

Philip Layley

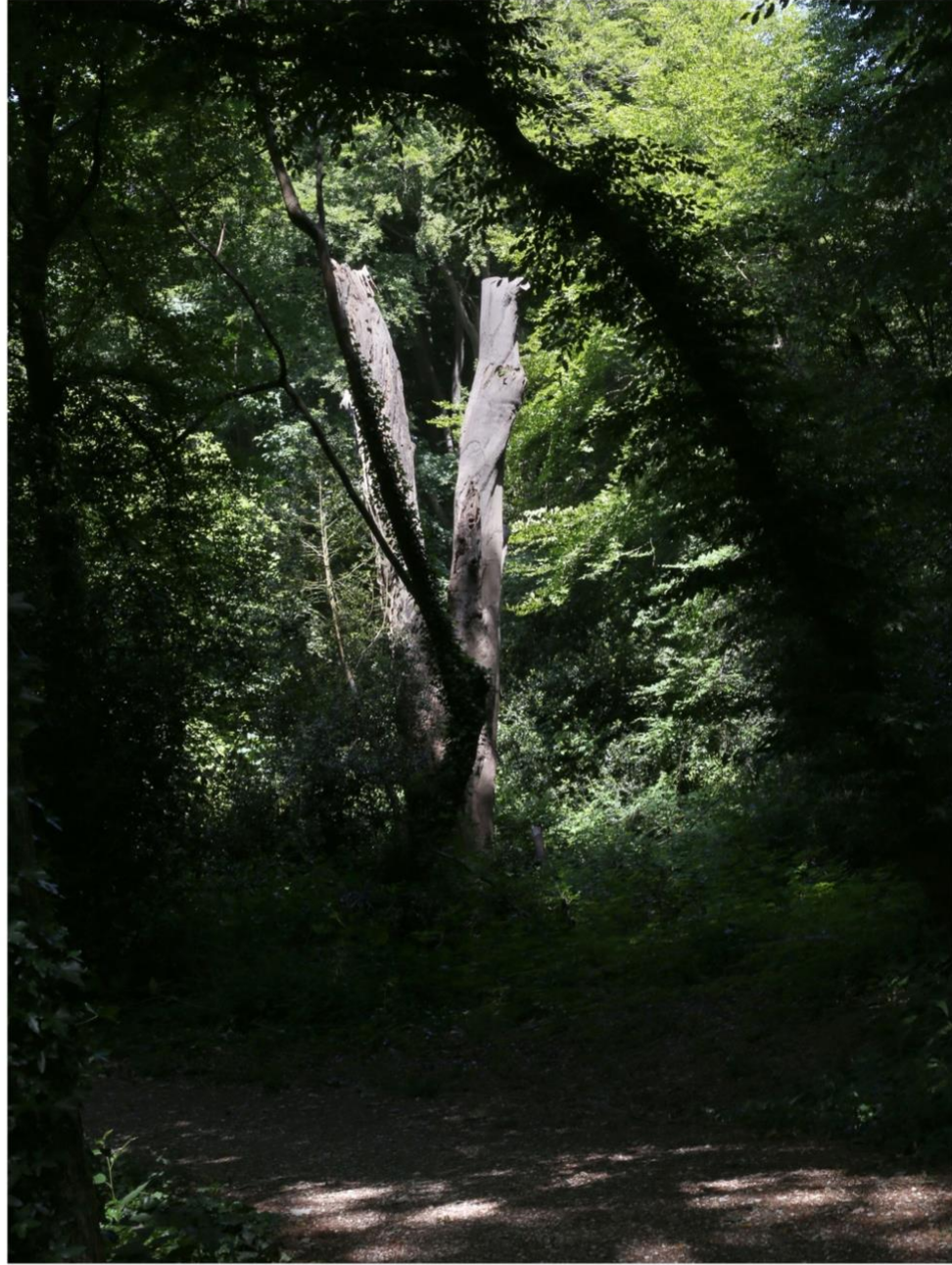
Nemophilist the Haunter of the woods



*The Groves invite thee, dear Nemophilist, to
care-free revel in their vernal bowers.
Sequoia Sonnets 1919.*



Woodland Exhibition



The expression Nemophilist (pronounced ne-mo-fe-list). Had been predominantly used by 19th century poets and creative writers who dwell in the romantic solitude that can be found in a forest location and describes someone with a spiritual connection to a woodland environment.



With the abstract notion of the Nemophilist leaving no visual references I looked to Celtic Mythology for inspiration when making my collages.



Choosing a location that is popular with walkers and cyclist's gave me a steady footfall of people who perhaps would not usually visit a gallery but do have a kindred liking to the woods. None of whom were expecting to see an art installation on their Sunday exercise and stopped to chat about the woods and the environment in general. Art on it's own cannot stop the damage we are causing to our world however art can keep the conversation going and help to educate the climate change deniers.

Our countryside is as strictly managed as our city's the only true wild spaces left in England are the areas of land that lie on the edges of our residential and industrial estates where nature is left to it's own devices.

For my exhibition I chose an area on the edge of Southampton that in the past had been service road to a landfill site. Once a busy industrial location that over the last forty years has been left to return to nature.

