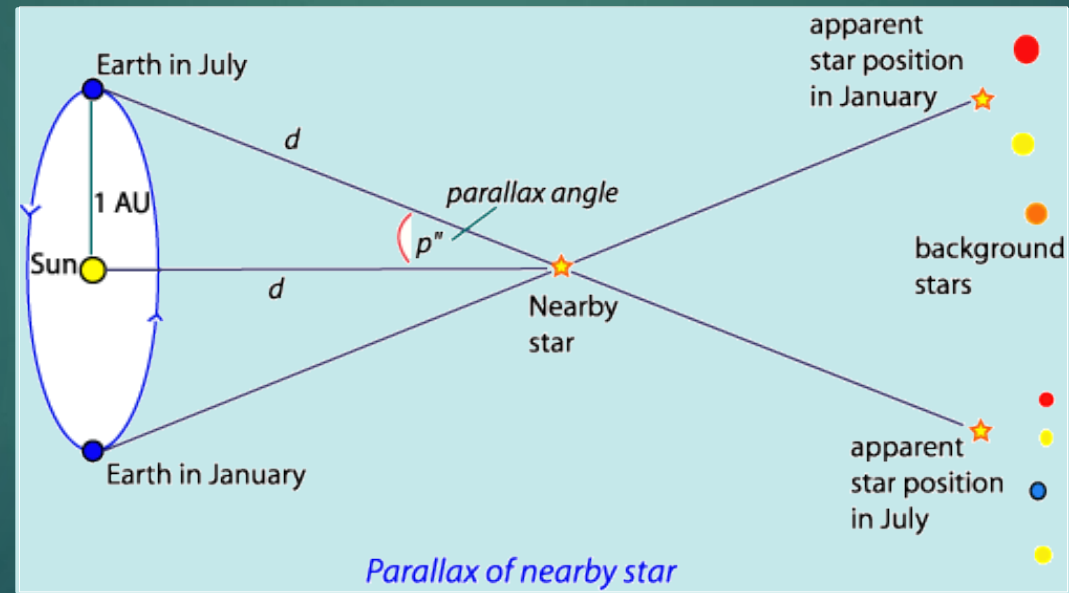




**Undercurrents and Crosscurrents
Revealed:
Sinéad Morrissey's Parallactic Poetry**

Christelle Serée-Chaussinand
Centre Interlangues TIL Texte-Image-Langage (EA 4182)
Université de Bourgogne (Dijon, France)

Parallax (noun) - *the apparent displacement, or difference in the apparent position, of an object, caused by actual change (or difference) of position of the point of observation.*



Jigsaw

The Royal children have been sent a gift –
A map of Europe from 1766
Complete with longitude, painted onto wood,
Like any other map in brown and green and red,
But **then disfigured**: cut up into parts,
A **disassembly** of tiny courts
Strewn across the table. (...)

And so the Royal children spend an hour
Staring and exclaiming, clicking together
(What a joy!) the angled buttress of a continent –
Their own unlikely island **on a slant**
By its farthest edge, and in their trance **ignore**
What will no longer fit: Aortearoa, America.

(my emphasis)



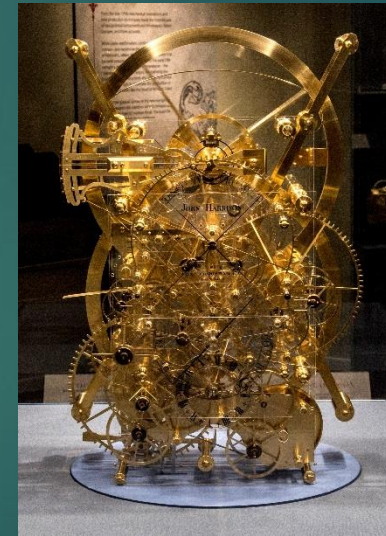
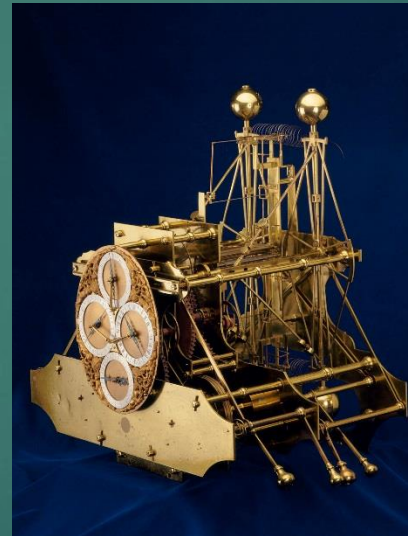
John Spilsbury,
« Europe Divided into its Kingdoms », 1766





John Harrison, 1693-1776
"The man who invented longitude"

Problem of calculating longitude
while at sea solved in 1762



John Harrison's timekeepers - H1, H3 and H4 (left to right)

The Coal Jetty

Twice a day,
whether I'm lucky enough
to catch it or not,
the sea slides out
as far as it can go
and **the shore coughs up**

its crockery: rocks,
mussel banks, beach glass,
the horizontal chimney stacks

of sewer pipes,
crab shells, bike spokes.
As though a floating house

fell out of the clouds
as it passed
the city limits,

Belfast bricks, the kind
that also built the factories
and the gasworks,

litter the beach. (...)

