *Der Wanderer über dem Nebelmeer* for example) can be seen in Peake's work. Glimpses of his spaces can be seen in this extract

by Thomas De Quincey, describing images from Piranesi's *Antiquities of Rome*:

a set of plates [...] called his *Dreams*, and which record the scenery of his own visions during the delirium of a fever. [...] vast Gothic halls; on the floor of which stood all sorts of engines and machinery, wheels, cables, pulleys, levers, catapults, etc., expressive of enormous power put forth, and resistance overcome. Creeping along the sides of the walls, you perceived a staircase; and upon it, groping his way upwards, was Piranesi himself. Follow the stairs a little further, and you perceive it to come to a sudden, abrupt termination, without any balustrade, and allowing no step onwards to him who had reached the extremity, except into the depths below. Whatever is to become of poor Piranesi, you suppose, at least, that his labours must in some way terminate here. But raise your eyes, and behold a second flight of stairs still higher; on which again Piranesi is perceived, by this time standing on the very brink of the abyss. Again elevate your eye, and a still more aerial flight of stairs is beheld; and again is poor Piranesi busy on his aspiring labours; and so on, until the unfinished stairs and Piranesi both are lost in the upper gloom of the hall. With the same power of endless growth and self-reproduction did my architecture proceed in dreams. In the early stage of my malady, the splendours of my dreams were indeed chiefly architectural; and I beheld such pomp of cities and palaces as was never yet beheld by the waking eye, unless in the clouds. (De Quincey 1993: 188-9)

The incomprehensible, almost delirious, state of vast complexity described by De Quincey is mirrored in Peake's literary daydream. However, Peake does not follow directly in the footsteps of the tradition of the romantic sublime: he quantifies his vastness and he brings the miniature into it as a fundamental aspect. His sublime is not always dark and brooding, nor his miniature always delicate. He made his thoughts on the use of terms such as 'romantic' clear:

Those threadbare terms 'classic', 'romantic', have little meaning when the finest examples of any master's work are contemplated, for the first thing one finds is that they have that most magisterial of qualities, 'equipoise'. They are compelling because they are not 'classic' and because they are not 'romantic'. They are both and they are neither. They are balanced upon a razor's edge between the passion and the intellect, between the compulsive and the architectonic. (Gilmore 1978: 239)

Peake questioned frequently-used terminology and through his comments an insight into his perspective on language and its usage is revealed.<sup>246</sup> He considered the words he used, not only in his literary and poetic works, but also in commentaries he made about his work and that of others. He did not accept clichés, but questioned them.

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<sup>246</sup> See section 1.2.



Figure 62: Giovanni Battista Piranesi: Untitled etching (called "The Drawbridge"), plate VII (of 16) from the series *The Imaginary Prisons* (*Le Carceri d'Invenzione*), Rome, 1761 edition (reworked from 1745) [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons



Figure 63: Caspar David Friedrich - *Der Wanderer über dem Nebelmeer* (Wanderer above the sea of fog) 1818 [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

The vastness of the minute and the fractal-like layering of spaces that Peake creates may also be termed *little big* (derived from John Crowley's 1981 novel *Little Big*). The capacity for a space to be both vast and small at the same time – like the TARDIS of Dr Who, or the rabbit hole from Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) – is also present in Gormenghast: the Room of Roots is a space so densely packed with tree roots that one gets lost. Although there are walls supporting and confining the root structures they are not defined. It is a space so dense that it is vast:

It was certainly a room of roots. Not of a few simple, separate formations, but of a thousand branching, writhing, coiling, intertwining, diverging, converging, interlacing limbs whose origin even Steerpike's quick eyes were unable for some time to discover.

He found eventually that the thickening stems converged at a tall, narrow aperture on the far side of the room, through the upper half of which the sky was pouring a grey, amorphous light. [...] Wherever he turned he was faced with a network of weird arms that rose and fell, dipped and clawed, motionless yet alive with serpentine rhythms. (*TG* 181)

It would be possible to calculate a size for this room, but this is not how the space works within the imagination.<sup>247</sup> It is a labyrinth without end; its boundaries more effective when they remain undisclosed. It is a vast, contained daydream about the inhabitation of roots; expanded to a human scale. The combination of the sublime and the beautiful, the vast and the minute allow Peake's literary spaces to act as architectural loci. The focus of the gaze can shift and explore. It allows the text to create at different scales and densities. The experience of an encapsulated infinity contained within another occurs more than once in Peake's texts and this immensity can be categorised into three distinct aspects: the *detailed*, the *vacant* and the *variable*.

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<sup>247</sup> Starting with the size and species of the tree as a starting point to estimate root spread.

### 3.3: The Vastness of *The Gormenghast Trilogy* and 'Boy in Darkness' as a Literary

#### Daydream

##### *Peake's Literary Vastness – Comprehension of Size in a Medium Without Scale*

Peake's literary 'daydream', made concrete by the published text, has become a shared experience, existing as parallel instances within the minds of readers. Gormenghast is a complex place of great distances, extending up with its plethora of skyward reaching towers and down into the bedrock below. It sprawls within its boundary wall and beyond into the Outer Dwellings and the limitless landscapes beyond. Yet whilst it is restricted by its Outer Wall, within this boundary there are loci with no known end: the endless twisted passages of the Stone Lanes, the depths of the Catacombs and the height of the Tower of Flints.<sup>248</sup> The ambition of the castle-city of Gormenghast, the Outer Dwellings that blur its boundaries and the landscapes beyond, is clear from both the physical volume of the text and the first paragraph of *Titus Groan*:

Gormenghast, that is, the main massing of the original stone, taken by itself would have displayed a certain ponderous architectural quality were it possible to have ignored the circumfusion of those mean dwellings that swarmed like an epidemic around its outer walls. They sprawled over the sloping earth, each one half way over its neighbour until, held back by the castle ramparts, the innermost of these hovels laid hold on the great walls, clamping themselves thereto like limpets to a rock. [...] Over their irregular roofs would fall throughout the seasons, the shadows of time-eaten buttresses, of broken and lofty turrets, and, most enormous of all, the shadow of the Tower of Flints. This tower, patched unevenly with black ivy, arose like a mutilated finger from among the fists of knuckled masonry and pointed blasphemously at heaven. (*TG* 7)

The complexity of space which contains the narrative is formed of convoluted and lengthy connections, detailed rooms and unseen passageways. If so inclined one can

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<sup>248</sup> The Outer Wall of Gormenghast is unusually permeable. There are few entry or exit points described in the narrative and often characters shift from spaces within the walls out to the landscapes beyond without mention of a portal. This great structure has the ability to prevent access to those outside and at the bottom of the hierarchy, like the Outer Dwellers, yet is permeable to the privileged that dwell within.

enter these spaces, through the daydream, and explore beyond the descriptions Peake provides. The further one goes the more there is to find and the literary creation is revealed to be a fractal-like environment, with ever smaller infinities nestled within.<sup>249</sup> These features can be perceived in the table of loci and the nesting diagrams, both of which have no scale. They are the first steps of the rendition process yet in their formation this inherent aspect of architectural understanding – scale – is removed, along with the narrative structures that provide points-of-view. Certain loci, which sit within others, are able to be larger than their containers: a paradox of spatial planning that cannot be replicated in the physical world but is comprehensible in the imaginary.

Even the smallest spaces become grand on close inspection and Peake provides details which allow the miniature to be examined. In this examination it becomes clear that Peake did not adhere to Burke's definitions of the sublime and the beautiful. Although the ruggedness of the vast and the delicate nature of the miniature initially appear consistent with Burke's definitions, on closer inspection Peake's spaces disrupt the divide between these two states (Burke 2005: 122). The landscapes and castle-city are vast and rugged, but also inherently delicate and elegant: the graceful twisting and distortion of vegetation, the qualities of light and air that brush the surfaces of these formations grace the dramatic ruggedness. The miniature, conversely, is not always light: there are a plethora of dark and dusty corners and the stonework is pitted and rough when examined up close. Peake makes the miniature obscure and the great delicate:

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<sup>249</sup> If the loci were to be truly fractal then each would be identical with only a change of scale. This is not the case here, but the staged revelation of increasing detail is pertinent.

There was no more rain. The washed air was indescribably sweet. A kind of natural peace, almost a thing of the mind a kind of reverie, descended upon Gormenghast – descended, it seemed, with the sunbeams by day, and the moonbeams after dark.

By infinitesimal degrees, moment by moment by golden moment, hour by hour, day by day, and month by month the great floodwaters fell. The extensive roofscapes, the slates and stony uplands, the long and slanting sky-fields, and the sloping attitudes, dried out in the sun. It shone every day, turning the waters, that were once so grey and grim, into a smooth and slumbering expanse over whose blue depths the white clouds floated idly. (G 745)

It is not that Gormenghast is not also grand, dark and gloomy, with miniaturised fragments of delicacy, only that Peake does not allow the vast or the miniature to define the sublime or beautiful. The shifting of scale within the sublime is connected to his nesting of space. The loci sit within each other, each containing both vastness and the minute, so in forming these nested spaces the sublime cannot be consistently physically vast. The loci might contain a vastness unfurled upon closer inspection, like the Silent Halls, or the vastness may be contained within the details of the miniature. Fractal-like nested structures allow the sublime to be contained within the fissures of the beautiful.

The grand spaces of Gormenghast are imperfect and in the cracks of the edifices the nature of its vastness is revealed. The ruin described in *Titus Groan* and *Gormenghast* acts in contrast to the sleek loci of *Titus Alone*, allowing the vastness of space to be a romantic gesture.<sup>250</sup> Whilst the Factory is threatening in its expanse due to its bright, clinical nature, the spaces of the castle-city are crumbled and neglected, they are dark and lit by candle light, and it is in this faded grandeur that the romance of the ruin is established. The senses are evoked in descriptions of the smell of dust, tactile qualities of scarred velvet and creaking of old wooden chairs, floorboards and doors. Peake only hints at Gormenghast's past, leaving the reader to form their own understanding.<sup>251</sup>

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<sup>250</sup> See Rose Macaulay's *Pleasure of Ruins* (1953).

<sup>251</sup> See section 4.3.

Additional details enhance complexity, adding historical weight to loci, compounded by places which have little information but evocative and descriptive names: cellars, attics, tunnels and halls. A return to Bachelard enables the phenomenological aspects of this literary space to be recognised. He reveals both the cellar and the attic to be primary spatial states in the first chapter of *The Poetics of Space* (1994: 3-37), highlighting their resonance with the imagination, connection to memory and our inclination to inhabit these spaces non-corporeally.<sup>252</sup> Bachelard explores the embedded polarity of understanding that comes with these literary spaces: the dark, subterranean depths of the cellars carved from the bedrock and the light deliberate constructions of the attic (Bachelard 1994:17-26).<sup>253</sup> In this contrasting of space, vastness becomes understandable at a human level, creating a sense of scale where there is none.

The literary medium does not have an inherent scale; the text provides a context from which the reader determines the viewpoint and scale at which content is perceived. This usually relies on the internal scale perception of the reader, based upon experience, understanding of objects, furniture or spatial features such as doorways and staircases.<sup>254</sup> Whilst most narratives are assumed to be at a 1:1, or near human scale, this may be deliberately distorted and indicators are required to provide the reader with a basis from which they can position themselves.<sup>255</sup> One method is to provide a fixed point-of-view,

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<sup>252</sup> See section 4.2.

<sup>253</sup> The first locus Peake introduces to the reader is an attic: The Hall of the Bright Carvings (its name the title of the first chapter). This vast space contains an ever increasing number of carvings; some very large.

<sup>254</sup> Just as the architect can read a drawing's scale through comprehension of 'standard' features.

<sup>255</sup> Some narratives occur at a much closer or further distance than human. Terry Pratchett's *The Carpet People* (1971) and Mary Norton's *The Borrowers* (1952), for example. However, the human characters often mean the narrative scale is adjusted in the imagination and the objects and non-human creatures are re-sized: the carpet is enormous rather than a reduction of the reader's imagination and perspective.

in first or second person, where human characters provide a reference; or in third-person when the narrator is, in effect, an additional, invisible, human-scale character. This provides readers with a pseudo body through which to experience space and mimics the manner in which physical space is experienced: overviews acting in combination with details. The *feeling* of a space is known through tactile references and features that catch the eye. We do not perceive physical spaces at one scale (although the body is a constant reference), but as a combination of phenomena and experiences.

Peake does not provide a consistent viewpoint; he allows the narrative to determine the point-of-view. This is one reason readers might find Peake's writing disconcerting:

Sometimes words liberate Peake's eye from the fixed perspective of a drawing faster than the reader can accommodate. In fact, what characterizes much of Peake's work is the stunning abruptness of his shift of perspective or viewpoint. (Winnington 2006b: 204)

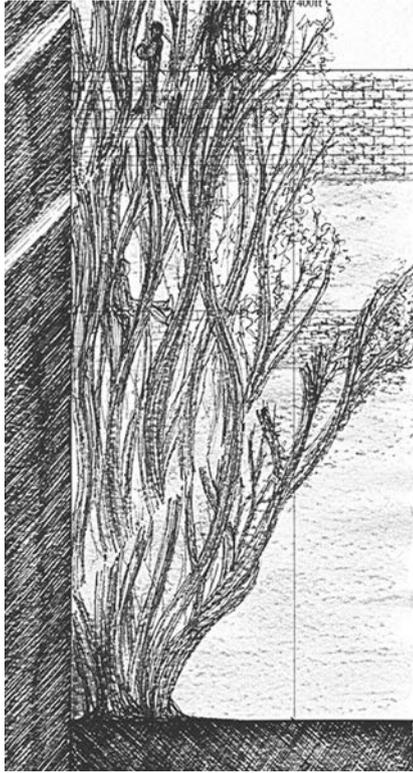
These shifts in perspective, possible in literature, allow the reader to be directed to important points in the narrative without hindrance, no matter the distance or angle required to view. In allowing variation in the point-of-view all scales become possible. The imagination is asked to remain flexible and adjust rapidly to change.

When Titus encounters the Marble Desert in *Titus Alone* perspectives change quickly and frequently. In the space of four pages (*TA* 776-9) the reader is shown Titus as if by an invisible witness; his point-of-view; wide panoramic views of the City Structures; Titus' imagination (with its own shifts in scale); the perspective from an anonymous watcher within the City Structures; a bird's eye view and Titus' own knowledge of what he must look like from above. The scale of these perspectives changes accordingly, the wide panoramas show less detail than the description of Titus' sweaty palms and could not be drawn together at a single scale. The awareness of the 'ugly crow

[...] sitting on the [Copper Dome] and fouling from time to time' (*TA* 776) reveals a view Titus could not clearly see, yet is placed immediately after a description of his gaze: the reader observes up close what he cannot. This shifting adds to the immensity of the locus; the reader is asked both to run with Titus, to experience distance from a personal point-of-view, and to see him as a miniature in an empty landscape. His tiny figure provides a reference point so the reader can comprehend the magnitude of the Marble Desert; just one example of a vast space within the texts. The level of detail Peake provides for the spaces allows them to be categorised as one of three aspects of vastness.

### *Categories of Vastness within Peake's Literary Spaces*

Peake provides reference points through measurements, comprehensible details and characters' bodies. Through these the first category of vastness is found: the *detailed vastness*. Vegetation is created on a magnitude beyond expectation and physical experience. Sensory details make it knowable and phenomenologically understandable: taking them from a distinctly other state, to an experience within the self. For example, the vines of the castle-city are embodied with the irritants found upon close inspection of a living specimen: 'the ivy stem was dry and coarse and hairy to hold, [...] the bitter leaves exuded a pungent and insidious smell' (*TG* 102). Yet they also act as structures for climbing. The vines are giants: 'the enormous hairy stem of the creeper [was] as thick as the bole of a tree' (*TG* 101), one is more than 4000ft (122m) tall (Figure 64). This vegetative vastness, along with a detailed knowledge of the climb allows a personal understanding: measurements confirm the size of these plants, rather than define it.



**Figure 64:** Steerpike in the vine leading Fuchsia's Attics. Detail taken from the long section of Fuchsia's Bedroom and Attics, based on Peake's texts. 1:50 at 2000mm by 750mm

Clarifying details are also used within the landscapes. Descriptive names provide triggers for the imagination: 'Knuckles of Endless Rock', 'Shining Flats' and 'Salt Marshes' provide knowledge of features without describing every stone, tree or marsh plant. Large landscape loci are regions identified with contents but contain information at a different scale to smaller detailed loci. They are a full, detailed vastness, like the vines, Attic Number 1; Fuchsia's Bedroom No. 1 and the Library, see below. The nature and scale of the detailed vastness is not fixed, as the rendition process demonstrates; mirroring the gradual understanding the reader develops. The narrative is initially situated in a general overview with broad images, lacking in defined detail. As the text progresses loci are enriched, increasing texture and resolution. They become sensually developed and grand in scope, forming the detailed vastness of Peake's daydream.

In comparison the second aspect of vastness found within Peake's texts is the *vacant vastness*. These areas contain no information: they are voids within the loci. The landscapes of *Titus Alone* are examples (Figure 67). These landscapes operate on a different scale to those of *Titus Groan* and *Gormenghast* (Figure 65, Figure 66). The change in scale is formed by the shorter length of the text and the greater narrative distances. Tracts of land are travelled faster due to the technology available.<sup>256</sup>

The landscapes of *Titus Alone* consist of islands of detailed vastness with large unknown territories between them. Very little is known about the places Titus crosses to get from the City to Cheeta's House, other than his experienced, immediate surroundings and a statement that he had passed through 'many climates' (*TA* 691). These vast areas, absent of guidance from Peake, either become detailed by the reader according to their own inclinations, or become voids – places of non-habitation which extend infinitely beyond the text. This phenomenon is also apparent in other loci: the Silent Halls/Lifeless Halls/Hollow Halls are only detailed in the places where characters encounter them. They are known to extend far beyond, fading into a vacant existence. *Gormenghast* as it floods becomes emptied of known details other than the vast volume of water and the few hints that Peake provides of the submerged world.<sup>257</sup> The absence of detail is not, therefore, always a permanent feature.

This leads to the third category of vastness, the *variable vastness*. Although less clearly defined it falls between the detailed vastness and the vacant vastness. This

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<sup>256</sup> In *Titus Groan*, *Gormenghast* and 'Boy in Darkness' the fastest mode of transport is a horse. In *Titus Alone* helicopters, cars and aeroplanes increase speeds and distances, reducing contact with landscapes and so detail is reduced: focus is on the transport and journey, rather than the places passed through.

<sup>257</sup> Both of these loci are discussed further in section 4.4.

vastness is most easily recognised in the landscapes and loci of 'Boy in Darkness'; a vastness altered by the manner in which the narrative is encountered.<sup>258</sup> The nature of the variation within this vastness is not fixed and is also found in other guises. It is an emotional vastness and therefore inconstant in its manifestation. Its distinguishing feature is its variability. The loci found solely within 'Boy in Darkness' are as equally grand in scale as those of the novels, yet are linguistically condensed. The descriptions, from necessity, are curtailed and the effect is of places observed through a mist: the major features in the distance are noted, as are the tactile details underfoot, but specifics are obscured. This can be seen in the first description of the Mine:

Dropping imperceptibly from the four horizons this wide swathe of terrain, as if drawn in towards a centre, began, hardly noticeably at first, to break into terraces bright and lifeless, and, as the level of the surrounding land subsided, the terraces grew steeper and wider until, just when it appeared that the focus of this wilderness was at hand, the grey terraces ceased and there was spread out to the gaze a field of naked stone. Scattered indiscriminately across this field was what looked like the chimneys or shafts of old metal workings, mine-heads, and littered here and there in every direction girders and chains. (BiD 54-55)

A great deal of the visual appearance here is left to the imagination. There is no true indication of size or the exact nature of the machinery remnants. However, the lack of detail in this vast landscape does not reduce the impact; it highlights the expanses of space. The fleeting moments of detail read as one might observe a true (albeit romantic) landscape, picking up interesting fragments and general points of note. It is a sublime landscape just as that of Friedrich. These three categories enable an understanding of the density of detail and sensory experience that Peake weaves into his spaces. They allow for the perception of space from both the human and non-human perspectives. They make the space believable, even when the view is not physically possible.

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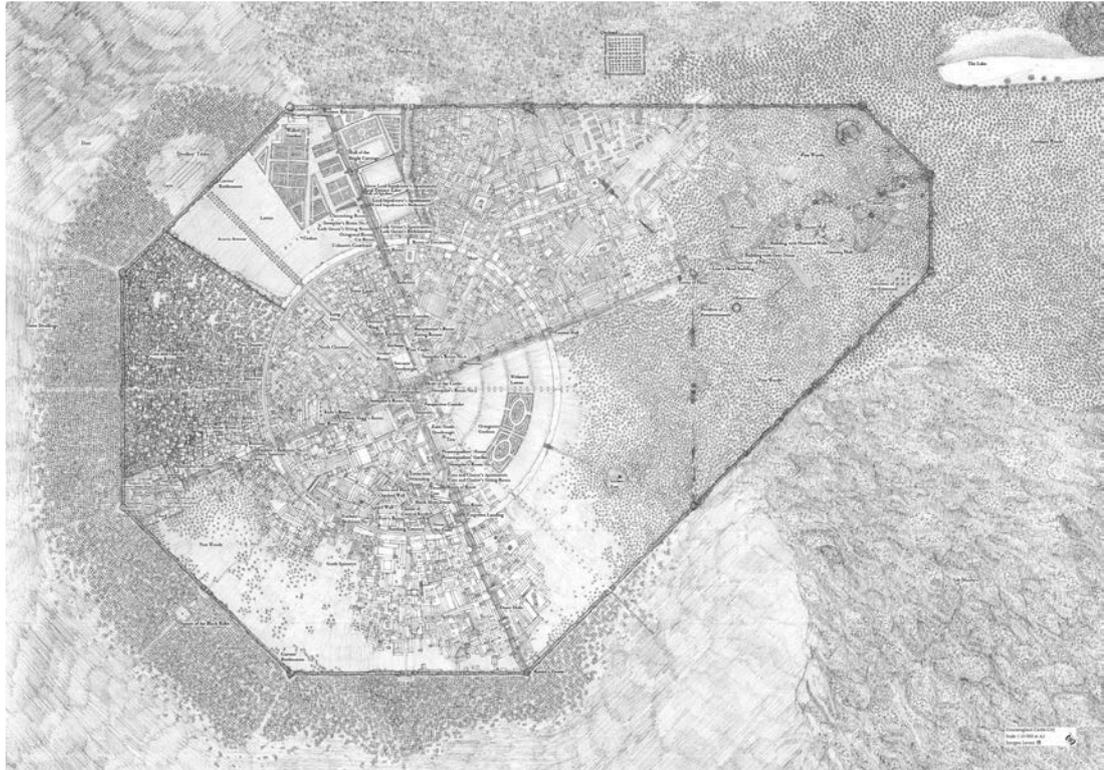
<sup>258</sup> See section 2.4.

### 3.4: Mapping Peake's Landscapes – Scale, Vastness and Miniaturisation

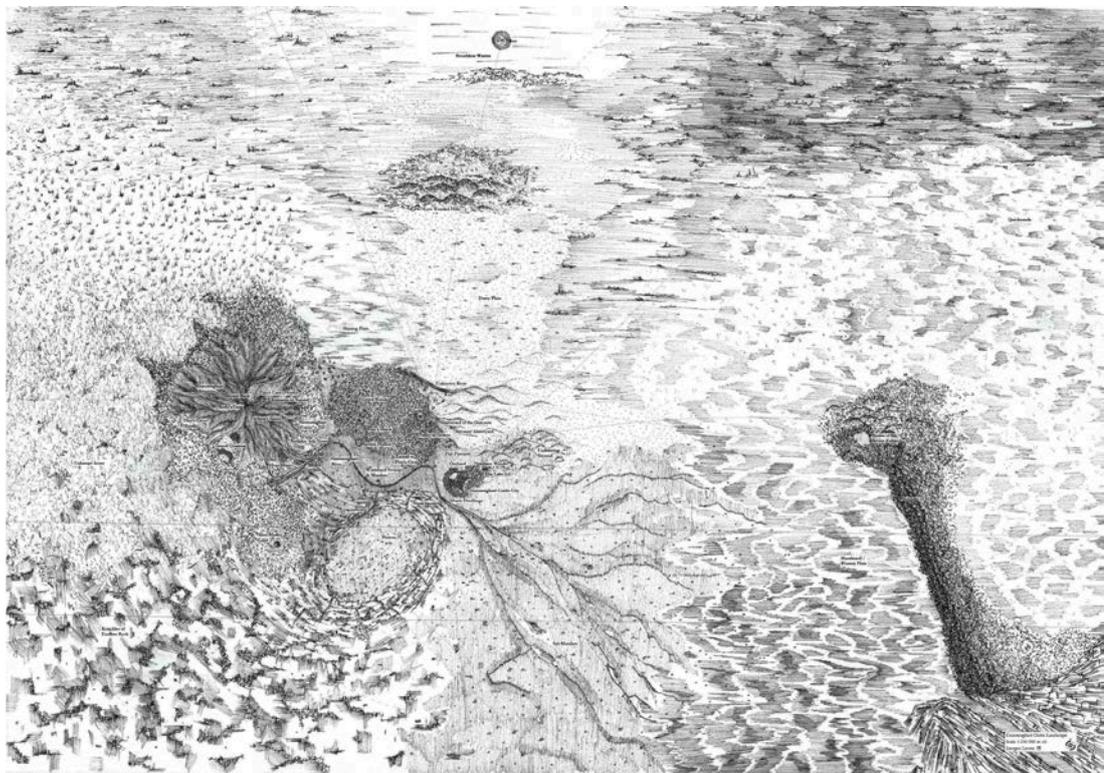
The three maps drawn from Peake's landscapes exhibit the three different aspects of vastness, yet in rendition the landscapes are altered from a fluid to a static state.

Locations become fixed, where previously distances could warp and distort, so that a single version is drawn out from the multitude of potential imaginings. Whilst the methods used to produce the rendered maps mitigate inclinations to expand or contract distances, personal interpretation remains a factor: one may be more inherently inclined towards great expanses, or compact landscapes.

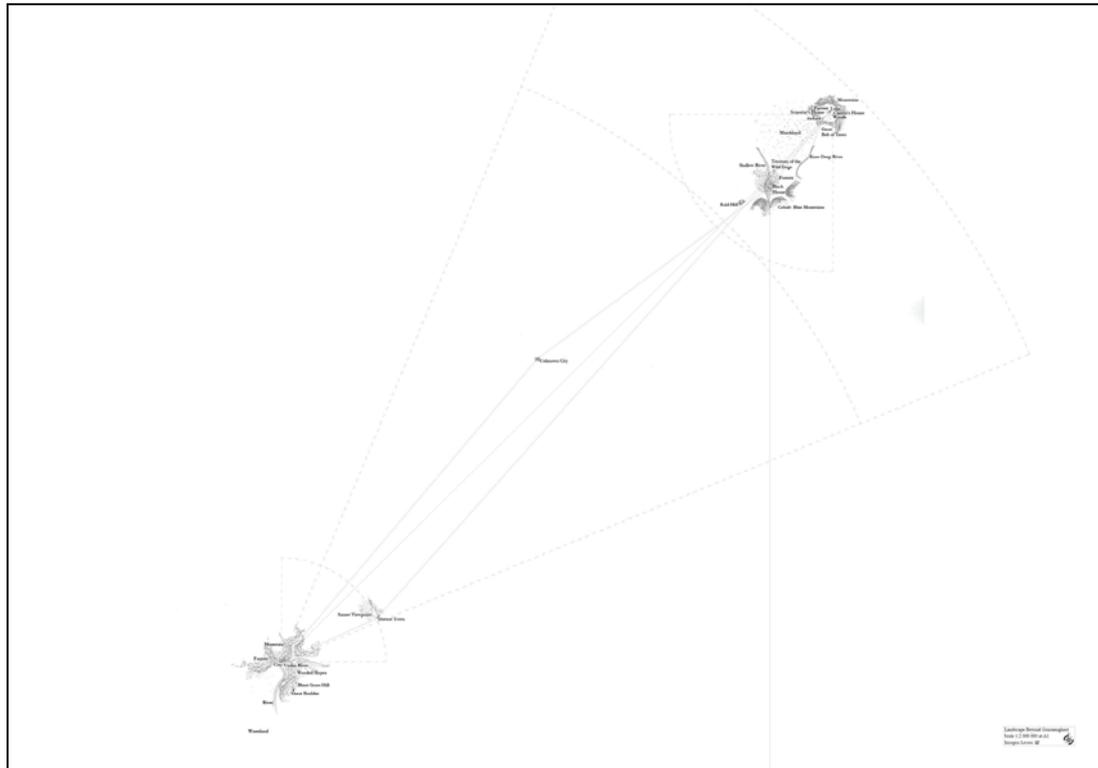
The differences between the detailed and vacant vastness can be observed when the Gormenghast Outer Landscape map (Figure 66), is compared to the Landscape Beyond Gormenghast map (Figure 67). The variable vastness from 'Boy in Darkness' becomes an aspect of the map's detailed vastness, as the short story is interwoven with the novels. In the former of these images the hand-drawn line acts as an indication of the environments. There is a suggestion of detail and the imagination is invited to explore textures and interpret them as landscapes. In the latter the island nature of the detailed areas from *Titus Alone* becomes clear through the large blank spaces: no indication of what might be in these areas is provided and the imagination must interpret (or not) as it will. Drawn, invented landscapes could fill this vacancy, but this would remove them from Peake's writing and shift control from the imagination of the reader-viewer to the architectural-draughtsman. Blank space extends the map beyond its paper limits; although the act of framing prevents it from extending infinitely outwards.



**Figure 65: Gormenghast Castle-City, based on Peake's texts. 1:10000 at A1**



**Figure 66: Gormenghast Outer Landscape, based on Peake's texts. 1:250000 at A1**



**Figure 67: Landscape Beyond Gormenghast, based on Peake's texts. 1:2000000 at A1**

The map of Gormenghast Castle-City (Figure 65) also illustrates the detailed vastness of Peake's work but emphasises the complexity and labyrinthine nature of the loci more than the other maps. The maze of structures, that in the imagination are infinitely extendible, becomes contained (in the horizontal axes, vertically it remains infinitely or absent of depth). The map, sitting within the map of Gormenghast Outer Landscape, illustrates the expansion of space outwards from Gormenghast: the magnitude of the landscapes increasing as one travels out from the centre.

The outwards movement of the narrative, and of Titus, correlates with the magnitude of the landscape and the form of vastness: the larger the distances the less dense the detail and emptier the landscapes. There are more instances of vacant vastness in *Titus Alone* than in *Titus Groan* and *Gormenghast*. When mapping the landscapes the

fixed scale of rendition is derived from the magnitude of their integral vacancies. This is possible because of the digital processes which form the foundations of the images.<sup>259</sup>

Digital images have a similar relationship to scale as the imagination. They can be constantly shifted, zoomed in or out and have no defined boundaries. It is common for digital drawings to be drawn at a scale of 1:1, allowing for subsequent re-scaling. This concept is examined by Jorge Luis Borges in 'On Exactitude in Science' (1999: 119), where the (paper) map becomes as large as the land it describes.<sup>260</sup>

In digital space depicted elements can be continuously shifted, repeated, reconfigured and rescaled. This affects the process of architectural drawing. It removes the need to make decisions concerning scale and layout before commencing. Traditional scales do not need to be applied and the same digital model can be used to create multiple printed drawings. There is no single master drawing: each print (digital or physical) can be unique if necessary, or replicated infinitely (as can the digital file it is derived from).<sup>261</sup> A drawing inscribed directly onto paper requires careful planning. The flexibility of digital drawings, with the ability to alter both the scale and the page, mean that only when the true extents of the landscape have been located does the 'fixing' of scale through printing take place.<sup>262</sup> The image dictates the layout and the scale it is

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<sup>259</sup> See section 2.3.

<sup>260</sup> The relationship between map and cartographer is discussed elsewhere but a statement by writer Darran Anderson on Borges' map is apt: 'Viewed under the microscope, the ragged remains of the map might reveal other maps; of the cosmos and the synaptic circuitry of emperors, writers, artists, cartographers, mystics, vandals, saints and other lunatics. The map might not be the territory but the relationship between the map and the mapmaker is a symbiotic one. Each defines the other' (Anderson 2015: 59).

<sup>261</sup> The digital print, whilst inheriting some qualities from the physical print, retains the ability to zoom in a way not possible with paper (although a magnifying device enables enlarging). The digital print therefore requires different considerations to both the digital drawing and the physical print.

<sup>262</sup> The digital drawing is never truly fixed: the file can be returned to, re-scaled and re-oriented on the page to form a new version of the same information, providing different challenges of clarity.

reproduced at.<sup>263</sup> The further from Gormenghast the landscape, the smaller the scale of the map required to maintain a consistent paper format.

This fixed format is important so that the rendered maps are read as a series. It connects the landscapes to the architectural imagination which, although often forms images in a digital space, still perceives and understands the image as a physical drawing with traditional 'A' paper sizes: the space of the page remains important. As depictions of landscapes, rather than spatial qualities, this triptych is not required to show the human aspects of space. The physical and tactile quality of paper reflects the nature of the text, both as a book, with its origins as a hand-written manuscript, as well as the nature of the spaces contained within (although the act of framing alters this). Maps are understood to show the connections between places rather than their exact nature and scales become secondary to the use of the page. As these maps are used for mental, rather than physical, navigation the clarity of the image, rather than routes, dictates the layout. The act of printing, which leaves different traces in the work, allows for deliberate decisions to be made regarding the level of information shown and the detail and clarity provided. The gaze of the viewer is directed and attention drawn to selected information.

The limitations of physical maps provide opportunities to decide what level of information is presented. In rendering Peake's landscapes the vastness he describes becomes fixed and this distorts them. Where details are illustrated the aspect of vastness becomes detailed and the imagination explores and interprets the lines. Where there is

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<sup>263</sup> This process typically results in the drawing of more information than necessary and reducing it once the scale is fixed. This would be considered poor practice by those who use digital drawing tools as one would a traditional drawing board, as it is less efficient than drawing only the detail required. However, for this research the decision of scale was required to be made later and thus the more wasteful process became intrinsic. It also allows for a greater understanding of the level of detail that Peake provides.

an absence of lines and traces it is left to the imagination to create within the vacancy left: there is no grain beyond the texture of the paper to encourage this. Details inscribed by hand to complete rendered maps are appropriate to the size of the physical page. When images are reproduced at different sizes, as within the thesis, the detail perceived and consequently the vastness they exhibit is altered.

With these renditions the inclusion of text, or not, along with the drawn details affects understanding. When text forms an aspect of the replicated image, changes of scale become more apparent. Legibility is altered as the image is reduced or enlarged. Text as an integral aspect of the architectural renditions becomes an indicator of scale. When text appears reduced there is a perception that the image was once larger (that it was once legible). It contains an assumed trace of a previous state. When text appears significantly large, there is an understanding that the original image has been expanded – whether or not it has. It is accepted that there is a range of font sizes perceived as appropriate to any given situation (the font sizes used in books is different to that on advertising boards) and that the 'original' image uses text sizes within this range.<sup>264</sup> It would be possible to alter the size of the text with each reproduction (some digital drawing programs can do this automatically) and alter this awareness. However, it is not just font size that changes when an image is re-scaled. The thickness (weight) of the lines also changes and provides an indication of the 'original' size: when an image is reduced they become finer, when expanded they thicken and become less defined.

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<sup>264</sup> Although not necessarily true, the text is legible in the original rendered maps.

With miniaturisation of the map's perception of space is altered, but it does not necessarily reduce their vastness. With a large image one cannot view the entirety without standing back. With a miniature one can view the whole image simultaneously. The viewer is invited into the image and asked to take delight in details that extend beyond perception. The ultra-fine lines become too small to perceive with the eye alone and the gaze and imagination is drawn to the infinity contained within this ever receding world. With miniaturisation the vastness becomes further contained and folded in upon itself. It is left to the viewer to unpack this space within their imagination and to explore beyond the limits of their vision. Both the detailed vastness and the vacant vastness become greater as they contract, and whilst maps become less navigable in respect to locations and connections, they provide spurs for the imagination and evoke a desire for exploration. The capacity for a map, particularly one of an imaginary landscape, to remain navigable even in miniature demonstrates the process of scaling a landscape. The map contains a printed illusion of a world, which the imagination comprehends as vast, whilst perceiving the finite space of the page and limited rendered information. The vast is made legible, even though its detail is rendered as finite.<sup>265</sup> Once again the fractal-like nature of space is revealed as one inhabits the map and 'walks' upon its surface, viewing grassy planes or rocky surfaces with a potentially infinite complexity and a vastness rendered as symbolic lines upon the page.

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<sup>265</sup> The coastline paradox is a similar affair: the method of measuring defines the measured length.

### 3.5: Sectional Expression of the Three Aspects of Vastness

The long drawn sections contain the three aspects of vastness in a different manner to the mapped renditions. The shifting cut line of the sections, created by the act of incision, alters the customary fixed view and introduces a level of uncertainty to the size of the loci. The exact nature of the spaces remains deliberately ambiguous: the volumes depicted and the relationships between them are never fully resolved. Within Peake's text the sequencing of events is driven by the narrative, with information introduced as and when it is required. The long sections enable the image to be viewed as a whole, but the narrative structure is disrupted: there are multiple instances of characters and events within a single drawing. The comprehension of vastness is altered by the static medium. In order to examine the effects of rendering, the interconnected loci of Fuchsia's Bedroom and Attics provide a case study (Figure 68). Each of the loci in this sequence is unique and separate, but dependant on the others to counterpoint and define aspects of their vastness. The three attic spaces are the most prominent loci of this sequence. These voluminous wooden loci sit between, and are bounded by, two great voids: the unknown depth of Gormenghast's heavy stone masonry below and the infinite envelope of the sky above.<sup>266</sup>

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<sup>266</sup> It is known how far it is to the ground from Fuchsia's Bedroom and from Attic No.3, it is not known if there are subterranean spaces below, although it is suspected.

