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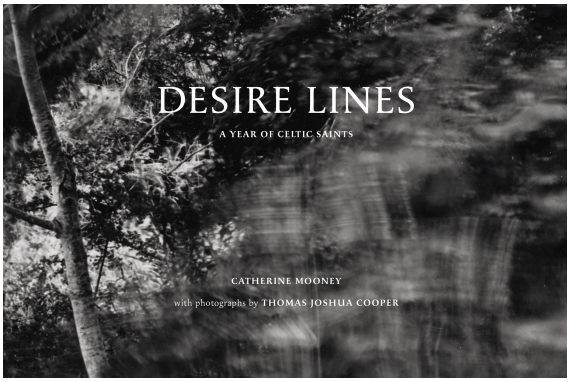

Desire Lines

A Year of Celtic Saints

Thomas Joshua Cooper

Catherine Mooney

Anne Lyden

ISBN	9781911054658
Publisher	National Galleries of Scotland
Binding	Hardback
Territory	World excluding US & Canada
Size	240 mm x 300 mm
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Illustrations	79 b&w
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- ***Desire Lines*** is an exhaustive internal exploration of home…proposing a new Caledonia, a place bound by language and culture rather than borders

Using descriptions from stories about early Scottish and Celtic saints, photographer Thomas Joshua Cooper and Catherine Mooney made pilgrimages to the birth sites, death sites and places of significance to the early Scottish Christian pioneers. The beautiful, often ethereal, photographs they made once they'd arrived in these places are reproduced in a format reminiscent of a Calendar of Saints, in which saints' days were honoured – here illuminated by 79 of Thomas' arresting black and white images. Locations depicted include Lothian, Scotland and Donegal, Ireland, mimicking journeys made first by St Enoch, her son St Mungo and his contemporary St Columba, among others, such as sites relating to St Ninian, St Constantine, St Serf, St Mirren and St Kessog; the latter was evangelised in Loch Lomond, Lennox and Perthshire and a number of views relate to his journey.

The stories of these early Celtic saints are fascinating and the corresponding landscape views by Cooper are transportive in evoking an earlier age, where the trappings of modern society are largely absent, and one can very easily imagine the paths, routes and journeys – or 'desire lines' – taken by these inspiring people.

Thomas Joshua Cooper was born in San Francisco in 1946. He attended Humboldt State University, California and graduated with distinction from the University of New Mexico in 1972. He was appointed Head of the Photography Department at Glasgow School of Art in 1982 and was tasked with establishing the Fine Art Photography Degree course, the first of its kind in Europe. A dedicated teacher for more than four decades who maintained his own practice throughout, he continues to live and work in Glasgow. He has published numerous books of his photographs, including most recently *The World's Edge* (2019) which realises a project to circumnavigate the extremities and edges surrounding the Atlantic Ocean. This body of work took thirty-two years to complete and resulted in more than 700 photographs. Cooper uses a large format camera that dates from 1898 and only ever makes one exposure at a given site, before developing the negative and printing by hand in his darkroom. His photographs are exhibited widely and feature in museum collections all over the world. In 2017 Cooper was awarded a doctorate degree from the University of Glasgow for the work he had published over a thirty-year period.

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