

## EXTRACT: ALICE McCREADIE

*A man or a woman?*

A woman. Everything is dark so all we experience is sound; the voice speaks but it is not as might be expected. It is distant, at several removes above and behind the images, slightly nasal, every word well pronounced, relished. In darkness, it says: “They were thinking about a space that would be somehow woven into the sequence of life, or slightly raised up, embossed or proud of the reality underpinning it. Images would identify themselves by being rehearsed beforehand. A monologue of different parts, calling on obscure texts they had uncovered in their adventures. A narrative would be revealed, quilted together from these texts and their own words, to be delivered in a fervent but conversational way, with only one person as their audience, though they debated at length whom that person would be and whether that even mattered, failing in the end to agree. It would not be long: a passing event, a brief meeting, whispered even with the urgency of something secret. The location would be a tiny table and bench under the slide in the playground at the end of a normal street. They preferred cramped spaces, chairs too small, ceilings too low, secret spaces beneath or between things, miniature meeting places relatively hidden, which formed a link in each of their minds to hermit’s caves, though they always enjoyed the idea of smallness, of having to crouch one’s shoulders to get in and huddle up, a posture fulfilling a sense of urgency; the contrast between the imminent danger in a priest hole and the role play in a children’s den, and in the way that participants have to physically change themselves to adapt to the space. The performance would repeat itself weekly and they would record the monologue and harmonise it musically in the tones of the speech and through the narrative, the constellations of syllables, sounds and punctuation etc. From week to week both the story and its physical and audible density and complexity would become incrementally layered, more sophisticated. The locations in the narratives would change but they would always

use the seats beneath the slides in the playground. Could it happen? Would it work? It didn't matter. At that moment, it was enough for it to serve as a way of generating tiny plans and building on them to find something larger, as well as finding what it was they were trying to do, collectively trying to say, or not to say.”

*Then what? Darkness follows?*