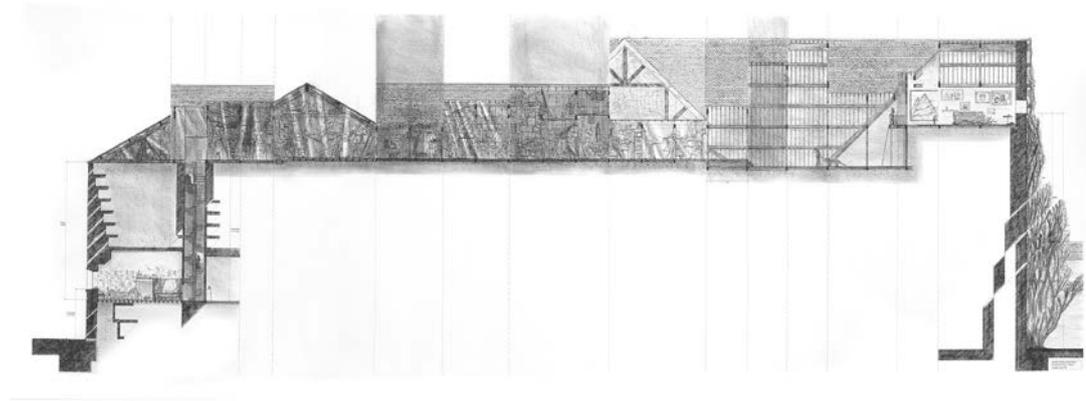


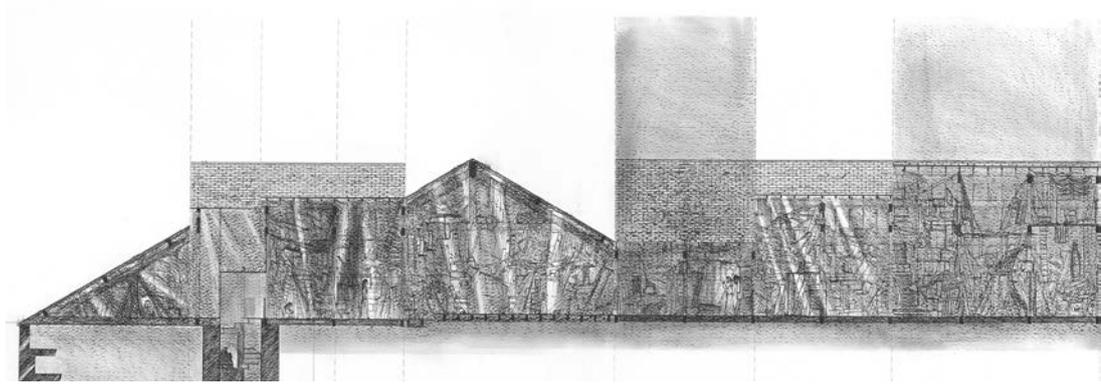
Figure 68: Long section of Fuchsia's Bedroom and Attics, based on Peake's texts. 1:50 at 2000mm by 750mm

### *The Detailed Vastness*

The first of the three attics, Attic No.1 – Lumber Room (Figure 69) is a dimly lit space of indeterminate length full of a plethora of objects that fill it, bar a canyon-like pathway leading to the next attic. Whilst the vague nature of its dimensions, described as 'very long and lofty' (*TG* 54) form one aspect of its spatial magnitude, the contents have a greater impact upon the vastness it holds. The collection of 'incongruous relics of the past' (*TG* 54) define the vastness as detailed. Objects can be explored at leisure and act as encasements for a multitude of unspecified voids and grottos hidden within.

These pockets of empty space act as resting points for both Fuchsia and the reader as they transverse the pathways amongst the cacophony of items stored away:

it was here that many long afternoons had been spent as she crawled deep into the recesses and found for herself many a strange cavern among the incongruous relics of the past. [...] Huge and impregnable they looked in the warm still half-light, but Fuchsia, had she wished to, could have disappeared awkwardly but very suddenly into these fantastic mountains, [...] and been entirely lost to view within a few moments. (*TG* 54-5)



**Figure 69: Attic No.1 – Lumber Room. Detail taken from the long section rendering of Fuchsia's Bedroom and Attics, based on Peake's texts. 1:50 at 2000mm by 750mm**

This quotation does not describe an event which occurs directly within the narrative. Fuchsia enters these pockets of space, but not whilst the reader is present. The passage above is speculative and the Fuchsia that inhabits these voids does so outside of the events Peake describes. Here she exists as a latent version of herself, which the reader can develop if they wish. This short interlude in the plot is an invitation to step aside from current events and explore further, unguided by Peake.

The geode-like pockets of space between relics illustrate Peake's use of vacancy within highly detailed space (Figure 70). These little voids, surrounded by crystallised details, provide space for the imagination and its inherent variable vastness. The attic is primarily a detailed vastness with never-ending potential for exploration and adventure. The vastness of the miniature is found within and the collection of ancestral relics becomes romantically haphazard. Each object is imbued with the potential to form its own bubble narrative. Whilst it is known that there is an enclosure to this space, with the roof forming an imperfect envelope, its limits are never reached:

this zone of moted half-light, this warm, breathless, timeless region where the great rafters moved across the air, clouded with moths. Where the dust was like pollen and lay softly on all things. (TG 46)

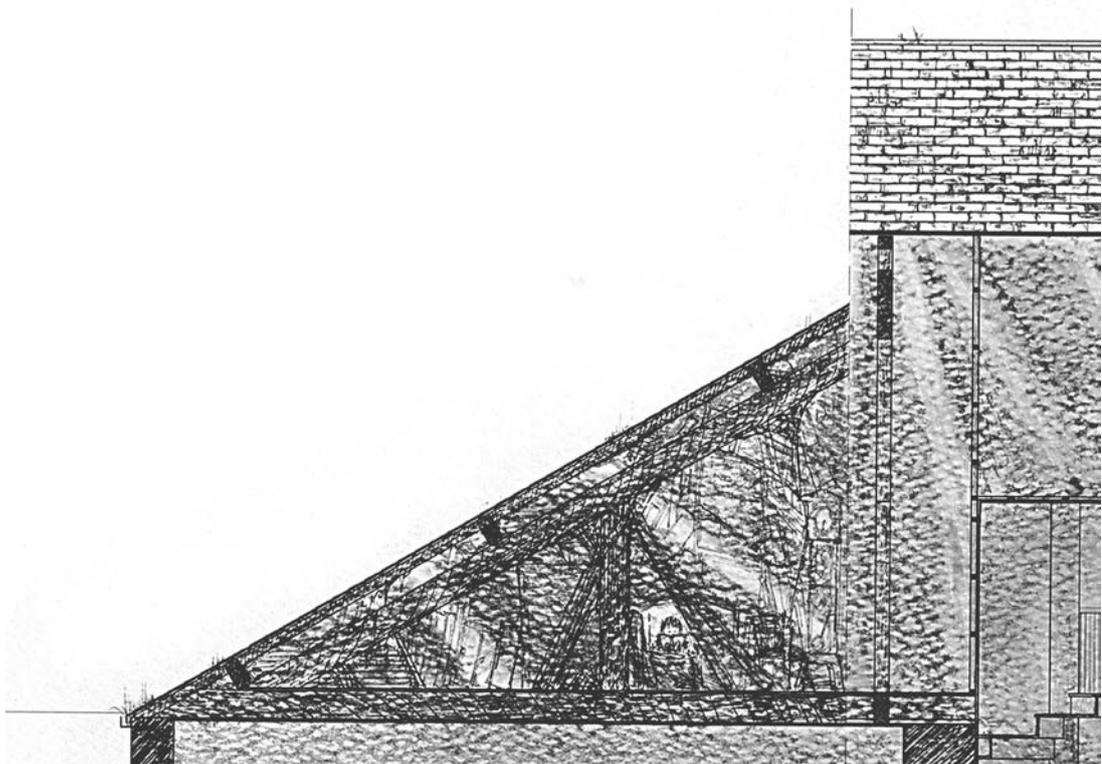


Figure 70: Fuchsia reading in Attic No.1 – Lumber Room. Detail taken from the long section of Fuchsia's Bedroom and Attics, based on Peake's texts. 1:50 at 2000mm by 750mm

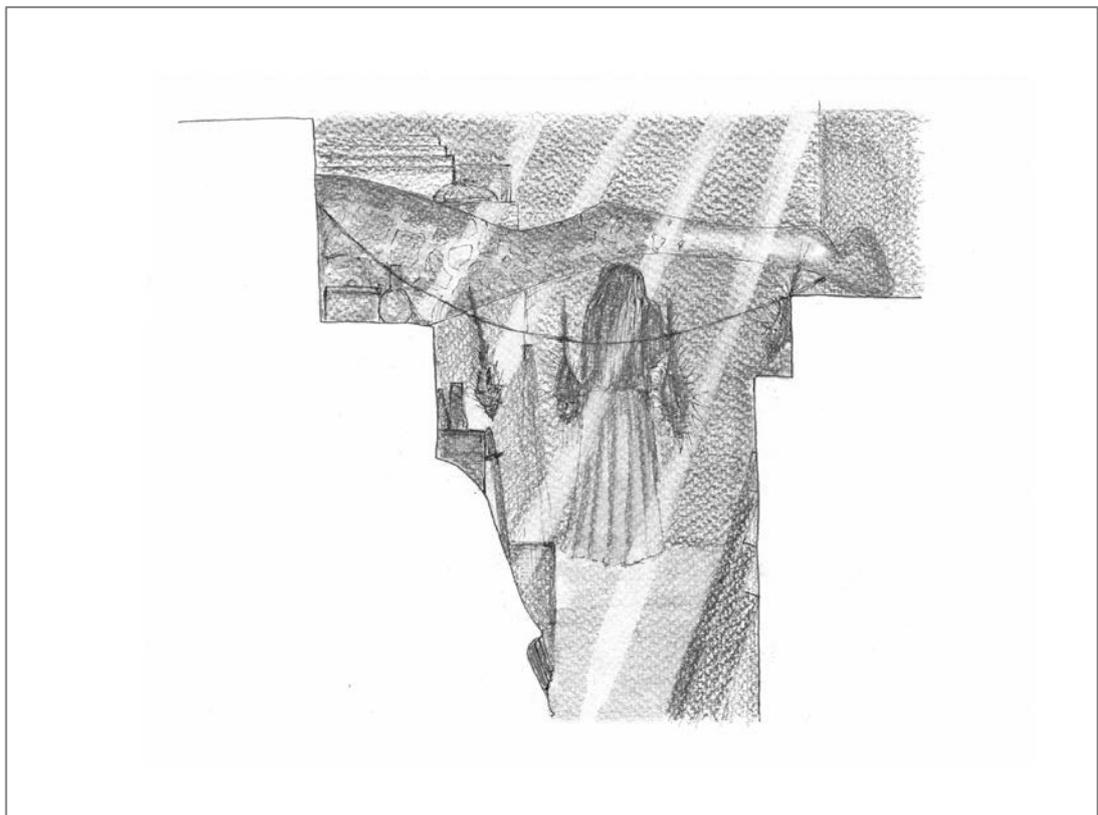


Figure 71: Fragment drawing of Fuchsia in Attic No.1 – Lumber Room, based on Peake's texts. 1:20 at 320mm by 240mm

Peake's description is vague about the extents of the volume; however, a rendition requires more definition. In a section boundaries are marked, the empty space of the air beyond contrasts with internal volumes, providing architectural comprehension. Yet, whilst the enclosure becomes fixed, the length remains ambiguous: section lines divide spaces, re-connecting without indicating if portions have been removed. In this way the length becomes potentially infinite: in the imagination sections can be added between the breaks.<sup>267</sup> Space becomes distorted, as it is in the imagination, with steps between key features and events. Light changes throughout the rendition, distorting time and warping events: Fuchsia walking from her bedroom to Attic No.3 is merged with a return journey with Steerpike. There is no single moment of entry or egress.

The rendered image does not record the whole potential of the locus; the little voids and diversity of items are only hinted at (Figure 70). Inhabitants are encouraged to speculate about events beyond the narrative. In other places items and voids merge, creating a confusion of space and objects so that interpretation is required: items are suggested but not clearly defined. The shards of light that penetrate the space, drawn from Peake's descriptions, provide variations in time of day and temperature: patches of hot sun are surrounded by cool shade. The dancing motes are reminders of the smells of dust, decay and aged space, constantly moving as air currents shift. The drawing recalls childhood memories of making dens and long summer days. Peake's text describes these shifting environmental qualities directly to the reader, triggering sensory responses; the rendition relies on a fixed visual description to encourage an ephemeral understanding.

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<sup>267</sup> With a return to the digital drawing, further sections could be placed between ones already drawn.

Details in the text are made clearer by the fragment drawing of the locus (Figure 71). Specific views Peake describes are not captured by the section. The image of Fuchsia as she walks down the attic-canyon illustrates items Peake describes: the giraffe's leg and the shells. It also hints at voids in knowledge with blank spaces indicating objects which remain unseen. The drawing, like Peake's text, provides hints of the potential within the locus but does not attempt to comprehensively list its contents. Gaps are as important as known particulars. The drawing of the attic both reveals and hides aspects that Peake describes. By cutting the space longitudinally its length becomes significant. In Peake's text the inhabitant is surrounded by the detailed vastness as they pass down the canyon-path, in the section they view this pathway from outside, seeing the route in a way they cannot within the text. The rendition changes the perspective of the space and its comprehension. It can be rendered because of the vastness it contains. The vastness of this locus is a complex and faded splendour of items forgotten by the rest of the inhabitants of the castle-city and directly contrasts with the attic that follows.

### *The Vacant Vastness*

The second of the garrets tryptic is Attic No. 2 – Acting Room (Figure 72). This is another space of unknown dimensions:

Twelve feet away were the wooden steps which led down to the second attic. The rafters above the steps were warped into a sagging curve so that it was not possible to obtain more than a restricted view of the room beyond. But an area of empty floor that was visible gave an indication of the whole. She descended the steps. There was a ripping away of clouds; a sky, a desert, a forsaken shore spread through her.

As she stepped forward on the empty board, it was for her like walking into space. Space, such as the condors have shrill inklings of, and the cock-eagle glimpses through his blood. (TG 55)

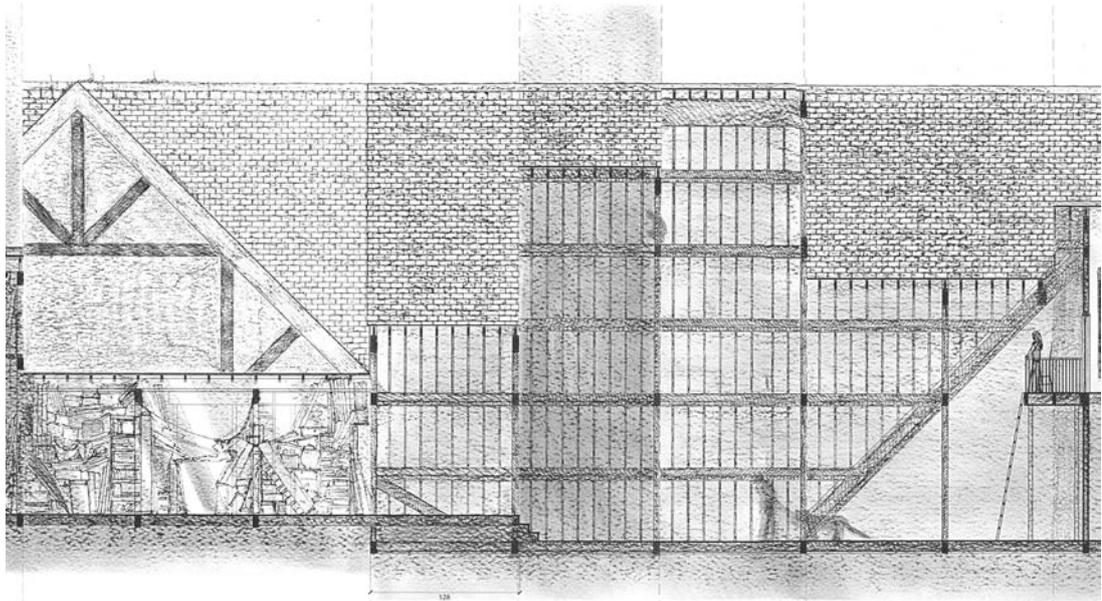


Figure 72: Attic No.2 – Acting Room. Detail taken from the long section of Fuchsia's Bedroom and Attics, based on Peake's texts. 1:50 at 2000mm by 750mm

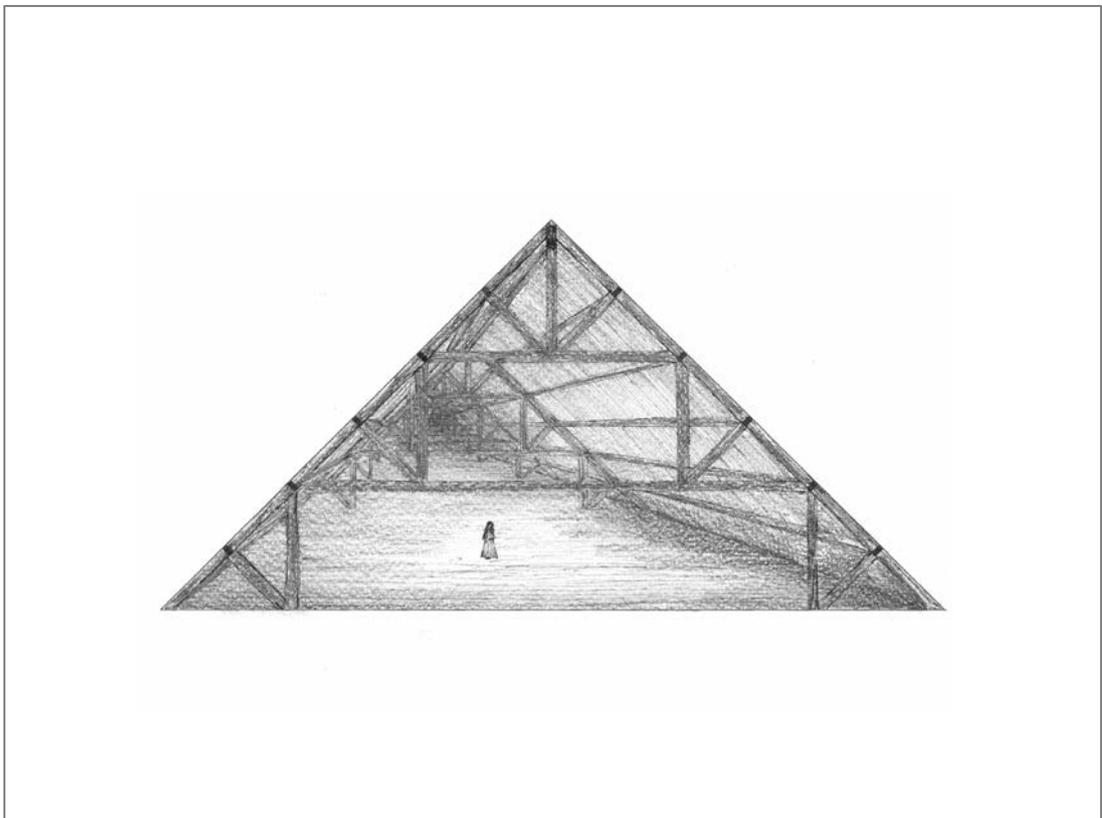


Figure 73: Fragment drawing of Fuchsia in Attic No.2 – Acting Room, based on Peake's texts. 1:100 at 320mm by 240mm

Here the emphasis is on the vastness of an empty space rather than of a density of items.

This attic is vacant, with its extents made ambiguous by distance and imagination rather than physical objects. Here Fuchsia watches creatures of her imagination at play. The infinite possibilities of her creations extend the vastness, filling and highlighting the emptiness. It is a room of silence and expectation, yet crowded with imaginary figments.

Once again physical boundaries are not clear in the text. Peake does not specify the materials of the space beyond the rafters, floor, steps, and balcony that overlooks it. In his description there are no enclosing walls or roof, yet there must be structures to contain the vastness. A sectional drawing requires an awareness of volume, otherwise there is nothing to cut. The size of the room is indicated by Steerpike's shock when he sees the space in comparison to the third attic and the emphasis on its immensity as he sees Fuchsia approaching: 'The floor across which she walked slowly but firmly appeared to stretch endlessly behind her and to her right and to her left' (*TG* 108). In the text it is through contrast that the space becomes partially quantifiable, in the section its extents are depicted by the structures that define it as an attic.

The rendition of this attic, when taken in isolation, does not show how large the space is, for the figures in the main volume are imaginary and might be larger or smaller than expected. They are drawn crossing section lines, which no other figures do. This, along with their pencil rather than ink depiction and blurred forms, separates them from the 'living' character-inhabitants of Gormenghast. They are the invisible rendered visible, unclear and distinctly different from the true inhabitants. Through comparison with other loci and their human-character inhabitants the scale of the locus becomes

clearer. The context reveals aspects not obvious in isolation. This attic is not only of a greater width than the previous one but also dramatically higher. Again section lines dissect the time and volume of this locus to draw attention to possibilities not shown.

The rendered space, like that of the first attic, requires an understanding of enclosure to define its separation from the voids beyond. This contains the space, making it finite in its vastness, where Peake's description enables its extents to fade out into oblivion. In depicting a fixed volume the dramatic scale is made clear and the stage is set for Fuchsia's imaginative feats. The section allows the relationships between this space and the other attics to be revealed in ways not described by Peake. The space becomes more physical but less imaginative. The volume is the focus, rather than its potential theatre. The vastness of space is revealed in the fragment drawing, depicting the space from the balcony leading to Attic No.3 – Secret Attic (Figure 73). Here the rafters act as a guide for the eye, the end of the space is lost in receding distance. The figure of Fuchsia emphasises the vacancy and acknowledges a desire to fill it, as she does with her characters. Her imagination is also inherent in the last of the three attics.

### *The Variable Vastness*

The last attic space illustrates the third aspect of vastness (Figure 74). The secret attic is a significantly smaller room than the previous two, although once again specific dimensions are not provided.<sup>268</sup> Its position as a cockloft, the vertical wall outside the window for the vine to climb and the specific position of the door in relation to the

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<sup>268</sup> In drawing this locus became larger than first imagined due to the way it connects with Attic No.2.

balcony affects the architectural representation of this space. This locus requires a greater level of spatial awareness for it to fit with Peake's descriptions than the other attics: its geometry and connections are more complex.

This locus is a place of solitude and its vastness is contained within Fuchsia, directly linked to her state of mind. It is an internalised place of contemplation: 'This was the loft which was for Fuchsia a very secret place, a kind of pagan chapel, an eyrie, a citadel, a kingdom never mentioned' (*TG* 46). There are individual immensities contained within the paintings upon the walls, which act as windows to other lands; in the book that she 'devours'; the views from the window over the immense forms of Gormenghast; the great writhing root, which holds an awareness of the acres of woods that grow in the landscapes beyond. These immensities offer senses beyond the visual; the imagination remembers the sound of a turning page; the smell of books and oil paintings in dusty heat; the smoothness of polished wood and feel of carpet under foot.

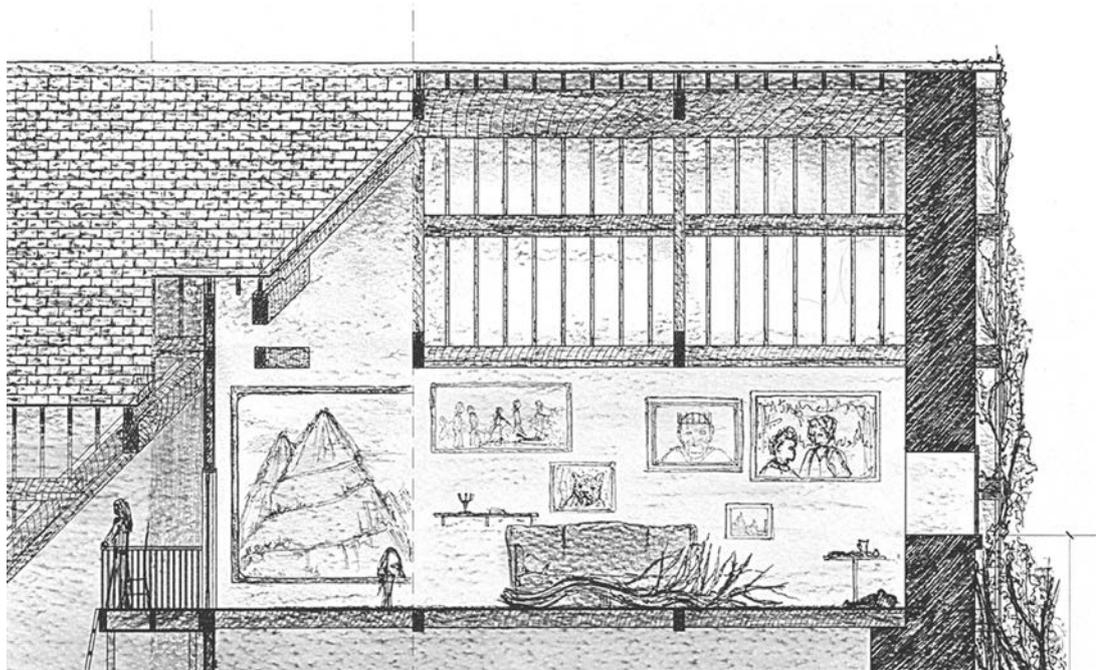


Figure 74: Attic No.3 – Secret Attic. Detail taken from the long section of Fuchsia's Bedroom and Attics, based on Peake's texts. 1:50 at 2000mm by 750mm

This locus contains a different form of variable vastness than the landscapes. The variation is still context based, but here it is a context provided by inhabitation. The room holds entry points to other spaces which Fuchsia, the reader or the architectural-draughtsman can access at will. Each entry has different, fluctuating aspects of vastness: the close and comforting space of the substantial sofa, the wild spaces of the paintings, the knotted, twisting intricacies of the root. This private space contains a vastness not defined by physical qualities, but through a capacity for imagination and inhabitation. The solitude is disturbed by Steerpike and this affects its capacity for vastness: it becomes an ordinary room, no longer a sanctuary for Fuchsia's imagination.

The confined nature of this attic contrasts dramatically with the previous two. Its walls are clearly defined by Peake in a qualitative manner, by the paintings not by measurements. Yet, although this locus is physically restrained it has comparable imaginative qualities. It has the potential for exploration inherent in Attic No.1 combined with the storytelling elements of Attic No.2. It is a variable vastness with its nature dependent upon its occupant. The rendition of this locus illustrates the scope and contents of the physical space but does not demonstrate the vastness that lies beyond it, in the paintings, the book or the view from the window. The rendered space contains all the physical contents described by Peake, but lacks the emotional aspects of vastness that make this space *Fuchsia's* attic. In the rendition it becomes simply a room, unless it is connected to an awareness of what it means to Fuchsia. The rendition focuses on physical spaces rather than emotional ones and the vastness limited. It cannot illustrate the locus entirely: Peake's language has a greater emotional connection.

### *The Vastness of Secondary Loci*

Whilst the clearest examples of vastness within this series are within the roof spaces other loci have significant aspects. Fuchsia's Bedroom No.1, which starts the sectional narrative, is of unknown size, containing a great number of objects (Figure 75). Like Attic No.1 these objects provide a detailed vastness, distorting the room, making corners inaccessible, merging with images drawn on the walls, creating an illusion of infinity.

Fuchsia had covered the walls of her room with impetuous drawings in charcoal. There had been no attempt to create a design of any kind upon the coral plaster at either end of the bedroom. The drawings [...] lacking in subtlety or proportion were filled with an extraordinary energy. These violent devices gave the two walls of her bedroom such an appearance of riot that the huddled heaps of toys and books in the four corners looked, by comparison, compact. (TG 46)

Fuchsia's knowledge of herself is contained within this room. She knows its secrets and the chaotic hoarding of objects shows the similarities she has with her mother, Lady Gertrude Groan.<sup>269</sup> Fuchsia makes her mark (inscribes herself) upon the fabric of this space, 'she drew a heart and around it she wrote: I am Fuchsia. I must always be. I am me. Don't be frightened. Wait and see' (TG 104). In doing this the room becomes a self-reminder of her own existence. This room is an extension of her personality and in this role it becomes as intense and chaotically boundless as its occupant.<sup>270</sup>

The intensity of the drawings and the plethora of objects, both natural and man-made, create a locus that holds and encourages Fuchsia's imagination and energy. It is visually connected to the vast landscapes that surround Gormenghast, through its triangular windows (Figure 76). The link is reinforced by Fuchsia as she brings in stones

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<sup>269</sup> Unlike the objects in Attic No.1, which were put there by others, of whom there are no descriptions. Fuchsia is connected to her bedroom as her mother is intertwined with her own. See section 4.2.

<sup>270</sup> The change in her is apparent when she relocates to another bedroom elsewhere in the castle-city: paralleling the changes in Flay: see section 4.3.

and vegetation to add to her collection. The landscape makes its mark within the space, leaving puddles of dampness and vegetative smells. Inanimate objects contain traces of life from outside and the tiny creatures that inhabit damp moss are made present:

Her room became filled with stones of curious shapes that had appealed to her, fungi resembling hands or plates; queer-shaped flints and contorted branches [...]

Among Fuchsia's hieroglyphics on the wall great leaves had begun to take residence, pinned or pasted between her drawings, and areas of the floor were piled with trophies. [...] Fuchsia entered late one evening and deposited a moss-covered boulder on her bed. Tiny fronds of fern emerged here and there from the moss, and white flowers the size of gnats. [...] around which a wet mark was spreading on the patchwork quilt. (*TG* 140-2)

The landscape is brought inside: its vastness, nature and physical contents miniaturised in Fuchsia's collection. The inevitable creatures affect the scale: each rock and fungus is a miniature landscape and complex ecosystem. The room gets physically smaller in its capacity for human occupation but greater in its scope. The miniaturised vastness increases as physical space is reduced. It becomes a living version of Attic No.1 above it. In the rendition the similarities between this room and the attic above it become greater. Fuchsia's bedroom appears to be a miniaturised version of the Lumber Room above and in doing so becomes secondary. Peake's descriptions have a greater focus on this locus than the rendition. It is a constantly evolving space that the drawing fixes in place, showing only a single moment in its constantly changing state.

Access from the bedroom to the first attic is via a secret door behind the bed. The dark winding staircase is neither detailed, nor grand (Figure 75). It is confined and solitary. The act of climbing the 'hundred or so narrow, darkened steps' (*TG* 46) creates a transition between the tedium of castle-life and the imaginative spaces of the attics. The transition, with its repetitive motions, provides preparation and an anticipatory prelude for Fuchsia and the reader each time it is visited.

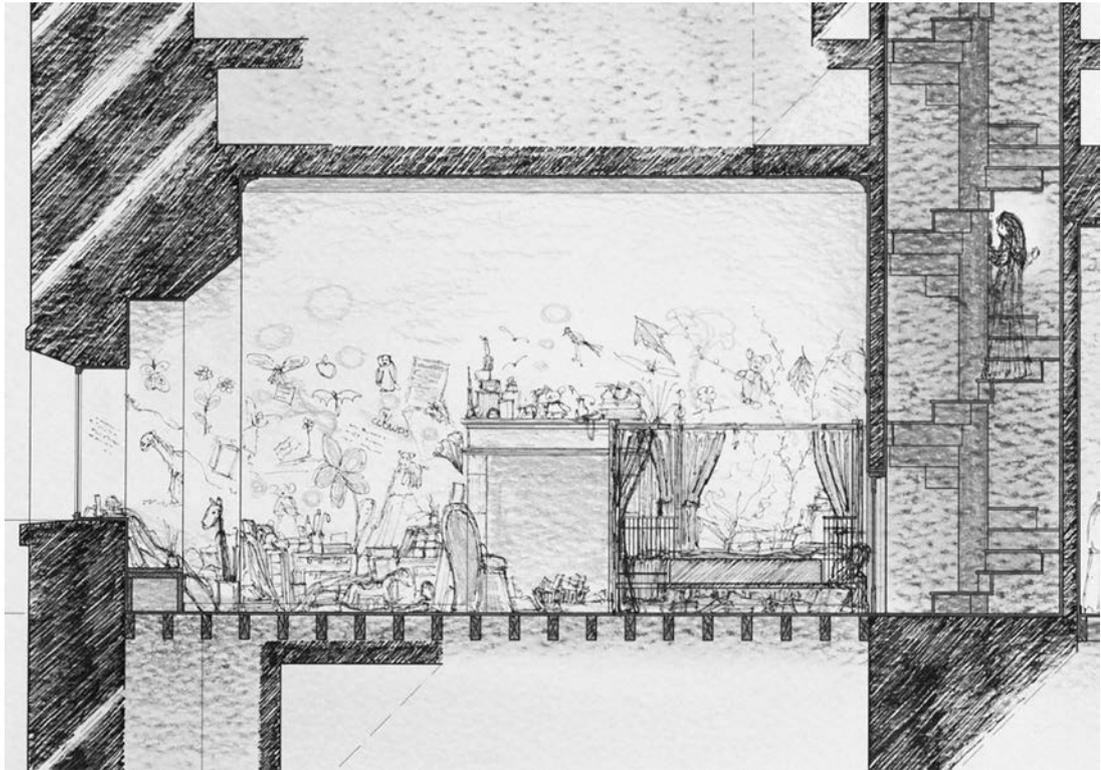


Figure 75: Fuchsia's Bedroom No.1 and Attic Staircase. Detail taken from the long section of Fuchsia's Bedroom and Attics, based on Peake's texts. 1:50 at 2000mm by 750mm

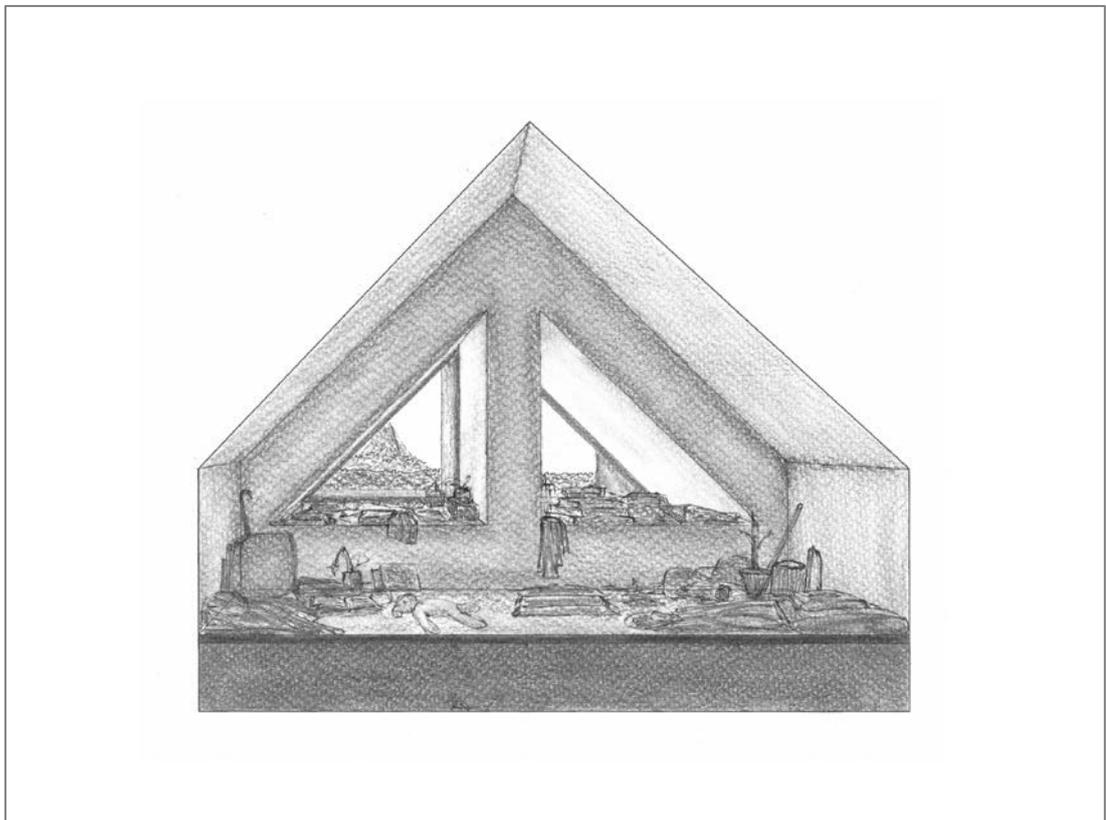


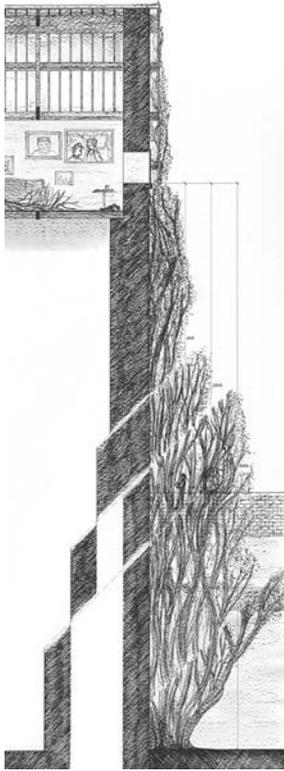
Figure 76: Fragment drawing of Fuchsia Bedroom Windows, based on Peake's texts. 1:20 at 320mm by 240mm

The darkness of the stair contrasts with the lofty attics. The confinement of this locus makes the attics a relief from claustrophobia. One loose stair-tread, eighteen steps from the top, marks the shift in space, allowing the imagination to ready itself for the spaces beyond. Peake's descriptions of this locus enable an experience of the repetitive motion of the climb. The rendition, even with the horizontal sectional cut, highlights the height of this dark narrow staircase. It contrasts with the horizontal attic spaces and mirrors the vine at the other end of the image. Verticality is drawn through the image. The difference in illumination is brought to the fore in the drawing. The staircase has no light source and the climber must take their own. This extends the climb. The steps beyond the light have the capacity to extend infinitely, until proven otherwise.

At the other end of the drawing is one of the extraordinary vines, which provides access for Steerpike into Attic No.3 and Fuchsia's life (Figure 77).<sup>271</sup> This is a tactile, detailed vastness when viewed up close, but this is a variable vastness. The extraordinary height and the monotonous darkness of the foliage allow the imagination to expand the presence of the plant, and the exhausting act of climbing it, beyond physical limitations. The more tired Steerpike becomes and the greater the empathy of the reader towards his plight, the more vertiginous the experience of the vine becomes. The quantified height becomes stretched within the imagination. The rendition of the vine draws attention to the magnitude of the plant. Whilst the imagination focuses on the climb in Peake's descriptions, the drawing reinforces the physicality of the vine. It becomes a structure, a part of Gormenghast, rather than a process of ascent.

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<sup>271</sup> See section 3.3.



