

## EXTRACT: CHRIS FITE-WASSILAK & NADIA HEBSON

...I know. I was wrong about the whale. I think it should be more complex, far more sophisticated. Don't you think so? I think it should be an anamorphic image of a woman. A fresco, not a mosaic, a painting stretched out across the entire expanse of ceiling, though it would be difficult, even impossible to fine the correct angle from which to view her, from which the entire image would suddenly coalesce into a recognisable whole. If that position could be found then the woman revealed would be seated, looking back at us, or just past us. She would have something like glass covering one portion of her face, even as a part of her face, a perfect diamond in front of one eye. The gaze of the other eye is powerful, as though the diamond has given it greater potency. We focus on the image for a moment, then drop back to our original view looking up through the flowers, back to the parquet, then along to a window right at the end of the room which looks out onto a long avenue, broad and perfectly straight. We move out and follow the avenue down to find we are also following a woman. Her look is as direct and forceful as the woman in the fresco. After some time, as though walking with her, keeping her pace, we enter a garden that stands at the back of one of the great villas cropping up every once in a while, along the avenue. We pass a rectangular piece of concrete: its base surrounded by sparse grass and sand. On its top, at the woman's eye line, are two intersecting grooves forming an X, at the centre is a hole, formed by circular rusted steel tube that has been roughly cut away near the surface. The road seems to go on sloping up forever, there is no levelling out available to view, not for several miles' distance; it just seems to go up and up...

*She is speaking though, the woman. What is she saying? You give the impression that she is angry...*

She is not exactly angry or aggressive, more like I don't know 'passionate' is a difficult word, overemployed. Certainly she has the demeanour of someone who can fend for herself. She continues to talk all this time.

*Is she talking to us or to herself?*

I think she is only really talking to herself. Moving quickly through the garden, we walk up to the back of one of the more dilapidated houses, through some rusting high metal gates that do not make a sound, up some stone steps, entering a house through a loggia at the back. A long room that, once we have been inside for a few moments, feels too hot, stifling and claustrophobic. Now there are two women. The new woman is seated and the woman we come in with stands by a table and watches her carefully.

*Watching how? With what sort of expression?*