PERFORMING LANDSCAPES

Performing Ice

Edited by Carolyn Philpott
Elizabeth Leane · Matt Delbridge

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Performing Landscapes

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Performing Landscapes offers a critical study of generic and complex sites for performance, including forests, ruins, rivers, home, fields, islands and mountains. Distinctive to this series is that such landscape figures will be located both on and off the theatrical stage, approached as both material and representational grounds for performance-led analyses. With its unique focus on particular and singular sites, Performing Landscapes will develop in novel ways the debates concerning performance's multiple relations to environment, ecology and global concerns.

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Series Editors' Preface

The *Performing Landscapes* series provides an international platform for the first comprehensive critical study of generic but complex sites of performance landscapes, located on and off the theatrical stage and within and beyond the frame of cultural performance practices.

Acknowledging and engaging with the nature-culture dynamics always already at play in any concept of and approach to 'landscape', authors' original research and innovative methods explore how landscapes—such as mountains, ruins, gardens, ice, forests and islands—are encountered, represented, contested, materialised and made sense of through and in performance. Studies of singular landscape environments, experienced from near and afar, offer up rigorous historical, cultural and critical discussion and analysis through the dynamic and interdisciplinary lens of performance. In the context of the twenty-first-century climate changes the series also directs attention to performance's diverse contributions to environmental debates.

Performing Landscapes aims to understand better how specific landscape locations function as sites of and for performance and what performance practice and analyses does to and for our understanding of, and engagement with, landscapes.

Glasgow, UK — Deirdre Heddon
London, UK — Sally Mackey

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Performing Ice: Histories, Theories, Contexts

Elizabeth Leane, Carolyn Philpott, and Matt Delbridge

Ice has long shaped our planet. Many of the landscape features we see today are the result of its actions over thousands or millions of years. This has long been known; but in the Anthropocene we understand that, through our production of greenhouse gases, humans also shape ice—not the ice in trays in our refrigerators, but the glaciers that produce our rivers, the sea ice that impacts our ocean currents and the enormous ice shelves that hold the vast majority of our planet's freshwater. While humans have always encountered and interacted with ice, understanding this relationship has taken on a new urgency in the twenty-first century.

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Even though the Anthropocene has brought ice an unexpected salience in global public consciousness, the idea of a collection focused on "performing ice" might seem surprising or incongruous were it not for the *active* quality that ice shares with humans. Hard, solid and weighty, and often associated with stasis (as in cryogenic freezing), ice is simultaneously dynamic: mutable, unstable, mobile and constantly in transition between the fluidity of water and the hardness of land. Glaciers are always on the move, advancing or (more likely at present) retreating, producing icefalls and crevasse fields; ice shelves fragment and collapse; icebergs overturn without warning; lake ice splits beneath the unwary skater. Icy environments thus share with human performances a contingent and unpredictable quality, making them both challenging and productive to consider in the context of performance studies.

This book examines the myriad ways in which ice and humans have performed with and alongside each other over the last few centuries, so as to better understand our entangled futures. Just as the notion of performance is notoriously difficult to define, so ice, as it appears in the nonhuman environment, comes in many forms and occurs in diverse locations—most prominently the polar regions, but also in high mountains in temperate or tropical areas, as well as many densely populated regions of the world. In this first chapter, then, we tease out different approaches to and contexts for thinking about ice, performance and the nexus of the two. We consider different qualities of and ways of understanding environmental ice, and how these intersect, historically and theoretically, with human performances. We end by giving a guide to the structure of the book and the chapters that follow. Because both ice and performance are large and multifarious concepts, we begin our analysis of their intersection by narrowing our attention to one particularly compelling form of ice: the iceberg.

Iceberg Spectacles

In mid-2017, a drama of planetary proportions played out on the Antarctic Peninsula, relayed to low-latitude audiences via the international media. For months, reports had been appearing of a rapidly extending fissure in the Larsen C ice shelf that threatened to create an iceberg the size of a small country. As the dark polar winter drew near, headlines became increasingly frequent and their tone more urgent: "Giant Antarctic Iceberg 'hanging by a thread,'" reported the *Guardian* (Davis 2017). The

Independent announced that the Antarctic was sending a "message to Donald Trump" about global warming (Mooney 2017). When the iceberg finally calved in early June, it was greeted as a harbinger of the planet's future: *WIRED* magazine mused about "Giant Antarctic Icebergs and Crushing Existential Dread" (Rogers 2017). The enormous berg's monumental indifference to the panic it generated only exacerbated the sense that humanity had had a hand in producing a monster entirely beyond its control. Over the next few years, its movements were followed not only by scientists (the US National Ice Centre tracks all icebergs over twenty square nautical miles in size [Taylor 2016]), but also by the media (e.g. Amos 2020). Despite scientists' reluctance to class its calving as an anthropogenic event (Fricker 2017), the iceberg functioned as a visual icon of global warming—a spectacular emblem of a process that, in its temporal and spatial vastness and complexity, resists easy representation.

Although the mounting alarm associated with the Larsen C calving event points to a new centrality and emotional valency of icy places and things in the Anthropocene, Western cultures have long interpreted icebergs in terms of danger and spectacle. Even within the confines of the traditional theatre, where the challenges of representing such large-scale, remote and mobile objects are very evident, they have a surprisingly long scenographic history. Icebergs have featured—indeed, starred—in theatrical performances since at least the eighteenth century. In his study of ice and the English imagination, Francis Spufford points to the 1785 production in Convent Garden Theatre of *Omai, or A Trip Round the World* (1785): Philip de Loutherbough's set included an iceberg made, Spufford speculates, of "lath and white papier-mâche" (1996, pp. 48–9). Five years later a production entitled *English Heroism* had a successful run at Sadler's Wells theatre in the summer of 1790: based on a recent incident off the coast of South Africa, the work offered a "Living Picture" of a British frigate "in a very perilous situation … amongst stupendous Floating Islands of Ice" (Advertisement, *London World*, June 14, 1790, p. 1). In the early nineteenth century, the search for the Northwest Passage generated new interest. A Christmas pantomime based on the subject opened in Drury Lane in 1820, offering an "elaborate stage of frozen sea, icebergs and ships of discovery" (Thrush 2014, p. 73). This was an early example of numerous "Arctic Spectacles"—panoramas, dioramas and other entertainments—available to British and North American nineteenth-century audiences (Potter 2007, pp. 211–26). These extended outside traditional theatres: twice in the 1830s, Vauxhall Gardens in London "were

transformed into an Arctic wilderness as the grounds were covered with a sea of 'icebergs' towering more than seventy feet in height," complemented by "fur-costumed 'Eskimos' and 'Polar Bears'" (Potter 2010, p. 28). The *Titanic* disaster of 1912 generated several well-known films as well as innumerable nonfiction and fiction books, in which the iceberg was inevitably cast as "an icy demon" (Brown 2012, p. 10). However, the large proportions of the physical event and its human tragedy have made it relatively resistant to stage production[1]: a musical *Titanic* closed on its opening night when, following the iceberg collision scene, the set began to collapse (Locker 2018).

More recently, performance art—site-specific or otherwise—has provoked a different set of considerations of human interactions with these non-human objects, particularly as concerns over anthropogenic warming have mounted. Examples range over all media: composer and pianist Ludovico Einaudi playing his "Elegy for the Arctic" on an "artificial iceberg" erected by Greenpeace activists off the coast of Svalbard (Greenpeace International 2016); projections onto icebergs of urgent messages, linguistic or otherwise (in David Buckland's *Ice Texts* and Andrea Juan's *Antarctic Project*), or projections *of* icebergs onto urban structures (Joseph Michael's *While You were Sleeping*; Silis Høegh's *The Tip of the Iceberg*); and Daniel Léveille's *La pudeur des icebergs* ("The Modesty of Icebergs"), which features neither ice nor sets but rather a group of naked dancers whose performance "equates icebergs with the simultaneous remoteness and vulnerability of the human body" (Cauthery 2013, p. 122).

However, it is perhaps outside the context of specific artworks or entertainments that the most telling performances with, on, by and about icebergs have occurred. A few examples give a sense of the diversity of these events. In 1977, Australian entrepreneur Dick Smith played the nation's most elaborate April Fool's Day joke when he sailed a barge covered in white sheets and foam into Sydney Harbour. Smith was referencing (perhaps ironically) an event earlier in that year: a Saudi-sponsored US conference on "Iceberg Utilization" (i.e. towing bergs to dry places as a water resource) that had itself boasted a one-tonne iceberg centrepiece brought in by helicopter, plane and truck from Alaska (see Ruiz 2017). A more visually impressive version of the same idea occurred in 1992 at the Chilean Pavilion of the Universal Expo in Seville: the Pavilion was dominated by a 28-foot-high "iceberg" from Antarctica, although this was actually a sculpture made up of berg fragments harvested from the Antarctic Peninsula, a part of the continent in which Chile has a territorial claim (see

Korowin 2010). A year later, the Canadian Iceberg Vodka Corporation was created: their "iceberg hunters *aka* cowboys" "lasso" ice from unpolluted Arctic bergs formed prior to industrialisation so that their product can be promoted as the "cleanest tasting vodka" (Canadian Iceberg Vodka Corporation 2017; "The Cowboys who Lasso Ice" 2016)—a slickly market version of a commercial venture that has its roots in nineteenth-century ice-harvesting (Gosnell 2005, ch. 26). And in early 2017, media reports appeared of "traffic jams" in a Newfoundland town caused by tourists flocking to see a huge iceberg grounded just off the coast (Kassam 2017). Again, this is only one example of a much larger phenomenon, with over 50,000 tourists annually cruising the Antarctic and many more in the Arctic, paying large sums of money for journeys marketed under titles such as "Iceberg Spectacle."[2] For decades, icebergs have been enrolled into performances of human technological prowess, mastery and modernity; used as displays of political sovereignty and territoriality; and, whether left in situ to be photographed by visitors or chipped off and melted for bottling, treated as commodities for human consumption (see Fig. 1).

Fig. 1 Tourists make a captive audience for a penguin perched on a small iceberg (technically a growler)

We have begun with this potted history of iceberg performances not only because these objects exemplify the rich and diverse ways in which humans and ice interact, but also because they typify the paradoxical qualities of icy environments that make them so challenging and productive to consider in the context of performance studies: their ever-mobile nature; their liminal status between fluidity and hardness, water and land (the word "berg" itself suggesting their likeness to terrestrial features); and their icy ability to "freeze time" while simultaneously representing impermanence in their continual transformation from autonomous objects into undifferentiated liquid water.[3] Even though large Antarctic bergs, such as the one that calved from the Larsen C, can last many decades, they are incessantly melting, sometimes fragmenting and occasionally overturning. As previous researchers have noted (Hancox 2013, p. 58), this evanescence of ice has a specific resonance with the ephemeral and processual qualities of performance itself.

Encountering Icescapes

Icebergs, of course, are only one of many environmental features with which this book deals. Joining them are glaciers, ice shelves, ice sheets and sea ice in its various manifestations (bergy bits, growlers, floe ice, fast ice), as well as frozen lakes.[4] As we noted earlier, ice can occur naturally in a wide variety of geographical, topographical and ecological contexts. Icy outdoor scenes, such as frozen lakes and rime-covered trees, are regularly found in relatively low latitudes and altitudes and in busy urban environments. Glaciers can form in the mountains at any latitude, and can butt up against quite contrasting environments, such as temperate rainforests. And, particularly if we extend our understanding of ice to include other frozen compounds such as carbon dioxide, we can talk about extra-terrestrial icescapes, such as Mars' icecaps, the frozen moons of Jupiter and Saturn, and the comets that are repeat visitors to our solar system (Prockter 2005).

The warming temperatures, melting glaciers and rising sea-levels of the twenty-first century have brought home the connectedness of ice to all parts of the world. In particular, the polar regions, long thought of in the Anglophone imagination as remote, isolated places, are increasingly recognised as intimately linked, through climate, currents and sea level, to more temperate locations. While they are frequently spoken about in one breath, and sometimes confused (as when penguins brush against polar

bears in children's books), the Arctic and Antarctic are very different—something captured in the etymology of their names, which casts one as the opposite of the other. Physically, the North Polar region is a frozen sea with ice a few metres thick surrounded by continents, while its southern counterpart is a continent surrounded by water and weighed down by ice that is on average over two kilometres thick, rising to almost five kilometres at some points. As a result, the Antarctic has more ice than the Arctic, by an order of magnitude. Socially, the Arctic has been inhabited for many millennia and includes Greenland, Iceland, parts of Canada, the United States, Russia and the Scandinavian nations; the Antarctic has no indigenous people and no permanent inhabitants, although nearly eighty scientific facilities are now speckled across its ice, and, in addition to tourist visitors, thousands of scientists and support personnel make a temporary home there. The Arctic is politically contested, with three overlapping claims on the North Pole at present. The situation in the Antarctic is quite different: while there are seven extant national claims to the continent, they are all indefinitely suspended by the international treaty through which the region has been governed and protected since 1959. To conflate these two regions is to flatten out important physical, political, historical, social and cultural differences, so that even while we collect them together in this book based on their icy commonalities, we also remain alert to their heterogeneity.

In the past there has been a tendency in cultural researchers—many of whom are located in the Northern Hemisphere—to examine human relations with ice by focusing largely on the Arctic, treating the Antarctic in afterthought as its less complex southern counterpart (e.g. Spufford 1996). This collection departs from this tradition. The majority of the contributors are based in southern hemisphere locations, and several of them live or have lived in the "Antarctic gateway" cities Hobart (Australia) and Christchurch (New Zealand), where the cold waters of the southern ocean and the winds issuing from the south are constant reminders of the vast icescape at the "bottom" of the planet. While several chapters deal with the Arctic, mountainous regions and other cold and icy locations, as a whole this book reflects the distribution of ice, rather than humans, in giving the bulk of attention to the far south.

Scientists have a useful term that refers to all the frozen water parts of the Earth: the cryosphere. This includes not only ice, but also closely related phenomena such as permafrost (effectively frozen land) and snow (which can in turn form into ice through re-melting or compaction).

While snow is closely associated with ice, these two types of frozen water are distinct in both their physical structures and cultural resonances. Snow can be powerful and threatening, as in an avalanche, but it can also be soft, playful and romantic. Ice, as it is found in the environment, is brittle, unforgiving and dangerous. Where a snowy scene might conjure up scenes of children building snowmen, racing toboggans and anticipating a visit from Santa, icy terrain has very different connotations: in Western cultures, it evokes images of doomed explorers trudging towards an unseen goal, cramponed climbers clinging precariously to frozen waterfalls or hardy scientists drilling holes kilometres deep to determine climate patterns of the past. All of these images are clichés, but as such they point to well-established and contrasting historical and aesthetic associations of ice and snow.

The new centrality of ice in a rapidly warming planet has seen the emergence of several studies, both academic and popular, examining the cultural and social history of ice.[5] Recently, researchers have been reaching for a new terminology to convey aspects of ice not captured by scientific discourse. Environmental historian Sverker Sörlin has suggested the term "cryo-historical" to encapsulate the sense that "ice is an element of change and thus something that can be considered as part of society and of societal concern" (2015, p. 327). Even more relevant to performance studies and to landscape studies is Marcus Nüsser and Ravi Baghel's (2014) coinage of "cryoscape" to encapsulate the entangled epistemic, cultural, scientific and physical processes through which Himalayan glaciers are understood. This term can be usefully extended to other glacial and snowy environments, and is perhaps particularly helpful in understanding human interactions with and perceptions of planetary ice as a whole. While the cryosphere and cryoscape, then, are focused on the same planetary phenomena, their difference is the disciplinary frames they bring to these phenomena, and the extent to which they attempt to separate them from, or leave them entangled with, human concerns.

Because our interests are specifically in ice, we most often opt here for the more familiar term "icescape," with all that its second syllable suggests about point of view, framing, subjectivity and natural/cultural hybridity. Edward Casey defines a "-scape" as a "bounded view of a scene of some sort … a place or region seen from somewhere by a looking body" (2004, p. 264)—although this emphasis on visuality has been challenged in recent scholarship.[6] Casey's reference to a "scene" also suggests an intrinsic connection between landscape and theatre—something that the ecocritical

turn in performance studies has explored and interrogated (e.g. Fuchs and Chaudhuri 2002).

As a title in the series *Performing Landscapes*, however, this book could be considered something of a contradiction. Unlike deserts, forests or mountains, icy environments cannot be readily classed as a particular subset of landscapes—not, at least, without overlooking important differences. As poet and polar tour guide Elizabeth Bradfield writes, "Ice is not land. Is restless. And what was claimed/has moved, is inching toward sea/has maybe broken off …" (2010, p. 32). Scholars of place of course acknowledge the existence of different kinds of "scapes." Casey, for example, considers landscapes and seascapes as the two fundamental "modes of scapement" (2011, p. 107). Particularly since the "oceanic turn" within the humanities, seascapes have become subjects of considerable attention, including within performance studies (Gough and Trubridge 2016). But icescapes are especially intriguing in the way they challenge the land/sea distinction. Philip Steinberg notes that many kinds of environments—swamps, estuaries, islands, wetlands—"complicate the land-sea divide," but argues that of these liminal spaces "sea-ice holds particular interest, because it is juridically (and cartographically) unquestionably of the sea, but its tactile, functional and visual properties in many cases more closely resemble land." He asserts that ice's spatial and temporal dynamicism "confounds attempts to place it in either category" (2013, p. 163).

As a material and a metaphor, then, ice is slippery, challenging familiar categorisations and always holding the possibility of a phase change into something far more fluid. The ancient Greek geographer Strabo described the Arctic regions as those in which there was "no longer either land properly so-called, or sea, or air, but a kind of substance concreted from all these elements" (quoted in Dodds 2018, p. 54). Icescapes—glaciers, bergs, floes, ice sheets, ice shelves—are thus places of paradox and contradiction. They seem at first glance sterile and inorganic, and yet at the same time are disturbingly alive, cracking, shifting and constantly transforming. As we noted at the beginning of this chapter, ice is active in a very visible way, making the changing nature of our planet—and humanity's role in this change—all too apparent.

While icescapes are anomalous, neither land nor sea, this very fluidity simultaneously renders them particularly salient within contemporary landscape studies. The field has increasingly replaced ideas of landscape as a static object with notions of constant change and becoming: in David Crouch's words, "Landscape occurs" (2013, p. 126). Cultural geographer

and landscape theorist John Wylie has analysed this quality of icescapes in his article "Becoming Icy," an examination of the famous South Polar journeys led by Norwegian Roald Amundsen and British explorer Robert F. Scott. Arguing that "it is through embodied, material practices … that distinctive subjectivities and landscapes are produced," Wylie identifies the qualities of the Antarctic icescape as its constant motion and the lack of clear differentiability between sea and land: "Casting aside a habit of thought based upon such boundaries, and adopting one which valorizes mobility and mutability, the principle of ceaseless interaction, is perhaps one way of dwelling in Antarctica" (2002, pp. 251, 254). While the icescape that produces this realisation is usually thought of as marginal and extreme, the mindset it requires—an acceptance of the inseparability of physical environment and human dwelling and the accommodation of modes of dwelling to a constantly changing habitat—is central to the rethinking of "nature" and "culture" in the Anthropocene.

Performing with/in Ice

If icescapes take to an extreme the mutability that characterizes all landscapes, they also intensify the contingencies that characterize performance, particularly site-specific performance. While icescapes have featured within traditional theatrical spaces in diverse ways (see the chapter by Hanne Nielsen that follows this one), and some site-specific works involve representations rather than material ice, the majority of contemporary performances that engage with ice are site-specific and incorporate the substance itself. Many are low-latitude, using the action of (comparatively) warm temperatures to drive environmentally motivated artworks. Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson's *Ice Watch*, an installation piece created for the United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Paris in late 2015, is a useful example. Eliasson placed twelve "icebergs"[7]—blocks of free-floating ice calved (the *New Yorker* again uses the word "lassoed") from a Greenland glacier and transported by tug, containership and truck—in a circle in the Place du Panthéon, the clock-like positioning of the melting objects highlighting the time-urgency of the negotiations (Zarin 2015). In other cases, artists travel to the ice: *Ice Watch* has a high-latitude counterpart in Miami artist Xavier Cortada's *Longitudinal Installation*, in which the artist placed twenty-four shoes around the Ceremonial South Pole at positions corresponding to the world's time zones. Walking around the small circle, Cortada read out reflections from people living at those longitudes on

climate change's impact on them. Performers working in more traditional forms have also travelled to the ice: in early 2018, Royal New Zealand Ballet principal Madeleine Graham worked with choreographer Corey Baker and photographer Jacob Bryant to produce *Antarctica: The First Dance*, in which Graham performs not only on the icescape but in it, dangling on a harness in a glacial crevasse.

However, site-specific performance in icescapes is challenging in a number of ways: the audience is small, so the work is almost always conveyed via film or photography; the performer must deal with unfamiliar environmental constraints; and merely travelling to the site, especially in Antarctica, can itself be difficult. For this reason, programs have arisen to facilitate artistic production in and about icescapes, from the various "artists residencies" at national Antarctic bases, to not-for-profit climate-activist endeavours such as David Buckland's Cape Farewell project, which enables artists of various kinds to travel to the Arctic alongside scientists. But even with this support, performance in high-latitude icescapes remains unusual and logistically difficult.[8]

Ice is thus a particularly revealing substance to perform in or with, whether at high or low latitudes. Mike Pearson's *Site-Specific Performance* locates—provisionally—the distinctiveness of "site work" in its unpredictability and lack of control: where, for example, the ambient conditions of an auditorium are (comparatively) stable, "At site, environmental conditions may change and need to be accepted or actively countered" (2010, p. 16). Just as icescapes reveal, in their extremity, something fundamental to all landscapes (mutability), so performance with, on or in ice intensifies the contingency and risk characteristic of all site-specific theatre. Even if a choreographer-dancer team (for instance) can achieve a way of travelling to and living in Antarctica—something that itself requires competitive application, medical checks and logistical planning—whether the dancer can perform dangling in a fissure of a glacier depends on a whole range of social and environmental factors, including work health and safety training; the existence of a conveniently located crevasse of appropriate dimensions and reasonable stability; the ability to perform while dressed for the conditions; the weather; and the availability of a field training officer and a suitable vehicle. A huge amount of human effort is required so that the contingencies of working in and on ice do not become serious dangers. A low-latitude work such as *Ice Watch* depends on different contingencies: the ice surviving transport; and the winter temperatures in Paris remaining warm enough during the period of the work's display to produce melting.[9]

While the materiality of ice is central to understanding its relationship to performance, it is important to distinguish between ice as substance and ice as "scape." Icescapes are broader in some ways than "ice" alone, in the sense that they refer not only to a material substance, frozen water, but also—indeed primarily—to icy places and phenomena, both generic and specific. However, they are also narrower, suggesting ice only as it occurs on a relatively large scale in the environment—the kind of scale implicit in (to return to Casey's phrase) a "view of a scene of some sort." Thus ice as manufactured or created by humans—ice cubes in drinks, icepacks to put on injuries, frost accumulating in refrigerators—while certainly open to a performance studies approach, is not, or is only peripherally, our concern. Similarly, Ice Capades, Disney on Ice and speed and figure-skating championships are undeniably a point where performance and ice come together, but we would not expect them to shed much light on environmental icescapes. In this sense, *Performing Ice* builds on but departs from the special issue of *Performance Research* "On Ice" (2013)—the only other major scholarly engagement with performance studies and ice—which took as its subject ice in all of its manifestations. "On Ice," together with "On Fire," was part of an elemental couple edited by Richard Gough. As part of the *Performing Landscape* series, the present book's concerns are more squarely ecocritical and strongly connected with questions of place.

However, as soon as you attempt to tie these categorisations down firmly, they begin to unravel. In the Anthropocene any clear divide between the natural and the cultural is increasingly difficult to sustain. Thus distinctions between "environmental" and "produced" ice are inevitably provisional and to some degree arbitrary. An ice-rink, for example, may be indoors or outdoors, entirely manufactured or merely groomed for human purposes. We might call the latter process "icescaping," in parallel with "landscaping." As if to make this point, an indoor Olympic-size ice rink in a shopping mall in Putrajaya, Malaysia, goes by the name "Icescape." Ice hotels are clearly human constructions, buildings rather than "scapes" in the traditional sense, but as they are normally sourced from nearby environmental ice and deconstructed after the winter season, they too could be considered part of our remit. One of the most striking ice structures, in the context of *Performing Ice*, was the Ice Globe Theatre, a replica of Shakespeare's Globe made entirely from ice. Erected multiple times alongside the frozen Torne River in northern Sweden, the theatre had a capacity of around five hundred and saw about seventy performances

in its three winter seasons from 2003–2005, including Shakespearean classics in the Sámi language (Poláček and Pokorný 2015, p. 326). The theatre was run by the Jukkasjärvi ice hotel next door (also built from the frozen water of the Torne), where many of the audience members were housed. Here, the performance space itself is sourced from and contiguous with the icescape, but equally a product of global capitalism and luxury tourism.

Links between indoor ice and what we might previously have called the "natural environment" can be metaphorical as well as metonymical. A play performed on an ice rink, such as Howard Brenton's *Scott of the Antarctic* (first performed in 1971), may reference, ironically or otherwise, a much more expansive sweep of ice. In Linda Chanwai-Earle's *Heat*, set in Antarctica and performed "off-grid," a large block of ice slowly melting downstage acts as an unmentioned reference to the otherwise unrepresented icesheet, potentially alerting the audience's attention to the environmental cost of human comfort more than any traditional "landscape" set could. Néle Azevedo's *Minimum Monument*, which places small seated statuettes of ice on stairways in urban centres, a transparent and slowly liquefying audience to the city-goers' rushed activities, makes no direct reference to an icescape, but its implicit connection between the heat and activity of the city and the tiny melting figures necessarily references the glaciers, ice shelves and icesheets whose own gradual vanishing goes unseen by the majority of humans (2013, p. 16). More mundanely, a piece of ice melting in a glass of water has become the go-to metaphor for the ocean-induced melting of polar glaciers and ice shelves—although Annouchka Bayley argues in her article "A Domestic Ice Cube's Journey towards Transformation" (part of the "On Ice" issue of *Performance Research*) that an ice-cube's performance must also be considered at some level non-metaphorical and non-readable (2013, p. 29).

This brings us back in an unexpected way to the enormous tabular berg produced by the Larsen C calving. The news reports that greeted its appearance treated this berg as, effectively, an outsized ice cube: a phenomenon of human making, although in this case inadvertent and threatening rather than purpose-built and convenient. Scientists went to some length to explain that while "there is plenty going on to merit concern" about the Antarctic icescape, there is no evidence that this particular event (as opposed to the collapse of the neighbouring Larsen A and B ice shelves) was anything but part of the "normal processes of a healthy ice sheet" (Fricker 2017). The rush to cast the Larsen C berg as a harbinger of

planetary doom points, first, to the tendency to conflate icescapes in the public imagination, paying little attention to regional specifics; and secondly, to the potential for Anthropocenic thinking to fold back, ironically, into anthropocentric thinking. It seems impossible for we humans that the creation of a trillion-tonne berg could not be all about us. Icescapes and their inhabitants are so readily transformed into clichéd elegiac planetary symbols—the polar bear perched precariously on an isolated ice floe—that it becomes difficult, if not impossible, to grapple with their specific localities and materialities.

The Liveliness of Ice

One key way in which humanities researchers have responded to the Anthropocene is by extending understandings of agency, including within performance studies (see e.g. Schneider 2015). In this approach, the non-human world is no longer imagined simply as a setting against which humans act or an adversary they must battle and conquer. Rather, human and non-human agency are understood as always entangled. Likewise, matter is not automatically assumed to be lifeless and inert, but is considered something with its own stories, histories and interactions. Non-human performances are of course ubiquitous, and not only limited to domestic or commercial scenarios that are constructed by humans. As Willmar Sauter describes in the final chapter of this collection, individuals of non-human species (such as the ptarmigan) perform for non-human audiences and for their own purposes. Sauter also argues that the human experience of landscape and weather can itself be understood in performative terms; Riku Roihankorpi in his chapter similarly describes the calving of the giant iceberg from the Larsen C ice shelf as constituting "a geographical and climatic performance."

In this sense, ice exemplifies and makes visible an argument that has been applied to all matter. Because of their tendency to shift, crack, fragment and overturn noisily and unexpectedly, icescapes have long been described in the language of liveliness. One early twentieth-century explorer, Morton Moyes of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition (1911–14), left alone in a hut on an ice shelf for over two months, began to see the booming, cracking glacier as "something alive," and all of Antarctica as "a slow-brained sentient being deceptively solid and lifeless but actually full of movement and change, with a low amoebic vitality" (1964, p. 22). Whether or not one embraces new materialist extensions of

agency, it is hard not to recognize a certain uncanny liveliness in mobile, ever-changing icescapes. Unsurprisingly, then, recent critical approaches to ice have focused on its status as a non-human actor or agent. Drawing from the narratives of early modern Arctic travellers, Lowell Duckert argues that glaciers can be seen as "networks of non/human things that constantly, and slowly, collaborate." Understanding humans and ice "not as impervious antagonists, but as co-constitutive *living* things constantly being entered and entranced" might, he suggests, "help us reimagine new futures for our warming world right now" (2013, pp. 68, 70).

In the move towards considering the liveliness of ice, however, it is important to remember that icescapes have always been lively in a more traditional sense, inhabited by human communities (as well as a large range of non-human species). While the ice-covered ocean of the high Arctic is necessarily unpopulated, the land surrounding it has long been the home of Indigenous peoples including the Inuit (in present-day Siberia, Alaska, Canada and Greenland), Sámi (in Scandinavia and Russia) and the Chukchi (one of a number of Indigenous groups of northern Russia). These communities, which originally relied on oral rather than written communication, have their own traditions of ritual, dance, song, storytelling and other forms of performance, which have been combined with or maintained alongside contemporary Western forms (see e.g. Brask and Morgan 1992). Music and song in particular have been central to traditional Arctic performing arts, with a wide range of purposes from accompanying games through correcting anti-social behaviour to spiritual communication (Kingston 2005, pp. 1339–40). In some communities, the adoption of Western theatrical venues and conventions has been an important way of maintaining cultural practices and traditions (Kvernmo 2014, p. 23). At the other end of this spectrum is the very troubling history of Arctic people exhibited as exotic objects for Western consumption, grouped together with other Indigenous people classed as "primitive" or "extreme," or featured as elements in a constructed icescape (see e.g. Potter 2007, p. 178).

In addition to artistic performance, Indigenous people have their own ways of relating to the icescapes as active environments, very different from those of Western explorers and travellers. Julie Cruikshank's *Do Glaciers Listen?* examines the connections of the icescapes of the Saint Elias Mountains with the human histories of both travellers and people indigenous to the region. The latter understand glaciers as "actors" that "respond to their surroundings," "make moral judgements and … punish

infractions" and are described "as both animate (endowed with life) and as animating (giving life to) landscapes they inhabit" (2005, pp. 3, 243–59). As Cruikshank notes, climate change brings new meanings to these natural/cultural entanglements. Lill Rastad Bjørst (2010, p. 133) examines the role of ice as a "non-human actor" in debates around climate change, tracing its interactions with "hybrid networks" that include scientists, governments and Inuit hunters and fishers. Where ice might be seen as a "global non-human actor," argues Bjørst, "the Inuit are both local actors and witnesses of climate change in the Arctic" (p. 142). While the ways in which Indigenous Arctic communities have performed in and with ice, both within and outside specific arts traditions, historically and in the present, are too rich and various to be dealt with substantially in this collection, awareness of their long-term inhabitation of the far north—registered particularly in Sauter's chapter—provides a check on the tendency in Western thinking to empty out icescapes as non-human or inorganic environments.

This thinking applies in a different way to the Antarctic icescape. The stereotypical framing of Antarctica as a "last wilderness" belies the degree to which the ice itself already encodes the material products of human activity: heavy metals, DDT, microplastics, carbon dioxide and other chemicals. While these contaminants may not be visible to the human eye, the numerous scientific bases and cruise-ships are more evident. The latter must continually perform Antarctica's purity by scheduling their visits so to as carefully avoid each other's presence. Antarctica is now a humanised icescape, even if sustained human presence has occurred for less than a century and a half.

Some of the many ways in which humans have engaged with the Antarctic and other icy environments are explored in the following chapters. In the remainder of this chapter, we explain the structural principles behind *Performing Ice* and give a sense of the approaches and topics offered by its contributors.

Reading *Performing Ice*

The chapters that follow could be grouped in many ways—geographically, historically, thematically or methodologically. We have chosen to order them according to the frame they bring to the idea of performance, which ranges from drama and theatre studies (Nielsen's following chapter on the staging of plays set in Antarctica), through examination of other kinds of

artistic (Quin, Philpott, Pearson) and cultural (Roihankorpi, Kelly and Wise, Leane and Jabour) performance, to personal and autobiographical approaches (Roberts, Sauter). We enforced no restrictions on the way contributors understood the concept of performance, allowing them to bring their own disciplinary contexts to their analyses. These vary markedly, including not only performance studies but also musicology and sound studies, literary studies, law, anthropology and visual arts. As a result, their approaches to the notion of "performing ice" are eclectic, rich and occasionally in opposition to each other. Nonetheless, various thematic ideas, events and historical figures recur across otherwise disparate chapters—the idea of the "heroic era" explorer; the human body in extreme conditions; the significance of dramatic events within the cryosphere (such as an iceberg calving) in the Anthropocene; the role of performance in the politics of icy places—suggesting a set of shared cultural preoccupations that icescapes engender at the present time.

Hanne Nielsen begins her chapter "Staging the Construction of Place in Two Antarctic Plays" with an account of her own role in a performance that took place at Scott Base in East Antarctica. She moves on to outline the history of attempts to represent Antarctica in conventional theatrical settings, before narrowing in on two specific examples: Manfred Karge's *Die Eroberung des Südpols* (1985) and Patricia Cornelius's *Do Not Go Gentle…* (2010). While markedly different in their political and historical contexts, these plays share an interest in representing real and imagined places simultaneously on stage: Antarctica and (respectively) an attic in an industrial town and an aged-care home. As Nielsen argues, these plays self-consciously perform the imaginative construction of the Antarctic ice, something that—for most people—happens every time the continent is invoked.

Douglas Quin's "Figures in a Landscape" brings our attention to human bodies and kinaesthetic engagement with the Antarctic icescape via movement, dance and performance. In his chapter, Quin explores the different approaches, sensibilities and creative outputs of four artists who have undertaken work in Antarctica: Christina Evans, Shakti Avattar León and VestAndPage (Andrea Pagnes and Verena Stenke). Drawing on interviews with the artists, their writings and correspondence, as well as his analyses of their Antarctic performances and/or documentary videos and still imagery, he provides detailed discussions of Evans's dance works *Body of Ice* and *Polarity* (both 2011); León's filmed performance project *Places of Power—Antarctica: Ritual+Performance+Butoh* (2012); and

VestAndPage's *Performances at the Core of the Looking-Glass* (2012), the final episode of the duo's film trilogy *sin∞fin The Movie*.

As Quin's chapter recognises, the vast majority of our aesthetic experiences of Antarctica have been mediated through the visual arts and the written word. A corrective to the dominance of visuality in creative responses to the polar regions is offered by Carolyn Philpott in her chapter "Mixing Ice." She draws on approaches from musicology, including score and sound-recording analyses, to provide the first scholarly examination of the polar-inspired music and performances of composer, writer and experimental hip-hop musician Paul D. Miller (also known as "DJ Spooky that Subliminal Kid"). The works she discusses in detail include *Terra Nova: Sinfonia Antarctica* (2008), the book and installation *The Book of Ice* (2011), the album *Of Water and Ice* (2013) and his *Arctic Rhythms* concert series (2014 onwards). She considers these works within the context of Miller's in-person engagement with the polar regions and his knowledge of climate change science and the structure of ice, revealing the ways in which he attempts to educate audiences around the world about the polar regions and important environmental issues affecting them.

The fifth chapter in the collection, Mike Pearson's "*One Year Performance 1921–22*, or Two Men in a Boat," takes us back to the so-called "Heroic Era" of exploration (1895–1922). His chapter provides a detailed and engaging reading of the largely ignored British Imperial Expedition (1920–22) to Antarctica, undertaken by just two young men: geologist Thomas Bagshawe and surveyor Maxime Lester. Living in an abandoned overturned boat in the middle of penguin colonies at Paradise Bay, the men subsisted on baked beans and seal meat for a full year while undertaking regular meteorological readings and observations of tidal conditions with makeshift equipment. Drawing on material published by the expeditioners after their journey, surviving photographs and his own observations of the material remains at Waterboat Point, Pearson reflects on entwined themes of dwelling, of Antarctic heritage and archaeology, and of the mutability of objects and their improvisational uses in extreme circumstances. Above all, he reframes Bagshawe and Lester's expedition as a work of durational performance, comparable with the protracted works of Taiwanese/American artist Tehching Hsieh and the corporeally demanding undertakings of British artist Stuart Brisley. In so doing, he permits us to rethink some of the earliest human performances on the continent.

Riku Roihankorpi's "The Eco-Cruelty of the Great Finnish Famine of 1695–97" focuses on a very different historical and geographical event that puts the privations of polar explorers into perspective. This chapter gives us a reading of Artaudian ethics that helps to reassess the contemporary significance of the Great Finnish Famine. The cold period that lasted from the sixteenth century until the mid-nineteenth century was, perhaps, the gravest humanitarian crisis to hit pre-modern Nordic societies. Centuries later, informed by the even greater human tragedy of World War One, Antonin Artaud's *The Theatre and Its Double* (1958) pursued an apocalyptic and gratuitous "must" that resists all politics of representation. Reminding us that Artaud's vision of theatre capitalises on the irrational and uncontrollable implications of cataclysmic events, Roihankorpi applies Artaudian dramaturgy to rethink the force-filled and eventful landscape of famine caused by extended winter as a performative event. In this way, he sheds new light on our potential failure to comprehend the ethical or performative functions of humanity in the present climate crisis.

The following chapter, Tace Kelly and Kit Wise's "Immersion: The Aquatic Ice Body," explores narratives associated with swimming in ice-cold waters in and beyond the polar regions through a performative lens. Beginning with myths and legends involving immersion in cold waters, Kelly and Wise touch on issues of gender and race as they discuss some of the most prominent examples in Western literature of tales about feats of endurance played out in cold and icy waters. They then turn the spotlight to contemporary swimming performances carried out near-freezing waters, especially the polar swims of Lynne Cox, highlighting the rigorous preparations that must be undertaken before such events, as well as the risks and impacts (positive and negative) of such close bodily encounters with extremely cold environments.

Extreme activities in polar regions can be highly political, as demonstrated by Cox's famous swim across the Bering Strait. Elizabeth Leane and Julia Jabour's "Performing Sovereignty over an Ice Continent" focuses on the geopolitics of some recent cultural performances in and about Antarctica, including national debates over naming, campaigns around whaling, and tourist expeditions. Bringing together the perspectives of legal and literary studies, Leane and Jabour point to the necessarily performative nature of territorial claims in an environment that repels usual modes of colonial occupation. While in other potential colonies, they argue, ceremonies of national claim—proclamations, flag-raising—could be consolidated by long-term inhabitation, Antarctica resisted

permanent human occupation. Even when scientific bases began to be established, the ice had a way of rejecting them—slowly covering them with snow and sometimes spitting them out at its edges. Performative aspects of sovereignty claims thus loomed larger—and appeared more surreal—in the far south than in other, less icy, environments. Covering a wide range of examples, Leane and Jabour draw our attention to the distinct and evolving nature of the performance of sovereignty over the Antarctic ice.

Leslie Roberts's chapter "The Gigaton Ice Theatre: Performing Ecoactivism in Antarctica" approaches political performance in a more personal way. As a journalist in the 1980s, Roberts was embedded in a Greenpeace occupation of a site in Antarctica as a protest against an emerging minerals convention. In the chapter, she intersperses memories of this experience with reflections on the media strategies deployed throughout the campaign. Employing theatrical methods to draw attention to remote features of our shared environment in Antarctica, Roberts argues, Greenpeace effectively changed perspectives on this place, confronting humans with their own interactions with and impacts on the ice.

The volume ends with Willmar Sauter's "Hiking beyond Roads and Internet," a contemplative reflection on an extended hiking expedition through Northern Sweden—a Padjelanta Tour above the Arctic Circle. Over the course of the expedition through remote Sámi regions, Sauter presents a contemporary version of a polar journal, reminding us of aspects of Swedish literature, history and Arctic traditions as he and his companions undertake a performative journey through a frozen and intriguing landscape. Both history lesson and survey, this account of the slow-paced wanderings of an icebound adventurer contributes to new understandings of the beauty of the frozen environment. Sauter's captivating journey in this remote cryoscape reminds us of the endless capacity of nature to perform, but also importantly of our own need to bear witness to this performance.

Marginal to the everyday lives of many humans, icescapes are set to become some of the most contested sites on the globe in the next fifty years. Coming to terms with human relationships with icy environments is an urgent and important task. The chapters that follow take on this task, examining performances about, against, in and with polar icescapes in order to investigate the role that ice has played, and will continue to play, in the history of our cultures and our planet.

