Valley of the Deer

By Jillian McDonald

Valley of the Deer, from which these images are drawn, is a two-channel high-definition video installation shot on location in the Scottish highlands. The work features thirty residents of Northfield, Scotland, the majority of whom are cyclists and other riders who live in the Glengyle area. The video was created in collaboration with the artist, Dave Robers, who wrote the score, in response to the local landscape, traditional highlands dress and music, oral traditions and pagan legends — both real and imagined. The haunting remembrance of the landscape figures prominently as the camera creeps through mossy glens, barren fields, shattered monuments, tattered textiles, and abandoned stone houses, uncovering the secrets of the land, water sources, majestic trees, moss-covered stones, misty scents, and ghostly figures. This video has many tales. The video is my current focus. Unlike contemporary horror directors, I avoid extreme violence in favor of simplified narratives, sublime nature, and familiar characters. Research plays an important role in my work, and my process includes reading film theory, watching popular films, and exploring film culture.

Jillian McDonald, jilliemcdonald.net

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