

HOLLOW EARTH

ANTHOLOGY

Work inspired by Nottingham Contemporary's 2023 Exhibition:
Hollow Earth: Art, Caves & The Subterranean Imaginary

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All poems are original work by trainee teachers at Nottingham Trent University

Compiled by the Nottingham Institute of Education 2023

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Drawing is fantasy, my feelings masked
By someone else's meaning.
Writing is truth exposed.
Tangible and absolute. I want to hide
In a picture, there's a picture.
That is not to say that I cannot see
The metaphor nor the simile
Of my pencil dancing like my mind.
You may write with words,
Fountain pens on parchment.
I draw my disguise with pencil,
On canvas or scrap paper.
Call me distant, call me aloof,
This picture stands testament, proof enough.

A voice, it whispers
Telling you to go, leave now!
But you don't listen.

Cave walls start to shrink,
And the light begins to fade,
You can't trust your eyes.

You've travelled this far
Chase the footprints of the past,
No turning back now.

Is it left or right?
Climb or run, you can't escape.
You're already lost.

Now you join the rest,
You were given a warning.
But you don't listen.

Nardia Slack

She spotted a glimmer of hope amongst the darkness - a sliver of sky visible from the deep depth of the cave.

She gave little thought to the thing obstructing the light moving back and forth - she just had to make it.

She climbed and climbed and climbed relentlessly. Just as the harsh sun rays hit her broken body, a heavy weight fell on her, and she found herself at the bottom of that forsaken cave once again - no sliver of hope to climb towards this time.

Fire

Spitting, smouldering
smoke enveloping my thoughts
a destructive blaze

Walls

encrypted language
engraved into the stone face
unclaimed names, stories

Rain

thunder and lightning
foreshadows my unlocked fate
eerie warning moonlight

anna

Empty Shells...

The rain washes ambition down.
Down the walls of the hollow earth.
Preservation yet destruction. Sheltered comfort.

Crevices in the earth reveal.
Engraved are the children's shadows. Fossil
identity.
Growth like a stone brain.

The Trek

The surreal reality of a
daunting journey to my end, the end.
I'll be pushing up daisies.

Afterlife

Acceptance of finality. The union
of the unavoidable. My connection with a
populated solitude brings great comfort.

A Summoning

Rhythmic. One, two... One, two...
Where will this lead? An unending suspense.
My ancestors' hymn calls me.

A rabbit warren of inactivity
Once an underground hive buzzing with bodies
Now deserted, used no more.

An apocalyptic landscape. Neon signs
lit, desk chairs waiting at empty tables
For suited men to return.

People want sunlight now. Caves
Are no longer an option apparently. So
Deserted it will stay, endlessly.

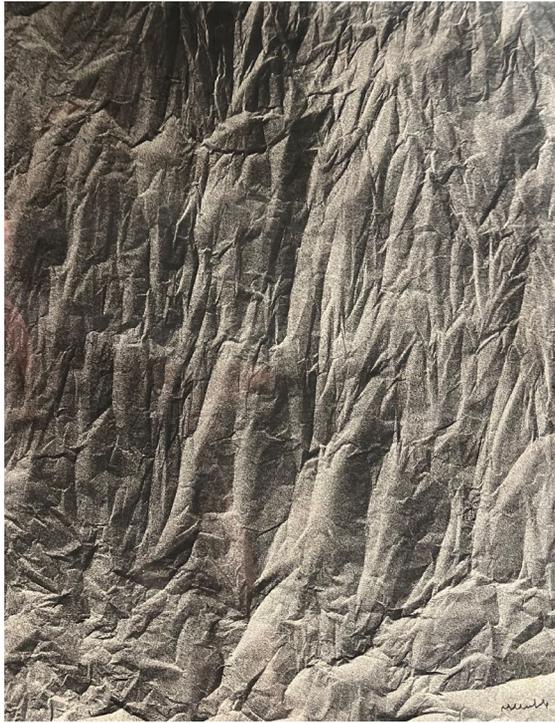
A portal through trust leads
Me, rough jagged darkness, faces looking
On timeless sun, searching, finding.

Echoes in the dark, loss
Of vision, soothing music, landscape crystal caves
Reflecting eyes, full of colour.

Blind exploration, life lacking light
Lost and found, elusive but sparking
Wandering hands, shadows, daylight. Solitude.

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