Notes

1. *The Titanic in Print and on Screen* (Anderson 2005) lists only eleven items under "plays," only six of which appear to have been staged (the first, *The Berg*, in 1929). There are fifty-eight items under novels and short stories.
2. "Iceberg Spectacle" is a three-day helicopter and boat tour from Iceland offered (at the time of writing) by Greenland Adventures.
3. From W. Clark Russell's *The Frozen Pirate* (1887) to Louis Nowra's *Ice* (2009), fictional icebergs often yield up human figures who have been preserved for decades due to the power of ice to slow decay.
4. Definitions of all the different forms of ice are too many to canvas here, but it is worth distinguishing between a glacier, a body of ice "massive enough to thin and spread under [its] own weight"; an ice sheet, "A glacier that covers large parts of a continent or a large island"; and an ice shelf, "The floating perimeter of parts of an ice sheet grounded in water" (Hughes 2011). Icesheets occur only in Greenland and Antarctica.
5. These include Dodds (2018); Gosnell (2005); Marling (2008); Spufford (1996); and Wilson (2003).
6. Recent scholarship has de-emphasised visuality in the analysis of landscape and foregrounded more holistic bodily encounters. For instance, taking a phenomenological perspective, Wylie argues that "landscape is more than visual and more than symbolic," requiring attention to "myriad everyday and embodied practices of interaction with and through landscape" (2013, p. 59). Mike Pearson, referencing the electroacoustic work of Chris Cree Brown, notes the "primacy" in Antarctica of "sound over sight, the ear ever attuned to the cracking of ice" (2010, p. 27).
7. Given the size of the chunks of ice displayed in the work, they are technically too small to be classed as icebergs and would normally be termed—like the one in the image featured in this chapter—as "growlers."
8. These difficulties—and perhaps also environmental concerns—can be reflected in the criteria for national residencies. While Antarctica New Zealand facilitated *Antarctica: The First Dance*, the U.S. Antarctic Artists and Writers Program explicitly excludes performances and art installations in Antarctica, although artists may travel to there in order to gain inspiration or material for works to perform elsewhere (National Science Foundation n.d.).
9. Anthropogenic climate change does not, of course, correspond to uniformly warmer temperatures across the planet; the average increase in temperature can lead to more extreme weather events including intense cold spells (see e.g. Milman 2018).

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Staging the Construction of Place in Two Antarctic Plays

Hanne E. F. Nielsen

One of the world's most unusual degrees is the Postgraduate Certificate in Antarctic Studies (PCAS). This summer course, run by the University of Canterbury in New Zealand, includes a fieldtrip to the Ross Sea region of Antarctica, where New Zealand's polar activities are concentrated. At the end of the fieldwork, and before departing Antarctica, a PCAS ritual is to perform a skit about the group's on-ice experiences for the staff of New Zealand's Scott Base. Preparing scripts and rehearsing with classmates in December 2011, I was keenly aware that we were feeding into a long tradition of performing in Antarctica. As fourteen of us took to the "stage" in the dining hall and dramatised such events as "the forgotten boots," "the sunbathing incident" and "the lost pencil," we not only parodied contemporary safety and environmental regulations and reporting mechanisms—we also added another layer to Ross Island's performing history. Those performances have taken many guises: Heroic-Era explorers transformed the chilly confines of Discovery Hut into the *Royal Terror Theatre* and staged Watts Phillips' 1862 farce entitled *A Ticket-of-Leave* in the

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winter of 1902 (Scott 1905, p. 376; Leane 2003; Pearson 2004)[1]; Jenny Coverack brought the story of Antarctic explorer Robert Falcon Scott's wife Kathleen to Scott's *Terra Nova* Hut in a site-specific performance of *A Father For My Son* (2000) in 2006; and choreographer Corey Baker and Royal New Zealand Ballet dancer Madeline Graham spent two weeks on Ross Island creating a dance performance to highlight the impacts of climate change in 2018. That stations such as Scott Base have entire rooms dedicated to costumes is testament to the ongoing popularity of performance. Antarctic expeditioners have long recognised the power of theatre to entertain and transport audiences to familiar places back home.

This process also works in reverse: theatrical performances have transported low-latitude audiences to "The Ice" (as Antarctica is colloquially known) on many occasions over the past two centuries. Theatre is an ideal medium through which to explore notions of space, place, embodiment and belonging, and through which to forge connections with distant locations. Space and place are contested categories and have been interpreted though many disciplinary lenses. "Space" is often understood as an abstract conceptual framework—mutable, not experienced by humans and ready to be endowed with meaning (McAuley 2003, p. 601)—while "place" is specific, (usually) concrete, tangible and inhabitable, and plays a central role in human experiences (McAuley 2006, p. 16). Rather than being opposites, Tim Cresswell argues, space and place exist together on a continuum, linking experience to abstraction (2004, p. 21); places can be understood as "spaces which people have made meaningful" (2004, p. 7). Geographer Yi-Fu Tuan articulates a similar view, writing that "what begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value" (1977, p. 6). This process is particularly apparent in the Antarctic context as the undifferentiated space of the uninhabited continent was transformed into place by early expeditioners. As Robert Falcon Scott and Roald Amundsen set out across Antarctica's interior ice towards the geographic South Pole in the early years of the twentieth century, they turned space into place with every step. Their diaries track this process, making tangible the idea of the southernmost latitudes and providing inspiration for writers, artists and playwrights for many generations.

In recent years there has been renewed critical interest in the relationship between place and performance. Cathy Sloan writes that the "concept of place as a set, defined entity does not correspond to the subjective experience of that place" (2018, p. 587), particularly when theatre and theatre

practices are used to question human relationships with particular locations. Writing on applied theatre, Sally Mackey argues that "[performance] practices can trouble the meanings of place, destabilizing suppositions of locality, dwelling, inhabitation, territory, indigeneity, community, residence, belonging, connection and ownership" (2016, p. 107). Theatre can therefore be a useful tool for exploring the construction of place (via stories both old and new) and for encouraging both performers and audiences to reconsider their own relationships with a variety of locations, both physically tangible and accessible via memory or imagination. Theatre allows for a staging of both the literal and the imagined, thus offering the audience a chance to reconcile the often-complex concepts of place and space, and to bring distant locations (such as the polar regions) into their own sphere of experience.

This chapter examines how the ice of Antarctica has been depicted and made tangible through theatrical staging and performance. Further, it argues that by putting the Antarctic stories of Scott and Amundsen on stage, playwrights dramatize the transformation of unknown and uninhabited Antarctic space into the Antarctic place we know today. I outline some of the ways in which Antarctica has been "staged" within traditional theatre settings throughout the last 250 years, before focusing on two specific plays, Manfred Karge's *Die Eroberung des Südpols* (1985) and Patricia Cornelius's *Do Not Go Gentle…* (2010). Although emerging out of very different cultural and historical contexts, these two plays share an interest in using an imagined icescape to work through very real and mundane struggles. In both plays, physical and imagined encounters merge within the context of the theatre, with actors materially present on an actual stage set but simultaneously inhabiting an invisible landscape communally constructed by the characters they play. The performances bridge the distance to a remote place by recreating it imaginatively and metaphorically upon the stage, generating a version that can be experienced by the viewers as they witness its very construction. These works of theatre encourage the audience to become aware of the way the imagination engages with the real, foregrounding a process that happens whenever we engage with any place—including Antarctica.

Staging Ice: Challenges and Approaches

Antarctica has a long history of being depicted on stage. The continent was first used as a theatrical setting well before the interior was explored by humans, with many of these depictions of icescapes inspired by the experiences of early explorers. The London pantomime *Omai* from 1785, based on the experience of a Tahitian man who travelled on voyages led by James Cook, included "a dreary ice island" (O'Keefe and Shields 2004), while a Hobart melodrama entitled *The South Polar Expedition*, staged upon the return of James Clark Ross's Antarctic expedition in 1841, featured a "splendid ice landscape" as a setting as well as a scene where the expeditioners are attacked by giant penguins (quoted in Leane 2013, p. 20). An 1876 performance entitled *The Antarctic*, staged at London's Strand Theatre (Codling 1986, p. 67), used "beautiful new scenery" as a selling point in a published theatrical notice—although the plot had little to do with the polar regions, the promotional material highlighted this aspect in order to capitalize on readers' interest in the polar regions.

The vast size and inhospitable nature of Antarctica have presented challenges for playwrights and directors. How can a land of superlatives (coldest, highest, windiest, driest) be represented effectively within the confines of a theatre? For some, such as German Expressionist Reinhard Goering and American playwright Ted Tally, a minimalist approach was the best option, as it mirrored the minimalist space of the Antarctic plateau. Although Tally instructed that "The setting should above all be simple and flexible, close to a bare stage" (Tally 1981, p. xi), he explicitly incorporated other senses, indicating that wind sounds should be used to evoke a blizzard, with the noise of the wind turning into "impossible towers of sound" (Tally 1981, p. xvi) and accompanied by a bright white light. Temperature is another element that can be invoked to represent ice: in 2004 the German theatre company Das Letzte Kleinod performed the play *Eismitte*, which told the story of Alfred Wegener's last Greenland expedition, inside a giant freezer at −24 degrees Celsius. Lynda Chanwai-Earle's 2008 play *Heat*, first performed in a standard theatrical space that was powered using portable solar panels, also used temperature as an element of setting (Nielsen 2015, p. 203). As noted in the Introduction, *Heat* deals with climate change: a physical block of ice on the stage simultaneously stands in for Antarctica and makes visible concerns about anthropogenic warming and the melting of polar ice (Nielsen 2015, p. 213).

In other instances playwrights reconstruct their own Antarctic experiences for audiences at home, in order to explore ecological, historical or racialised aspects of their own encounters. Multi-media works blur the line between Antarctica as a place to perform on and perform about. Pierre Huyghe's *A Journey that Wasn't*, which took place on an ice rink in New York's Central Park in 2005, included projected footage that was captured during a yacht journey to the Antarctic Peninsula. In this case, a real encounter with the far south led to a performance that imagined the destruction of much of Antarctica's ice, and the emergence of new islands. Viewers were invited to not only imagine Antarctica as a setting, but to also consider possible futures for the place. Mojisola Adebayo, a British-born Nigerian/Danish playwright and performer, premiered her *Moj of the Antarctic* in 2006, in which a nineteenth-century escaped slave woman travels to Antarctica on a whale ship disguised as a man. In the play, an African-American character's presence on the continent is used to trouble the dominant narratives of Antarctica as a place for white explorers to perform empire building (van der Watt and Swart 2016, p. 126). Adebayo's play both highlights and challenges the fact that "the discourse of Polar exploration is layered with the language of white supremacy" (Adebayo 2009, p. 96). Her in-situ performances on the continent were captured on film during a tourist voyage to the Antarctic Peninsula and later incorporated as projections into a stage production back in London (Nielsen 2015, p. 207).[2] Both Huyghe and Adebayo documented their encounters with Antarctica and used this as the basis for later performances about ways of viewing and interacting with the continent.

There are many ways of approaching the staging of ice, then, and both minimalist and complex sets have been employed in Antarctic productions. The 2016 production of *Antarctica: The Musical*, written by Dana Bergstrom and Dugald McLaren, used puppetry to bring a sense of the scale of Antarctica to a Hobart audience. In one notable scene, a small Hägglunds (a tracked vehicle often used in Antarctica) was presented atop large white screens in order to dramatize movement across the icescape and to portray the setting as vast and "beautiful but very remote" (Shine 2016). This production carried an environmental message similar to that of Chanwai-Earle's *Heat*, with McLaren explaining in an interview that "the Antarctic continent is the canary in the coal mine for the planet and it's a very special and unique place that deserves to be protected" (Shine 2016). While Antarctica was integral to the title, theme and setting of the 2016 musical, other playwrights have been drawn to the continent because

it stands in for any remote, faraway place. Tony Kushner's well-known *Angels in America* (1990), for instance, features several scenes set in a self-consciously imaginary Antarctica, complete with pine trees and an Inuit character. This "Antarctica" is a refuge for the unhappy housewife Harper to escape into; the inclusion of non-Antarctic elements in the set for this scene serve to highlight the constructed nature of her version of the place.

Historical stories of human interactions with Antarctica have attracted many playwrights, with Heroic Era narratives providing material for a number of Antarctic theatrical productions over the course of the twentieth century. The famous "Race to the Pole" in 1911/1912 (van der Merwe and Michell 2018; Jones 2003) has been dramatised from various perspectives. This "race" saw Amundsen's Norwegian team become the first humans to reach the South Pole on 14 December 1911, ahead of a British party of five men led by Scott, who attained the Pole on 17 January 1912, then perished on the return journey. The German playwright Reinhard Goering was the first to dramatise Scott's story in his *Die Südpolexpedition des Kapitäns Scott* (1929), which foregrounded themes of "suicide, sacrifice, and self-determination" (Nielsen and Leane 2013, p. 279). Douglas Stewart's well-known Australian radio play *The Fire on the Snow* (1944), like Goering's, positioned Antarctica as the backdrop to a tale of heroic endurance and sacrifice. Subsequent plays have challenged the framing of Scott as a hero. Foreshadowing the arguments Roland Huntford would make in his controversial book *Scott and Amundsen* in 1979, Howard Brenton's *Scott of the Antarctic* (1972), set on an ice rink, presented a scathing view of Scott's expedition. Instead of being wide and unending, the rink has clearly defined edges, so the scaled-down setting itself undermines the commonly received tale of heroic endeavour, making the deaths of the men appear pathetic rather than heroic. Where Brenton's approach was excoriating and presented Scott as a bumbling fool, Wolfgang Weyrauch's *Das Grüne Zelt* (1969) and Tally's *Terra Nova* (1981) were far more sympathetic, indicating that the same historical episode (and the continent where it took place) can be interpreted in very different ways.

The tradition of retelling Antarctic stories, exploring the nuance of historical characters and recasting the Antarctic landscape as complex rather than hostile, enabled later playwrights to move away from the Antarctic as a setting, while still using the legendary polar narratives of Scott and Amundsen as "a central conceit" (Cornelius 2011, p. 6). Both Karge and Cornelius use well-known stories of Antarctic heroes as a central element in their plays. Examining how these playwrights present both the stories of

exploration and the Antarctic continent itself reveals much about changing attitudes to heroism, exploration and the Antarctic region: Romantic ideals of "man versus nature" make way for more nuanced narrative retellings that focus more on characters' inner challenges than on Antarctica itself. Karge's characters perform the roles of Amundsen's successful party (Amundsen, Helmer Hansen, Olav Bjaaland, Oscar Wisting and Sverre Hassel) as they seek out a way to experience a sense of achievement, while Cornelius's characters follow in the footsteps of Scott's doomed men (Scott, Edgar Evans, Lawrence "Titus" Oates, Henry "Birdie" Bowers and Edward Wilson) to navigate the path towards their own deaths. Both plays examined in this chapter show how Antarctica has gone from being seen as a blank white page for heroic stories to a complex and ever more accessible terrain of metaphor and imagination.

Reframing Antarctic Heroism in *Die Erobung des Südpols* and *Do Not Go Gentle…*

In Karge's *Die Eroberung des Südpols* (1985) and Cornelius's *Do Not Go Gentle…* (2010), characters create their own versions of Antarctica on the stage, using an imagined icescape to help them deal with the challenges associated with (respectively) unemployment and aging. In these plays story leads to the construction of setting: in acting out Amundsen's and Scott's narratives of place-making, the characters come to create their own versions of the Antarctic. This approach allows for an exploration of the fragility of place and highlights the importance of subjectivity in the place-making process, as many versions of reality play out simultaneously. Characters talk of icescapes and the polar plateau as they traverse the stage, but these meta-theatrical plays do not represent Antarctica directly. Instead, they stage the construction of place, using polar narratives as a vehicle to address contemporary social issues. The plays examined in this chapter present Antarctica as "an *actively* imagined landscape" (Nielsen 2015, p. 206), meaning the audience is privy to the ways in which it is constructed by the characters on stage. Karge's characters use sheets on the washing line to represent the white icescape as they act out Amundsen's conquest of the South Pole. Cornelius's characters occupy a bare stage until Act II, when a large white structure makes visible the Antarctic landscape, showing how this imaginary icescape is more real for the characters than any other setting. This puts the focus on subjectivity and perception,

making it possible for multiple characters with a range of perceptions to have their voices heard. Antarctica is not the actual setting for either play; rather, the icy landscape serves as a metaphor for the struggles the characters are facing in their everyday lives.

Born in Brandenburg in 1938, Karge trained as an actor and a director before beginning his career with the Berliner Ensemble, the group founded in 1949 by Berthold Brecht and Helene Weigel. Karge worked closely with both Matthias Langhoff at East Berlin's Volksbühne and Claus Peymann in the industrial Ruhr area before writing his first play, *Jacke wie Hose*, at the age of 44. *Die Eroberung des Südpols*, which premiered in Bochum in 1986, is set in the industrial coal mining town of Herne in the Ruhr valley. This is a play for actors and directors: Karge's theatrical experience led him to write a text that leaves plenty of room for interpretation by the company performing the piece. This was not the first time Karge had worked with a play set on ice, as he also co-directed and starred in Thomas Brasch's *Lieber Georg* at Berlin's Freie Volksbühne in 1980, a production that has been described as "Poetry on Ice" (Hensel 167). Based on the life of writer Georg Heym, who died after falling through ice whilst skating, Brasch's play also touches on Heym's Antarctic story from 1911 entitled "Tagebuch Shakletons." This allusion to Heym's story demonstrates that Karge was familiar with Heroic-Era Antarctic narratives (and their retellings) before writing his own polar play.

While its title conjures images of a remote and unfamiliar environment, Karge's *Die Eroberung des Südpols* turns the audience's attention to a local and contemporary issue. The harsh physical environment of the Antarctic is a metaphor for the inhospitable nature of a society in recession, with Karge's characters using a role-play of Amundsen's Antarctic journey to explore themes of joblessness and hopelessness. For these characters the role-play acts as "a survival strategy in a social environment in which they have become all but invisible" (Remshardt 2004, p. 319). This survival strategy has had lasting resonance: since its premiere *Die Eroberung des Südpols* has been one of the most regularly performed Antarctic plays. It has become especially popular in recent years due to the centennial anniversary (2011) of Amundsen's reaching of the Pole, while the concurrent global financial crisis has made the theme of unemployment particularly resonant. Lyn Gardner's review of a 2012 performance in *The Guardian* remarked that, thanks to the idea of job centres being full of hopelessly desperate young people, "it could be set in the here and now" (2012). *Die Eroberung des Südpols* has thus made "a considerable impact" (Vivis 2000,

p. 340) as a German text on the English stage and several English language versions exist.[3] The language differs markedly, but the themes remain relevant for diverse audiences.

While Karge's play was still being performed on a range of English and German stages,[4] Cornelius's *Do Not Go Gentle…* had its premiere on the other side of the world in 2010. *Do Not Go Gentle…* garnered considerable critical claim within Australia and saw Cornelius awarded both the 2011 New South Wales Premier's Literary Award for Drama and the Victorian Premier's Literary Prize. A founding member of the Melbourne Worker's Theatre, Cornelius aims to make powerful contemporary theatre about issues that are often ignored and people who are marginalised by society (Andrew 2012). *Do Not Go Gentle…* juxtaposes the elderly and mentally ill, who are often forgotten, with Antarctic heroes whose memory has endured. This allows the characters to explore their own failures and acknowledges the very human desire to leave a legacy behind. The yearning for a life that is more vibrant is a common theme in Cornelius's plays, and this comes through strongly in the different regrets of the characters in *Do Not Go Gentle…* The title of the play is instructive as it is borrowed from the famous Dylan Thomas poem that urges people to "Rage, rage against the dying of the light" and to resist death to the last with the imperative "do not go gentle into that good night" (Thomas 1957, p. 128). Although the outcome of their struggles is predetermined, Cornelius's characters rage until the end.

Julian Meyrick, who directed the premiere of *Do Not Go Gentle…*, describes Cornelius's play as "a meditation on time, loss and love, on what it is to reach a point when a judgment on one's life is both unavoidable and beside the point" (quoted in Cornelius 2011, p. 3). He goes on to explain why this makes Scott's polar journey an appropriate metaphor for the elderly as the end of life comes into sight. As a cultural myth, Scott's story can be invoked and then requires no further explanation: "[It] places an uncompromising metaphor on stage—that of a long, ultimately fatal trek to the South Pole—as a means of exposing, exploring and expanding our experience of the aging process" (quoted in Cornelius 2011, p. 5). The elderly characters in the play face their deaths one by one, heading alone into the snow and the unknown as they leave the stage. Meyrick also comments on the associations he thinks the Scott myth evokes for contemporary audiences, namely "courage, comradeship, daring and determination" (quoted in Cornelius 2011, p. 3). However, both Cornelius and Meyrick are well aware of historiographic debates and shifting attitudes

towards heroic sacrifice, with the director commenting that Australians "don't take kindly to the heroic posture" that saw Scott raised to a mythical status (quoted in Cornelius 2011, p. 3). Cornelius makes Scott more relevant to her characters by comparing his famous suffering to their own challenges. In doing this, she also shows how the term "hero" can be applied to unlikely members of society. Scott's narrative is temporarily removed from the Antarctic and used as a frame around which her characters create their own imagined landscape, helping them come to terms with reaching their own points of no return.

Staging the Construction of Antarctica

In both Karge's and Cornelius's plays it is narratives (of Amundsen and Scott, respectively) that come first, as they offer ideal vehicles to address contemporary social issues relating to failure and triumph. It is only in acting out these stories of the creation of Antarctica as a place that an Antarctic setting becomes necessary for the characters on the stage. Thus, both plays stage the construction of place. They also reveal the problems associated with place-making by offering multiple perspectives on the constructed setting, and by questioning what constitutes the "real." These problems of perception are applicable in any setting but are exemplified in Antarctica thanks to its comparatively recent discovery and transformation from space to place and to the continued dominance of Heroic Era narratives in the public imagination.

Karge's stage is minimalist, with *"Die Bühne als Bühne. Ein kleine rote Vorhang*" (Karge 1996, p. 37) [The stage as a stage. A small red curtain]. This sets the scene for a play that is largely about, and takes place in, the imagination of five unemployed men. Remshardt describe this "self-consciously performative and frankly anti-illusionistic" setting as "a paean to the unfettered imagination in the empty space of the theatre and a sober caveat about the limits of escapism" (2004, p. 317). These limits apply both to the characters on the stage and the audience watching the play. If audiences go to the theatre in order to be confronted with alternative possibilities and to escape their everyday lives, then in the case of this play they watch the characters on stage do the same. These characters are aware of the curtain and the ideas of spectatorship that it entails, building up to the moment when they reveal what lies behind it:

Büscher: Was ist hinter dem Vorhang.
Slupianek: Pfoten weg, Büscher. Hinter diesem Vorhang, Freunde, hinter diesem Vorhang, der gestern noch nicht da war—
Braukmann: Was ist hinter diesem Vorhang, der gestern noch nicht da war. (Karge 1996, p. 38)

[Büscher: What's behind the curtain?
Slupianek: Hands off, Büscher. Behind this curtain, friends, behind this curtain that was not there yesterday—
Braukmann: What is there behind this curtain that wasn't there yesterday?]

When the curtain is pulled back Slupianek responds to the discovery of Seiffert in a noose using a theatre analogy, telling Seiffert that if he goes ahead and kills himself there will be no applause: "*Die Zuschauer sind taub, blind und temperamentlos*" (Karge 1996, p. 40) [The audience are deaf, blind and unresponsive]. The characters crave the affirmation that an audience could provide. However, they act out Amundsen's story in private in the attic, away from the eyes of others. For Karge's characters the Antarctic role-play offers an escape by breaking up the monotony of the men's day-to-day lives. Paradoxically, this private role-play is performed on a stage before the audience, thus highlighting the meta-theatrical elements of the performance that the presence of the curtain introduces.

Karge dramatises the process of imagination, thus allowing the audience to see how his characters create their own Antarctic setting as they act out Amundsen's story of South Polar place-making. Sheets hanging on the washing line in the attic act as the catalyst for imagining the polar landscape, but they are not immediately welcomed:

Seiffert: Ärgerlich.
Braukmann: Was.
Seiffert: Die Wäsche hängt.
Braukmann: Ja, die Wäsche hängt.
Seiffert: Was kann man da machen.
Büscher: Nichts kann man da machen. (Karge 1996, p. 47)

[Seiffert: Damn.
Braukmann: What.
Seiffert: The laundry's up.
Braukmann: Yeah, the laundry's up.
Seiffert: What can you do about it?
Büscher: Can't do nothin' about it.]

Importantly, none of the men attempt to change the situation. This is symptomatic of their lives: they feel powerless and remain passive. When Slupianek arrives to perform the role of Amundsen he sees the washing in a different light, imagining it as a great white Antarctic landscape instead of complaining about the inconvenience:

> *Slupianek: Noch nie, Freunde, hab ich eine schönere, wilder Landschaft gesehen. Gewaltig, die festgefrorenen Blöcke von Eis. Der Gebirgsstock zur Linken. Die bizarren Formen der Berge. Die Eiswellen, Pressungen. Zwischen den heimtückischen Abgründen die Eiskanten, Eisnadeln. Alles weiß, alles in schwirrendem Weiß.* (Karge 1996, p. 48)
>
> [Slupianek: Friends, never before have I beheld such a beautiful and wild landscape. Enormous, the blocks of ice frozen solid. The mountain range to the left. The bizarre shapes of the mountains. The waves of ice, pressure ridges. Between the perilous abysses the walls of ice, ice needles. Everything white, everything dizzyingly white.]

Armed with a vision, Slupianek creates the Antarctic landscape, using evocative language to present the domestic scene as a place of awe or adventure. The other characters follow his lead, transforming the mimetic signifiers on the stage into an icy landscape by virtue of imagination.

Cornelius's play *Do Not Go Gentle…* also invites the audience to use their imaginations, thanks to an undefined setting. This ambiguity enables an exploration of the fragility of life and the subjectivity of the "real." Events take place in a "fragile world" (Cornelius 2011, p. 10) and the set is minimalist:

> Setting
> A fragile world.
> Act One:
> On a field of ice
> In sleeping bags
> Act Two:
> A labyrinth of crevasses and ice towers
> In sleeping bags (Cornelius 2011, p. 10)

In Act II Cornelius provides some description of her characters' imagined Antarctic setting, but instead of reaching for the trope of the vast plateau, she locates her characters within a labyrinth of the ice itself,

Fig. 1 Characters on the set of the 2010 performance of *Do Not Go Gentle…* at Fortyfive Downstairs in Melbourne. (Photo Jeff Busby©2010)

emphasising the idea of entrapment. The inhospitable Antarctic landscape is a metaphor for a range of problems her characters must face, which become more immediate as the play progresses. The white labyrinth makes visible the Antarctic landscape, showing how this imaginary setting becomes more real for the characters than any other. As their various personal challenges become insurmountable, the characters are swallowed up by their imagined Antarcticas. The set of the 2010 production of *Do Not Go Gentle…* was designed by award-winning set and costume designer Marg Horwell, who used a very bare stage but made visible the idea of degradation via a collapsing ceiling (Fig. 1).

Cornelius's production presents a world where, instead of being opposed categories of experience, imagination and reality are linked and fluid. This reflects the situation of her characters, who grapple with both failing bodies and failing minds. Their perceptions of reality can differ markedly from each other's, as when Wilson mistakes Scott for her husband Scot, or when Bowers can no longer recognise her husband. The lack of definitive mimetic pointers led to many questions when Cornelius's play was first performed. In a 2009 letter to the Australian Council, Julian Meyrick explained how, when talking to companies about staging the play, he "faced questions like 'why are the characters in the Antarctic?' and 'why doesn't Patricia show they are really in a rest home?'" (quoted in Cornelius 2011, p. 5). Both the nursing home and Antarctica are "places [where] we don't belong," but both are also imagined settings, so Meyrick's response was that "the characters aren't 'really' anywhere" (quoted in Cornelius 2011, p. 5). Instead they are on the stage, with actors present in the flesh

and telling stories that make both faraway and very personal settings come alive within the confines of the theatre.

In Antarctica and Out of Place

Antarctica is outside the possible realm of literal experience for both Karge's unemployed men and Cornelius's elderly characters, a fact that underlines the constructed nature of the staged version of the continent in each play. Writing in 2004, Cresswell noted "an explosion of work which considers the role of place in the production of outsiders" (103), and these two plays can be readily understood within that context. Indeed, the protagonists in the plays examined in this chapter can all be considered to be "out-of-place" (Cresswell 2004, p. 103). Cornelius includes the voices of immigrants (Maria), women (Bowers and Wilson) and the elderly, with the average age of the actors in the Melbourne production being 73 years. The unusual blend of characters allows for the exploration of a range of social issues. Elderly people are not often seen on the stage (Gardner 2017), and their presence undermines readings of Antarctica as a place solely for fit young men, challenging the notion of what constitutes a "hero." *Do Not Go Gentle…* also addresses how attitudes towards women changed between 1912 and 2012. Bowers and Wilson going head to head over what matters in life illustrates this point:

> Wilson: I've had a good marriage, four wonderful children.
> Bowers: So what?
> Wilson: What do you mean, so what? That's a lot.
> Bowers: No, it's not. It's not enough.
> Wilson: That's plenty. (Cornelius 2011, p. 35)

Bowers and Wilson, both played by female actors, voice two different attitudes towards what a woman needs in her life in order to feel fulfilled. Wilson represents an older generation who felt their duty was first and foremost to their family, while the much younger Bowers believes that a woman needs to have a career, an opinion and a life of her own. Their differing views suggest that if the way women's roles are conceptualised can change so dramatically, the way we think about landscapes, spaces and places might also undergo the same change.

Cornelius's characters struggle to navigate the icescape and encounter frequent hazards. The idea of not belonging and of being mis-placed is a

recurrent theme throughout the play. Right at the beginning, the characters Bowers, Evans and Oates raise questions about where they are and why:

> Evans: What the hell are we doing here?
> Bowers: I don't belong here.
> Oates: In this godforsaken place. (Cornelius 2011, p. 12)

This "godforsaken place" could equally be the nursing home or the Antarctic, and Cornelius is deliberately non-specific in order to leave questions about place and the characters' own realities open to interpretation.

One of Cornelius's characters, Maria, does not take part in the Antarctic journey but nonetheless tells anyone who will listen that "I want to go home" (Cornelius 2011, p. 31). An immigrant from Serbia, Maria feels displaced as a result of seeing her homeland altered beyond recognition. This also brings the idea of place-making to the fore:

> Maria: … The town where I was born is populated by strangers, by those who speak a different language, who pray to a different god. My country hoisted its flag and another country pulled it down.
> Scott: You have traversed a new and undiscovered land.
> Maria: What's to discover?
> Scott: Through discovery great advancements are made.
> Maria: And dreams are trodden on. (Cornelius 2011, p. 48)

Addressing the experience of an immigrant uncovers a new definition of "new and undiscovered land." This term is applied to Australia, because although people were living in this continent already when Maria arrived (and had been for over 65,000 years), it was still "undiscovered" to her as she did not have tangible experience of the place. This definition takes away the importance of being first (such as first to the South Pole) and highlights the idea that there is a first for everyone, while linking the Scott story to a global history of colonisation. It also suggests that the immigrant's experience of adjustment is just as tough as any ground-breaking traverse of Antarctica. This is reinforced a few lines later, when Maria criticises the idea of a Heroic Age:

> Maria: … You're deluded. You believe in a heroic age.
> Scott: I do.
> Maria: You're a romantic fool. (Cornelius 2011, p. 48)

Scott is a "romantic fool" because the trope of the heroic figure claiming territory is outdated and a throwback to the colonial imperial mindset. The play, however, suggests that far from being a static category, heroes are present in every age, facing a whole range of adverse situations that must be overcome. People likewise continue to make places all the time, moving continents and attempting to create a place called "home." If a place like Serbia can change beyond recognition in Maria's lifetime, this suggests that Antarctica may not be static either, and that to continue to cling to stories of the Heroic Era is to blind oneself to the contemporary developments in the understanding of the continent.

Developments in the lives of individual characters also shift the way they perceive their icy goal. Karge's performance ends with the cry of a South Pole child, introducing a voice not usually associated with Antarctica. Imagination and reality collide in this final scene, with Slupianek confirming their location to be the South Pole even as the sound of the baby reminds the audience otherwise:

> *Slupianek: So, sind wir am Südpol.*
> *Frankieboy: Aber, na klar.*
> *Slupianek: Und wo ist der Südpol.*
> *Frankieboy: Südlich von Herne.*
> Ein Kinderschrei. Slupianek legt den Pelz ab, geht. (Karge 1996, p. 80)

> [Slupianek: So, are we at the South Pole.
> Frankieboy: But of course.
> Slupianek: And where is the South Pole.
> Frankieboy: Somewhere south of Herne.
> *A child's cry. Slupianek lays down the pelt, leaves.*]

This child is a hopeful sign, representing success and the possibility of new perspectives. As well as joining the men in the last leg of their metaphorical march to the Pole, Frau Braukmann has reached a "Pole" of her own and has given birth to the child she has always wanted. Contrasting with the good news of the South Pole child, Cornelius has Wilson explore a related experience that is less often talked about:

> Wilson: Once I miscarried, but I couldn't tell you. I lay in bed and pretended I had the flu. I was too afraid you wouldn't be able to say anything, or hear me say anything to you. (Cornelius 2011, p. 39)

This failure to carry a child to term underlines the ideas of disappointment and aborted dreams that permeate *Do Not Go Gentle…*. Ideas of heroism and loss that are familiar from the stories of Amundsen and Scott are removed from the Antarctic setting yet still find resonance in a domestic situation. These scenes illustrate how the emotions that accompany heroic success or failure are not limited to historical explorers or to those re-enacting the place-making of Heroic Era expeditions; rather, they can be experienced by a range of people both in the Antarctic and elsewhere.

Access to Antarctica

Although the continent of Antarctica remains out of reach for characters in these plays, it is not out of reach for all; Antarctica is currently visited by over 50,000 tourists each year (IAATO 2019). Commercial-scale Antarctic tourism began in the 1960s, with Lars Erik Lindblad's pioneering voyages (Liggett et al. 2011, p. 357). By the 1980s, an Antarctic experience was available to those who could afford it, with the accessibility of the continent used by Karge to highlight the opportunity gap that exists between those who can afford leisure activities and the unemployed. Antarctica remains firmly outside the scope of experience for Karge's main characters, a fact that is brought into focus when Braukmann's neighbour Rudi starts to boast about his recent polar holiday:

> *Rudi: Erlebnisreise ins ewige Eis.*
> *Die Braukmann: Ins ewige Eis. Ist ja interessant.*
> *Rudi: Ja, man läßt alles hinter sich, die ganze Arbeit, den Alltag. Man ist in einer anderen Welt. Das braucht man halt auch mal. Man klebt ja am Sessel. Die Sinne verkümmern. Man klebt ja am Sessel.* (Karge 1996, p. 70)
>
> [Rudi: Adventure trip into the eternal ice.
> Mrs. Braukmann: Into the eternal ice. How interesting.
> Rudi: Yes, you leave everything behind, all your work, everyday life. You're in another world. You need that sometimes. You get stuck in your familiar ways. The senses get dull. You get stuck in a rut.]

Rudi's comment about leaving everything behind mirrors the men's own experience in the attic, where imagining Antarctica provided a welcome escape from monotony. The similarities end, however, when their preconceptions are rubbished by Rudi, who has the authority of having actually been to Antarctica. In his luxury experience, oil heaters thwarted

the cold, five-star cuisine replaced pemmican and, instead of killing seals for food, Rudi and his wife Rosi posed for photos with them. The climax of the conversation centres on the South Pole, a place that has had huge significance for the men in their role-play but is belittled in Rudi's version:

> *Rudi: … Hier ist der Pol.*
> *Die Braukmann: Der Pol.*
> *Rudi: Der Pol aus dem Flugzeug. Das ist richtig der Pol. Du kriegst eine Urkunde, ein Zertifikat, handschriftlich, Doktor Soundso.*
> …
> *Slupianek: Also, das ist richtig der Pol.*
> *Rudi: Nein, ein Hinterhof in Herne.* (Karge 1996, p. 73)
>
> [Rudi: Here is the Pole.
> Mrs. Braukmann: The Pole.
> Rudi: The Pole from the plane. That's actually the Pole. You get a diploma, a certificate, handwritten, signed by Doctor So-and-so.
> …
> Slupianek: So, that's truly the Pole.
> Rudi: No, it's a backyard in Herne.]

This tourist's version of Antarctica is not at all how the men imagined it to be. This moment is their equivalent of Scott's men arriving at the Pole and discovering it has already been made a place by Amundsen's prior presence. Rudi's cavalier attitude to the Pole grates against the version of the South Pole that the men have built up in their minds, where tough journeying and endurance through repetitive landscapes lead to success. They attack him at the end of the scene because he has trampled on their dream, his casual superiority and sarcasm making their role-playing project and efforts to reenact a successful place-making expedition seem trivial. This episode brings to the surface the question of what constitutes the "real" Antarctica, a question that is mirrored by the production as a whole.

Versions of the "Real"

Characters in both Karge's and Cornelius's plays experience ambiguities around what belongs to the "real" world and what is imagined, and these ambiguities can have both positive and detrimental effects. Karge's characters come alive as they re-enact Amundsen's South Pole journey and escape to "another world." Braukmann's wife describes the difference she

sees in her husband when he is role-playing, right after telling him she has had enough of his behaviour:

> *Abgründe sind das ja, Abgründe… Da wirds einem ja Eiskalt. Eiskalt wird es einem da. Ja, beim Affentheater, da ist der Braukmann am dransten. Da ist er ganz da. Da macht der den Kasper. Da tanzt er. Da lacht er. Da kann er lachen. Aber ansonsten. Da sitzt er da und kaut Fingernägel.* (Karge 1996, p. 45)
>
> [It's an abyss this, an abyss … It's chilling. Chilling, that's what it is. Yes, when it comes to monkey business, Braukmann shines. He is completely there. He plays the clown. He dances. He laughs. He is able to laugh. But otherwise. He sits about and chews his nails.]

Braukmann becomes animated when acting out the polar story as it gives him a purpose. It also provides an escape from the inertia of his everyday existence, allowing him to leave his fears and stresses behind.

Cornelius's characters take another approach, using the icy setting as a way to work through their fears and stresses rather than to forget about them. The ambiguity of the setting (a nursing home/Antarctica) blurs the lines between the real and imagined by highlighting the fact that both settings are in fact imagined, and all that is "real" are the actors who physically stand upon the stage. This ambiguity is a constant theme for Cornelius. When Scott remarks that "the elements have aged us so" (Cornelius 2011, p. 27) he refers not only to the harshness of the Antarctic landscape, but to the trials of everyday life that batter, bruise and wear one down. He tells the others "we've had our fingers nipped, inch-long blisters filled with frozen liquid; and our noses and lips split …" (Cornelius 2011, p. 41), referring to Antarctic cold weather injuries, but this sparks off a whole list of complaints from his companions:

> Evans: I've got arthritis.
> Wilson: I've got osteoporosis.
> Bowers: I've got gingivitis. (Cornelius 2011, p. 42)

Everyday physical ailments take the place of cold weather injuries, suggesting that for the elderly, everyday living is just as hard as man-hauling. A journey of endurance thus plays out across the stage, with Scott's story providing a vehicle for the characters—who are located in a nursing home/Antarctica/their own minds—to come to terms with their own decline.

Karge's characters must likewise come to terms with the fact their coping strategy is not a viable long-term solution when Seiffert gets lost within the polar fantasy. By the end of the play he thinks of his everyday problems in terms of a polar landscape, and uses the techniques he has developed to cope with the landscape during the imagined journey in order to attack his joblessness. Stuck in polar mode, Seiffert sees the door to the job office as an unassailable ice wall:

> *Was ist dahinter. Der Südpol. Ist dort wirklich der Pol. Ganz richtig oder nur aus dem Flugzeug. Vielleicht nur eine Eiswand. Steil, unzugänglich. Was heißt unzugänglich. Hab ich doch Pickel und Steigeisen. Stufen schlagen, kilckklick. Stufe um Stufe.* (Karge 1996, p. 79)
>
> [What is behind it. The South Pole. Is it really the South Pole. The real Pole or just from an aeroplane. Maybe just a wall of ice, steep and inaccessible. What do you mean, inaccessible. I have an ice pick and crampons. Hack out steps. Click click. Step upon step.]

The imaginary ice landscape becomes a metaphor for Seiffert's everyday difficulties, with a task such as visiting the job office fraught with dangers and requiring maximum focus. The polar role-play has taught him coping mechanisms, but he is no longer able to accurately recognise his situation so tries to apply inappropriate solutions from his story of success to an everyday situation that epitomises his repeated failure. After negotiating a treacherous landscape he reaches the door of the job office, only to introduce himself as the character he has been playing, indicating that for him the imaginary has become more tangible than the real:

> *Wie heißen Sie. Bjaaland, sagt Seiffert. Seltsamer Name. Haben wir nicht in den Akten. Dann, sagt Seiffert, Adams, Ja, ich heiße Adams. Sie stieren so. Ich bin, sagt Seiffert, Sie müssen entschuldigen, schneeblind.* (Karge 1996, p. 79)
> [What's your name. Bjaaland, says Seiffert. Strange name. We don't have it in our files. Then, says Seiffert, Adams. Yes, my name is Adams. You're staring. I am, says Seiffert, you must excuse me, snow blind.][5]

Seiffert's confusion of the real and the imagined highlights the dangers of using imagination as a place-making strategy with no tangible reference points. Acting out the polar story of how Amundsen turned the South Pole from space into place gave Seiffert purpose while the game lasted, but

when the game becomes his life he is unable to escape from the icy world of imagination.