**Figure 77: The vine leading to Attic No.3. Detail taken from the long section of Fuchsia's Bedroom and Attics, based on Peake's texts. 1:50 at 2000mm by 750mm**

The secondary loci of this rendition add more than just context to the primary spaces: they enrich and clarify the contrasts of detail and vacancy. Within this series are examples of all three aspects of vastness identified within Peake's text. In the attics the details contrast with vacancy before shifting to the variable state of Fuchsia's imagination. Comprehension of vastness is altered by rendition. It makes sequential spaces immediate to the gaze. In Peake's text each locus is encountered through the previous one, as with physical space.<sup>272</sup> When viewing the rendition the loci are initially encountered simultaneously. In drawings one can directly compare, observe and switch between loci in a way not possible physically: one rarely encounters a physical space literally sectioned. The section is not only a cutting but also a joining of space. Thus on

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<sup>272</sup> See section ii.

first appearance the vastness is more apparent and linear in the rendition, yet it becomes less clear as the fragmentation and distortion of the loci is realised.

### 3.6: Dimensions and Mass as Aspects of Vastness

#### *Quantified and Ambiguous Distance*

Another form of the vastness inherent in Peake's spaces is found in the loci of the Under-River (Figure 78). In this complex network of spaces Peake uses measured distances to quantify and enhance awareness of the numerous subterranean volumes. Peake's use of measurements within poetic prose is an unusual addition to fictional writing, but it allows loci to be rendered and analysed architecturally and the effect is more than just an indication of distance. In the Under-River Peake uses numerical values in a similar manner to his smaller spaces, to indicate significant features and provide reference points. However, in in this locus the majority of the dimensions are of significant length: miles, leagues or hours of walking, as with his landscapes. In other interior loci dimensions are primarily in yards or feet. This gives the Under-River the scale of a landscape whilst effectively being internal.

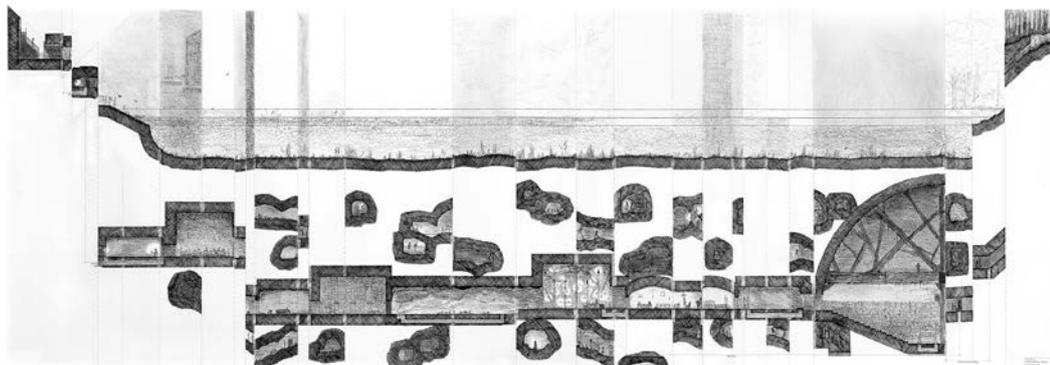


Figure 78: Long section rendering of the Under-River, based on Peake's texts. 1:100 at 2000mm by 750mm

This approach to dimensions is one in which the architectural imagination takes comfort.<sup>273</sup> There is a learned need in the architect to quantify space even where there is no physical distance, due to the use of measurements in drawings and models (the super accuracy in digital drawings may be connected to this). Peake uses devices beyond numerical values to measure space: physical activity (number of steps/arm span etc.) and time progression (an hour's walk). These allow the imagination to understand through direct (remembered) experience. In the Under-River Peake's measurements are examples of quantified space not directly perceived through physical understanding: they are described. These numerical descriptors may be translated by the imagination through awareness of physical activity: 'how long does it take to walk?'<sup>274</sup> An architectural education provides a platform where this translation becomes more instinctual. The architect *knows* how long a distance it is and what it looks like at scale. It is no longer 'from here to the shops' but 'the length of this line at 1:100.' Peake's text extends the capacity of the text towards the architectural, whilst remaining intuitive for those without its training: there is potential in this approach within the discipline.<sup>275</sup>

As a locus from *Titus Alone* the Under-River is found within the landscapes beyond Gormenghast (Figure 67) and has no known connection to the castle-city. Yet in many ways it is more akin to the spaces found in the first two novels than the others of *Titus Alone*. Gormenghast is a place of heights: towers attics and mountains. It has crypts below but they are a vacancy in the reader's awareness. The City, upon its own

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<sup>273</sup> See section iv.

<sup>274</sup> Converting between metric and imperial measurements requires a similar translation process. When one is used to one system the other becomes quantified in comparative terms: one inch is 25.4mm.

<sup>275</sup> See section 5.2.

mountain, has less detail in its heights but the depths are inhabited in a way that the catacombs of Gormenghast are not. The Under-River is a mirror to Gormenghast with similar modes of inhabitation, concentrated below rather than above. This inversion is highlighted in the quotation below. The Under-River does not contain the technology of the City and is formed of a complex network of nested and interconnected spaces, full of the masses of humanity who do not fit the clean, bright society above. It is a place of cracks and gaps, where *stresses* are revealed both within the rock from which it is formed and those who live there. Peake calls it a wilderness, but due to the multitudes of people it is very different to other wastelands he describes:

A wilderness of tables, bed and benches. [...] The figures moving at various levels, with various distinctness [...] And the 'lakes' changing their very nature: now ankle-deep, the clear water showing the pocked and cheesy bricks beneath and then, a moment later, at a shift of the head, revealing a world in so profound and so meticulous an inversion as to swallow up the eye that gazed upon it and drag it down, out-fathoming intention. (*TA* 838)

Through curtailment of detail, rather than elaboration, Peake evokes the spaces of this locus. The depths and distances are unknown as are the vagary (and lack) of civilisation and the unforgiving materials which form the vast network of voids within the bedrock of the City River. There is grandeur inherent in its decay which, in contrast to the stagnant deterioration of Gormenghast, is a living degeneration fuelled by the constant shifting of inhabitants and the ever-present water. There is a permanent dripping and dampness in these spaces and the imagination holds an awareness of darkness and the constant dank temperatures that coincide with this environment. The overarching descriptions are non-specific, individual ferns are not detailed and the different sounds of water are not isolated. Yet understanding of the nature of the space is inherent, as is the logic of Titus' journey through it.



Figure 79: The Exhibition of Rendered Loci. The length of the title block for the Under-River, located below the long section, is significantly longer than for any other rendition.

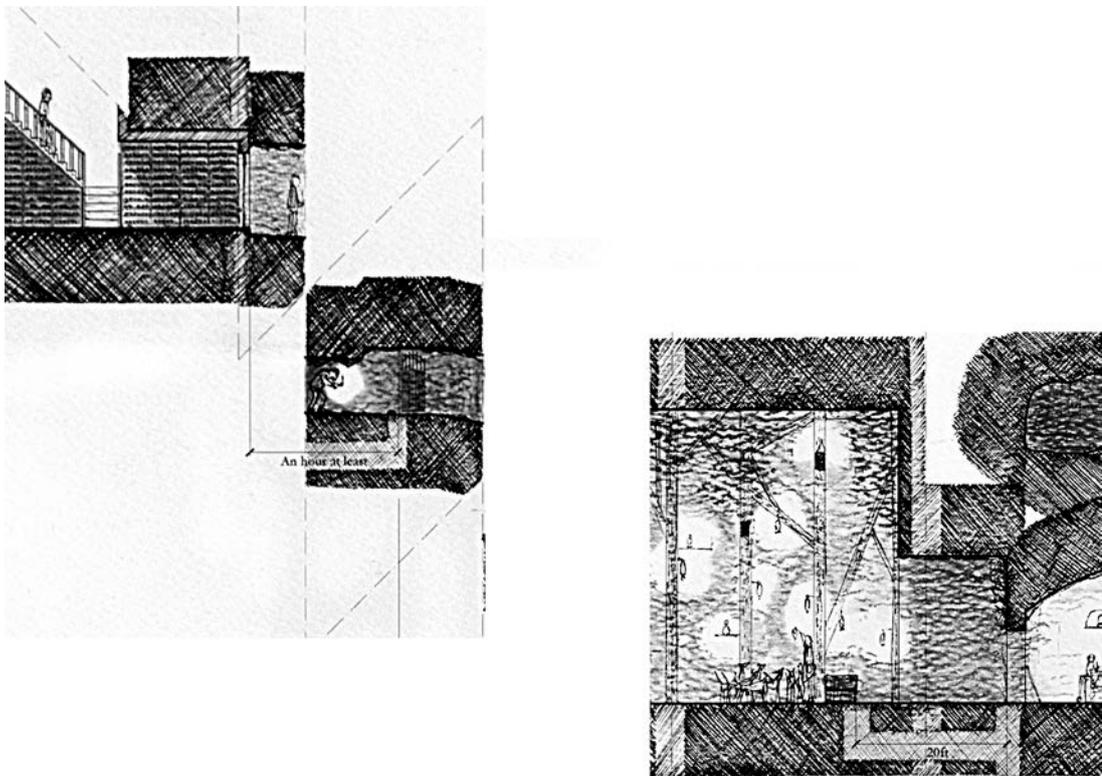


Figure 80: Details showing areas of the Under-River long section which has been cut to shorten it physically, based on Peake's texts. 1:100 at 2000mm by 750mm

The course Titus takes through the Under-River initially appears to be straight forward: he enters via the cellars of Muzzlehatch's House in the City, walks through the subterranean metropolis and exits from another secret entrance in the City Forest. This sequence is the focus of the rendered long section and the labyrinth of the Under-River is illustrated as a linear route. However it, as with Peake's narrative, does not describe the true nature of Titus' passage, which winds its way through loci, via unknown paths and vague changes in direction. The dimensions Peake provides (rendered in an abbreviated form) provide indications of this. Titus must walk for over an hour to get to the gate into the Under-River and then another forty minutes to get to the field of flagstones. The Four Inch Deep Lake which, as its name suggests, is shallow is 'a mile across' (TA 843) and of unknown width. In order to escape the Under-River, Titus, Muzzlehatch and the Black Rose walk for over two hours to the staircase leading to the egress. These distances provide a linear journey many times the width of even the widest river, so Titus travels along as well as, possibly, across the course of the City River above. There are no cardinal reference points to connect these spaces with the world above. It might be, therefore, that Titus crosses his own path (this may be via different spaces which cross above or below loci Peake mentions) as he walks the subterranean maze. It is not known what the relationship of these two exits is above ground. This route is evoked in the rendition but it becomes simplified in its depiction as a section. The limits of the drawing alter understanding of Titus' path.

So these distances could be comprehended in the exhibition the sectional drawing was complemented with a title block containing the full extents of the journey Titus

takes (Figure 79). Each section had this second, uncut, rendition of the loci at a scale of 1:2000. This allows for the digital line drawing, drawn with distances in full and over 15km at 1:1, to be cut for the large-scale rendition without removing the drama of length from the display.<sup>276</sup> Sectioning of this locus does not only condense space and time, but also acts in the same manner that Peake presents its vastness. He does not include each moment, but focuses on important instances, skimming past the monotony of walking for hours, yet providing understanding of duration:

And so, at speed, threading the groups lit here and there with lamps, the dog-pack all of a sudden and seemingly with no warning doubled its speed until it reached a district where there was more light than is common beneath the river. Scores of lamps hung from nails in the great props or stood on ledge or shelf, and it was beneath a circle of these that the hounds drew up and lifted their heads to the dripping ceiling, and gave one simultaneous howl. (TA 844)

The hounds cover a great deal of distance, yet the text is concise, including details of different districts they pass through. It is this selective abbreviation that the visual rendering attempts in its sectioning and abridging of distance (Figure 80). The rendition of the Under-River enables Peake's condensing of space to be illustrated. The length of time spent in a locus acts upon the space of the page. The sectional cuts clarify and simplify Titus' journey but in doing so the Under-River is warped. This warping cannot be pinned down, as the loci it depicts are not fixed in space as those of Gormenghast are. The rendition attempts to follow Peake's example to deal with long distance.

### *Depth and Mass as Aspects of Detailed and Intimate Space in a Vacant Vastness*

The Under-River as a locus contains all three categories of vastness. It is an unfathomable wilderness; a vacancy below the flowing water of the City River; vast in its

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<sup>276</sup> An hour of walking was unintentionally missed and the uncut drawing is therefore too short.

scope and in its subterranean landscapes. There are pockets of detailed space where the faceless descriptions of those who live there are resolved into individuals, with names and intriguing hints of past lives: the Room of Six Lamps and Mr Crabcalf's Room. This shifting between great masses and minute details provides an ever changing place of tenuous inhabitation. There is also an aspect that, whilst belonging to the vacant vastness, is specific to the Under-River, that of *depth*.<sup>277</sup>

It is through personal and intimate actions of inhabitants that certain loci become distinct from the general masses of the Under-River. Peake's measurements within these spaces are at a human scale with distances described in feet and strides (rather than miles or hours). Peake once again uses vegetation to provide sensory details. In comparison to the dry vines of Gormenghast, here it is through dripping ferns that the characters move and mildew rather than dust shrouds the furniture. The grandeur of vegetation is reduced to rankness and decay. In the Under-River water carves out spaces in the rock, increasing their size over time (even with human interventions such as brick), while within Gormenghast spaces become reduced, buried in layers of dust and debris.

Spaces carved out from the river bedrock (a solid void in the reader's awareness) function as places of inhabitation: they are inhabitable gaps within the density of stone. These hollows are different from those of Fuchsia's Attic No.1 as they are formed by a removal of material rather than defined by objects or structures that contain them.<sup>278</sup>

The weight of the City River and the boundary rock encapsulate these loci, yet they are

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<sup>277</sup> There are other loci that feature this aspect within *Titus Groan* and *Gormenghast* but they are ones with no narrative existence, like the Groan Catacombs. The only other locus that truly exhibits depth is the Mine of 'Boy in Darkness' partly rendered as a model and fragment drawings.

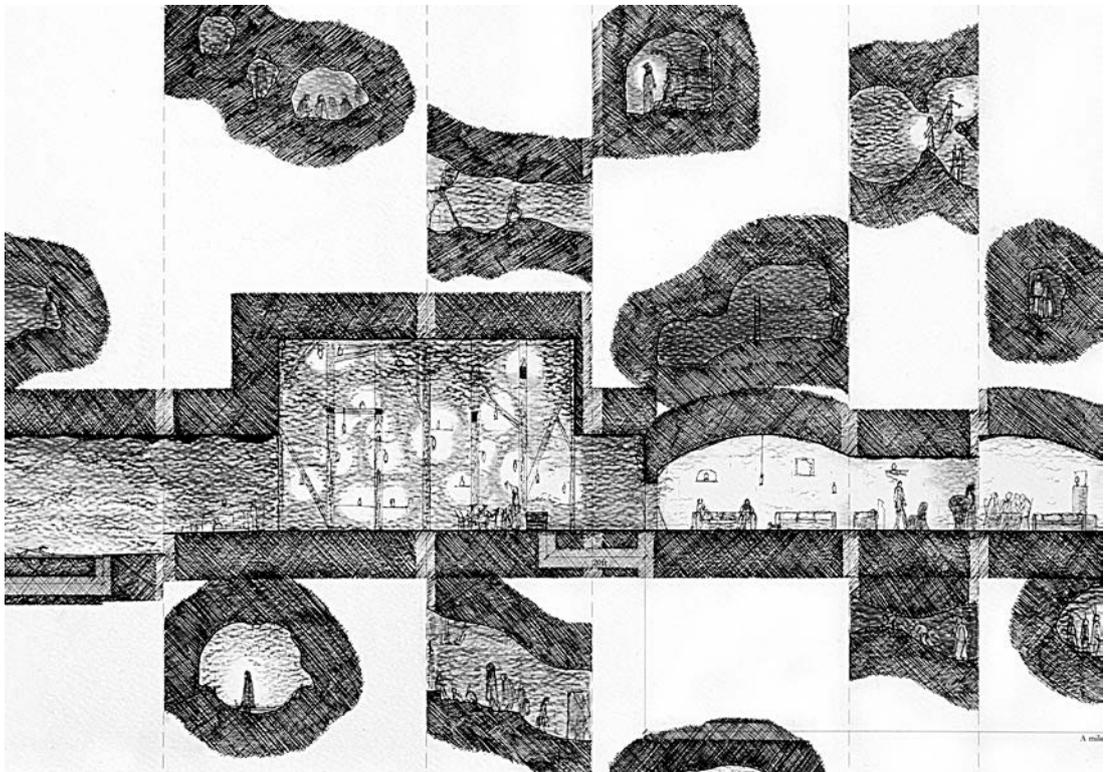
<sup>278</sup> Although there are similarities with the Attic Staircase and its position within the (solid) walls of the castle-city. The use of light in this space is also familiar. See section 3.5.

just as fragile as the precarious structures of the attic: the City River threatens to come flooding in, just as the furniture and objects in the attic might come crashing down. The depth of the Under-River is unknown, but large caverns hint that in places there is a great distance down into the depths: the Arena/Circus is one such volume (see below). In other places it is understood that the spaces are perilously close to the water above.

The vacant vastness and its depths are most easily recognised in the Under-River's lack of outer limits, other than the City River above it. Gormenghast in comparison has an enclosing wall containing its loci, even if their physical extents remain ambiguous. This lack of limits is emphasised by Peake in descriptions that go beyond Titus' experiences of the Under-River's loci. These accounts provide general indicators of the nature of the places; specific in certain details, sounds, smells and textures. The lamps that allow scenes to be observed do little to dissolve the blackness beyond: there is no way of knowing how far it extends. Peake makes the reader blind. One must rely on other senses to determine boundaries to these pitch black spaces.

The material the Under-River is carved from also contains the unknown. The distances between voids in the rock are not defined; there may be voids between those the reader is unaware of, or it may be solid. Just as the depth of the Under-River is never disclosed, the uncertain density of passages provides another vacancy. The long section approaches uncertain spaces in a similar manner to Peake. Whilst known loci were first drawn digitally (the clean lines remaining visible), speculative spaces were created entirely by hand and retain vague qualities (Figure 81). These bubbles (another space with geode-like qualities) hold indistinct figures performing ambiguous activities;

doorways lead to black space and cut-off tunnels where the section line shifts. The Under-River and its dubious undertakings extend beyond the page. The locus is fragmented and the rendition collapses space and jumps between events. More speculative drawing was required than in the other rendered sections, to provide the atmosphere and comprehension of the locus as a vast and chaotic occupied space. In visualising the Under-River an awareness of how little Peake details is brought to light. He creates amorphous atmospheres and spaces which are formed within the imagination. The rendition forces the vastness to become immobile and the subterranean architectures are dense upon the page.



**Figure 81: Comparison between the angular and fluid forms of the Under-River long section. Detail taken from the long section of the Under-River, based on Peake's texts. 1:100 at 2000mm by 750mm**

The Under-River is a locus of grand human endeavour in much the same way as Gormenghast. There is an awareness that it is substantially man-made, shaped alongside nature: in the Under-River water continues to erode the rock; in Gormenghast the majestic ruins are slowly degraded and consumed by vegetation. The voids of the Under-River may once have been natural caves, but at the time of the narrative it is clear that human hands have expanded and altered them far beyond the natural hollows they once were. It is a constructed place of vastness, formed over time and riddled with decay. Its position under the City River affects the vastness and destabilises it:

In the silence was the voice of the river, a muted sound, all but inaudible, yet ubiquitous and dangerous as the ocean. It was not so much a sound as a warning of the world above (*TA* 854)

It is not a place of controlling ritual and heritage as Gormenghast is: it is inherently chaotic with an absence rather than proliferation of rules. The ever present dangers, provided by the inhabitants within and the river above, create a precarious position of inhabitation that it may be lost at any moment. This balance between life and death is highlighted in the encounter between Titus and Veil in the Arena Circus. While the spaces of these loci are familiar to the reader, due to the parallels they have with Gormenghast, the techniques Peake uses to form these spaces are different. Its density is more uneven. Details are provided but with greater voids between. The scale and focus of the gaze is broader than the familiar spaces of the castle-city.

### ***Modelled Masses as Fragments of Variable Vastness***

The Arena/Circus is one of the most prominent loci of the Under-River and a pause in Titus' journey. Peake provides no dimensions for the fabric of the cavern, although it

known to be physically grand. It is massive both in size and in its resistance to the weight of the bedrock that surrounds it and the river above it. As a locus within the depths of the Under-River it is also emotionally vast: an inordinate number of people fill this space for the fight between Titus and Veil. The Arena/Circus is not only the *place* of congregation but also *the act* of gathering. The crowd filling the vacancy becomes, briefly, the spectacle of the circus:

Around him, tier upon tier (for the centre of the arena was appreciably lower than the margin, and there was about the place almost the feeling of a dark circus) were standing or were seated the failures of earth. The beggars, the harlots, the cheats, the refugees, the scatterings, the wasters, the loafers, the bohemians, the black sheep, the chaff, the poets, the riff-raff, the small fry, the misfits, the conversationalists, the human oysters, the vermin, the innocent, the snobs and the men of straw, the pariahs, the outcasts, rag-pickers, the prodigals, the defaulters, the dreamers and the scum of the earth. (TA 853)

The volume (masses) of humanity that this space has capacity for expresses its vastness, along with the understanding that comes inherent in Peake's descriptions; the smells of unwashed bodies and the noise of large numbers of people fill the reader's senses.<sup>279</sup>

It is not only the space that is important in the rendition of vastness but also the material and manner of its formation. The casting process is a solidification of a liquid around voids constructed from impermanent materials, leaving traces of their absence. This vacancy becomes inhabitable space and what was once void becomes the solid that defines it. Within the Arena/Circus Peake's text provides the imagination with an inhabited space that gradually solidifies, each detail – of physical and atmospheric qualities – adding to the (temporary) resolution of space. The coagulation of this locus within the imagination is one in which substance is formed from void and understanding carved from potential.

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<sup>279</sup> The masses of people here are much more present than those of Gormenghast. See section 4.3.



Figure 82: Photograph of Arena/Circus model, based on Peake's texts. Model at 1:200



Figure 83: Hand-drawn overlay of figures on Arena/Circus model photograph, based on Peake's texts

Although the locus is fixed in the cast, knowledge from the text warps it.

Imagination allows the rendition to be simultaneously claustrophobically crowded and expectantly vacant, its physical volume can increase or decrease and it exists both in muted silence and chaotic uproar. Whilst these states are contradictory in a physical space, within the imagination they can be concurrent. In the modelled rendering (Figure 82) the lack of visual reference points affects the interpretation of scale. Whilst it was made at a numerically defined scale of 1:200, the lack of figures allow for the intellectual interpretation of size to be distorted by the imagination. The tiers of the floor might be shallow steps or great platforms; the entrances might be cavernous or low crevices and the 'great beams' (*TA* 855) could be any enormous size.<sup>280</sup> The viewer is given licence to interpret the vastness of the space. In comparison the figures in Figure 83 immediately provide a scale and events to the locus image. Figures provide a fixed reference point and a scale. The vastness is no longer variable.

Within the open space of the Arena/Circus Peake uses measurements. These do not define the enclosure of the locus but instead position people of interest, making their presence and movements integral to the scaling of the space:

Somewhere in the heart of this sat Slingshott [...] Within a few feet (although they had lost sight of one another) crouched Carrow. [...] Thirty to forty feet away from Carrow and Slingshott stood Sober-Carter, and on the far side of the open space the old couple, Jonah and his 'squirrel' grasped one another's hands. (*TA* 854)

This manner of defining locations is used to place Titus and Veil at a key point in their battle; yet it only provides minimum distances. Beyond these the Arena/Circus can expand outwards indefinitely, but cannot contract further than these numbers allow.

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<sup>280</sup> They are strong enough to carry Muzzlehatch's weight (*TA* 857).

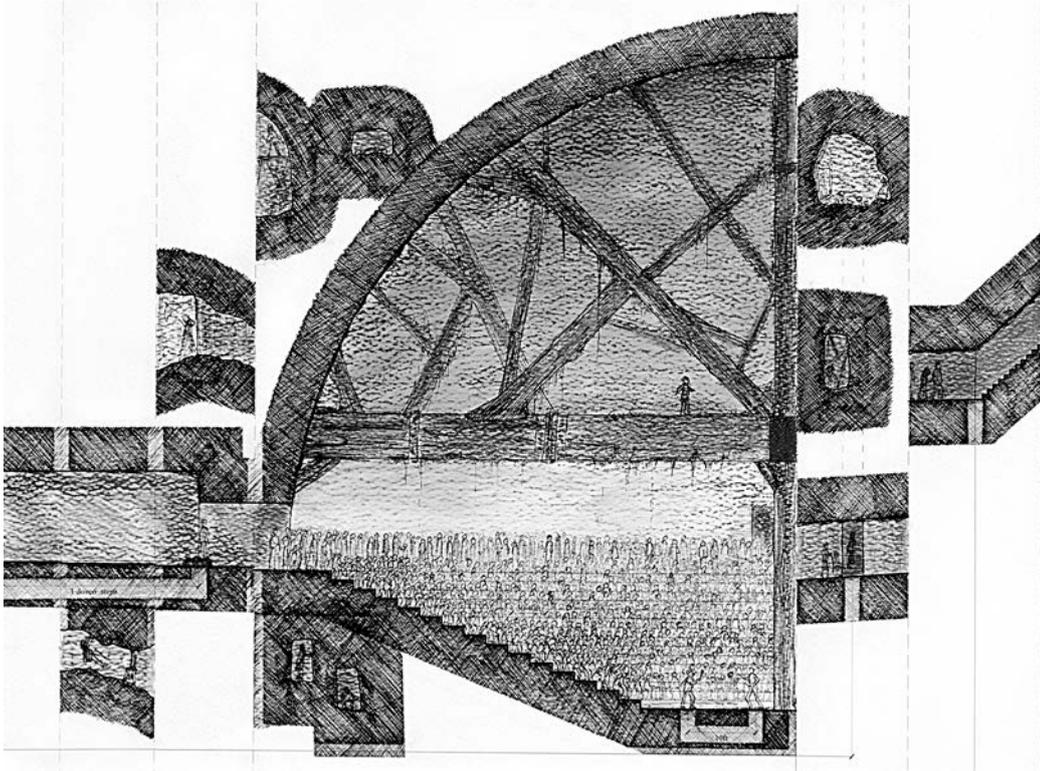
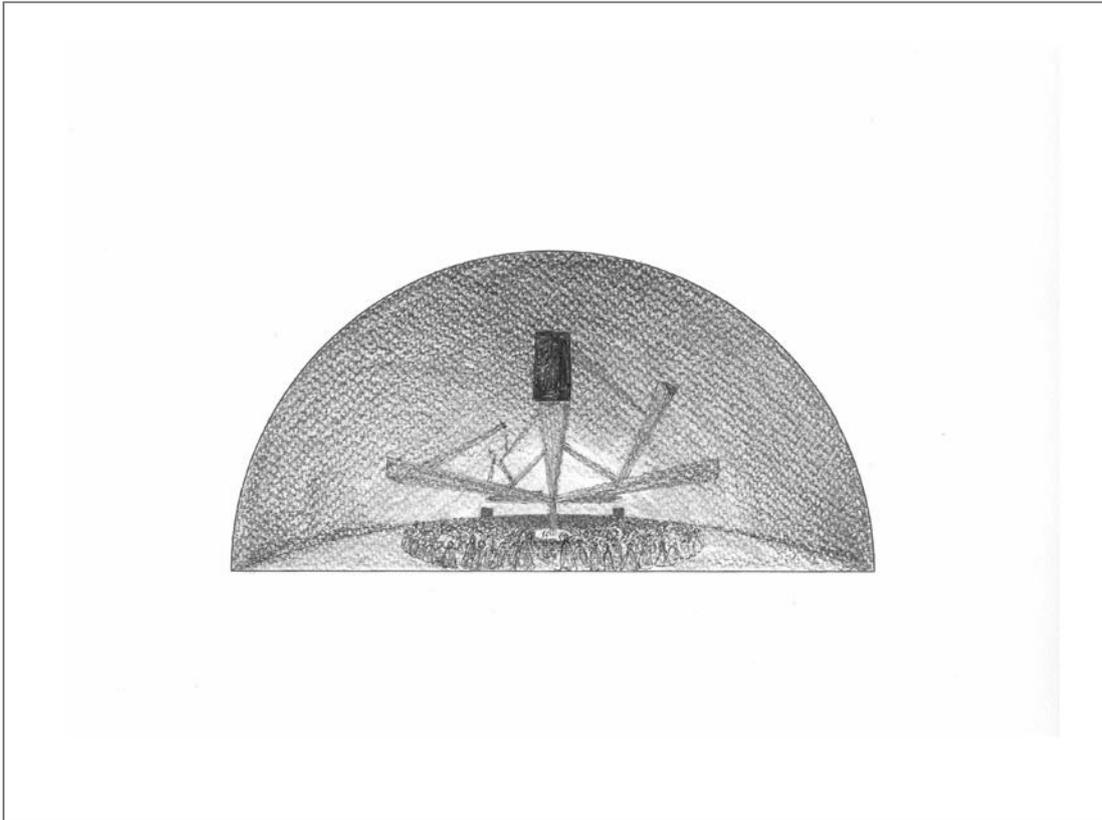


Figure 84: Detail of the Arena/Circus taken from the long section of the Under-River, based on Peake's texts. 1:100 at 2000mm by 750mm



Figure 85: Photograph of Arena/Circus model, based on Peake's texts. Model at 1:200



**Figure 86: Fragment drawing of Arena/Circus, based on Peake's texts. 1:100 at 320mm by 240mm**

This locus forms a key part of the long section of the Under-River and a comparison between the model, sectional drawing and fragment drawings illustrates the difference that the media have in relation to vastness. The sectional drawing shows how the integration of the figures highlights their part in creating the space (Figure 84). In comparison the model has more tactile and material qualities, and lacks the chaos and auditory stimuli of the section (Figure 85). The fragment draws attention to the vast dome and the vacancy that hangs above the density of the crowd (Figure 86). Whilst the locus of each of these images is the same they each demonstrate different aspects of Peake's descriptions, the variable nature of the imagination as well as the influence of specific media. The renditions of the Arena/Circus each highlight certain aspects and in doing so they conceal others. The focus of Peake's text is the human events of the space,

in the renditions it is scale, volume, void and texture. The effects of comparing different renditions of space are more easily perceived in the gallery setting, where each medium is viewed in relation to others and connections made between them and the text.

### **3.7: Vastness and Scale when Exhibiting Renditions**

A greater understanding of the loci is gained when components are viewed together.

When one reads the text as intended by the author (assuming a printed edition conforms to their intent) details of each space are compounded by each occurrence in the narrative: a gradual coalescing of understanding is formed when the loci are contextualised. Whilst the full extents of Peake's world is not fully comprehended with the limited number of loci rendered here, an understanding of the nature of his spaces and their relationships can be gained, along with the principles and scale of Peake's creation. The table of loci, with its illustration of the number of spaces, in combination with the visual renditions of a select number, allows an exploration of spatial perception. The curation of the renditions forms connections between loci that do not exist when viewed in isolation. These connections shift between individuals, their experiences, (both past and present) and their perceptions and awareness of Peake's texts.<sup>281</sup> Those with architectural training have a different relationship to the renditions than those who do not: they bring expectations of architectural conventions.

The exhibition space provided a neutral background on which to display.<sup>282</sup> The lack of framing on the long sections and the close colour match of the paper and walls

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<sup>281</sup> See section 5.3.

<sup>282</sup> See section 2.5.

let the physical edges of the paper merge with the mounting surface (Figure 87).<sup>283</sup> This allowed the gaps between drawings to form new vacancies between loci, the gallery walls acting as a temporary part of the renditions. In curating the space loci are affected by their relative positions, forming void space between them, extending them into undefined areas and allowing expansion. This expansion is only present for the exhibition period and each new curation forms new voids and relationships. These transient interactions provide new spaces within which the imagination creates connections. Just as each time Peake's text is read the imagination forms a new version of the loci and their relationships, each time the rendered spaces are displayed a new interpretation of Peake's descriptions is provided.

Figure 87 demonstrates the separation created by the act of framing the mapped renditions. The visual distinction encourages a perception of completeness; their vastness is contained within frames and behind glass, unlike the sections which are extended by the space around them (shadows hints of their distinction from the mounting surface). The act of mapping is differentiated and one becomes aware they are an orientation guide. The separation of loci is formed by the surface of the walls and the space between them. In this configuration the dialogue between the walls plays an important aspect of the expression of vastness. The gallery space contains the loci, but just as with the paintings of Fuchsia's Attic No.3 they invite an exploration beyond the physical space.<sup>284</sup> The gallery becomes larger than (a miniaturised) Gormenghast and its landscapes, simultaneously extending them and highlighting the limits of the renditions.

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<sup>283</sup> This visual merging with the walls was affected by the humidity of the room.

<sup>284</sup> See section 3.5.



Figure 87: Photograph of the exhibition in the Studio 3 gallery space. The edges of the paper holding the long sections merge into the space of the wall, whilst the mapped images remain distinct in their frames



Figure 88: Photograph of the exhibition in the Studio 3 gallery space. The gap between the model plinths and the walls varied depending on the relationship between the loci

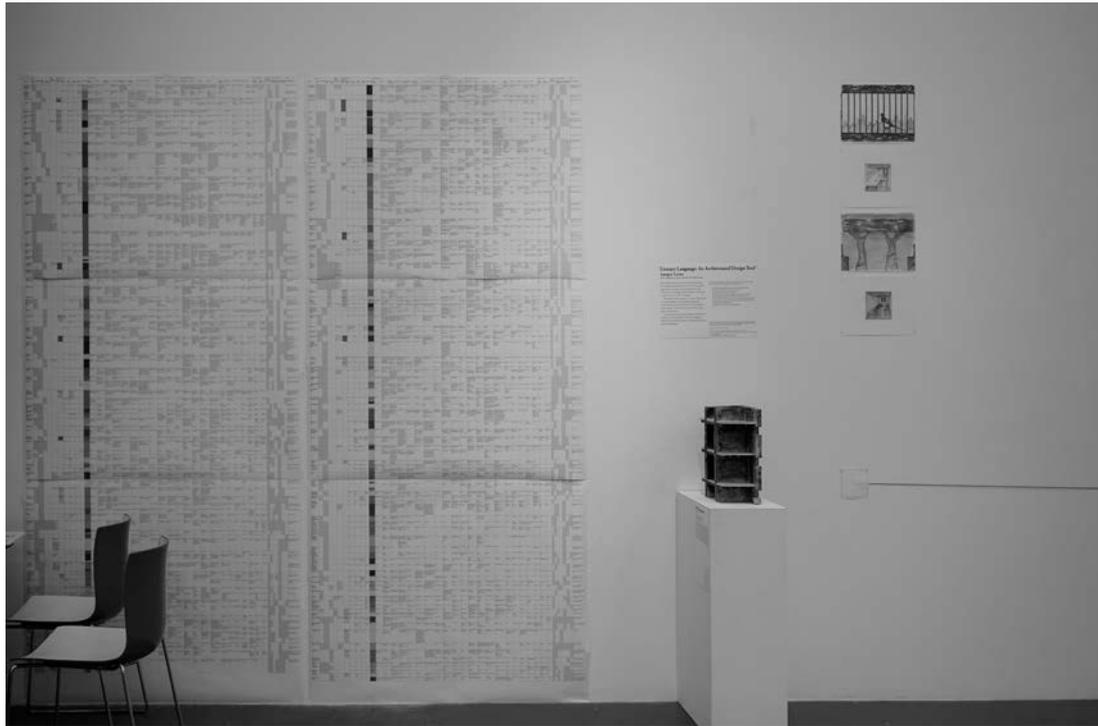


Figure 89: Table of loci at the exhibition.

The physical distance that dislocates the loci of *Titus Alone* from those of the other texts, a separation created by Peake, is continued in the gallery. Although the physical distance is less than ten metres it became a significant separation and a void through which the participant has to move, forcing awareness of the dislocation between the texts and allowing for interpretation of this space. *Titus Alone* is clearly distinct from the space of *Gormenghast*, yet their connections are clear. The modelled loci were situated in this void between the novels, creating islands within the vacant space. Their placement upon plinths, raising them above the ground plane, isolates them further. Although their positioning was determined by their relationship to loci on the walls, the exact nature of the relationship is not disclosed. These not-quite-located features act as positioning points in the gallery space, but with no indication of distance (Figure 88). The scale of the gap is not revealed and the imagination is able to expand or reduce this vacancy as it

wishes: a step could take individuals a great distance, or a few metres. The lack of discernible scale within the exhibition is a feature shared with its literary counterpart.

The scale of each rendition is derived from Peake's text, placed alongside the renditions and the subsequent association of the narrative with the object, although this may not be significant to all viewers. Resolution of scale is eased by the presence of the fragment images containing figures which provide references. The vastness of space contained within Peake's texts is most clearly demonstrated in the exhibition by the table of loci (Figure 89). This representation of information derived from the text is not only visually grand as an image but also contains miniaturised versions of Peake's vastness. Each locus, described in detail in a small font, is shown to be a small part of the whole. This demonstration of the building-up of spaces to form a complex environment is a clear visual description of Peake's literary creation.

The models within the gallery space are a miniaturisation of Peake's loci and small in comparison to the physical walls surrounding them (if they were placed in a cupboard they would be comparatively larger and as objects they are significant in weight and size). Their dislocation from the walls highlights their object-ness before their spatial manifestation.<sup>285</sup> The model is first understood in relation to the body; its size, height and volume it contains. From this the void within is recognised as space and the imagination enters to inhabit, deriving scale from the non-corporeal body.<sup>286</sup> In entering the models the imagination experiences them at a different scale, one formed through the imagined body within.

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<sup>285</sup> See section 5.3.

<sup>286</sup> See section 4.4.

There is no inherent scale in gallery space: it is designed to be as open as possible and each curation and set of artwork changes the perceived scale even though the physical room does not change size (insertion of partitions does affect this), nor does the scale of those who view the art.<sup>287</sup> Imagination relies on a personal understanding of scale in relation to its connected body. In a gallery, comprehension is based on the physical dimensions of the space and the objects it contains (their arrangement and size, both actually and comparatively) in relation to the body. The renditions, as objects at a scale, are examined in comparison with their relationship with the human form.

### 3.8: Conclusion

This chapter examines the vastness inherent in Peake's loci: within descriptions; the imagination of the reader and architectural-draughtsman and the renditions. The vastness of imaginary space is not only one of physical size but also of the details: the miniature can be as vast as the immense. This awareness of miniature-vastness is important due to its inherent connections with scale. Architecture is traditionally designed at scale, before (potential) construction at 1:1.<sup>288</sup> Design takes place within Bachelard's minuscule world which contains great heights and cavernous depths:

Thus the minuscule, a narrow gate, opens up an entire world. The details of a thing can be the sign of a new world which, like all worlds, contains the attributes of greatness. Miniature is one of the refuges of greatness. (Bachelard 1994: 155)

The minuscule is found within the cracks and stresses of the form and within these gaps there is an-other vastness. It is not only the miniature and its traces of magnitude that

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<sup>287</sup> See section 3.3.

