A Donegal Bestiary
Etrarem animal quod diutur pantera uarmi quide colorum habens et speciosissimi nimis in mansuetum Philosophus et evocat quem illum etiam nem habet nimium. Cumque omen 7 saeculorum fuerit reconditum in specula sua 7 aeternum. Post triduiu novo exurgent sampnse et emittit magni riguiti et ab oceani odor suamissimi genere unum omni aromatum. Cunem mem audierunt eum
Introduction

The project explores the idea of exhibiting animals both in literal terms—the zoo for instance as a space for the display and containment of animals—and as a metaphorical construct for architecture’s relationship with nature, with enclosures and with artefacts.

The Bestiary is proposed as a new way of exhibiting animals and as a new program to reappropriate “Big Houses” in Ireland and their adjacent demesnes. Sited in Hazelwood Forest which located just over 3 kilometers outside the town of Sligo in northwest Ireland, the project A Donegal Bestiary has a 28-hectare demesne and an 18th-century Palladian style country house. The Hazelwood House was destroyed during the Irish revolutionary period in the early 20th century and have been abandoned until now.

By bringing the idea of the Bestiary—a compendium of beasts generating moral lessons for the observer—the project stands as a new model for the contemporary zoo. The Donegal Bestiary involves a process of integration of the animal into the found Irish landscape, allowing each party to influence the development of the other, far from the outdated idea of animal exhibitionism. It as well gathers within its territory a wide selection of local species that are naturally inhabited in the Irish landscape. The Big House, where the project is sited, was a house for the outsiders and once a colonial stage, it is reconstructed as the reversal of a universal reality, where the animals become the protagonists and the human become the observer, the outsider. The Donegal Bestiary is therefore an opportunity that can be utilized and manipulated with the adequate scientific and spatial practices, to generate targeted outcomes: reintroduction of extinct species, educational purposes, ecological integration and landscape recovery of the abandoned estates.

In this sense, the project stands for 5 propositions: It is Bestiary not Zoo, Reintegration not Importation, Irish not Exotic, Big House Solution not Ghost House and Ecology not Tourism.

Jui-Ying Tung (TW)
The Highway and the Country

In taking Ireland as a starting point to Ireland—an island in the Northern Atlantic Ocean—is separated from Great Britain by the Irish Sea, whose upper half is also a part of the United Kingdom. Located on the edge of Europe, Ireland has been largely peripheral to the continent’s history at least through its industrialization and economic success. However, in purely cartographic terms, the island can be considered the center of the world. If one were to locate a pin in the middle of a world map, it would most likely land at Ireland. The Republic and Northern Ireland are separated by a border—the result of sectarian conflict—dividing the minority of the north from the majority of the south. If the border is de facto invisible due to the British membership of the European Union, the plausible new reality of a “Hard Brexit” questions the necessary relationship between the two parts of this island.

The country’s population achieved its numerical maximum of eight million inhabitants in the nineteenth century; however, since then, the country has been unable to recover from such demographic strength. The Great Potato Famine of 1845—which claimed the starvation of one million people and resulted in three million emigrating abroad—can be considered as the beginning of a trajectory of steady population loss. Two centuries later, Ireland’s current population consists of merely six million inhabitants. The distribution of its population is unequal across the island with up to 60% of the population concentrated in the urban centers of the east, most notably Dublin and Belfast. Consequently, these cities have attract-ed multinational companies like Google, Facebook, and Apple, contributing to highly developed eastern and southern parts of the country—operating in a stark contrast to the west which remains rural and depopulated. In this regard, the small island is divided from north to south by political and religious differences, and from east to west by economic and demographic disparity.