This scene follows a tradition of going "mad" in the Antarctic (Guly 2012, p. 206), a tradition parodied by Brenton in his depiction of Evans' death in *Scott of the Antarctic*. In earlier plays such as *The Fire on the Snow* and *Terra Nova*, tangible landscapes weaken and overtake the men, but here the landscape that Seiffert finds overwhelming is an imagined one. Rather than going mad as the result of being exposed to a harsh setting, he goes mad as a result of getting lost within a setting he creates in his own head. The unstable setting that Seiffert inhabits is also mirrored in the structure of Karge's play. The remaining text of this scene—a description of Seiffert's leap to his death through the window—is not attributed to any actor in particular, meaning that the production company is free to interpret it as they choose. Just as Seiffert can no longer distinguish fact from fiction, the text can no longer provide direction as to whether Seiffert should narrate his own struggle and suicide, or whether it should be narrated for him.

Seiffert's engagement with Antarctica is similar to Cornelius's treatment of the polar landscape, where the hostile environment represents an involuntary loss of ability on the part of the characters. The "labyrinth of crevasses and towers" in Act II is an important theatrical element that comes to stand for the characters' inner and past landscapes. As the play progresses these internal landscapes become more important than either Antarctica or the nursing home. The visible ice labyrinth is a metaphor for many intertwining story threads: for getting lost, for chasing the past, for how easy it is to lose your footing and fall down a crevasse. The characters face both physical and psychological hurdles such as gout and memory loss, with Claudia/Bowers' dementia being a case in point. In Act I Claudia's husband Alex comes looking for her, but she, identifying as Bowers, no longer recognises him at all:

> Bowers: I hope you find her soon.
> Alex: I hope so too.
> Bowers: Yes, well, good luck to you.
> Alex: But I think she's gone for good. (Cornelius 2011, p. 33)

In Act II the set is used to visually show the effect of dementia on Claudia/ Bowers' mind:

> Alex: Claudia!
> *For an exquisite second Bowers recognises her name*
> Bowers: Yes.
> *And then she forgets it. She disappears down an ice tunnel. Alex disappears down another.* (Cornelius 2011, p. 51)

The crevasses and tunnels on stage are like those in the mind—treacherous, fleeting and easy to get lost in. Just as an ice bridge cannot be trusted with the weight of a life, the bridges between Bowers' present and her past have crumbled down into crevasses where they are irretrievable. In the face of dementia, place dissolves back into space as meaning is unmade. The tunnels are used to show others' searches too, with Oates following the elusive Peter (his deceased son) in and out of various openings. Finally the character Evans (named after Edgar Evans, the first of Scott's party to perish during the 1911–1912 expedition) emerges from one of the tunnels and articulates their situation: "Lost. Utterly lost … *Evans disappears down a crevasse*" (Cornelius 2011, p. 52). When the other characters notice that Evans is no longer with them, Oates says he "Last saw him when we crossed at the lights" (Cornelius 2011, p. 53). References to an urban setting, rather than the Antarctica of spires and crevasses suggested by the set, remind the audience of the fragility of place in this play. This brings the question of what is "real" back into focus. Instead of one version of reality, there are many, and each character enacts their own private battles upon the same stage.

The difference between our own reality and what we aspire to be is explored as Cornelius's characters come face to face with that gap in their own lives. In contrast to Captain Scott, who famously wrote "I do not regret this journey" (Scott 2006, p. 422), these characters regret many things, and the regrets reveal the stories and episodes that have shaped them, making them all the more human. Evans "thought we'd achieve something great" (Cornelius 2011, p. 50), Wilson is "rather disappointed, actually" (Cornelius 2011, p. 19) and Scott "did not fulfil a single dream" (Cornelius 2011, p. 39). Still, all long to be remembered as they come face to face with their own mortality:

> Scott: They died having done something great—how hard must not death be, having done nothing. That's what someone will say about us one day… We did something remarkable, didn't we, men? (Cornelius 2011, p. 61, 63)

The first sentence is a direct quote from Tryggve Gran (quoted in Huxley 1990, p. 257), one of the men from the *Terra Nova* expedition who discovered Scott's snow-covered tent and frozen corpse in the spring of 1912. In the context of Cornelius's play the remarkable thing these characters have achieved is to struggle on in the face of adversity, a heroic act that is performed by many every day but is often overlooked.

Conclusion

As the editors of this collection note in their introduction, icescapes are "places of paradox and contradiction"; at times human fears and memories have been projected onto Antarctica, and at other times the materiality of the place has been foregrounded. Just as physical ice melts when exposed to heat, imagined versions of the icy continent are dynamic and manifest in many ways. The examples examined in this chapter demonstrate how, in the Antarctic context, the icescape has been used metaphorically to explore contemporary issues, such as unemployment and ageing. Karge's and Cornelius's plays feature unemployed, female and elderly characters who are all far removed from the dashing men of the Heroic Era. However, ice and its mutability are central to the characters' understandings of the world around them as they reenact Antarctic place-making, using this process to better understand their own contemporary situations.

As Antarctica becomes more accessible to a greater range of people—both through first-hand encounter, via tourism, and in the more mediated form of images, texts and plays—it becomes increasingly storied (Booth 2011). In the age of the Anthropocene, Mackey writes, "the fragility and mutability of place has become an increasingly global issue" (2016, p. 124). This is a particularly salient observation when it comes to conceptualising and performing the far south, as Antarctica comes to have meaning in the everyday lives of coastal people around the globe, with melting ice affecting far-flung places due to rising sea levels. Over the past century Heroic Era stories have been overlaid by those of scientists, tourists, artists-in-residence and students (like my PCAS classmates and me), many of whom are aware of Antarctica's human history as they lay down their own layer of personal narrative onto the continent. From amateur skits in the dining room of Scott Base, to New Year's Eve "Icestock" rock concerts at McMurdo Station (Krzywonos 2016), Antarctica's stages and stories are varied and rich. New stories will continue to be laid down into the future, leading to new interpretations of Antarctica as an icescape and as a

continent of global relevance, and to new representations in the theatrical context. Just as white light is made up of all the colours of the spectrum, today the white ice of Antarctica represents the sum of many narratives working together and against each other, layer upon layer, turning the far south into an ever more storied place.

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Notes

1. The one-act farce *A Ticket-of-Leave* by Watts Philips was first performed on 1 December 1862 at the Royal Adelphi Theatre. This play is not to be confused with *The Ticket-of-Leave Man* by Tom Taylor, which was first performed at London's Olympic Theatre in 1863.
2. Adebayo subsequently participated in the 2008 Cape Farewell expedition to Disko Bay in the Arctic, exploring an interest in the African-American explorer Matt Henson's North Pole expeditions, undertaken alongside Robert Peary. This Arctic expedition led to her 2009 play *Matt Henson: North Star*—a kind of companion piece to *Moj of the Antarctic*.
3. While the Tinch Minter and Anthony Vivis version (1988) is a transliteration, Ralph Remshardt, Caron Cadle and Calvin McLean's 1992 translation uses English language idioms instead of direct translations in order to capture the essence of the play and make it more accessible to an English-speaking audience. The Silas Jones and Laurence Maslon version (1990) goes further still, changing the character names and adapting the colloquialisms to suit the US market. My reading here is based on the original German version (and translations are my own). An in-depth analysis of the differences between these various translations would make an interesting future project.
4. These include performances by Kompass-Theater in Hanover in 2007; Elephant Performance Lab in Los Angeles in 2009; Strawdog Theatre in Chicago 2011; and Landestheater Coburg in Bavaria in 2011.
5. The name Adams is borrowed from Jameson Adams, one of three men to accompany Ernest Shackleton on his 1908/09 expedition towards the South Pole. The party turned back after reaching a new farthest south record of 88°23' on 9 January 1909. Despite failing to reach their goal, all four men in the party returned alive.

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Figures in a Landscape

Douglas Quin

Introduction

Since the first human being set foot on *Terra Australis Incognita* (Unknown Southern Land) in the early nineteenth century, seafarers, explorers, adventurers, scientists and artists have responded to its vast, sublime expanse through the written word, visual expression, music and song. Speculation about *Terra Australis Incognita* has been part of collective wisdom, imagination and consciousness in the West since classical antiquity—long before any geographic exploration or verification of such a place existed. Plato, writing in *Timaeus* around 360 BCE, expounds on the notion that the dynamic forces of the four planetary elements (earth, air, fire and water) are in a state of constant flux and motion, seeking equilibrium or stasis. In accepting that the earth was a sphere, with a centripetal pull to a fiery centre, the outer earth had to be in antipodal balance:

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> … because the principal masses of the different elements hold opposite positions; for that which is light, heavy, below or above in one place will be found to be and become contrary and transverse and every way diverse in relation to that which is light, heavy, below or above in an opposite place. (Plato 1998, p. 266)

The idea of antipodal forces was expanded upon by Aristotle in *De Caelo* (Aristotle 1922, pp. 307b.28–308b.28). The thinking was that laws that govern the natural order and harmony of the cosmos must surely apply to planet Earth. It was assumed and believed that a landmass of equal and opposite dimension must exist in the southern hemisphere as a counterpoint to the known boreal world, including sub-polar and temperate lands.

Ptolemy's second century CE *Geography* contained maps that codified *Terra Australis* as being contiguous with African and Asian landmasses. These maps were copied and modified, often fancifully, for more than 1200 years and helped to inform the conceptual basis of the known world. It was not until Bartolomeu Dias sailed around Cape Horn in Africa in 1488 and Ferdinand Magellan made his way through the strait that now bears his name at the southernmost point of land in South America in 1520 that *Terra Australis Incognita* was redrawn by mapmakers as a separate landmass—the details of which remained very much unknown. During the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, explorations of the Great Southern Ocean resulted in the amorphous *Terra Australis* moving further south on maps of the day. At about noon on January 17, 1773, James Cook first crossed the Antarctic Circle aboard the *Resolution* (Price 1961, p. 576). While he came to within 240 kilometres of the continent, Cook and his crew never made landfall. However, the impulse to press further south emboldened subsequent generations of explorers and adventurers as the legend of *Terra Australis Incognita* endured. Despite over a century of exploration, the continent continues to leave an indelible and persistent mythic impression on those who travel there today.

My interest in Antarctica and the impetus for writing this chapter springs from a distinctly phenomenological and subjective reckoning: one deeply rooted in my upbringing; the direct experience of working in polar regions; and in having the privilege of knowing, collaborating with and experiencing the work of the artists with whom I share a passion for *Terra Australis Incognita*.

I spent much of my childhood and youth in Scandinavia, Canada and Scotland and developed an affinity for both climate and cultures associated with these regions; it was the world as I knew it growing up. The experiences of extreme cold, frostbite, chilblains and the feeling of burning in

my lungs trying to breathe in sub-zero temperatures; of infinite varieties and textures of snow and ice; of winter twilight and flat light across the lava fields of Reykjanesfólkvangur in Iceland; and sound traveling through the frozen stillness of hoarfrosts that lasted for days in the Scottish Highlands in conditions so thick that my outstretched arm and hand disappeared in the frozen air in front of me. These sense memories are woven into my identity and into the fabric of my being. They exist in an embodied or corporeal modality of knowing that continues to inform my artistic practice as a sound artist and music composer.

By way of illustration, one especially powerful and formative memory I have is from a cross-country skiing trip I took in the central lake district of Sweden. The memory is from a day more than fifty-five years ago. What I describe below my mother would later call a "cameo memory" by which she meant a moment in time that is recalled with a surprising level of precision, detail and relief. I think of my mother and a Wedgwood jasperware pendant, exquisitely carved ivory coloured centre, powder blue field, durable as the memory is enduring, and contained within a silver filigree border. The memory, however vivid, is circumscribed and was codified over time with little connective tissue to what may have happened before or after on the same day, let alone the same week, month or even year. These cameos often are imbued with an affective resonance and lingering emotional residue in what I have come to appreciate exists in a kinesthetic-empathetic continuum. Merleau-Ponty, in describing the "synthesis of one's own body," posits: "Experience discloses beneath objective space, in which the body eventually finds its place, a primitive spatiality of experience is merely the outer covering and which merges with the body's very being. To be a body, is to be tied to a certain world … our body is not primarily in space but is of it" (2002, p. 171). I can still feel what I felt at the time when I conjure the memory or when it is triggered by some other stimulus or association. That primacy of individual and often subjective bodily awareness does not exist in a solipsistic vacuum. As folklorist and bodylorist Deirdre Sklar asserts, "Movement embodies socially constructed cultural knowledge in which corporeality, emotion, and abstraction are intertwined" (1994, p. 12). However, she further emphasises, it is "an approach that has been too often trivialized or ignored in academic discourse, one that takes seriously the ontological status of immediate bodily experience in the production of knowledge and epistemologies" (ibid., p. 12).

I was about 7 years old. A group of us, led by an instructor, headed into the evergreen forests and across frozen ponds and lakes as the shadows of winter sun stretched across the afternoon, a gentle arc on the horizon. After about an hour of up and down effort on virgin snow and traces of buried trails, the talk and banter died down and we became focused on skiing—our line spreading out, each unto themselves yet connected. I remember my exertion going uphill cutting a pattern of vees into the snow with my skis, relief gliding down and crouching with suppleness in my knees, an occasional jump over a mogul, the rhythm of my breathing, planting my poles, moving one ski, then the other, the creak and accretion of ice building up on my bindings, my toes hurting. Looking back, this was a pivotal moment in comprehending a connectedness and relationship between my physical self as a system and the people and space around me. Much later, in the fullness of time, I came to appreciate what Merleau-Ponty meant by: "The body is our general medium for having a world" (2002, p. 169).

After some hard skiing, we took a rest sipping hot cocoa from our thermoses. As the group settled, we savoured the view across endless snow fields and pines down a gentle sloping vale to a frozen lake. The sunlight sparkled in the snow and the quiet was stunning. This experience of silence was profound in me, as it was in the unspoken embrace it cast over all of us in that moment of collective consciousness. I would later write about my experience of silence in Antarctica as being one of the most enduring physical and psychic sensations I had on the ice (Quin 1997). When considering this, I am often reminded of Merleau-Ponty's admonition:

> Our view of man will remain superficial so long as we fail to go back to that origin [of silence], so long as we fail to find, beneath the chatter of words, the primordial silence, and as long as we do not describe the action which breaks this silence. The spoken word is a gesture, and its meaning, a world. (2002, p. 214)

I spent three seasons in Antarctica between 1996 and 2000 (with additional work in Greenland and Alaska before and after), exploring silence, listening to glaciers, recording soundscapes, wildlife and natural phenomena like wind and atmospheric whistlers. Fieldwork for me is part of the compositional process and central to my artistic practice—rather than simply a process of gathering data. It is bodily-kinesthetic at its conceptual and phenomenological essence: from what to record; where to go and

when; planning the physical and logistical aspects of the work to be undertaken; what microphones to use and associated sonic point of view; to negotiating the extremities of the environment; to artistic product or outcome. My works include commercial recordings, live performances with traditional and electroacoustic instruments, live satellite broadcast, interactive gestural sound installations and film soundtracks. The former necessarily involve some kinesthetic engagement on the part of performers or audience members as I seek to invite and to bring people into an empathetic identification with the ice. Thus, my own path and practice drew me to the work of the artists whose work is the subject of this chapter.

Over the last few decades, artists have begun to explore bodily-kinesthetic engagement with the landscape itself—expressed through movement, dance and performance. This chapter examines the varied approaches, sensibilities and work of four artists who have direct experience of working in Antarctica. What follows is a closely keyed description and examination of a selection of works based mostly on their voices, writings, interviews, conversations, correspondence, documentary video, still imagery and, in one case, my first-hand experience of seeing work performed. This is by no means an exhaustive or comprehensive survey of dance and performance art in, or about, Antarctica. Rather, it is an attempt to shed light on some shared, complementary and contrasting aesthetic concerns and philosophical dispositions to the ice and our place on it as human beings.

Christina Evans created *Body of Ice* and *Polarity* following her trip to Antarctica in 2010. Evans's creative process is one of choreographic translation, drawing inspiration from ice morphology: scientific data, sound and photography. She developed a gestural vocabulary, in situ, based on the immediacy of her responses to the environment and then refined them in the creation of her dance works.

Through performance and movement, Shakti Avattar León's work gravitates to a spiritual-bodily exploration of the landscape. *Places of Power—Antarctica: Ritual+Performance+Butoh* (2012) is part of a series of performances she enacted and documented for the camera. For León, Antarctica is a place of mystery that provides a *mise-en-scène* within which she conjures and animates a world of mythic resonance—through deeply personal, often ritualised actions and the cultural displacement, transposition and adaptation of forms inspired by Japanese Butoh.

VestAndPage (Verena Stenke and Andrea Pagnes) frame their work in terms of a philosophical-bodily discourse. In 2012, they travelled to

Antarctica where they shot the final episode of their film trilogy, *sin∞fin The Movie*. The Antarctic section is called *Performances at the Core of the Looking-Glass*. In a series of ephemeral, performance-based actions on the ice, the artists explore an ontological tension of sorts: moving between the inner, bodily and personal realm of existence and the "comprehensive spheres of nature and universe" (VestAndPage 2013, p. 62).

For each of these artists, the physical experience and bodily comprehension of Antarctica lie at the heart of their creative reckoning and mode of expression. They are, in their own ways, literally and figuratively performing landscapes.

It is helpful to circumscribe and discuss briefly what is meant by the term "bodily-kinesthetic," as it provides a useful framing for understanding the dance and performance works considered here. In her book *Choreographing Empathy*, dance historian Susan Foster includes both a useful overview and detailed discussion of kinesthesia and the historical evolution of its meaning, from the late nineteenth century to the present day (2011, pp. 1–14 and 73–125). The term initially described what was an expanding and emerging understanding of the interaction of the nervous and musculoskeletal systems and associated awareness and perception of movement. Early in the twentieth century, motivated by an increasing body of neurological research, the idea of proprioception came to be used to describe the physiological responses to bodily stimuli—the suggestion of unconscious action and perception. Kinesthesia was reclaimed, or rather reintroduced and refined in scope, by James J. Gibson, a psychologist specializing in visual perception and cognition. According to Foster, Gibson "identified the kinesthetic system as one that integrated information about position, motion, and orientation with other visual, aural, and tactile information so as to construct a sense of one's location in the world" (ibid., p. 74). This holistic conception of kinesthesia continues to inform current research in the neurosciences, especially with respect to the relationship between the brain, sensing and movement (ibid. p. 7).

Writing in the 1940s, pioneering contemporary dance pedagogue Margaret H'Doubler described the kinesthetic sense, especially rhythm, as a vibrant connection between emotion and motion and the revelatory capacity for expression therein (H'Doubler 1940, p. 44). The parts of the musculoskeletal system associated with the kinesthetic sense are muscles, joints and tendons, while the inner ear provides a sense of balance and equilibrium. The link between bone, flesh, heart and mind, H'Doubler

argues, is an affective-motor dynamic that makes us human in the fullest sense of being alive. She writes:

> Consciousness of meaning in movement comes through knowledge of its range, varying degrees of force, time relationships, and speed. … In dance, movements are the motor symbols of actions within the mental life of the dancer. Through action, dance expresses feeling aroused by the sensations of movement. (Ibid., pp. 87–88)

As H'Doubler stresses, rhythm is understood to encompass more than a purely metronomic function. It represents procreant and spontaneous action: a reactive animating force bringing the world into existence. In a distinctly Platonic sense, the embodiment of rhythm, and its emotive potential through movement, is a vital bridge between ourselves and the patterns of the universe: the music of the spheres, the seasons, time and tides.

For educator Howard Gardner, bodily-kinesthetic knowledge is a clear manifestation of cognition and applied intelligence (2006). His idea, which forms part of his theory of multiple intelligences, is based on a number of assumptions, including the use of tools and a universal, cross-cultural trajectory in the developmental stages of body movement and locomotion in children. Regardless of where in the world we are from, we learn by doing and the tactile dimension of this learning is revealed in the words "apprehend" and "comprehend." Both share the same Latin root, *prehendere* (to seize or catch in a physical sense), and mean "to understand, take into the mind, grasp by understanding." Gardner observes that "the ability to use one's body to express emotion (as in dance) … is evidence of the cognitive features of body usage" (ibid., p. 10).

The idea that kinesthetic awareness touches upon the emotive and exists in a continuum of cognition and sense awareness is key to understanding the discussion that follows. Foster writes of the connection between kinesthesia and empathy:

> Like "kinesthesia," empathy came into usage at the end of the nineteenth century. Naming the experience of merging with the object of one's contemplation, it was originally coined in 1873 by the German aesthetician Robert Vischer as *Einfühlung*, and translated into English by Edward Titchner in 1909. Both Vischer and Titchner conceptualized empathy as

> entailing a strong and vital component of kinesthetic sensation. And both envisioned empathy as an experience undertaken by one's entire subjectivity. (2011, p. 127)

Furthermore, when we use the word "feeling," it can be understood either as the physical sense of touch, or as indicating a range of emotional states, often with subtle gradations of meaning: from empathy and intuitive awareness to refined sensitivity and affection. For Sklar, empathy is necessarily bound to kinesthesia. In arguing for an integrated method or approach to what she describes as "kinesthetic empathy," she writes, "Based on the hypothesis that movement embodies cultural knowledge, I had discovered that to 'move with' people whose experience I was trying to understand was a way to also 'feel with' them, providing an opening into the kind of cultural knowledge that is not available through words or observation alone" (Sklar 1994, p. 11).

The notion of "feeling moved" by an experience or a work of art emphasises how intimately connected body and emotions are. Implicit is both empathetic identification and incipient motion, physical and psychic—and so it is with the kind of bodily-kinesthetic reckoning that forms the basis of the works examined in this chapter.

Christina Evans, *Body of Ice* and *Polarity*

> Our bodies are made up of pure water that at some point has been Antarctic ice. We are a part of the ice as well as its signs of a changing climate. (Evans 2013)

Christina Evans is the first choreographer and dancer to have been awarded an Arts Fellowship as part of the Australian Antarctic Division's ongoing commitment to supporting artistic inquiry, outreach and communication about the ice. In 2010, she travelled to Davis and Mawson Bases to research and develop two interrelated works: *Body of Ice* and a full-length dance performance called *Polarity*. These works have been performed a number of times and in various settings since the premiere of *Body of Ice* at the Australian National University in Canberra in June 2011 as part of a conference celebrating the centenary of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition (1911–14). Later that same year, for example, *Polarity* was staged in an outdoor setting at Federation Square in Melbourne during the 2011 Melbourne Fringe Festival.

Before travelling to Antarctica, Evans contacted scientists, including glaciologists, and read studies about ice dynamics and morphology to help her understand some of the complicated forces at work in the harshest of environments (Evans 2017a). She also looked at a range of photographic evidence—from on the ground stills, time lapse and motion video, to satellite imagery—in order to arrive at an understanding of both temporal and spatial forces at work on the ice. She later reflected:

> The shapes and layers of an ice structure reveal its movement history; the many processes of action and reaction that created its current yet continually changing form. While in Antarctica I collected a vast range of movement and choreographic stimuli, ice imagery, visual and written responses and sensory impressions. The illuminated colour, textures, diversity, scale and raw beauty of the ice was phenomenal, and my physical state was altered through interacting with it. (Evans 2013)

Evans's comment regarding "choreographic stimuli" reveals a keen awareness of the power of synesthesia as a means of generating formal ideas and in animating a dance. Time on the ice no doubt provided her with the tactile, visceral knowing of place that only comes from being there: a necessary and foundational bodily reckoning which lies at the heart of her choreography. She had to experience and feel the shifting ice beneath her feet, the wind whipping against her face, the excruciating pain and numbness that can come from being exposed to severe cold, and the exertion and aching muscles that underscore even the basic mechanics of simply getting around. No amount of reading or research quite prepares one for the assault on the body that being on the ice involves. The environment demands a certain mindfulness, being present and tuned in to your surroundings. A simple misstep or error in judgement can have dire, and sometimes lethal, consequences. As Evans commented, "Physically, the whole time, I was just trying to be aware of everything I was seeing and feeling but at the same time being completely physically cut off in a way with everything" (2017a).

Part of this is an observation on the insulating nature of extreme cold weather clothing that comes as standard issue for visitors to the ice. On a deeper level her observation is also a more fundamental recognition of being cut off and out of one's element. Until very recently there was no history of human settlement in *Terra Australis Incognita*. Even now,

human presence is at best limited to a scattering of far-flung research outposts clinging to the continent in a very tenuous prospect. Evans continued:

> I remember moments on the ice just creating these fluid movements and just feeling so expansive and there was a moment where I had never heard the world so quiet before and really having that deep sense of that physical and emotional connection of deep serenity and peace. And, having those experiences where the wind and the water [were] really rough and that was a whole other physical experience. (Ibid.)

Once she came off the ice and returned to Australia, Evans needed time to allow her impressions and ideas to gestate and coalesce into an artistic direction and plan. She reflected, "As an artist, going there was so spectacular and overwhelming to a point where, when I first came back, I did not know how I could possibly communicate anything to do with Antarctica. That was a creative challenge to start with. I don't feel like I ever finished the journey" (ibid.).

One facet of the sensation of being awed, generally, is how difficult it is to know or comprehend the space and the true vastness of Antarctica. It touches upon Edmund Burke's notion of the sublime, perhaps not so much in inspiring terror or fear, per se, but an existential disquietude of how insignificant and fleeting human life appears to be in the face of such an expanse (Burke 2008, pp. 71–74).

In spite of feeling overwhelmed, Evans was keen to start working. She describes her choreographic process in terms of "translating" or rendering her experiences in kinesthetic form. To this end, she was particularly sensitive to understanding ice as a fluid material subject to dynamic forces of pressure, temperature and great seasonal variation. The organisational or structural conceit of *Polarity* took on a narrative shape as Evans sought to tell the story of the journey of ice from the Antarctic interior and plateau, to glacial formation, the passage outward to the coastal periphery of the continent, to ice shelves and sheets, their subsequent break-up in the surrounding ocean, and the ebb and flow of seasonal variability (Evans 2013). She elaborates:

> In terms of choreography, for me—even in the beginning—I was looking at patterns of the ice on a really big-picture scale to start with. So, looking at the seasons of the ice, how it expands and contracts over the winter and summer periods and seeing a breathing body in that. Then, looking at all the

> layers of ice and all of the movement within a sculptural iceberg; it's just full of information. I just wanted to translate that kind of movement through the dancer's body. (Evans 2017a)

Evans took a decidedly multi-sensory and interdisciplinary approach in working with her dancers to arrive at a language, grammar and syntax of choreographic form to communicate her ideas. She shared moving and still images of ice with her group, placing a premium on seeking out patterns, geometries and morphologies of ice in its various states of crystallisation and disintegration. In order to internalise and process this information, the dancers were also exposed to the soundscapes of ice and Antarctica through recordings made by composer and sound artist Philip Samartzis. Rather than functioning purely as a score to accompany the dance or to choreograph to, the sounds themselves provided another layer of stimulus, as well as a soundtrack for the performance. With this rich palette of information and sensory reference, the group engaged in a series of guided improvisations, exercises and rehearsals. Evans was especially interested in having the dancers develop a strong bodily identification with ice in its different states: to "be" the ice, as it were. She later described her creative and rehearsal process:

> Textures, rolling, crumbling, melting and freezing were explored through intricate parts of the body and through bodies interacting with each other. Dancers could all be one piece of ice, varying types of ice, or their individual bodies could split into various types of ice with varying qualities of movement, speed and dynamics.
>
> Water and ice itself were explored in several ways. Dancers danced with actual ice and also performed movement material on plastic sheets covered with ice in the studio. I conducted several rehearsals in swimming pools to explore the effect, sensations and qualities of being in water. The fluidity and impact water made on body movement were dramatic, and these qualities were brought into the choreographic material. (Ibid.)

In building a gestural vocabulary and inventory of movement and shapes, Evans relied on a number of techniques informed by contemporary dance, including Butoh, of which she writes:

> I had an overall structure in mind for the piece but the movement itself was created from imagery of ice moving through my body, so every performance/rehearsal was different and very in the moment, with both imagery

> and sounds instigating the movement through me. Painting my body white was very Butohesque. This was used for the dancers … in Canberra where there were structured elements with free-flowing movement based on imagery, sounds and sensory impulses as well. I also took the dancers through exercises of moving extremely slowly (no more than one centimetre a second) for over half an hour—this was straight out of a Butoh class that I did, and time completely slows down, creating a heightened awareness of the body, environment and senses. Plus, it's "glacial" speed! (Ibid.)

Public performances of *Body of Ice/Polarity* (Evans 2016, 2017b) are noteworthy for their commonalities as much as for their differences. The first performance of *Body of Ice*, which I attended, was in a theatre setting with projections and soundscape. The dancers were grouped in such a way as to suggest the shape of an iceberg or glacial terminus: a tectonic and plastic representation. Their interlocking formation was somehow reminiscent of the sculptural choreography of Pilobilus and their namesake fungus (see Fig. 1). However, unlike Pilobilus's gravity-defying organism, Evans's dancers remained decidedly earthbound: an interconnected mass of ice, moving inexorably to the sea. The dancers' limbs touched and intertwined while revealing both the whole and the more detailed granularity in component parts and layers, scaled like fractal patterns of ice. This was directly inspired by Evans's first-hand encounters with "these giant, majestic icebergs everywhere but then also when getting onto the ice … going down into an ice crevasse and [observing] these really delicate little bits of ice and seeing and experiencing those extremes: so fragile, delicate" (ibid.).

Against the soundscape of squeals, bangs, crashes and grinding of brash ice, bergy bits and growlers, the dancers move and break apart. Their movements are at once fluid and erratic, modelling the behaviour of ice. The negative space of interlocking arms and legs hints at constantly shifting crystals forming and dissolving. The dancers pull together into tight arrangements and push apart in constellations that are constantly morphing and being redefined.

The pacing varies, as does the movement of ice itself, with moments of quietude and stillness fractured with the sudden release of pressure and tension associated with friction and calving. The break-up of an iceberg or the entire face of a glacier plummeting into the ocean can be violent, explosive and spectacular. Evans's challenge as a choreographer was to translate and harness this feeling into a human, bodily scale—expressed

Fig. 1 Christina Evans's dancers evoke an ice formation in *Polarity*. (Photo: Lucia Ondrusova. Used with permission)

through collective and individual movement in a sublimation of the kinetic energy of the ice itself.

In the journey to the sea, ice transforms and changes into an ever-increasing fluid state. Meltwater and sink holes called *moulins* lubricate or grease the floor beneath a moving glacier, thus accelerating its progress to open water. The soundscape shifts to a palette of percolating, percussive patter of dripping water and streaming rivulets in glacial channels, while the dancers' movements become more lithe and sinuous, from full body expression to the subtlest tremor or gesture of a limb and a digit. With the allusion to the breaking-up and scattering of sea ice like a seasonal apron around the continent, each dancer extends their footprint to cover more of the stage.

The theatre setting was one venue for the work and it offered a range of possibilities within the controlled atmosphere afforded by lighting,

projection, sound and stage. Evans also had the idea to create a site-specific iteration and had the opportunity to restage *Polarity* outside on a rooftop car park at Federation Square in bustling downtown Melbourne in October the following year. While some aspects of movement that had been carefully honed, crafted and codified in the previous iteration were clearly visible, the spatial dynamic and expanse of the tarmac invited a very different experience for both dancers and audience. Evans reflected on this and the possibilities in *Polarity*, "surrounded by this cityscape with the buildings all lit up. They were like giant icebergs to me. And, at the same time, all the bodies of ice are kind of melting away because of all of the stuff in the city. That aspect was really metaphorical within the work as well" (ibid.).

While Evans's journey to the ice may not be complete, she is circumspect in reflecting on her experience there: "If people knew how spectacular it was maybe we would take more care in how we are living our lives. Antarctica is all movement, it's just all movement. At least that is how I see it" (ibid.).

Shakti Avattar León, *Places of Power—Antarctica: Ritual+Performance+Butoh*

> There's an infinity of ways in which you can move from that spot over there to here. But … have you figured those movements out in your head? Or are we seeing your soul in motion? Even that fleck on the tip of your nail embodies your soul … the essential thing is that your movements, even when you're standing still, embody your soul at all times. (Ohno and Ohno 2004, p. 209)

Shakti Avattar León is an artist whose practice combines a variety of forms and media, including performing arts, theatre, dance, video, costume design and experimental film. A native of Patagonia, she draws from a wellspring of indigenous traditions, shamanism and medicinal healing, as well as contemporary modes of expression inspired by the Avant-Garde and especially Japanese Butoh. It was in the late 1950s, in an ontological reckoning of our physical, bodily selves and artistic expression through movement, that Hijikata Tatsumi and Kazuo Ohno designated and described their ideas as *ankoku butoh*: a compound term marrying *ankoku*, "utter darkness," with *butoh*, or "dance," specifically dance in the Western tradition (Ohno n.d.). This broadly encompasses varied forms from

ballroom and ballet to the Dance of Death or *Danse Macabre* of the mediaeval period.

All the artists discussed in this chapter have noted that Butoh exerted an influence on their thinking and approaches to movement in their art: from the broader embrace of a cosmological consciousness and understanding of movement as a generative force, to situational awareness informing a decision to kinesthetically engage, to move, to gesture, to respond, or not. For León and VestAndPage, in particular, this includes an inventory of costumes, props and quotidian objects. In relation to the movement component of Butoh, León notes:

> I began to dance as a way to train my body to become an instrument, to refine and expand … in order to ease the encounters during live performances. It was integrated into my craft in an inevitable, organic and constitutive manner. These manners are the axis that cross my execution in the majority of my craft, especially in the *Places of Power* project. (2017)

Her *Places of Power* project spanned several years and continents, beginning with a residency at Shelter Island at the eastern end of Long Island in New York in 2008. She continued developing the project in Argentina, Denmark and Antarctica. Her visit to Antarctica took place in 2012, as an artist-in-residence under the auspices of the Argentine government's Dirección Nacional del Antártico (DNA). Here, during the austral summer, she carried out her work mostly in the area surrounding the Esperanza Base on the Antarctic Peninsula. The resulting *Places of Power—Antarctica: Ritual+Performance+Butoh* (2012) is both an individual work and the title of a series of performance-based, ritual actions drawing inspiration from and continuing in the tradition of Butoh. While there is a primacy on the performance itself, the audience experience is through documentary video and sound. Below, I examine five of the Antarctic-related pieces that are part of the greater whole of *Places of Power*.

León describes the project as a journey and an exploration, "the crossing and linking between performance and ritual within Butoh Dance," and "each position's power in dialogue as well as the position of power we all have within ourselves" (ibid.). For her, the power of the Antarctic is both a physical force of elemental substances (*prima materia*: ice, water, earth and air) and a mythical consciousness churning in the substrate of Pangaea and Gondwanaland that lies below kilometres of ice covering the continent. She writes:

> In Antarctica, that encounter is translated by me through dance, video, experimental sound, colors, textures, shapes, images, sensory perceptions that expand the comprehension of anything vital, present, the impermanent, the interconnection between all beings, the expansive energetic web of resonances that is Antarctica. (Ibid.)

In this regard, León's choice of locations and actions assumes a form of personal geomancy, which she describes with a sense of wonder:

> In Antarctica, impermanence is something that gets amplified. Each place would choose me and I would respond or I wouldn't. I remember there were days when I'd leave the house and the landscape view was so amazing and different than the previous day and so different than the moments that would follow. Each moment was an indescribable dance of ice and water, of colours and light over the ice, of the ocean, of the animals from the coast. (Ibid.)

In the performance, *Kausay Curandera* (León 2013c), León sits on a coastal rock surrounded by small icebergs and bergy bits. It is snowing and sleeting under a leaden sky and a steady wind blows. She has painted her face with classic Butoh: white paint and drawn solid lines in red around her eyes, eyebrows, as well as a series of dots criss-crossing her face and, like a punctuation mark, a red mark in the position of the third eye between her eyebrows. The white paint is also in her hair and she is wearing red clothing over her cold weather underwear. Her initial movements are contained, sometimes expanding from the body outward: simultaneously awkward, easy and tense. She slowly and deliberately steps down from the rock and moves through rough rocks and ice toward the camera with bird-like gestures (see Fig. 2). Her plastic cape crackles in the wind, ice knocks against rocks and in the distance a slurry of ice and water swirls in a tidal pool. The world of the performance through the lens is attenuated through the distortion of a wide-angle lens. This has the effect of altering a landscape that is already difficult to fathom—in scale and to suggest the seemingly infinite expanse that lies beyond. This reflects the reality that *Terra Australis Incognita* is still a mystery and largely unknown to human beings.

León moves close to the camera and picks it up, moving to a new location. The camera is hoisted above her head and we catch glimpses of the terrain and a Jamesway hut from the Esperanza Base in the distance. She sets the camera down momentarily, looking to the lens—through a looking

Fig. 2 Shakti Avattar León performing on the ice in Antarctica. Still from the video, *Kausay Curandera*. (Photo: Shakti Avattar León. Used with permission)

glass, as it were. The segment has a "selfie" quality as a reflexive gesture in the moment. León picks the camera up again and continues walking, exploring. At one moment she gently rocks back and forth, revealing a highly distorted visual compression of the world immediately around her. She is at the centre of an *orbis terrarum*, looking out and in at the same time.

In *Blue* (León 2013d), a three-and-a-half-minute performance, León leans, with her knees bent, into a strong, persistent wind along the coast. She cuts the spectre of a figure, with painted, white face in the fading, indigo twilight. Waves break at her feet and gusts billow and fill her costume. In the distance, we can see the face of a glacier. In the shadows, we see the periodic flashing of a pinpoint of light. Photographer Gaston Lacombe filmed the piece which contains several different angles. His framing of the scene is tilted in such a way as to accentuate the force of the wind against her body. Towards the last minute, León is joined by another figure which, in the murk, is at first an ambiguous, motionless shape, perhaps part of the landscape. The scene dissolves to reveal the two figures, looking in different directions. They occupy the same frame but inhabit a world apart and are lost in their own thoughts.

Sounds of wind and pronounced reverberant knocking and pings provide a droning soundscape. The reverberant space we hear is not the one we see—or, at least not entirely. Rather, it suggests a cavernous interior: the sonic signature of a knowable, tenable space superimposed over what is, in some respects, unknowable.

ORBS Dance (León 2012) is a short, in situ improvisation filmed using a stop-frame, time-lapse approach. The staccato effect is such that both space and time are compressed. León has selected as her stage a patch of melting snow stretching across an expanse of scree with a craggy rise and mountains in the distance. The performance is brightly backlit by the sun, which slides along the horizon. She wears no make-up and is clad in black, standard issue cold weather gear. The one exception to this habit is a brightly coloured, red wrap which is clearly of indigenous South American design, touching on her ethnic origins.

She places the camera and moves away onto the snow and the rocks. The editing belies a rather fluid and limited range of motion as she sways and rocks, extending her arms, before gradually coming to momentary rest and then, on all fours, connecting with the icy surface. About two-thirds of the way through the piece, León picks up the camera and films herself walking to the shore nearby, where she encounters sea lions and birds.

The audio for this piece provides a further layer of meaning, as well as agitation and discord, as snippets of narration, poetry and vocal fragments are heard. Some of these are processed digitally using reverberation, delay and echo, along with decidedly harsh electroacoustic sounds that are over-modulated, sometimes truncated, or made to feedback and howl. The timbres are both primal and industrial, punctuated by León's voice and by silence, which is heard throughout the last part.

In another short performance called *Natural Walking* (León 2013b), León films herself walking through snow. She holds the camera, and the point of view is towards her feet and the surface. As in other performances, the warp of the lens she uses distorts and compresses the world, or stage, into a microcosm. She moves deliberately; the slow motion of the video accentuates her actions. Each step appears to be measured, mindful, as if discovering the tactile qualities of snow for the first time. It is a sunny day and glints of snowflake crystals dance about her along with her accompanying shadow. The music we hear is a combination of small bells, of a kind that one might hear in a Buddhist temple, small hand-held percussion instruments and howling wolves. After about two and a half minutes, the

music subsides, and we hear the delicate sounds of brash ice on calm waters moving gently in the current. She continues to walk, each step sinking into the snow. Gradually a pulsed beat emerges, accompanying the sounds of ice. She adjusts the camera in such a way that the horizon appears as a convex band on the left of the frame: the edge of the known world. A slight breeze picks up, the pulsating sounds ebb and she leaves the snow, moving across rocks before turning around to reveal the short journey and circuit she took out and back. Walking is a very basic, everyday activity. It is also, in this context, a fundamental affirmation of life and connection with the landscape: her footprints, a statement, "I have been here." Indeed, there is a good chance that she may be the only human being ever to have set foot on that particular spot.

