

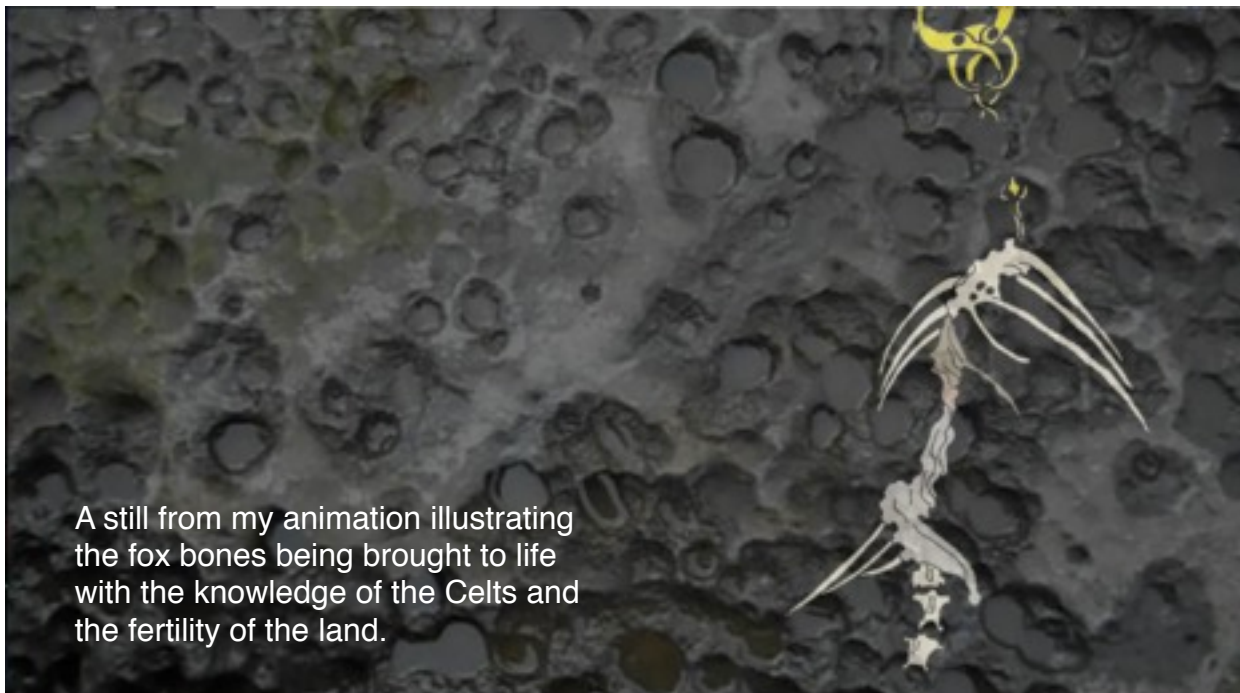
Human History and the Manipulation of the Land in Ireland

The Burren, Ireland trip in the city of Ballyvaughan was an enlightening experience. My artistic work has transformed with a strong emphasis on natural history's relationship with human history and the way the two subjects manipulate one another. The more I learned of the Burren's history, the more creative connections I made while conceiving my abstract animation. My animation tells the ecological story of the Burren while connecting religious transition, deforestation and The Great Famine of Ireland into one concept.

On the first history tour of the trip, we learned of the religious turmoil that has ravaged Ireland, notably the Catholic and Protestant conflict. We stopped at the 15th century castle called Leamaneh Castle, where I found unlikely inspiration from a decomposing fox on the side of the road. Its ribs resembled a cathedral structure which prompted me to use its form in my abstract animation. Another stop was a place called the "Famine Road," which was one of many roads built not for traveling purposes, but to keep starving Irish people working for extremely little food. The roads were governmental control mechanisms. I was struck by this horrific concept while walking down the now peaceful, foliage covered road that was once so painful.

Spending time in the Burren National Park felt like walking in a moonscape. Exposed rock spread beyond the field of vision in every direction. No Irish virgin forests survived the slow process of deforestation, similar to the undocumented Celtic pagan culture that was forgotten after Christianity transformed the people. In the figure below is a still from my animation. I depict the pagan knowledge as a flame beneath Earthen bones, which is then washed away by new ideals.

As I continue my artistic journey beyond graduation, I will continue to make thoughtful connections between the land, natural evolution and human history.



A still from my animation illustrating the fox bones being brought to life with the knowledge of the Celts and the fertility of the land.



The figure to the left illustrates the hand-drawn process I used to animate the bones into a shape reminiscent of an arching cathedral.

The figure below illustrates a part of my animation that refers to the slow deforestation process of the Burren.





The flame above represents the forgotten past knowledge of Ireland before Christianity was introduced. The flame in the image below is now being washed away in the confines of an old church.

