emblematic, part of a personal visual language.

GW How have objects developed into language?

PC As a student, I was inspired by Miro. In his painting *The Farm* [1922], he attempted to paint every creature: snails, birds, hens, cockerels, and stones and leaves. By the time he was painting *Harlequin's Carnival* [1925], all these characters and other invented forms became animated within the flat canvas. I saw, in Miro's work, the release of a visual language and the invention of motifs, forms and shapes that took on their own meaning. Since then, my own visual language has been synthesized from diverse sources: still-life and found objects, museum collections, fossils, archaeological artefacts, signs and symbols and from etymological origins: alphabets, characters, letter forms.

GW Archaeological themes run through your work. Tell me more.

PC My interest in archaeology is broad – somewhere between geology, palaeontology, anthropology, ethnology and linguistics. Fossils, ammonites and belemnites, rock carvings from the Boyne Valley and petroglyphs of the American south west have all found their way into my lexicon.

GW Tell me about letter forms in recent work?

PC I became interested in the etymological origins of letters; this resulted in prints based on the alphabet. I was inspired by Denise Schamdt-Besserat's theory that language evolved from the accounting of objects for economic reasons[5]. Inspired as much by the tables and classification of clay tokens and symbols, I have embarked upon cataloguing the symbols I discovered or invented for a project I call *Greganyce*. Drawings are scanned, digitally manipulated, saved and filed into different periods from ancient to modern *Greganyce* – my invented, visual language.

GW What are your plans now?

PC The next project may see collaboration with the Computer Science department at Aberystwyth University, so that graphics software can be developed to facilitate further digitization of lithography. I am also keen that *Greganyce* will be realized as a tray of type, either laser-cut into resin blocks or printed as font using 3-D printing technology.

Notes

1 The Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation offers grants to young artists. See: www.elizabethgreenshieldsfoundation.org
2 A 1982 American dystopian science fiction film directed by Ridley Scott
3 The Japanese writing system uses 3 alphabets: Hiragana, Katakana & Kanji
4 *Stone Lithography* (2001) & *Plate Lithography* (2003) published by A&C Black Ltd (now part of Bloomsbury), see: www.bloomsbury.com/uk
5 University of Texas Press, 1992, *Before Writing, Vol I: From Counting to Cunieform* & *Before Writing, Vol II: A Catalog of Near Eastern Tokens* by Denise Schmandt-Besserat

Contact

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Images, left to right
Paul Croft with *Navan Fort III*, 1989/90. Graphite, lithograph, 525 × 490 mm
Stowell's Still Life 1983. Etching, 305 × 305 mm
Spiral Shrine 1995. Lithograph, 700 × 500 mm
Alphabet Mn 2008. Lithograph, 400 × 530 mm
Les Amulets à Musée Sippar Chequer Pan 2011. Lithograph, 240 × 180 mm