The individual piece, *Places of Power—Antarctica: Ritual+Performance+Butoh* (León 2013a), opens with León lying on her back on the ice. Her arms are outstretched, cruciform, as though about to make a snow angel. The image, like others in the series, is shot using a wide-angle lens. The reach of the ice across the frame creates a concave hollow across the lower third, and she appears cradled in a hammock. The water, icebergs and islands that dot the coastline in the distance are reduced through the distortion of the lens to a smear. The upper two-thirds of the image are dominated by slate-grey clouds moving slowly, with the sun barely punching through. León remains still for the better part of a minute before slowly bending her knees, drawing them up to her waist. She rises from the ice, extends her limbs and, in a somewhat birdlike motion, folds her arms behind her. She appears to struggle to her feet, rotating and moving toward the camera, then lifts her head and tilts into the lens at close range as if to ask, "Who are you?"

León has painted her face white, with purple and magenta dots tracing the brow and a solid line running down her nose. She is wearing jewellery and a knotted white scarf over her black cold weather gear. The knots cascade down in tresses to her waist and her sleeves are sewn together from fabric scraps. From the knees down, three red skull and crossbones motifs are sewn into her black leggings, symbolising mortality.

At every step, her motions remain earthbound—or rather, icebound—and confined to the microcosm of the frame. She moves from sinuous, repetitive motions to very steady, measured poses and shapes that tap into a gestural vocabulary reminiscent of tai chi in their static detail and stylisation: a firm planting of one foot, a raised knee and outward reach of an arm to the closing of index finger to thumb and a final resolution in the

last extension of a phalange. These restrained, more choreographic, movements are juxtaposed with emphatic, almost childlike, naïve gestures—rotating her arms in windmill fashion. Her costume swirls and moves with her and with the ever-present wind. The time of the performance has been compressed through editing and the use of dissolves, sometimes extended to superimpose her figure both as an overlay and as an almost reflexive gesture. The image is further manipulated by blurring, zooming and polarisation—intimating the spiritual journey inward. León approaches the camera a second time. The wind has picked up; her hands are raw; the white paint on her face and hair is cracking, revealing a network of fissures that reflect the reticulated ice and snow surrounding her. Of the physicality of the performance and encounter with the elements, she writes: "In a general sense, once in a state of dance, I didn't feel the cold. Through the performance I could integrate the cold, the snow, the water, the ice and the dance could notice and understand. Even more so, when the performance would end, I'd come to feel muscular pain, physical exhaustion and extreme cold" (León 2017). There is a simultaneous embracing and denial of the harsh realities of freezing temperatures and wind: the consciousness of the dance itself is expressed. She notes, "Kauzo Ohno used to say that once you begin your dance, it's like taking a vow to dance 'everything' that you're experiencing" (ibid.).

The performances that make up *Places of Power* are sparks of personal, divine and physical revelation, like the meaning of her name, Shakti. They are a series of geographies, real and imagined, observed and engaged. The id is ignited and compelled to move. This is, she writes, "Sometimes more spiritual, sometimes more emotional, sometimes more mental, sometimes more physical; sometimes lighter, sometimes darker, sometimes with more fluidity and sometimes stuck for long periods of time…" (ibid.).

VestAndPage, *Performances at the Core of the Looking-Glass*

> We are here to make performances based on the human body and its conditions related to the environment, but we can't lose the sensation that the human presence on this continent is the one of a mere intruder. (VestAndPage 2013, p. 65)

VestAndPage (Verena Stenke and Andrea Pagnes) are a performance art duo. Based principally in Europe, their work has taken them around the

world. In the austral summer of 2012, they travelled to Esperanza Base on the Antarctic Peninsula with the support of the Argentine government. Like León, who also made the journey under the auspices of the DNA, their project was part of a larger endeavour spanning several years and continents. The Antarctic component of their work, *Performances at the Core of the Looking-Glass*, forms the final part of their performance-based art film trilogy, *sin∞fin The Movie* (VestAndPage 2012).

The conceptual framework—or, to use the artists' words, the "theoretical armature"—for *sin∞fin* was inspired by philosopher Peter Sloterdijk's notion of spheres (VestAndPage 2013, p. 62). While a detailed discussion of Sloterdijk's work is beyond the scope of this chapter, it is necessary to note that, in a trilogy of works, he grapples with ideas of "spaces of coexistence" that lie at the heart of human experience. Spheres are scalable and variable, providing intersections, contradictions, paradoxes and existential flash points. They represent an ontological reckoning of sorts: from the mammalian genesis of life in the womb and the physical spaces that define our bodily selves and the exigencies of survival, to social spaces and constructs and, for the purposes of our discussion, landscapes—both real and imagined. Through his work, Sloterdijk "reinterprets the history of Western metaphysics as an inherently spatial and immunological project, from the discovery of self (bubble) to the exploration of world (globe) to the poetics of plurality (foam)" (Semiotext(e) 2017).

Performances at the Core of the Looking-Glass is a series of performance actions and *tableaux vivants.* Pagnes and Stenke filmed each other and also used a stationary camera. The individual performances that make up the film are sequenced and edited together in the interests of telling a non-linear narrative, one that, through its imagery and associations, invites viewers into an oneiric reality with its own language and syntax. As the artists explain, the cinematic idiom provides more than a means of documentation:

> We were stimulated to explore the possibilities of the media of filmmaking, which we felt virtually expanding and retracting with the Antarctic environment perennial *motus*, as if that environment itself was injecting into us narrative splinters that could then be recomposed by our artistic endeavour during and after our temporary experience, both as viewer and agent …. (VestAndPage 2013, p. 62)

The film is divided into six sections, or chapters, whose titles echo some of Sloterdijk's spheres in their suggestion of spaces, places and human desires. The performances are varied and undertaken in different locations near the Argentine research station where the artists were based: a wind-swept incline of scree and ice; a tidal pool of brash ice; a crevasse; a seemingly endless expanse of snow; the rocky shore strewn with ice and littered with the bones and carcasses of dead marine mammals and birds. The primacy in their activities is on direct experience and response to these places through spontaneity and an honest feeling of openness and vulnerability—both physical and psychological. The range and types of movement are not so much choreographed or formalised as poetic, gestural and impulsive. For VestAndPage, poetic is not meant as lyrical sentimentality, or an exercise in nostalgia. Rather, it is more a suggestion of *poesis* and the generative power of spontaneous, reflexive action as a manifestation of situational awareness—of being alive in the moment. In terms that recall both Surrealism and Butoh, Pagnes describes this as a necessity and a call to action:

> The drive is like a homeostatic disturbance from a condition of quietness inside: to be excited to do something. So, in this way we hazard to do something we normally would never do. For example, Verena would never dance on the block of ice floating on the frozen sea or I would never say, "Okay, let's go on an iceberg." I would go, naked, and lay down. But maybe there is a situation or a kind of landscape that conjure to then make that performance happen. (VestAndPage 2017)

Pagnes and Stenke explore and develop a number of themes throughout their performances. These provide a richly layered iconography and semantic construct within which we come to understand their kinesthetic engagement with the ice. The physicality of contact and connection with the environment is of primary artistic concern and is also the focus of this discussion.

The first chapter or collection of performances within the work, *Land of Neither You Nor Me*, reflects Stenke's observation that, "Humans clearly don't belong to this place. They have nothing to do with it. This was a bewildering feeling, especially as we were there to make performances based on the human body and condition in relation to the environment" (ibid.).

One performance at the beginning of the film shows Stenke moving, negotiating and walking on a moving veneer of brash ice being pulled in the tidal current. Bergy bits and growlers move slowly behind her and, in the distance, larger icebergs stretch into a dark and menacing horizon. The wind, along with the shifting ice beneath her feet, makes it hard for her to maintain her balance. She is swathed in extreme cold weather (ECW) clothing and a skirt. Maintaining equilibrium is as much physical as it is mental. This tension serves as a metaphor or warp in the looking-glass through which we come to understand much of the work.

The audio accompanying this scene includes what sounds like voiced bubbles being blown into water. The sound is at once playful and childlike in its naïvety. However, it is a key passage of underscoring and introduces us to a recurring theme of the body and water which VestAndPage explore in a number of performances: eating ice, drinking water, the impossibility of salt water, disgorging ice (and its facsimile, glass) and bleeding. The human body is comprised of between 50 and 75 percent water. In infants under one year of age that increases to nearly 80 percent, or roughly the same percentage of water that is found in pure blood. Stenke and Pagnes express a keen interest in and awareness of the body as a network of tissues and structures through which water passes and which constitutes their very essence. The tissues and sinews are permutations of the physical spheres of our bodily selves and, metaphorically, visceral manifestations of Sloterdijk's spheres in the forms of bubbles (the self) and foam (pluralities).

In one performance iteration of the water theme, Stenke is lying in the snow and, through the use of a visual special effect called a motion blur, everything except for her face is out of focus. The lines, shadows and textures of snow, ice and her clothing are all distorted to suggest the forced perspective of convergent orthogonals directed to her face, which is covered in small pieces of ice. It is as if all the ice is either issuing from, or about to be pulled into, the vortex of her mouth. Her eyes are closed; she opens and closes her mouth and appears to speak, rotating her head from side to side. The ice cubes fall away and slide off her face. The action is all in slow motion as if to emphasise its meaning.

Using the same visual editing technique, the next image is of Pagnes's black-hooded face covered with snow. Like Stenke, his eyes are closed as if that which is to be understood or revealed cannot be seen. He slowly disgorges a glass orb in which we can discern a microcosm of the Antarctic continent and the suggestion of Sloterdijk's macrosphere. The process is

like a birth, and the glass ball falls away into the snow. Stenke describes their interest in using the body as a physical and metaphysical interface and a way of exploring ideas of presence and absence as follows:

> I think you can go down to the very basic aspects of interior and exterior which, in this case, was also very important for us because the whole *sin∞fin* in Antarctica worked on absence. Of course, when you question absence you question the absence itself: whether something really is absent or it is just somewhere else where you can't access it, or see it, or sense it anymore. So, the symbols of something exiting or entering your body are one of these passageways between the outside and the inside. (VestAndPage 2017)

In another performance that is invested with a liturgical meaning, we see Pagnes, bare-chested, wedged into the womb-like slip of a crevasse. He takes a piece of ice and attempts to bite into it. The action is a ritualised form of ablution, as he explains: "Taking in the water of the ice, the purest ice, the purest water to clean my body, my inside, my soul. It is a way to try to find a way to purify myself" (VestAndPage 2017).

In one scene later in the film we find ourselves deep within the womb of an ice cave. We see Stenke's hooded visage, dimly lit from ambient daylight and eerie green light from glow sticks in her mouth. In the murk, Pagnes also has some of the chemiluminescent material in his mouth. Glow sticks are an alchemical conjuring, symbolic of inner light and life. They represent a generative force as they require no external source of power for illumination. The two come together and kiss. The green, glowing filaments from their mouths touch and fall into Stenke's hands. The figures fade and we are left within the confines of the ice cave, now slightly more brightly lit with the glint of reflections off the crystalline facets of ice.

In a rather still and static performance, the sounds of breaking ice, melt water and seals usher in the subsequent scene: a brightly lit ice cave with boulders in the foreground, ice walls and vaulted ceiling with a veneer of icicles. The image of Pagnes and Stenke fades in. They are naked, kissing and holding one another in an embrace that recollects Edvard Munch's *The Kiss* (see Fig. 3). Dripping melt water and shards of ice catch the sunlight as they fall in front of the camera. The detail is noteworthy as a gentle echo of the falling glow sticks in the previous scene. The lovers and ice cave crossfade to another image of icicles descending from above and growing from below.

Fig. 3 Andrea Pagnes and Verena Stenke embrace in an ice cave near the Esperanza Base, Antarctica. Still from the film, *sin∞fin The Movie: Performances at the Core of the Looking-Glass*. (Photo: VestAndPage. Used with permission)

Just as water is a key element and operative symbol for life and the flow of time, so is blood. We are introduced to blood as a performance object and material in a somewhat indirect manner, which is only clarified or revealed later in the fullness of several actions and performances. On a barren patch of snowy ground, we encounter Pagnes kneeling, as if in ritual or prayer, before a bound journal. He casts a die onto an open page. The die is old, yellowed and lands on 3. Through a long dissolve we move from an extreme close-up of the die face to Pagnes's chest. It is tattooed and has been scored or cut in three vertical lines. He is bleeding. The cutting is a form of cleansing and purifying or ritual action, affirming life in the numbing cold of Antarctica. It also is part of the ongoing dynamic of exchange between bodies of water, between spheres and membranes: permeable and semipermeable; human and planetary. Pagnes picks up his book and presses it against his chest, transferring the trickles of blood to the open pages: primal markings and assertions which he has committed, through ritualised or ceremonial action, to a codex. The book is set down, pages open, in the snow before him. These are similar to enigmatic images encountered in an earlier performance in the film in which Pagnes turns the pages of his book while contemplating the graves of two researchers

who died in crevasse accidents on the ice. Within the sphere of time the looking-glass distorts and bends. We pause with Pagnes as he looks out on the landscape. It is cold, grey and windswept.

The ensuing sequence brings us onto the ice once again. Pagnes's black-gloved hands are handling two syringes filled with blood. Here and in subsequent scenes this is Pagnes's blood, drawn by medical staff at the Esperanza Base (Pagnes 2018). He injects this into the surge of brash ice. The blood trickles and leeches—like a red algal bloom and fluvial braids that are seen in the opening part of the film—into the surrounding pockets and channels to be carried out with the tide: a co-mingling of spheres. Pagnes explains:

> The physical transfer of the blood on ice is also to deliver back to nature the genetic information that the blood carries within, this looking back at the ancient alchemist theory that the soul resides in the blood and not elsewhere. Imagine to be left in the Antarctic forever, having nothing but you, how can you deliver a message before freezing to death? Not with a written paper in a bottle, only delivering a physical part of yourself—your blood into the ice afloat. (Ibid.)

In a performance toward the end of the film, Pagnes and Stenke are seen in profile, two figures in the landscape. He faces her, holding a syringe in his upraised hand. She steadies the glasses and he solemnly injects his blood into one glass and then the other. They lock arms, raise the glasses to their lips and drink. The glasses drained, Pagnes collects them and kisses Stenke as they both fade, leaving us in the grey void of the ice. This Eucharistic celebration is fleeting, the connection between them and the landscape momentary, and they vanish without a trace.

In one of the final scenes, Stenke, who is sitting on a floating bergy bit, hangs her head and cuts her hair with a pair of scissors in a sequence that is compressed using time-lapse. She releases tresses of her hair to the wind and, pausing, raises her head to stare into the camera before being dissolved out of the scene to leave only the ice and a leaden sky. A little later, we see Pagnes spitting out a mouthful of the hair. Of this action, he states, "She cut the hair because it was a promise that she made. The last scene was dedicated to her father who had just died. So, she was cutting the hair and giving the hair to the wind. In that moment, I took the hair and wanted to be part of this ritual, also. This is a very personal layer." He continues, "All the time, there is a lot of our life experience that enters

into the performances. But, then, of course we don't want to explain them but it is like a psycho-magic act, [Alejandro] Jodorowsky-style, let's say" (VestAndPage 2017). The physical matter and exchange of blood, water, hair, ice with the earth form the visceral and vital link between human life and landscape. They are variable symbols and devices within the performances. Here and elsewhere in *Performances at the Core of the Looking-Glass* where religious traditions and practices are referenced, recast and reenacted, we are reminded of Sklar's observation that, "Religious belief and knowledge are not explained in terms of more and more symbolic associations but are exposed as a deep yet immediate interplay of sensory, affective, and symbolic experience" (Sklar 1994, p. 18).

Another theme that VestAndPage explore in performance involves movement, in the form of walking, as an aspect of mapping as well as actual maps themselves. Foster discusses in detail the etymological and conceptual roots of chorography with respect to mapmaking and choreography in dance and how the two are bound together (Foster 2011, pp. 76–86). "Ptolemy," she writes, "had likened chorography to the study of a region of the body such as the face, and geography to the study of the whole body" (ibid., p. 80). Walking is the bodily-kinesthetic in its most salient expression: ordinary and familiar action gesturing to a sense of circumscription, or measuring out space in time by connecting with the landscape itself. Every chapter of *Performances at the Core of the Looking-Glass* includes passages of a figure walking, usually alone: along the shore, crossing the ice, negotiating the boundary between ice and *terra firma*. Walking is a form of living geography animating the world.

The idea of a map is established in the viewer's mind in the first chapter in several iterations and continues to be explored in both a material sense and as a conceptual conceit throughout. Maps are both a record and reckoning and serve as projections of desire and incipient or anticipated motion. They appear in several forms and contexts in a number of performances: a map of the ancient world; a meteorological chart; an astrological chart; and the more abstract suggestion of a map in the form of the chessboard.

Early in the film, Stenke's figure dissolves while the brash ice swirls in the background, before gradually crossfading to a crouching, black-cloaked and hooded figure before a cairn. It is Pagnes on a rocky rise with a slice of glacier visible in the distance under a blue sky with shoals of altocumulus clouds. He slowly unrolls a scroll, revealing the *Tabula Peutingeriana*—a thirteenth-century copy of what is thought to have

been an early Roman road map of the Augustan period. The soundtrack during this passage is a mix of conversation from the research station, Morse code and radio static. The juxtaposition of what we are seeing and hearing is compelling: a macabre dance and a map of the "known" ancient world being unfurled against the suggestion of the infinite space of *Terra Australis Incognita* that lies beyond the frame—and our capacity for understanding. The pulses of code and fragments of conversation cut through the wash of noise like beacons from another world.

A subsequent scene shows an expanse of sea ice with a blackened spit of land and the crumbling face of a glacier cutting across the frame. There is a small-scale model of a Nansen sled, neatly laden with supplies tied down. It sits on a marooned bergy bit along the shoreline. The reference is clearly to the "Heroic Age" of Antarctic exploration, during which dogs and sleds were the primary means of transport. The size is as much a visual play and part of the oneiric fabric of their performances as it implies a temporal scaling of the past: a past that, as it recedes, makes things appear smaller somehow. Day transitions to night, the wind rumbles and we see Pagnes kneeling, bent over and illuminated by torchlight. He dons a fur cap and vest and we can see the glint of a wire dog muzzle on his face. Like the Nansen sled, the muzzle is a vestige of the past, as it has been decades since the last working dogs were deployed on the ice. Furthermore, Pagnes admits, "The meta-level with the muzzle is my impossibility to get into nature as I would like" (VestAndPage 2017). It is an object and image that is revisited in a revised context in other parts of the work. He slowly and deliberately reels in the Nansen sled, to which has been added a small scroll. The scene ends with another roll of graph paper unfurled before the sled under the flickering light of the torch. It appears to be a chart of either meteorological or ice data of some sort—something of an enigma, like the traces of ancient Roman roads in the *Tabula Peutingeriana*.

In another performance we see the black-cloaked figure of Death curled up on the ground with his face covered and hidden in a black fabric mask. Pagnes kneels before a giant whale vertebra on the beach with his head, face down, in the centrum of the bone. The vertebra has deteriorated somewhat and its surface is pitted and coloured with slowly spreading lichens—one of the most ancient and enduring forms of life in Antarctica and a living map of sorts. In a scene that recalls Ingmar Bergman's opening to *The Seventh Seal* (1957), Pagnes plays chess—with himself. There is no board, no playing field or map, as he places the king, queen and a pawn on the curve of the vertebra. He surveys the game, cradling a swaddling

bundle—only, he is blindfolded and cannot see what is before him. The camera pans across the extent of the whale's spine and a scattering of ribs, disarticulated slightly by forces of tides and wind. Chess pieces are arranged, haphazardly, like toy soldiers on the rocks between a couple of vertebrae. Reflecting on his impressions and thoughts about this site and the performance, he explains: "The thing that strikes me the most was that the seashore is full of bones. So, for me, it was like constantly walking in a graveyard, open air. It was not a pagan religion way of feeling. It was that I am on my earth in a way but an earth that is not mine" (VestAndPage 2017).

The theme of chess is revisited and developed in other performances. It is worth noting that, as with other situations, scenes and objects, there are several layers of reference, inference and meaning that coalesce over time. The most obvious is that chess is played regularly by the inhabitants of the base—staff, researchers and visitors alike. It is part of the everyday experience on the ice. Unlike Bergman's knight, who has experienced the ravages of the plague and wars and now challenges Death to a chess match, Pagnes is a lone chess player looking into a mirror with no reflection. As an actor, he is both subject and object in an activity that, however restrained in its physicality and cerebral in nature, is nonetheless kinetic. Marcel Duchamp once wrote, "In chess, there are some extremely beautiful things in the domain of movement, but not in the visual domain. It's the imagining of the movement or of the gesture that makes the beauty in this case" (Duchamp quoted in Cabanne 1987, p. 19). So, too, here: the motions and gestures of chess moves and assembled pieces evoke a psychic movement, a game or divine comedy of an indeterminate nature.

For VestAndPage, the physical reckoning at the core of the looking-glass is in some ways a *tabula rasa*, a prism of mirrors within which we can only experience fragments and glimpses of an unfathomable whole (VestAndPage 2013, p. 71). As Pagnes et al. reflect in the poem, *Antarctic Dream: At the Core of the Looking-Glass*:

> Beauty, which moves without provoking,
> Doesn't fulfil its consequences,
> Knows how to keep a secret.
> And beauty,
> Where anything is a mirror.
> I enter the stage:
> It is sacred. The dream begins.
> I'm a man, (a woman), the other, none, and everyone.

> At times, it feels like I'm not human.
> When my rage begins to surface,
> My blood seeps into the waters.
> Pulled by the moon,
> The ebb and flow lulls me into reflections of timelessness,
> Naked,
> Exposed to the imminence of a constructed world, and taxed beauty.
> This is the realm of Ice. (Pagnes et al. 2012)

Conclusion

Antarctica occupies a significant area at the vortex of the earth's magnetic field, one pole of the planet's rotational axis. Yet we, as living beings, could not be at a further remove from its epicentre. It is a vast continent separated by the Southern Ocean with its treacherous currents and winds: the Roaring Forties, Furious Fifties and Screaming Sixties. The world of ice exists beyond the realm of most human experience and, indeed, comprehension. Despite greater access through sturdier sailing vessels and by air, life in the deep freeze is tenuous at best and certainly not sustainable without tremendous effort, resources and expense. After two centuries of exploration, adventure and scientific probing, much of Antarctica remains an uncharted mystery, still only vaguely understood. The landscape and the elements exert an almost mythic power on our collective imagination—somehow always out of reach and ineffable.

The importance of the arts is to provide different modalities of knowing, understanding and representing the world around us and, ultimately, of being in the world. Most of the aesthetic experiences we have of Antarctica have been mediated through the visual arts and the written word—those modes of expression most culturally privileged in the Western tradition. For Christina Evans, Shakti Avattar León, Andrea Pagnes and Verena Stenke, the search for purpose and meaning is a direct bodily-kinesthetic engagement with the Antarctic landscape itself. They bring us to a different ontological reckoning of self as subject versus object, space and place through corporeal experience and episteme. Their bodies are the instruments and artistic medium of exploration and expression through which they offer us visceral insight and empathetic identification with *Terra Australis Incognita*.

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Mixing Ice: DJ Spooky's Musical Portraits of the Arctic and Antarctic

Carolyn Philpott

Music and the Polar Regions

In recent decades, increasing numbers of professional composers, musicians and sound artists from diverse national and cultural backgrounds have turned their attention towards the polar regions to gain inspiration for new creative works. This trend can be attributed to several factors, including the celebration of centenaries of Heroic-Era expeditions, the rise in media reporting about environmental changes in the polar regions and the implications for global climate processes, the increased dialogue about these places within literature and the arts, and the greater opportunities for artists to physically visit them through tourist cruises/flights and arts residency programs.[1] While some composers, musicians and sound artists have focused their attention on one of the polar icescapes, rather than both, collectively their work reflects on the uniqueness and

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importance of the polar regions, the history of human presence within them, and the influences of these places on the spaces in between.

Musical and sound-based works composed in connection with the Arctic and/or Antarctic exist in a range of styles and genres, from pieces in the Western art music (or "classical") tradition—such as Ralph Vaughan Williams's film score for *Scott of the Antarctic* (1948) and *Sinfonia Antartica* (1949–52), Sir Peter Maxwell Davies's *High on the Slopes of Terror* (1999) and *Antarctic Symphony* (Symphony No. 8, 2000), Nigel Westlake's *Antarctica* suite (1992), Vincent Ho's *Arctic Symphony* (2010) and Ludovico Einaudi's *Elegy for the Arctic* (2016)—to the soundscape-based compositions of John Luther Adams, Cheryl Leonard, Andrea Polli, Douglas Quin, Philip Samartzis, Ian Tamblyn and Craig Vear, among others. While several scholarly studies have been published on art music composed in connection with the polar regions (Beckerman 2000; Grimley 2008; Hince et al. 2015; Leane et al. 2014; Philpott 2016; Philpott and Samartzis 2017; Wiesel 2012), these have rarely encompassed forms of popular music, despite a large number of examples. This might reflect the general tendency among musicologists to privilege the study of music from the Western art tradition (works that have stood the test of time and for which there are tangible scores to analyse) over forms of popular music, which by their very nature typically have shorter histories, rely on aural transmission and often appear less complex when notated. The apparent simplicity of some forms of popular music when notated can be deceptive, however, as music in this genre often requires a different set of analytical techniques (such as sound recording analysis) to adequately investigate the key musical characteristics that vary (at least in the degree of emphasis placed on them) from those of Western art music, such as vocal timbres and nuances, and subtleties in rhythm and beat placement.[2]

The lack of scholarly attention given to polar-related popular music so far certainly does not seem to be representative of the quantity and quality of this repertoire, nor of its potential impact. Examples of polar-related popular music vary from songs with fleeting references to the Arctic and/or Antarctic in lyrics (such as in rock band Australian Crawl's 1983 hit "Reckless [Don't be so]"), to entire tracks about polar icescapes (for example, Midnight Oil's "Antarctica" from the album *Blue Sky Mining*, 1990). There have also been noteworthy performances by popular music artists in these locations (such as Metallica's 2013 concert at Argentina's Carlini Base on King George Island, near the tip of the Antarctic Peninsula). Significantly, polar-related popular music has the capacity to reach large

audiences. While aesthetic considerations remain important, many examples of polar-related popular music are designed, like much other popular music, to "mediat[e] community concerns" through lyrical content and provide "new perspectives to initiate creative dialogue," rather than only "simple messaging" (Pedelty 2016, p. 209). Although contrasting perspectives exist on the capacity for the arts to initiate changes in behaviour (see e.g. Heddon and Mackey 2012), scholars working in the relatively new field of ecomusicology have recognised that listening to environment-centred music, as well as "incorporating considerations of music and sound into sustainability," can indeed "engage community and help effect cultural change" (Allen et al. 2014, pp. 10, 23).[3] The potential for music to connect people with places and important environmental matters is particularly relevant in relation to the polar regions, given their centrality to global climate processes and to ongoing debates about climate change.

This chapter focuses on the work of an artist at the forefront of creating polar-related popular music: the internationally renowned American composer, writer and experimental hip-hop musician Paul D. Miller (also known as "DJ Spooky that Subliminal Kid"). Having visited both Antarctica (2007–2008) and the Arctic (2010 and 2014), Miller combines his field recordings of ice with newly composed music and electronic sounds based on patterns derived from scientific data to create a range of projects and performances aimed at engaging audiences with these places and the environmental issues affecting them. Through his various works and performances that explore ice—its distinctive properties and the many different forms it takes—he invites listeners into an open dialogue about the unique ecosystems of the polar regions and the impacts of climate change. Although his performances have occasionally received mixed reviews from critics, Miller has been formally and publicly recognised for "inspiring people to care about the planet" (Daugherty 2014). In 2014, for example, he was named as one of National Geographic's "Emerging Explorers," as part of a programme which recognises and supports gifted visionaries and innovators who are "making a difference and changing the world" (National Geographic 2014b; National Geographic 2017). His work, however, has yet to receive much in the way of critical scholarly consideration.

Drawing on musicological approaches, including score and sound-recording analyses, this chapter presents the first scholarly examination of Miller's polar-inspired music and performances. It focuses primarily on the work *Terra Nova: Sinfonia Antarctica* (2008), and also incorporates

discussions of his book and installation *The Book of Ice* (2011), his album *Of Water and Ice* (2013) and *Arctic Rhythms* concert series (2014 onwards). These projects are considered within the context of his experiences in the polar regions and his interests in the science of climate change and the structure of ice. By exploring his ice-related outputs, the study shows the methods through which he aims to engage audiences around the world with important environmental issues relating to the polar regions. Overall, this research seeks to facilitate greater understanding of Miller's ice-related and broader environment-focused work and contribute to the burgeoning discourse on creative engagement with, and representation of, icescapes in the twenty-first century.

Background to Miller's Polar-Related Work

Born in Washington DC in 1970 and now based in New York City, Miller has travelled extensively in order to perform and gain inspiration for his music and other creative work. He has collaborated with a large range of musicians and composers, from Iannis Xenakis and the Kronos Quartet to Yoko Ono and Sonic Youth, and his creative work has appeared in myriad contexts, from concert halls to galleries and museums (such as the Ludwig Museum in Cologne, Kunsthalle Wien, and the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh), as well as at festivals and exhibitions (including the Venice Biennale and Whitney Biennial in New York City). His compositions draw on a variety of influences, including from the visual arts, literature, mathematics and the natural environment, as well as other styles of music. Much of Miller's music is in a style referred to as "trip hop" due to its fusion of electronic music with hip-hop and the favouring of abstract over vocal sounds. Other works cross over with Western art music, especially through his adoption of minimalist and postminimalist approaches to composition. This interest in art music was no doubt encouraged by composition lessons he took with Elliott Schwartz at Bowdoin College in Maine, where Miller was a student majoring in literature and philosophy. A deep thinker and gifted writer, Miller has written and/or edited various books and articles that reveal his perspectives on sound, music and digital culture, including *Rhythm Science* (2004) and *Sound Unbound: Sampling Digital Music and Culture* (2008), the latter of which features contributions from high-profile composers, artists, writers and intellectuals, including Pierre Boulez, Brian Eno, Douglas Kahn, Pauline Oliveros and Steve Reich. Like his writings, many of Miller's compositions echo his belief that

the "arts have an incredible and very powerful role to play in raising awareness" of climate change and other pertinent issues affecting the planet (Miller quoted in National Geographic 2014a). In his view, the arts should "grab people by the scruff of the neck" and prompt them to respond to challenging matters—particularly the current environmental crisis (Miller quoted in Daugherty 2014). This aspect of his creative philosophy is perhaps most evident in his ice-related compositions.

Miller's fascination with icescapes was prompted during his youth, when he first encountered early polar-related films such as Méliès's *The Conquest of the Pole* (1912), Frederick Cook's *The Truth About the North Pole* (1912) and Herbert Ponting's *Ninety Degrees South* (1933), as well as the polar-related literature of Jules Verne (Miller 2011, p. 18). His desire to visit both polar regions in his late thirties and early forties was motivated by his "deep interest in environmental issues" and his wish to see the effects of climate change firsthand (Miller quoted in Hanscom 2012).

Miller's visits to Antarctica and the Arctic have informed his creation of a suite of musical and multimedia works that reflects his experiences of the ice, his understanding of environmental change and his encounters with scientists working in these regions. His aims when undertaking these trips have included to "collect impressions of the landscape[s], distil the material into something [that could be used] in the compositions (visually, sonically, and for writing as well), and arrive at a point where sound and art can create portraits of what's going on [in these places]" (Miller 2010). When performing his ice-inspired compositions, Miller typically combines samples of his field recordings from the ice with electronic sounds based on patterns derived from scientific data to create listening experiences for audiences that are accessible, stimulating and loaded with extra-musical meaning. The following discussion explores a selection of his ice-related projects, revealing some of the techniques he employs to convey aspects of his experiences of the polar regions to audiences around the world.

Terra Nova: Sinfonia Antarctica (2008)

The purpose of Miller's trip to Antarctica in the summer of 2007–2008 was to "bring a studio to the ice field" in order to record sounds of the environment and gain inspiration for new creative works (Miller quoted in Daugherty 2014). In particular, he aimed to compose a "digital media symphony" (Miller 2011, p. 55) to fulfil a commission from the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) in New York for its 2009 Next Wave Festival.

His composition of this work, which became his *Terra Nova: Sinfonia Antarctica*, also received support from several other institutions and international arts festivals in the United States, Australia and Italy.[4] *Terra Nova* is a seventy-minute multimedia performance piece that combines scientific, historical and geographical visual material projected onto large screens with music Miller composed for violin, cello and piano based on algorithms of Antarctica's weather and temperature patterns, over the top of which he layers electronic sounds based on his field recordings of ice. His ultimate aim through performances of the work is to provide audiences with what he describes as an "acoustic portrait" of "a rapidly transforming continent" (ibid., p. 11; Miller 2017).

Miller travelled to Antarctica aboard the expedition vessel *Akademik Ioffe*, which was purpose-built in the late 1980s to facilitate scientific research in the polar regions. As described in an interview published in *Nature*, he visited several sites in the region and in each location he "carried a compact recording studio in a backpack across the ice … [then] set up microphones to record the sounds of water and ice [and] took photographs" (Miller quoted in Hoffman 2011). His plan was to use this collection of recorded sounds as an "acoustic palette" from which he could "distil a composition" (Miller 2011, p. 22; Miller quoted in Hoffman 2011). According to the composer, moulding the recorded sounds into a composition required mixing and remixing the material "to the point that bass lines come from wind and water movement" (Miller 2011, p. 22). He later worked to combine his "electronic edits" of the sounds with string arrangements that he composed based on Antarctic weather patterns, which he claims "are so complex it takes a supercomputer to model them" (Miller quoted in Hoffman 2011). As these statements suggest, his aural experiences in Antarctica and the sound recordings he made on the ice directly impacted upon the sound of the completed composition; however, the piece was also shaped by other relevant ideas, influences and compositional choices.

First and foremost, the compositional process behind *Terra Nova* was influenced by Miller's study of literature about ice—its structure and properties—and deep thinking about how ice might relate to music. As an experimental hip-hop artist, he has always been interested in patterns, and this fed into his desire to visit Antarctica and experience the ice firsthand. He writes:

> One could say that ice is characterized by ambiguity, openness and indeterminacy, but is highly structured when it forms. It reminds me of how Eric Dolphy, the jazz musician, described sound: "When you hear music, after it's over, it's gone, you can never capture it again." … Hip-hop is always considered the soundtrack of the city's geometric landscape… . I wanted to take the "urban" concept of repetition and apply it to a different landscape… . After all, music is patterns. And so is landscape. The common denominator here is pattern recognition. And that's what brings me to Antarctica… . Ice and snow are basically geometric forms … *Terra Nova* was loosely based on things like Johannes Kepler's famous 1611 essay "Strena Seu de Nive Sexangula" (A New Year's Gift of Hexagonal Snow) and the fact that nature has some incredible dynamic movements that are at the threshold of human understanding. Going to Antarctica for me, was a kind of exploration of geological time—through the prism of sampling. Scientists go to ice fields the way I go to look at my record collection: ice is an archive of data from the planet's hidden past, preserved and ready for playback with the right devices. (Miller 2011, pp. 9–11)

Miller's study of literature relating to ice, particularly Kepler's observations about hexagonal symmetry in snowflakes,[5] prompted him to consider "how that symmetry would sound in music. That's a touchstone for *Terra Nova*. The tone patterns are a kind of evidence, a reflection of a crystalline symmetry in sounds that reflect Antarctic conditions" (ibid., p. 11). While keen to produce music with obvious patterns in *Terra Nova*, he was simultaneously concerned that a project about "the sound of science" should not distance audiences further from the science (ibid., p. 22). Rather, he wanted to encourage listeners to connect with the science on an emotional level, to think about ice in deeper ways and to become passionate advocates for the polar regions. He has spoken about these ideas publicly on more than one occasion:

> People often think data is cold and removed from everyday life. For me, it's the opposite. It's at the heart of things, the hidden poetry of modern life. By letting us see and hear data in new ways, I'm hoping to engage people in the climate change debate and show why we can't afford to be passive. (Miller quoted in Daugherty 2014)

> I really hope that [by listening to *Terra Nova*] people think about the idea of music as information. [My aim is not just to create] beautiful pieces, but also [to get] people to think a little bit outside the box about what's going on with the environment. So, it's a very lyrical piece. (Miller 2009)

By referring to *Terra Nova* as a lyrical piece, Miller emphasises that he has tried to make its musical language as accessible as possible, so that it appeals to—and its ideas *speak* to—a wide audience. In this regard, he has largely been successful. The musical material notated for violin, cello and piano, which he generated from algorithms of Antarctica's weather and temperature patterns, shows the influence of minimalist music—one of the more accessible styles of art music that emerged in the twentieth century—in its repetition of short motives and sections, its emphasis on melody, its largely tonal and consonant framework, its regular pulse and sense of gradual transformation (see Fig. 1).[6] Upon first hearing the work, some sections of the instrumental score may sound relatively simplistic, yet the sophisticated underlying structure (algorithms) of the score and its combination with Miller's electronic sounds in performances create a level of complexity and stylistic hybridism in the overall work that is more in line with the style of music known as postminimalism.[7] Miller's use of minimalist and postminimalist ideas in *Terra Nova* is an extension of other work that remixes pre-existing minimalist music in dance music contexts, such as his remixes of Steve Reich's *City Life* (1999) and Terry Riley's *In C* (2009).[8] One of the pioneers of minimalism in music in the 1960s (with fellow Americans Riley, La Mont Young and Philip Glass),[9] Reich appears to be very supportive of Miller's work; he even wrote the introduction to Miller's book *Sound Unbound: Sampling Digital Music and Culture* (Miller 2008).

The use of minimalist and postminimalist devices in a composition about Antarctica is very appropriate, given that explorers traversing the interior of the continent since the earliest days of human presence there have frequently noted the general "repetitiveness" of the icescape.[10] As environmental historian Stephen Pyne has observed in relation to visual art, with the emergence of minimalism (among other facets of modernism) in the mid-twentieth century "the intellectual apparatus at last existed with which to comprehend the alien ice terranes of Antarctica" (2004, p. 114). Similarly, the paring back of musical materials in minimalist music seems ideally suited to the polar plateau, which, as Pyne argues, "is not merely a landscape that has been simplified to a minimal state, but one that relentlessly simplifies whatever ideas are brought to it" (ibid., p. 153). Yet, although Antarctica (especially its ice sheet) is often referred to as a "blank canvas," as Elizabeth Leane and others have pointed out, the terrain of the continent varies considerably from the coastal areas, where animal life is abundant and the ice changes rapidly through processes of freezing,

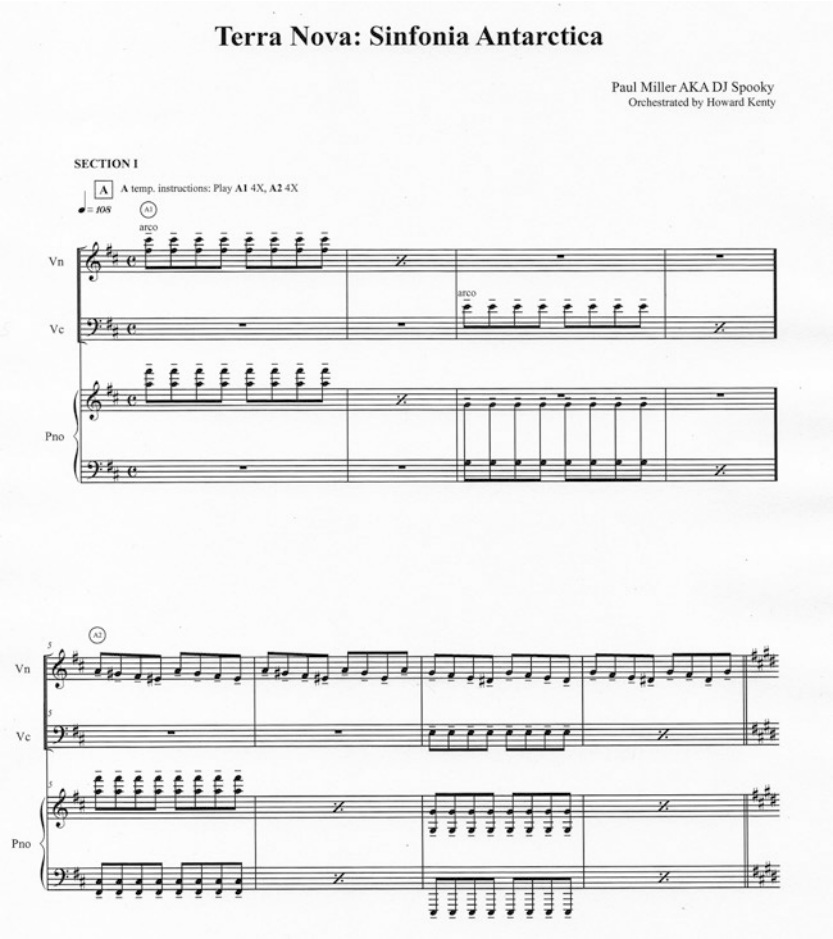

Fig. 1 Opening page of the score of Miller's *Terra Nova: Sinfonia Antarctica*, written for violin, cello and piano

melting and calving, to the interior, which is "not completely blank but punctuated by both natural and human-made features" (Leane 2013, p. 18). The ice itself is also more complex and dynamic than it first appears—both when magnified (in terms of the structure of an ice crystal) and when considered at the macro level (the ice cap is deeper than four

kilometres in some places and the continent doubles in size in the winter months as it accumulates extra sea ice). For these reasons, Miller's post-minimalist approach in *Terra Nova*—with its minimalist façade, underlying complexity and stylistic hybridism—seems particularly well suited to Antarctica. Moreover, the composition's repetition of sections with subtle changes of mood mirrors the perceived repetitiveness of the ice cap and the transforming nature of the ice and the Antarctic environment more broadly over time.

