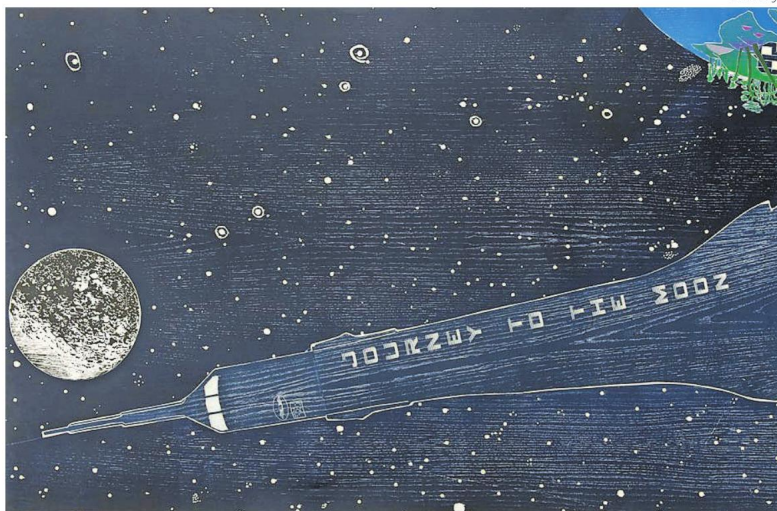




Cloud Island

©Tom Hammick;  
Courtesy of  
Flowers Gallery



Star Path

©Tom Hammick;  
Courtesy of Flowers  
Gallery

formally riveting work, sharing the quality of Henri Matisse's *L'Atelier Rouge* where your eyes constantly rove over the picture plane trying to find a visual clue as to the room's architecture and your place in it. Viewers are forced to play out that sense of dislocation felt when trying to reintroduce oneself back into a life and space you've been absent from a long time.

On the table in the foreground is one of Hammick's *Lunar Voyage* preparatory books with drawings and notes-to-self that refer to the saga with a prosaic reminder to 'cut out the sea... do not cut out any part of island'.

To sign off on a less commonplace note, studying single prints in Hammick's series is a joy, you can lose yourself in them.

But seeing *Lunar Voyage* as a whole, to be able to spin around in the middle of a room and take in pretty much the whole viridian green and blue to rainbow lambent to lamp black journey is a real pleasure. There's wit and visual

invention akin to Hockney's *Rake's Progress* but a profound elegiac solemnity also.

Adam Nicolson was right when he said visiting the exhibition was like being in a chapel. *Lunar Voyage* – Hammick's Stations of the Cross – launches all sorts of emotions, fears and longings. The journey is revealed to be not simply an adventure but a test also, of character as well as a luminous, mindful examination of our place in the universe and the relations we have with the things and people we hold dear.

■ *Lunar Voyage* will be on display at the Peter Pears Gallery in Aldeburgh until June 24th, to coincide with Tom Hammick being artist in residence at Snape Maltings, Suffolk, during the 71st Aldeburgh Festival

■ Adrian Burnham writes on art and urban culture. He is founder and curator of [www.flyingleaps.co.uk](http://www.flyingleaps.co.uk), a street poster and web platform for artists. Email him at [info@flyingleaps.co.uk](mailto:info@flyingleaps.co.uk)

# SOLVING THE BERGAMOT PUZZLE

**PETER TRUDGILL** is mystified as to why anyone would drink Earl Grey tea, but can at least solve the riddle of its distinctive ingredient



**M**any Scandinavians of my acquaintance seem to think that one of the finest things ever to come out of England is Earl Grey tea. They are surprised when I do not share their enthusiasm – it's never clear to me why anyone would want to ruin a perfectly good cup of tea with essence of bergamot.

The essence comes from bergamot oranges: bergamot is a citrus fruit, *Citrus bergamia*, first referred to in print in English around 1700. Its name is said by the *Oxford English Dictionary* to be "apparently from Bergamo, the Italian town". But this origin is rather hard to credit: Bergamo lies in the foothills of the Alps and, according to the American botanist Professor Kathleen Keeler, oranges cannot grow there.

Most bergamot essence is made from the fruit of trees grown in Calabria in southern Italy, about 600 miles south of Bergamo.

The issue is further confused by the fact that bergamot is not only a citrus fruit, it is also at least two different herbs.

In North America, the name generally refers to *Monarda fistulosa*, an indigenous mint, while in Britain it more often refers to *Monarda didyma*, another American plant. Both of these herbs are also known as bee-balm.

The first recorded use of bergamot for a herb comes from 1843. As to where the name comes from in this case, we can simply suppose that the herbs' aroma reminded the first Europeans in America of the scent of bergamot oranges.

It is disconcerting, then, to note that a bergamot is not only a type of herb, and not only a kind of orange, but also a kind of pear: there is a particularly juicy and delicious kind of fruit known as a bergamot pear. Scientifically it is a variety of *Pyrus communis*. The bergamot pear made its first appearance in written English around 1600.

Interestingly, the *OED*

gives a different etymology for this meaning than it does for the citrus fruit and herb.

The dictionary states that the name of the pear came into English from French *bergamotte*, which was from Italian *bergamotta*, which was from Ottoman Turkish *beg-armudi*, 'prince's pear' – in Modern Turkish, *bey armudu*.

There may also have been a link somewhere along the line with the name of the Turkish town of Bergamo, which in Ancient Greek was Pergamon or Pergamos. (The Greek word for bergamot orange is *pergamonto*.)

In 1885, the *New York Times* claimed that bergamot pears were first introduced into Europe by the Crusaders – which was "no doubt the reason why in some parts of Southern Europe they are still known by the name of Syrian pears". The *Times* also wrote that the word bergamot was believed to be derived from the name of a village in Cyprus called Pergama or Pergamos – which may or may not have been named after classical Pergamon. In the 1950s, the Turkish-speaking inhabitants of this Cypriot village gave it the name of Beyarmudu.

The 'prince's pear' etymology actually makes rather good sense; and we can suppose that *beg armudi* became Italian *bergamotta* through the well-known process of folk etymology: Italian speakers made sense of what, to them, was a new and meaningless Turkish form by making an (unwarranted) link from it to their own town of Bergamo.

Happily, there is no need to restrict this etymological explanation solely to the word for the pear. The first bergamots were indeed pears; but Professor Keeler suggests that the name was then later transferred to the citrus fruit (about 100 years later, in the case of English) because it looked very similar to the (very round) bergamot pear.

Interestingly, *beg armudi* has made its way back to its original homeland. Unlike in English, there is no linguistic confusion in Modern Turkish between the bergamot pear and the citrus bergamot: the pear is called *bey armudu*, while the citrus fruit is called... *bergamot*.

## CITRUS

Citrus was a Latin word which originally referred to a scented conifer, native to North Africa. Etymologists are not agreed about its origin, but it may be related to Greek *kedros* 'cedar'. And it may be of Etruscan origin: one place where Etruscan was probably spoken around 600 BC was Bergamo.