To mediate these divisions, the Government of the Republic of Ireland has proposed the construction of an “Atlantic Corridor,” a series of highways running from north to south along the western region of the island, aimed at stimulating economic growth. Furthermore, the Republic’s Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework, directed towards a future date of 2040, anticipates an influx of one million non-Irish migrants. Approached as an opportunity to redistribute both population and development across the island, both proposals allude to the possibility of a permanent economic route through Derry/Londonderry, thereby establishing a new set of relationships between Ireland and Northern Ireland. By imagining a new north-south link, both plans effectively seek to establish a new relationship between the east and west of the island. Although the Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework anticipates a widespread transformation, it lacks a clear articulation of a spatial agenda for these changes. While the Atlantic Corridor is a clearly delineated construct spanning 430 kilometers, its effect on the country remains uncharted.

One of the island’s peculiarities is that the Republican South extends further north than the Unionist North. This uppermost region, both north and south, Irish and British, more than any other region in Ireland will concentrate the effect of Ireland’s future redevelopment plans. This significant terrain, known as County Donegal, is where this collection of eleven projects is sited. Located be-tween the towns of Sligo in the south and Derry/ Londonderry in the north, it is one of the most economically fragile counties of the Republic. This fragility is further highlighted by its geographic position, surrounded on either side by the sea and Northern Ireland, and connected to the Republic by a narrow strip of land that makes it susceptible to the effects of a possible hard border with Brexit.

Characterized by pastures, woodlands, small villages, peat fields, and a dispersal of innumerable one-off houses, the remote County Donegal is exemplar of the coexistence between rural countryside, housing estates, and urbanized towns in Ireland. These settlements represent the architecture of the region; and yet historically this region has existed without any real relationship to the profession or the culture of architecture.

The following architectural project is one of eleven that speculates on County Donegal’s possible architectural futures in relation to the Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework, the construction of the Atlantic Corridor, and the indeterminacy of Brexit—creating necessary encounters between north and south, between infrastructure and environment—or in short, between the highway and the country.
Photographs from authors during fieldwork in Donegal, Ireland, May 2018

As Found Objects
As Found Object

Aerial View of Hazelwood Demesne, Photo by Author, Accessed from TripAdvisor, December 2018
Site

Hazelwood House, Hazelwood Forest, Kiltycahill, Sligo, Ireland

Hazelwood House on the shores of Lough Gill was built for the Wynne family in 1724. It is a Georgian mansion, the earliest example of Irish Palladian-style architecture and Sligo’s finest 18th century house. In addition to its very high quality architectural value, the house is important both socially and historically. It has been described as one of County Sligo’s most neglected treasures. But it’s also one of the country’s most ‘at risk’ heritage properties.

One survey carried out in 2014 by the IT Sligo lecturer Mary O’Keeffe and students (Business in Tourism) shows the public were highly supportive of Hazelwood Heritage Society. The Society wants to conserve and restore the property, in public ownership, as a tourism attraction/outdoor recreation centre.

The house is located in Hazelwood Forest, as known as Hazelwood Demesne, which is a bio diverse and historical lakeside forest recreation site with stunning panoramic views of Lough Gill, islands thereon and surrounding countryside. The site currently provides a nature loop trail of 3 km.
Numbers of Landed Estates in Record per County

- Donegal: 125
- Sligo: 69
- Dublin: 436
- Leitrim: 63
### Sites found in Sligo

Displayed below is a list of sites found in Sligo, click on the site name to view the information about the site.

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**Site Information**

List of Landed Estates in County Sligo, Survey of Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes, National Inventory of Architectural Heritage
Hazelwood Demesne as a peninsula of Lough Gill

Site Information

Hazelwood Demesne as a peninsula of Lough Gill
Hazelwood House located on Hazelwood Demesne
Site Photographs

Jui-Ying Tung, photograph of peeking Hazelwood House in Sligo, September 2018
Discourse

The project A Donegal Bestiary aims to illustrate a new relationship between human and non-human. It is processed through 3 parts: precedent studies, visualized evidence and architectural references. In precedent studies, it includes the idea of bestiaries, current condition of animal exhibitionism and landscape designation in Ireland. As for visualized evidence, the estate of Anglo-Irish Big Houses and zoo territory are compared side by side. Architectural references look into the history of exhibiting animal through different form of enclosures.