The repetition of short musical motives that is a feature of minimalist and postminimalist music—such as in *Terra Nova*—also reflects the capacity of the Antarctic icescape to produce a "hypnotic effect" (Kennedy and Bourne 2017). Some expeditioners of the Heroic Age sang sledging songs during journeys across the Antarctic ice to help pass the time and noted in their diaries that their repetitive physical actions and monotonous surroundings could induce a "meditative state" similar to that achieved through iterative chanting (Philpott and Leane 2016, p. 700). As Leane (2016) notes, contemporary explorers to the region have also reported entering such a state during their journeys across the ice (pp. 183–84). With *Terra Nova*, it seems that Miller has purposefully aimed to provide a meditative experience for listeners that will encourage reflection on the Antarctic landscape. He describes the work as a "meditation about landscape" (Miller 2009) and a "composition meant to make you lose track of time, to exist in a prolonged present" (Miller 2011, p. 11). Ultimately, he hopes it will prompt audiences to engage with some of the pressing environmental and political issues affecting Antarctica today. He writes:

> *Terra Nova* looks at the Antarctic terrain not only through recordings that I made while I was in Antarctica for four weeks in 2008, but through the prism of how music can interpret some of the political and environmental issues facing the continent. … The composition explores the linkage of concepts like *Res Nullius* (Nobody's Thing) and above all *Terra Nullius* (Nobody's Land). … Antarctica is a commons that we all share, conscious or not, of the history of our planet. That's what I wanted to use as a touchstone for this project. … For me, the music composition I made while I was in Antarctica is kind of a document of collective memory and a meditation on what happens when we remove the idea of ownership. (Ibid., pp. 11–12)

Miller explores these ideas of ownership and a "commons" in *Terra Nova* by drawing freely on the musical ideas of other composers. For

example, when composing the work, he took inspiration from one of his favourite composers, leading American avant-garde composer John Cage (1912–1992). Cage's *Imaginary Landscape No. 1* (1939)—one of the earliest known electroacoustic compositions—employs two variable-speed turntables within its instrumentation; Miller describes *Terra Nova* as a "twenty-first century update" on this particular work (Miller 2009). While Miller also uses traditional Western classical instruments (violin, cello and piano) in *Terra Nova*, he claims these instruments become the "equivalent of turntables" within the work (ibid.). He admits that *Terra Nova* is also influenced by a vast range of "other works that reference landscape—John Cage's 1948 *In a Landscape*; George Frederic Handel's *Water Music* of 1717 … Charles Ives's *Central Park in the Dark* [1906], whose collage-based aesthetic implied that the listener had heard glimmers of sound from every angle of the park; artist Annea Lockwood's *A Sound Map of the Hudson River* [1989]; and above all Ralph Vaughan Williams's *Sinfonia Antartica*" (Miller 2011, p. 13). While borrowing creative ideas from others is nothing new in music—within Western art music or in hip hop—in this case, Miller draws on the musical and conceptual ideas in these works for the express purpose of treating them as a "commons." In doing so, he prompts listeners to contemplate questions relating to ownership—of intellectual property, as well as of physical spaces and places, such as Antarctica. He declares, "that is what resonates with Antarctica for me: the space to be sonically free" (ibid., p. 25).

Even the composition's title, *Terra Nova: Sinfonia Antarctica*, samples and reuses titles previously employed by others. Referring to both Robert Falcon Scott's final, fatal *Terra Nova* (British Antarctic) Expedition of 1910–13 and the first symphony to have been composed in connection with Scott's story—Ralph Vaughan Williams's *Sinfonia Antartica*, which was based on the British composer's score for the 1948 Ealing Studios film *Scott of the Antarctic*—the two-part title of Miller's work immediately creates associations with a pre-existing narrative and musical work with strong connections to Antarctica. Miller's composition is certainly not a "sinfonia" in the traditional sense (it is not symphonic), so the use of this term in the title is purely to reference Vaughan Williams's masterpiece. The words "Terra Nova," meaning "new land," are relevant in this context though, as they connect with Miller's mission to encourage listeners to consider Antarctica as unowned, and a place that is free for creative interpretation.

Similarly, the visual material Miller projects onto large screens during performances of *Terra Nova* has been derived from diverse sources. Some of the material includes his own photographs, video footage and graphic design works from his visit to Antarctica, but he also freely uses historical photographs from expeditions of the Heroic Age, texts that relate to the Antarctic Treaty System and territorial claims to parts of the continent, and scientific data such as charts showing sea level changes and the carbon dioxide emissions of various countries. Again, this open and obvious sampling of pre-existing material created by others—used in combination with his own original photographs, videos and graphic design works—aligns with both the hip-hop "remix" aesthetic and his own personal aspirations to encourage audiences to reflect on the meaning of ownership, especially in relation to Antarctica.

In live performances of *Terra Nova*, Miller accompanies the small ensemble and his visual display by mixing into the sonic texture electronic sounds based on his Antarctic field recordings. Of course, the nature of live performance means that *Terra Nova* continues to exist as an intangible work—it is a "living subject" (Bohlman 2011, p. 513), rather than a fixed object. In this regard, the piece is not unlike the Antarctic icescape: there is an element of change inherent in each live performance of the work, just as the Antarctic environment is subject to variation due to seasonal, anthropogenic and other influences. Nevertheless, in performances of *Terra Nova*, visual and aural elements converge to form an original and immersive multimedia work that is not only aesthetically pleasing, but also richly informative and provocative. Additionally, Miller typically verbally introduces the piece and provides a context for the work by discussing his personal experiences of Antarctica and issues affecting the region. This dialogue is a very important part of his mission to educate audiences. By framing the music in this way, he helps people to understand the ideas within his work, and enables them to connect with his music—and its context—in deep and meaningful ways.

Miller has performed *Terra Nova* with numerous professional ensembles at venues around the world. In the United States, he has performed it with members of the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE)—recognised as "America's foremost new-music group" (Alex Ross quoted in International Contemporary Ensemble 2017)[11]—while in Europe, Australia and elsewhere, he has presented it with musicians from the Alter Ego Ensemble—an Italian ensemble widely recognised for its performances and recordings of new and experimental music, including music

by Philip Glass. *Terra Nova* has been showcased at significant festivals, including the BAM Next Wave Festival and the Melbourne International Arts Festival. It has also been presented at events associated with the 2008 Democratic National Convention and as part of a presentation Miller gave in 2009 at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, which focused on the science behind the piece and the changing environment of Antarctica. While *Terra Nova* has received mixed reviews,[12] on the whole, the composition and its related projects have been praised by the public and critics as innovative, thought-provoking and accessible to broad audiences.

The Book of Ice (2011)

According to Miller, *The Book of Ice* (2011) is another component of his *Terra Nova* project, which as a whole "serves as a portrait of a rapidly transforming continent" (p. 126). This book provides contextual information relating to the multimedia work, including explanations of Miller's influences and aesthetic approaches to composing *Terra Nova*, as well as a selection of his graphic design works (including a series of posters and stickers advertising a fictional "Manifesto for a People's Republic of Antarctica"). Alongside these creative elements, the book features educational material, including a timeline of the history of Antarctica and human presence in the region, a map showing territorial claims to the continent, and facts about the causes and effects of climate change (ibid.). Supplementary materials—in the form of additional images, maps, text-based definitions, and sound and video examples—are readily available to the reader by scanning QR codes in various parts of the book. While Miller wrote most of the text himself, the book also includes contributions from physicist and mathematician Brian Greene, ecosystem ecologist Ross A. Virginia, and two separate interviews with the composer conducted by media theorist Tobias C. van Veen and by Elena Glasberg, author of *Antarctica as Cultural Critique: The Gendered Politics of Scientific Exploration and Climate Change* (2012). As Miller later explained in the *Nature* interview, although he initially intended *The Book of Ice* to showcase creative work, much like *Terra Nova*, it had gradually morphed into an educational project:

> The book started as a graphical score for the musical piece, inspired by the work of British experimental composer Cornelius Cardew. It grew into a

> larger project: to condense the complex information about Antarctica into a digestible format using graphic design. (Miller quoted in Hoffman 2011)

The intertwining of creativity and education in *The Book of Ice* and *Terra Nova* is highlighted in Brian Greene's preface for the book, which characterises the combined project as a "call to all nations and people to see the coldest, driest, and windiest continent in a new way. Miller spins a collage of music, art, sound, science, and ice to challenge our sensory and intellectual perceptions of Antarctica. In his artistry, Miller brings new people, new ideas, and new beauty to bear upon a discussion of the future of Antarctica" (Greene quoted in Miller 2011, p. 6). Overall, the book serves as a companion to *Terra Nova* and really relies on the reader having experienced the multimedia work in order to fully appreciate the written content. *Terra Nova*, on the other hand, stands alone successfully as an independent creative work, although it does depend, at least to some extent, on Miller's spoken introduction to explain the work's scientific and real-world sonic underpinnings. Together, these creative works are examples from just one of the projects through which Miller seeks to engage the public with the polar regions and related environmental issues.

From Antarctica to the Arctic: Miller's "Bipolar" Creative Work

Following on from Miller's visit to Antarctica and composition of *Terra Nova*, he undertook two separate journeys to the High Arctic—in 2010 and again in 2014—to gain inspiration for a series of Arctic-inspired pieces that would complement, and yet be different from, his Antarctic work. His 2010 trip was facilitated by Cape Farewell, an artist-led organisation that aims to prompt an urgent cultural response to global climate change. Instead of planning to produce one long composition, this time he intended to create shorter "acoustic portraits" of the Arctic for a project he called "Arctic Rhythms: Ice Music" (Miller 2010). He spent just over three weeks with scientists aboard the ship *Noorderlicht*, which set sail from Longyearbyen, Spitsbergen (the largest island in the Svalbard archipelago), in mid-September to cruise around Svalbard, making stops at various glaciers in the region. Once settled on the ship, he set up a "mini studio" to begin composing the pieces and also started a blog on the Cape Farewell website, where he recorded his experiences, thoughts and the

first seeds of ideas for his compositions in a series of "Arctic Notes" (Miller ibid.). These posts are essentially the online equivalent of the detailed and highly evocative notes Sir Peter Maxwell Davies made during his 1997–98 Antarctic expedition to compose his *Antarctic Symphony* (Symphony No. 8, 2000), which were later published in the book *Notes From a Cold Climate: Antarctic Symphony No. 8* (Maxwell Davies 2002).

Miller's "Arctic Notes" acknowledge various composers and musicians whose works inspired his thinking in relation to his Arctic pieces, including John Luther Adams, Vincent Ho, Terge Isungset, Magnus Lindberg, Torbjörn Iwan Lundquist, Nuuk Posse, David Rothenberg, Ryuichi Sakamoto and Jean Sibelius (Miller 2010). Above all, however, he focuses on describing the places he visits, especially his sensory experiences of those sites. Although he describes his visual experiences and includes some photographs to illustrate his points, he writes particularly vividly about his aural encounters and occasionally contemplates connections between those sounds, the icescape, climate change and music. For example, on September 23, 2010, after a day exploring Monaco Glacier (which reaches down into Liefdeforden from the island of Spitsbergen), he reflects:

> Huge walls of ice march from the landmass into the sea waters facing the island, they stretch out and speak in a language like music, with no words but with undeniable meaning. And like music, the vista is a language we don't have to learn to be profoundly moved … The music I'm working on while I'm walking and thinking about landscape is a post-minimal situation: how to translate the volume and density of this place, the immense expanses, the way the eye is fooled by the optical qualities of the ice, or the way the ear is fooled by the echoes of our footsteps as we walk through these empty, primordial spaces. I'm still not sure … There's something about walking up the side of a huge mountain, or looking at the effects of climate warming on a massive structure like a glacier [and thinking about] something that huge being reduced to rubble and dust by … carbon dioxide … you stand back and watch the earth crack and the permafrost crumble beneath your feet. The main thing is to carry this information back and to translate it into something that people can relate to. (Ibid.)

Three days later, after visiting the glacier Fjortende Julibreen, he again explains his impressions of the icescape using musical terms:

> Every glacier moves at certain tempos, and the way they sculpt the land beneath—all of this is the way the planet moves in different rhythms and

> tempos. At one point while I was looking at some of the striations in the glacier a huge "boom-crack!!!" came out of the glacier—with no visible change in the ice facing me. … [This sound] was from what scientists call "basal sliding"—the ice repositions itself and creates massive sonic booms that reverberate throughout the glacier at every level. The ice grinds against the soil beneath itself, causing more friction, causing more melting, saltwater from the sea invades the ice tongues underneath the "roots" of the glacier, causing the ice to break off. Thus you get a kind of sonic "echo-system" that mirrors the way the rest of the planet's systems move in and out of "homeostasis." Think of it all as a kind of meshwork—the planet isn't improvising, it's creating dynamic tensions between complex living systems in a planetary choreography: a balancing act between physical, chemical, biological, environmental, and human components. (Ibid.)

Miller's "Arctic Notes" also provide insights into his compositional processes and the ways in which he envisages translating his experiences and impressions of the Arctic, as well as his knowledge of climate science, into music. Patterns—in the icescape, in science and in music—are again of primary importance, as they were in his experience of Antarctica and the composition of *Terra Nova*. In a post dated September 14, 2010, he writes:

> I spent the bulk of [yesterday] sitting and thinking about pattern recognition and its relationship to how environmental issues are so ambiguously and deeply complex … I look at oceanic currents, atmospheric pressure masses, ice pack density and other phenomena for inspiration … Translating the movement of the ice against the prow of the ship, and creating material (patterns, patterns, patterns!!!) will be the task of the next couple of days for me. (Ibid.)

More than a week later (September 25, 2010), patterns are still on his mind, and now not only during his waking hours:

> I haven't been able to sleep much, and some of the best thoughts I've had on this voyage have been in the place between dreams and waking life. In fact, the landscape has come to blend seamlessly with the dreams I've been having. Basically my sleep has been drenched with abstract geometric, asymmetrical shadows of the Arctic landscape, blurred with various unresolved music motifs and patterns, patterns, patterns …. (Ibid.)

In his post the next day, he continues to draw connections between the patterns he recognises in the changing icescape and in his music:

> I've been thinking more and more about the patterns holding this fragile ecosystem together … Fjord after fjord we've looked at has been a site of glaciers vanishing—they move in patterns that are difficult to see, but you can feel the sense of disappearance. I look at the whole process as a starting point for some of the hip-hop and electronic music, and the classical music compositions I'm working on for the Arctic Rhythms project … The sound pieces I'm composing for the "Arctic Rhythms: Ice Music" project are essentially acoustic portraits in motion. They're focused on pattern recognition in flux …. (Ibid.)

Along with patterns, collage is a recurring theme in his Arctic posts, as it is in his music from the trip. He mentions the concept in relation to specific sites, as well as when considering the region as a whole. On September 17, 2010, for instance, he observes that "geography and landscape overhang almost every aspect of being here in this region, but the accumulated debris of several centuries, and the technologies and methods of exploring the landscape that each era used, these all linger in the present moment. It's as if each island, each landscape is a collage of different eras" (ibid.). Six days later, he again reflects, "I've been thinking about how collage and specific patterns of disruption have made a musical landscape out of the Arctic for me. I've been a hunter gatherer of experiences and moments, fleeting impressions that leave a trace of a moment, and [now] I need to figure out how to translate [these] into compositions" (ibid.). In another post, he refers to the Arctic region as a whole as "a collage of geographies and cultures that make for a kind of patchwork situation" and in his final days of the trip, he elaborates: "So many countries claim the Arctic. I want to make music a way to reflect on this … there's a lot of possibilities that the Arctic could be opened for exploitation … That's what these compositions will look at—how music can reflect some of the basic realities facing us in this time of massive change" (ibid.).

As these quotations suggest, some of the content of his posts clearly has an educational purpose, informing readers about aspects of Arctic history and politics (and how they differ from the Antarctic case) and the impact of climate change on this region and beyond. His writing also reveals a deep concern for the potentially detrimental effect of his own presence in the Arctic on the local environment, although he admits that his experiences and having "access to the minds of the scientists" as part of the expedition have been invaluable to his creative work (ibid.).

Soon after returning from his first visit to the Arctic, Miller finished composing several of his "Ice Music" pieces and began presenting them to audiences, including in a 2011 performance at the New York Academy of Sciences, which incorporated a discussion about communicating the science of climate change with climatologist, climate modeller and Director of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies in New York, Dr Gavin Schmidt. As part of Miller's commitment to educating broad audiences about the polar regions and climate change through his music, he then released some of his "Ice Music" on an online album, titled *Of Water and Ice*, which he made available to listeners free of charge (see Fig. 2).

Fig. 2 Cover of Miller's album *Of Water and Ice*

Of Water and Ice (2013)

Miller produced *Of Water and Ice* as part of his year-long role as the first artist in residence at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City in 2012–2013. The album incorporates predominantly instrumental, postminimalist, electronic and hip-hop-style pieces inspired by his visits to both polar regions, including tracks titled "Antarctic Rhythms (Invincible Hip Hop Mix)," "Adagio in Blue," "Arctic Rhythms (Dubstep Mix)" and "Antarctic Dawn." Again, the postminimalist aesthetic evident in these pieces provides a suitable musical backdrop for considering the nature of polar icescapes. As with his compositional process for *Terra Nova*, Miller utilised data from polar weather and temperature patterns to "generate" some of the musical patterns within the tracks on *Of Water and Ice* (Miller quoted in Kozinn 2012). He also drew again on the equations developed by Kepler to analyse ice, and then "made them into music" (Miller quoted in ibid.). Both of these techniques relate to his observations about patterns in the polar icescapes and in science. Reflecting on this approach in an interview published in the *New York Times* in late October 2012, he explained: "If there's one consistent theme here, it's that information is my palette. And the research I do on any project—it's reasonably technical but pretty easy to digest" (Miller quoted in ibid.). Juxtaposed against these data-driven and mathematics-based musical patterns are excerpts from his polar field recordings (for example, penguin vocalisations and sounds of ice moving and icebergs calving in "Antarctic Dawn"), as well as samples from music by other composers, such as an obvious borrowing of a motive from the first movement of Vivaldi's Violin Concerto in A minor Op. 3, No. 6, in Miller's "Adagio in Blue." By remixing pre-existing musical ideas with his own recordings of sounds from the polar regions and music based on data and mathematical theories relating to the ice, Miller again aims to prompt audiences to think about ownership in relation to the icescapes and reinforces the need for a collective effort to protect these places from irreparable change. Simultaneously, through his patchwork-like approach to composition, he effectively represents his experiences of the "collage of geographies and cultures" that he observed during his time in the Arctic (Miller 2010).

Miller's willingness to make these compositions available to listeners free of charge demonstrates his dedication to making his ice music openly accessible to a wide audience. He released the album on the website *Jamendo*, a leading service for free music streaming and downloading, and

allows others permission to remix the material (Miller 2013). In fact, he encourages remixing of the tracks by also making his custom-designed turntable software (used during his performances) available for free download online through the iTunes Store. The remixing process again enables a static, fixed object (a sound recording) to undergo transformation, like the ice itself, and to continue to live on as an intangible art form. Moreover, Miller regularly performs the pieces live, such as in a concert held as part of his residency at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in March 2013, and subsequently as part of his *Arctic Rhythms* concert series (from 2014 onwards). These performances provide "a music/video exploration of the composition of ice and water," and invite audiences to consider "our relationship to the vanishing environment" of the polar regions (The Metropolitan Museum of Art 2012). Again, the intangible and changeable nature of live performance means that these pieces regularly undergo subtle modifications, in a process which mirrors the icescapes that inspired them. His 2014 visit to the Arctic, sponsored by the environmental organisation Sierra Club, has further fed into this work—leading to an exhibition titled *Ice Music* in 2015–2016 at the University Art Gallery at Sewanee, Tennessee—and continues to shape his ongoing polar-related performances and other creative projects.

Conclusion

Miller's visits to Antarctica and the Arctic have inspired an array of different outputs, from the large-scale multimedia performance work *Terra Nova: Sinfonia Antarctica* to *The Book of Ice* and shorter audio and audiovisual pieces. His polar-related compositions have been presented in a broad range of contexts, from professional concerts before live audiences, to museum and gallery exhibits, and as audio files available for free download/streaming and remixing online. This mix of tangible and intangible outputs, as well as the techniques he uses to compose and perform them—including from Western art music (minimalism and postminimalism) and from popular music (hip-hop and electronic music)—is directly related to his encounters with the polar icescapes. His use of repetitive patterns that undergo transformation—inspired by science, music, the structure of ice, and the icescapes he visited in the Antarctic and Arctic—is particularly relevant to the "minimalist" nature of the polar regions, which are themselves landscapes in flux. Similarly, his adoption of collage techniques and free sampling of ideas from others—in the form of pre-existing musical

motives, photographs and scientific findings—have been directly influenced by his experiences of the far south and far north and by his musings on the concept of ownership, the human presence and impact in each region, and political issues affecting both places. Through his mixing and remixing of these materials and ideas, Miller has been able to create unique and eminently listenable pieces that reflect his personal experiences of these remote icescapes and which allow others to engage with them through the medium of sound (and, in some cases, accompanying visual material).

Significantly, Miller's polar-inspired creative work reaches—and has the potential to educate and *move*—wide audiences, including many people who will never have the opportunity to visit these remote and extreme locations. His commitment to connecting with large audiences is evident not only in the wide variety of different styles and mediums in which he works, but also in his efforts to make his compositions freely available online for listening and/or re-creating through remixing. In providing open access to his creative work, Miller encourages listeners to learn about the problems he addresses in his music, and also to react to them in their own ways. As he explains, "I don't see a piece of music as an end result; for me it's an ongoing process. If you make it freely available, people with deeply shared values can connect and create their own community" (Miller quoted in Daugherty 2014).

Miller's polar-based work is just one aspect of his much larger campaign to involve communities in debates about environmental change. In 2011, he founded the Vanuatu Pacifica Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation that strives to support and foster discourse on the intersections between creativity and sustainability. One component of this is the Island Innovation Lab, an artist retreat "based on the principle that art can help reframe the debate on climate change" (Vanuatu Pacifica Foundation 2011). Such initiatives demonstrate his belief that "Music and art can be vehicles for provoking thought, overcoming inertia, and helping people engage with issues that are exponentially reshaping our information-driven world" (Miller 2016a). As such statements suggest, Miller is optimistic that art can inspire action. He has stated, "All through history, artists have sparked cultural change by empowering people to look at problems in new ways and imagine something different. Imagination is our ultimate renewable resource. That's why I'm so optimistic that the past doesn't have to define our future" (Miller quoted in Daugherty 2014). He is not alone in expressing optimism either, as increasing numbers of visual and performing

artists, as well as scientists, are beginning to recognise (and capitalise upon) the potential of the arts to connect the public with pressing environmental issues,[13] including in relation to the polar regions. The work of artists like Miller, therefore, is both timely and significant. It has the capacity to initiate public engagement with the polar regions and climate change, as well as inspire individuals and communities to work together to address some of the major environmental problems confronting our world today.

Notes

1. Various national Antarctic programs have offered arts residencies in recent decades, including the United States' National Science Foundation, the Australian Antarctic Division and, until the last few years, the Argentine Dirección Nacional del Antártico and the British Antarctic Survey.
2. See McClary and Walser (1990) and Legg and Philpott (2015, pp. 198–99).
3. Ecomusicology is defined by Allen (2017) as the "study of music, culture, and nature in all the complexities of those terms." The field emerged in the late twentieth century due to rising interdisciplinary interest in intersections between music, place, culture and the environment. Some research in this area has also investigated issues of sustainability in relation to the production and consumption of popular music (see e.g. Pedelty 2012).
4. These include Change Performing Arts, Melbourne International Arts Festival, the Hopkins Center at Dartmouth College, UCSB Arts & Lectures and the Festival dei Due Mondi in Spoleto, Italy (Miller 2016b).
5. German mathematician, astronomer and astrologer Johannes Kepler (1571–1630) provided the first published description of the hexagonal symmetry of snowflakes in his 1611 essay (in Latin) *Strena Seu de Nive Sexangula* (A New Year's Gift of Hexagonal Snow).
6. For definitions of minimalism, see Potter (2017) and Davies (2017). The score of *Terra Nova* for violin, cello and piano was arranged by Brooklyn-based composer Howard Kenty.
7. For detailed discussions of differences between minimalism and postminimalism, see Evans (2015), which mentions Miller's work in this context, and Potter et al. (2013).
8. See Reich (1999) and Grand Valley State University New Music Ensemble (2009).
9. See Potter (2017).
10. See e.g. Prestrud (1913, pp. 230–31).

11. To hear and see a full performance of *Terra Nova* from February 2011 (held at the Savannah College of Art and Design, Savannah, Georgia), see Savannah College of Art and Design (2011).
12. See e.g. Smith (2009).
13. See Curtis et al. (2012).

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One Year Performance 1921–22, or Two Men in a Boat

Mike Pearson

The relics are few. Perhaps not surprising for the smallest expedition ever to overwinter in Antarctica, and one that was undertaken with so little equipment: "They had a hammer and a saw, packing cases and odd nails, lots of ideas and whole shiploads of hope. For luxuries they had an ample supply of unreliable matches, plenty of cigarettes and boxes of *crème de menthe* sweets" (Frank Debenham in Bagshawe 1939, p. xii). The Scott Polar Research Institute Museum in Cambridge holds their aneroid barometer, an Abney level, a brass telescope, a pair of teardrop snowshoes and a knife; a deed box with "No. 1" painted in red on the lid, with "T.W. BAGSHAWE" and traces of "BRITISH IMPERIAL ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION" in white; a home-made pennant of green silk; a candlestick fashioned from an old cigarette tin and a piece of bamboo pole; a geological hammer stamped "T.W.B."; and a box of R. Bell & Co.'s "Royal" wax vesta matches, collected from Waterboat Point by Lieutenant Commander Victor Bunster del Solar of the Chilean Navy, during the Fifth Chilean Antarctic Expedition, 1950–51 (SPRI 2017a).

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Of their base at 64°49′S, 62°51′W—at the entrance to Paradise Bay on the Danco Coast, on the west side of the Antarctic Peninsula—little that is visible remains (see Stonehouse 1991, p. 364). One metal plaque reads: "Memorial Antarctic Treaty Historic Site 56 UK Expedition Lester and Bagshawe Waterboat Point Overwintered 1921 Sponsored by Fuerza Aerea de Chile"; a second bears a diagram of the hut layout as drawn by Thomas Wyatt Bagshawe on page forty-one of his *Two Men in the Antarctic: An Expedition to Graham Land 1920–22* (1939). When Chile established the "Presidente González Videla Station" in 1951—now painted black, with incongruous two-storey buildings—traces of their jerrybuilt construction still survived. The Historic Site registration records "the base of the boat, roots of doorposts and an outline of the hut and extension" as still existing (Antarctic Treaty Cultural Meeting, Bonn 1991). The site was erased by natural processes of climatic and environmental attrition, by burial with guano from the large penguin rookery and by human intervention—"burnt and bulldozed, along with builders['] rubbish in a clearing-up operation" by the Chilean occupiers in 1951 (Bernard Stonehouse quoted in Harrowfield 2013, p. 134). It is largely unremarked by passing tourist voyages.

John Lachlan Cope's proposals for the British Imperial Expedition (1920–22) (SPRI 2017b) had been grandiose and hubristic. It was to involve a personnel of fifty-four, and amongst its objectives were: circumnavigating the continent (using Scott's ship *Terra Nova*); conducting the first flight to the South Pole in the aircraft *The Kangaroo*; extending Swedish explorer Nils Otto Nordenskjold's mapping (in 1901–3) of the western shore of the Weddell Sea; and assessing resources for commercial exploitation. In one of the few critical commentaries on the expedition, David Harrowfield (2013) traces the declining fortunes and diminishing ambitions of Cope's endeavour. Despite being a survivor of Ernest Shackleton's ill-fated Ross Sea Party (McElrea and Harrowfield 2004), where he served as surgeon and biologist, and the fact that initial plans included several Antarctic veterans—among them *Endurance* expedition photographer Frank Hurley—Cope never came close to raising the £100,000 required. He received neither the support of the Royal Geographical Society nor the Admiralty, nor the approbation of the wider UK Antarctic community. Shackleton considered a revised proposal "thoroughly impracticable, absolutely suicidal, and [it] shows a complete

ignorance of Antarctic experience and travel"; Cope himself he regarded as "totally unsuited to life in Antarctica" (Harrowfield 2013, p. 120).

Eventually only four men sailed south: Cope as leader; Australian aviator and photographer George Hubert Wilkins as second-in-command; twenty-nine-year-old Maxime Charles Lester, a lieutenant in the Royal Naval Reserve and recently second mate on a tramp steamer, as navigator; and nineteen-year-old Bagshawe, a student drop-out from Cambridge, as geologist. The four men travelled separately on the Norwegian whaling ships of Lars Christensen of Sandefjord, in journeys beset by financial difficulties—Wilkins could only afford to procure eight dogs in the Falkland Islands. They rendezvoused on Christmas Eve 1920, in the flooded volcanic caldera of Deception Island in the South Shetlands—a charnel house of rotting whale flesh.

Cope's new strategy was to disembark at Hope Bay on the northern tip of the Antarctic Peninsula (known at that time as Graham Land) and then sail south to Snow Hill Island and occupy Nordenskjold's deserted hut. But heavy sea ice deterred the whalers, who recommended instead landing on the west coast, sledging the sixty miles across the Peninsula, and once there picking up Nordenskjold's route.

On January 12, 1921, the four men went ashore on a tiny island 215 metres long by 100 metres wide and 6 metres above sea level, joined to the mainland by a spit at low tide and occupied by 12,000 nesting Gentoo (*Pygoscelis papua*) and 1050 Chinstrap (*Pygoscelis antarcticus*) penguins and their guano—what Bagshawe compared to both "a country garden" and "a small prison camp" (1939, p. 128); two other islands in the miniature archipelago they named Coal Point and South Island. Here they found a flat-bottomed boat—8.4 metres long, 3.2 metres wide and 1.1 metres high—that had been used for ferrying fresh water to the factory ship *Neko* and abandoned eight years earlier. It was completely decked over, with a sliding entrance hatch. When lined with *sennegraes* and sacking, it provided convenient, though cramped, sleeping quarters. With the addition of a "lounge" built from packing cases and sail canvas sewn by Lester, it became their expeditionary base at the eponymous Waterboat Point. Lined with eiderdowns, "it resembled my [Bagshawe's] idea of the appearance of a padded cell" (ibid., p. 42). Too heavy to move, the boat lay permanently at an angle of eight degrees.

But recce trips in the interior revealed "a range of mountains from 2000 to 6000 feet in height, steep, rugged, and covered with glacier" (Lester 1923, p. 176). Any crossing would be beyond their means. Hence,

on February 25, an extraordinary decision was taken—to split the party. Cope proposed travelling back to Montevideo with the whalers, to find a ship suitable for conveying them into the Weddell Sea. Against Norwegian advice, Bagshawe and Lester were persuaded to remain and carry out "a programme, albeit limited, of observations and scientific measurements" (SPRI 2017b). Cope would collect them the following year and then try again for Snow Hill Island. Wilkins quit altogether, with the intention of organising his own expedition in the United States. Should Cope fail to return, Captain Ole Anderson of the factory ship *Svend Foyn I* offered to pick up the young explorers early in 1922—fortuitously as it turned out.

Isolation 1921–22

And so two men began a twelve-month sojourn—"two people alone on a continent the size of Europe and Australia combined" (Bagshawe 1939, p. 61)—with no prospect of rescue in the interim. "Our kingdom was an uninhabited continent, yet with all its five and a half million square miles we could walk only a few hundred yards" (ibid., p. 115). Their isolation was absolute: without radio, "the affairs of the world were closed to us" (ibid., p. xx). Without knowing if they could tolerate each other, with little scientific training, and with barely adequate supplies, what they were about to do "smacked of genuine lunacy" (Boothe 2011, p. 200). With little appreciation of the physical, emotional and psychological challenges ahead, "we were taking one big risk" (Bagshawe 1939, p. 61). But this was not entirely self-sacrifice in the name of research. They expected remuneration in return for their observations in meteorology, hydrography, geology and biology, and for the contracted photographs that would salvage the reputation of the expedition. From the outset, their efforts had a future-orientated aspect.

Cope never returned. On January 13, 1922, Bagshawe and Lester were picked up by *Svend Foyn I*—one year and a day after their landing.

Performance

How to regard their exploits? As a final throe of the "Heroic Era"[1] of exploration—contemporary with Shackleton's aimless *Quest* voyage to South Georgia on which he died—but now long beyond the worn agendas of imperial expansion, and subsequent to a revised appraisal of heroism in the tumult of the First World War? Or as a scientific enterprise: the first

to create a complete annual set of climatic records for the west coast of the Antarctic Peninsula? Neither seems entirely appropriate. Perhaps rather akin to forms of enforced captivity, particularly those in which internment or segregation precipitate alternative forms of living?

Or—given its volitional aspect—as redolent of and bearing comparison with contemporary durational performance works, especially of male body art: that involve physical trials extending over periods of time, in which time itself becomes a conceptual and operational component, and endurance a mark of its passage. Not to suggest here an easy simile, but rather as a disorientating optic of apprehension that might also occasion reciprocal reflection on the characterization of such performance works as putatively "heroic": shifting focus from the hermetic deeds of the lone artist towards a figuration of performance as a heterogeneous assemblage in which individuals are intimately involved with, bound up with and perpetually mixed with things. The protracted undertakings of Taiwanese/American artist Tehching (Sam) Hsieh (2017) and the corporeally demanding feats of UK artist Stuart Brisley (2017) seem apposite. Performance art here resembles a rear-view mirror of intermittent clarity with which—through the discussion that follows—to regard the endeavours of 1921–22.

Duration and Endurance

Of Hsieh's five "One Year" performance works series, Steven Shaviro notes: "Each of these Performances involves a particular vow, a particular constraint, and a particular mode of being. Each of them is meticulously documented in a manner appropriate to its content" (Shaviro 2017). In practice, each performance began with a statement, of intent and/or of action. For Hsieh, one year is a basic unit—"It is about being human, how we explain time, how we measure our existence" (Hsieh 2017). For *One Year Performance 1985–1986 (No Art Piece)*, he proposed: "I not do art, not talk art, not see art, not read art, not go to art gallery and art museum for one year. I just go on in life" (ibid.).

Though essentially unprepared, invisible to the outside world—"outsider" explorers—Bagshawe and Lester also found a way to "go on in life": "We immediately settled ourselves down to the idea of not seeing another man for at least ten months" (Lester 1923, p. 179). Their undertaking was essentially task-based, set by the clock and—were they to be successfully collected—of fixed duration. When the whalers returned

prematurely on December 18, 1921, Bagshawe and Lester insisted on staying three further weeks to complete one full year of records.

Adrian Heathfield observes that duration "has the force to question the notions and senses of passage, succession and continuity, the integrities of the moment to moment, that form the grammatical structure of common sense understandings of time and hence its wider cultural realization" (2009, p. 22). What marked the exceptionality of Bagshawe and Lester's time at Waterboat Point—placing it far beyond all "common sense"—was the unquantifiable risk and impossibility of withdrawal.

It was the self-imposed schedule that focused their activities—an unwavering application to the assignment—in hourly, daily and weekly routines that set a rhythm, a pulse to their existence. This was punctuated by irregular though much-anticipated occasions for celebration and *jouissance*: Easter marked by two *crème de menthe* sweets; birthdays by Christmas pudding; midwinter by baked beans—"Every baked bean was dealt with individually so as to obtain the maximum of satisfaction" (Bagshawe 1939, p. 98). Their initial timetable comprised: "Up at 7.30, breakfast 8, lunch 1, tea 5, supper 10" (ibid., p. 43). They took it in turns to take readings and to complete other chores: whoever recorded at 8am also made breakfast; in an attempt to lead a civilised existence, Saturday eventually became devoted to hut cleaning. But special events and mundane matters of housekeeping are mutually subsumed here in a set of unprecedented circumstances that renders each moment singular.

They had a rudimentary weather screen—made by a whaler's carpenter—that was equipped with thermometers, anemometer and aneroids. They kept a weather log, an ice log and a natural history log, "all needing constant attention and involving shortage of sleep" (Frank Debenham in Bagshawe 1939, p. xii). Up to Midwinter Day (June 21, 1921), meteorological observations were taken every four hours during the day; from June 21 until December 16, they were taken every two hours night and day. As Lester later reflected:

> Our days were fully occupied. Besides the ordinary work of cooking, chipping out enough frozen coal and frozen dog-meat, clearing the hut door and the dog boxes of a night's snow-drift, searching for fresh-water ice for the cooking, and a score of other things had to be done; there was, in addition to all this, the scientific work to attend to. All our writing was invariably done before supper. (1923, p. 180)

In *One Year Performance 1980–1981 (Time Clock Piece)*—from April 11, 1980 through to April 11, 1981—Hsieh punched a time clock every hour on the hour, and took a single frame of himself on black and white film, later edited together into a six-minute movie. It was the timetable and formal convention of recording—the "laborious commitment" (Heathfield 2009, p. 23) to a ritualised act—that ordered his, and by analogy, their, present reality: that set the rules, giving direction and purpose to the planning, organisation and release of energy, to maximising the effort and achieving the desired outcomes. A series of repetitive actions and gestures, cyclical, rhythmical—though each one was qualitatively different, depending on prevailing conditions that served to counter monotony (Lefebvre 2004, pp. 6–9). It is punctuality that gives authority to Bagshawe and Lester's readings; it is the sequences of plotted records that document their assiduity and exertion, that make time explicit. Read graphically, their observations reassemble the year, tracing the lived experience of duration, making evident the climatic constraints, impacts and deprivations implicit in their registration, against the obligations of sustaining the human effort. Inevitably, their entries lack independent verification; out of our purview, we take Bagshawe and Lester's word for it. A regulated existence buoyed, in hindsight, by small domestic incidents, as when the bitch Florrie stole the dinner of shag's breast and liver (Bagshawe 1939, p. 117)—"an opening of regularity to other phenomena or inchoate orders" (Heathfield 2009, p. 22).

In *Art/Life One Year Performance 1983–1984 (Rope Piece)*, Hsieh and fellow artist Linda Montano spent one year—between July 4, 1983 and July 4, 1984—tied to each other with an 8-foot long (2.4 metre) rope. Before starting the piece, they did not know each other: "We will stay together for one year and never be alone. We will be in the same room at the same time, when we are inside. […] We will never touch each other during the year" (Hsieh 2017). "What one did, the other necessarily shadowed or witnessed"; "each body was kept in *orbit* of the other" (Heathfield 2009, p. 47).

At Waterpoint Point, there was little privacy. Each was always aware where the other was, even if one was out of sight in the hut; they slept crammed together in a catafalque with only one metre of headroom. It was doubtless psychologically gruelling, and their interactions were not always *isobaric*, of equal pressure (Latour 2005, pp. 201–2). But they chaffed along with good humour, though occasionally at each other's

expense, as when a lump of dislodged ice fell on Lester—to Bagshawe's amusement—from the waterboat ceiling. Years afterwards, Bagshawe wrote:

> Had either of us been addicted to melancholia, heaven knows what would have become of us; some days have been so trying that we could easily have sat down and wept with misery and depression, but we always tried to make a joke of our troubles. (1939, p. 130)

Subject to the same checks on behaviour and to the curtailing of individual enterprise (Heathfield 2009, p. 47), Bagshawe and Lester developed a symbiotic mode of dwelling, with a degree of intimacy. Heathfield notes that Hsieh and Montano "became habituated to some dynamics of their constraint"; "learning to adapt their physical decision-making, thoughts and social practices to their altered and remorselessly interdependent condition" (ibid., p. 49). Bagshawe and Lester laboured together for several weeks before winter set in: building an extension from bamboo poles covered in a lifeboat sail and fixed with iron hoops salvaged from crates; "strengthening the hut, stowing away provisions, stacking coal, making dog kennels, collars, and also articles for domestic use" (Lester 1923, p. 179)—using bent nails from packing cases. Though, as Bagshawe notes: "Even under pleasant conditions most of us would think twice before undertaking a set of hourly observations for a whole month, one always at work whilst the other slept" (1939, p. xii). As Lester cooked, Bagshawe changed records on the gramophone. Whilst eating in the tiny lounge, they devised a complementary arrangement, "whereby we fed in turns in a sort of alternating rhythm" (ibid., p. 94), so as to avoid bumping each other's heads. They were aware of their shared dependence: if Lester had succumbed, "I could not have faced the ghastly loneliness of being left behind" (ibid., p. 114). It was a "test site of cultural values" (Heathfield 2009, p. 25); an extemporary propinquity predicated upon "hospitality, civility and ethics" (ibid., p. 51). In a fug of cigarette smoke …

In his "Explanation of Procedure" for *One Year Performance 1980–1981 (Time Clock Piece)*, Hsieh writes: "To help illustrate the time process, I shall begin the performance with my head shaved bald and allow my hair to grow back naturally" (2017); in the animated sequence of single frames, his hair sprouts. Of the 1200 exposures taken principally by Lester (SPRI 2017c), most are of their whaling adventures and of distant penguins that give little sense of chronology—"It was not encouraging taking hundreds of photographs without knowing how they were turning out" (Bagshawe

1939, pp. 127–28). But in two portraits, they appear similarly dressed in the leather, one-piece flying suits they found in the deposited stores, their wild hair attesting to the passage of time; after attempting a trim with nail scissors, Lester looked like "a freakish mixture of artist, poet and actor" (ibid., p. 133). In the images, they seem cheerful, though life was always risky in such isolation. Fortunately, apart from Lester biting his tongue following a blow from an oar and an injury to his eye, they suffered few injuries.