<sup>288</sup> Digital technology allows drawings to be drawn at 1:1, although seldom viewed at this scale. They are continually viewed at different scales and sizes, through zooming. Schemes are rarely printed at full scale.

are central to architectural space; the nature of vastness is also significant within the imagination and experience of architecture. This vastness, like the miniature, is not consistent within Peake's text but forms different types of otherness within the narrative. The detailed vastness coincides with and overlaps the vacant vastness with no defined boundary: thus the variable vastness becomes an overarching condition but hard to define. The nature of the vastness depends on how closely the detail is examined and so becomes fractal-like. It is a poetic layering, creating texture from the otherness experienced. The deeper one explores the more is found and it is both familiar and strange, as the imagination creates from personal experience and an-other's language.

What this thesis refers to as vastness Bachelard calls immensity. His inner or intimate immensity is inherent in the scope of Peake's imagination creating the vastness in his texts, from which the imagination and the renditions extrapolate. This immensity of the day-dream and the natural inclination towards vastness that Bachelard describes (1994: 183) is an inherent aspect of creative space: it is a place where the imagination can thrive. The imagination requires an otherness to trigger speculation. Often this textural poetry is formed from stress – the narrative is a series of traumas for the characters, the loci and the readers. The textural weaving of stresses into the landscapes allows differing densities of detail, shifting depending on the perceived perspective.

The vastness of Peake's writing is not only about visual or measured aspects of space, it is the sensory qualities that create a phenomenological understanding of that vastness. The detailed vastness is formed through descriptions of visual, tactile, aural and smelled elements. The Under-River's vastness is created through the massing of

humanity and Attic No.1's is formed through the plethora of miscellaneous objects that were once part of the castle-city's life. It can be a claustrophobic vastness, continuing down to the infinitely small. In contrast the vacant vastness is not merely a lack of sensory qualities, but an opening up of density. Attic No.2 is not just a void, but an unveiling of volume to an experience of vertigo and the physical understanding of what this means – a space which shifts as one views it, the walls move away leaving the open, dizzying aspects of vacancy. These types of vastness are inherently linked to time (space) as well as density. The vastness of absence is timeless in that it can take a fraction of an instant to cross or an infinite time period; the nature of the detailed vastness's time is dependent on the density of the details.

Loci which are variable in their vastness are common in Peake's writing, due to his switching of perspectives. The Arena/Circus is a vast empty space, until filled with the rabble of unwashed humanity. It contains both the void and the highly detailed. Attic No.3 is emotionally variable as well as comparatively – it can be the entirety of one's (Fuchsia's) focus and vast because of this, or minute in comparison to the loci and landscapes that surround it. Fuchsia's attics demonstrate that although physical size is fixed, the mental size of a space is dependent on its inhabitants.<sup>289</sup> Whereas this quality is comparatively easy to achieve in a literary medium it is more difficult in a fixed rendition: although there are similarities in the built form (like the gallery space). The traditional architectural section has been shown to be limited in this respect, with its fixed scale and point-of-view. Yet with additional context and the allowance for

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<sup>289</sup> See section 5.2.

distortion, the cutting of space to provide alternative views can depict a version of the variable vastness. In this research the addition of fragment drawings form an aspect of this textural detailing. Within the long sections the stepping of the cut provides gaps within the depicted knowledge and allows a questioning of what is inscribed.

The integration of aspects of vacant or variable vastness into the architectural rendition provides an invitation to imagine, similar to that extended to the reader by Peake. Although the nature of the vastness is changed through the act of rendition (what was fluid becomes fixed), aspects of the variable vastness can be rendered: a lack of reference points for scale in models or photographs; section lines that allow for poetic gaps to emerge in drawn space and for an ambiguity of scale, drawing the imagination in. Visual detailing is important; a too accurate rendition can prevent speculative engagement. Space formed from text is able to indicate more than its specified contents. Context and inferred understanding forms an important aspect of imagined space. Rendering this space too completely limits understanding gained from imagination. By providing gaps for the imagination and inviting speculation in an image or model, a greater phenomenological exploration of space can be achieved.<sup>290</sup> The participant is invited to inhabit, as they are within the text. The inclusion of text in conjunction with architectural renderings, as present in the exhibition, provides context for the visual and an opportunity to stimulate other senses of the imagination. Within the exhibition it is not only the renditions that are important but also the spaces between.

Renditions of Peake's loci are inclined to certain aspects of height and depth. The

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<sup>290</sup> The expectation of what a drawing is and what it is for affects the need or capacity for exploration.

sectional renditions are a flat plane and so spaces which extend into the page are suggestions and places for exploration rather than visible. Vertical heights and depths are most prominent, along with narrative rather than spatial lengths. The exhibition highlights this. Whilst the cranking of section lines shifts the viewed horizontal width it also hides it. Horizontal depth is tantalisingly obscure – yet this is the plane in which we move through physical space. Peake focuses on length rather than the horizontal depth (width) of his world. Gormenghast's wings are long rather than wide (there is no width to the Library, the Tower of Flints is described in two-dimensions as a 'ruler' (*TG* 300)). There *is* width, as the mapped renditions show, yet it is not emphasised. Yet as Jonathan Hale explains, Merleau-Ponty regarded depth as the most significant of the dimensions (Hale 2017: 46). Merleau-Ponty's horizontal depth is one built up by experience; Peake's is present in his twisted routes that are presented to the reader as lengths. For this reason Peake's spaces work well in section. He describes space through movement (whether of a body or a phenomenon) and these pathways build up space directly in the imagination.

This chapter has discussed the differences between the vastness of the text and rendered versions of loci. Each medium brings different forms of comprehension to the space and the layering of awareness allows for a richer representation. The next chapter examines Peake's loci through the different forms of inhabitation that take place, both in relation to his text and in subsequent renditions of them. In stepping from the objective to the subjective experience of the loci the self becomes the focus, where the other was prominent. Awareness of the self and of traces left within spaces allows the relationship between the reader and writer, inhabitant and architect to be brought forward.

## Chapter 4: Inhabitation of Peake's Loci by Characters, Readers of the Text and the Architectural-Draughtsman

### 4.1: Summary

Chapter 3 examined loci as architectural, objective space, forming an understanding of their (imagined) physical nature but not subjective experience a key aspect in *knowing* a space comprehensively. The vastness of Peake's spaces is one in which readers must apply their own sense of scale and in doing so they must place themselves within the text. This is not an objective understanding, as Bachelard states:

the reader [...] is asked to consider an image not as an object and even less as the substitute for an object, but to seize its specific reality. For this, the act of the creative consciousness must be systematically associated with the most fleeting product of that consciousness, the poetic image. (Bachelard 1994: xix)

The poetic understanding of the image, its 'specific reality' and its realisation as space forms the focus of chapter 4. In order to examine this, the self must be situated within in the text and the renditions so that they might be inhabited and explored.

The first section of this chapter examines Peake's use of language as a method of removing the reader from their physical place of occupation, in order to immerse them within his text. Peake's loci are analysed as occupied space, drawing out interior, subjective positions and examining the personal *act* of inhabiting, as an imagined-self is placed *within* imagined space. In placing the self within the text the other and the self are interwoven and so the act of citation takes place not only within the text but also within the imagination (self).<sup>291</sup> The limitations of architectural representations in

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<sup>291</sup> See section 1.3.

respect to inhabitation are interwoven with this discussion. In order to examine different states of inhabitation the structure of the chapter is formed around positions of reading, a method similar to Derrida's. His approach is discussed by literary theorist Sarah Wood:

Derrida's themes permeate his text: it is a matter of what writing can do as well as what it might say. In the process he writes into being a wide border zone where familiar critical categories come into question. For example, it is sometimes hard to tell Derrida's own thoughts apart from those of the writer he is reading or to establish a hard and fast distinction between the form of the text and its content or meaning. His work propels readers towards an unprecedented experience of writing. *Writing and Difference* is an adventure. (Wood 2009: 4)

The experience and adventure that Derrida creates through this method is akin to that of Peake's. Although they interrogate different ideas (Peake, poetic fictions and Derrida, philosophy) each uses the act of writing and selection of vocabulary to extract more from their texts, recording and examining ideas through linguistic mark-making. By isolating positions of reading the reader's relationship with the text can be understood. This chapter does not replicate Derrida's analysis but stems from the manner in which he deconstructs a text and forms places from which to analyse the subject and examine its traits. In *The Truth in Painting* (1987) Derrida isolates four traits through which the truth is interrogated. These are '*the thing itself*'; the '*representation*' the painting produced; the '*picturality*' and the '*subject of painting*' (1987: 5-7). He examines the painting-as-creation, not its author. It is the image over the metaphor.<sup>292</sup> It is, therefore, not an analysis of intent but as much a discovery of the self within the painting as the image-object itself. It is a considered reading of the work and one's own understanding.

This chapter takes a similar approach and begins by defining four positions of reading; *character*, *captivated-reader*, *critical-reader* and *architectural-draughtsman*. These

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<sup>292</sup> See section iv and Bachelard 1994: 74

are used to construct an understanding of different forms of inhabitation. They are not truly discrete, but for clarity they are treated as such. This allows the analysis of Peake's work through perspectives of others as well as oneself and to experience the writing and renditions alongside the other in its various guises. The chapter analyses inhabitation through these reading positions, from the most interior and working out. It begins with the characters as integral inhabitants of the text and the spaces it creates. These inhabitants are created by Peake in parallel with the text and from this position the structures that connect them with their places of occupation are discussed. This allows for the architectural potential and limitations of spatial design through text to be revealed.

The chapter then moves outwards to the readers of the text, who inhabit in either a state of captivation within the spaces or in a position of critique. Here the text as a medium and external input brings forth an awareness of the author-as-other. The final position discussed is that of the architectural-draughtsman, who occupies an interior-exterior position.<sup>293</sup> The architectural-draughtsman is discussed as a continuing aspect of the reader in a position of critique, shifting away from the text and into inhabitation of the renditions they produce. Rendered examples provide the basis for an analysis of the architectural-draughtsman's inhabitation. In this analysis their position is shown to be similar to Peake's, as author-inhabitant, and the discussion is brought full circle.

In examining positions of inhabitation as a critical aspect of spatial comprehension Peake's language is demonstrated to invite the reader to fully enter its spaces. This rich environment provides opportunities for imaginative exploration and holds architectural

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<sup>293</sup> The viewer of the renditions is an inhabitant more external to the architectural-draughtsman. Their relationship with the text and renditions is unknown and their inhabitation difficult to analyse.

capacity. The position of the architectural-draughtsman is established as one in which inhabitation occurs on a number of different levels so the richness of a text can be understood. Throughout this chapter the self and the other form key aspects of the notion of inhabitation. This leads into the concluding chapter in which the thesis returns to the questions asked and the outcomes of the research are established.

#### **4.2: Aspects of Spatial Inhabitation as a Character, Reader and Architectural-Draughtsman**

Inhabitation (Latin *inhabitare*) is a situating of oneself within, dwelling and lingering in order to appreciate variations and nuances. Its understanding consists of being *in-* and of dwelling, holding or having *-habitare*. It does not, however, imply physical presence: as comprehension of space is formed mentally one can inhabit places only through the lens of the imagination.<sup>294</sup> Within this term there is an understanding of *duration*, but this does not only occur in moments of contact (reading, rendering, viewing) it may follow later, in reflection or memory. Therefore whilst there are instances described which may be perceived as acts of visiting rather than dwelling, the term *inhabitation* allows for post-contact connections with space, where one lingers outside of time. Later inhabitations are not easily accounted for and are derived from fragments and sticking points which demand recollection and interrogation.<sup>295</sup>

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<sup>294</sup> Physical spaces also require imagination. The mind constantly filters sensory information. Experienced space is a personal version of reality. Optical illusions make use of this to trick the mind into perceiving something untrue. A (physical) place may be known intimately from experience, yet it is through memory or perceived reality that we 'know' what is unseen at the moment of perception, or that which is left behind. To inhabit, imagination and memory are both required.

<sup>295</sup> See section iv.

Bachelard considered imaginary space to be inhabitable. In *The Poetics of Space* he discusses this in relation to the daydream, the image, shell forms, corners and engravings. He moves beyond poetic texts and into engraved space (1994: 50-1), inhabiting the lines upon the page, no matter whether they form words or images.<sup>296</sup> As the *feeling* creates experience, the act of underlining, marking and *engraving* is impressed upon him both as a writer and inhabitant. His 'need to underline' (51) is a movement towards rendition, an expression of his inhabitation: an urge familiar to the architect.<sup>297</sup> As a writer he articulates this connection in language, where the architect tends towards images. Inhabitation of the text and the drawing is similar; both are deliberate marks made upon a page. Peake understood this.<sup>298</sup> Comprehension and expression of this form of inhabitation is subjective and individual: the depth of connection to a space is dependent on many factors.

The act of dwelling is one of these factors. In order to dwell one must linger (Old English *lengan*, prolong, lengthen). Imagination expands direct experience and is inherent in exploration: increasing awareness and understanding of a place, or forming a transitory aspect of broader comprehension. Inhabitation and exploration of the imaginary are not only acts of forming places described, shown, tasted, felt or smelt, within the imagination. They also require spatial consideration and development (Old French *desveloper*, unfurl, unveil, unwrap). It requires participation; a ludic imagination and belief that the imaginary world *can* be inhabited. As Walton states, it is a game:

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<sup>296</sup> See sections iii and 5.3.

<sup>297</sup> See section iv.

<sup>298</sup> See section iii.

Appreciating paintings and novels is largely a matter of playing games of make-believe with them of the sort it is their function to be props in. But sometimes we are interested in the props themselves, apart from any particular game. And we are interested, sometimes, in seeing what contributions it is their function to make to games of make-believe, what fictional truths it is their function to generate, and what sorts of games would accord with their function, without necessarily actually playing such games. (Walton 1990: 53)

The game is not always one intended by its creator: Peake did not write in expectation that his text would be used for architectural exploration. As with any game the level of participation a player is willing, or able to, apply varies with each occurrence: internal or external factors inhibit, or assist. When participating in the daydream inhabitation may (but not necessarily) occur and has different facets dependent on its medium.

The inhabitation of any imaginary world can be split into two forms, the first of which is dependent on the second. The first is *character inhabitation*. This is contained completely within the context and consists of the fictional population and their relationships with the literary spaces. The cast is entirely imaginary (even if they are fictitious versions of real people) and is reliant on the imagination of others in order to exist. In a text characters are dependent on their author and readers to bring them into being and actuate their lives. Different media affect participation: drawn spaces may contain figures fixed upon the page; modelled spaces may have characters represented as physical forms; or figures may not feature at all and must be created by the imagination in order to perform. Characters bring a form of life to the spaces, yet this always requires the input of others.<sup>299</sup> Peake's characters are symbiotic to the loci, created alongside their

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<sup>299</sup> This concept has been explored by writers and playwrights. Luigi Pirandello's 1921 play *Six Characters in Search of an Author* is one example. Here the eponymous characters are performed as if they were independent and in need of direction for their existence to be ratified.

environment, significantly affecting spatial understanding. Architectural comprehension of Peake's loci is a textural building-up of inhabitation beginning with the characters.

The second form is that of *participant inhabitation*. This act is carried out by the author, captivated-reader, critical-reader and architectural-draughtsman.<sup>300</sup> Here space is understood in relation to the self, rather than (but alongside) the other-as-character. This requires an imagined (although not necessarily accurate) version of the self to be placed within the space. The placement of an imagined-self within a fictional context is discussed by philosopher Paul Crowther who terms it 'corporeal imagination' (Crowther 2009: 63). It is a state which allows us to 'make general sense of times and places which are not immediately given to us in perception, through being able to imaginatively project what they might be like' (2009: 64). He states that this phenomenon is part of what it means to be conscious and enables understanding of other viewpoints and perceptions. It is how we comprehend ourselves as individuals, works of art, literature and our environment; it also, he claims, contains our ability to learn language (4; 25-7). In this context the construction of the text, descriptions, ease of reading and understanding affect how easily the game is played and full immersion achieved.

The position of the reader-as-inhabitant within imagined spaces is capricious. Peake asks his readers to participate from different perspectives: as narrator, characters or as an invisible presence within or beyond narrative events.<sup>301</sup> In each of these situations Peake provides rules for participation and his manipulation of points-of-view and

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<sup>300</sup> This then leads to inhabitation by viewers of the renditions.

<sup>301</sup> Peake, as mentioned above, invites readers into his work and asks them to affect his creation. Other writers use different techniques, holding readers at a distance from their fictional world. This also depends on individual readers' inclinations.

perspectives guide the act of inhabiting. Without direction the reader would lose much of their comprehension of narrative events. In providing different views and scales the reader, as an-other to the text, constructs Peake's spaces through garnered details and material knowledge, depicted through sensory information. Inferred understanding comes from experiences and memories beyond the text, affecting the capacity of any literary space. The author has to assume some shared knowledge with readers so the text does not have to begin from first principles.<sup>302</sup>

When reading there are two states which may be occupied, depending on the purpose of reading. The first is complete immersion as a *captivated-reader*. This reader is not within the space as a character but is fully immersed: external stimuli (the weight of the book, personal comfort etc.) are background to the experience: the text-as-medium is forgotten. This immersion has been noted by literary practitioners. Experimental French literary writer Michel Butor discusses this dislocation of the self:

When I read the description of a room in a novel, the furnishings which are before my eyes, but which I am not looking at, give way to the ones which emerge or transpire from the words on the printed page.

This "volume," as we say, which I hold in my hand, sets free as a result of my attention evocations which assert themselves, which haunt the place where I am, displacing me.

This other place interests me, installs itself, only so far as the place where I am fails to satisfy me. If I am bored there – it is reading which allows me to remain where I am in flesh and blood. The novel's space, then, is a particularization of an "elsewhere," complementary to the real space in which it is evoked. (Butor 1970: 32)

As Butor explains, the level of experienced removal varies, and is not easily defined: external circumstances affect the capacity for, and level of, immersion. The 'elsewhere' is not constant and the place of boredom is more or less attainable at any given moment. Captivation has been described in other terms: contemporary author Toby Litt names it

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<sup>302</sup> See Walton 1990: 114-5.

'enraptured reading' and describes it as a state in which 'the boundaries of personal identity are felt to have dissolved' (Litt 2003: 56).<sup>303</sup> The reader is drawn into the text, and the self and the other become merged. Here mapping is used as an example: Peake asks the reader to envisage maps drawn by characters, enticing the reader into a state of captivation. The act of reading which allows displacement is one where there are no ulterior motives; it occurs when reading for pleasure. The reader has to relinquish control to the author. It is for this state of reading that Peake writes, as the statement that his writing 'was a case of self-indulgence' suggests.<sup>304</sup> He indulges the reader, as well as himself, willing them to participate and to 'enjoy the fantastic' (Peake 2011d: 32) with him, rather than maintaining an analytical and critical perspective. The freedom that Peake allows in his prose enables experimentation, both in the narrative and its spaces, bringing discovery and delight to the proto-architecture it holds.

The second reading state is where one remains aware of the act whilst reading. The *critical-reader* examines the text as well as the world it contains; remaining partially detached from the internal experience. Full submersion in an imaginary world is not always attainable or desirable. External circumstances may affect concentration: physical discomfort or intrusions by others encroach upon solitary inhabitation and creates an awareness of the text.<sup>305</sup> Awareness may also be triggered by the text: through the content, or marks and traces left upon the pages.<sup>306</sup> As the reader becomes critical

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<sup>303</sup> This position in which one inhabits a place that is not physical existent is both a contrast to and parallel with the existence where one is physically present but the mind is elsewhere.

<sup>304</sup> See section 1.3.

<sup>305</sup> It may also lead to an *absent-reader* state.

<sup>306</sup> Marginalia, hand written notes or incidental marks may disturb the reader from the trance-like state of the fully inhabited.

(Greek *kritikos*, to make judgment; *krinein* to separate, decide) they are located in a position in which there is an awareness of the act of reading.<sup>307</sup> It may be deliberate, with the reader examining the text for a purpose: to perform an analysis, like the literary critic or architectural-draughtsman. Criticism is a re-writing of the text making it a creative-destruction and intervention by the critique.<sup>308</sup> This state may be interwoven with a captivated-state, a stepping between full immersion and critical awareness. For pleasure-readers the critical-state is one of enquiry with little direction or intent in order to enjoy the experience: the loss of immersion may be irritating or result from (self)reflection (which then becomes integral to the understanding of the text).

The last position of inhabitation is that of the architectural-draughtsman. This is a position with the intent of rendition, similar to the illustrator, but with knowledge of both the principles of architectural renditions and their purpose, selecting loci for analysis on the basis of their architectural and spatial qualities (rather than narrative or visual interest as an illustrator might).<sup>309</sup> In order to render Peake's spaces they first position themselves as a critical-reader so that the text, rather than the imagination, is the primary source of information. The architectural-draughtsman must allow the atmosphere and phenomenological qualities described to manifest in their imagination, so renditions remain true to the text: there is a constant need to balance the level of captivation. From this position the state of immersion evolves into one from which

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<sup>307</sup> Criticism is not meant only in the literary sense, although it may be an aspect.

<sup>308</sup> See section 1.2 and 2.2.

<sup>309</sup> The illustrator must adopt a similar position when producing images for a text, but with a different intention. They must balance narrative with images, selecting key moments. Illustrations are usually intended to become a part of the bound text and sit within the volume of the book, remaining visually and physically connected to the text from which they originate.

renditions can be formed. The architectural-draughtsman has intent in respect to the text and for this thesis the focus is directed towards Peake's literary works and the rendition of selected loci. These positions of inhabitation enable the analysis of the loci to be formed from within the spaces. The inhabitants are not only situated within the loci but also shape them, bringing life, and through this, change.

#### **4.3: Inhabitation of Peake's Text by his Characters**

The most interior position of inhabitation is that of the characters. The population of a literary place is an internal, personal menagerie, the foundations of which are provided by the author, yet they are not wholly bound by the text they are constructed from. The reader is not obliged to follow Peake's instructions. Just as Fuchsia creates a menagerie to amuse her, Peake creates an imagined world which the reader can bring to life and watch scenes performed at a whim.<sup>310</sup> In this situation the author (Peake) is not the same as the actuator (reader) and control is passed over. In bringing the population to life through the act of reading and imagining, characters become an exploration of the self (reader, and projected-self within characters) and the other (characters) through the language of an other (Peake). Within Peake's texts inhabitation is taken a step further and characters perform acts of imaginative inhabitation, creating situations in which the reader imagines the imagination of characters they (the reader) are animating (Fuchsia's figments for example), leading to greater complexity of inhabitation.

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<sup>310</sup> See section 3.5.

Each of Peake's texts has a population that is grotesque to varying degrees, each an examination of humanity.<sup>311</sup> Peake was aware of this and it appears in all his work:

London, famous for its eccentrics, was at my elbow – and it was with a sense of excited speculation that I hung around the streets, on the qui vive for those occasional characters who pass and are gone, but whose faces never quite fade from the memory. I felt like a head hunter with a pencil instead of a spear. (Peake 1954: 3)<sup>312</sup>

'Boy in Darkness' takes caricatured morphing to the greatest extents: the inhabitant-characters of the Mine are horrific chimeras (Lamb, Hyena and Goat), with and derived from, perceptible human attributes. The creatures are integral to and augmented by their spaces. They remain understandable, despite exaggerated characteristics, because of their environments. The Lamb is distorted and expanded by the Mine, his hearing extended by its echoes; it is a projection of his being, as twisted as he is both physically and mentally. In *Gormenghast* Fuchsia manipulates her attics and their inhabitants; collecting and positioning objects as an extension of herself; watching ghostly figures perform. She is influenced by them and her attic hideaway allows her isolation from, and observation of, the masses of architecture and people below. The constant, meaningless rituals of *Gormenghast* marks upon its structures and inhabitants:

The unearthly lull that had descended upon *Gormenghast* had not failed to affect so imaginative and highly strung a nature as Fuchsia's. Steerpike who, although sensitive to atmosphere in a high degree, was less submerged, and moves as it were with his crafty head protruding above the weird water. (*G* 627)

The loci cannot exist without their fictional inhabitants, for without them there would be no narrative and no reason for the spaces to have been written. The characters would not be themselves without their spaces. Peake's use of pathetic fallacy creates an

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<sup>311</sup> See section 1.2.

<sup>312</sup> Peake is not the only author to do this and he would have been aware of other's who examine the world in this manner. Charles Dickens, for example, is well known for his literary caricatures.

inherently symbiotic relationship between loci and characters.<sup>313</sup> The effect of space upon its occupants is not a new concept for the architect, yet Peake is able to explore this in his writing to a greater extent than most architectural designs are able to.

This interdependency is due to Peake's writing methods. As noted above, the manuscripts indicate a linear writing process, running parallel to printed editions.<sup>314</sup> Character development is therefore directly connected to progression through the text: loci evolve concurrently with characters and narrative. This is shown in the names Peake selects for his characters, along with his creativity of language. In the manuscripts characters' names are liable to change as the narrative, and their personalities, develop: for example, the first name of Doctor Prunesquallor, even in printed editions, is usually Alfred but sometimes Bernard. This shifting is inherent in all aspects of Peake's narrative development and awareness of this is reinforced by the locus documents: many loci have numerous entries spanning the length of the texts. Although some repeated loci are landscapes and significant features, like Gormenghast Mountain, others are individual spaces which become richer as the narrative progresses. The majority of loci are only found in two of the texts (usually *Titus Groan* and *Gormenghast*).<sup>315</sup> Flay's Caves are in all three novels, as is the Tower of Flints.<sup>316</sup> In repeating occurrences of loci, Peake builds up detail for key places and does not have to reveal everything on first contact.<sup>317</sup> It not

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<sup>313</sup> A trait of Gothic fiction, as is the characterisation of the castle-city discussed below.

<sup>314</sup> See section 1.4.

<sup>315</sup> See appendix IV.

<sup>316</sup> The number of instances of any locus is difficult to quantify as they are rarely discrete. However, for example, the Tower of Flints is mentioned 14 times in *TG*, twice in *G* and twice in *TA*.

<sup>317</sup> Georges Perec's *Life, A User's Manual* (1978) describes each space in one instance, itemising objects and occurrences, providing a very different perspective on space and inhabitation.

only makes it more intuitive for the reader but also accounts for changes within loci: what may be perceived as inconsistencies become developments.<sup>318</sup>

The relationship between character and place would be different if Gormenghast were physical and recorded by documentary processes. Changes would be understood to be an aspect of human habitation or absence.<sup>319</sup> As Gormenghast is a written-only space the reader might assume it was fully formed before the narrative (in the story Gormenghast is ancient but in respect to the text it is concurrent) and accept that it is fixed. However, as it was created as it was written it changes in conjunction with events and characters. The creation of a specific world to house a narrative has the advantage of providing characters with tailored environments. If Peake had used a known place, as Victor Hugo does in *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* (1831), those outside of the text, as well as within, would bring greater expectations. Physical places have a collective history (not necessarily entirely true or known) which creates anticipation and assumptions in their narrative use.<sup>320</sup> Gormenghast does not have this weight of expectation: there is an implied past created by Peake and imagined by the reader, but it cannot be examined for

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<sup>318</sup> See section 2.2.

<sup>319</sup> In this situation the characters would inhabit spaces significantly older than themselves. It would be possible to write the structure of a place first and add the narrative later, providing a pre-existing place for characters and plot. Occupation directly affects space. Pre-existing spaces have a greater historical presence and inhabitation is perceived as impermanent: each occupant becomes one in a long line of residents (in Peake's text the doors to the Professors' Bedrooms have a list of all previous occupants of inscribed upon them). Spaces affect inhabitants but any tendency towards preservation over personalisation shifts the balance, with the space providing a greater influence.

<sup>320</sup> Existent places have history. It may be collective, known or not, to varying extents (Iain Sinclair's texts provide various, often interwoven, insights into fictional, historic and psychogeographic understandings of London for example). It may be personal, formed through visits, reading (historic, fictional, factual), folklore, mythology and second-hand accounts. Fictions often use distant places to trigger notions of the exotic. Shakespeare wrote of places neither he nor his audience had been to and uses these to form assumptions. This is increasingly prevalent in digital technology where one can virtually 'walk' down a street or view internal spaces (galleries for example) without leaving home.

accuracy. There are no maps, physical remains or artefacts around which a mythology can be built.<sup>321</sup> Gormenghast and its character-inhabitants begin their existence on page one of *Titus Groan*.<sup>322</sup>

The ruinous and massive castle-city of Gormenghast, is overbearing and exaggerated and thus so are those who live there: they grow to fit their circumstances. The castle-city is a member of the cast and whilst it may not perform, or self-actuate in the same way as human characters, it has a distinct presence.<sup>323</sup> This is perceived by Titus to be missing in the spaces of *Titus Alone*.

What can I tell you? It spreads in all directions. There is no end to it. Yet it seems to me now to have boundaries. It has the sunlight and the moonlight on its walls just like this country. There are rats and moths – and herons. It has bells that chime. It has forests and lakes and it is full of people. (TA 818)<sup>324</sup>

The characterisation of space allows it to develop through the narrative, increasing its architectural capacity. Understanding of the complexity of *Gormenghast* is gained throughout the text and one is aware that it is not static but constantly evolving. The castle-city alters with the seasons and situational conditions; it is easy to read this as an aspect of personality. It protests when weather-beaten:

The days flowed on, and the walls of Gormenghast grew chill to the touch as the summer gave way to autumn, and autumn to a winter both dark and icy. For long periods of time the winds blew night and day, smashing the glass of windows, dislodging masonry, whistling and roaring between towers and chimneys and over the castle's back. (G 589)

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<sup>321</sup> J. R. R. Tolkien, in contrast to Peake, creates a detailed mythology around his narratives. See section ii.

<sup>322</sup> A second reading brings expectations, as do adaptations. The reader may bring knowledge of the plot to a first reading of the novels via a stage production or television adaptation. These are *versions* of the narrative rather than facsimiles. This version of a fictional place is different to a physical one: it cannot be tested for precision or 'truth' in the same way. It is also possible to read a text with no pre-knowledge.

<sup>323</sup> The notion of Gormenghast as a character is discussed by Hindle (1996). See section 1.3.

<sup>324</sup> It is interesting Titus states it is 'full of people' yet the text contains few instances of this supporting cast. Often characters appear to exist in solitude or with the few familiar to readers, yet there are a multitude of underlings who make the place function, only appearing occasionally. The unseen population of Gormenghast is mentioned by others: 'Gormenghast seems alive because of the throng of life its gothic exoskeleton houses' (Anderson 2015: 328).

Dramatic climactic conditions, like the vast blanket of sound-muffling snow that kills with cold and dramatic flooding that rises up the walls moving the population ever higher, develop the castle as a protective force and a not-quite-silent member of the cast (as fallible as its inhabitants). It is not only external influences that affect it but also the residents. The spaces are worn to fit those who live there, affecting them in return. In the bedroom of Lady Gertrude Groan (Titus' mother) this connection is clear:

Like a vast spider suspended by a metal cord, a candelabrum presided over the room nine feet above the floor boards. From its sweeping arms of iron, long stalactites of wax lowered their pale spilths drip by drip, drip by drip. A rough table with a drawer half open, which appeared to be full of bird-seed, was in such a position below the iron spider that a cone of tallow was mounted by degrees at one corner into a lambent pyramid the size of a hat.

The room was untidy to the extent of being a shambles. Everything had the appearance of being put aside for the moment. Even the bed was at an angle, slanting away from the wall and crying out to be pushed back flush against the red wallpaper. As the candles guttered or flared, so the shadows moved from side to side, or up and down the wall, and with those movements behind the bed there swayed the shadows of four birds. Between them vacillated an enormous head. This umbrage was cast by her ladyship, the seventy-sixth Countess of Groan. (*TG* 35-6)

The locus has qualities that mirror its occupant. Lady Groan is substantial, with masses of dark red hair 'of great lustre, [which] appeared to have been left suddenly while being woven into a knotted structure on the top of her head' (*TG* 36) she is constantly accompanied by birds and owns a large number of white cats.<sup>325</sup> This locus not only belongs to its inhabitant, they are inherently connected. She is a continuation of the room, as it is of her. Through the space the reader comprehends its inhabitant.<sup>326</sup>

This does not mean that characters are inseparable from their habitats, but upon removal from familiar environments they become changed. The difference in Flay before and after his exile is clear. The disruption in circumstances does not end his existence

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<sup>325</sup> Peake uses Lady Groan as an example in his discussion about neurosis in *The Reader Takes Over*. He states that she is not neurotic, only extremely individual, but that she would become so if circumstances changed; the removal of her cats for example (Peake 2011d: 38). She is embedded in her environment.

<sup>326</sup> This aspect of inhabitation is a vast topic. The interweaving aspects of time, space and body have been discussed within architecture and philosophy. Jonathan Hale's research is a good place to start.

but changes him and his perceptions. He takes new-found knowledge back when he re-enters the castle to inhabit the Silent Halls.

[Flay] began to make the silent halls particularly his own, in the way that he had unconsciously identified himself with the mood of Gormenghast forest. [...] Had his exile in the woods not inured him to loneliness, then he must surely have found these long days insupportable. But isolation was now a part of him. (*G* 591-3)

He becomes a resident of the halls, via the Twisted Woods and caves of Gormenghast Mountain. He is significantly altered from the man who slept outside his master's door.

The relationship between place and character allows Peake to explore the imaginative populating of space further, by creating pockets of character-imagined-space. Fuchsia fills her attics with her imagination. Her Attic No.2 is her performance room. Here she watches creatures of her imagination act out scenes for her amusement.<sup>327</sup> This creates a situation in which the reader imagines the imagination of Fuchsia so that these figments, existent only within her, might entertain:

at a call she could set in motion the five main figures of her making. Those whom she had so often watched below her, almost as if they were really there. At first it had not been easy to understand them nor to tell them what to do. But now it would be easy, at any rate for them to enact the scenes that she had watched them so often perform. (*TG* 55)

This is an act in which the self (reader) explores the imagination of the other (Fuchsia) whilst this Fuchsia-other is exploring actions of imagined-others (imagined figures).

This reader-self creates a Fuchsia-self in order to watch the figure-others, all driven by the writing of the internal-self of the writer-other (Peake).<sup>328</sup>

The imagining of another's imagination is a condition familiar to the architect: in examinations the architectural student must express intentions and understand critique,

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<sup>327</sup> See section 3.5.

<sup>328</sup> André Gide's term *mise en abyme* (placed in the abyss) is appropriate here as the descent of the self into the other becomes transformed into the self descending into another other.

tutors and examiners must comprehend the schemes presented; the architect has to capture the imagined space of the client so designs fulfil the brief. The expression of space through language requires a capacity for the imagination to be vocalised in a manner that can be understood by everyone in the conversation. In the above quotation Peake describes a need to practice accomplishing feats of imagination, not only for Fuchsia but also the reader. It is a learned skill, as architectural drawing and design is learned. Understanding the symbiotic inhabitation of the characters and Peake's spaces allows the imagination to comprehend their development. Spaces are formed around and with their inhabitants. Captivation forces the reader to exist in the here-and-now, distanced from physical sites of occupation.

#### **4.4: Inhabitation of Peake's Text by the Captivated-Reader**

##### ***The Captivated-Reader's Inhabitation of a Character's Body***

When one is completely absorbed within a fictional place the physical world becomes secondary. The text as a transfer mechanism is forgotten, the page and the marks upon it are no longer observed, and only the image they provide is experienced. When inhabiting Peake's text the captivated-reader is able to take up a number of positions: as a character, the narrator, or an invisible observer. When Peake asks the reader to inhabit as a character, he does so to highlight the intensity of particular events. He does not write in first person, to encourage the reader into this position. Instead he draws the reader in through changes in perspective and free indirect discourse so they look through the eyes of the inhabitant-host:

Directly Titus saw the stairway he ran to it, as though every banister were a friend. Even in the access of his relief, and even while the hollow echo of his footsteps was in his ears, his eyes widened at the apple-green – the azure of the banisters, each one a tall plinth of defiance. Only the rail which these bright things supported was hueless, being of a smooth, hand-worn ivory whiteness. Titus gripped the banisters and then peered through them and downward. There seemed little life in the fathoms beneath him. A bird flew slowly past a far landing; a section of plaster fell from a shadowy wall three floors below the bird, but that was all.  
(*G* 405-6)

Here the reader begins by viewing Titus, but the perspective quickly shifts to his point-of-view. The colours of the stairway might be seen either through him or as an invisible bystander, but the dramatic drop with the bird far below is described through his eyes. This inhabitation-as-character requires the reader to understand both the space and the character-inhabitant: the drop is more dramatic because Titus is a child, the heights are taller and the sense of aloneness greater. The excitement, fear of exploration and discovery is not only that of Titus, but also of the reader experiencing events through him. Peake asks his audience to be childlike in their wonder. The reader is made aware of their lack of physical presence by Titus' observation that 'the very lack of ghosts in the deserted halls and chambers was in itself unnerving' (*G* 405). The reader is integrated with the text, absorbed by the narrative and its spaces. The captivated-reader draws upon personal experiences of discovery to enhance empathic contact with Titus.

Titus is the most frequent position from which the reader inhabits-as-character, as the narrative increasingly focuses upon him in the second and third novels and 'Boy in Darkness'. In *Titus Groan* the reader is more frequently asked to place themselves in the position of other character-inhabitants, as Titus is too young to discover his extended environments. Fuchsia and Steerpike in particular are focal points, providing opportunities for vicarious possession and stretching readers' empathy. The reader is asked to sympathise with a range of personalities, some more distasteful than others.

This provides a better understanding of the relationship between spaces and their inhabitants, as well as oneself. The text becomes an opportunity for self-reflection and a testing of reactions through thought experiments.<sup>329</sup> This is particularly true when one is subject to uncomfortable or unusual actions, such as the burning of the Library.

The use of language to draw the reader into a space and encourage inhabitation from the perspective of someone who only exists within has potential for the architectural discussion. In drawing architectural space there is an inherent invitation to inhabit, but this also needs to be reflected in the language used to describe and elaborate on the space, image or model presented – particularly when the recipient might not be familiar with architectural drawings and conventions and so may struggle to place themselves within the space. The self-reflection it encourages provides a means through which to appreciate spaces and events and expands the awareness of being within an imagined place, personalising the experience. This position is significantly less detached than when the reader is observing from the point-of-view of narrator or third person.

### *The Captivated-Reader's Inhabitation as Narrator and Imagined-Self*

The positions of narrator or an imagined-self placed within the text both provide a view from which the reader is within the space but outside of the action, as a third person.