Precedent Studies

As the start of the project, studies of exhibiting animals in different urban forms, themes and purposes are illustrated. Also, in the context of where the site located, Ireland has different form of exhibiting nature to the public. As well as the study of bestiaries in history gives the scope of selection process and moral lessons they address.

Landscape in Ireland varies from rugged mountains to magnificent coastline and from cliffs to underground caves. Looking into the landscape designation of Ireland, there are landscapes either open to public with care or preserved in nature reserves and national parks. As well as there are zoos and animal farms that the scenery is based on naturalistic landscape.

There are four iconic capital zoos in Europe being compared, namely the Dublin Zoo, the London Zoo, the Berlin Zoo and the Paris Jardin des Plantes (Garden of Plants), for the size, theme, location and zoning logic.

A bestiary is a compendium of beasts. It is known as a medieval work with a moralizing tone, while in different period of the history, beasts are selected based on contemporariness. From everyday livestock to exotic species, from real to imaginary and from humanized to the concept of world, bestiaries compiles what we are familiar with and scared of.
Landscape designation of Ireland
The Natural, Glendalough and Wicklow Mountains National Park, Ireland
European Zoos Zoning Study, the Dublin Zoo and the London Zoo
European Zoos Zoning Study, the Berlin Zoo and the Paris Jardin des Plantes (Garden of Plants)
Beasts in historical and contemporary bestiaries, illustrating the common, the abnormal, the exotic, the real, the imaginary and the humanized
Beasts in historical and contemporary bestiaries, illustrating the idea of fairytale, environment, view of the world.
Some transformed into luxurious hotels or historical museums, while most Anglo-Irish Big Houses were destroyed during the Irish revolutionary period in the early 20th century and remain abandoned until now. The territory however became an untouched land like a self-served nature reserve when Ireland has experienced a relatively high rate of land use change since the early 1990s.

In Ireland, these demesnes were not just delightful scenery around country houses; they were the drive to Irish landscape development and designation. Their social and economic role has now gone, following the collapse of the estate system early this century, but they remain the most significant man-made feature of the landscape. Considering these, the demesnes are once man-made yet now relatively natural. By comparing the territory with the zoo, it is obvious they share some similarities in scale, percentage of artifacts, While the demesne of the big house serve better ecosystem and biodiversity thanks to its more-natural feature.
Comparing demesne to zoo

Feeding the Deer, Phoenix Deerpark, Dublin, Ireland; the elephant house and enclosure, Dublin Zoo, Ireland, 1831
Comparing demesne to zoo

Site plan of the Lissadell House and Garden, Co. Sligo, Ireland
Comparing demesne to zoo

Site plan of the Dublin Zoo, Dublin, Ireland
Architectural References

From the 19th century to the end of the 20th century, the literal zoo has evolved from menagerie type collections into conservation centers. Zoos in general are exhibiting “wild” animals in an “artificial and protected” environment, either in cages or simulated habitats. They are also educating zoo visitors about the “reality” of survival in nature which seems “unreal” to modern society.

The methodology of the project starts from collecting typologies and the composed elements from the history of “animal exhibiting”. The Tower of London Menagerie for instance housed a menagerie of exotic wild animals, never before seen in London, including lions and a polar bear given as royal gifts, from the 1200s to 1835. The collection was at first privately owned by the royal, later half opened to public to demonstrate power.

Through typological studies, the relationship between human and non-human are examined. It is later applied to the demesne of Anglo-Irish Big House in order to experiment how the installed elements can reshape the existing landscape and the other way round.
Spatial Study of Exhibiting Animal in History

Tower of London, 1204 (drawing from 15th century)

Gog extricating Xit from the Bear in the Lions’ Tower, 1840
Spatial Study of Exhibiting Animal in History

Camel House, London Zoo, 1835

Monkey House, Tiergarten Schönbrunn, 1907
Bird Cage, Cincinnati Zoo

Imperial Breakfast Pavillion, Tiergarten Schönbrunn, Vienna
Spatial Study of Exhibiting Animal in History