In *Survival in Alien Circumstances* (1977), Stuart Brisley and Christoph Gericke worked for fourteen days digging a hole in which to live, "then leaving the evidence as an installation as echo" (Brisley 2017). Brisley's performance work often tends towards abjection, in its original sense of degradation. In *And for today…nothing* (1972), he lay in a bath of black water for approximately two hours each day for two weeks whilst offal decayed in a wash basin. In *Artist as Whore* (1972), he dressed in soiled clothes and makeup and lay on a bed for one week. During preparations for winter at Waterboat Point, a bag of flour exploded, "adding, in so doing, a coating of fine white powder to the veneer of seal oil, blood, smoke, penguin guano, reindeer-hair and candle-grease with which we were already covered" (Bagshawe 1939, p. 93). Bagshawe's white tennis shirt became a "dark khaki wreck," the right sleeve "held together by dirt" (ibid., p. 113). By October 6, their last bath was twelve months previously. But there is an incorporation of the Other (material, body) here rather than the separation—"that of being opposed to I"—asserted by Julia Kristeva (1982) in her figuration of abjection. Only upon relief, did they become conscious of their appearance: "We may even have smelt. I could not tell by sniffing at Lester, for it is difficult to tell whether another person is odiferous when one is no better oneself" (Bagshawe 1939, p. 99).

Conditions

Their living conditions swung between "not truly bad, at best, to nearly unliveable, at worst" (Boothe 2011, p. 200). The lowest temperature they experienced was −16° F (−26.6° C), the yearly average 26.1° F (−3.3° C). As Lester explained:

> Taking a retrospective view of the weather we experienced, my impression, generally speaking, is very bad. At no time during the year could the conditions be called very severe, but they were trying in the extreme. The very

> great and rapid fluctuations in temperature, with the consequent freezing up and thawing out of everything, the almost incessant winds and overcast sky accompanied by heavy precipitation and thick weather, were detrimental to our work and would prove trying to the most philosophical of minds. (1923, pp. 183–84)

"Everything freezes," wrote Bagshawe on May 9: "Tonight my ink-pot has frozen up and the mince froze as we were eating it. We sit and shiver and try to laugh at our discomforts; it's not much use to moan and groan" (1939, p. 89). On July 25, it was 20° F in the bedroom—"not uncomfortably warm" (ibid., p. 106). Book pages froze together, the alarm clock refused to work and boots felt like cast iron—"By the vigorous application of the hammer and some physical contortions I managed to pull them on later in the day" (ibid., p. 104), a painful ordeal as they suffered chilblains as well as constant sore noses. They warmed their hands by placing them in the entrails of animals, "an unpleasant but effective method" (ibid., p. 81).

The hut was dark, requiring candles day and night. It leaked incessantly, needing constant repair, particularly after sudden thaws in the wildly fluctuating temperatures. In the bedroom, breath and steam condensed and froze to the ceiling as hoar frost, before falling and leaving sleeping bags sodden. The stove was a constant headache; on July 9, it took six hours to light. It only really worked in warm weather: "If we shut the door completely we were stifled by fumes, if we left it open we were nearly frozen" (ibid., p. 110). In Bagshawe's view, "The man who called this spot Paradise Bay should have the honour of living here!" (ibid., p. 123).

Materials

Expeditions of the "Heroic Era" took a finite amount of equipment, listed in the ship's manifest, along with the personal belongings of crewmembers. This constituted a closed assemblage: a given repertoire, augmented by elements drawn from local faunal sources, that had to be used and reused, and refashioned to fulfil expeditionary imperatives, or more expedient matters of survival, or of entertainment. This was a milieu of improvisation: objects were employed for purposes that were never intended. In this extreme circumstance, things circulated: slipping their classificatory order, no longer confined to their originary or ascribed identity. In forms of *bricolage*, in makeshift responses to an environment of limited resources,

as a way of making sense with the tools to hand, their usage was ad hoc and provisional. They became mutable, fungible. There is here an inherent instability and potentiality in the nature and meaning of things. But as familiars, they become closely bound up with human aspirations, enshrining purpose, invested with hopes for successful outcomes.

Bagshawe and Lester "lacked a great many things of a domestic kind" (Lester 1923, p. 179)—"a saw, two geological hammers, a chisel, and some pocket-knives were about all we had" (Bagshawe 1939, p. 86). In addition, they possessed an arbitrary assortment: a single fork from Bagshawe's picnic set, but also a gramophone. So it was that geological hammers were used to shatter the skulls of penguins, to club seals, to hack coal from the frozen pile and to nail up eiderdowns, though "both Lester and I hammered and cut most of our fingers with their sharp edges" (ibid., p. 42). Bagshawe fashioned himself a two-pronged fork from a packing case and used a towel as a muffler. They constructed a door with seal-skin hinges from cigarette cases; a stepladder, by splitting a wooden spar; a shovel out of a kerosene tin; a poker from a blubber drag-iron; a handbarrow—for carrying seal meat—from a box; and a pemmican guillotine, similar to a photographer's print-trimmer, from a knife—"It worked very well and the bits of pemmican no longer flew in all directions" (ibid., p. 92). They made a stove from an oil drum, in which was placed a bucket punched with holes: "This bucket, which contained the fire, gave off most of its smoke into the hut instead of up the chimney. The lack of ventilation and the absence of windows caused us to suffer from bad headaches and sore throats" (Lester 1923, p. 179). They fashioned guards for sore noses from bandage and tape; they recovered the telescope from the bay using a dog bowl tied to an ice pick, with a snowshoe as a landing net. They exploited resources to hand, making mittens of dog skin. And when a penguin smashed the glass of a wristwatch—"which was a nuisance, for it was the only ordinary watch we possessed and had been most useful to remind us of observation time" (Bagshawe 1939, p. 147)—Bagshawe created a new outer case from an old toothpaste tin, for time was the essence of their being.

In its spareness, in the paucity of things, the scene resembles the essentially metonymic or synecdochic nature of theatre—with a few objects standing in for an absent whole, for the vernacular complex of everyday life at home.

Their food reserves were limited to biscuits, baked beans, tinned pemmican and whisky, though they were generally abstinent. Seal and penguin

meat flavoured with Worcestershire sauce, celery-seed or curry powder, provided their main sustenance, leavened by a daily sweet each and copious amounts of Nestlé's condensed milk. It was Lester who placed an embargo on taking penguin eggs: "We were both anxious to eat them, but we felt that the scientific work should have preference" (ibid., p. 149).

Environment

Within the boundaries of their domain, they found affordances. As James Gibson (1997) posits: "The medium, substances, surfaces, objects, places and other animals have affordances for a given animal. They offer benefit or injury, life or death" (p. 143); "The *affordances* of the environment are what it *offers* the animal, what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill" (p. 127). And they faced ergonomic challenges: to posture, locomotion and manipulation.

In *Between* (1979), Stuart Brisley and Iain Robertson, both naked, attempted to maintain their footing on a wet, sloping steel ramp of 44 degrees, repeatedly developing tactics for survival and applying themselves to the exercise for four days.

At Waterboat Point, environmental conditions—oscillating between *acceptable*, *unacceptable* and *optimal*—required modification of contact and contracts: body to scene, body to object and body to body. Snow, wind and rain lashed them, making the short journey to take readings "full of thrills"—rain transforming rocks into miniature skating rinks, and guano into a morass. Through increases in hazard, stress, demand and overload, their responsive capacities were compromised or restricted, execution hindered or prevented, the ability to adjust effectively limited. The increased timespans needed for tasks resulted in duress. And the present dangers of fire and suffocation required constant vigilance.

Bagshawe and Lester's methods of coping included those planned, those momentarily concocted and those informed by previous experience. Unpredictability became the catalyst for unanticipated actions, precipitating events, accelerating responses as energetic interjections into the schedule. And just occasionally, as they addressed, accommodated and animated opportunities and compensated for shortfalls, their practices led to virtuosic displays of resilience and inventiveness.

They culled the fauna and, despite being heartily sick of the restricted diet, stayed relatively healthy. They were flexible in response, employing tools both designed and rejigged for the task, appreciating the affordances

they offered, pushing the limits of their customary use. At times, objects became prosthetics, extending human capabilities in these extra-ordinary circumstances of cold and darkness.

Immersion

Jane Bennett (2010) proposes that non-human objects and their corresponding effects have vibrancy and vitality, the disposition "not only to impede or block the will and designs of humans but also to act as agents or forces with trajectories, propensities, or tendencies of their own" (p. viii). They possess distinct powers and capacities of effectivity, efficacy, volition and causality. They can do things, make a difference, and alter the course of events. In their instability and unruliness, they may require compensatory acts, what archaeologist Ian Hodder calls "fixing solutions" (2012, p. 207). In Antarctica, human occupation is conditional. This is a world of doing, of making a stand. But also of being done unto, and inevitably of being immersed, of being totally absorbed—as another element of a vibrant milieu.

Bagshawe and Lester came to know the terrain at the most intimate of scales, as a network of places linked in their daily itineraries: as familiar nodes or as knots of activity and things, of practices and affects tied together. They became habituated through repeated, constitutive acts of dwelling. In this way, Waterboat Point further resembles a *taskscape* (Ingold 2000)—"an ensemble of tasks" (p. 155), with a *task* as a practical operation carried out by a skilled agent in an environment that only gets meaning from its position within "an array of related activities," in a world, "continually coming into being through the combined action of human and non-human agencies" (p. 195). In an inhabited lifeworld, people and environment, natural and cultural phenomena, features and practices are enfolded or *entangled*: in webs of "material and technical as well as immaterial, symbolic and conceptual components" (Hodder 2012, p. 113); of restraints and reliances "that create potentials, further investments and entrapments" (ibid., p. 89).

Two projects mark Bagshawe and Lester's increasing investment in the opportunities afforded by their confinement and their subscription to a rhythmic life, as they devised both event- and set-time activities (Schechner 1969, pp. 87–88) that served to allay cabin fever. In the first, they undertook a detailed and methodical study of the breeding cycle of Gentoo (and Chinstrap) penguins: marking fifty nests with numbered stones and

individual eggs in Indian ink; and watching hatching hourly for thirteen days in December. In a second, they rigged a tide-gauge, made from an anchored barrel with half an oar projecting from it. The oar was calibrated: "white enamel strips were painted every alternate 6 inches, the intervening six inches being left unpainted. Between the strips we marked every 3-inch interval with a white line, and divided the white strips with red lines across the centre" (Bagshawe 1939, p. 134). From November 16, they took readings every hour for thirty days, in alternating six-hour watches.

Assessment

Eventually, the whalers returned to collect them; on January 13, 1922, Bagshawe and Lester nailed up the hut, taking their notes and records with them but leaving most of their meagre supplies.

The British Imperial Expedition is often adjudged "the greatest failure in the history of Antarctic exploration" (Burton 2008, p. 41). According to David Day (2012), "The expedition had been a farce. It provided no headlines to stimulate British interest or activity in the Antarctic, and failed to reinforce Britain's claim to other parts of the continent" (p. 187). Yet the unique achievements of Bagshawe and Lester—attested in their observations—are appreciated: "[They] collected more data per man than any other expedition […] until the advent of computers and satellites" (Fogg 1992, p. 130). However, Bagshawe did not publish his study of penguins until 1938 (Bagshawe 1938); a narrative monograph and observational appendices until 1939 (Bagshawe 1939); and an illustrated children's book until 1940 (Bagshawe 1940).

But there is something else here beyond scientific rationale and apologia to which Lester, albeit inadvertently, alludes: "We spent a year and a day at our base, Water Boat Point, and therefore experienced a complete cycle of the weather conditions" (Lester 1923, p. 183). There is a commitment to time; to completing tasks against time; to fulfilling schedules, however arduous; to intensifications of attention rather than attention-seeking heroics—in isolation as profound as that of space exploration. As Shaviro notes of Sam Hsieh's works:

> He also lived them, in their full existential density, joy, and terror. Doing this required an incredible force of discipline and dedication. But it also required an extraordinary willingness to let go: to give oneself over to time and chance and materiality. (2017)

"Snow, ice, wind, sea, and penguins existed and interacted in Antarctica prior to being encountered by humans" (Olsen et al. 2012, p. 13)—and continue to do so in their absence. We might best regard and describe Bagshawe and Lester's exploits at Waterboat Point through the notion of *symmetry* (ibid.), an analytical levelling of people and things in a field of distributed agencies that affords no particular primacy to any particular component, stressing rather flows of interplay between things, and the effects and affects engendered in their dynamic contacts. This approach recognises "the varied qualities always possessed by things, and thus the radical differences they make to the world—both among themselves and to humans" (ibid., p. 12). In a terrain with specific attributes, the two men—as features and functions of the eco-system—were not separate from the things they used and made, consumed and discarded. They arrived as an alien species rather than as heroic conquerors, though it is doubtful whether they ever upset the ecological balance, or—in the realm of the leopard seal—that they became the top predator.

We might apprehend their venture—as figures *in* the landscape—through *pragmatology*, "a thing-centric discipline" (Holbraad 2014, p. 235): with pragmata also including "'deeds,' 'acts' (things done), 'doings,' 'circumstances' (encounters), 'contested matters,' 'duties,' or 'obligations'" (Shanks 2012, p. 69). From this perspective, we can scrutinise the entanglement of both things—bodies, species, objects, phenomena, sensations—and things done, as well as the impacts, effects and experiences generated in their manifold articulations. As Shanks observes: "The verb at the root of pragmata is *prattein*—to act in the material world, engaged with things" (ibid.); the task now becomes—after Jane Bennett—"to identify the contours of the swarm and the kind of relations that obtain between its bits" (2010, p. 31), beginning in the thick of things …

And this shift to a less anthropocentric perspective might prompt us to reframe analysis of aesthetic forms of contemporary performance: from prime concentration on the "heroic" human subject, to closer consideration of contributory factors—of environmental constituents and the nature and role of things; to taking cognisance of all that is operating—to what is doing what—at any one time in a specific context. Of the ways in which prevailing conditions mediate and impact upon activities, offering both constraint and opportunity. How things have agency, possessing unique properties, potentialities and propensities for engendering sensual, visceral and emotional impacts, and how the performer exhibits the symptoms of their engagement. How things themselves perform autonomously,

irrespective of human presence—freezing and thawing; metamorphosing, accumulating, collapsing …

To consider then Stuart Brisley's *And for today … nothing* commencing with the decaying offal; or Sam Hsieh's *One Year Performance 1980–1981 (Time Clock Piece)* with the clock …

Note

1. In the so-called "Heroic Era" of Antarctic exploration (1895–1922), all-male expeditions undertook potentially perilous voyages to little-known destinations. These included those led by de Gerlache (1897–99, Belgium); Borchgrevinck (1898–1900), Scott (1901–4; 1910–13), Bruce (1902–4) and Shackleton (1907–9; 1914–17; 1921–22) (Great Britain); Drygalski (1901–3) and Filchner (1911–13) (Germany); Nordenskiöld (1901–4, Sweden); Charcot (1903–5; 1908–10, France); Nobu Shirase (1910–12, Japan); Amundsen (1910–12, Norway); and Mawson (1911–14, Australia). The first woman to set foot on the mainland of Antarctica was Norwegian explorer Ingrid Christensen on January 30, 1937.

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The Eco-Cruelty of the Great Finnish Famine of 1695–97: Artaud's Anarchic Ethics at the Climax of the Little Ice Age

Riku Roihankorpi

This chapter conducts a reading of an Artaudian ethics that may help to reassess the contemporary significance of the Great Finnish Famine of 1695–97 and the ensuing epidemics. During the recent renaissance of historical climatology, the Famine has been diagnosed as one consequence of the long period of climatic cooling in Europe known as the Little Ice Age. This cold period lasted, depending on sources, from the fourteenth or sixteenth century until the mid-nineteenth century (Mann 2002; Matthews and Briffa 2005). Occurring at the climax of one of the coldest intervals of the Little Ice Age, the Great Finnish Famine was, perhaps, the gravest humanitarian crisis to hit pre-modern Nordic societies.

Centuries later, informed by an even greater human tragedy of World War One and spurred on by a metaphorical reading of the plague of Marseille in 1720, Antonin Artaud's *The Theatre and Its Double* (1938/1958) pursued an apocalyptic and gratuitous state of "one must"

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that resists all politics of representation (Roihankorpi 2015, p. 112). The must itself became the basis for an anarchic dramaturgy and ethics, a theatre always-already at the heart of the interhuman spectacles performed by cataclysms. "One must" perform at the face of dying, among the dead and without an audience, for this is where the societies seemingly based on interhuman consensus and rationality are at their most vulnerable, most receptive to the languageless and signless anarchy that their ethical commitments are born out of but try to suppress. This anarchy then spells the signless motif of an experiential (cruel) transgression (a gratuitous doubling)[1] of cultural functions, values and metaphors designed to uphold a society that strives to ignore or escape the fact of suffering.

In its effort to address all human senses through extreme and intimate use of space and the body, through "the revelation" of "cruelty" beyond the negotiating and mediating functions of consensual language, Artaud's (1958, pp. 30, 38) vision of theatre manages to speak for communities of the twenty-first century. We are touched by massive environmental changes—the performances of the climatic "eco-cruelty" discussed by Una Chaudhuri and Shonni Enelow (2014, p. 27)—that defy shared words and definitions. In the capacity of famine and epidemics reminiscent of the plague, the shifts in our living environments effect "extreme action" that reveals the "terrible and necessary cruelty which things can exercise against us" (Artaud 1958, pp. 85, 79). These "things" qua severe weather, famines and other humanitarian crises comprise an Artaudian double to life, an enacted but disturbing intimacy with biospheric forces, an eco-cruelty capable of revealing the extent of our negligence towards the forces themselves. Insofar as this negligence is of modern making and due to human-centred safety nets of politics and accumulating wealth, viewing its origins through a famine that exposes the underlying human condition may help to critically reflect on its current, excessive state.

In the light of this ethics of cruelty and the double—the foundation of the Artaudian definition of *katharsis* (Sellin 2017, location 1626)—and the eco-cruelty of the current climate change, Artaud's thought bears certain "queer" qualities. Here, "queer" denotes the "pervasive, intrusive, and above all intimate modalities of ecology" (Chaudhuri and Enelow 2014, p. 123) that occur and evolve beyond the meanings we attach to them. They embody a performance[2] as reinvention or purification (*katharsis*) of the politics of their representation. This suggests that cataclysms and their consequences to humans, their gestalt as human tragedies, generate

figures of suffering; doubles that become transhistorical and, through their constant reinvention, continue to haunt the hubris required to repeat these tragedies.

The above standpoints do not necessarily facilitate a radical restructuring of Artaud's theatrical philosophy or an ethics that tackles ecological challenges and their cultural implications as such. Yet, they may contribute to the ways in which the ongoing environmental crisis of global scale could be approached in terms of a critical, anarchic ethos, one that reaches out to the prehistory of modern eco-cruelty in order to inform its current, ethical status. This is what the present essay sets out to do.

Culture and Eco-Cruelty

At the time of writing this paragraph, a trillion-tonne A68 iceberg—a quarter of the size of Wales—has calved away from the Larsen C ice shelf in Antarctica. The event constitutes a geographical and climatic performance that not only changes the landscape of the Antarctic Peninsula permanently, but also effectively embodies the radical transformations that affect our planet due to the current climate change and make impressive headlines across the media. A performing landscape with all the proper qualities of a Shakespearean character, ice establishes a slowly forming, texturally uncompromising, but highly sensitive element, of climatic drama, ripe for metaphorical processing of the environmental perils ahead. Yet, it is precisely the metaphorical value of the elements (their implicit or immediate affordances for human identification) that makes their performative power a problematic tool for approaching and comprehending their interaction with the ethical self-aggrandisement of human culture or the Earth's systems at large. At the intersection of human thought, creativity, and global ecosystems—that is, where the dramaturgy of their dynamics takes shape—one enters sheer complexity (Bristow and Ford 2016).

This complexity is something that Artaud's dramaturgical legacy and the present-day debates on climate change have in common. Much in the vein of the metaphorical suggestions about what will happen to our planet in the coming decades, the discussions on how Artaud's writings may actualise themselves on stage are reflections on a theatre that is yet to be realised, and therefore must "settle for approximations of an ideal that function less as fulfilments of the ideas than as adjuncts to them" (Sellin 2017, location 1856).

The ethics summoned by the Artaudian project makes an analysis of this performing landscape even more problematic. Kimberly Jannarone's (2012, pp. 189–99) reading of Artaud's works notes how the purifying cataclysm and the rediscovery of life that recur in his thoughts on performance (and have appealed to generations of revolutionary dramaturgies) are, by their ethos and their "dynamic of power," also capable of feeding dystopian dynamics of control and inequality. They even lean towards positive views on fascism, not least because of Artaud's preoccupation with rigorous surpassing of the individual, "powerful men," and the "supreme reorganization" inherent to apocalypses (ibid., p. 190, 192). His radical but often equivocal thought may then best serve the present discussion as an informative transgression of cultural enclosures to conduct a dialogue with, rather than a blueprint for any definite intent of anarchic ethics.

In performance philosophy, the intrigue of natural phenomena and their potency (including that of human activity) has rarely been as radically treated as in the writings of Artaud. His vision of theatre actively sought to capitalise on the irrational and uncontrollable implications of cataclysmic events to reveal the bleak height of modernity, and its failure to comprehend the ethical or performative functions of humanity (ibid., pp. 49–50). Well before Giorgio Agamben's (1998) incisive theorisation of the history of Western biopolitics, Artaud was ready to question the good, cultural life (*bios*) of the individual in order to establish something bigger than the self or the community. The ethical scheme of Artaud's (1958, p. 7) writings implied a ground zero where human culture, along with its systems of representation, would need to confront the limits of its project "devised to tyrannize over life." While sudden cataclysms (such as the plague) and their metaphorical weight in challenging the cultural embankments of the human life-instinct provide the template for this anarchic vision, his works also contain an incitement to better grasp the slow and mostly unseen forces and processes of ecosystems (such as the complex development of famine). These agents are delegates of the "slow violence" of ecological cycles that may expose the human hubris in discussing climatic changes (Chaudhuri and Enelow 2014, p. 23).

Whether slow or abrupt, the current changes in (our interaction with) our environments and the capacity of these changes to permeate individual and collective existence—to affect or result from our everyday lives as "collective, excessive identity" (ibid., pp. 26–7)—also set the scene for a specific Theatre of Cruelty. This theatre not only permutes our

relationship with the performing landscapes of ecological crises, but also reveals an ethical potential in the impossibility of devising a cultural tyranny to reign over life and nature. The term "eco-cruelty," as coined by Chaudhuri and Enelow, is composed of and informed by several interacting remarks on ecological thinking and performance. Together, they generate seminal links between Artaud's writings and contemporary, critical theories of ecological thought.

Eroding even evidence-based forms of its representation, the very complexity of climate change unfolds and transforms through the slow violence of global and interacting climatic and biospheric mechanisms. Consequently, climate change itself defies all tendentious and anthropocentric interpretations. No spectacle or scrutiny—whether composed to meet the needs of knowledge,[3] ethical projections or the market economy's alternative facts—can thoroughly grasp its manifestations and their "geological agency," especially as long as they rely on a "distinction between natural history and human history" (ibid., p. 25). Thus, moving through the denial of and the debates on the human origins of climate change, questions of preservation and conservation, views on related technological advances, and transgressive concepts such as Timothy Morton's "queer ecology," Chaudhuri and Enelow (2014, pp. 27, 30) see that human responses to climate change—including the performative ones—must evolve to better engage the collective, excessive identity at hand. This identity embodies "countless dispersed behaviors and practices" that transgress anthropogenic divides. Both human and non-human, it stands for an intimate and living expression of Artaud's (1958, p. 10) suggestion that "from time to time cataclysms occur which compel us to return to rediscover life."

To rediscover life and its conditions in this particular, performing landscape also means to rediscover Artaud's idea of the double: in it, we may behold a mirror, a shadow, a representation or a metaphor of nature or life as such (which, of course, are not interchangeable as terms), but only insofar as the double does not submit to judgements about mimetic resemblance or to acts of substitution of a political or social kind. Meanwhile, and on the basis of what Morton (2010, p. 274) has argued, all human systems that enclose or categorise ecological phenomena and processes through "inside-outside" discourses fail to appreciate life as intimacy—or, indeed, as a queer, Artaudian double—that challenges cultural hierarchies as they form between human ethos and life in general. According to this logic, a theatre may, in the wake of Artaud, "generate a

new world of signs hewn out of the very stuff of life" (Morfee 2005, p. 69), but it does so as "one of the cultural spaces most potentially hospitable to our life as organisms, to our *species life*" (Chaudhuri and Enelow 2014, p. 27). The continuum from life in general to the species life of the most mimetic species of all (as Aristotle describes the human animal) thus operates with a cost. The impossible potential reserved by Artaud for the ideas of cruelty and the double are not to be confused with the potential of representation as a system reaching for closures, like Derrida (1997, p. 43) and others have noted.

As if understanding the frail yet compelling nature of metaphorical speech in the present context of famine, Artaud claimed that "the attempt to orient toward culture thoughts turned only toward hunger is a purely artificial expedient" and ultimately, for his theory of the double, this means an incentive "to extract, from what is called culture, ideas whose compelling force is identical with that of hunger" (Artaud 1958, p. 7). While the aim of the above passages was to shake up the aesthetic regime of the early twentieth century in the West, their ecological implications towards a necessary rediscovery of life are still resonant. As far as modern human communities are concerned, hunger or famines do not ensue from mere changes in climate or the biosphere, but from insufficient, exploitative or miscalculated interaction between human culture and natural environments (Lappalainen 2012, pp. 13–16).

Famines demonstrate the fact that natural history and human history cannot be separated, and thus embody a certain "body without organs" (Artaud 1988, p. 571), a double that may critique culture's wedlock with distancing metaphors. For this is where famine displays a specific dimension of both hunger and the double: the slow violence of famine enters the cultural life as a force within, as the very gravity of the body and its "metabolic contingencies" (Delville and Norris 2017, location 1118), while the Deleuzian legacy of the body without organs rests on an anorectic (hunger) figure that tries to escape the control exercised by natural processes or the cultural representations thereof. As such, the body without organs operates as an intimate (queer) modality between two other hunger figures—the starved individual who needs to nourish herself with materials difficult, impossible or illegitimate to obtain or digest,[4] and the figure of excess that primarily consumes (representations of) that which is beyond any such need.

The Eco-Cruelty of a Pre-Modern Famine

All diachronic (and potentially anachronistic) paths from the Great Finnish Famine to the responses to the current climate change may prove to iterate a cultural contempt for ecology. Yet, both instances of modern human evolution contribute to an anarchic understanding of culture and life central to a theorisation of performance that wishes to inform ecological thinking and its anthropocentric nuances. The Great Famine may serve as a workbench for investigating the modern reversion from Artaud's (1958, p. 7, brackets mine) "simple power of being hungry"—not to be wasted "in the sole concern for eating"—to a "culture whose existence has never kept a man from [worrying about[5]] going hungry[.]" In today's world, this culture is manifest in the need to spectacularise or alienate transgressive—and therefore, ultimately, queer and cathartic—ecological processes in discussing the anthropogenic climate change.

The humanitarian legacy of famines does not necessarily benefit from any Artaudian reading of the Finnish cataclysm, nor should it need to. What drives the present problematic is the experiential transition of Western societies from a domestic lifeworld, from being directly and intimately affected by the changes in our natural environments, to a postdomestic[6] lifeworld of modernity, the Enlightenment, and all subsequent political and economic ideologies. The operations of these postdomestic systems of the common good—transitions from the intimate to the metaphorical, from weather to climate, from necessities to rights—have not stopped us from worrying about going hungry but, according to Artaud, fail to invest in the subversive power of being hungry. The ethical and performative implications of a pre-modern cataclysm that is set against a transhistorical philosophy and its modern and contemporary interpretations are then about envisioning a specific historical process; one that provided Artaud (1958, pp. 7–8) with a necessary criticism of culture and ethics. With this, we may reach a wider understanding of the ethical underpinnings and challenges that the contemporary lifeworld strives to disregard as it engages with increasingly dramatic changes in the environment.[7]

Scarcely populated, poorly organised in terms of crisis management, and greatly dependent on the yearly yields of agriculture and the forest, the part of the Swedish Empire now known as Finland experienced in the late seventeenth century an upheaval not unlike those caused by the outbreaks of the bubonic plague in the centuries preceding and following it.

The Late Maunder Minimum from 1675 to 1715, one of the coldest periods of the Little Ice Age,[8] hit hard in the remote, northeastern part of Europe between 1695 and 1697, and reduced its population by twenty-five to thirty percent. In proportion to Finland's demographic size at the time, these figures exceed all European famines of the modern era, even the massive loss of life incurred in the twentieth century by the collectivisation projects of Stalin (Lappalainen 2012, pp. 11–14, 29–30; Fagan 2000, location 1477–98). For a pre-modern people consisting mainly of peasants and other demographic groups highly dependent on the natural resources at hand, a sudden period of cold, experienced as unexpectedly shifting weather and badly timed frosts, meant serious harm in the form of endemic and epidemic diseases. While the effects of the cold were immediate, the impact of disease only slowly developed into a state of emergency fully acknowledged by the authorities of the Swedish realm (Lappalainen 2014, p. 426).

According to later documents, the beginning of 1695 was colder than any winter for several decades, with contemporary reports of wolves attacking people "in their houses" (Neumann and Lindgrén 1979, p. 778). The following spring and summer were also cold and therefore did not allow enough time for crops and other useful plants to ripen before the late summer frosts arrived, killing most of the harvest. A rainy autumn that followed made it largely impossible to perform the winter sowing, nor were there enough seeds to do this. The winter of 1695–96 started out under exceptionally snowy conditions, but a thaw at the beginning of 1696 turned the fields green very early in the year. The lack of snowdrifts might have meant that the plants and the animals had very little protection from the cold that returned in March. Like the year before, the spring and the summer of 1696 did not provide sufficient temperatures or sunshine for proper harvests, and the severe frosts in the autumn "finished off" what little crops there were (ibid., pp. 778–9). This ensured that the unprecedented hunger crisis that had already begun would develop into an apocalyptic torment reminiscent of the Biblical calamities that contemporaries had so often heard about during sermons.

In contrast to Artaud's (1958, pp. 15–32) imaginative retelling of the Great Plague of Marseille, I will not discuss in detail the gruesome circumstances and human tragedies involved in the Finnish catastrophe. Yet, the effects of the worst famine in pre-modern Europe entered the lives of the Finns in various guises: firstly, as misery and deaths caused by unpalatable foods, lethal diarrhoea (or dysentery) and oedema (swelling of the body).

Sustained and weakening "semi-starvation" combined with harmful "famine foods"—such as pure bark, mouldy (and potentially neurotoxic) grains, reindeer lichen, moss and bread from straw and bast fibre—resulted in bloated bodies that, as if without proper organs, turned on themselves. While it is now impossible to diagnose individually whether the victims suffered from infections or the symptoms of starvation and their diet (or both), the human body itself became a spectacle for needs that could not be appeased by acting upon them (Lappalainen 2014, pp. 429–30, 435).

Later, as the crisis developed, epidemic cases of typhoid fever and typhus (diagnosed by contemporaries as "*brännesjuka*," a disease that burns), suicides, as well as psychotic and delusional homicides and infanticides became common. Hordes of starving and infectious beggars eventually roamed from the countryside to the small and still underdeveloped cities, or were buried in mass graves. Cases of cannibalism were recorded, such as that of Margareta Bertilsdotter from a village in Juuka in eastern Finland. With her eldest son, and "after the family had eaten everything, including dogs and cats," she "killed and ate [her] two younger children. Later they also slaughtered a local boy for food" (Lappalainen 2014, pp. 432, 436–7, brackets mine). Echoing a "higher determinism" in Artaud's (1958, pp. 102, 30–31) musings on the plague and on undergoing or practising cruelty—wherein "the victim swells his individuality" and "life is always someone's death"—the self-destructing body of malnourishment and the bodies of epidemic diseases, hallucinations, and transgressive or desperate acts, established an intimate double "injected into the social body" of the Swedish realm, disintegrating it.

These ordeals contributed to an unforeseen nationwide distress reported to later generations via several dispersed documents and letters by and to the Swedish authorities (Neumann and Lindgrén 1979, pp. 776–7; Lappalainen 2014, pp. 427–8). The authorities did not necessarily disregard the human tragedies involved, but had no effective resources to react to the records of fatalities that emerged (Lappalainen 2014, p. 439). Yet, it must be noted that no serious attempts to tackle the famine were devised until it was evident that the significant loss of life in the province of Finland would also mean a blow to the taxes collected by the state of Sweden (Jutikkala 1955, pp. 62–3), at the time (and until his death in April 1697) autocratically ruled by King Charles XI. His agenda for preserving the "military superpower" which Sweden had become was mercantilism, a system that tried to protect the accumulation of the state's wealth but was not flexible enough to cater for the acute needs of the

mostly peasant population (Lappalainen 2014, p. 426). Then, as all classes of society fell victim to the catastrophe, the already materialised image of the starving hordes of beggars turned into an image of a failing human economy and culture. The alienation from natural forces and contingencies through stratified wealth and processes of cultural and economic domination or distancing[9]—the transition from domestic to postdomestic regimes—was yet to actualise itself, but the effects of declining human and (other) harvestable resources on the economic system appeared to trigger a more active resolution to relieve the slow violence at hand.

The cataclysm that no doubt assisted in eroding Sweden's superpower status left a severe cleft in the societal development of many Scandinavian regions, which took generations and decades, if not centuries, to heal. The situation illuminates the grounds for the modern project of controlling the forces of nature and building societal structures that, while running on the concrete resources they try to protect, articulate a cultural sphere that aims to develop into an anorectic body without organs or want—an autonomous representation of the very conditions that engender it. Later, as a modality, this body transforms into a human figure of collective excess that knows no need but that of transcending its dependencies (and their contingencies). The collective, excessive identity that takes part in contemporary ecological crises did not exist at the time of the Famine. Yet, the conditions of its emergence suggest what the modern trajectory of rationalism, coupled with its agenda of spectacles and metaphors—in Artaudian terms, sublime but thus foreign or paralysing views for those "who have dined well" (Sellin 2017, location 1791) or at least sufficiently—has done to our ecological orientation as individuals and communities. The Famine of 1695–97 entered the collective consciousness of Swedish and Finnish society as a disastrous potential that took on different cultural forms, from the just punishment of God to a natural condition that required some response in order to preserve the mercantilist project. During the centuries since, the Western world has dedicated significant efforts to building societies that survive and ward off disasters, but their mechanisms are—collectively and excessively—connected to structures and policies that, through a "metaphysical … inside-outside manifold" (Morton 2010, p. 274), have contributed to the ongoing climatic upheaval that is yet to gain its full force.[10] Artaud's response to this problem is to let hunger—an intimate and cruel double to the manifold—flood and erode the hubris that constitutes related figures of excess and their cultural and economic frames in modernity.

This "metaphysical hunger" (Sellin 2017, location 1794)—that which should motivate art and culture to operate with the same force that undergoing actual hunger requires—is, of course, not a direct recipe for accessing any ethics of catastrophe. It serves as a counterforce for a long and imperious process in culture that requires anarchic disruptions to be exposed—and *process* is the key word for the impact of Artaud's performance philosophy (Murray 2014, pp. 42–3). Moreover, the societal performance of climatic changes is not primarily a process emerging from or through a specific cultural or natural landscape, a scene that affords pragmatic interactions and aesthetic assessments. It bears the partly human face of the workings of a "climatescape" (Strahler Holzapfel 2015, p. 402), a meshwork of coactive organic and non-organic processes that exceeds comprehension. As such, the performance always-already assumes and affects the human population. It fuels the import of the Agambenian *zōē*, the pure fact of life that defies but conditions all evaluative processes of *bios* (life qua political and cultural existence) that try to appropriate it. By way of emphasising life's vulnerability, for Artaud (1958, p. 13) life qua *zōē* does not mean something we can discern "from its surface of fact" but a "fragile, fluctuating center which forms never reach." Yet, this requires "a sense of life renewed by the theatre," one "in which man fearlessly makes himself master of what does not yet exist." As ever so often in Artaud's thought, the problem and the remedy seem to stem from established distinctions and become entangled along the way (a double).

To grasp a wider history behind such inclination, one may observe how the roots of Agamben's (1998, location 23–45) use of the terms *zōē* and *bios* can be traced back to the cultural and epistemological hierarchies of Greek and Roman antiquity. These hierarchies still serve as the grounds for the unilateral, human capacity to diagnose the relationships between different life forms and their non-organic associates, and remain a central agenda for the Western ethos of modernity, including its pre- and posteras and beyond.

The status given to the human animal in the above equation—the most mimetic (and thus the most judicious) of all animals—may also call for a reorientation of the functions of Western theatre, as Artaud submits. Chaudhuri and Enelow's comprehensive use of the term eco-cruelty to discuss the cultural space and limit of performance thus addresses a potential for a cultural ecology beyond the scope of metaphorical psychology and its templates of common or human (Platonic) good. The term facilitates the development of a queer, ecological ethics that also challenges the

canonised, performative functions of a spectacle (*opsis*) and the related, verbal logic of reason (*logos*). As such, eco-cruelty communicates with Artaud's intimate language of the body and space, which resists any cultural principle or origin (here, *arkhē*), "a controlled anarchy and dissonance" (Morfee 2005, p. 69) that should take apart shared patterns of signification in order to "generate a new world of signs hewn out of the very stuff of life."[11] It recalls the aims of Artaud's thought to reinstate the potentials of life as such—to both motivate and defy the human need to communicate with life as an other—by implying an ethics fuelled by that which is, at least in the modern project, "powerless or ineffectual in existing representations" (Roihankorpi 2015, p. 112).[12] This is the performative and gratuitous ethics of *zōē* that, in the capacity of eco-cruelty, may irrevocably change *bios* and its language. Agamben (1998, location 111, brackets mine) explains the politics of *zōē* and *bios* through the provision that

> [t]he fundamental mental categorial [*sic*] pair of Western politics is not that of friend/enemy but that of bare life/political existence, *zōē/bios*, exclusion/inclusion. There is politics because man is the living being who, in language, separates and opposes himself to his own bare life and, at the same time, maintains himself in relation to that bare life in an inclusive exclusion.

To build an anarchic critique of the inclusive exclusion that takes part in upholding this categorical relationship with life—which, in itself, appears to transgress any representational limit—one needs to search for a very specific reading of Artaudian ethics: a scraping of the limit of exclusion that the political dimensions of both early modern and current responses to climatic cataclysms patronise.

Queer Famine

In the late seventeenth century, Finland was a remote part of the Swedish realm and the socially organised world. Nevertheless, it came to epitomise the fact that, although Sweden was a strong state in terms of its main administrative system, its operative structures and the grain trade, along with the mercantilist economic policy (emphasising military sustenance), could not deal with the causes and effects of famine. The modern cultural ethos of trusting in the means and the capabilities of human rationality was then at the early stages of development, but amplifies the

non-anthropocentric tone of Artaud's later, cultural criticism. The conditions of the emergence of this ethos inform the human performance that, in Artaud's works, unravels through the anarchic potential of the Great Plague of 1720. Both catastrophes remain sources for a critique of the consensual or emancipatory agendas of today's market-driven societies that tend to spectacularise the intimate and imageless effects of climatic shifts on our lives.

For Chaudhuri and Enelow (2014, p. 27), the ethical recourse implicit in the collective, excessive identity of climate change then rests on "a new construction of the figure of the human, one that should displace, or supplement, earlier constructs, including the universalist, sovereign individual of the Enlightenment, as well as the fragmented subject of postmodern and postcolonial theory." In the context of performance—exemplified by the play *Carla and Lewis* (2014) by Enelow[13]—this figure of displacement emerges through a queer treatment of ecological approaches, the potentials of an intimacy and a rediscovery of life that blur the limits and goals of established meanings. It entails a transgression of the inclusive exclusion as (a) politics—a disruption of the canons of metaphorical spectacle and climatic amnesia—that is motivated by something other than what takes place, gratuitously; by interhuman profit, exploitation or anxiety. At a societal level, accumulating oxymorons such as "green growth" (Hickel 2018) need to be set against the impossibility they perform in the face of diminishing resources and unforeseeable changes in the climate.

Such a reading of queer ecology, or, in the present discussion, of queer famine, aims to rediscover phenomena that are not yet (if ever) subject to analyses resting on available conceptual repertoires. As it builds on intimate responses to a "new construction of the figure of human," the queerness of climatescapes leads one to rediscover a treatment of ecology and performance that understands Artaud's critique as a timely radicalisation of *katharsis* (here, purification or cure).