The discreteness of these positions is not only influenced by the text but also by the reader's inclinations and is not clearly distinguishable. If a reader consistently places an imagined version of themselves within a text, irrespective of point-of-view (corporeally

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<sup>329</sup> See section iii.

flying above rooftops, for example), to view narration and events through their own (imagined) eyes then these positions are identical. If a reader is inclined to inhabit corporeally (providing a human scale as an invisible observer) within some spaces and as a non-corporeal entity in others (as the intangible narrator) then the positions are separated. In Peake's texts there are episodes which are more inclined to the position of non-character-narrator or of a non-corporeal-self and so these two states are considered separate. While some readers may not observe this difference, it alters how space is experienced and affects inhabitation. Non-corporeal sensory experiences are different from those with a corporeal framework acting as a reference point.

The position of narrator within Peake's text is non-corporeal: there is no character-narrator through which to inhabit.<sup>330</sup> Events form a shifting point-of-view not fixed by human limitations. The narrated position can take viewpoints from numerous angles; above the action, from within, at a close or expansive range.<sup>331</sup> It does not have to be a human perspective. As can be seen in the following quotation, the non-corporeal position of inhabitation alters awareness of phenomena like air flow and light, allowing them to be directly experienced, changing understanding of spatial qualities. Switching between perspectives within loci allows the reader to gain insights not found in conventional (human) points-of-view. An example of a lack of human corporeality can be seen in Peake's description of the zephyr:

a zephyr had broken through the wall of moribund air and run like a gay and tameless thing over the gaunt, harsh spine of Gormenghast's body. It played with sere flags, dodged through arches, spiralled with impish whistles up hollow towers and chimneys, until, diving down a saw-toothed fissure in a pentagonal roof, it found itself surrounded by stern portraits – a

<sup>330</sup> In other texts the narrator is clearly distinct: e.g. Agatha Christie's *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* (1926).

<sup>331</sup> See section 1.3.

hundred sepia faces cracked with spiders' webs; found itself being drawn towards a grid in the stone floor and, giving way to itself, to the law of gravity and to the blue thrill of a down-draught, it sang its way past seven storeys and was, all at once, in a hall of dove-grey light and was clasping Titus in a noose of air. (*G* 423-4)<sup>332</sup>

In this passage the reader is asked to *be* the gust of air, not a ghostly body moved by it, so non-corporeal inhabitation predominates. This position is that of the narrator rather than a self-manifestation moved by air currents: physical descriptions and conditions would be significantly different if there was a body being shifted within. The text asks the reader to become something other, the gust of wind, and there is blurring of subject and object, inside and outside – not only of the body but also the spaces that surround it. In experiencing what it is like to be something so other than human, the human-character-inhabitants become more understandable.<sup>333</sup> One steps outside of the self, in order to realise the self in others (stepping inside the other).<sup>334</sup> In writing and reading the other and the self are lost and found within the text, as Derrida explains:

Writing is the outlet as the descent of meaning outside itself within itself: metaphor-for-others-aimed-at-others-here-and-now, metaphor as the possibility of others here-and-now, metaphor as metaphysics in which Being must hide itself if the other is to appear. Excavation within the other toward the other in which the same seeks its vein and the true gold of its phenomenon. Submission in which the same can always lose (itself). *Niedergang, Untergang*. But the same is nothing, is not (it)self before taking the risk of losing (itself). (Derrida 1987: 29)

The exploration of the other through language encourages displacement of the self. In the passage above the reader is provided with knowledge of what it is *to be* a zephyr with its audible whistles as it moves through hollow spaces, speed of passage, gusting lightness and gravity pulling it down. One cannot literally be a gust of wind, but the imagination

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<sup>332</sup> The 'body' of Gormenghast also reinforces it as a character as well as a container. See section 4.3.

<sup>333</sup> It is a romantic vision exploring the sublimity of movements within air currents. See section 3.2.

<sup>334</sup> The zephyr also provides details that draw the reader into Peake's world, containing both the fantastic and an awareness of the real. Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967) is another example where the everyday and the fantastic are interwoven.

allows the experience to be felt. It is a reminder of Shklovsky's 1917 comments, that the 'purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known' (1988: 20).<sup>335</sup> In this, text has more to offer than a visual rendition, providing certain sensory information more effectively: smells and sounds are difficult to visualise but more easily described. A drawn environment can suggest what it might be like to inhabit, through indications of materials and volume, light qualities and events, to evoke a phenomenological resonance, but some senses are lacking. The viewer may assume these stimuli; the smells of hot dust, tobacco smoke, subterranean dampness, the sound of leaves. Yet this is dependent on the richness of the image and level of inference and input by the participant. There are qualities of space that are lost when presented visually. It would be difficult to draw the zephyr as effectively as Peake writes it.

For the architect a richness of language allows an overlay of sensory awareness and improves mutual understanding. Whilst comprehension, emotion and sensory information transfer is complex, Peake's language is not and so the audience or others in discussion can perceive concepts sculpted from language without vocabulary as a barrier. As Merleau-Ponty describes, a good tool becomes forgotten and consciousness transfers to the working point, the body schema extends into the tool it is working with.<sup>336</sup>

The pressures on the hand and the stick are no longer given; the cane is no longer an object that the blind man would perceive, it has become an instrument *with* which he perceives. It is an appendage of the body, or an extension of the bodily synthesis. Correlatively, the external object is not the geometrical plan or the invariant of a series of perspectives; it is a thing toward which the cane leads us and whose perspectives, according to perceptual evidentness, are not signs, but rather appearances. (Merleau-Ponty 2012: 154)

In this situation it is not the pressure of a tool that becomes lost to the hand but the text

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<sup>335</sup> See section iii.

<sup>336</sup> See section iii.

that is no longer perceived by the eye. Peake's text is poetic in content and form but provides little resistance to its image. The text is an extension of awareness, rather than a consciously perceived input:

The use of all kinds of tools and equipment is therefore gradually sedimented into habits or behaviour routines, withdrawing from direct awareness to become part of our bodily repertoire of skills and abilities. We might also argue that this is similar to how most people – especially non architects – encounter a building: not as an object of focused attention, nor as an 'invisible' or anonymous background. Rather we mainly experience that built environment through a form of bodily cognition, as a medium through which we experience the task we happen to be engaged in – and, of course, as a key part of what gives that experience its characteristic quality or texture. (Hale 2017: 29)

This not only applies to physical space but extends into imagined space. Full immersion and bodily cognition of imaginary spaces takes practice.<sup>337</sup>

The second position of the captivated-reader involves greater input, as one projects a-self into spaces in order to inhabit. There are places within *Gormenghast* where the reader has no character present to provide a corporeal reference, but which are known to be of human scale. In these locations the reader may place an imagined corporeal version of themselves within in order to experience the space.<sup>338</sup> Examples like the Forgotten Landing, shown to the reader before Titus, and the episode of *Gormenghast's* submersion, where only aquatic inhabitation is possible, provide situations in which awareness of environments is deepened through (non)physical comprehension. By placing a body in these environments scale is created. In inhabiting in this way the imagined presence has the same relationship with the literary space as the body does with physical space. Air currents, smells, light and textures are created via remembered experiences. The self-manifestation allows the knowledge of the body to be present.

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<sup>337</sup> As does physical experience: the world is experienced through the body and growth changes perspectives.

<sup>338</sup> This choice may be an unconscious, instinctual shifting between exploration through an imagined body and as a non-corporeal entity as the text guides them.

The most detailed and lingering of these characterless places is the Heron Room. Peake spends two pages describing a forgotten place in order for the reader to glimpse an elusive figure (the Thing) for a moment on a far turret. This space is both beautiful and poignant, a romantic ruin that in reality would smell terrible. This, necessarily long, extract illustrates Peake's use of poetic language to describe this glorified birds' nest:

The stone stairway which led up to this pavement was lost beneath a hundred seasons of obliterating ivy, creepers and strangling weeds. No one alive had ever struck their heels into the great cushions of black moss that pranked the pavement or wandered along its turreted verge, where the herons were and the jackdaws fought, and the sun's rays, and the rain, the frost, the snow and the winds took their despoiling turns.

There had once been a great casement facing upon this terrace. It was gone. Neither broken glass nor iron nor rotten wood was anywhere to be seen. Beneath the moss and ground creepers it may be that there were other and deeper layers, rotten with antiquity; but where the long window had stood the hollow darkness of a hall remained. It opened its unprotected mouth midway along the pavement's inner verge. On either side of this cavernous opening, widely separated, were the raw holes in the stonework that were once the supporting windows. The hall itself was solemn with herons. It was there they bred and tended their young. Preponderately a heronry, yet there were recesses and niches in which by sacredness of custom the egrets and bitterns congregated.

This hall, where once the lovers of a bygone time paced and paused and turned one about another in forgotten measures to the sound of forgotten music, this hall was carpeted with lime-white sticks. Sometimes the setting sun as it neared the horizon slanted its rays into the hall, and as they skimmed the rough nests the white network of the branches flared on the floor like leprous corals, and here and there (if it were spring) a pale blue-green egg shone like a precious stone, or a nest of young, craning their long necks towards the window, their thin bodies covered with powder-down, seemed stage-lit in the beams of the westering sun.

The late sunbeams shifted across the ragged floor and picked out the long, lustrous feathers that hung from the throat of a heron that stood by a rotten mantelpiece; and then a whiteness once more as the forehead of an adjacent bird flamed in the shadows (*G* 421-2)

This space could be described in fewer words and, perhaps, more accurately. Yet the qualities of light and poetic descriptions make it appealing and ripe for exploration. The reader does not desire a character's body to wander among these birds – this would scare them away, disrupting the scene. The Heron Room does not add to plot progression and little to character development. What this locus does is increase understanding of the nature of Gormenghast as a vast network of interconnected and hidden spaces. It illustrates that characters do not know its full extents and that there are occurrences of

which they have no knowledge. It values the reader, inviting them to partake of hidden incidents, removing them from the action and allowing development of their knowledge of the castle-city, in order to better understand narrative events. Just as the reader perceives alternate perspectives when Peake shifts the point-of-view, they can walk alone among forgotten spaces. For the architect the capacity to move through described spaces and have one's attention drawn to details and atmospheric qualities allows for an understanding of space and of events that occur beyond human experience. The herons are an event that could not be observed in reality. Peake provides a situation opposite to Schrödinger's cat: an event *not* changed by observation. There is an architectural capacity in events like this that the creative imagination wants to explore further.

When the reader is wholly dislocated from the real world and becomes entirely captivated by a text, the inhabitation of an imaginary space becomes the sole focus of attention. This attention to and *being* within a space, is desirable in architecture.<sup>339</sup> Peake provides opportunities for this level of inhabitation through the richness of his descriptions and stimulation of all senses. The sensory qualities inherent in his language allow his texts to stimulate the imagination and displace the reader from their physical existence – a process key to non-physical inhabitation of a space and with great potential the field of architectural design. Some of this is enriched through incorporation of personal memories, yet it is also dependant on real-world circumstances permitting the reader to become immersed. In other situations the reader remains detached. The state of deliberate separation is one in which the reader becomes a critical observer of the text.

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<sup>339</sup> Particularly when technology provides an easy means of escape.

#### 4.5: Inhabitation of Peake's Text by the Critical-Reader

##### *Critical Inhabitation of Peake's Folded and Looped Space*

The architectural-critical-reader inhabits the text across a number of different positions along the inhabitation spectrum during the rendition process, both within and outside the spaces. Their relationship with the text requires inhabitation as a captivated-reader and personal experiences of space, whilst retaining a position of awareness and critique of the language that forms them. It is a position of balance: they must not become too captivated and forget the reason for inhabitation but must inhabit deeply enough to experience and analyse from within, as well as objectively and externally. The architectural-critical-reader is a precursor to the architectural-draughtsman and in reading the text in this way the rendition process is begun: the architectural imagination is stimulated and possibilities begin to crystallise.<sup>340</sup> So that this position of inhabitation might be understood examples from Peake's text follow. These loci have not been rendered for the thesis but provide situations for critical inhabitation and architectural speculation. They bring to light a capacity for literary space to shift in ways not (yet) physically possible. Within Peake's texts there are points where spaces are contained within each other but the locus within is both miniaturised and as immense as the exterior one.<sup>341</sup> This fractal-like state allows for spaces to connect in ways that are physically impossible. Peake uses looping, folding and unfolding to condense his spaces through and within transitions as shown in the following passage:

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<sup>340</sup> See sections 2.1 and 2.3.

<sup>341</sup> See section 3.2.

Once again Flay, who is now as much at home in the Silent Halls as he had been in the forests, sits at the table in his secret room. His hands are deep in his ragged pockets. Before him is spread a great sail of paper that not only covers the table, but descends in awkward folds and creases to the floor on every side. A portion near its centre is covered with markings, laboriously scripted words, short arrows, dotted lines and incomprehensible devices. It is a map; a map which Mr Flay has been working upon for over a year. It is a map of the district that surrounds him – the empty world, whose anatomy, little by little, he is piecing together, extending, correcting, classifying. He is, it seems, in a city that has been forsaken and he is making it his own; naming its streets and alleys, its avenues of granite, its winding flights and blackened terraces – exploring ever further its hollow hinterlands, while all over, like a lowering sky, as continuous and as widespread are the endless ceilings and the unbroken roof. (*G* 621)

The 'great sail of paper' is in Flay's Secret Room, within the vast network of the Silent Halls/Hollow Halls/Lifeless Halls.<sup>342</sup> The unfinished map of the halls is hand drawn, but Peake does not detail it, so the reader must perform an imaginative act of mapping to view it. In a similar situation to the figures of Fuchsia's Attic an outside-inhabitant-reader must create as an-other within their own imagination. When inhabiting this passage the reader is taken through a spatial loop: it begins in the isolation of Flay's Secret Room; expands out into the complex and undefined network of the Silent Halls; goes back to Flay's room; to the map; then through page into the Silent Halls. The next paragraph describes Flay's penmanship and focus returns to the map as a drawing and the room that contains it. Aspects of vastness are revealed within this sequence.<sup>343</sup> Experiences of vertigo are induced: the vast moving to the miniscule in a single movement; passing through pinch points and expansive spaces.

Whilst captivated-readers may experience this sequence unaware of the strange routes taken, the critical-reader is conscious of and reflects upon transitions, the (lack of) place that Flay's Secret Room has within the Silent Halls and the spatial qualities

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<sup>342</sup> These spaces are encountered numerous times from different points-of-view. They are one place and many within the castle-city.

<sup>343</sup> See section 3.2.

described. This path may become cyclical, the reader transitioning repeatedly, until it is broken as the narrative progresses. This inhabitation loop is akin to the 'strange loop' discussed by cognitive scientist Douglas R. Hofstadter in his book *Gödel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid* (1980): self-referential loops in which spaces, drawings or text create seemingly impossible feedback loops (1980: 684-719).<sup>344</sup> The same cycle appears in the transition between room, map and halls of Peake's text. Peake creates the loop and so is an inhabitant of his text, yet once the reader is within the author is absent.<sup>345</sup>

The transitions that occur are not only between loci; there is a shifting between inside and outside, between the corporeal and non-corporeal presence of the reader, between the self and the other, and between poetic image and prosaic language. This shifting allows space to collapse in upon itself and bloom back out, blurring thresholds and inhabitations.<sup>346</sup> The critical-reader becomes aware of the different densities of loci. The map is a variable vastness. There are voids which contrast with drawn details, compounded with an awareness that knowledge has been gained through exploration. The map is a two-dimensional miniaturisation of the Silent Halls. The halls are vacantly vast, with detailed pockets known to the reader: Flay's Secret Room, Cora and Clarice's Prison Room. Flay's Secret Room is not evenly detailed, within it are nodes of vacancy:

a small room, voluptuously soft with dust; a small, square place with a carved mantelpiece and an open grate. There were several chairs, a bookcase and a walnut table on which, beneath the dust, the silver, glass and crockery were laid out for two. (*G* 592)

Dust softens unknown features and the reader infers information not provided. The space is vast in its capacity, holding the Silent Halls, yet is small and isolated within

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<sup>344</sup> Hofstadter's examples include *Drawing Hands* by M. C. Escher and René Magritte's series of pipes.

<sup>345</sup> See section 1.2.

<sup>346</sup> Like a Klein bottle's continuous surface between inside and outside, there is no clear beginning or end.

them. The inhabiting reader expands and contracts space between scales of miniature, human and vast. In this fluctuation the architectural-reader is aware of the physical limitations of materials: stone cannot physically flex, but can within the imagination.

The act of mapping integral to this locus creates different levels of inhabitation. At the surface level the reader inhabits the room, observing the map and the space. Above is their inhabitation of the locus within the Silent Halls. Below the reader enters the map (a real-imagined map of an imagined place), drawn by Flay, constructed by the reader. In this position the inhabitant-reader is both within and outside of the map – at full scale observing the miniaturised self within. At the deepest level the reader-inhabitant places themselves within the drawn landscape, entering spaces beyond the map, bringing them back to full scale. These levels of inhabitation are not mutually exclusive and the critical-reader can perceive the Secret Room, map and Silent Halls in parallel.

In serial places like these loci Peake provides entrance points for infinite exploration (refining imaginative skills), narrative pauses and areas in which the relationships between spaces are examined. This testing of space and the dialogue between internal and external space is particularly architecturally interesting. Thresholds are often static conditions, with a distinct inside and outside. Yet in these circumstances, where a drawn representation would be limited, the linguistic representation of the transitions allows for a fluid shifting between spaces: thresholds can become moments of vastness, almost invisibly minute, significant, unrecognisable or absent.

Peake allows the boundaries of loci to break down and transitions become an identifying aspect of containment and expanse. The surface of the page upon which the

map is inscribed is permeable in a way not possible in a physical drawing, yet this surface is one which the inhabitant crosses. The architectural drawing assumes the viewer will cross the threshold to inhabit and experience the potential spaces it depicts. However, a paper image does not physically break down this barrier in the way that Peake does with his imagined, text based maps. There is capacity in this literary technique within architectural design. Peake's text has examples in which the internal and external behaviour of space is questioned; Flay's Caves, where disrepair has broken down structural boundaries and volumes; the Outer Wall of the castle-city with its unknown number of portals. The most dramatic of these occurs at the end of *Gormenghast*. In this event the landscape surrounding the castle-city intrudes, as a vast volume of rain water floods Gormenghast and its surroundings.

*Critical Inhabitation of Peake's Theatres of Manoeuvre – The Flooding of Gormenghast and the Drama of the Black House*

Peake's theatrical events not only provide an outlet for his interest in theatre and costume design, but also allow narrative thought experiments.<sup>347</sup> These dramatic stages allude not only to theatrical changes of space but also the indeterminate nature of inside/outside. For the critical-reader the events of the flooding of Gormenghast and the drama enacted out in the Black House provide disruptive, sinister places of inhabitation and in doing so create situations through which one can study the self within the text and the otherness of those created by Peake.

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<sup>347</sup> See section iii.

The flooding of Gormenghast, at a narrative level, is an event that reduces inhabitable spaces of the castle-city so that Steerpike can be found. It changes customary modes of inhabitation and the inside/outside dichotomy is broken down entirely.

As it was the theatre of manoeuvre – the three dry topmost floors and the wet 'floor of boats' (where the coloured craft of the carvers sped to and fro, or lay careening beneath great mantelpieces, or tied up to the banisters of forgotten stairways, cast their rich reflections in the dark water) – these theatres of manoeuvre – the three dry levels and the one wet, were not the only areas which had to be considered [...] the isolated outcrops of the castle. Luckily most of the widely scattered and virtually endless ramifications of the main structure of Gormenghast were under water [...] But there were a number of towers to which the young man might well have swum. (G 710)

The water progressively and significantly reduces the volumes of Gormenghast as it rises.

At its zenith only the highest towers and the top of the Mountain remain dry. The flooding is a convoluted, ever-changing drama; rising water takes days to reach its peak, as does its recession. The re-inhabitation of loci is still in progress at the end of *Gormenghast* and the flood damage is significant. There is inhuman malice in this disaster (in contrast to the events of the Black House) combined with humour: farcical sequences, where cattle and livestock are driven up grand staircases, are intermingled with tragic episodes.<sup>348</sup> Whilst the captivated-reader stays with characters through these events (entranced by emotional aspects), the critical reader moves freely through spaces no longer physically inhabitable. They explore submerged spaces, returning to loci described before the flood, to consider effects of submersion. Spaces remain physically close but are inexorably altered and dislocated from their literary inhabitants. The text provides the architectural-critical reader with an understanding of the effects on space: the changes in light conditions, acoustic properties, smells, textures, submersion and

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<sup>348</sup> Peake never mentions how these animals are taken back down. Cows do not easily walk downstairs.

dampness. The highest point of the flood provides a greater understanding of the Gormenghast topography. Turrets and high structures, lost in the dry masses of the castle-city, are exposed during the flood, creating islands and isthmuses.

This is another space mapped by the characters, here used by Lady Groan.<sup>349</sup> The 'great map of the central district of Gormenghast' (G 694) is, like the one of the Silent Halls, within the setting it depicts. Where the uncertainty of the map of the Silent Halls is due to places not yet explored, here it is the fluid nature of rising water. The text repeats the invitation to inhabit a map not physically drawn of a fictional place, this time with an awareness that what it depicts is constantly in flux. Whilst the text is able to track the ever-shifting movement of the water level a paper map cannot. However, an imagined map can shift alongside the text and water. Prominent features remain, yet they no longer exhibit their original characteristics. The river is no longer a river:

The agitated water had become silent, motionless. It had taken on a dark translucence. Afloat upon a yawning element he gazed down to where, far below him, trees grew, to where familiar roads wound in and out, to where the fish swam over walnut trees and strangest of all to the winding bed of Gormenghast river, so full of water that it had none of its own. (G 699)

Distortion of the now-familiar setting of Gormenghast reminds the architectural-critical-reader of the fluidity inherent in spatial occupations. What may appear to be a permanent, invariable feature is vulnerable to dramatic change.<sup>350</sup> As previously discussed, literary space is not as restricted as physical or rendered space and can be used to test conditions. Speculative design and theoretical events are inherent in architectural theory and designs. Through linguistic exercises, like Peake uses, potential outcomes can

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<sup>349</sup> She is, however, unlikely to have produced it.

<sup>350</sup> The reader is constantly aware of the slow decay of the castle-city but it becomes so familiar as to become unnoticed. The crumbling of the fabric is slow and continuous, hidden in plain sight.

be established.<sup>351</sup> The awareness of dramatic events is made personal by the narrative and so it is not only the capacity for space that is tested but also human reactions.

The events of the Black House provide a different theatrical setting from which humanity can be observed. This ruinous structure of unknown origin is used as a theatre in which Cheeta intends to take revenge on Titus and drive him mad. The drama of this locus is one of human creation, with hallucinogenic qualities of Titus' fever dreams interwoven with amorphous qualities of physical space. There are few details that fix the Black House as an architectural form. It is a structure reminiscent of many places yet it remains vague: it may be remains of a European cathedral or Cambodian temple. Forms that the reader supplies to fill in the gaps come from personal experience; other narratives, film and television encounters with spaces perceived to be similar. The captivated-reader is caught in the atmosphere of the locus but the critical-reader finds little that is specific:<sup>352</sup>

Very little of the roof was left, and none of the inner walls, but Cheeta, gazing down, recalled immediately the vast interior of the building.

It had an atmosphere about it that was unutterably mournful; a quality that could not be wholly accounted for by the fact that the place was mouldering horribly; that the floor was soft with moss; or that the walls were lost in ferns. There was something more than this that gave the Black House its air of deadly darkness; a darkness that owed nothing to the night, and seemed to dye the day.

[...] what might have been the shell of an abbey, for there was a heap of masonry that might or might not have been some kind of alter, sacred or profane. (*TA* 911)

This locus is one in which the atmosphere and emotional power is not only provided by the physical structure but also temporary manifestations and effects put in place by the narrative (and Cheeta). These qualities are inherent in architecture, yet difficult to

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<sup>351</sup> See section iii.

<sup>352</sup> Peake again uses mapping: '[Cheeta] knew almost as though it were a map before her eyes, the winding core of Gormenghast' (*TA* 916).

translate into renditions, like the flood. Peake's descriptions create spaces within this locus that are architectural but ephemeral. It is a locus formed from the manipulation of emotions and the use of language is an important aspect of the spatial construction:

The band crashed into dreadful martial music. Titus sat down upon a throne. He could see nothing except the vague blur of the juniper fire. The crowds surged forward as lamps blazed out of the surrounding tree-tops. Everything took on another colour ... another radiance. A clock struck midnight. The moon came out and so did the first of the apparitions.

Under a light to strangle infants by, the great and horrible flower opened its bulbous petals one by one: a flower whose roots drew sustenance from the grey slime of the pit, and whose vile scent obscured the delicacy of the juniper. This flower was evil, and its bloom satanic, and though it was invisible its manifestations were on every side.

It was not the intrinsic and permanent mood of the Black House, although this alone was frightening enough, with the fungi like plates on the walls, and the sweat of the stones; it was not only this but was this combined with the sense of a great conspiracy; a conspiracy of darkness, and decay: and yet of a diabolical ingenuity also; a setting against which characters played out their parts in floodlight, as when predestined creatures are caught in a concentration of light so that they cannot more. (*TA* 924)

The phrasing is short, tending towards the poetic, the vocabulary is emotional. Peake contrasts 'vile' and delicate perfumes, blurs the visual and overwhelms the aural senses, distorting the true nature of the space. It becomes a false locus. The decaying form of the Black House is a backdrop and remains detached, disguised by the created theatre. It is a layered space: the ruins of the unknown edifice with its unidentified, significant past; the structures of performance, not intended to be recognised; the casting of shadows and light, atmospheric sounds and distortions that persuade character-inhabitants of a false reality. The final layer is the broken illusion. Peake forces the captivated-reader to become critical; whilst immersed they are made aware of the constructs. Peake invites the reader in as an observer, not a participant. He places them apart from the crowd, conscious of Cheeta's plans where character-inhabitants are not.

Peake's text conveys these layers alongside the reader's knowledge of the castle-city.

The event-architecture of the Black House is transitional, becoming a pseudo

Gormenghast; unreal, formless and lacking in character. It challenges Titus and the reader about their knowledge of previous events and their reality. Inhabitation is different to that of other loci and one in which the reader is forced to shift between reading states, between captivated and critical in order to question events, destabilising the reading experience. The linguistic construction of the locus allows for hallucinogenic properties to remain fluid where a rendition would force coagulation and stasis.

The ever-changing nature that language is able to convey allows for the constant distortion of events and the shifting of the architecture around it. The architectural-reader is aware that this state of veiled understanding is not only more powerful because of its uncertainty but is also an echo of reality in its fluidity. Architecture is not stable and a linguistic element added to traditional rendition processes allows ephemeral aspects to be conveyed. Within Peake's text the loci shift within the imagination. This warping provides significant challenges when rendering. The following section examines how the inhabitation of loci by the architectural-draughtsman forms a significant aspect of understanding the spaces and forming the renditions.

#### **4.6: Inhabitation of Peake's Text by the Critical Architectural-Draughtsman**

##### ***The Architectural-Draughtsman's States of Inhabitation***

Inhabitation by the architectural-draughtsman takes place in two stages. The first is inhabitation as a critical-reader in which the text is read with the purpose of isolating and examining loci, requiring a level of detachment as well as a mental stepping in and out of the text. The architectural imagination is stimulated, but not yet put into creative

production beyond itself. The second aspect comes with the act of rendering. During this process the architectural-draughtsman simultaneously inhabits Peake's text and the locus-as-rendition as it is worked, once again stepping between forms of inhabitation – from the inside to the outside, from the imagination to the page/model and back again.

In early stages of rendition inhabitation is located primarily in the text (first in the book and then in the locus documents), details are extracted and early impressions of space are formed. Inhabitation gradually shifts, oscillating, from the text towards the rendered space. Upon completion of the rendition the text becomes removed. The extraction and collation of information in order to draft renditions alters the nature of the text as each instance of a locus becomes excised from its context.<sup>353</sup> The inhabitation of the architectural-draughtsman is initially destructive. Reconstruction then occurs, beginning with collated documents, through drafting and modelling and finally within finished renditions, when there is a shift from creator to viewer of the rendered space. Inhabitation of the architectural-draughtsman is one in which a miniaturised, imagined-self is placed within a space in order to experience and comprehend it. This idea, discussed by Renaissance architect and author Filarete, is not new, as architect and theorist Paul Emmons explains:

Filarete's human is drawn neither as a scale figure nor a measuring stick, instead as a vehicle to imagine through projecting oneself into the drawing. As this imagined miniature self inhabits a drawing, traditional representations of the human soul picture a tiny self that often stands on the person's shoulder or in the hand. With measures deriving from the human body, the tiny body of the architect *is* the measure and the conscience of the project. (Emmons 2007: 71)

The placement of the miniaturised-self occurs within the text, throughout the formation of loci, and after a rendition is complete. The medium affects this positioning: the self-

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<sup>353</sup> See section 2.2.

within-the-text is imaginary, whereas the self-within-the-drawing occurs both upon the page and within the mind.<sup>354</sup>

The balancing of inhabitation states is learned through practice. By understanding how and why it occurs the architectural-draughtsman can be more cognisant of the process and its effects. There are differences between the inhabitation of drawn and modelled loci and the stages of development they pass through towards completion. The differences between inhabiting drawings and models are discussed in the next two sections of this chapter. This begins with an examination of the architectural-draughtsman's inhabitation of complex nested loci at different stages of a drawn rendition, using the East Wing of Gormenghast as an example.

### *The Architectural-Draughtsman's Inhabitation from Peake's Text to Sectional Drawing*

The East Wing of Gormenghast is frequently referred to in the texts and so is gradually constructed within the imagination. The piece-by-piece addition of information, along with the differing densities of space forms a layered position of inhabitation. The East Wing is the outer locus of a nested series, revealed in every season, at various points in the diurnal cycle and in numerous different climactic conditions.<sup>355</sup> The differing states in which it occurs are separated and sequenced in the rendition (Figure 90) rather than as concurrent, overlaid depictions – forcing a discontinuous experience of the space as

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<sup>354</sup> Again Merleau-Ponty's understanding of the instrument becomes apt (2012: 154). See section 4.4.

<sup>355</sup> The East Wing occurs numerous times in *Titus Groan* but not as a separate locus in the other texts. It does appear in *Gormenghast* and *Titus Alone* through loci it contains: the Library (*TG* and *G*), The Cemetery of the Esteemed (*TG* and *G*, not rendered) and The Tower of Flints (*TG*, *G* and *TA*).

events become woven together.<sup>356</sup> Awareness of this locus begins with a fragment:

'Fuchsia suddenly remembered when she had seen her aunt Cora faint, a very long time ago, in the central hall of the East Wing' (*TG* 110).<sup>357</sup> This begins a speculative process that is gradually concretised as Peake provides further information.

Initially the relationships between these loci are established as linear (Figure 91 and Figure 92). This linearity is developed further in the rendered map of the castle-city (Figure 93). In inhabiting the map the architectural-draughtsman considers space in plan and in dimensions beyond the image; they enter through the threshold surface into depicted space. There are numerous speculative structures along the length of this locus with little or no detail. Speculation is easier at smaller scales and in plan: textures are indicative of forms and environment. Peake's text describes two distinct sections of the East Wing, divided at the central point, marked by the Tower of Flints. The inner half, the Heart of the Castle to the Tower, relates directly to the rest of Gormenghast (in its varied and erratic way) and there are no named loci.<sup>358</sup> The outer half, between the Tower and the Outer Wall, is a convoluted series of Derelict Architectural Experiments (Figure 94) containing the Library. Few Experiments are named and details are limited:

Most of these buildings had about them the rough-hewn and oppressive weight of masonry that characterized the main volume of Gormenghast, although they varied considerably in every other way, one having at its summit an enormous stone carving of a lion's head, which held between its jaws the limp corpse of a man on whose body was chiselled the words: 'He was an enemy of Groan'; alongside this structure was a rectangular area of some length entirely filled with pillars set so closely together that it was difficult for a man to squeeze between them. Over them, at the height of about forty feet, was a perfectly flat roof of stone slabs blanketed with ivy. This structure could never have served any practical purpose, the closely packed forest of pillars with which it was entirely filled being of service only as an excellent place in which to enjoy a fantastic game of hide-and seek. (*TG* 144-5)

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<sup>356</sup> This is not a dramatic discontinuity, as the section can be viewed as a gestalt.

<sup>357</sup> It is not certain where this locus is exactly within the East Wing of Gormenghast.

<sup>358</sup> The Playroom is likely to be located here but Peake does not confirm this.

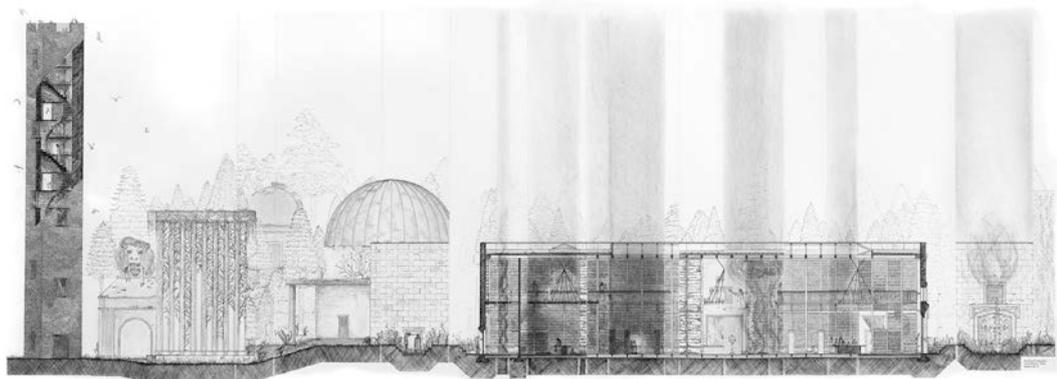


Figure 90: Long section rendering of The East Wing of Gormenghast, based on Peake's texts. 1:50 at 2000mm by 750mm

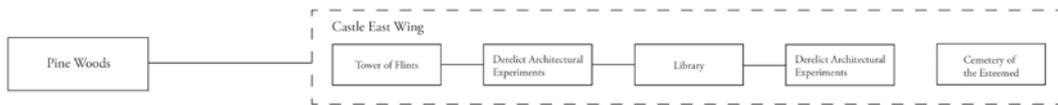


Figure 91: Nesting Diagram showing the relationship of loci in the East Wing of Gormenghast



Figure 92: The East Wing of Gormenghast before sectioning, based on Peake's texts. 1:16000 at A4

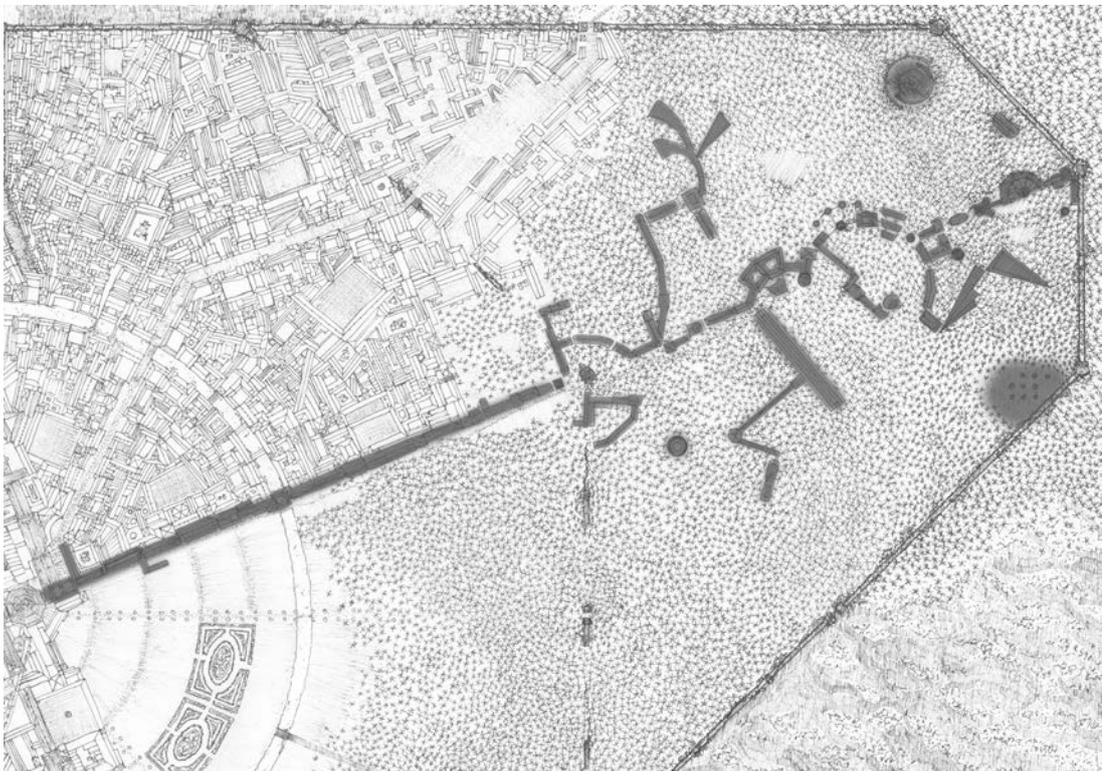
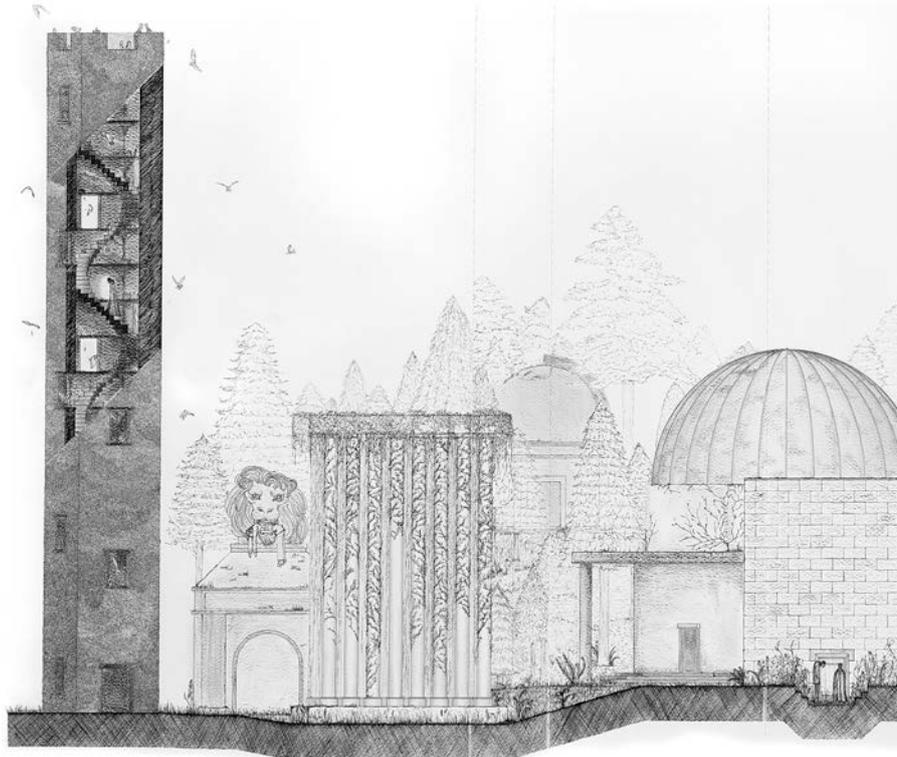
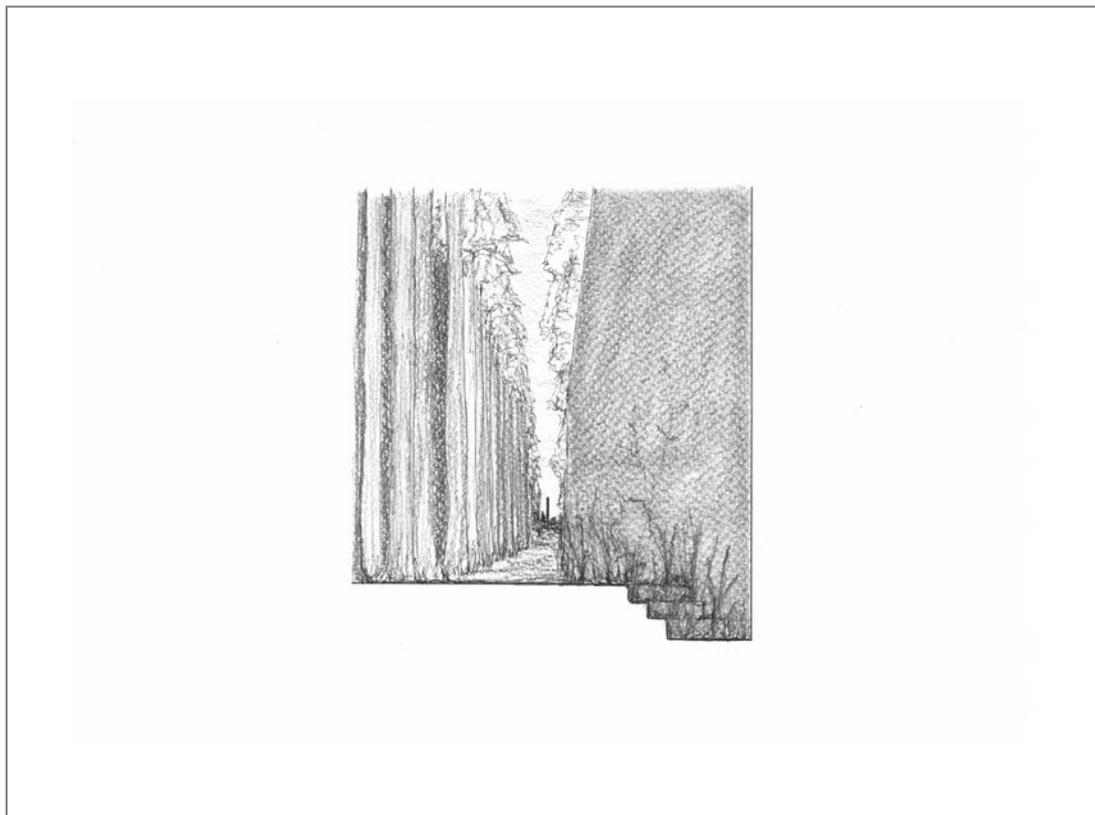


Figure 93: Detail from Gormenghast Castle-City map with the East Wing of Gormenghast highlighted, based on Peake's texts.



