

Presents an Inaugural Ephemera of...

**A Volume of Dust**

- \_A granular exploration of the Universe
- \_A volume of taxonomy
- \_A monument to vulnerability

Dust is a substance full of contradictions.

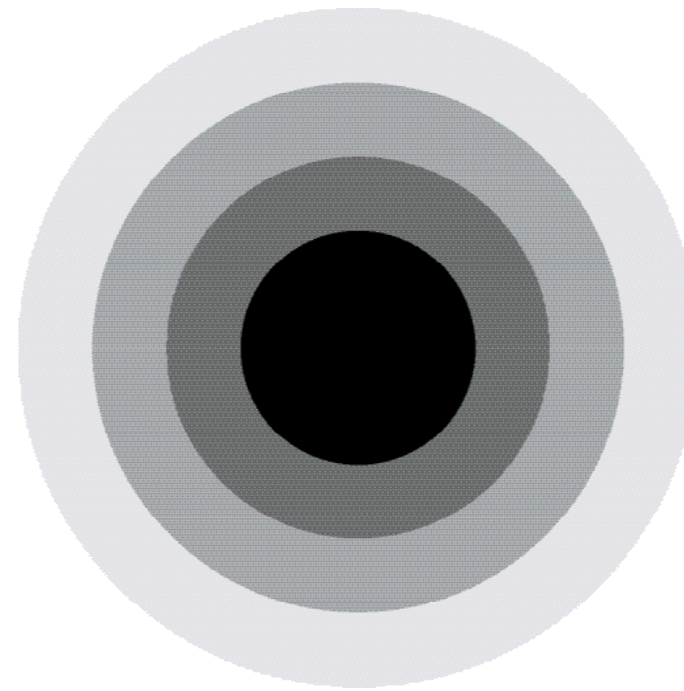
As a *noun* it can be defined as:

Very small (fine) dry powdered substance, momentarily suspended in the atmosphere or settled on a surface under the influence of gravity. Any material that is reduced to fine powdery particles through natural or external processes can be categorised as a type of dust.

As a *verb*, dust is a contronym; a word that evokes diametrically opposed meanings depending on context:

- \_The process of removing very small (fine) dry pieces of matter from a surface
- \_The process of covering the surface of something with very small (fine) dry pieces of matter

**Dust embodies the Universe in an eternal state of change, as matter annihilated over time; its function, relevance and value transformed; its tangibility waning.**



**Dust signifies the end - and the beginning of matter.**

In the region of space we occupy, a dense cloud of dust and gas collapsed around 4.5 billion years ago. Physicists theorise the collapse was caused from the shockwaves of a nearby exploding star. As it collapsed it span and folded in on itself, tremendous pressure at its epicentre created the Sun. Gravity drew the small particles in the spinning dust cloud together, some of which formed larger and larger objects, creating asteroids, comets, meteoroids, and small, irregular moons. The largest objects became planets as their gravity shaped them into spheres. Dust was a fundamental precursor for our Solar System, and planet Earth.

**Cosmological, meteorological, and geological events cause dust to be fugitive.**

Planets without gravity create cosmic dust as they shed their deteriorated matter into space. The tails of comets are visible emissions of their dust and gas. On Earth, the pulverisation of ancient rocks over aeons by oceans and weather events create geologic dust; volcanoes erupt and spew their molten cores forth to become hardened rock and decompose into volcanic sand and ash; atmospheric pressure changes whip wind across vast deserts creating violent dust storms. The creation of dust and its migration is ever present.

Industrial processes create natural and synthetic powders: co-opting botanic and organic matter to benefit humans. Through a process of levigation: pounding, grinding, or triturating: matter is transformed to create medicines, pharmaceuticals, pigments, foodstuffs, building products, cleaning products, weapons, cosmetics, faux snow, fireworks, and so on ad infinitum.



Powders are associated with achievement—evidence of mastery of nature. Often associated with decay, degraded and obsolete. When a powder eventually becomes a dust. Through mingling with other matter, it is rendered 'Powder' and 'Dust' the way in which our anthropocentric world subject/object through humans.

At a micro scale, humans relocate dust: through processes (milling, sweeping or 'dusting' skin; and as our bodies

## Taxonomy

### \_(An) Anthropogenic

Caused by humans or their activities  
*Human skin cells; Human hair; Food particles; Vehicular matter; Pollution; Synthetic simulation*

### \_(Ge) Geologic

Relating to the physical structure, composition, and history of Earth or a planet

*Soil particles; Moon dust; Coal dust; Volcanic dust; Mineral dust; Rock; Powdered metals*

### \_(EB) Economic botanic

Remains of materials originating from the use of plants to benefit humans  
*Sawdust; Wood ash; Textile fibers; Paper fibers*

### \_(Bo) Botanic

Originating from a plant  
*Pollen*

### \_(Zo) Zoologic

Originating from an animal  
*Animal hair; Pet dander*

### \_(En) Entomologic

Originating from an insect  
*Insect follicles*

### \_(Sp) Space

Located in interstellar space  
*Intergalactic dust; Interstellar dust; Interplanetary dust (ie. zodiacal cloud); Circumplanetary dust (ie. planetary rings); Terrestrial dust; Spacecraft debris particles*

### \_(Po) Powder

A very small (fine) dry powdered substance that is beneficial to humans

\_(EB) Economic botanic

\_(Or) Organic

*Composed of organic compounds that have come from the remains of organisms such as plants and animals and their waste products in the environment*

\_(An) Anthropogenic

*Caused by humans or their activities*

## Samples

### PoAn001: Synthetic Indigo

Classification: Powder, Anthropogenic (a powder created by humans or their activities)

Synthetic Indigo has a gorgeous, intoxicating, infinite depth. Its deep blue /purple hue, its matte powderiness, its refusal to be contained by my stencils: leaving ghostly trails beyond my want of crisp edges. Its chemical smell, its imposition on every surface it touches: 'dusting' only serves to further embed it. As a material it exemplifies our relationship with our planet, and each other.