Disrupting attempts to civilise the conditions and affects that are in conflict with the rationale of wellbeing that dominates modernity—such as hunger or famine (or the fear and pity entangled in them)—a queer reading of ecological forces emerges as a view to constant or prolonged *katharsis*. Famine, whose legacy here is the "pure energy of being hungry" and culture's failure to "tyrannize over life," performs an ongoing and cruel displacement, a double to both life and culture. The displacement that this double embodies may, and should, become uncomfortable and excruciating when it offers no re-entry to the practical wisdom (*phronēsis*)

that is valued and upheld by cultural systems. The queer *katharsis* that the Great Famine seems to facilitate—or the critical, ecological condition whereby queer becomes (or is) cathartic—results from the historical doubleness of one of the hunger figures discussed above. Artaud's (1958, pp. 31, 49) politics of *katharsis* is based on "death or cure … a total crisis after which nothing remains except death or an extreme purification." Meanwhile, the self-destructive but "organ-filled body" (Murray 2014, p. 42) of malnourishment resides in an unresolvable state of death and cure—where death is a cure to starvation, and a potentially revitalising cure (famine diet) means death.

Those who happen to survive a famine are surely not figures of extreme purification (regardless of any present-day slogan about fasting). Rather, the purification present in famine means that the agency of the dead and the survivors are irreversibly bound together. They haunt modernity as "a corporeal expression of thought" (ibid., p. 41) on starving catastrophes, as something that is "injected into the social body" like theatre to, well, plague it and therefore to allow its "reconception and re constitution [*sic*]" (Artaud 1958, pp. 31, 49, brackets mine).[14] This new construction of the figure of the human—cathartic in the incessant sense presented above[15]—is based on the exposure of the cultural trajectories that prevent us from approaching any collective, excessive identity or life in general (bare life), or from giving them a voice or presence.

The anarchic project of plague in Artaud's (1958, p. 30) writings also concentrates on re-liberating the "Platonic Eros" from its abject status as the Dionysian "*Libido*" through a must to perform at the face of death (by looting, raping and carnivalesque frenzy). Yet, the collective, excessive identity emerging from famine presents us with a slightly different demonstration of performative anarchy. The remark that "the sky can still fall on our heads" (Artaud 1958, p. 79), one of the Theatre of Cruelty's central reproofs, urges us to acknowledge the fact that the boundaries between human history and natural history (that includes human history) have always-already collapsed. They are only graspable through a transgression of meanings that hopes to leave societies surviving cataclysms in a state of ongoing *katharsis*. The sky did fall on the heads of the Finns in the 1690s, with a population loss that remains insurmountable, but the social hubris of the Western world that relies on the human capacity to deal with any global crisis is yet to be undone.

Chaudhuri and Enelow (2014, p. 32) discuss the queer play of (or beyond) meanings necessary for a different construction of the figure of

the human through *Carla and Lewis*, with its sensuous and "sometimes genuinely revolting" intimacy with and between mud, DNA, steel, the various conceptions of them and us, animals and humans, the humanist ecology and the sublime mechanics of biophysics. The pre-modern Finns had, perhaps, an even more intimate or parasitic double to life and culture in famine, but therefore their tragedy renders visible the fact that any representation of a collective, excessive identity—whether it be a stage play or an image of a society—must fall short of its cathartic excess. This excess implies a seemingly exterior must, an anarchic potential unhinged in the eyes of modern rationalism. Consequently, it both motivates and questions all cultural explanations for those worried about their freedom to maintain a good life (*bios*) and to dine well in the future—the metaphorical bulwarks suitable for "our age of ecological panic and scientifically measurable risk" (Morton 2010, p. 274).[16]

The key element for building an ethical outlook on the basis of Artaud's non-anthropocentric project is, then, the essentially queer proposition that representations are always-already conditioned by a must that cannot be explained by any political statement about what is or should be given a voice in or with them. This means the obligation of not assigning the representations any specific agenda of freedom associated with given conceptions of the good. As Jannarone (2012, p. 190, brackets mine) writes, to warn us against any emancipatory reading of Artaud, "[t]o honestly examine [his] particular kind of freedom—a dismantling of the self and the social order against a backdrop of generalized, "gratuitous" violence—requires not making general assumptions about the inherent goodness of freedom."

Much like the metaphors used to describe or even determine the course of the current climatic crises, Artaud's views on cruelty and catastrophe—as existential conditions of, or solutions for, cultural evolution—risk the reduction of their non-anthropocentric potential to a dynamic of power that may favour superhuman ideologies. To acknowledge this tendency in his writings, a queer reading of Artaud (1958, p. 28) must conclude that a Theatre of Cruelty induces its full effect on ecological thought "only if it remains virtual" (that is, potential) in the sense of intimately experiential, so that the rediscovery of the human it may bring about does not imply a new form of anthropocentric oligarchy. Artaud's impact resides in disrupting, displacing and re-orienting processes, not in achieving or weighing results.

Conclusions: Anarchies

How can we activate the ecological import of Artaud's anarchic ethics, historically, and in the current lifeworld? As noted above, its critical potential should be traced through the transition from a domestic to a postdomestic society, from hunger and famine to a society that prefers images of hunger and famine over the pure experience they are in a corporeal and performative sense—a society that has not prevented the sky from falling on our heads. Globally, this ethics addresses the modern transition from nation-based mercantilism to the much more aggressive economics of hyper-capitalism, and the transition from the word and the will of God to their reincarnation in collective, excessive economy.[17]

Artaud's anarchism then presents itself as an unstable but innate fulcrum for an ethical gesture presented amid climatic upheavals and their impact on social systems. It troubles the economic and cultural functions of the societal life as the excess of a figure that gestures gratuitously among the dead, without an audience but driven by a must, without political function or gain (Roihankorpi 2015, p. 112). Henceforward, the forces or symbols "unavailable to reality" (Artaud 1958, p. 28), released by the dramaturgy of catastrophes, are set against or in opposition to the social life. At stake is an intimate force, which cannot be treated chiefly as a form of political influencing. It resembles the agency of infants and the dead (qua ghosts) discussed by Agamben (2007, p. 91, brackets mine), of those "unstable [cruel] signifiers" that, as Artaudian doubles, do not attain "a state of [metaphorical] fixity." Rather, they motivate metaphors to arrange their operations around an ethical demand from the past and the future.

At the time of revisiting this chapter, the world has just witnessed the warmest January on record, devastating ground fires the size of many European countries on the continent of Australia, and unexpected acceleration of oceanic currents that may speed up the recurrence of disastrous weather conditions. These are symptoms of a global process of warming that is rapidly reaching more extreme mean temperatures than any recent period of cooling in history.

The two extremes share figures of suffering that perform a transhistorical ethics beyond the potentiality (*dynamis*) and the metaphors of social life, as they suggest an intimate and anarchic debt that surpasses any era of misconceived human confidence. The cathartic ghosts of cataclysms—the diachronic revenants from the synchronic finality of death (ibid.) that catastrophes sow—are just as compelling as afterbears of the mercantilism

of the Little Ice Age as they are as the still unborn (still-born) victims of the current climate amnesia. In this frame the Artaudian double is the undead wanderer, the starving beggar of the pre-modern period of cold, unable to restore herself as a member of the living, and the heir of today's overconsumer, detached from the needs that should set the terms of living itself.

As for contemporary political responses, one may observe how the Artaudian anarchy colours the ecological activism whose gratuitous acts remain in the margins of political rationalism or litigation (the cultural ratios transmutable by any given need or gain) and, subsequently, the public debates that ask whether instances of radical activism should be replaced by more consensual forms of political influencing. For Artaud, the question of consensus is irrelevant: demonstrations of anarchic ethics are not political activity per se, but performances of a must that—queerly, and cathartically, because the must itself urges to voice that which is powerless in representations—inhabits the social life as a double, as something that is detached from but concerns its actuality. The ethical gravity of famines, epidemics, and the hordes of sufferers they have created contests the hegemonic politics and privileges of wellbeing as a "virtual revolt" (Artaud 1958, p. 28) that is, in effect, a theatre that is cruel. I have previously termed this gratuitous must as "arch-ethical" (an originary obligation), but now, through an Artaudian reading of famine, wish to revive as an anarchic "ethics of the dead and the not-yet-born" (Roihankorpi 2015, pp. 111–13) that disqualifies belated apologies and futureless profits typical of societies of catastrophe.

Finally, the eco-cruelty of famine may help to envision the gratuitousness of theatre itself as the intimate presence of an excessive, collective identity; one whose dramaturgy does not promote metaphors of closure based on the dynamics of the social life. As an art of cruelty whose space, materiality, and bodies may undo shared, metaphorical functions, it has the potential to expose the senses to the corporealities of the past and the future—to reveal the doubles, the unstable signifiers that have refused to die of hunger or indebt the current bodies of excess. Most of today's media—very different from those of the late seventeenth century or those that operate on the vulnerability of the body—are capable of building imposing images of threat and culpability for the masses, but the eco-cruelty they either spectacularise or try to contain emerges from an intimacy that only radical or cathartic reinvention of the media themselves may bring about. The postdomestic and market-driven reality of global

warming, fuelled by alternative facts about our life instinct that are comparable to the Artaudian *coup d'état* in plague, is again and still a scene for an ethics that should embrace life beyond the templates of cultural and economic good.

Notes

1. These conceptions of cruelty and doubling (or the Artaudian double) rest on a reading of catharsis in Artaud provided by Eric Sellin (2017, location 1443, 1625–47).
2. My use of the term performance refers here to one of my earlier definitions of the term, which perceives it as "(1) the conceptual and the concrete modes and forms through which a given state of affairs is expressed, articulated *per formam* (by or in relation to a composition—a structure and a dramaturgy); (2) the abstract and the tangible capacities with which this process is carried out and the implicit (corresponding) capacities of the articulated phenomena and (3) the … capacity to transform and even transcend the mentioned articulations and the continuities they embody" (Delbridge and Roihankorpi 2014, pp. 51–2).
3. For example, some of the most effective and pertinent visualisations of data on temperature anomalies in recent centuries have been composed by Antti Lipponen (2018), a research scientist at the Finnish Meteorological Institute. See e.g. https://twitter.com/anttilip/status/1033342041474969601.
4. Murray (2014, p. 56, brackets mine) aptly suggests that Artaud's relationship to textual figures of malnourishment and indigestible foods "is not only [that of] a metaphor, but for Artaud a description of his own bodily processes: after years of malnourishment firstly as a poverty-stricken drug addict in Paris during the 1930s, and later in psychiatric institutions during the war, when rations were scarce, he claimed to be unable to eat without spitting, and to be unable to digest his food."
5. This addition refers to (and is present in) another translation of *The Theatre and Its Double* (2013, p. 3) by Victor Corti. It better reflects the modern condition, largely immune to actual hunger, but also obscures the idea of the double in the present context. In order to be Artaudian, the meaning and status of both hunger and culture need to be interchangeable.
6. The terms "domesticity" and "postdomesticity" are borrowed from Richard W. Bulliet's book *Hunters, Herders, and Hamburgers: The Past and Future of Human-Animal Relationships* (2007, *passim*) to describe the different social and cultural spheres of influence in modern history through which the conditions and the politics of human subsistence are negotiated.

7. cf. Williams (2016) and Behringer (2010, pp. 121–205).
8. For more information on the Maunder Minimum, see Luterbacher (2001).
9. The "Phagocene" (the history of "a capitalist world-economy" accompanied by "increasing commodification") and the "Agnotocene" (the history of ecological "zones of ignorance" due to "a modernizing unconscious"), which represented this process, are central themes for *The Shock of the Anthropocene: The Earth, History, and Us* (2017, pp. 148–69, 198–221, 290) by Christophe Bonneuil and Jean-Baptiste Fressoz.
10. At the time of writing this particular part of the chapter, flooding of catastrophic magnitude is causing serious harm to the people and the infrastructures of Bangladesh, India and Nepal. Hurricane Harvey has hit the coast of Texas with unparalleled force (attributed by scientists to rising sea temperatures and levels) and two more hurricanes approach the Caribbean region, with more catastrophes in store. According to *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2018: Building Climate Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition* report by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, extreme weather and climate change have contributed to the increasing amount of undernourished people and "food insecurity" (FAO et al. 2018, *passim*) in the world since 2014.
11. Despite its specific dramaturgical purposes, the idea of "controlled anarchy" here appears also to imply a post-catastrophic metaphysics that, with its demand for the reinvention of life and culture through signs of physical and spatial cruelty, may court fascist fantasies about superhuman survival.
12. This view is based on Susanna Lindberg's (2009, pp. 34–5, translation mine) reading of Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe in the context of *mimesis*, where she speaks of an "arch-ethical" injunction, inherent in an artwork, to deliver justice to "pre-existing representations and figures and first of all to the artwork itself." My own reading of Lindberg's approach—including a move from the arch-ethical to anarchic ethics—then suggests that through (a) representation, one must strive to deliver justice to that element or motive of making something present, which ultimately does not receive a voice or cannot be reached through (a) representation, to the fact that representation must, without exception, fail or betray an ethical statement or outlook.
13. The full text and programme of the play are provided in Chaudhuri and Enelow (2014, pp. 87–123).
14. Murray (2014, pp. 42–3) notes that "[t]here must always be an organ-filled body for the body without organs to be made, and language must possess a tyrannical semantic system in order for meaning to be disrupted, because it is the process that interests Artaud rather than its result."
15. cf. Sellin (2017, location 1681).
16. cf. Ibid., location 1201.

17. The Finns of the late seventeenth century experienced, first hand, the whip of God's wrath (as Mirkka Lappalainen has titled her book on the Great Famine), when they were subject to the prevailing, collective relationship with the Christian God as that which condemns and redeems. In the present case of famine, God served as the cultural interface for the excess of natural forces of life as *zoē*. One must then note how, historically and theologically, the modern conception of God has mostly served as an authoritative limit to queer. Here, God is more akin to the intimate transgression of what counts as the right (pious) course of action by that which takes place—and this is precisely the function of the Artaudian double: to compel culture by reflecting life while being "without shape" itself (Sellin 2017, location 1638–46). Since the Great Finnish Famine, it seems that God, as a cultural source and engine of intimate forces from nature to capitalism, has become a pre-eminently queer agent and a double—a corrupted, Artaudian (1958, p. 8) "divine within."

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Immersion: The Aquatic Ice Body

Tace Kelly and Kit Wise

While sustained bodily contact with solid ice is incompatible with human life, temporary immersion in ice-cold water is another matter entirely. Immersion of the human body in ice-cold water has long been associated with transformation and connection with the sublime. Often interpreted as an act of heroism, swimming in ice-cold water functions as an extreme risk-taking behaviour, challenging the limits of the individual both physically and psychologically. This chapter takes liquid ice as a medium in which the performing body can be considered. It seeks to explore the narratives associated with swimming in ice-cold waters (including the origins of the practice), touching on Indigenous histories and the Classical origins of a Western literary tradition before moving on to consider twentieth-century and contemporary performances of endurance.

Performance theorist Richard Schechner suggests that, "There is no cultural or historical limit to what is or is not performance" (2006, p. 2). Alongside the common meaning of "performance" in sporting terms (i.e. to succeed or excel), in ice- and cold-water swimming, performance can

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be understood as both the result of a process and a process in itself. According to Schechner, "performance marks the identities, bends and remakes time, adorns and reshapes the body, tells stories, and provides people with the means to play with, rehearse, and remake the worlds they not merely inhabit but are always already in the habit of reconstructing" (2015, p. 7).

The ice- and cold-water swimmers discussed in this chapter have both revised histories and created new futures, by reframing perilous spaces as the sites for critically informed performances. The chapter discusses performative feats of endurance carried out in icy and/or open waters, as well as male and female narratives of heroism. The migration of these politically charged performances from a European tradition to the edges of the world can be used to chart an increasing level of risk, and also significance, as they are now regularly enacted within the theatres of Arctic and Antarctic waters.

Cold Heroes

Long before the contemporary renaissance of ice- and cold-water swimming—before ancient Roman generals, Japanese Samurai and knights of the Middle Ages developed swimming as a key martial skill, and before the publication of the first swimming manuals (such as *The Art of Swimming* by Melchisédech Thévenot in 1696)—mythologies, folklore and legends associated with swimming in cold waters circulated as part of various cultural traditions. Tales of gods, merpeople, nereids, sirens, giants, selkies, spirits and humans that swam through oceans, rivers, lakes, fjords, lochs and mires were (and still are) passed down in oral and recorded histories, embedding culture in the various landscapes and seascapes from which they have emerged.

One notable foundation myth focuses on the female body in ice water. The story of Sedna is of "central importance to traditional and contemporary Inuit culture across the Arctic" (Selesky 1996, pp. 71–84). While there are many variations and interpretations of the story of this female spirit who dwells at the bottom of the sea, most involve a young woman whose father throws her into the sea and then cuts off her fingers, joint by joint, as she tries to climb back into the boat. Each finger joint that falls into the water is transformed into one of the staple animals of Inuit culture, including seals, walruses and whales (ibid.). Sedna descended into the ocean, becoming the goddess of the sea and ruler of the animals there,

with the power to decide whether to release them to the Inuit people to hunt for food (Swinton 1985, p. 8).[1] She continues to be discussed and feared by many living within the Arctic region (ibid.). As Michael Kennedy (1997, pp. 218–19) recognises, "Despite variations in content, the Sea Goddess myth is pan-Arctic in scope, extending from Greenland across the Canadian North to Siberia. It has endured time, distance, and the intrusion of alien religion and culture." Across the Arctic and through time, Sedna has been given many names, including Old Woman of the Sea; Kavna (She Down There); Aywilliayoo or Protectress of the Sea Animals; and Nuliajuk, "the Mother of the Sea and Ruler of all beasts on sea and land" (Field 1973, p. 47).

Narratives of the aquatic ice body are rare outside of such accounts by First Peoples, in large part because the populations required to sustain literary traditions have not existed in the Arctic and Antarctic regions. However, immersion in cold water can be identified as a sub-genre within a wider European cultural tradition. A key example is found in what is thought to be the earliest extant work of English literature, *Beowulf*, which cites swimming as the defining attribute of the first Western literary hero. The Old English poem opens with a description of a swimming contest between Beowulf and another warrior in the North Sea, which lasts for days and includes hunting and despatching sea-monsters along the way. The middle section of the epic focuses on Beowulf diving into the black lake or "Mere" that is the home of one of his supernatural foes, Grendel's mother. Wearing armour and carrying a sword, his descent takes most of a day. Beowulf slays his foe and, after his victorious return to the surface, "The lake's waters / Sullied with blood, slept beneath the sky" (Alexander 2001, p. 60). As with the myth of Sedna, here ice-cold water is a place of danger and violence for those who enter. The mythical women that lurk underwater in these ancient tales can be read as manifestations of a narrative that established a persistent genre of the female ice swimmer as visionary shape-changer—both of themselves and the geo-politics in which they are immersed. This chapter explores, in particular, the performances, origins and contemporary manifestations of these female heroines.

Tales of extreme swimming performances are not restricted to cold-climate locations and so it is helpful to contextualise ice-water swimming alongside other epic swimming narratives. Arguably the most influential literary account of ocean swimming is the Ancient Greek story of Hero and Leander. The two lovers were divided by the Hellespont, now the Dardanelles, a body of water separating the continents of Europe and Asia

at Constantinople, modern-day Istanbul. Leander, a young man from Abydos, fell in love with Hero, a priestess of Aphrodite at Sestos. Leander persuaded Hero to break her sacred vows of chastity. During the summer, he swam across the water to spend each night with her, before returning to Abydos at dawn. However, the water soon cooled (if not to ice) and during a winter storm, Hero's torch was blown out. Leander perished in the waves and the grieving Hero threw herself from her tower into the same cold waters. Like Sedna and Grendel's mother before her, Hero was another female figure whose body became lost to the ocean and whose story inspired new mythologies, narratives and understandings, through a reimagining of the seascape.

The tragedy of Hero and Leander has prompted myriad literary responses over time. Ovid provides a moving, first-person account in the form of an exchange of letters between the two lovers in his *Heroides* (Epistles 18 and 19). The Byzantine poet Musaeus produced a version of the myth that was rediscovered and widely published in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. These two sources inspired Christopher Marlowe to write arguably the most famous (although incomplete) account of the tale in his epic poem, *Hero and Leander* (first published in 1598). Remarkably sensual, the work has been cited as the exemplar of a mode of writing "in vogue in the 1590s that filtered erotic, epic and mythological themes through the sieves of wit, learning, and rhetoric" (Weaver 2008, p. 388). The work was incomplete when Marlowe died (George Chapman later completed the text), but includes descriptions of charged scenes, such as when Hero is revealed naked to Leander for the first time, slipping "mermaid like" from beneath her veil; and, when Neptune himself falls in love with Leander's body, "He watched his arms and, as they opened wide / At every stroke, betwixt them would he slide / And steal a kiss" (Marlowe 2006, p. 16).

Byron references Hero and Leander in his poem *Written after Swimming from Sestos to Abydos*, following his own "heroic" swim across the same stretch of water on May 3, 1810. The first documented crossing of the Hellespont, Byron's swim was driven by vanity rather than love, as his poem makes clear. His only prize for swimming in waters yet to be warmed by the Mediterranean summer was "the ague," a cold. He swam to prove the crossing was possible (succeeding on his second attempt) and later claimed it was the achievement of which he was most proud.[2] With these feats publicised through Byron's poems, open-water swimming once again

became a fixture of the European literary tradition and, over time, entered the popular imagination.

The first swimming societies of England were similarly inspired by classical example. Carrying as their motto "*Áriston mèn hýdor*" ("Greatest however [is] water"), the opening line of Pindar's ode (Sprawson 1993, p. 60), two of the most famous were formed by Old Etonians (alumni of Eton College): the Psychrolutic Society (1828) for those dedicated to cold-water, out-of-doors swimming and bathing in winter; and the Philolutic Society (1832), for lovers of general bathing (Love 2008, p. 4). The poet Algernon Charles Swinburne, a Psychrolute, was drawn to cold, dark waters such as those of Lake Gaube in the French Pyrenees, which he described in his poem named after the lake, first published in 1899:

> So plunges the downward swimmer, embraced of the water unfathomed of man,
> The darkness unplummeted, icier than seas in midwinter, for blessing or ban. (Swinburne 2006)

Swinburne developed his love for swimming in the ocean at Northumberland in England, and few have felt a more painful longing for cold turbulent water: he declared, "I am dying for it—there is no lust of appetite comparable" (Swinburne quoted in Sprawson 1993, p. 90). He wrote on the liminality of cold-water swimming, a threshold between life and death, heaven and hell, and for him personally, also pleasure and pain. He received masochistic pleasures from the torturous nature of the sea and the shock of cold water on the body. As Charles Sprawson (ibid., p. 93) suggests, "The process of swimming in icy, violent waves, like the beatings [he had received at Eton], reduced the strain on his body and helped to restore his composure."

The pleasure Swinburne experienced through a closeness to death when swimming in cold water is a pronounced feature of his writing. The poem *The Lake of Gaube*, for example, includes the lines: "That heaven, the dark deep heaven of water near, / Is deadly deep as hell and dark as death." Similarly, in a letter to his sister, written after hurling himself into the cold water, he admitted: "to feel that in deep water is to feel—as long as one is swimming out, if only a minute or two—as if one was in another world of life, and far more glorious than even Dante ever dreamed of in his paradise" (Swinburne quoted in ibid., p. 91). It is significant that, for

Swinburne, one must be "swimming out," rather than merely immersing oneself in the cold water, to experience this kind of ecstasy (ibid., p. 92).

Risk Culture and Sublime Immersion

Swinburne is perhaps not unique in achieving such intense pleasure through cold-water swimming. Today, swimming in cold, icy and/or open water is a rapidly growing global sport. As Taylor Brien notes:

> The dynamic growth ranges from short shoreline swims for children to a 120-mile, seven-day stage swim down the Hudson River in New York that attracts dozens of Masters swimmers from several countries. While the Olympic 10K Marathon race is the most globally viewed open water event, there are another estimated 25,000–30,000 annually organized open water events around the world. (Brien 2018)

The number of swimmers attempting the English Channel has reached record levels, while both urban and "wild" swimming have seen a resurgence, with public river-swimming facilities emerging in London, Berlin, Paris and New York over the last decade. The UK-based Outdoor Swimming Society operates a worldwide crowd-sourced swim map, that documents an ever-increasing number of locations and members (Rew 2018).

The elevated status of long-distance cold-water swimming was made clear when it was staged for the first time as an Olympic sport in 2008. After the Beijing Summer Olympics featured a 10 km swim in the Shunyi Olympic Rowing-Canoeing Park, the event was repeated on the Serpentine for the London Olympics in 2012, and in the ocean at Fort Copacabana during the 2016 Rio Olympics. The outdoor locations of these marathon swimming races are reminiscent of the settings used for the earliest (short-distance) Olympic swimming events: the Mediterranean, for the first summer Olympics in 1896; a lake in St. Louis in 1904; and the River Seine in 1908. More extreme non-professional swimming takes place in so-called "polar bear" and "iceberg" clubs found around the world, such as in Russia and Scandinavia, where ice is broken to expose water channels for explosive short-course competitions, and at the Peter Pan Christmas Day swim in Hyde Park, London—a one-hundred yard race in which swimmers have competed since 1864.

Today, hundreds follow in the wake of Swinburne and Byron by swimming the annual *Canakkale Maratonu* or "Victory Day" Swim across the Hellespont. One of the busiest shipping lanes in the world, the waterway is closed on one day each year to commemorate the end of the Turkish War of Independence in 1922. Swimmers from around the world take part in this iconic global swimming event, braving the 4.5 km swim in 13° C water. Places are strictly limited and much prized, but many do not complete the swim. The Turkish lifeguards reserve the right to remove swimmers still in the water after ninety minutes, due to the very real risk of hypothermia.

Cold-water swimming is a dangerous sport. Even for experienced ocean swimmers, the risk of hypothermia is ever present, which can lead to delusions of warmth and irrational, confused, reckless behaviour. Heart attacks are not uncommon, with a disturbingly long list of fatalities associated with popular long-distance swims such as the English, Catalina and Rottnest Channels. In extremely cold water, swimmers must slowly immerse the body feet first, as over stimulation of the cranial "vagus" nerve through a sudden drop in temperature can trigger an automatic response that stops the heart. Returning from cold-water swimming has its own dangers, not least in navigating land with peripheral limbs numbed by the retraction of blood to warm the core organs (hence, blue lips and fingers). Some swimmers bite their tongue badly because they cannot feel it, while others die from the rush of cold blood to the heart.

Cold-water long-distance swimmers are required to have rigorous training regimes and other body-altering practices to successfully fulfil their swimming goals, such as the deliberate accumulation of fat to better insulate the body. Lynne Cox, a modern-day ocean swimmer, sought further insulation for her Arctic swims in 2007 by growing her body hair and even nails to shield her skin; the significance of her swims will be discussed later in this chapter. Swimmers have used different techniques to insulate themselves, within the rules permissible for their particular challenge. In 1875, Captain Matthew Webb drank sherry and beef tea, while in 1905 Annette Kellermann rubbed the pores of her skin with porpoise oil and glued on her goggles with bear grease for her Channel attempt (Kellermann 1918). Today, most recognised ocean swims, such as the English and Catalina Channels, only permit swimmers to wear a standard swimming costume, goggles and similar applications of animal fat to protect them from the cold. Aspiring Channel swimmers will spend months, if not years,

Fig. 1 A woman swims in the cold waters of the Beagle Channel near the Antarctic gateway city of Ushuaia, with snow-covered Patagonian mountains in the background. (Source: Katie Marx)

acclimatising to the cold by literally re-setting their body's thermoregulation through hours of cold-water immersion (Fig. 1).

Sociologist Karen Throsby has analysed this behaviour in relation to the sport's "culture of risk":

> For some, the one or two years of concerted training leading up to a target marathon swim was conceptualised as a "health holiday": a provisional break from healthy practices to which they would return. For these swimmers, a marathon swim figured as a temporary period of physically and emotionally stressful, potentially harmful, but pleasurably challenging, excess. (2016, p. 165)

Among these swimmers, Throsby noted a common aspiration towards a collapse of normative wellbeing, where "the failing body is simultaneously marked as the 'good body'" (ibid., p. 156). This can also be understood as a liminal state, or "edgework," operating at the limits of capacity (Ayoub 2004, pp. 25–30). For audiences observing a cold-water swimmer who has recently emerged from the water, the extreme shivering, rigid limbs, blanched face, cracked voice and chattering teeth generate an aberrant or "unreadable" body: "these experiences echo those of people with

disabilities affecting speech and motor skills, whose movements and speech patterns are experienced by others as illegible and potentially threatening" (Throsby 2016, p. 50).

For extreme swimmers, the performance of damage or disfigurement is understood as the manifestation of success. Lynne Cox's loss of the nerve endings in her fingers following a career spent in freezing waters is evidence of the very real physical damage that accrues from repeated performances of this kind. Such bodily changes resonate distantly with the brutal reshaping experienced by Sedna and Grendel's mother in legends, but also represent a range of transformative or transporting outcomes.

Engaging with the culture of risk associated with cold-water ocean swimming accumulates social value, but also potentially brings a more personal reward. For the individual risk-taker, the experience of risk itself has a direct and arguable spiritual impact. As Edmund Burke outlined in his account of the sublime:

> If the pain and terror are so modified as not to be actually noxious … they are capable of producing delight; not pleasure, but a sort of delightful horror, a sort of tranquility tinged with terror; which, as it belongs to self-preservation, is one of the strongest of all the passions. (Burke 1839, p. 169)

Here, Burke describes a synthesis of the various emotions experienced when swimming in extreme conditions that can result in "delightful horror." Swinburne describes this in more physical terms, in line with the sensual, indeed erotic, subtext identified in Neptune's caress of Leander, and his own masochistic delight. In Swinburne's novel *Lesbia Brandon*, Herbert (the semi-autobiographic hero) surrenders his body to the sea, to be pounded by the waves:

> Driven onto the shore, he felt the rapid lash and sting of small pebbles. He panted and shouted with pleasure among breakers where he could not stand two minutes the blow of a roller that beat him off his feet and made him laugh and cry out in ecstasy: he rioted in the roaring water like a young sea-beast. (Sprawson 1993, pp. 94–5)

Written between 1859 and 1868, the novel was deemed pornographic and so remained unpublished until 1952. Alongside this ecstatic sublime, the American philosopher Douglas Anderson provides a further account of how risk-taking in extreme aquatic environments can expand physical

and psychological experience to result in a more expansive awareness of being. He describes this as a broadening of perception that achieves "philosophical" outcomes:

> What makes extreme paddling or surfing [or swimming] exemplary is the immediate risk and necessary engagement with nature. They force one to focus on the experience, to engage in intuition, and, in [Henri] Bergson's terms, to overthrow one's tamer and more superficial conceptual approach to the world. (Anderson 2007, p. 75)

For Anderson, the intense perceptual rapport with risk that is required of extreme sports athletes can lead to a "spiritual" understanding, where the ability to think anew makes them "incipient metaphysicians":

> As highly experienced and trained readers of water, they have an intimate knowing of the world that is accessible only to a few—they understand Bergson's claim that reality is flux and change. They have the perceptual skill [William] James believed philosophers should seek: a "living understanding of the movement of reality." (Ibid., p. 76)

Ice (rather than cold) water swimmers manifest this extreme body, as the conditions they engage with are beyond what untrained bodies can endure. The outcomes, according to Anderson, are transformative: their experiences become something previously unknown, beyond other bodies' limits or capacities, thereby constructing a new reality or possibility. Here, we move beyond the re-enactment of past histories, hierarchies and traditions into a new, emerging and radical terrain. Significantly, these new ice-cold swimming sites have been charted by visionary female swimmers.

Ice Heroines

The heroic sublime tradition has long been associated with masculine narratives of privation and success, of which the ocean swimmer is but one example. Throsby identifies the same gender bias in the contemporary world of marathon ocean swimming. However, as both scholar and female ocean swimmer, she aims to "resist the discourses of heroism […] the inevitable focus on suffering (and the refusal to lessen it)" (Throsby 2016, p. 65). She notes Hargreaves' (2000) observation that "while men 'easily transform into heroes,' women are 'ambiguous heroines,' caught between

the demands of heroism to be exemplary and the construction of the feminine to be inferior […] heroines can only be defined by conventionally feminine attributes" (ibid., p. 126).

As has been demonstrated, ocean swimming as encountered in Western literature has been dominated by white, male voices—such as Beowulf, Byron and Swinburne—and the representation of their bodies (Sprawson 1993, p. 285). In the depiction and representation of swimming bodies in classical art, most are also white and male; bodies of other genders and races have been marginalised or too often left out altogether. Although swimming has developed and been practised across demographics and in communities around the world, its evolution as a sporting activity has seen the white male figure become the signifying body. As Karl Spracklen (2013, p. 110) suggests: "In Great Britain, white people dominate participation in sports associated with wealth and time resource, the two things elite classes have access to: so sports such as rowing, cycling, equestrianism, swimming and sailing are almost completely white."

There are, however, some alternative and more inclusive stories of cold-water swimming that have come to light over time. In 1679, a slave ship was wrecked off Martinique in the Caribbean. An African slave, whose name has been lost to history, reached the shore after swimming for sixty hours in a storm—"an aquatic feat of survival that rivalled Homer's Ulysses and was a record of endurance swimming that was not matched by a white man for almost three hundred years" (Pitts 2007, p. 2). Since ancient times, people in Japan have regularly entered cold water for reasons including "predation, hygiene, physical health, spiritual health, religion and enjoyment" (Matsui et al. 2012, p. 130). For over two thousand years, highly revered women of the sea, the Ama, have dived for shellfish and edible seaweed, mostly on the Eastern and Western shores of Honshu Island. It is said that men were excluded from this ocean swimming tradition because they could not stand prolonged exposure to the cold. Instead, they tend to the boats, whilst the women can spend up to four hours a day beneath the surface. Similarly, the Haenyeo (sea women or female divers) in South Korea's Jeju Province have dived without breathing equipment to harvest seafood on the ocean floor for hundreds of years (DenHoed 2015). In 2016, the Haenyeo were inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

To return to the Western world: according to swimming historian Christopher Love (2008, p. 2), "while it cannot be argued that women never swam in these early periods, there is little to no evidence to suggest

that female swimming existed in any significant form prior to the 1800s." However, after Captain Matthew Webb's dramatic and historic English Channel crossing in 1875 drew the world's attention to ocean swimming, several women planned similar long-distance swims in the Thames, including Anges Beckwith and Emily Parker (ibid., pp. 10–11). As Love points out, "importantly, it was *female* professional swimmers, not men, attempting these long-distance swims" (ibid., p. 11). One of the most prominent of these was the Australian swimmer Annette Kellermann. In 1905, Kellermann was the first person (man or woman) to emulate Webb by attempting to swim the Channel. Kellermann was a celebrity of her day: known as a professional swimmer, she popularised synchronised swimming (and water ballet) and was also the author of a swimming manual, a film actress, a business owner and the instigator of significant changes in women's bathing fashion (Landreth 2017, p. 164).[3]

Perhaps the female heroic swimmer and visionary *par excellence*, however, is the American Lynne Cox. Born in 1957, Cox has spent decades swimming in cold to freezing waters, enjoying a distinguished professional career as an elite marathon swimmer before turning specifically to ice water. Swimming without a wetsuit or other thermal protection, her most remarkable endurance events have functioned as performance works, crossing geo-political and historical seascapes in near-fatal conditions, to create new geographies, identities and possibilities. The four iconic crossings outlined below are examples of the extreme and significant nature of Cox's ice-water swims.

In 1985, Cox swam in the Muir Inlet in Alaska, "surrounded by an amphitheatre of white glacial peaks and in the distance was the Riggs Glacier, a mountain of white, blue and green ice compressed for millions of years" (Cox 2004, p. 333). For this swim—one of her most dangerous—Cox followed a small boat from which a crew member broke pan ice with an oar to help her navigate safely. Pan ice comprises sheets of ice that have broken away from larger ice floes, with edges sharp enough to cut through skin. In places, Cox was forced to use her hand to break the pan ice in order to swim through. Before the swim, her team had been concerned about the temperature dropping and the pan ice freezing around the boat, which would have compressed the two sides, crushing the hull "like Shackleton's expedition" (ibid., pp. 331–4).[4] Cox had to swim with her head up to avoid the pan ice cutting her face; however, this slowed her expected progress. Three-quarters of the way across the inlet, she was swimming in water at 3° C when rocks began to slide down the mountain

side. She later wrote that the avalanche propelled her on (ibid., pp. 336–7). Massive chunks of ice exploded as they tumbled into the inlet with such force that Cox and her accompanying rowing boat were buffeted by waves. At one point, she became caught on the underwater ledge of an iceberg and had to drag her chest, stomach and legs off the exposed ice. She compared the process of using her body to break the pan ice to the explorers of the North Arctic and Antarctic seas: where they used ships to break and carve the ice, Cox used her body. Familiar with Shackleton's expeditions, she swam with the knowledge of fatal errors that had impacted past ice explorers, and recognised the continuity with her own narrative.

Braving the Muir Inlet was preparation for arguably her most famous and ambitious performance: crossing a section of the Bering Strait. The Iñupiat people have been moving between the islands of Imaqłiq and Iŋaliq—walking over ice and sailing over water—for hundreds of years. These two islands, situated in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, have long been considered stepping stones from Siberia to Alaska, Asia to America (Jenness 1929, p. 78). In 1867, Russia sold Krusenstern Island/Iŋaliq (now Little Diomede) to the United States as part of the Alaska Purchase. After World War Two, however, the Iñupiat and Yupik people living on Ratmanov/Imaqłiq (now Big Diomede) were forced from the island, to live on the Soviet mainland. During the Cold War, the space between the islands became especially charged as the "Ice Curtain" fell, preventing all travel between them. Cox's father inspired her to consider the crossing when he suggested that swimming from one country to the other would help to re-open the border. For eleven years, Cox wrote for permission to stage the swim, corresponding with successive Soviet presidents: Leonid Breshnev, Yuri Andropov and Konstantin Chernenko. Finally, after much discussion, Mikhail Gorbachev granted permission on August 6, 1987, the day before the swim was scheduled to take place (Cox 2012). Cox swam the 4.3 km in ice water from Iŋaliq/Little Diomede to Imaqłiq/Big Diomede accompanied by a team of physiologists as well as local Iñupiat people, who travelled alongside and behind her in boats. After she swam across the international border and dateline, her small American convoy was met by a Soviet boat, which led them to the shore. The world looked on as she linked two superpowers and three cultural groups: the United States, the Soviet Union and the Indigenous people of Iŋaliq/Little Diomede. A few months later, after signing the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty at the White House, President Gorbachev

said to President Reagan: "She [Cox] proved by her courage how close to each other our peoples live" (Gorbachev quoted in Ramseur 2017).

Some fifteen years later, in 2002, Cox swam in the Antarctic at Neko Harbour, through over a kilometre of ice and cold water. She swerved around icebergs and near invisible "clear ice," her thigh bleeding from ice crystals that had cut her as she entered the water. She later wrote about this experience in her book, *Swimming to Antarctica: Tales of a Long-Distance Swimmer*: "My arms and legs were as cold as the sea, but I felt the heat within my head and contained in my torso and I thrilled to it, knowing my body had carried me to places no one else had been in only a bathing suit" (Cox 2004, p. 557). This swimming performance was extremely challenging, both mentally and physically, and helped her prepare for the conditions she would face in the Arctic just a few years later.

Inspired by the sea and ice journeys of Roald Amundsen, the first Westerner to successfully navigate the Northwest Passage (in 1903–6), Cox retraced a portion of Amundsen's journey by swimming at Church Bay, Ilulissat, Greenland, in May 2007. Dropping from rocks into water hovering at −1° C, she swam for a quarter of a mile (400 m) in less than ten minutes. Cox later declared she had "never worked so hard" in her life (Cox 2008, p. 52), but this did not deter her: she went on to swim at four different locations that had been part of Amundsen's journey. In freezing waters, she restaged history, immersing her body in the extreme landscape to create a unique and intense awareness of the physical and political environment.

Writing in the early 1990s, Peggy Phelan observed that "women are not visible within the dominant narratives of history" (1993, p. 163). Cox's engagement with narratives of polar exploration and the political landscape of the Cold War, however, locates the near-naked female body literally inside the landscape without the protection of a ship, experiencing and reconfiguring the political, psychological and physical challenges of ice water. Cox's Northwest Passage and Bering Strait swims can, therefore, be understood as site-specific performance works that function as responses to colonial legacies and provocations to contemporary geo-politics.

Today, Cox's legacy lives on. As Brien recently observed:

> Swimmers are pioneering high-altitude swims from the Andes to Mount Everest that attract media attention for a focus on environmental issues. Others complete cross-border swims—between Jordan and Israel, the

U.S. and Mexico, and Japan and Taiwan—that require a significant degree of Speedo diplomacy.

