

SOUNDWORK

Rising Tide at Okeover Inlet

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The soundwork file is openly available online on the UBC Library Open Journal Systems website: <https://ojs.library.ubc.ca/index.php/bcstudies/article/view/201402>.

Recorded at 19:09 on 27 May 2020, *Okeover Inlet, Lund*
Ancestral land of the Tla'amin Nation.

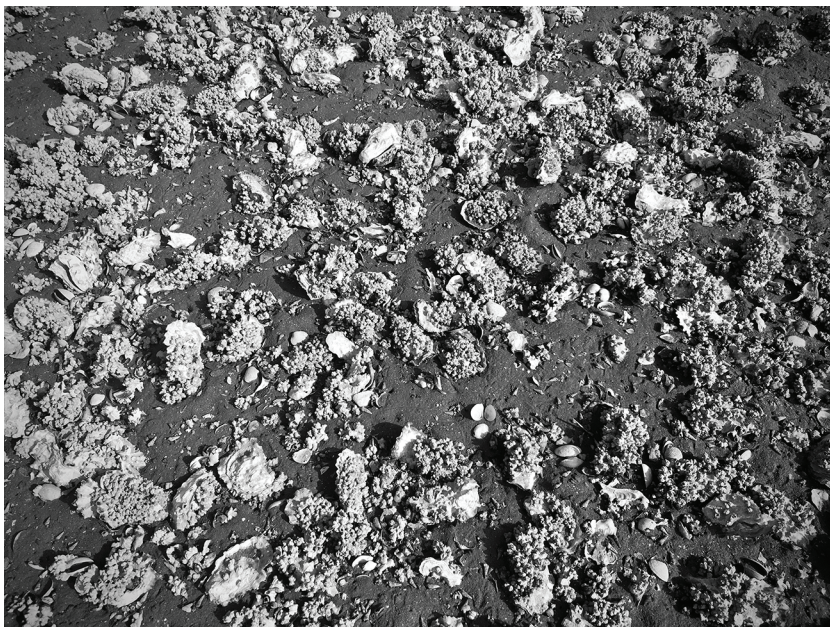


Figure 1. Clams, oysters, and barnacles exposed by the low tide at Okeover Inlet.

Latitude
49.97141° or 49° 58' 17" north

Longitude
-124.6842° or 124° 41' 3" west

Elevation
10 metres (32.8 feet)

knee-deep mud
undraped by low tide

Desolation Sound rumbles distant
at the tongue of the inlet

sky devoid of airspace metal
rocks warble

Our feet sink in the mud flats. The sun is higher than it should be at this time of the year.

Thinking about it now, *this image* sounds *imagined*. Images are *imagined*, I suppose; but that doesn't mean they all *sound* imagined. All the same, any image from back then feels dense and blurry.

We were fortunate, far from the epicentres of a global pandemic, and able to drive north only a few weeks after the first lockdown. We took a step together at *Earl's Cove*, signing papers on the trunk of the car while waiting for the ferry to *Saltery Bay*. I recall the relentless wind, as a final challenge to our commitment. Perhaps memory is a form of *imagination*.

These images came to me as I was listening to the recordings we took at the edge of the *Okeover Inlet*. There is a concreteness to these sounds. A material and spatial factuality. They are tactile, airy, scented, salty. Water meandering around boulders, filtering through sand grains formed by pressure over time. Buried clams spitting tiny iridescent bubbles; the bay, a soft tongue. The *Sound* an open mouth.

I fail to recall how or when the sandy surface became crusty as we wandered through the intertidal zone. Suddenly, rocks and shells all around us. Alive. I had never traversed a landscape like that. Something stopped me from going further. Squatting over a large round rock; still. As the sound of my motions faded; the exposed seabed gurgled.