Antecedent: The Indigofera Tinctoria is a member of the Fabaceae family, a genus of parasitic shrubs. It thrives in tropical and subtropical regions, and was geographically spread globally by humans from around 6000 years ago, a time when agriculture was beginning to proliferate. The genus typically contains indoxyl, a chemical that can be extracted to create 'Indigo' pigment: a beguiling blue and one of nature's rarest colours.

Human use: Tracing the history of the colour Indigo traverses massive cultural shifts and technological advances. Inspired by its rarity and beauty, ancient cultures used the pigment to evoke transcendent spirituality, to beautify their bodies; and the plant was used as 'an antiseptic, a contraceptive, an abortifacient,'<sup>1</sup> amongst other healing purposes. It's also woven into a darker history, of colonisation and slavery: when brutal exploitation of ancient expertise underpinned its commodification. Developments in chemistry enabled its synthetic production, reshaping its cultivation from field crops to laboratories. Today it is globally ubiquitous for its use in colouring denim, the sturdy fabric originally developed for labourers.

1. Indigo, In Search of the Colour That Seduced the World, CE McKinley, 2011

### Ge001: Marble Dust (calcium carbonate)

Classification: Geologic (relating to the physical structure, composition, and history of Earth or a planet)

Marble is a metamorphic stone which originates from limestone, a sedimentary rock composed of calcium carbonate from tiny fossils, shell fragments and other fossilised debris. When exposed to high temperatures and pressures, limestone recrystallises, metamorphosing to form a denser rock. Usually, this occurs at a convergent tectonic plate boundary, but can also form from magma heating the limestone. In pure form, marble consists of calcium carbonate and is sparkling white. The variety of colours exhibited in marble are due to minor amounts of impurities incorporated during metamorphism. Marble takes hundreds of years to form and is found among the oldest parts of the Earth's crust.

Human use: Marble is mined, cut, crushed, pulverised and polished for use in the construction industry, to make buildings, sculptures, and monuments. Marble dust is used as a filler in paint, plaster and cement, and used to prime canvases, and harden surfaces.

### PoOr001: Diatomaceous Earth

Classification: Powder, Organic (a powder composed of organic compounds that have come from the remains of organisms such as plants and animals and their waste products in the environment)

Diatomaceous Earth is created from ancient fossilised remains of diatoms, microscopic single celled aquatic organisms.

When they die, vast quantities of diatom's silica shells accumulate on the sea floor as 'ooze'. A bed up to several hundred metres thick of ooze forms into diatomite rock over millennia, containing unfathomable quantities of compacted microscopic diatoms. This is mined, crush, fired, and

ground to create Diatomaceous Earth, and used in wine, beer and water filtration; an ingredient in toothpaste; as a natural insecticide; and in many agricultural and building product applications. Diatomite is also sometimes found on desert surfaces: its erosion into aerosol particles is one of the most important sources of climate-affecting dust in the atmosphere. Twenty seven million tonnes of diatom dust fertilises the Amazon basin annually, transported by transatlantic winds from the Sahara.

Living diatoms are among the most important and prolific aquatic organisms: constituting nearly half of the organic mass in our oceans, and generating around 20% of the oxygen produced on our planet each year. Anatomically, they are the only known organism on Earth to have cell walls composed of transparent, opaline silica. They are the most diverse algae on Earth, with an estimated 20,000 - 2,000,000 variations, each with their own symmetrical form and intricate, striking pattern. Diatoms have existed for at least 135 million years.

### An003: House Dust

Classification: Anthropogenic (dust created by humans or their activities)

At a micro scale, humans create and relocate dust: through our industrial processes (milling, mining, etc); in the act of sweeping or 'dusting'; as we shed our skin; and as our bodies finally decompose.

The dust that accumulates in our homes creates tiny monuments to our lives. Particles of ourselves mingle with remnants of our activities: becoming symbols of our indulgences, desires, absurdity, and fragility.

This sample was collected in my home, from ten days of accumulated dust on 9.7.20, during one of the Covid lockdowns. In it I see winter's nights warming by the fire, chatting and drinking wine with my husband Al; our little dog Charlie burrowing

in for a snuggle - or us of his presence v carnal joy we share consuming food; the that take shelter wi earthiness of the dir bush outside. 'For n three of us, though far are foremost in strange times'.

### PoEB006: Ginkgo

Classification: Powder (a powder originating to benefit humans)

Source: Accolent D Australia (obtained)

Location: Sample o of 'survival' in a ser about the origins o Garden, Victoria, Au that have shaped it

Date: April 2018

Composition: Ginkgo

Antecedent: The Ginkgo considered a 'living group stretches ba making it the oldest Earth. They reached the dinosaurs of the throughout the wor million years ago; w temperatures spurr Ginkgo's geographi until around 2 millio became restricted t There they remaine years, until human i their spread around Japan and Korea, th America. Their spre European explorati in the late 1800s. In planted at Kyneton Victoria, Australia, v today as an exampl member of its genu