Tierpark, Stellingen-Hamburg, 1863
Spatial Study of Exhibiting Animal in History

Monkey cage, Tiergarten Schönbrunn, Vienna, 1898

Tower of London, Royal menagerie, 1812
Index of Exhibiting Animal Prototypes

- **boundary (1234)**
  - Wall
  - Fence
  - Naturalistic boundary
  - Natural boundary

- **privacy (AB)**
  - Closed / private
  - Open / public

- **grouping (1ABCD 2ABCDE)**
  - Single
  - Linear
  - Inner circular
  - Outer circular
  - Regular
  - Irregular
  - Unregulated

- **ecology (xyz)**
  - Nature
  - Nature simulation (copy)
  - Artificial (symbol)

- **perspective (12345) (abcede)**
  - One-sided
  - Multiple
  - Surrounded
  - Go-through
  - Go-through / vehicle route
Project

The project explores the idea of exhibiting animals both in literal terms – the zoo for instance as a space for the display and containment of animals – and as a metaphorical construct for architecture’s relationship with nature, with enclosures and with artefacts.

Description

The project proposes the Bestiary as a new way of exhibiting animals and as a new program to reappropriate “Big Houses” and their adjacent demesnes.

The Donegal Bestiary reintroduces native species that are currently extinct in Ireland into the Hazelwood Demesne. 9 species across the food chain are selected, namely the Grey Wolf, Brown Bear, Irish Elk, Eurasian Beaver, Irish Hare, Pine Marten, Great Auk, Tawny Mining Bee and Brandt’s Bat. The methodology of the project starts from collecting typologies and the composed elements from the history of “animals exhibiting” and creates expected scenes for each selected species. In order to examine how the installed elements can reshape the existing landscape and the relationship between human and non-human.

By bringing the idea of the bestiary – a compendium of beasts generating moral lessons for the observer – the project stands as a new model for the contemporary zoo.

The Donegal Bestiary involves a process of integration of the animal into the found Irish landscape, allowing each party to influence the development of the other, far from the outdated idea of animal exhibitionism. It as well gathers within its territory a wide selection of local species that are naturally inhabited in the Irish landscape.

The Big House, where the project is sited, was a house for the outsiders and once a colonial stage, it is reconstructed as the reversal of a universal reality, where the animals become the protagonists and the human become the observer, the outsider. The Donegal Bestiary is therefore an opportunity that can be utilized and manipulated with the adequate scientific and spatial practices, to generate targeted outcomes: reintroduction of extinct species, educational purposes, ecological integration and landscape recovery of the abandoned estates.

In this sense, the project stands for mainly 5 propositions:

Bestiary not Zoo,
Reintegration not Importation,
Irish not Exotic,
Big House Solution not Ghost House
and Ecology not Tourism.
The Donegal Bestiary Trail
Scene of Grey Wolf and Double Wall Type Lookout
Scene of Brown Bear and Amphitheatre
Type Lookout
Scene of Irish Elk and One Plus One Type Lookout
Scene of Eurasian Beaver and
Exhibition House Type Lookout
Scene of Pine Marten and Colonial Hut
Type Lookout
Scene of Irish Hare and Circular Type Lookout
Scene of Great Auk and Big Rock Type Lookout
Scene of Tawny Mining Bee and One Cage Type Lookout
Scene of Brandt’s Bat and Cage Box
Type Lookout
Panorama of the Donegal Bestiary, entrance side connecting to R286 Hazelwood Road and Lough Gill
Panorama of the Donegal Bestiary, Garvoge River side connecting to Sligo city
What is your position in the Wicklow National Park?
I am part of the team of the education guide consultants. We do studies of propagandas within the park, advertising towards schools and maintenance instructions.

What are the main ‘educational’ ideas you are addressing to the public? And in order to express these ideas to the visitors, what kind of forms do you adopt?
The Wicklow National Park is only one hour ride from Dublin the capital. It is the closest ‘natural’ environment for the dense urban life. For us the responsibility will be the care of nature, including geological landscape, animals and plants, in its most ‘natural’ and ‘original’ way. That is, having a piece of land that avoids human exploitation and respecting the ecological features. To achieve this, we have instructions for visitors to follow in the form of booklets and signs in the park.

