## People and Pinewoods



Cyanotype Workshop 29th September





The descriptions of the ancient Caledonian pinewood of Arkaig combine historical and contemporary ideology around the value of the forest. Shaping the forest future, human populations have for centuries attempted to curate the lifeforms within, according to the notions around supporting a wild place relevant to the era. Our current future is a collaborative vision placing restoration at the core where a neighbourly community honours this living wild place.

We reference Lucy Lippard in The Lure of the Local, today's arguments for wilderness areas as strongholds of freedom and for the rights of wild, nonhuman communities..

The workshop takes place in Achnacarry Village Hall, a wood panelled hall, with a wooden sprung dance floor, where many generations have gathered in community spirit. The air on this day is warmer outside than that inside the hall. The participants, a collection of family groups and individuals have been together for the previous sculpture casting workshop. Meeting again the familiarity for both the project theme and for each other makes the afternoon's activities flow well.



The text for the workshop comes from three sources, one from 1772, one from 2023 and one from 2024 each one describing the pine forest of Arkaig. We use cyanotype printmaking techniques to combine fragments of landscape in text and photography. The images are taken from our research into the charcoal platforms of Arkaig Pine Forest and Caledonian pines found just above these on the hillside. The images from Platform 2 reveal a method of seeing, from above, around, and below. Squares of light sensitive paper are given to participants who first choose words and image to create a print. This is followed by introducing natural found forest materials and handwritten and painted designs. Secured under glass and exposed in the sunlight for ten minutes the prints are then placed in a waterbath and the blue colour, cyan, appears. Each image is unique, and many are made creating a collection of forest blueprints sealing descriptions of the forest and imagery together.



The words are then used for fortune tellers, thinking about the value of the words, ideas of poetry and found words beginning to reveal a human response to this wild place. This idea will be revisited in the mapping workshop next time.