**Figure 94: The Tower of Flints and Derelict Architectural Experiments. Detail taken from the long section rendering of The East Wing of Gormenghast, based on Peake's texts. 1:50 at 2000mm by 750mm**



**Figure 95: Fragment drawing of The East Wing from the Library looking back at the Tower of Flints, based on Peake's texts. 1:50 at 320mm by 240mm**

Whilst the descriptions of each structure are short, architectural understanding is found.

The 'oppressive weight' and 'rough-hewn' nature of the stone reinforces knowledge of Gormenghast's characteristics and allows extrapolation of previously gained awareness.

The vastness of structures is softened by ivy and the encroachment of trees.

When inhabiting the text with an intent to render, the architectural-draughtsman becomes aware that detailed (narratively significant) loci are few and literary duration is short. The East Wing has considerable length, but forms a section in which the scale and density of detail makes continuous inhabitation at a human scale difficult (Figure 92). Consequently the architectural-draughtsman draws focus to the points of immersion that Peake provides. There are two key loci within the sequence, the Tower of Flints and the Library. The architectural-draughtsman spends more time in areas of greater density of detail and this is reflected in the long section. The presence of loci upon the page is dictated by the detail and length of time Peake provides for reader inhabitation (Figure 90). Peake combines evocative descriptions with quantifiable measurements, allowing the architectural-draughtsman to interpret and render the derelict structures (Figure 94). The text juxtaposes loci and the rendition contracts space in a similar manner: whilst there is an understanding of the distance the Derelict Architectural Experiments cover Peake does not detail them all to the same level. He collates notable structures in descriptions, highlighting distinctive qualities so that they become drawn out from the masses.

In the rendition, where the section is cut and cranked, the Derelict Architectural Experiments are fragmented and compacted by the sectioning. Throughout this process

the architectural-draughtsman inhabits spaces of the text (as imagined, potential space yet to be drawn), the drawing as it exists at any given moment *and* in its future as a finished rendition. The simultaneous inhabitation of different media, in different stages of completion is not an entirely conscious act. Using the architectural imagination to perceive a future drawing, in which the page space, the scale and the balance of the different elements fit together, requires an understanding of space that only inhabitation and exploration can provide. Whilst working digitally the architectural-draughtsman places themselves within loci so that scale and proportion can be established, with a constant awareness that the evocative qualities are not yet in place. The simultaneous inhabitation of loci when rendering is of time as well as place. Perpendicular sections cut events as well as volumes, interweaving different elements. The section consists of three segments: the Tower of Flints, the Derelict Architectural Experiments and the Library.

The Tower of Flints (Figure 94) demarcates the point at which the architecture of the East Wing becomes fantastic.<sup>359</sup> The Tower is an ever-present feature of Gormenghast, its landscapes (Figure 95) and its rituals:

The Earl, tired from a day of ritual (during part of which it was required of him to ascend and descend the Tower of Flints three times by the stone staircase, leaving on each occasion a glass of wine on a box of wormwood placed there for the purpose on a blue turret) (*TG* 238)

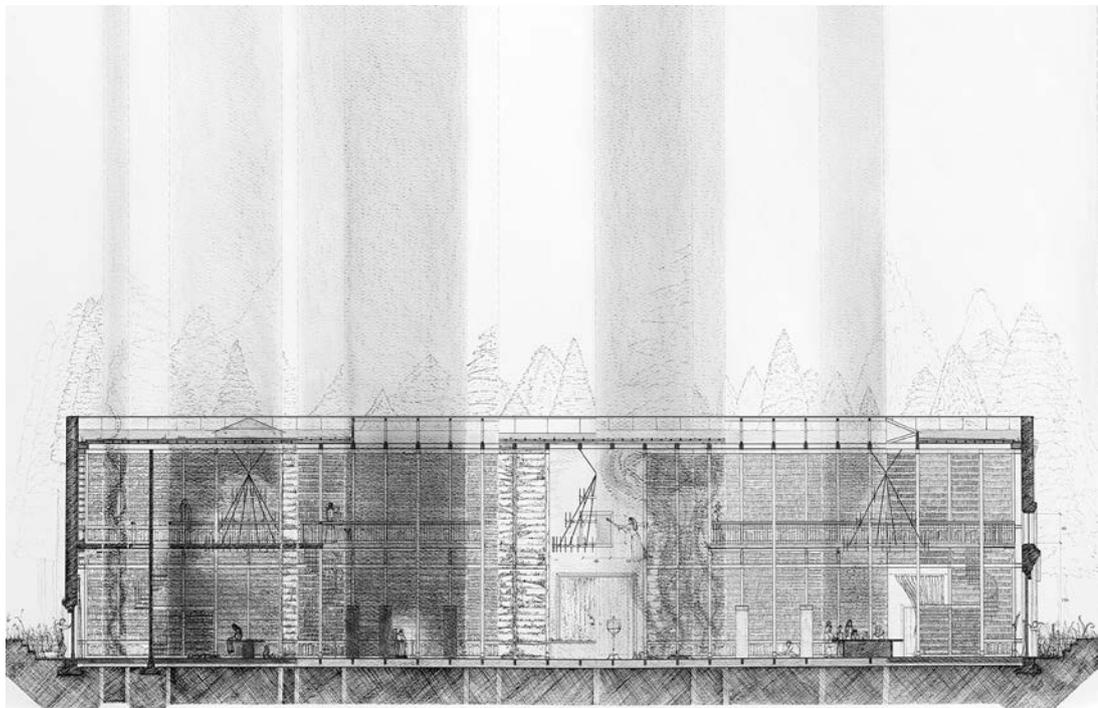
Critical-inhabitation of the tower by the architectural-draughtsman is driven by the events that take place within its walls. It is predominantly a home to owls and pointless rituals.<sup>360</sup> The captivated-reader is drawn into the events of the space. The critical-reader

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<sup>359</sup> See section 1.4.

<sup>360</sup> A reversal of the usual association of owls with wisdom, although Pliny the Elder connects owls with evil: it is 'a direful omen to see [one] in a city, or even so much as in the day-time' (*Natural History Book X*, 1<sup>st</sup> Century CE: Chapter 16).

is aware of its state as landmark and harbinger of doom. The architectural-draughtsman has an understanding of the consequences (beyond the poetic) of large numbers of owls: the noise, smells and mess that perpetually permeate the space. In drafting there is a need to balance events with the typical state of a locus. With the Tower the predominant state is stillness, with instances of high drama. The architecture has to be balanced with the narrative; as with any rendition. Architectural space may contain atypical instances which are more visually appealing, but the usual state might be far removed. The Tower is the only rendition significantly based on a drawing by Peake (in the manuscripts).<sup>361</sup> Its inclusion allows the square nature of its plan to be depicted fully in a way that has not done before, as well as providing balance to the Library in the section (Figure 90).



**Figure 96: The Library in section. Detail taken from the long section rendering of The East Wing of Gormenghast, based on Peake's texts. 1:50 at 2000mm by 750mm**

<sup>361</sup> See section 1.3. From this image the layouts of windows and crenulations are derived. No handrails or landings are included (the tower is threatening and dangerous), reinforcing its precarious nature, dramatic height and allowing owls to traverse freely. Other images influenced by Peake's sketches are the symbol of the Under-River (see section 3.6) and the Professors' Quarters (see section 1.4).

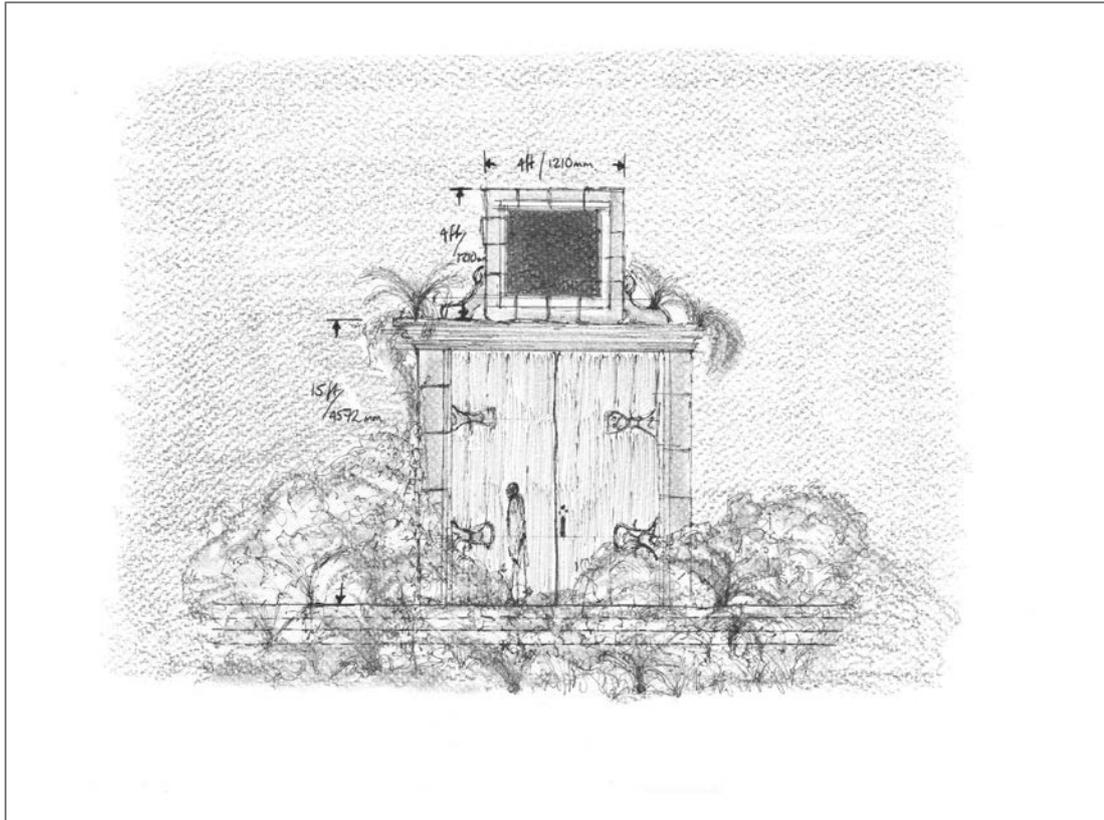


Figure 97: Fragment drawing of Main Door of the Library illustrating the precise details provided in the text, based on Peake's texts. 1:50 at 320mm by 240mm

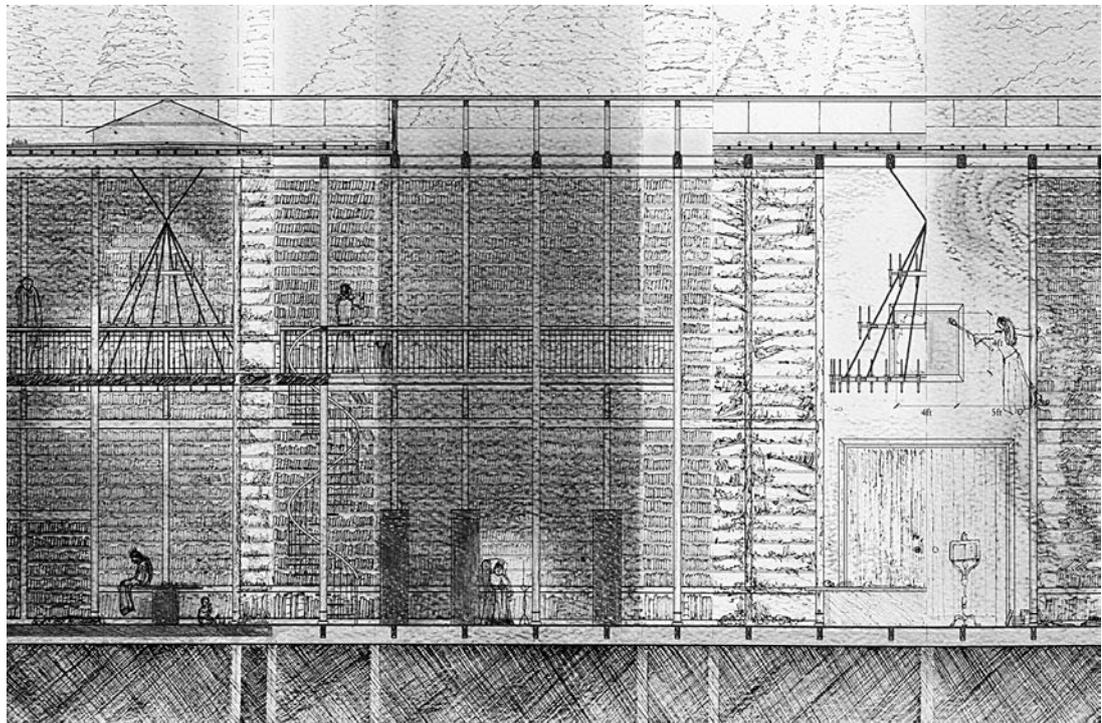


Figure 98: Sectional boundaries in the Library. Detail taken from the long section rendering of The East Wing of Gormenghast, based on Peake's texts. 1:50 at 2000mm by 750mm

The Library is the most complicated locus of the East Wing (Figure 96). In the narrative there are numerous connected events and these occurrences are integral to spatial understanding. The nature of the library and its typology is questioned by the rendition. Although the structure is simple in form, its roots lie in the literary tradition of endless labyrinthine libraries. The architectural-draughtsman is aware of Peake's use of dimensions. He provides detailed information about the Main Door, the window above and the balcony (Figure 97); yet, the detail also highlights the vague nature of other components. The Library is a significant length, in comparison to the structures that surround it (*TG* 145), but no quantifiable evidence is given of this or of its depth. It is assumed to have been purpose-built (although this may not be how Peake envisaged it). The simplicity of its rectilinear plan and the repetition of bookshelves allows for its potentially infinite extension within the imagination.<sup>362</sup> One can become captivated and lost within its shadows. It is this *potential* within the familiar understanding of the library space that the rendition aims to capture.

The drawing of the Library collates narrative fragments; it is a cranked section, disrupting events, providing gaps through which the imagination enters. Events are shown in situ but without context. Instead instances are woven together, confusing chronology and encapsulating the contrasts that create this locus. The Library is forced into a fixed state of uncertainty: it is simultaneously before, during and after its razing through fire.<sup>363</sup> The architectural-draughtsman inhabits all of these states, whilst

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<sup>362</sup> In a similar manner to Fuchsia's Attic No.1. See section 3.5.

<sup>363</sup> The interleaving of events may be perceived as dramatic irony: the destruction of the Library symbolic of both Lord Sepulchre's state of mind and Gormenghast's stagnant ritualistic structures.

remaining outside of them. The image is reminiscent of the locus documents, where the text is disrupted by spatial collation. Inhabitation of depicted loci shifts accordingly when moving through each spatial segment. A sectional drawing provides only the surface of the paper as an access point. Section lines remove segments, hiding them from view, but they remain accessible to the imaginative-inhabitant. The architectural-draughtsman occupies the surface of the paper in order to depict the characters' realm. In placing themselves within two-dimensional space an imagined three-dimensional volume is formed, in which phenomena are experienced.<sup>364</sup> In the rendition additional section lines cut space perpendicular to the surface of the page creating thresholds between events (Figure 98). The architectural-draughtsman shifts their inhabitation to cross these lines, so differences in light, temperature and time are perceived.

Traces of the drawing process remain within the Library space, creating a space in which time is visible.<sup>365</sup> Instances fixed upon the page contain digital lines: the burnt library shelves show ghosts of their original state, characters reveal (re-veiling shelves that were once exposed) bookshelves behind them and the outer structure remains intact.<sup>366</sup> The rendition illustrates the differing densities of these loci within Peake's text. The half he does not describe is absent; the Derelict Architectural Experiments are present but condensed and overlapped. As elevations they have a less significant presence than the densely inked Tower of Flints or the sectional volume of the Library. The Library has a significant presence on the page beyond its physical size: as the focal point of the

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<sup>364</sup> See section iii.

<sup>365</sup> See section 2.4.

<sup>366</sup> The fire does not significantly affect the roof. The chandelier remains suspended above the table and Sourdust's skeleton laid upon it, leaving both intact.

narratives events within the East Wing, the interwoven instances upon the page highlight the numerous encounters inhabitants have with this locus.

In inhabiting the East Wing of Gormenghast the architectural-draughtsman forms the rendition around the imagined spaces of the text, creating a disrupted section in which events are crystallised but not fully revealed. In cutting perpendicular to the page, as well as across it, the architectural-draughtsman directs viewers-as-inhabitants into fractures between depicted scenes. The architecture becomes more fully revealed, beyond the single-slice section, yet allows Peake's poetry and ambiguity to remain. However, the viewer-as-inhabitant requires the text to extend the spaces of the page, for without an understanding of the narrative the section lacks extended context.<sup>367</sup>

The context is also driven by other loci and through comparison between spaces represented in different media with similar themes. External viewer-inhabitants not only enrich spaces with remembered experience but also include awareness derived from other renditions. Peake relies on this in his texts, allowing knowledge of the general construction and condition of spaces to shape awareness, so he can describe exceptional details rather than forming each place anew.<sup>368</sup> In order to explore this phenomenon in relation to the renditions, the state of confinement forms a focal position.

### *The Architectural-Draughtsman's Inhabitation of Modelled Confinement*

The architectural-draughtsman has a different inhabitation relationship with modelled space than with a drawn one. Where a drawn section is an act of slicing to reveal, the

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<sup>367</sup> This is often the case with architectural renditions.

<sup>368</sup> See sections iii and 2.2.

surface acting as a key point in the manner of inhabitation, a model focuses on volume and the enclosure it creates. In places of confinement enclosure becomes more significant. This section examines three spaces of imprisonment which contain aspects of voyeurism, anxiety and replication.<sup>369</sup>

When casting space the architectural-draughtsman uses a different form of imaginary-self-placement than for sections, although the balance between captivation and critical inhabitation of the text is still required. When modelling the cast (which begins an inverse of the locus), inhabitation is shifted into the solid rather than the void (on paper inhabitation usually takes place where there is the least density of ink, unless it is an inverted drawing). The architectural-draughtsman places an imagined-self within a three-dimensional form of a yet-to-be constructed model and builds the form around it. The casting process is an act of confining the imagined self within the pre-space of a mould.

Peake's spaces of confinement share traits, yet each is unique. The first loci discussed are a pair with a dual existence, the Octagonal/Prison Room. Whether Peake interleaved these spaces intentionally is unknown. Each locus contains aspects of the other and in combination a single rendition was formed. The information Peake gives about these spaces is complimentary and coalescing them allows the locus to be enriched (Figure 99, Figure 100).<sup>370</sup> As these loci are melded by Peake, so is their inhabitation.

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<sup>369</sup> Lady Groan's bedroom (not rendered), also contains these features (see section 4.3.). Parallels can be drawn between her natal confinement and imprisonment of other characters in the loci discussed.

<sup>370</sup> In an instance in the text the Prison Room (where Flay locks Steerpike) is directly referred to as the Octagonal Room (a portrait room with a spyhole overlooking the corridor of Lady Groan's Bedroom), but they are known to be separate loci. 'Flay propelled Steerpike through the entrance [of the Octagonal Room] at a great pace and halted halfway down a narrow passage before a door. This he unlocked with

The architectural-draughtsman takes this further, removing the rendition from its surroundings, dislocating it from indicators that would confirm it as either the Octagonal Room or the Prison Room. The model is separated from its narrative place and coexists in two different literary moments. Perception is dependent on the inhabitants' inclinations. The corridor that separates them in the text is an unseen loop.

In both of these loci voyeuristic tendencies are explored: in the Octagonal Room Steerpike and Flay view the corridor beyond (Figure 101); in the Prison Room Steerpike watches Flay as he leaves him incarcerated (Figure 102).<sup>371</sup> Both these spaces protect (confine) those inside whilst they watch. For the Octagonal Room this is a reversal of its purpose to display portraits, which require an introverted examination, distinctly different to the extroverted voyeurism that takes place through the spyhole. These are places from which one escapes both visually (mentally) and physically. In rendering the architectural-draughtsman becomes a voyeur, not only of the other-characters within the text and vicariously through their actions, but also when viewing their imagined-self within the volume. The act of spying through the wall or keyhole captivates the architectural-draughtsman, trapping their imagination within. This is mirrored by the character inhabitants; Flay spends time 'gazing out of a narrow window in the octagonal room' (*TG* 34), the room he occupies is of little interest (Figure 103).

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one of his many keys and thrusting Steerpike inside turned it upon the boy' (*TG* 35). Steerpike's removal from one and his incarceration in the other is clearly described. However, when Flay is cogitating on Steerpike's escape the text reads: 'What had actually happened in the Octagonal Room and the subsequent events that befell Steerpike are as follows' (*TG* 88).

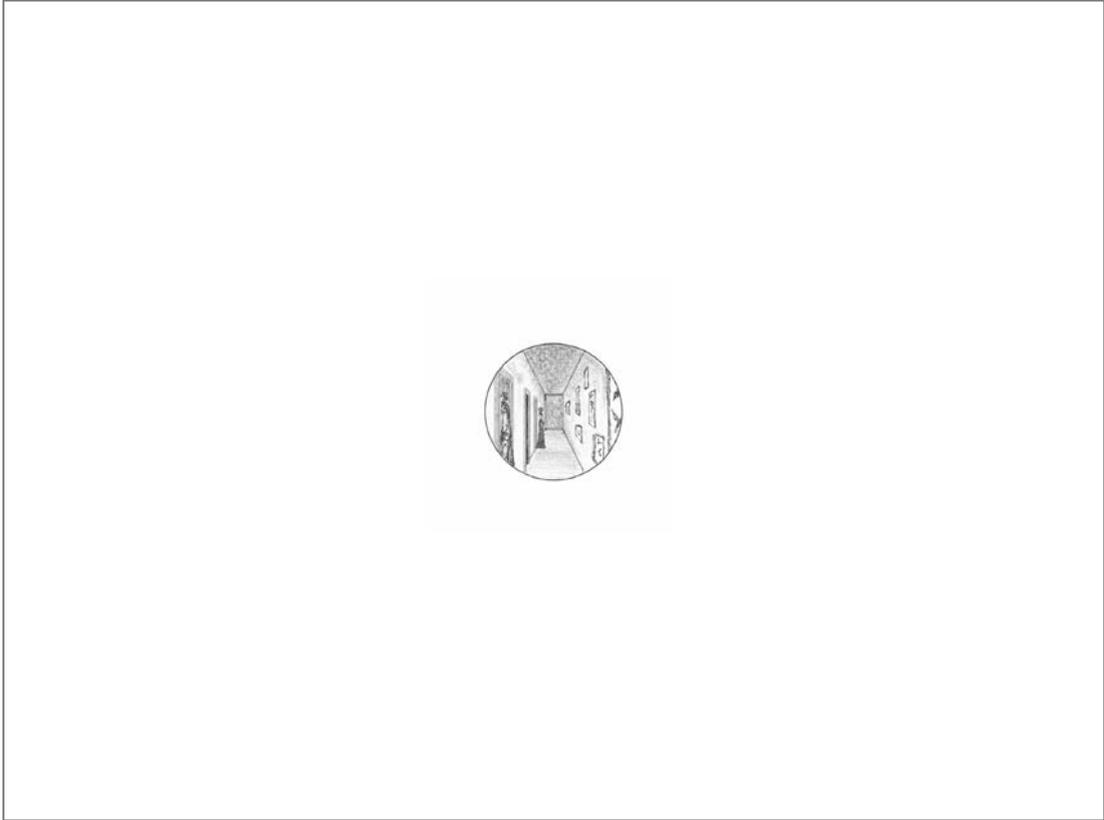
<sup>371</sup> Steerpike's voyeurism is apparent in other loci, most noticeably in Steerpike's Room No.4 – Mirror Room. This room defies spatial logic. Steerpike sits at the bottom of a disused chimney and uses a series of mirrors to see various rooms within Gormenghast. The locations of these rooms require Peake to twist and contract space for dramatic purposes and this is the least believable locus in these texts.



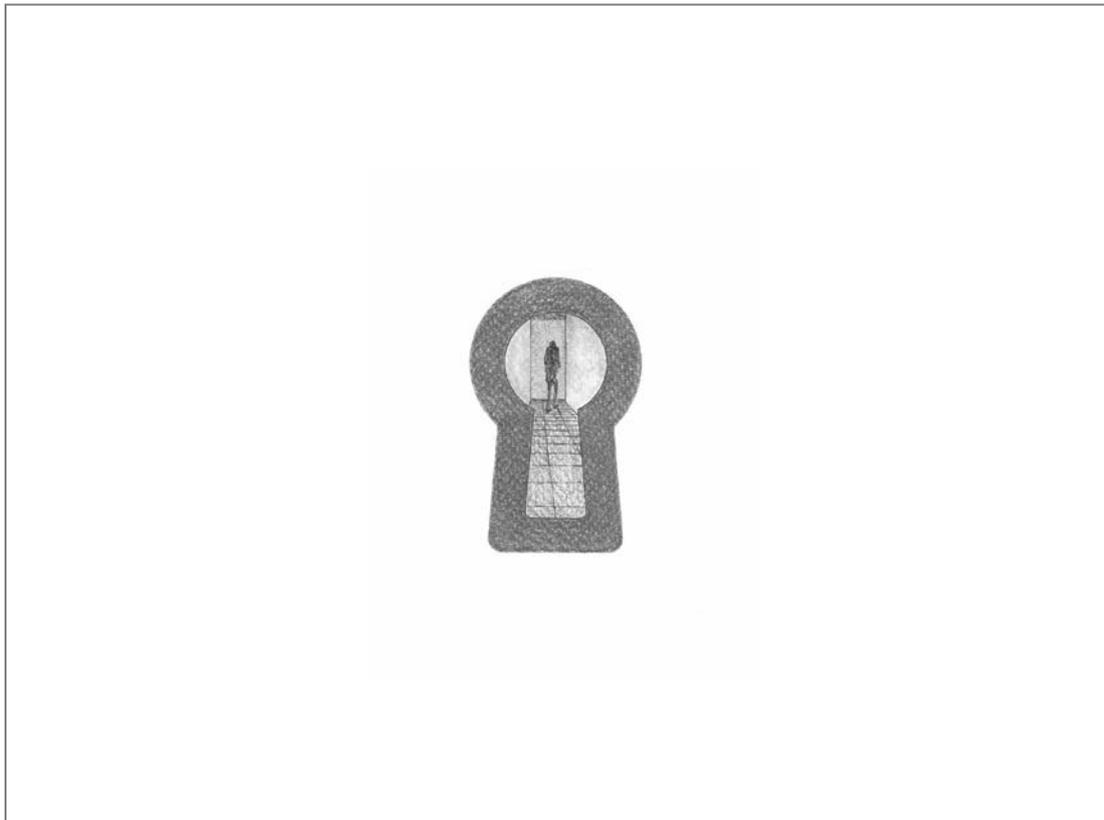
Figure 99: The window in the Octagonal Room/Prison Room – model (possibly) acting as the Prison Room, based on Peake's texts. Model 1:50



Figure 100: The window in the Octagonal Room/Prison Room – model acting as the Octagonal Room, based on Peake's texts. Model 1:50



**Figure 101: Fragment drawing of the Octagonal Room spyhole, based on Peake's texts. 2:1 at 320mm by 240mm**



**Figure 102: Fragment drawing of the Prison Room keyhole, based on Peake's texts. 2:1 at 320mm by 240mm**

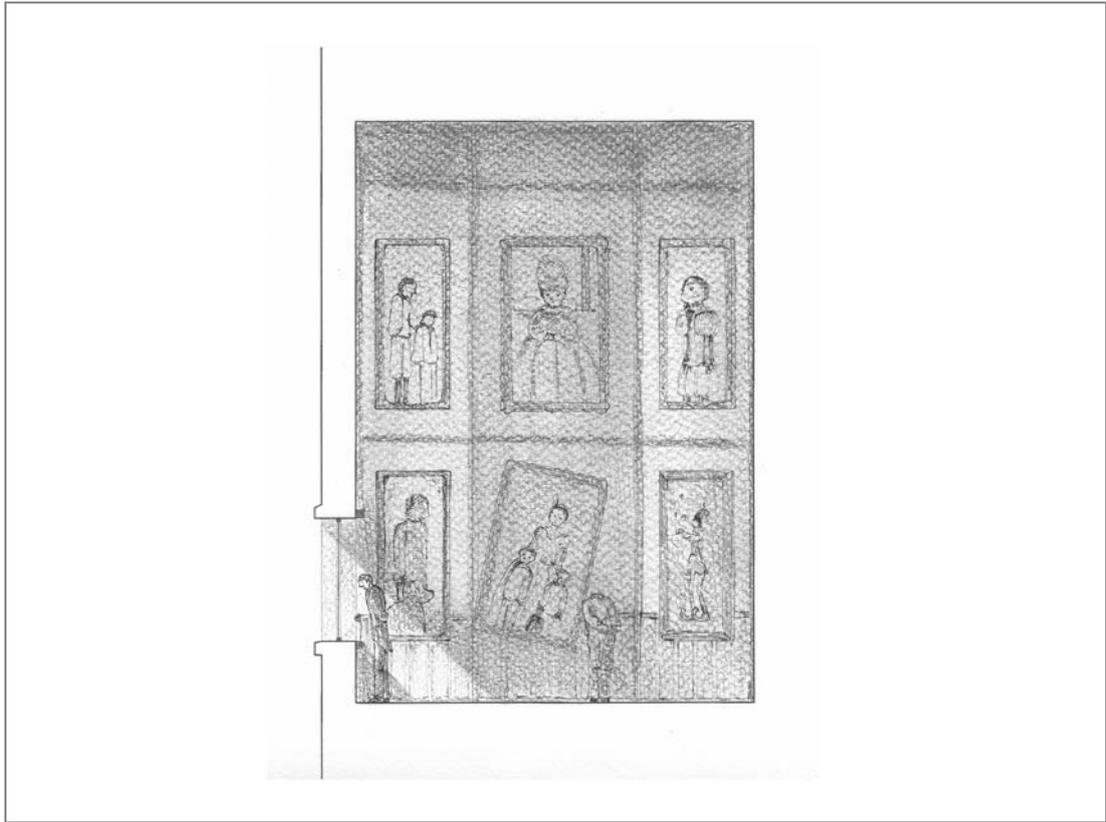


Figure 103: Fragment drawing of Flay and Steerpike in the Octagonal Room, based on Peake's texts. 1:50 at 320mm by 240mm

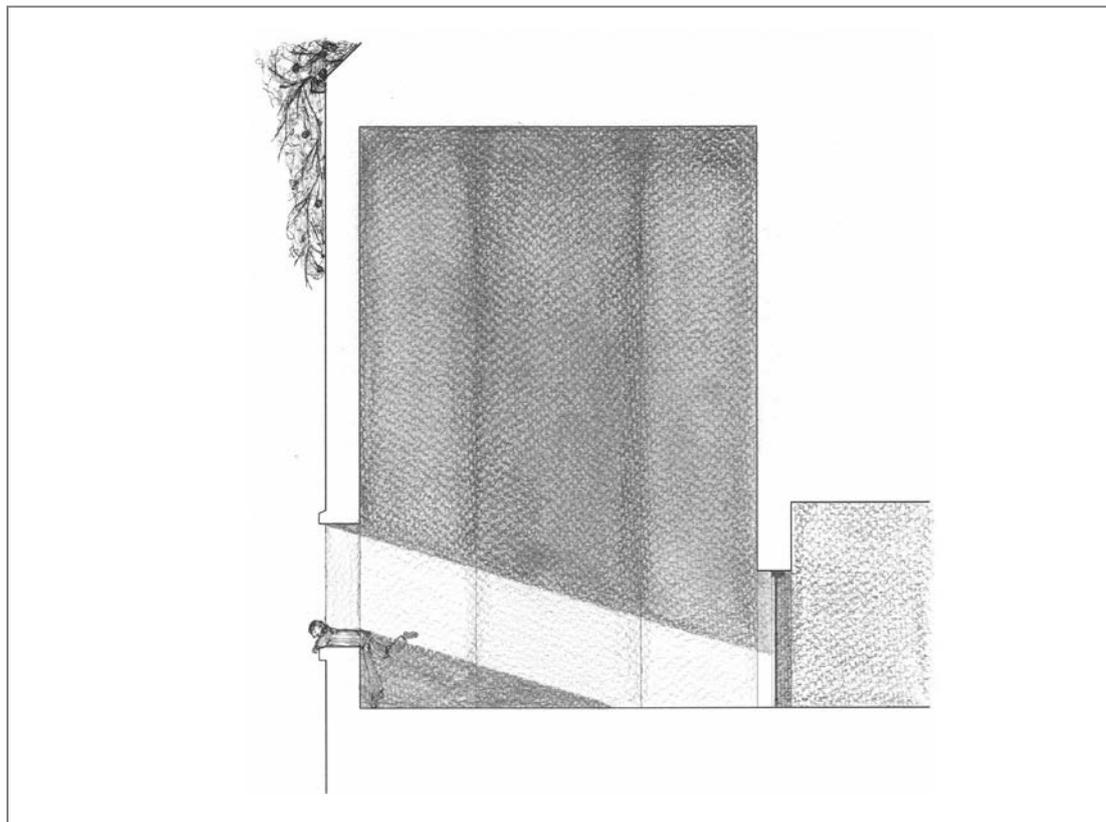


Figure 104: Fragment drawing of Steerpike looking for an escape from the Prison Room, based on Peake's texts. 1:50 at 320mm by 240mm

It is not only mental escapism that occurs in these loci. The door in the Octagonal Room provides entry and egress, but in the Prison Room Steerpike escapes by an alternative means and the architectural-draughtsman-as-inhabitant follows:

leaning precariously out over the sill and with his face to the sky, he scrutinized the rough stones of the wall above the lintel and noticed that after twenty feet they ended at the sloping roof of slates. [...] The twenty feet above him, although seeming at first to be unscalable, were, he noted, precarious only for the first twelve feet, where only an occasional jutting of irregular stone offered dizzy purchase. Above this height a gaunt, half dead creeper that was matted greyly over the states, lowered a hairy arm which, unless it snapped at his weight, would prove comparatively easy climbing. (*TG* 89-90)

This event haunts the imagination (Figure 104). The climb becomes integral to the claustrophobia of the locus and inhabitants become uncertain whether to remain incarcerated in safety or to attempt escape with the terror of the drop below. Steerpike's actions stick within the imagination and memory. The reader's awareness is captured by the event, as is Flay's, becoming fixated on the window of the Prison Room:

[Flay's] mind would lure him into the empty room where he had last seen Steerpike and in his imagination he would make a circuit of the walls, feeling the panels with his hands and come at last to the window, where he would stare down the hundreds of feet of sheer wall to the yard below. (*TG* 88)

The voyeurism of these spaces still confines even when the character-inhabitants have left. Inhabitation of these spaces occurs in parallel: Peake, the reader and the architectural-draughtsman create different versions of the same space, separating them by name but overlapping characteristics. Each mimics the other in acts of self-referential observation. The literary version remains more fluid than the renditions, but the model allows the dual identity to be revealed directly. The imagination is drawn into the model and the self becomes confined within the walls alongside the characters. The architectural-draughtsman is trapped, in their inhabitation of the space through the process of rendition. Only once the model is complete is escape realised.