How do you maintain this park? In the sense of the general environment, manmade structures and the habitants?
The national park is completely open, meaning there is basically no boundary around the park. Wild animals are welcome to enter, live or go out of the park. Our job is to take care of the original environment to retain animal-friendly habitats. I would say there is no manmade structures in the park, there is few benches though. But we strive to leave as less human footprint as possible. Once you enter the park, you are free to choose your own route. It is built on the basis of trust and understanding of nature.

What is the relationship between visitors and animals in the park?
We expect the visitors to respect the environment and habitants of the park. And luckily we have not had the unpleasant cases like animals got bothered or attacks. In general, we aim to make the experience as it is in the wild. Of course there are assistants in case there is any emergency, while the visitors also have the mindset that they are not here to bother the animals. If you are lucky enough, you can witness wild animals in their real habitats. Even if some of the habitants are huge mammal that seems dangerous, as long as the visitors don’t bother them, they are safe.

Who is the authority of the park? And where does the budget come from to maintain the park?
All national parks in Ireland are protected and sponsored by the NPWS (National Parks and Wildlife Service) under the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs of Irish government, and there are no entry fee.

In order to have the knowledge of transforming the Anglo-Irish Big Houses in an ecological way, I referred to two experts in the field of National Park and Big Houses in Ireland relatively.
What are the main features the estate you would say to attract the visitors?
In general people are interested in our well-maintained garden and the waterfall. Besides that, the Powerscourt House has been transformed into a shopping center with three local shops where you can find for example clothing, jewelry and furniture. Also restaurants.

Who are the main groups of visitors that are more interested in the garden? And who are more interested in the house?
Most are tourists from abroad interested in the garden I would say. And we also do advertisement to attract this target group through internet and local guides. While there are also locals that are more interested in the commercial part of the house. Since the house has been entirely transformed since 1974, you can only see the original exterior appearance of the house, but not the interior. The rooms are no longer as the original. And there is no feature like a museum for historical information.

How do you maintain the house, the park and the garden?
The budget comes from visitors to maintain both the house and the garden, no government involved when it comes to money since we are privately owned. I’m not really sure about the house, but we spent most of the money on the maintenance of the garden. We are the No.3 garden in the world after all. The trees and most plants in the park are completely original from what they were in the past, while the flowers of the garden we change them every season. The design and form of the garden is the original though.
Bibliography


Afterword: Reflection of Project in Relation to Discourse

The debate on the necessity of zoological parks has lasted for decades. Though the focus of having a zoo in the city has shifted from power display of cruel menagerie to conservation center, public is still unsatisfied with the fact that the “wild” animals are living in an “enclosed” territory no matter how big the scale is. And whether how “naturalistic” the habitats, they are far from the “natural” environment. Fantastic exotic animals that do not originally belong are always “imposed” and “imported”, therefore never natural. On the other hand, there are national parks featuring wild animals free to roam the territory without boundaries. Yet they are usually distant from city and seemly an big effort to interact with wild nature. Since civilization centralized urban development socially and geographically, human has struggled to include nature in everyday life. What can be the new approach to coexisting with animals and nature?

It seems that in the Irish context, an obvious answer comes across. The abandoned Anglo-Irish Big Houses and their demesnes provide massive territory with natural habitats for fauna and flora. Through the scope of architecture, the estates are the product of time, from how it is produced to used, transformed and ignored. The idea also applies to the collection of beasts, in which the educational and moral lessons are clearly addressed. The project “A Donegal Bestiary” is therefore a bestiary compiling knowledge of local species in Ireland, historical architecture and extinction of both the non-human (animal) and human (house). Instead of transformed into hotels, museums or shopping mall, the demesnes have much more to give. The Donegal Bestiary is therefore an opportunity that can be utilized and manipulated with the adequate scientific and spatial practices, to generate targeted outcomes: reintroduction of extinct species, educational purposes, ecological integration and landscape recovery of the abandoned estates.