(my emphasis)



Mud flats, Strangford Lough

Countless tidal rocky outcrops called pladdies (islet or bank in the middle of a channel) litter the lough and mudflats, along with marshes, rocks, bays and headlands.



as when Dorothy
opens her dull
cabin door

and what happens outside is Technicolor.



« The Wizard of Oz », Victor Fleming, 1939

Shadow

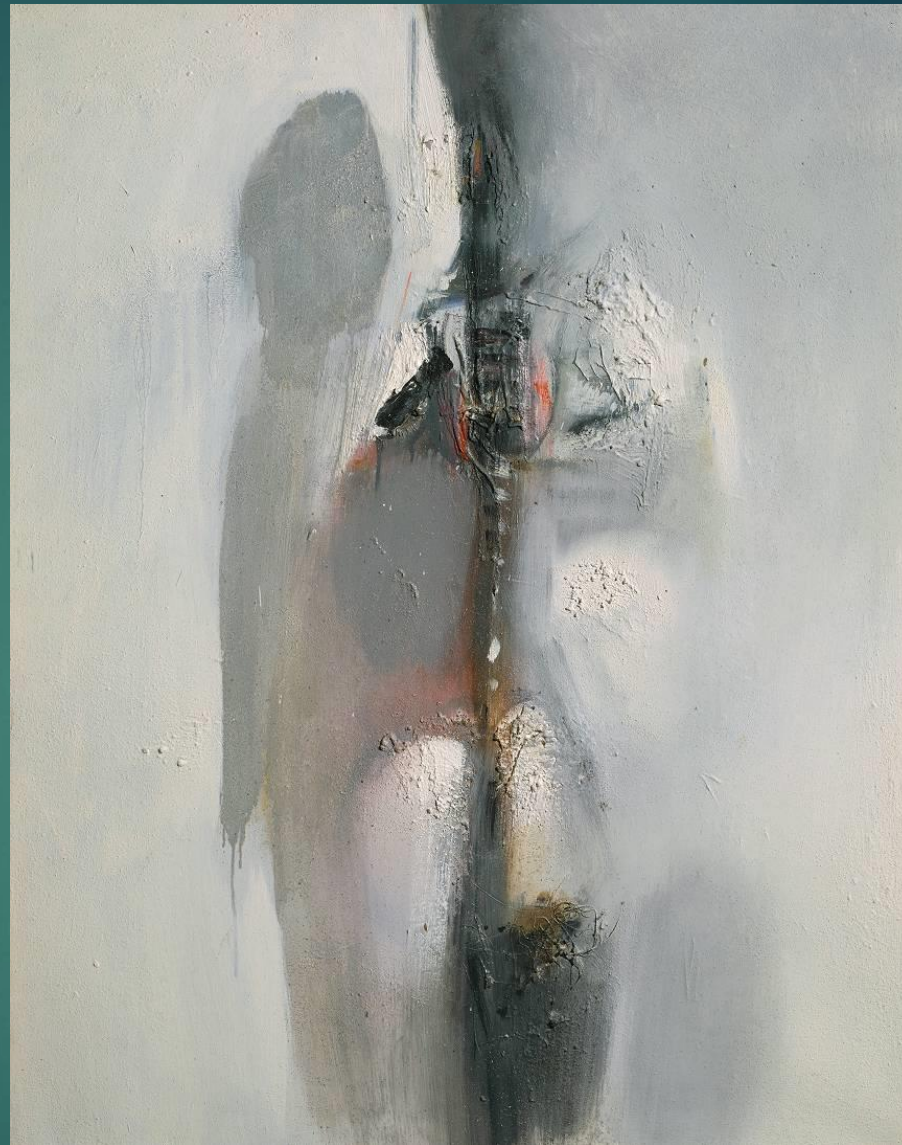
My shadow this morning on the station platform
looks impossibly stretched and beaten thin:
a stiltwalker's shadow, all legs and no torso;
a dun metal casing left after a hammering. (...)

The platform is shining with salt.
My shadow displaced at the waist is taking a bow.

Lady other, Lady mine, if I stood here all morning
I'd watch you retracting back like drowning soap.
Shadows of candles on church walls at Evensong
manifest not as flame, but smoke.



Louis Le Brocqy, "Woman" (1957),
Oil on canvas, private coll.



Louis Le Brocqy, "Woman" (1959),
Oil on canvas, Tate Modern