There are elements of fear in the Octagonal Room/Prison Room but the second example of imprisonment uses fear to a much greater extent. In Cora and Clarice's Prison room the inhabitation of the architectural-draughtsman crystallises around the axe, extending out from it to the undefined, encapsulating walls. The axe creates a space in which the lack of enclosure in the rendition is not only reflective of the unknown spatial boundaries of the locus but also of inhabitants' captivation (captivity).<sup>372</sup> The axe's descent occurs twice in the text, but there may be an indefinite number of other undocumented instances: it is unknown if the axe has dropped at any point previous to, or between, the narrative events. The first instance occurs when the Twins are still alive:

a great axe dangling a dozen feet above him, and the complex network of cords and strings which, like a spider's web in the darkness of the upper air, held in position the cold and grizzly weight of the steel head. With a backward leap the young man was through the doorway. Without a pause he slammed the door and before he had turned the key in the lock he had heard the thud as the head of the axe buried itself in that part of the floor where he had been standing. (*G* 564-5)

In the first stage of inhabiting this locus the architectural-draughtsman becomes aware of the lack of details provided by Peake. The axe's suspension is 'a spider's web', yet no fixings or form are described.<sup>373</sup> The rooms are barely defined with a few items of furniture and the knowledge that beyond 'this first room [...] descended the three or four steps that led to a second apartment' (*G* 654). Beyond the apartments are the Silent Halls:<sup>374</sup>

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<sup>372</sup> Cora and Clarice, twin sisters of Lord Sepulchre, believe the castle-city to be under a 'Weasel plague' and that they are locked in for safety (*G* 402). The twins come to loath Steerpike, their only link to the outside, and plan to kill him. They suspend an axe above the door, its descent triggered by his entrance.

<sup>373</sup> The description of it as a web might suggest a form with a strong visual structure, yet the stereotypical web, with radiating and spiral threads, would neither be easy to construct, nor practical enough to erect a suspension-drop mechanism that physically works. Its naming is evocative rather than literally descriptive.

<sup>374</sup> See section 4.5.

The short cuts he took through the labrinthian [sic] network of the castle led him into strange quarters. There were times when walls would tower above him, sheer and windowless. At other times, naked acres, paved in brick or stone would spread themselves out, wastelands vast and dusty where weeds of all kinds forced their way from between interstices of the paving stones.

As he moved rapidly from domain to domain, from a world of sunless alleys to the panoramic ruins where the rats held undisputed tenure – from the ruins to that particular district where the passageways were all but blocked with the undergrowth and the carved façades were cold with sea-green ivy (*G* 562)

The ambiguity of space draws focus to the axe: its measured position providing a contrasting surreal otherness. The architectural-draughtsman questions the locus' nature. There is no indication of a designed purpose, or why it is over 18ft (5490mm) high. A literary space does not require history; there is no past other than that written. In inhabiting, the architectural mind seeks a rationale behind the dimensions where there is none. It is a locus designed for the axe, for it to be suspended, gain momentum and imbed itself into the floorboards. No other events or previous use require this ceiling height. A captivated inhabitant accepts the space as it is described, a critical inhabitant is conscious of its dramatic creation. The casting process creates a space from which the axe can be suspended.

In inhabiting the model during its formation, spatial crystallisation around the axe becomes clear (in both the model and in the text). Inhabitation is focused upon the axe and the rendition retains the ambiguous boundaries (Figure 105) and the dilapidation of materials (Figure 106): it lacks a floor, preventing inference from (absent) marks left by the blade; there are no walls complete enough to enable a fixing of the room's extents. The cast fixes a moment; the axe is suspended in an instant dictated by perception: pre-descent or first instant in motion; first or second drop, never descended or re-suspended after aborted or failed attempts. The Damoclean state is an anxiety and *memento mori*; it is unknown whether death has yet occurred within the space (Figure 107).

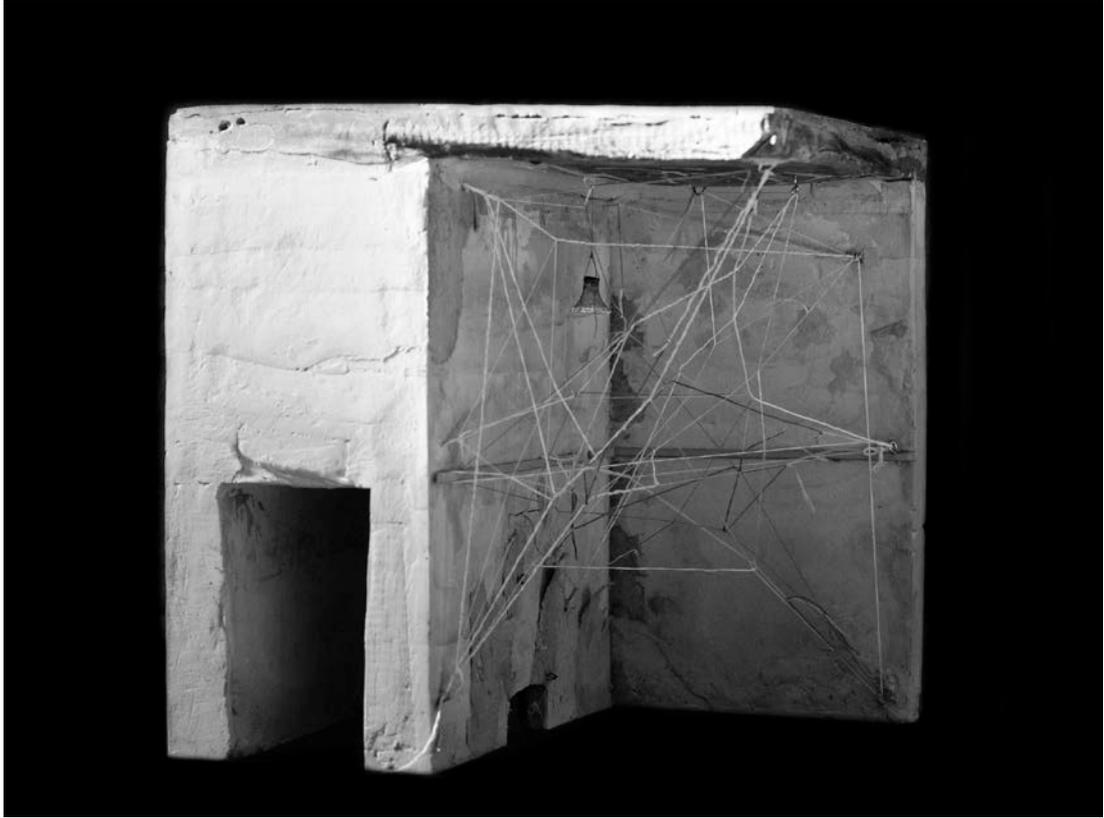


Figure 105: Cora and Clarice's Prison Room, based on Peake's texts. Model 1:20



Figure 106: Decaying walls of Cora and Clarice's Prison Room, based on Peake's texts. Model 1:20



Figure 107: The axe from below in Cora and Clarice's Prison Room, based on Peake's texts. Model 1:20

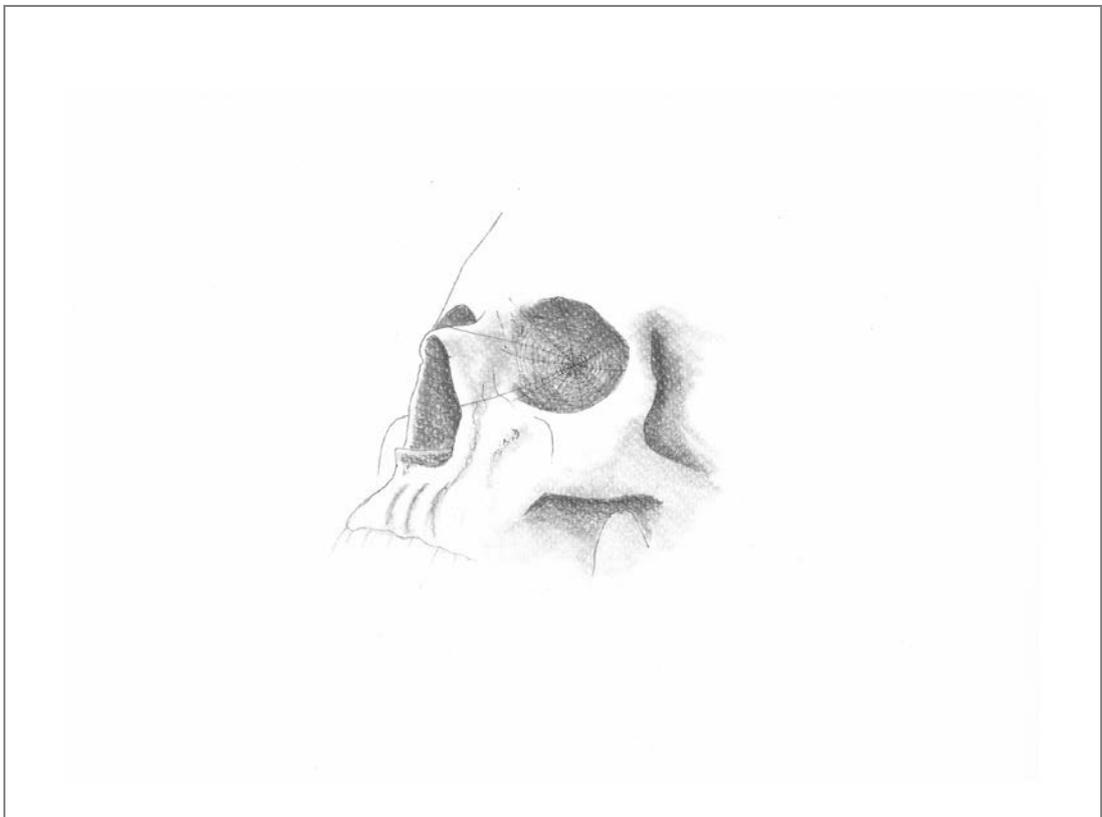


Figure 108: Fragment drawing of the spider web in one of the Twin's skulls, based on Peake's texts. 1:2 at 320mm by 240mm

Fear of the axe becomes inherent in the architecture and its occupation, the unknown compounded by fragment drawings (Figure 108). The architectural-draughtsman has to confront and capture the fear of the locus: the rendered space must be inhabited in a state of uncertainty. The architectural-draughtsman resides alongside the spectre of death, a significant other-ness, although it may not yet be present. In rendering fear the emotion becomes altered and static. The inhabitation of the architectural-draughtsman is one of uncertainty and suspense, distinct from the flowing progression of Peake's narrative as it leads to the inevitable. The architectural imagination becomes trapped within the network of strings and chords suspending the axe, the spider's web. For the reader and Peake the network of strings and chords is constantly in flux. Each time it is suspended the network is altered. The architectural-draughtsman fixes it, preserving a single form. The model holds a moment but does not disclose the instant captured. Uncertainty is increased by the lack of spatial boundaries.

This ambiguity of inhabitation is not uncommon in architectural space yet renditions often give the impression that spaces are static and only inhabitants move or effect change – this is particularly true of photo-realistic digital images.<sup>375</sup> The anxiety of architecture is absent in these images and they become clinical. Whilst the suspension of an axe is an extreme anxiety it serves to illustrate the spatial consequences of the unknown: it is a poetic statement as well as an uncertainty. The final example in this tryptic is also contains uncertainty of physical extents but in a different manner.

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<sup>375</sup> The inhabitants of these images overlaid at the end of their production often only increase the static nature of the image (see sections 2.6 and 5.1.).

The Cell is a single space within the Honeycomb, a prison of the City in *Titus Alone* (Figure 109). Titus is confined here before his trial, but his imprisonment is not solitary. He encounters a long term resident, Old Crime, through a loose stone slab in the floor. Inhabitation of this locus is claustrophobic. Yet, beyond the Cell the Honeycomb is an unknown entity. The prison contains an unidentified number of cells, stretching outwards in all directions, containing an indefinite number of prisoners. Inhabitation takes place at a human scale within the cell but is significantly smaller at the Prison level. This locus is easily imagined:

When Titus entered this cell this rectangle was filled with a golden light. The black bars that divided the window into a dozen upright sections were silhouetted against the sunset.

In one corner there was a rough trestle bed with a dark-red blanket spread over it. Taking up most of the space in the middle of the cell was a table that stood up on three legs only, for the stone floor was uneven. On the table were a few candles, a box of matches and a cup of water. By the side of the table stood a chair, a flimsy looking thing which someone had once started to paint: but they (whoever they may have been) had grown tired of the work so that the chair was piebald black and yellow. (*TA* 804)

The space is limited in volume and furnishings; there are no precise measurements, (although an indication is provided by the number of strides from the door to part way along the bed). The interest in inhabiting and rendering this locus lies in its connections (which become reduced in the act of rendition); the landscape through the bars, Old Crime's Cell below, unseen corridors and uncounted other cells. It is not unique. It is a single cell in a network created by prisoners, undermining formal circulation spaces.

'The Honeycomb? What's that?' said Titus at last. The man had been staring at him intently.

'It is the name we give, dear boy, to what some would call a prison. But we know better. To us it is a world within a world' (*TA* 807)

Escape routes sit alongside an awareness that those within do not wish to leave. The Prison Cell is a small volume within an immense one, its claustrophobia reassuring to those who do not want to venture outside. The rendition (Figure 110) is one in which

the extents of the prison networks are only implied. The front face of the cell is absent, removing the official corridors and access routes. Other half-formed cells surround the two known spaces and the viewer-inhabitant is left to fill in the gaps. There are no unique features (the paintings that were once there have been removed, uniformity is required): the cell-grid may extend infinitely in all directions.

The architectural-draughtsman's inhabitation is, as with Cora and Clarice's Prison Room, drawn into the space because of uncertainty. Yet, once within the rendition the absence of the sixth face and the door it contains distorts understanding of scale. The lack of a reference points increases spatial anxiety; the multiplicity of spaces beyond reduces the cell's size. Like Alice in the White Rabbit's house (Carroll 1865), the body becomes more and more voluminous, increasing claustrophobia (Figure 111). The naming of the structure as the Honeycomb is evocative; the hive-like nature of a prison and its character-inhabitants, close fitting cells built for efficiency and the resonance that forms with other literary spaces – Jorge Luis Borges' 'The Library of Babel' (1941) is a significant example, connecting back to the infinity contained within Libraries (see above).<sup>376</sup> This resonance is perceived when comparing their descriptions:

From any of the hexagons one can see, interminably, the upper and lower floors. The distribution of the galleries is invariable. Twenty shelves, five long shelves per side, cover all the sides except two; their height, which is the distance from floor to ceiling, scarcely exceeds that of a normal bookcase. One of the free sides leads to a narrow hallway which opens onto another gallery, identical to the first and to all the rest. To the left and right of the hallway there are two very small closets. In the first, one may sleep standing up; in the other, satisfy one's faecal necessities. Also through here passes a spiral stairway, which sinks abysmally and soars upwards to remote distances. (Borges 2000: 78)

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<sup>376</sup> See section iii.

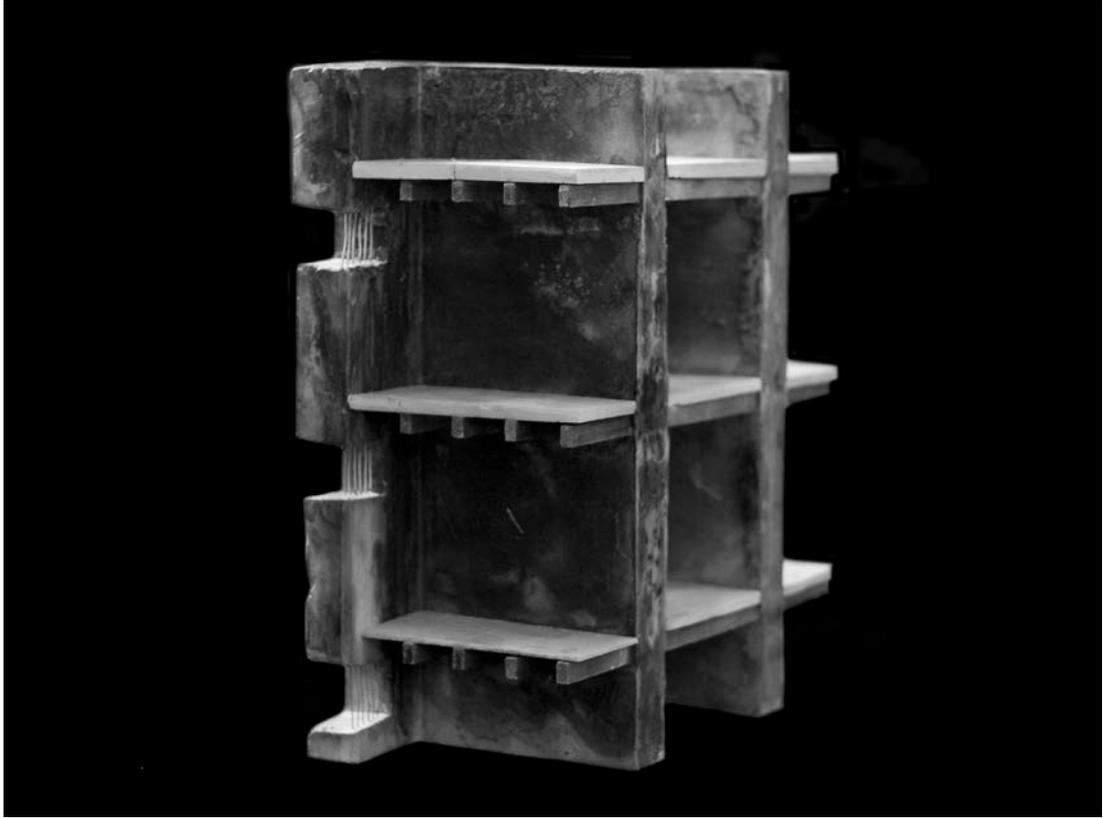


Figure 109: The Cell/Honeycomb, based on Peake's texts. Model at 1:20



Figure 110: Titus' Cell within the Honeycomb, based on Peake's texts. Model 1:20



Figure 111: Alice in the White Rabbit's House, Mervyn Peake 1946 (Carroll 2001: 41)



Figure 112: Hand-drawn overlay of figures onto repeated photograph of the Cell/Honeycomb

Borges cells are comparable to Peake's and mirror the description of the Cell above (*TA* 804). The structures are formed through the (potentially infinite) replication of spatial units. There is security within each (human scale) fixed-volume, yet the whole complex is vast and may contain almost any imaginable activity (Figure 112).<sup>377</sup>

The replication of space becomes another form of containment. As volumes extend beyond comprehension the inhabitant is trapped within the vertiginous potential. In places of confinement spaces are more extreme and the act of inhabitation more noticeable. Where dwelling is imposed awareness is sensitised, both within and beyond it. Spaces of imprisonment have specific threshold relationships between inside and outside but it shifts within Peake's texts: windows, spyholes and floor slabs become exits.

The architectural-draughtsman's inhabitation is one in which awareness of space is heightened through the intent to render: in inscribing space the text is critiqued. This evaluation allows spatial understanding to be formed alongside inhabitation of the imagined place. This is concurrent with the design process and in using Peake's text as a foundation the architectural-draughtsman is made aware of the potential that poetic text has to create space. During the design process of any project the architect continuously switches between points-of-view and inhabitation positions. This is both a method of creating spaces to fit the brief and of problem solving. The architect must understand the self and the other and by examining extreme examples sensitivity is increased.

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<sup>377</sup> See Douglas Adams' *Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency* (1987) and the horse in the bathroom.

#### 4.7: Conclusion

Literary inhabitation allows knowledge to be gained of events not experienced in reality. There are spaces which are only experienced vicariously, yet they influence perceptions and understandings, forming aspects of memory. Fiction speculates about potential occurrences and places.<sup>378</sup> Peake's expansion of the understanding of inhabitable space allows for speculative architectures. He has a sensitivity to detail not only in what *is* described but also in what *is not* – what is deliberately left to the imagination, or perhaps to (unrealised) illustrations.<sup>379</sup> Peake's texts constantly play with readers' understanding of the self and the other and in doing so the polarity of inside and outside is broken.

The inhabitation of space takes place at different levels of captivation and this alters from moment to moment. The evocative nature of Peake's text enables the reader to be drawn into a state of full immersion so that they might experience sensory aspects. When truly captivated the reader becomes disassociated from the physical world and the text is lost to the gaze. The use of language as a medium to create events and spaces allows for connections to be drawn that might otherwise remain unnoticed. Scales change and volumes distort. Human perception coincides with the immense or the miniscule. This allows the dramatic to be experienced from within and from without almost simultaneously as well as altering perspectives. The shifting of views and shifting of scale within the written place allows the reader to form an understanding of all aspects of a space and its events. Where a fixed scale provides a view, it focuses on specific aspects, while the shifting view enables different details to be highlighted. In

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<sup>378</sup> See section iii.

<sup>379</sup> See sections 1.2 and 1.4.

forming loci from text Peake is able to create spaces and connections that cannot physically exist, but which hold qualities that can. These connections are perceived through transitions that are not easily drawn with conventional architectural techniques. In allowing the imagination to take routes beyond the physical, different nuances, understandings and perspectives can be seen.

Inherent in these texts is a poetic sense of the environments created. This is an important understanding of Peake's language and the spaces he creates from it. The poetic nature of Peake's phrasing provides details from which spatial qualities can be extracted by the architectural-draughtsman as a critical-reader. This critical state of reading is one used for many purposes, such as literary analysis or translation into other media (as Peake did himself when writing stage and radio adaptations of his stories). The analytical state is, necessarily, a disruptive one: the text becomes altered. The use of a literary text as a basis for spatial analysis provides another form of criticism of the work. The critical state changes the reader's relationship with the text. They step back from it and (in theory) from expectations of the work. This deliberate removal of the reader from the text alters its effects upon them and changes their relationship with the spaces the text contains. In consciously not becoming absorbed, the critical-reader does not become completely immersed in the nature of the space they are analysing and in so doing their focus changes the spaces they are experiencing.

The capacity to highlight specific aspects of space is one that is difficult within the traditional triad of plans sections and elevations. The hierarchy of visual impact within the plan and elevation is generally evenly weighted; the drawing illustrates the face

presented to the page. With the single slice section the placement of the cutting plane affects which spaces are presented to the viewer but does not significantly alter the visual impact of the spaces. It is the void-to-dense-detail ratio that directs visual inhabitation. This evenness of information has advantages in situations like the Library of the East Wing of Gormenghast where depicted events are given an equal value and the viewer perceives them as equivalent, connecting them in a manner different to the text.

However, there are situations when events and spaces require a hierarchy of focus so that inhabitation can be more directed. The weighting of information that text allows is able to direct inhabitants to specific aspects of a space and influence their experience.<sup>380</sup> The rendered versions provide a more even distribution of information and the inhabitant is left to interpret the space as they wish. This may lead to a more personal understanding of the space but might also result in missing details. It is with the support of the text that the balance of focus can be redressed.

Throughout this chapter an awareness of the self and the other, through the inside and the outside of these positions and their poetic sensibilities, have provided a subjective view of Peake's loci. The self-ness of inhabitants is not constant and the reader constantly shifts between the self-who-reads, the self-who-experiences and the self-who-watches. In each of these positions the self is not entirely contained and the reader continually moves between an internal and an external awareness of events and structures (of the text and of the spaces). This also occurs within the spaces. Whilst individual loci might appear to have clear boundaries that mark internal space from

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<sup>380</sup> This is not a new concept. Students direct focus within (verbal) presentations in order to (optimistically) gloss over areas which are less satisfactory.

those beyond, as they are formed from text they do not truly have these distinctions.

The reader brings external assumptions, experiences and imagination into even the most defined locus. This might either be perceived as a barrier to communication or an opportunity for discussion, but it cannot be removed. Spaces of confinement become so because the imagination is enticed into further exploration. This confinement is appealing in its theatre and it draws the inhabitant in further and enables the experience of atypical events. The text places the internal-self within the external-other through a poetic capturing of awareness and the spaces of the imagination.

It is through the poetic qualities of Peake's text that the spaces he creates are able to contain an architectural potential: his effervescence in linguistic exploration, experimentation with vocabulary and a tendency to become lost within his own texts and narrative events. All of this mirrors the absorption the imagination has when stimulated by fascination (Latin *fascinare*, bewitch, enchant). However, these qualities also make Peake's work atypical in many respects. The extreme spaces and events he describes provide opportunities for thought experiments and understanding of situations other to the conventional understanding of reality. Yet it is because of this exploration we can use his language within the architectural field on various levels. The final chapter of this thesis closes the discussion by revisiting the questions raised in the introductory chapter and outlining the conclusions reached. The text is brought full circle and the issues between architecture and language highlighted in the introductory chapter allow this research to be positioned within the discipline.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

### 5.1: Summary of Thesis Outcomes

The poetry of Peake's literary texts enables a reader's imagination to become fascinated and invites inhabitation of the created space. Whilst Peake was not writing with the intention of architectural design, his spaces and methods of forming them have significant potential when combined with an architectural (creative) imagination. Peake's narrative structures and sensory descriptions parallel those of the architectural design process, and so his texts contains aspects from which architectural phenomena may spring. This thesis proposes that there is a comfortable position between the laconic and verbose architectural stereotypes, outlined in the introduction, and a place between the literary and the architectural disciplines.<sup>381</sup> It discloses, highlights and argues for a place where written text is a fundamental part of architectural design and spatial rendition. This would ease the transition between the drawn and the textual aspects of architectural education and practice and reduce the stresses and disparity between them. It would allow the written architectural text to sit more comfortably within architectural discourse and extend the capacity for architectural discussions, creativity and production.

The thesis demonstrates that with the application of a personal, architectural imagination Peake's text is rich in spatial descriptions (forming imagined phenomena) which have the capacity to create, enhance and extend spatial structures and their understanding. It began by discussing the need for this research, highlighting the gap

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<sup>381</sup> See section ii.

that exists between the poetic and technical forms of language and the different attitudes to communication within the architectural discipline. The thesis differs from other positions within architectural discourse on the use of language as a part of design: such as the architectural treatise. Pelletier's discussion of the treatise of Le Camus (2006), for example, expresses the potential sensuality in architectural space but in its built form rather than the process of design.<sup>382</sup> The 'words' discussed in her analysis are those describing the physical medium and expressive role of architecture as a constructed form rather than those of the English or French language, which can be used to discuss, experience or manifest space. The sensual spaces of Le Camus' work are derived from pre-existing narratives and mythologies and as such require an awareness separate to the spaces themselves. Another form in which language might traditionally become part of the design is in the form of explanatory document, as with Terragni's *Danteum*.<sup>383</sup> These documents reveal the architect's awareness that the layering of meaning with spatial design is not necessarily obvious to the casual inhabitant: they may also be read as an expression of how 'clever' the architect has been. These documents are often (although not always) constructed later than the design and may never be read by their intended audience. This leaves a gap within the architectural experience.

This thesis suggests that spatial narratives can be constructed in parallel with the spaces, like Peake, as an integral aspect of spatial and design inhabitation and that these texts might be approachable and easy to read both during the design process and once it

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<sup>382</sup> See section ii. It is interesting to note that Pelletier's understanding of the relative importance of Le Camus' rooms is 'suggested by the length of the text describing it' (2006: 5).

<sup>383</sup> See section ii.

is 'finished'. This does not preclude drawing from external sources (such as site histories), but requires that they are poetically inherent in the process of design and evolve together; as hinted at by Pérez-Gómez and Pelletier in the coda of their text on perspective.<sup>384</sup> What this research does is suggest a way in which language as text might become integral, rather than only discussing the need for it to be so.

The thesis approaches the architectural text and the potential use of language within the discipline, in a different manner to Pérez-Gómez *Polyphilo* (1992).<sup>385</sup> Whilst his text is an interesting exploration of 'erotic' architectural space, it would be difficult to use this form of language within the work place and for many would be both inaccessible and inappropriate. Pérez-Gómez's exploration of the language of architecture within this text has little exploration beyond the narrative and so whilst the text itself is an exploration it does not extend its potential beyond its own physical manifestation. It constructs a world but one with limited architectural potential.

The thesis has more in common with Lim's work, in which he explores existent spaces through text and collage.<sup>386</sup> His writing illustrates the potential, like Calvino, of describing poetic moments and events in order to build up an impression of potential experience. Lim's texts do not build up a long continuous narrative like Peake but instead creates texts which are architectural and accessible, whilst remaining brief (potentially more practical in practice). Although Lim explores physical places he does not, as this thesis advocates, explore spaces in the process of being designed (although in

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<sup>384</sup> See section ii.

<sup>385</sup> See section ii.

<sup>386</sup> See section iii.

his own commentaries on his work there are hints that this is possible). Instead he is involved in a process of re-investing places with narratives. This thesis argues that these narratives are already inherent but that they are not fully recorded through their development in the design process and beyond. The spatial awareness of his narratives is also often carried by the inclusion of images rather than the written language. Whilst this text also includes visual references it is with the aim of proving that Peake's texts create the physicality of inhabitable space, rather than as a substitution for it.

In highlighting the similarities between literature and architectural design through speculative world building, mark making and a synaesthetic awareness of space, Peake's literary language is shown to bridge the gap between the poetic and the technical and in so doing has great potential in architectural communication and design.<sup>387</sup> In this demonstration the written thesis attempts to remain, as far as possible, at a distance from the personal aspects of this work. This is not only in order to comply with the conventions of a doctoral thesis but also in order to set out a methodology that might be applied by others to different situations and texts. However the personal remains deeply ingrained, not only that of Peake but also the author. The choice of text was an intuitive as well as informed choice.<sup>388</sup> The methodology forming the renditions grew out of a step-by-step process deeply influenced by architectural design techniques: each outcome and iteration informing the next decision and so the pathway is developed in parallel with the progression of the research. This is not to say that there is no aim at the outset,

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<sup>387</sup> See section iii.

<sup>388</sup> See section i. It is also worth noting that had Peake's text been particularly personally significant it would not have been selected for fear of destroying the facets that made it so.

only that the route taken begins unknown. It is a reliance on the familiar in a time of stress and uncertainty whilst enabling a continual assessment and development of the methods and conclusions. There are aspects within this conclusion that could only be formed once the entire rendition and discussion process had been halted and reflected upon. For example, the extents of the Derridan nature of this work were only recognised in the final stages of this research: it is not what Derrida says about a specific text that is significant but the specific tailoring of his analysis to each text he encounters.

On a more general level, mark-making as a form of communication ties the linguistic and written with the drawn and modelled, so poetic understanding can be found within each narrative structure. The use of Bachelard's phenomenology of poetic space to analyse Peake's literary loci shows that written, poetic, experiential phenomena are able to create non-physical spaces with the capacity for inhabitation. This inhabitation occurs on various levels.<sup>389</sup> It can occur with an awareness of the mechanisms of spatial transfer at the forefront of the imagination, so that the text or drawing remains visible to the gaze, or the imagination can become wholly absorbed and inhabitation of the literary space overrides physically present stimuli. This enables the participant (architect) to experience and explore literary space as they would experience physical space: illustrating the capacity for a parallel design process in this medium.

Peake's parallel mark-making, through sketching and writing, is demonstrated to be fundamental in forming the richness of his spaces. His accomplishments in many media and artistic spatial awareness are familiar to the architect. His work is shown to have an

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<sup>389</sup> See section 4.2.

inherent bond between narrative content and spatial development: a process which runs parallel to architectural design. The sensory awareness Peake integrates into his spaces, in combination with a restraint in theorising about his own work, enables an unconventional, architectural analysis of his texts which steps beyond traditional literary analysis. The deliberate absence of Peake within the text and his implied invitation and acceptance of readers as a creative input into his written world facilitate the enrichment of the spatial experience: something from which the architect can learn.

The process of rendering Peake's spaces extends his spatial development and further highlights its architectural capacities. These processes have been shown to affect the outcomes of renditions, from both within and without. Within this the positions of object/subject, writer/reader, architect/inhabitant, external/internal, form/content, poetic/prosaic and poetry/prose are not clear-cut and there is a constant shifting between states within the text, imagination and renditions. The use of cranked sectioning and lack of modelled context broadens the gaps by which the imagination is invited to explore and extend the spaces depicted. Through the different stages of rendition – collation, diagrammatic depiction, mapping, sectional drawing and cast models – significant opportunities for architectural design are revealed. Each process is shown to both extend and limit aspects of the loci. The capacity for text to broaden sensory awareness and trigger experiences of phenomena not physically present is counterpointed by the freezing of ephemera within renditions. The inhabitant is shown to be a nucleic starting point within Peake's text, like a pearl around an irritant, while an architectural rendition creates space for inhabitants' integration upon completion. This

illustrates the potential for literary space as a potential method of constructing architectural space through the presence of the inhabitant rather than their absence.

The understanding of the roles that the architect-author and the reader-inhabitant play in creating space forms a discussion on the collaborative nature of architectural design. The dialogue between Peake's text and the reader's imagination permits his literary spaces to be understood as architecture-in-potential and the interplay between the reader and loci is illustrated through the discussion in this thesis on scale and vastness. The imagination's internal comprehension of distance allows the architectural nature of Peake's environments to be inferred and the layering, folding and stressing of space employed in his texts enables the imagination to perceive the vastness in the minute and vice versa. The different forms of vastness found in Peake's text enable the architectural imagination to comprehend his use of detail and vacancy. The drawing of focus created by these aspects, along with his shifting perspectives, is shown to be integral to his sensory development and phenomenological understanding of space.

Detailed understanding of Peake's spaces enables exploration through imaginative inhabitation. This is shown to be akin to the imaginative experience of architectural rendition in which spaces can be comprehended as places of non-physical inhabitation. The shifting between the self and the other in both the text and the renditions allows for a greater understanding of events, phenomena and personal additions brought to each locus by the imagination. Each medium is shown to have similarities of inhabitation as well as differences and limitations. This awareness positions the literary text as another form of rendition which can be productively used in architectural design. The shifting of

scale, focus and density of detail within the loci allow for a description of space which closely parallels that of the imagination. Consequently the understanding gained in the inhabitation of literary space is shown to be different to that of a traditional sectional or modelled rendition, particularly in thresholds and transition spaces. The poetic qualities inherent in Peake's spaces bring the thesis back to the questions asked at the outset and are shown to be vital in drawing the reader into and inhabiting the text.

## 5.2: Questions Revisited

The findings of this research are relevant both within and beyond the architectural discipline. For architectural practitioners, the act of writing creatively and poetically, as Peake does, opens up the potential for a refinement of thought and decision making throughout the process of design, it would enable conceptual and sensory discussions with clients and other professionals to take place through a common and accessible language as well as recording the design process via an additional medium. For the architectural student, learning and practicing writing and discussing their work in this way would not only benefit them in their later career but would also enable a greater connection and understanding of other aspects of their education (essay writing for example). In enabling text to form a recognised aspect of the design process it would allow students a legitimate route into verbal and textual processes: it would improve spoken presentations and remove the notion that speaking well is a gift rather than a developed skill; it would enable those students who struggle with aspects of visual presentation to eloquently discuss what it is they are trying to achieve and provide a

platform from which to do so. This would better enable tutors to aid students with their visual renditions. It would encourage greater diversity and exploration within the whole discipline without becoming more esoteric.

For students of literature this thesis presents another access point in exploring the work of Peake and other authors. It has discussed ways in which traditional literary criticism might provide barriers to analysis and opens up the scope of what literary criticism might be. For example a greater inclusion of diagrams, mapping and other visualisations has the potential to reveal aspects of literature not yet fully revealed. It has also shifted understanding of Peake's work and his writing processes, which will be of interest to those scholars specifically interested in his work. The Tower of Flints has been revealed as square in plan and amongst other things it has been shown that his writing processes are inherent in his formation and development of his spaces and characters. For practicing writers these processes might be of interest as an additional tool in writing creatively. The use of parallel media to develop ideas extends rather than hinders the thought process. It suggests ways in which the text can be extended upon the page and within the imagination. It also suggests an approach to the reader of texts and the capacity for their input. Of course, in all these situations personal inclinations will also drive the methods used and the outcomes. This research has opened up possibilities but cannot prescribe or predict the outcomes of this potential. Above all it is a creative approach that is highlighted and advocated.

Three questions were raised in the introductory chapter of this thesis. The first of these asks whether Peake's literary language, as a vocabulary set with no architectural

jargon, has the capacity to form potential architectural space when perceived through a creative imagination. The processes of this research, of extraction, rendition and reflection, demonstrate that Peake's literary spaces have enough sensory detail and spatial awareness to be thought of and rendered architecturally. This analysis took place through the focus of an architecturally trained imagination, with an architectural purpose and so the renditions are inherently and deliberately architectural. Yet, as shown here, the non-specialist language Peake uses enables those without architectural training to comprehend, imagine and inhabit his spaces: his text enables communication of the beautiful and the sublime and seduces the reader. This means that although the renditions produced here are architectural, this research does not exclude other non-architectural possibilities from emerging from Peake's texts.

Peake's use of materials and quantifiable and inferable distances provides familiar access points for the architect and non-architect alike, as shown in the dimensioning of the Library window, the Under-River and the vine up to Fuchsia's Attics. The phenomena and ephemeral qualities Peake describes create gaps for the imagination to enter and create, making the tactile qualities of the vine inherent to the awareness of the climb.<sup>390</sup> His poetic descriptions of light, sound, smell and texture allow spaces to be experienced physically through the imagination by anyone inclined to do so. The capacity for imagination is not constant across individuals and just as some readers do not find Peake's text easy, there are those who do not find the architecture of the loci

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<sup>390</sup> See section 3.5.

easy to imagine.<sup>391</sup> However, Peake's literary language is an accessible form of poetic, written language and it is from this basis that the loci are derived. The lack of technical terms within his text is shown not to hinder architectural or spatial understanding and this thesis demonstrates that the narratives contain latent architectural properties. A significant portion of this potential is found in the broader understanding of the world Peake creates (Gormenghast stone, the technological environment and construction techniques etc.) preventing the need to construct each space from first principles.<sup>392</sup> Peake's narrative structure permits collation and retention of this information.

