

MORE THAN A HAMMER

OR: HOW THE PROJECT CAME INTO BEING

by Rona Rangsch

The idea of combining art and geology on Fogo Island isn't very far-fetched given the nature of the place. Other artists visiting the island have included geological aspects in their work. The Shorefast Foundation's *Geology at the Edge* programme may have triggered earlier geology-inspired artwork; it definitely has triggered the work presented here.

I was busy on Fogo Island with a different project when I first learned about the local geology programme, and having a background in natural sciences I loved the idea of joining forces with a geologist to look on the island's features with not only two but four good eyes and develop a body of work at the intersection of science and art.

Geology at the Edge director Paul Dean demonstrated personal intuition when he introduced me to his friend and colleague Jack Botsford, who is not only a geologist but also an experienced printmaker. Jack and I started brainstorming on geology and art immediately, and we soon came up with a number of ideas bearing an overlap and/or a mutual inspiration of the disciplines. But we couldn't – and probably didn't want to – narrow down our spectrum to a single concept at that time. We were thus more than happy when Paul arranged for a joint stay on Fogo Island in summer 2016 which would give us the opportunity to start an actual collaboration on site.

When Jack and I arrived on Fogo Island our first approach to a joint project was extended hikes all over the island where Jack introduced me to the island's geology as well as to some basic geological field methodology. That was exciting as I saw the landscape I had previously walked over with new eyes, and soon we started to have our first geological discussions in the field.

Then came the day when Jack asked me to stand in the photo he was going to take of a geological feature. At first I didn't realize that he didn't need me as an attractive accessory to the setting but as a scale instead. When he asked me again I thought that I could actually be more than the hammer, book or backpack he usually uses to add a scale to his geological images and started to play with my limbs. The next step was to try and express some of the geological information the image was meant to illustrate by means of my body. This is when I really overcame the status of a hammer or a backpack and when we started to develop a body-based geological sign language for a variety of geological formations specific for Fogo Island.