In rendering Peake's spaces an assumption has to be made that the potential seen within by the architectural-draughtsman is also present for others and that their imagination is also capable of these grand feats (although their interpretation will inevitably be different). The use of literary descriptive language within architecture requires an awareness of the processes undertaken in this thesis in order to analyse the loci. These processes alter the text, both in the format and in the manner they are understood. It also prevents an assumption that all literary language, no matter its form, might be suitable for architectural analysis. Yet the methods of this research advocate an approach that, like Derrida's, can be unique to each literary text. This means that architectural (or other) potential might be found within any text if the method of analysis is tailored appropriately. There is little point trying to set out what specific form this might take, as the possibilities and texts are infinite and each individual will have

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<sup>391</sup> This might be for a number of reasons such as personal inclination, neurological differences (like aphantasia where one is unable to visualise within the imagination), level, focus and type of education.

<sup>392</sup> See sections iii and 2.2.

their own understanding of what is to be found within: in analysing through rendition as well as writing thoughts are discovered and altered, the marks made encourage exploration and discovery. However what can be said is that this research not only extends the architectural potential of the text but also the techniques of literary studies. Spatial understanding, in conjunction with inhabitation, is not an area traditionally approached in literary criticism, yet this thesis demonstrates that a greater awareness of the process of writing, as well as its contents can be found. There is much yet to be discovered both within the architectural field and beyond it.

It might be seen that these processes mimic those of Bloomer and her 'operations' upon Joyce's work.<sup>393</sup> There are similarities, as loci are initially extracted (cut) from Peake's work, but the processes set out here aim not to reveal hidden and allegorical structures of the text but to maintain a connection with the narrative and so the (character) inhabitants that reside within. This thesis also attempts to involve the personal interpretations of the text, which comes with critical excavations, as little as possible in order to maintain Peake's text as the primary source of spatial information; however, it is inevitable that the personal is revealed to some extent.<sup>394</sup> Bloomer's discussion on the frustrations of architectural writings and her need to write in a non-objective manner strongly resonate with this work and the difficulties found in writing this thesis. Where here a 'clinical' process is employed in order to highlight Peake's text, Bloomer is open about her rejection of it and its language. This changes the manner in which the reader approaches the texts, both the analysed and the analyser.

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<sup>393</sup> See section iii.

<sup>394</sup> See section 1.3.

There is certainly an architectural potential in Peake's literary language but it requires careful application and an awareness of aspects that are open to interpretation. Poetic qualities shift with each reading, rendition or episode of contact and are formed around the person experiencing them. These fluctuations are also inherent in physical architectural space: one might be more inclined to feel cold, be melancholic, or optimistic. Ephemeral qualities cannot be fixed in place and so are difficult to capture as renditions, yet they are important to spatial experience. This means that there is a strong capacity within a linguistic architecture (architecture discussed in a temporal rather than static medium) that remains limited and out of reach for a drawn or modelled space.

The second question asks what the effects upon Peake's literary spaces are of the input of an architectural imagination and architectural rendition. The renditions have been shown to remove the spaces further from the author, continuing the process begun by Peake and furthered by publishing.<sup>395</sup> In re-constructing loci architecturally, the architectural-draughtsman takes on some responsibilities of creation, no matter how objective they strive to be, and in doing so the spaces become architectural.<sup>396</sup> This is an extension of the process that each reader participates in when they form and inhabit spaces within their imagination. The detachment of space from the text begins with the formation of the locus documents and the narrative is disrupted by spatial collation. These versions of spaces alter the manner in which they are approached and understood. The table of loci and nesting diagrams extend this detachment as the format is shifted further from Peake's poetic narrative: they are tools for understanding what a space is

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<sup>395</sup> See section 1.2.

<sup>396</sup> See sections 3.5 and 3.6.

made of and how it manifests, but do not approach a sensory understanding. The medium and restrictions of each rendition affect the architectural properties of the depicted space: casting brings it into physical form; a drawn section provides views not seen in the physical world. Architectural renditions select, compose and fix spatial qualities and the fluid poetic states of the literary text are made static. The temporal nature of description becomes frozen through design and rendition.

The renditions act within this research as an integral methodological aspect of the analysis of Peake's spaces. As 'finished' pieces they stand apart from his text and from the thesis. They can be seen as proof of the architectural potential of the identified loci and of the process that drew them from the text; they are both an outcome of the research and an integral aspect of its methodology. In evaluating them along with the other outcomes of the research they must be considered not only as individual pieces but as a part of the whole, including this document. A significant part of this evaluation process was formed through the exhibition. This further removed the renditions from their origins, yet served to tie the individual pieces together in a way not previously managed.<sup>397</sup> The extracts of Peake's texts stood to remind the viewer of his work, but there was little immediate connection with the text of the thesis. This was a deliberate attempt to improve the accessibility of the exhibition, for the thesis-as-document is not readily accessible, but also due to its position in respect to the development of the thesis text. At the time of the exhibition the written thesis and its analysis was still in progress (the exhibition providing a new awareness of the work and its consequences). If the

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<sup>397</sup> In curating the renditions their spatial relationships could be considered physically in a way not possible on the floor of a tiny flat in London.

exhibition were to be re-presented the ties between the thesis-text and the renditions would be more easily revealed, although once again this would alter the understanding drawn from the work. In this respect the exhibition presents a point in time of the work in which conclusions were still being drawn and so the work was in a state of analytical uncertainty.

The architectural coalescing of loci also alters and fixes the points-of-view through which spaces are perceived. Peake's shifting of perspectives and direction of the gaze enables a selective and choreographed, dynamic series of movements within and through space: Titus' passage through the Under-River is curtailed and condensed to enable narrative clarity and spatial focus.<sup>398</sup> Renditions do not have the capability to show the pace of events and the gaze is drawn to whatever it wishes (influenced by textures, density of lines, or the openings and formation of a model).<sup>399</sup> They are selective about the events they depict, reducing the scope of the narrative as they focus on spatial awareness and thus fix the space through the medium of representation. My drawn sections provide a single, orthogonal frame, through which volumes are viewed, and made immediate to the eye. The whole is perceived before details are explored. This means narrative routes, like Fuchsia's Bedroom and Attics, are transformed: the canyon-pathway no longer encloses; the boundaries of space are revealed.<sup>400</sup>

Cast models provide no frame; they are viewed from all angles but lack events and human manifestation. They physically anchor Peake's narrative. Spaces become

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<sup>398</sup> See section 3.6.

<sup>399</sup> See section 3.4.

<sup>400</sup> See section 3.5.

objectified (become an object) through miniaturisation and draw the gaze into the volume, shifting the point of inhabitation from outside to within. The inhabitant-viewer is mentally transported into the cast volume from their adjacent physical position. This allows for the simultaneous internal and external inhabitation of the space as both physical object and imaginary place.<sup>401</sup>

By rendering Peake's loci architecturally the spaces are more easily perceived as architectural and comprehension is shifted from the narrative to the volumetric. This changes the relationship of the inhabitant to the space. The architectural renditions, in reifying Peake's descriptions, evoke a different understanding: subjective narrative awareness formed by the passage through a volume and inhabitation through events become objective. Emotion becomes focused on the physical (via visual) understanding of a space rather than sensory (via imaginary).

The last question asks how the sensory awareness formed through Peake's descriptions alters in the architectural renditions and how this affects imaginative immersion and inhabitation. The richness of Peake's descriptions has been shown to stimulate the senses and invites imaginative participation by the reader. The acceptance of the reader as a collaborator enables the architectural renditions to extend awareness of the text and contribute to the comprehension of Peake's spaces. Emotional aspects of space are shown to play an important role in their creation, in text and imagination.

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<sup>401</sup> As demonstrated by the Arena/Circus (see section 3.6). The space gains an outside through modelling and the inhabitant is miniaturised (within) and expanded (without) by this, the Mine becomes reduced to tunnels through the cast and loses its symbiotic connection to the Lamb (see sections 2.4 and 4.3).

Understanding the inhabitation of non-physical spaces is possible because of the inherent phenomenological qualities that Peake invokes through descriptions. His text becomes lost to the gaze as the imagination is drawn into spaces of the text. As this occurs the physical world becomes secondary to the experience. Material and physical understanding of non-physical space is gained via remembered experiences: the imagination integrates this knowledge to enable inhabitation. The physical nature of the imagination shifts the understanding of imaginative inhabitation away from a Cartesian dualism in which the mind is separate from the body towards an awareness that the inhabitation of any space is inherently simultaneously both an imaginary and a physical experience. The architectural renditions support this, for although they are approached by a prospective inhabitant in a different manner to a text (events which are temporal in literature are static in rendition, spaces are revealed through structures rather than events) the imagination still responds through physical understanding. Loci remain synaesthetic no matter in what medium they are rendered (described) in. Phenomena are felt by one sense but perceived by another: the differences in temperature between the shards of light and the shade in Fuchsia's attics are an example.<sup>402</sup>

Once seen architectural renditions change the phenomenological and personal experience of loci, as the drawings force the inhabitant to reformulate and fix temporal aspects of ephemeral phenomena within their imagination and the models remove temporal events from view. This can be observed directly in the measurements used by Peake and within the renditions. Many of Peake's spatial quantifiers come in the form of

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<sup>402</sup> See section 3.5.

human experience – number of steps taken by a character, or the length of time it takes to get from one place to another – these are more than just a statement of length. These measurements allow the space to be known through the body and so are easily recognisable to those without architectural training, as well as those with it. In describing space through an understanding inherent in *being* (the body), Peake makes his spaces transparently comprehensible. The translated versions of these measurements, in which they become dimensions in the renditions, remove part of this innate sensibility of understanding. The rendition is less easily 'physically' accessed.<sup>403</sup> There is potential for this understanding and Peake's descriptive techniques to be used within architecture, not only in its design but also in its rendition.

The renditions can be compared to other versions of spatial (re)construction, for example film adaptations and illustrations, not only of Peake's work but also that of other writers. Each format of spatial rendition affects inhabitation and sensory immersion differently. Illustration, for example, provides visual images that are intended to sit within the text-as-book and so has a very specific relationship with the narrative and events contained within. The drawings of Brodsky and Utkin, illustrates this close connection between speculative architecture and illustration, combining narrative texts and images. This is particularly true when they are bound together in the form of a book.<sup>404</sup> The sectional drawings produced for this research, in depicting numerous events simultaneously and in regards to image size, would struggle to find a physical position within a bound copy of Peake's work. Nor do they stand alone, as Brodsky and

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<sup>403</sup> See section 3.6.

<sup>404</sup> See section iii.

Utkin's work does, as fragments of a speculative architectural narrative. Peake's text is required for context, deliberately so, although the exhibition attempted to manifest an event of this work that worked without the entirety of his narrative present. The physical models, which depict no events, also do not fit within the physical, or emotional, spaces of the text-book format. The renditions have a different intent towards the text and whilst they attempt to capture the tastes and smells of Peake's language, they are not episodic enough to be considered illustrations. The fragment drawings however, do approach this format and might fit within this category if they had been drawn with a specific illustrative awareness of the text.

Film adaptation is another spatial version worth considering briefly. This position allows for the changing of perspectives that Peake explores within his text and that the renditions have lost. There are similarities with this format, particularly in regards to inhabitation, where the viewer is invited to become completely immersed within the depicted space (one which is not truly whole but pretends to be so). Yet this medium relies on a distinct 'vision' of style and genre in order to narrate the (altered) story, where these renditions relied as much as possible on the text.<sup>405</sup> The spaces of a film are designed in order to be physically inhabited (albeit sometimes by puppets or digital figures) where the renditions are not. The physical holes in a film set are disguised by the act of filming and editing; the gaps in the renditions are exposed in order to invite the imagination within. The renditions produced here deliberately leave gaps in order to invite inhabitation.

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<sup>405</sup> The 'Gothicness' of Peake's work would likely be re-enforced by such an adaptation. There is a BBC television adaptation but this has deliberately not been watched.

The processes of map making, discussed above, directly connect to established traditions, whether for real, virtual or imagined landscapes. This mapping-out of Peake's landscapes does not necessarily follow the conventions of mapping physical landscapes but the spatial awareness that it reveals is one that can be understood to link with other examples. There are numerous examples of fictional landscapes which have been mapped and many novels come with a map of the landscapes contained within. The maps formed within this research cannot be interrogated for accuracy, although the processes attempt it, they provide a position from which the loci can be positioned and interrogated. The other drawings are also a form of mapping-out of space, but via architectural techniques rather than cartographic.

Within the architectural realm there are other comparisons that can be drawn. These renditions might be considered a form of 'paper architecture' or speculative architecture that has no intention in respect to physical construction like the projects of Brodsky and Utkin or Webb's 'Temple Island'.<sup>406</sup> This work is certainly akin to these projects, yet the speculative spaces of the paper architectures are ones in which the physical world is still present no matter how distant. Brodsky and Utkin's work is derived directly from their physical and political situation whereas Webb's is a personal speculation about a physical place that created 'chronic mental wanderings' (1987: 1) in his imagination. The visions that are engaged with remain inherently connected to ideologies and are critical of social constructs and events. This thesis, like Peake's, is distant from this aspect of physical space: although it provides another method of

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<sup>406</sup> See section ii and iii.

investigation which may be used in this respect, it needs further development in order to do so. The architectural spaces rendered here are ones in which it is the process of criticism that is analysed rather than a criticism of cultural or physical events.

Other architectural speculations, which remain on paper, posit a situation in which the spaces might be constructed. Student projects, for example, are often encouraged to be convincing in regards to site, construction and physical qualities even though there is usually no notion of physical manifestation. Competition entries also often fall into this arena. Often the most successful of this type of architectural project are those which invite inhabitation so strongly in their audiences that there is a belief that they could be built. This research does not intend any physical intervention and so does not sit within this category; instead it asks that the inhabitation take place within the physically imagined rendered form rather than a physical form imagined in a specific 'real-world' space. It might be argued that pieces of Peake's spaces could be constructed but this would require a substantially different set of drawings and models, as well as a site in which to do so. As Peake does not describe the whole of any space these physical manifestations would be very different to inhabit than a 'real' version of Gormenghast: they would be fragment spaces and more comparable, perhaps, to a film set rather than Peake's castle-city. The drawings of these erections would also have different requirements than the renditions are able to provide; an accurate awareness of materials, scale and construction techniques, which the models and sectional drawings produced here do not contain. There are suggested constructions within the renditions but these are, once again, invitations to explore rather than a setting out of practical specifications.

Inhabitation of text forces the self into the spaces to experience what Peake describes progressively through language. Inhabitation of a rendition is different: for a drawing inhabitation occurs within a two dimensional space, made three-dimensional by the imagination, as it places the self within; for the model inhabitation places the imagined-self within a physically present volume. Sensory understanding is shifted towards the visual and volumetric and away from the temporal-narrative. Yet all (imagined) phenomena are experienced through (imagined) movement through a space. The inhabitant of a rendition adds their own passage of time to the experience rather than receiving it from the spatial depiction/description via text.<sup>407</sup> Whilst this shift is useful in depicting architectural space (particularly for construction), the reduction of narrative means that space becomes depersonalised. The potential-inhabitant becomes inclined to view the rendition as an object or as an image rather than an experience. This removal of experience also limits the emotional connection felt and described within the space and so reduces it further.<sup>408</sup> This is the violence of architectural depiction: through each change in media the subject is changed, contaminated by other versions.<sup>409</sup>

### 5.3: Architectural Consequences and Conclusions

The shift from experience to object is significant and fundamental to the transfer of ideas that the architectural rendition strives for. It is an attempt to capture a complex

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<sup>407</sup> Although in a text time is not forcefully driven (as it is with a visual or audio sound recording) and the reader can bend time, skipping or skimming passages or re-reading them. The tempo of a text is flexible, but progressive and the reader is influenced by its metre.

<sup>408</sup> See sections 3.5 and 3.8.

<sup>409</sup> See section 1.3.

and ever-changing spatial experience through a primarily visual medium. It tries to communicate and seduce, to integrate the other, the viewer, into the space as an inhabitant whilst stepping away from the architectural-draughtsman-self. There are advantages; conventions provide short-hand knowledge, the image/model is static, often reproducible and iterative processes allow tracking of the design development. However, without knowledge of conventions they can be hard to comprehend and those without architectural training do not gain understanding as easily as those with it.<sup>410</sup> In other words what I see and understand is not the same as what another perceives in my work – each individual perceives and inhabits space differently. The gap still remains. Each text and rendition generates a multitude of positions from which personal interpretation forms a significant aspect of understanding. The imagination must remain open in order for this form of work to take place. There is a need for exploration and an analysis of the self that is revealed within and is exposed by the process. It is sometimes difficult to remember that the things I perceive within Peake's text or my renditions are not present for everyone. In attempting to reveal these aspects it is a more than just a statement of what I see. I reveal my imagination within the analysis and my-self becomes exposed. This was the same for Peake and the comments about his books driving him into 'madness' demonstrate the hazardous exposure of this internal world.<sup>411</sup>

Renditions are also deficient in representing much of the experiential qualities of space. In describing (designing) space through a model or drawing the spaces *are* experienced, through the imagination and the hand, but only by the self that creates

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<sup>410</sup> See section ii and Blanchot 1995a.

<sup>411</sup> See section 1.2.

them. This takes practice, but the one who draws or models *knows* what they are visualising and inhabits the space before it is manifested. The self within knows the space and its phenomena inherently, whether it is a physical place or an imagined one that I attempt to capture. Yet, the process of making/marking, and therefore its experience, may not be apparent to those outside its production. Writing in order to create and writing as an aspect of creation provides an access point to the process, as Peake shows: not to maintain control or add layers of 'mythology', but to allow an entry and provide spaces into which others' imagination can inhabit.<sup>412</sup> There is no reason why drawn architectural descriptions of space might not be combined with linguistic descriptions (commonplace in construction drawings, but rarely poetic). Peake used sketches to replace text, so might the architect, who might also reverse the process, or merge the two together. Marks upon a page do not have to be antithetically text or image. Writing as a part of the creative process is another form of *poesis*. Like rendition, it is a *creative* exploration of ideas, an opening of the other eye and the gaze.<sup>413</sup> Within each exploration architectural potential can be found.

The rendition is inherently personal, formed by the hand and imagination that creates it. It is my interpretation, of a space and its experience. Even technical drawings reveal spatial qualities and details first 'built' in the mind before they are drawn. These practices leave *traces* in the imagination like Peake's spaces.<sup>414</sup> This means that a rendition is an expression of internal processes, of the synaesthetic imagination at work

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<sup>412</sup> See section ii and Barthes 1973.

<sup>413</sup> See section iii and Haralambidou 2007.

<sup>414</sup> See section i.

and the editing conducted by the hand as it translates it into a visual expression of form.

The drawings and models produced here are an expression of my imagination along with Peake's. Peake's writing reveals himself (although the reader does not experience this, they only experience their own understanding of his work).<sup>415</sup> The architectural rendition, in an attempt to express an experience, reveals *my* self but seen through the eye of an-other's self (first Peake and then later the inhabitant-viewer). The inhabitant-viewer does not see this self (myself) within the work, only *their* self and their experiences.<sup>416</sup> The viewer might perceive aspects of me within the work but only through their own lens of experience. The version of 'me' that they see is not the self that I know; it cannot be for I am not wholly revealed in any situation. Even I do not know the whole of myself. Traces of the writer/draughtsman are left within each mark made by them as a text or drawing is inscribed: the self that makes the mark is inherent in the mark they make. However, these traces are other to the self-that-marks the page, as they are external to the hand and imagination that forms them. The present thesis reflects this otherness. The writing is found through iterations, overlapping and folding of thoughts. The other-within is brought forth so that the self may remain (partially) intact: a personal text becomes distanced out of necessity. It is a trauma bound in language. This is a text where the architectural-draughtsman yearns for the drawing.

If the thesis were to be re-written, retaining the knowledge that has been gained from it, then it would, perhaps, take greater steps towards its exploration of the thesis-

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<sup>415</sup> See section 1.2.

<sup>416</sup> This is also true of interpretation, the critique shows themselves within their interpretations of what they think an artist is presenting to their audience. See section 1.3.

as-text. In the form that it stands it remains other to the self that wrote it, yet it is fundamentally a part of the author, as the renditions are. With practice the text itself could be more accessible, more personal and less aloof from its contents. However, this is only capable of being considered with hindsight. Convention is a strong force, not only for the author but also for those that surround and guide them. It is hoped that with exploration this tension might be alleviated for others.

The other is present in a number of ways: they are the other-within, formed through my understanding and experience of Peake's spaces and characters (my personal-internal other), and they are the other of the viewer or the critic (the external other). The *you* perceiving my work is other to me, to Peake and also, in part, other to yourself (you have your own internal-other derived from the work of others). The loci are rendered from Peake's (an other's) descriptions, yet they are combined with my understanding of his text and experiences of spaces I have inhabited (both physically as myself and imagined through the media of others, in books, films or conversations). I could reveal some of these influences (not all are conscious) and introduce another 'other-ness' to you, as you inhabit my renditions. I could reveal the Piece Hall from my childhood which, to me, *is* the quadrangle Peake describes as the Professors' Quarters, altered, repurposed and relocated.<sup>417</sup> The rendered spaces become not only a part of the self-who-experiences the rendition but an introduction to the other within – my personal other that allows me to experience things I have not, and do not want to, in the

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<sup>417</sup> It also, coincidentally, fits with Peake's descriptions and his sketch, reproduced in section 2.5.

physical world. This internal other enables experiences to be *known* that have not been directly felt.<sup>418</sup> They are formed through fictions and non-physical discovery.

Without the internal-other there would be no change: it enables empathy and broadens personal experience. The consequence of this is that every rendition, whatever the medium, is collaborative. Those who view, read or participate, invisibly add to inscribed spaces and the work is, temporarily, completed: for though it is never finished, for an instant it can appear to be. The work requires both the maker and the audience in order to be made whole – Derrida understood this.<sup>419</sup> Peake's text does not operate only within himself and nor does the architectural rendition. Acceptance and development of this allows for the enrichment of spatial depiction and awareness. Peake's poetic writing forms space which captures and seduces the imagination, communicates with it, as the architectural rendition strives to do.

The architectural potential is clear: poetic, descriptive, *creative-writing* (writing to create) has a capacity to form a significant tool for architectural design, but practise and acceptance of experimentation is needed. This requires an integrated methodology within architectural education and beyond: experimentation with linguistic rendition is essential.<sup>420</sup> This linguistic rendition, making and designing space through writing, creating through writing, might come in many forms but would entail an architectural testing of writing and its combination with other forms of spatial depiction.

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<sup>418</sup> This is one of the purposes of speculative world building. See section iii.

<sup>419</sup> See section ii.

<sup>420</sup> The ways in which written creativity might form an integral aspect of architectural design are legion: one might start with a written brief, but with an examination of the sensory and poetic qualities required, as well as practical aspects; or 'drawings' of a space might be formed only through text. Each designer will have a different affinity to certain aspects of creative text, as they do with other media of rendition, so there is no certainty in predicting the outcomes of what has to be an experimental process.

The potential use of poetic writing does not apply only to spatial depiction. The exploration of ideas through text is a parallel construction to that of architectural rendition. The text of the thesis is another depiction (description), a development of spatial awareness, in a medium that is to the architect (and myself) less practised and less familiar than drawing or modelling.<sup>421</sup> In architectural discussions the medium guides expression. However, the text reveals a stress in *myself* (the self known to me as me), not apparent to me as a reader, in Peake's writing (although it is, or was, there as he wrote).<sup>422</sup> This stress is that of attempting to express the inexpressible. Architecture currently relies on this stress (the trance-like stress of the creative mind under pressure), both in practice and in education: it is perceived to nurture creativity.<sup>423</sup> The use of a written thesis in the architectural discipline is beneficial, yet it sits awkwardly within a culture focused on drawing and model making.<sup>424</sup> Writing is a creative expression and discovery of ideas, yet exploration through text is not as integrated as it might be. This thesis has applications in the education of students of architecture. The typical writing of an architectural education is formal and requires adherence to strict academic criteria. This includes the essays required of students, educational literature and theses. It is not often a particularly pleasurable, creative or sensitive text and exploration is a risk many are not willing to undertake for fear of the perceived consequences.<sup>425</sup> Experimentation

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<sup>421</sup> See section i.

<sup>422</sup> See section 1.3.

<sup>423</sup> See section ii.

<sup>424</sup> See section ii.

<sup>425</sup> This is not to say that it cannot be done, but it requires the marker as well as the maker to participate in experimentation. In my Diploma in Architecture one of my essays was written from the perspective of an explorer, in order for it to be relevant to the connected design project. As my tutor was open to this the risk was worth it, but it would have impacted on my degree if it had been regarded as inappropriate.

in academia requires a framework to fit it within the system. Yet there is a multitude of different ways of writing, not yet thoroughly explored in architecture. As shown in this thesis there are opportunities within poetic texts whether they are extended prose, short narratives or poetry.<sup>426</sup> I become lost in academic language and conventions, even though the written word often delights me. My-self as an academic becomes separated from the architectural-draughtsman who produced the renditions, the poetic writer I aspire to be and from the reader who reads for pleasure and finds architectures manifested within.

My natural written voice is put under duress in ways I cannot understand until it is written. This is both a loss and a gain; the other must become more prominent as the self is lost and I discover aspects of my thoughts that I did not previously know.<sup>427</sup> Poetic expression is buried under stress. How can I express creatively in the stilted, rigid language driven by the academic voice, instilled through years of education?<sup>428</sup> Fear becomes incorporated into the text; I become trapped within it, as the imagination is held within Peake's spaces of imprisonment.<sup>429</sup> Where the student fears the blank page and the marks they must make upon it to design, they also fear the linguistic marks which reveal thoughts ('what if it is wrong?').<sup>430</sup> Mark-making reveals the self, it is discomfoting. Personal narratives inevitably become interwoven with the content of these marks. It is hard to accept the collaboration and criticism of others when the self is

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<sup>426</sup> See section 2.4.

<sup>427</sup> See section 1.5 and Hale 2017.

<sup>428</sup> Learning a scientific, academic style of writing begins in school, before architecture becomes its focus.

<sup>429</sup> See section 4.6.

<sup>430</sup> Others have argued this is a matter of gender (see Gubar 1981 'The Blank Page'). Yet from my experience the fear of the blank page is universal: it is an exposing of the self, no matter its gender. I am not afraid of the blank page because I am female but because I am human. See section iii and 1.2.

exposed. Convention allows a veiling of this fear, yet drives it. Academic objectivity is not only practised but is often necessary, to protect the self (or allow an impression that I *can* protect *myself*, there is an-other-*myself* not revealed). The academic and the self are in conflict within the text.<sup>431</sup> In making marks there is an attempt to extract and share thought. It is a stressful process and one in which the stresses-forming-cracks are integral to the outcome. Within these gaps, the other can find new thoughts and spaces.

Peake's descriptions show that there is a great deal to be learned about these gaps, spatial narratives and reader participation. These techniques are learned through practice. In order to fully learn from Peake the architect must read and write poetically (although not necessarily write poetry).<sup>432</sup> Reading not only benefits writing but also increases the creative potential of the imagination. The range and depth of experience is increased and so the designer has a greater range of experiences and understanding to draw upon.

The architectural text needs to (re)discover its creativity and integrate poetic, as well as academic, forms of writing so that its capacity can be further explored and utilised. The potential for students is manifold. Writing is inherent in academia and in qualifying as an architect. If greater connection to the design process is made then reading and writing not only become more easily understood to be relevant to the architecture student but also to be *creative*. However, this comes with a caveat: in order for poetic texts to form a part of architectural practices there needs to be an awareness of

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<sup>431</sup> See section ii and Hills 2002.

<sup>432</sup> This is not unknown in the architectural discipline but is unusual, as demonstrated by Shelly Smith, Alex Selenitsch and the Writing Place research team (Symvoulidou, A., et al. 2017). See section ii.

limitations and usage, as well as an understanding that it is a creative process.

Experimentation is required. This means that if students are provided with a poetic reading, or are asked to write creatively they must perceive the connections and relevance to their studies. This is not to dictate a reaction or outcomes, but to dissipate some of the stress of the unknown: writing is potentially uncomfortable, as is drawing; it *reveals* and architecture students are not accustomed to writing as a creative process. An awareness of how to be creative in any medium has to be learned and practised.<sup>433</sup>

This thesis demonstrates the complexities and challenges for the architecturally trained to express thoughts only via a written text: I have been taught to demonstrate ideas through rendition. In order to express my understanding of Peake's spaces (and mitigate the stresses of the writing process), it was necessary to draw and model the loci, to coalesce my experience into visible image/space. To examine Peake's loci as potential architecture they required testing and presenting as architectural forms: to be made immediately recognisable as *inhabitable space* to those outside my-self (not only to demonstrate this within the remit of the thesis). The rendition process is integral (has been made integral by my education) to the thought process. The act of making, of transferring an awareness from the imagination to the hand in order to bring a space into a place of collaborative inhabitation is one of the outcomes of this thesis.<sup>434</sup> Peake's spaces are created through linguistic rendition: he designed with and through text.

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<sup>433</sup> Many students feel a need to be given permission to experiment. This is becoming more prevalent with the present changes in university education. The fear of being wrong (and failing) stils creativity.

<sup>434</sup> See chapter 2. I wonder if the difficulty in the thesis also lies within its medium. The reasons for using manual rendition techniques are lost when typing: although the hands are involved physical feedback is different. This is not to advocate a Butlerian rejection of technology but consideration of the processes of different media (Samuel Butler *Erewhon* 1872: also referenced in *Dune* 1965 by Frank Herbert).

Mark-making is an act of discovery, whether this is through linguistic or figurative lines: I do not know what I am going to write or draw until it is marked upon the page, I surprise myself.<sup>435</sup> Writing *is* creating; it is an act of design. Recording ideas through inscription enables the process to inform the ideas they describe. Traces and marks bring unintended meanings and signs to the inscription. Writing and drawing are not separate acts (although they are *named* as different it is not binary as non-phonetic, hieroglyphic forms of writing show) and this can be an advantage, as Peake's manuscripts illustrate.<sup>436</sup> The instinctive use of sketches and vocabulary in his work, used to build and explore, provides different perspectives both within the narrative and beyond it. His shifting views not only aid spatial awareness but also experience. The manuscripts show the differences in his work during periods of excitement, stress and illness.<sup>437</sup> This is lost in the printed editions where clarity and ease of reading is increased: legibility is part of communication. The selection of materials makes a significant difference to how marks are read (interpreted and understood) and the effect they have on the senses.

The choice of materials is not only one of making marks; it is also within the marks that are made. The strength and quality of the line reveals qualities of space and hides others: the casting of volumes draws out different features to a carved or piece-by-piece construction; the vocabulary chosen to express ideas makes them more or less accessible. I might write entirely in metaphor, each sentence acting as a wolf in sheep's clothing, hiding my thoughts through convoluted descriptions, or I might describe Peake's spaces

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<sup>435</sup> See section 2.2 and Hale 2017: 29

<sup>436</sup> See section iii and 4.2.

<sup>437</sup> This would also apply if this thesis had been written by hand.

as made of stone, wood and plaster, forgetting that providing only material qualities does not present the whole experience. Vocabulary requires deliberation, nuance is important; there should be a pleasure in linguistic materials and the shifting capacity that language has as a medium. Peake's work demonstrates this: his text is an exploration and testing of language. Each word is embodied with different sensations of sound, taste and physical reaction: a susurrus of a voice transferred by text, imagined by the reader. It is beyond onomatopoeia and for this reason Peake's prose is poetic; a quality striven for in architectural space and renditions in order to evoke (create) experience. These experiences become incorporated into the personal narrative, stepping beyond environments created by Peake and into the imagination's storehouse. As a writer, an (almost) architect, an artist, spaces I have experienced because of Peake become my own and feature (un)consciously in my work and my inhabitation of other spaces: the Piece Hall is, and will remain, also the Professors' Quarters.

The narrative aspects of an architectural design are frequently presented as a method of describing an experience of space, as well as an integral part of design development. The awareness of how inhabitants move through and interact with a volume is fundamental to its operation, yet narratives produced in architectural design are not often recorded as fully or as elegantly as other aspects.<sup>438</sup> Exploration through Peake's narrative processes would enable an expanding of the architectural imagination's narrative capacity. Experiences are temporal and fleeting. They cannot easily be captured or reproduced, in order to be appreciated by an-other. However, an elegant text

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<sup>438</sup> The complex narratives created by some of the best architectural students and practitioners are often lost in portfolio versions of projects.

(whether linguistic or rendered) can draw the other in and allow the other to participate and experience something in parallel. The narrative in architecture needs just as much detailing as the space through which it manifests, if it is to work in this manner. It cannot be a superficial add-on, pseudo-narrative, produced as a gimmick or because it is 'expected'.<sup>439</sup> As with all aspects of design it needs a purpose and an expression that enhances the architecture. An architectural narrative can all too easily be (or be perceived as) a pretence, when it should be integral to making the experience and phenomena of a space accessible and captivating. Architecture needs to explore the creative, productive aspects of language and extend enquiry into this medium.<sup>440</sup> Architectural writing should be playful and explorative.

The addition of another medium to the architect's skillset increases flexibility and diversity in the design process. As a design is being developed a written and well formulated narrative allows changes to be tracked, as with Peake's work, and acts as an anchor to the fluctuating ideas that surround a project: this does not have to be a conscious act of recording changes. This text becomes another rendition of the design development and it might be that fragments are used in discussion with clients or tutors so that thoughts not present in progress drawings and models are recorded more elegantly and poetically than meeting minutes. In exploring events through a time-based medium as well as through static ones, changes in space become more easily integrated into designs and those who cannot easily read architectural plans and sections are able to

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<sup>439</sup> Evan's comments on Eisenman, and others, discussed in section ii are again revealing. Although this is influenced by perception: what one person perceives as a gimmick another knows to be integral.

<sup>440</sup> Rob Pope's comments on understanding and changing text should be remembered. See section ii.

experience spatial inhabitation of this non-physical space. This would benefit discussions in which participants without knowledge of architectural drawing conventions are present.

This process-text is the missing connection between architectural space and literary space. Texts which describe finished designs are used within the discipline (with varying degrees of success) but if they are not fundamental in the *process* of design then they become superficial.<sup>441</sup> It is the process that Peake illustrates so clearly: his manuscripts are his sketchbooks and the printed editions are as intuitive and poetically elegant even after their (sometimes less than successful) editing. As with all media, each individual must find their own style and methodology, but Peake's texts provide a strong starting point for architecture. Layering of words upon drawings and drawings upon words, using explorative text to design and comprehend space, integrating *creative-writing* into architecture has potential from which the principles of this thesis can be extended (Figure 113, Figure 114).<sup>442</sup>

Peake's narrative provides a basis from which a descriptive and poetic architectural style can be established. His text combines a plethora of different linguistic features (poetic, atmospheric, measured, shifting perspectives, details and absence of detail) integral to the narrative. The potential for a text to develop space lies not only in its temporal nature, allowing phenomena to change over time, but also in its inclusivity. An elegant, poetic, non-architectural, linguistic description can captivate anyone who can read or hear it and understand the language (and potentially those who do not). It does

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<sup>441</sup> Like making a model at the end of the design process where no sketch models have been used, it might help 'sell' a scheme but does not influence its development.

<sup>442</sup> See section 2.4 and appendix IX for more examples.

not rely on drawing conventions or technical jargon. Tone of voice becomes important and adds colour and depth when a passage is vocalised, or the reader has an internal narrator. Peake's text is a stimulant for the imagination rather than a dictation of space and this makes his text enjoyable. It is the opposite of the overworked academic text which becomes staid, overcomplicated, difficult to read and to produce. The academic text forgets that criticism is a form of self-discovery through the work of another.<sup>443</sup> I wish to create through text, as I create in other media. I would rather write poetically about Peake's text than reduce it through over analysis, or write spaces of my own for others to experience.

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<sup>443</sup> See section 1.3.

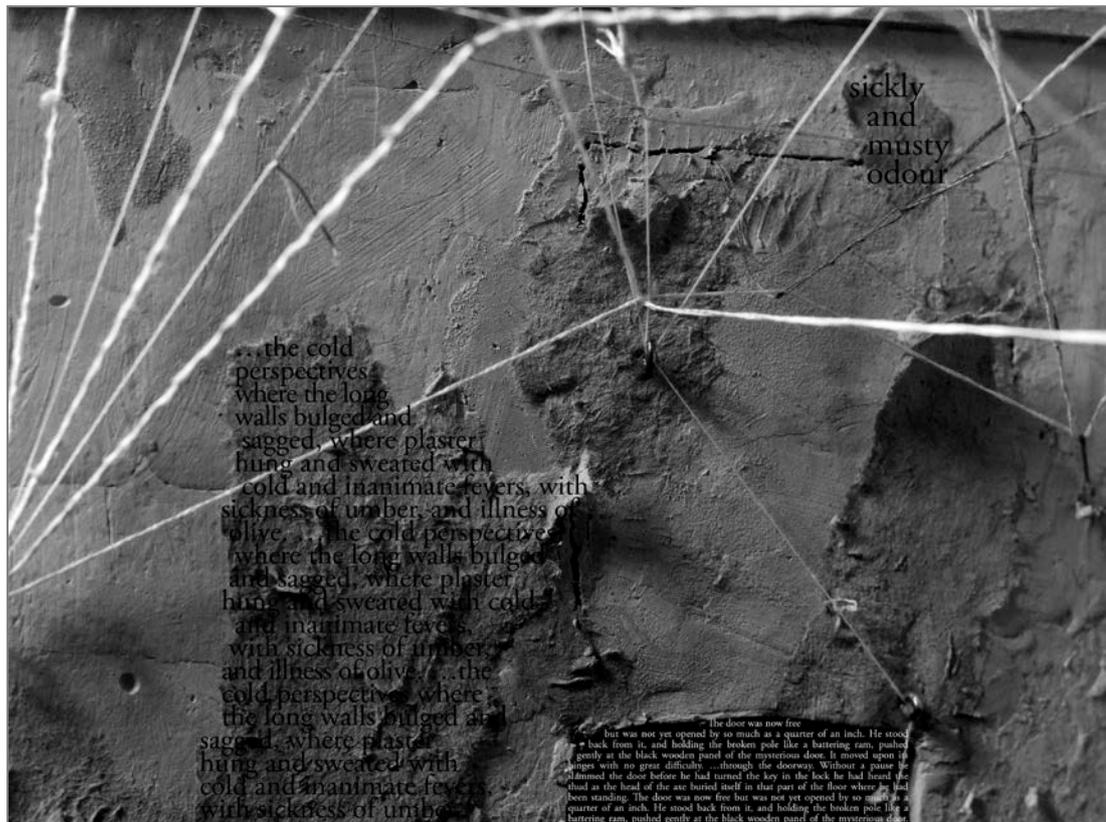


Figure 113: Text and Image Manipulation of Cora and Clarice's Prison Room, not to scale



Figure 114: Text and Image Manipulation of the Cell/Honeycomb, not to scale

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