Unprecedented swims of unfathomable length include Ben Lecomte who is currently 1,642 miles east of Japan swimming daily across the Pacific Ocean with the aim to reach San Francisco by March 2019. Lewis Pugh swam along the length of the English Channel—350 miles along the southern coast of England—that resulted in the British government promising to protect 30 percent of its domestic waters by 2030. Sarah Thomas swam 104.6 miles in Lake Champlain in 67 hours 16 minutes, while 66-year-old Nejib Belhedi swam 74.6 miles in 76 hours 30 minutes in Tunisia, while 67-year-old Khitindra Chandra Baishya swam 115 miles down the Kangha River in 61 hours 55 minutes in Bangladesh. (Brien 2018)

Conclusion

This chapter has considered how the extreme cold-water swims of Byron, Kellermann and Cox can be understood as performances situated in "a time, a place and history" (Madison and Hamera 2006, p. 357). It has also described how the ice swimmer's body has changed from something outside possibility, in the realm of heroes and gods, into the acutely real body, located in time and place and, therefore, subject to, as well as acting upon, politics. From the reading, writing and telling of narratives populated by mythical characters whose swimming bodies enact heroism, bravery and imagination, to modern-day stories about living athletes who perform extreme acts involving considerable risk and endurance, the ice swimming body has moved from classical representation to lived experience, located within the politics of the ocean. The bodies of these swimmers have been found to be of different colours, sizes and genders. Yet, they all enter the water and, concentrating on their breathing, they swim out. In individual performances, they experience extreme cold, navigating the environment with numbed bodies but heightened understanding.

Contemporary ocean swimmer Bhaki Sharma extends these narratives further. Sharma was the first Asian woman and the youngest in the world to break the endurance ice swimming records of Cox and Pugh, swimming 2.3 km in 1° C waters in the Antarctic when she was twenty years old. Today, rather than passing into myth, evidence of Sharma's 2010 Antarctic swim is readily accessible through the internet, with video footage available via YouTube. Watching on—with snow-capped mountains in the distance and the intermittent passing of ice as indicators of her passage

through space and time—we are able to witness her performance, albeit from a distance, and can only imagine how cold the water must feel. She later commented that, standing on the deck of the ship, "before the biggest event of [her] life": "I could only see ice, in all forms and shapes. Ice floating on the water and standing tall on the land. So beautiful yet terrifying. … There I was standing between all that ice (and) I could see what I could be" (Sharma 2015). This revelation immediately before her swim allowed Sharma—a young woman who grew up in an Indian desert—to enter and navigate the icy water without hesitation. Watching her swim through the ice in the video, her body confronts the white male hero whose exploits she surpasses, whether swimmer or explorer. Rethinking history, geography and possibility through ice, we share her exhilaration.

> After the shock of entering the ice cold water, and after that pain, there is a space for something else. A rush, the elation. An inexplicable lightness. (Lee 2017, p. 164)

Notes

1. As Swinton notes, the notion of a goddess is contrary to the Judeo-Christian notion of a God who is omnipotent, kind, loving and understanding, and instead resembles the gods and spirits of classical mythology (1985, pp. 9–10). The sea goddess and other powerful spirits, such as the weather spirit, the sun spirit and the moon spirit, must be feared, as well as respected, at all times, in order to sustain a secure existence in the harsh environment of the Arctic (ibid., p. 10).
2. After his swim, Byron wrote: "I plume myself on this achievement more than I could possibly do any kind of glory, political, poetical or rhetorical" (Sprawson 1993, p. 122).
3. Jenny Landreth points out that while Edwyn Sandy was conducting a campaign to change what women wore in the water, it was Kellermann who caught the public imagination. Arriving in the United States in 1907, she asked, "How could these women swim with shoes—stockings—bloomers—skirts—overdresses with puffed sleeves—sailor collars—in some cases even lightly fitted corsets?" (2017, p. 164). Kellermann went on to design, manufacture and market the first truly modern bathing suit for women. This was not without setbacks: also in 1907, Kellermann was arrested in Massachusetts for public indecency, whilst wearing an example of her fitted one-piece swimming costumes. Around twenty years after Kellermann's arrest, the

female endurance swimmer Agnes Nicks swam from Tottenham Bridge to London Bridge on Boxing Day in water hovering around 2.2° C.

4. Shackleton's expedition ship, the *Endurance*, sank after becoming trapped in ice in 1915.

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Performing Sovereignty over an Ice Continent

Elizabeth Leane and Julia Jabour

In early May 1841, Antarctica appeared on stage for the first time. In the far-flung British colonial town of Hobart in Van Diemen's Land (soon to become Tasmania), a melodrama entitled *South Pole Expedition* made its debut, to sell-out crowds and reasonable reviews (Anon. 1841a). Despite some reservations about the acting, the *Hobart Town Advertiser*'s critic considered that the performance "surpassed … expectations"; the icescape set, at least, was "as cold-looking as could be wished" (Anon. 1841b). This inaugural attempt to stage Antarctica was distinguished by the presence in the audience of people who had actually been to the continent. The play was inspired by an expedition led by James Ross that had returned from a summer spent exploring the Antarctic to recuperate in Hobart, and some of the men came along to watch the theatrical entertainment. The production concluded with an allegorical tableau that placed the figures of Science, Fame and Britannia against the icescape, and a prediction that, sometime in

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the future, a southern empire might rise with Tasmania as its centre: "Then Tasmania that proud flag [the Union Jack] shall rear / And shine the Britain of this hemisphere" (quoted in Anon. 1841a). The theatrical performance was, on the one hand, a way of bringing the remote and glamorous icescape into the space of Tasmania, but on the other a means of imagining Tasmania itself achieving sovereignty over the icy region to its south.

While Ross did not attend the performance, his expedition could be considered an imperial performance of its own, something that became explicit at key moments in the journey. Soon after sighting the continent, and despite threatening weather, he led a "ceremony of taking possession of these newly-discovered lands," raising the flag, cheering, drinking a toast to Prince Albert and Queen Victoria, and naming the region for the latter (Ross 1847, p. 189). The island on which the expedition members held the ceremony (ice prevented them reaching the mainland) was named "Possession Island," in case anyone was in doubt of their intent.

Such ceremonies and rituals of possession were a hallmark of European exploration and claim-making in numerous locations (Seed 1995). Contemporary geopolitical relations are still characterised by performances of various kinds, both in territories under dispute and in international forums. In his analysis of the operation of sovereignty, performance and agency in a very different context, Alex Jeffrey argues that states' "legitimacy and ability to lay claim to rule rely on a capacity to perform their power." These performances can be both "spectacular"—such as pageants and celebrations—and "prosaic"—the use of a certain letterhead, or a state official's body language (2013, p. 2). On a continent uninhabited by humans and unseen until the early nineteenth century, such performances had—and continue to have—both a heightened significance and a surreal unreality. Ice cannot be materially occupied in quite the same way as land, so symbolic enactments of claim and ownership carry a heavier burden. Sovereignty performances take on distinct forms in a region where the incongruity between human ability to withstand the environment and the confidence with which that environment is declared to be under human control constantly threatens to turn such displays into parody.

In the following, we outline some of the distinct features of sovereignty performances in, near and about the ice continent, before examining more closely several kinds of contemporary examples. We began this chapter with an account of a melodrama, but our focus here is not on artistic performances such as theatrical, musical or dance productions—although these also have their own long histories.[1] Rather, our aim is to bring a

performance studies approach to behaviour, activities and events that communicate a position on state sovereignty in Antarctica to an audience. While in some cases these are self-conscious political acts by bureaucrats or state delegates, in others they are less direct and multifunctional activities. The latter, we argue, have become increasingly important in the last sixty years: with the Antarctic Treaty prohibiting explicit declarations of national sovereignty in Antarctica (at least for the fifty-plus parties to the Treaty), sovereignty is nonetheless constantly reasserted and contested on a symbolic level through a diverse range of performances.

Modes of Sovereignty Performance in the South: A Brief Historical Overview

The performative aspects of Antarctic exploration have often been noted—by explorers themselves, who did not always enjoy the constant need to promote their activities, as well as contemporary critics. While Ross's expedition proceeded under the auspices of the Royal Navy, from the late nineteenth century, when land-based exploration of the continent began in earnest, many Antarctic expedition leaders had to generate their own funding through donations, sponsorships and media deals: they needed to be showmen as well as explorers. Antarctic expeditions from this period onward would be bracketed by long periods of campaigning and promoting, in which the leader would enjoy or endure a constant stream of public lectures, addresses and fundraising events (Nielsen 2017).

While the departure of the expedition offered relief from this publicity drive, demonstrating the qualities valued by governments and publics of the time—national pride, masculine strength, heroic endurance—continued to be an inherent part of the undertaking, displayed in flag-raising ceremonies and speeches, sledging expeditions and geographical achievements. "Expeditions are theatre—plays of power and possession performed for indigenous spectators, distant audiences back home, and even curious penguins in a howling wilderness," writes historian Tom Griffiths (2014, p. 171). He entitles his analysis of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition (1911–14) "A Polar Drama." Denis Cosgrove (2003, p. 217) considers the polar regions to be "theaters of [national] competitive heroism … silent stages for the performance of white manhood." Wherever they occurred, such imperial performances needed to be recorded and transmitted: through photographs and film; official expedition accounts;

newspaper and magazine articles; and radio broadcasts. In Antarctica, this effect was intensified: local audiences were particularly difficult to come by and, uniquely, continental exploration occurred entirely after the rise of mass media and modern visual technologies. As Christy Collis (2004, sec. 4) points out, Antarctic expeditions aimed "not simply to perform rituals of spatial possession, but to textualise them for popular and governmental consumption." These textual outputs, as much as any event in the expedition itself, formed the theatre of polar exploration.

When it came to territorial naming and claiming, however, the size and extreme climate of the continent made it difficult logistically to perform the appropriate ceremonies. Expeditioners were reduced to seemingly ridiculous activities such as dropping national symbols out of aircraft. When American aviator, naval officer and celebrity-explorer Richard Byrd led the first flight over the Geographic South Pole in 1929, he dropped the Star-Spangled Banner onto the polar plateau when he reached ninety degrees south. Around the same time Australian explorer Douglas Mawson conducted a similar exercise at the edge of the continent: prevented by ice from landing on the thousand-kilometre-long coastline of the part of East Antarctica he was in the process of claiming, he instead dropped a British flag from an aircraft while reading aloud a proclamation of claim (Day 2012, p. 251). The captain of the expedition vessel dubbed the expedition "a cinema show" by "a lot of flag raising humbugs" (John King Davis, quoted in Mawson 2008, p. 318). When members of the *Neu Schwabenland* expedition, under the auspices of the Third Reich, dropped swastika-embossed darts from an aircraft onto the coast of the continent in 1939, they were repeating the kind of nationalist exercise that other nations had performed before them.

The unique challenges of an ice continent loomed even larger when it came to consolidating the claims to which such sovereignty performances only gestured. One-off ceremonies of discovery and possession bear little weight in political and legal forums unless they are followed up by some semblance of sustained inhabitation and administration of the region claimed. In the early years of Antarctic exploration, however, this was hard to do. Not only was the climate completely hostile to human survival, the ice itself, constantly shifting and moving, repelled attempts at permanent occupation. The continent had a way of rejecting human dwellings—gradually covering them with snow and pushing them inexorably towards its coast.

By the 1950s, when humans were starting to develop the technological capacity to establish bases that allowed ongoing occupation, the political situation had changed significantly. Seven wedge-shaped claims—by Argentina, Australia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (shortened here to "Britain"), Chile, France, New Zealand and Norway—divided up the continent, leaving one slice unwanted and thus unclaimed. Cold-War tensions, alongside the rejection by the US and USSR of these seven claims and their assertion of their own right to claim part or all of the continent, led to a truce in the form of the 1959 Antarctic Treaty. This legal instrument, which applies to the region south of 60° South, declares the continent a place of "peace and science."[2] Under Article IV of the Treaty, territorial claims are effectively put into abeyance: they are not extinguished, but cannot legally be reinforced or diminished while the Treaty (which has no expiry date) remains in force. Any country that has signed the Treaty can choose whether or not to accept another country's claim to territorial sovereignty (only Australia, Britain, France, New Zealand and Norway have recognised each other's claims[3]). Since 1961, the signatories (which now number 54) have held regular Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings to discuss all matters to do with the region. As we demonstrate below, these meetings offer their own low-latitude version of Antarctic theatre.

After the Treaty, then, no more official ceremonies of possession could be held—at least none that had legal meaning to its growing number of signatories. This did not, however, put an end to sovereignty performances. Rather, by preventing official legal manifestations of sovereignty, it intensified the need for less formal displays that reinforced territorial claims in the public imagination. Polar geographer Klaus Dodds (2011), in particular, has drawn attention to these more modern forms of "sovereignty performance," which span "maps, postage stamps, public education, flag waving, place naming, scientific activity, the regulation of fishing, flying pregnant women to the region, and public ceremonies such as commemoration" (pp. 231, 234). Whether they involved "government ministers standing in front of maps … and/or explorers by flagpoles," he notes, "bodily performances [regarding Antarctica] depended on audiences" (p. 233). Dodds has tracked the way in which specific bodily gestures, such as politicians pointing their fingers towards regions of the continent on a map, are reproduced for national audiences, and argues that these "visual performances" need to be "taken seriously" as a way of linking political authority to claimed territory (2010, p. 284).

While science is often held up as a neutral and almost utopian undertaking in the far south—particularly in an era of climate change—Dodds includes it in his list of sovereignty performances. There are some obvious reasons why a nation might want to be seen to be doing science in Antarctica, in addition to the worth of the research itself. To be a Consultative Party to the Treaty—that is, a state with decision-making rather than just observing status—that state must conduct "substantial scientific research activity" in the Antarctic region (Article IX.2). After the Treaty, then, science itself became a public performance that was crucial to state involvement in Antarctic governance. Acknowledging that Antarctic science has always been a "geopolitical performance," one polar historian argues that in the post-Treaty period Antarctica might be labelled a "Continent for Performing Science" (Roberts 2011, p. 157). This is not to suggest that the science undertaken is false or fraudulent, but rather that it is an activity that must be seen to be done for reasons beyond its own internal purposes. High-profile scientific endeavours, such as the search for a million-year ice core, can be read as enactments and reassertions of national prowess (Hemmings 2018), without detracting from the value of the information obtained for understanding global climate dynamics.

Many forms of sovereignty performance are thus evident both within and outside the Antarctic continent—some of them obvious, others less expected. In the remainder of this chapter, we look in more detail at three very different examples of the ways in which sovereignty is symbolically asserted and contested in contemporary Antarctica.

Political Actors and Naming Rituals: the ABC of Sovereignty Performance Over the Antarctic Peninsula

As James Ross's activities on "Possession Island" exemplify, early claiming ceremonies in Antarctica almost always involved bestowing a name—of a monarch, a sponsor or an expedition member—upon a piece of ice-covered land. While the Antarctic Treaty removes substantive legal meaning from such claiming rituals in the contemporary period, names continue to play an important symbolic role in the performance of sovereignty. A recent example is the British Government's 2012 re-naming of part of the British Antarctic Territory as "Queen Elizabeth Land"—a diamond

jubilee tribute to the monarch. The process was accompanied by a ceremony in London in which the Foreign Secretary, William Hague, standing in front of a map of Antarctica bearing the new name, announced the "gift" in the presence of the Queen (see e.g. Rayner 2012).

The newly named Queen Elizabeth Land lies in territory claimed by Britain on the Antarctic Peninsula. The British Antarctic Territory overlaps those of Argentina and Chile, and these three claims form the "ABC" of our subheading above. In the case of Argentina and Britain, these overlapping claims extend to the subantarctic, with both states claiming the South Sandwich Islands, South Georgia and the Falklands/Malvinas. The naming of Queen Elizabeth Land, then, was a strategic move in a contested region, with the ceremony held at the Foreign Office an "embodied performance of polar statecraft" (Dodds 2013, p. 330).

As the naming of Queen Elizabeth Land suggests, the performative assertion of sovereignty in Antarctica is nowhere more evident than in exchanges between the ABC states. The three-way relationship between these states in regard to their Antarctic claims is complex. While outwardly on the cusp of brinkmanship, the South American neighbours often cooperate as players in the Spanish-speaking bloc at Antarctic meetings, where they share a common adversary: Britain. At the same time, they all use diverse symbolic means to assert their own claims to the region. While Britain has primarily used displays of administrative authority to assert sovereignty, such as the long-established post office at Point Lockroy that caters primarily to tourists, Argentina and Chile's efforts centre on fostering a geographic imaginary in which their respective claimed areas of Antarctica appear as natural extensions of the mainland states. Unlike any other states, the two South American states have sent families to their Antarctic bases and have run schools there, and both have facilitated the birth of nationals in their claimed territory. Both also regularly issue official maps which include their claimed territory.

Key forums for the performance of Antarctic sovereignty by the ABC states are the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings (ATCMs) and the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) meetings, where routine exchanges centre on sensitivities over the naming of disputed territory such as the Falklands/Malvinas (see Fig. 1). These islands, four hundred nautical miles off the coast of Argentina and more than 6860 nautical miles from Britain, were the subject of armed conflict in 1982, which ended in Argentina capitulating and Britain asserting its sovereignty. Irrespective of this outcome, at almost

Fig. 1 Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting XXVI in Madrid in 2003. (Photo: Andrew Jackson)

every ATCM and CCAMLR meeting since that time a highly ritualised display has been carried out. The exchange at the thirty-ninth ATCM in 2015 gives a sense of the flavour: the Argentinian delegate registers an intervention on "incorrect references" to the territorial status of the "Malvinas, South Georgias and South Sandwich Islands."[4] The intervention process is formal, with the delegate, whose allegiance is indicated by a small national flag, turning his or her country nameplate on its side to indicate to the Chair a wish to speak. This quintessential intervention is invariably followed by a response from a British delegate, who asserts Britain's undisputed sovereignty over the "Falkland Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands." Thereafter, the Argentinian delegate rejects the British response and the matter is put aside for another year. The "incorrect references," while unspecified, almost always involve the use of a name: Falklands rather than Malvinas. Although a brief reversal of this behaviour occurred at the 2016 CCAMLR meeting, which registered a constructive agreement between Argentina and Britain to avoid "sensitive issues,"[5] the ritual quickly reasserted itself. The following year, at the fortieth ATCM in Beijing, it was claimed that a paper contained language

unacceptable to Argentina; when the author refused to withdraw or modify the language, the interventions resumed.[6]

The Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting thus becomes an annual forum for what Edyta Roszko, in reference to maritime territorialisation in the South China Sea, terms a "linguistic performance" (2015, p. 231). On a continent where the physical environmental renders the usual material displays of territorial possession—settlements, borders, roads and street signs—minimal or absent, the original speech acts through which territories are claimed require constant citation. Thus, the types of ceremonies of possession originally held in situ in the Antarctic region are reinforced and supplemented by related rituals in low latitudes. And while the ABC exchanges at the Treaty meetings make this very obvious, they also serve as a reminder of similar processes occurring in less contested regions of the continent. In 2017, Australia, a state that makes the claim to the largest portion of the continent (42 percent), named a series of previously unnamed "islands, rocks and reef" after the dogs that travelled with the Australasian Antarctic Expedition (Australian Antarctic Division 2017). On the one hand, this is a recognition of the role that animals played in early exploration of the continent—part of a move away from a "great man" approach to the history of the continent in which glory is bestowed on one or two prominent figures (in Australia, Douglas Mawson) while other contributors fade into the background. On the other, it is a way of publicly reasserting a through-line between Australia's early exploratory activity and the territory on which it continues to have a sovereign claim.

Hunters and Protestors: Sovereignty Interests in the Japanese Whaling Conflict

As the naming of these landmarks indicates, non-human species have figured prominently in human engagement with Antarctica, from the late eighteenth century, when fur seals were first hunted on Antarctic and subantarctic islands (an activity that would drive them close to extinction), to the present day, when wildlife is one of the biggest drawcards for tourist visitors. During the period of imperial exploration in the twentieth century, Antarctic wildlife began taking on a value beyond what it could be made to yield in meat or oil. With expedition leaders looking for publicity, and audiences drawn to exotic animals, Antarctic wildlife—and particularly penguins—became "leading actors" in post-expedition lecture series

and film screenings (Jones 2003, pp. 185–6). Non-native species also had prominent roles in expeditions. Dogs and ponies enabled sledging expeditions, and others, including pigs, sheep, goats, cows, rabbits and cats, were brought as companions or as food (Headland 2011). Occasionally non-human species took on a performative function as an assertion of symbolic settler colonial presence, such as the reindeer taken by Norwegian whalers to the British-claimed subantarctic island of South Georgia, or the three cows brought by American explorer Richard Byrd to his base "Little America" on the Ross Ice Shelf in the 1930s (see Roberts and Jørgensen 2016, p. 65; Leane and Nielsen 2017).

With the signing of the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty (the "Madrid Protocol") in 1991,[7] all non-native species (bar humans) were indefinitely prohibited in Antarctica, except under special permit. The last huskies left in 1994. However, native animals—most prominently, whales—have continued to provide a means through which humans performatively assert and contest a sovereign relationship with the continent.

The controversy over Japanese factory whaling ships operating in Antarctic waters is well known. Japan has actively hunted whales in the Southern Ocean since the 1930s. Although the International Whaling Commission placed a moratorium on commercial whaling in 1986, Japan continued to catch whales—predominantly Minke whales—under an exception to this ruling which allowed the activity if its primary purpose was scientific. From the early twenty-first century, Japan's position was contested by state and non-state actors, who claim that its expeditions are commercial whaling ventures presenting themselves as scientific research.[8] This conflict played out in two main theatres: the waters of the Southern Ocean off the coast of Antarctica claimed by Australia; and domestic and international courtrooms.

Until recently, the marine conservation NGO Sea Shepherd has engaged in physical confrontations with Japanese whaling vessels in the Southern Ocean, with all of the performative elements that normally accompany public protest, always textually transmitted to remote audiences through still and moving images, and written reports in the media (see Leslie Roberts's chapter in this book for an analysis of environmental protest in Antarctica as performance). While at first glance the Antarctic location of the conflict seems relevant only in that its evocation of pristine wilderness bolsters the activists' case, it is in fact central to the nationalist frame through which the "whale wars" are often viewed.[9] In 1994,

Australia declared an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) off the coast of its Antarctic claim—a move which was itself something of a sovereignty performance. With the Antarctic Treaty prohibiting any reinforcement of existing claims, Australia was in the "ambiguous legal position of having asserted these maritime claims without actively implementing its laws within the zones" (Rothwell and Scott 2007, p. 12). In 1999, under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* (EPBC Act), Australia declared a Whale Sanctuary within its EEZ, including the Antarctic waters. Thereafter, both anti-whaling activists and the media persistently claimed that Japan was killing whales in "Australian waters" (see e.g. Hasham 2017; Barnes 2013; Sea Shepherd 2008).[10]

This view was reinforced by a cultural sense of Australian custodianship over the whales migrating along its coast. Examining the Japanese whaling conflict, anthropologist Adrian Peace (2010) argues that this "political ritual"—in which "[t]he stage is set for 'drama on the high seas'"—masks a deeper archaeology of cultural factors (pp. 5, 9). For Australians, "[whales] from Antarctica are routinely referred to as 'our whales', and protecting them has become a national responsibility … identification with the totemized whale has become part of how Australians imagine themselves as decent and enlightened citizens in the contemporary world." This image is "constituted against a damming, even racist, portrayal of the Japanese" (ibid., p. 7). Of course, until the 1950s, Australia itself was a whaling nation. Its about-turn is the product, as Peace notes, of the entry of whales into "public culture" through various media and whale-watching tours (ibid., pp. 5, 6). The national identification with whales, then, stems from the ability to frame whales themselves (through technologies such as underwater photography) as performers—the same process applied to penguins a number of decades earlier.

Converse arguments apply to the Japanese perspective. The symbolic importance of the consumption of whale meat to Japanese national identity has often been noted. Peace explains that "Eating whale meat represents an integral part of how the Japanese locate themselves in a world geared to the destruction of regional differences. …The anti-whaling rhetoric of countries like Australia and the United States is thus interpreted as a challenge to the right of the Japanese to live as they choose" (ibid., p. 7). If whaling is an assertion of Japanese sovereign independence, whaling off the coast of East Antarctica is doubly so. As Japan, like almost all other states, does not recognise Australia's sovereignty claim in the Antarctic, neither can it recognise its whale sanctuary. Thus, its

whaling expeditions are both a performance of its own sovereignty and a repudiation of Australia's sovereign claim on Antarctica. As Hemmings et al. note, "Whatever the objective merits many of us may see in securing the protection of whales … it is difficult not to see a degree of nationalism (and sometimes outright chauvinism) in the respective positions of Australians and New Zealanders on the one hand, and Japanese on the other, around whaling" (2015, p. 546).

While this conflict played out every summer in high southern latitudes, other contests took place in the courtrooms. The first legal case occurred in 2004, when the conservation NGO Humane Society International (HSI) filed an application in the Australian Federal Court seeking to restrain Japanese whalers in the Antarctic portion of Australia's whale sanctuary.[11] The Court noted that, while there appeared to be a clear prima facie case of contravention of the EPBC Act, the application by HSI was dismissed for a variety of reasons, including that any injunction granted might be ineffectual, any action would be futile, and it would be a diplomatically risky approach to solving the problem.[12] The Australian Attorney-General's office had provided submissions to the Federal Court outlining its preference for solving the problem through diplomatic means, in acknowledgement of the lack of recognition of Australia's Antarctic claim: "The Commonwealth Government considers that it is generally more appropriate to pursue diplomatic solutions in relation to activities by foreign vessels in the EEZ off the AAT."[13]

Throughout the HSI case, then, the existence of the Antarctic Treaty loomed large in political, if not the final legal, reasoning. Ultimately, however, the diplomatic solution the Treaty would have provided did not eventuate. HSI appealed and the Japanese whaling concern—Kyodo Senpaku Kaisha—lost. It was ordered to be restrained from killing Minke whales in the Southern Ocean.[14] However, the Court's ruling offered no clue as to how this restraint would be carried out in an area of the Southern Ocean where, under the Antarctic Treaty Article I, no military activity is permitted. In addition, even though the Japanese were found to be in contempt of court in 2015 for breaching the order from 2004, the AU$1 million fine imposed on them has never been paid.

In exercising the prerogatives granted to both Australia and Japan under international law, a highly charged performance of sovereignty and sovereign independence was carried out in the courts. The Australian Federal Court had no choice (albeit on appeal) but to charge the Japanese company with a breach of the EPBC Act and, later, fine it for contempt.

These were, from one perspective, empty gestures, as they could not be enforced; but to the extent that they *were* gestures—sovereignty performances—they were not empty. To have failed to make them would have implied that Australia did not believe in its own sovereignty in Antarctica. Japan, on the other hand, displayed strict sovereign independence by exercising its right under Article VIII of the Whaling Convention, which gives the state party absolute discretion over the issuance of scientific research permits, subject to the authority of no other state, and Article IV of the Antarctic Treaty, which provides for the discretion of any party with respect to the acknowledgement of any claimed territory.

Meanwhile, the Australian government had taken higher-level action against Japan in the International Court of Justice (ICJ), in a case which began in 2010 and concluded in 2014. The ICJ ruled that Japan's current Antarctic scientific whaling venture, JARPA II, was "not for purposes of" scientific research. It ordered all extant permits be extinguished, and declared that no more permits be issued for JARPA II. Accordingly, Japan created a replacement method of accessing whale meat: New Scientific Whale Research Program in the Antarctic Ocean (NEWREP-A). However, by mid-2019, Japan had stopped whaling in the Southern Ocean, having withdrawn from the International Whaling Commission and recommenced commercial whaling in its own waters and EEZ. Thus, despite the success of the anti-whaling parties, both court cases failed to protect whales in the long term.

Ironically, while the ICJ case was titled "Whaling in the Antarctic," the issue of Antarctic sovereignty was not raised. Rather, the case rested on the Court's interpretation of Article VIII of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (around scientific research permits). The fear among commentators at the time was that, if the ICJ decided it needed to examine Australia's sovereignty over the EEZ in order to make a judgement, then the whole agreement to avoid arguments about sovereignty (held in place by Article IV of the Antarctic Treaty) might unravel. Not recognising Australia's sovereign claim on Antarctica, legally Japan had every right to ignore the EPBC Act's whale sanctuary which, under other circumstances, would apply to it as the flag state of a foreign vessel.

Both in the Southern Ocean and in the courtroom, then, non-human actors—celebrated as performers in one cultural frame and considered a protein source of special significance in the other—became the means by which two states asserted their sovereignty.[15] This is not to trivialise cultural attachment to whales and whale meat respectively, or the fate of the

whales themselves, but rather to point out the entanglement of state sovereignty in what appears to be a conflict over animal rights and environmental issues. The whaling conflict can usefully be read as a performance to the extent that all actors are attempting to communicate a position to an audience, but this position is not merely a view on the rights of whales as individuals or a species. State actors also communicate their sovereignty interests via the conflict. And while non-state actors like Sea Shepherd primarily aim to communicate a view on whales themselves, they borrow nationalist rhetoric ("Australian waters") when this bolsters their publicity efforts, and thereby become players in the sovereignty performance.

Scientific and Touristic Actors: The Heroic Rescue of the "Spirit of Mawson"

While the post-Treaty period saw scientists replace explorers as the valued actors on the continent, "Heroic Era" adventure stories continued to provide a frame through which visitors experienced the place. While early expeditions in Antarctica functioned as performances—of nationhood, masculine hardihood and heroism—they also inspired numerous re-enactments. From the 1980s, adventurers began to follow "in the footsteps" of early twentieth-century teams, invoking various forms of authenticity, from period clothing and equipment to a line of descent from one of the original expeditioners. Focusing on Ernest Shackleton as the embodiment of "a model of manly white explorer integral to British imperialism," Rebecca Farley shows how re-enactments of his most famous journey reinforce the subject position he represents: "In such performances, 'Shackleton' is open to potential transformation, but … re-enactors' texts and images confirm and enrich rather than challenge the discourse of the manly white explorer" (2005, p. 232).

In terms of numbers alone, however, the most prominent actors in Antarctica are neither scientists nor adventurers but tourists, over 50,000 of whom now visit the region each summer season. Regularly available since the late 1960s, cruise ship tourism has increased exponentially since the early 1990s, when icebreakers became easier to obtain after the break-up of the Soviet Bloc. Other forms of tourism, including flights to the Pole, guided expeditions across the continent, and more "extreme" activities, such as mountaineering or marathon-running, also appeal to a niche market. With tourism studies taking a "performance turn" in recent

decades, Antarctic tourism is also being examined through this lens. Anthropologist David Picard considers the Antarctic tourist cruise as a "ritual performance" that enables "individuals to reconnect to, and enjoy, a presumed original nature from which they are alienated during the rest of the year." The "sacrificial" aspects of the journey—its cost and physical discomforts—are, he argues "necessary part[s] of the experience" (2015, p. 311). To complete their part in the ritual, tourist operators must produce a different kind of performance: to ensure customers are provided with the expected vistas; to evoke the requisite sense of isolation and remoteness (by avoiding other cruise ships); to deliver lively lectures and in-situ interpretation and information; and to provide the best encounters with wildlife available.

Tourist activities are covered by the Antarctic Treaty only to the extent to which they might impact the environment, and are not directly related to sovereignty claims. Yet they too might be considered one of the ways in which national relationships with Antarctica, at least, are displayed and reaffirmed. This is staged early in a typical Antarctic cruise voyage, when a vessel departs Ushuaia (Argentina) and travels down the Beagle Channel on its way around Cape Horn and on to the Antarctic Peninsula. A dispute about sovereignty over some of the islands in the Channel and the border between Chile and Argentina has been the subject of international arbitration.[16] Nevertheless, the Channel is routinely patrolled by military vessels of both countries and tourists witness these performances of sovereignty well before they reach their disputed territories in Antarctica.

Recently, tourist voyages have begun to be promoted as following "in the footsteps" of various "Heroic Era" explorers. Describing his journey on an Antarctic cruise in 2014, writer Jonathan Franzen (2016) notes that Shackleton became a "fetishized" figure on the tour:

> We were given a book about Shackleton, PowerPoint lectures about Shackleton, special tours to Shackleton-related sites, a screening of a long film about a re-creation of Shackleton's voyage, and a chance to hike three miles of the arduous trail that Shackleton had survived at the end of it … The message seemed to be that we … were not un-Shackletonian ourselves. (p. 24)

This particular ritual journey thus incorporated a form of performance of Shackleton, something that inevitably brought with it the various connotations of the "manly white explorer" identified by Farley (above).

While Farley contends that "Shackleton" is now "supranational," functioning "at the level of racial, rather than nationalistic, discourse" (ibid., p. 242), in other instances national identity forms a stronger link between the original expedition and its re-enactment.

One example is the Australasian Antarctic Expedition 2013–14, an Australian-led private expedition which combined science and tourism, with paying volunteers acting as "citizen scientists" (Turney 2017, p. 41). The expedition coincided with the centenary of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition 1911–14 (AAE), which was led by the key Australian Antarctic hero Mawson (mentioned above) and formed part of the basis of claim for the Australian Antarctic Territory (AAT) (Rothwell and Scott 2007, p. 8). The connection was explicitly acknowledged: the 2013–14 expedition was marketed under the banner of "The Spirit of Mawson" and travelled to the location of the expedition hut, now a heritage site and tourist attraction. While the expedition, led by climate scientist Chris Turney, aimed to determine environmental changes in the hundred years since the original AAE, the emphasis on intrepidness and danger—in its website, blogs, YouTube clips and published narrative—reinforces the connection with its "Heroic Era" namesake. Even the inclusion of tourists is framed in Turney's account of the journey as being in the spirit of the early polar explorers, who drew on sponsorship and donations to fund their expeditions (2017, p. 41).

The expedition went notoriously off-script, however, when the Russian icebreaker chartered for the journey became controversially beset in ice, arguably as a result of putting paying customers' expectations of visiting the expedition hut before safety (Russian Federation 2014). With icebergs bearing down on the ship, tourists and scientists had to be removed, requiring an expensive and dangerous multi-national rescue effort.[17] Attempts by vessels from Australia and France failed, and it was eventually the Chinese icebreaker *Xue Long* that was able to approach close enough to the beleaguered vessel to effect a rescue. China's activities in Antarctica have been the focus of considerable academic and Western media attention in recent years. Anne-Marie Brady (2017, p. 197) argues that at the same time that other leading players (including Britain, the US, Australia, New Zealand and Russia) were cutting back their Antarctic capacity following the Global Financial Crisis of 2008, China was taking action that reinforced its desire to become a "polar great power." The rescue of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition 2013–14 by the *Xue Long* was, therefore, reported with great pride by the Chinese media (Chen 2014). Thus,

a scientific/touristic expedition that tied itself closely to the key historical figure in establishing Australia's sovereignty claim (Mawson) ended by enabling a non-claimant nation to display its prowess in the Antarctic region.

Meanwhile, Turney defended the expedition, and in his published account augmented the original Mawson-centric framing of the journey with multiple references to Shackleton, whose *Endurance* expedition was also famously beset, in 1915–16. In Australia and New Zealand, Turney's book was entitled *Shackled* and marketed as a "classic adventure story" with the "ghosts of explorers such as Shackleton and Mawson looking on" (2017, back cover). Turney thus evokes two different legacies simultaneously, layering the connotations of heroic masculinity, adventure and masterful leadership evoked by Shackleton and the *Endurance* story on top of the nationalistic and scientific associations of Mawson. He recuperates the controversy around his science/tourist hybrid expedition by framing it as a Mawson/Shackleton re-enactment. The "Spirit of Mawson" expedition, in which discourses of science, tourism, national identity, masculinity and heroic rescue are entangled, demonstrates the complexity of human engagement with Antarctica in the twenty-first century.[18]

Coda: Performing Sovereignty at the Pole

At the symbolic centre of Antarctica is the South Pole, the centre of the circles of latitude with which we map the planet. The sovereignty claims on Antarctica are wedged-shaped—they all meet at ninety degrees south. Uniquely, then, the South Pole sees seven sovereignty claims approach infinitely closely together before reaching a kind of territorial singularity at the Pole itself. This place is marked by a barber-shop-style pole topped with a reflective silver ball, with the flags of the twelve original signatories to the Antarctic Treaty forming a semi-circle around it. This is not the actual Geographical Pole, which has a simpler marker, replaced yearly due to the motion of the ice; but rather the Ceremonial Pole—the point where "hero shots" are taken by expeditioners, adventurers and tourists, and where important occasions, such as the centenary of the first arrival at the Pole, are recognised by speeches and other official activities.[19] With its mirror sphere reflecting back the flags of the original twelve Treaty nations, the Ceremonial Pole seems to symbolically repudiate the seven territorial claims that meet there.

However, the Ceremonial Pole does not stand alone on the ice of the plateau. Rather, it is part of a large scientific station complex, established

by the United States in the late 1950s, when the negotiations that eventually produced the Antarctic Treaty were in train. As mentioned previously, the US is a non-claimant state that reserves the right to claim any or all of the continent in the future. Its construction of a station at a point where all territorial claims meet can be read as a material display of this political position—its refusal to recognise other nations' sovereignty, as well as its own ability to occupy the symbolic "end of the Earth." A 1996 Presidential Decision Directive stated that the South Pole station demonstrates the US's "commitment to assert its rights in Antarctica, its basis of claim, and its commitment to conduct cutting edge scientific research there."[20] The station thus functions as a sovereignty performance in Antarctica, more permanent than speeches and flag-raising ceremonies.[21]

The South Pole, with its connotations of multi-national governance and sovereign interests, acts as a fitting embodiment of the contradictions that characterise human activity in Antarctica under the Treaty. While ice-core drilling, tourist re-enactments, whale hunting and station building have scientific, cultural, commercial and/or personal motivations, they all also form ways of communicating a particular relation to the sovereign claims on the continent to an audience further afield. With the extreme environment continuing to prevent anything resembling normal settlement, and the Treaty forbidding explicit acts of possession, any assertion of national presence is coded through other seemingly politically neutral activities. Encompassing a range of human and non-human, state and non-state, and claimant and non-claimant actors over a range of historical contexts, the examples we have examined here demonstrate some of the many forms that sovereignty performances have taken and continue to take in and around a continent covered by ice.

Notes

1. Many have occurred in Antarctica, from the farces and pantomimes with which expedition members have ritually marked midwinter for over a century, to the outputs of contemporary artist residencies. A recent example, mentioned in this book's Introduction, is *Antarctica: The First Dance*, created by a choreographer, a classical ballet dancer and a videographer who travelled to Antarctica with the New Zealand national program in early 2018. See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_sq59Ajwv4.
2. Antarctic Treaty (402 UNTS 71), Preamble.

3. Government of Australia, Brief to Delegation, Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting V, Paris, 1968, p. 1.
4. Antarctic Treaty Secretariat, *Final Report of the Thirty-eighth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting*, Sofia, Bulgaria, 1–10 June 2015, Volume I, Paras 396–398, online at https://documents.ats.aq/ATCM38/fr/ATCM38_fr001_e.pdf.
5. CCAMLR, *Report of the Thirty-Fifth Meeting of the Commission*, Hobart, Australia, 17–28 October 2016, Paras 12.5 and 12.6, online at https://www.ccamlr.org/en/system/files/e-cc-xxxv_2.pdf.
6. Antarctic Treaty Secretariat, *Final Report of the Fortieth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting*, Beijing, China, 22 May–1 June 2017, Volume I, Paras 430–432, online at https://documents.ats.aq/ATCM40/fr/ATCM40_fr001_e.pdf.
7. Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty (30 ILM 1461, 1991), Annex II, Article 4.
8. The word "actor" is used in several different ways in this article, depending on context: to indicate agency (human or non-human); to indicate an element of cultural performance; and to indicate a role in international relations. In this last sense, a state actor formally represents a government, and a non-state actor is an organization or person separate from a government who nonetheless attempts to influence global geopolitical relations. While all of these "actors" have distinct meanings, this article emphasizes occasions in which they overlap in an Antarctic context.
9. The phrase "whale wars" comes from the title of a documentary following the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society protestors produced by Discovery Channel and aired in 2008.
10. The International Whaling Commission had previously adopted a Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary in 1994 at the same time the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea came into force, which facilitated Australia's right to extend a 200 nautical mile EEZ to its Antarctic Territory. Under the rules of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, Japan is entitled to make a reservation to this Sanctuary, which it did, citing specifically that the Sanctuary should not apply to Minke whales (see https://iwc.int/sanctuaries).
11. Section 225 of the EPBC Act applies. See *Humane Society International Inc v Kyodo Senpaku Kaisha Ltd* [2004] FCA 1510. For a commentary see Rothwell and Scott (2007, pp. 17–18).
12. *Humane Society International Inc v Kyodo Senpaku Kaisha Ltd* [2005] FCA 3 [33].
13. Outline of submissions of the Attorney-General of the Commonwealth as amicus curiae, NSD 1519 (2004), filed on behalf of the Attorney-General by Australian Government Solicitor, File ref: 04126020, para 17, 3,

available at http://www.envlaw.com.au and follow the links to "Case Studies," "Whaling case, Motion for leave to serve."

14. *Humane Society International Inc v Kyodo Senpaku Kaisha Ltd* [2008] FCA 3.
15. Peace, among others, notes that culturally and linguistically, the Japanese class the whale as a fish, with "none of the aura which nowadays surrounds mammals in the West" (2010, p. 7). Japanese state actors, however, noted the Western hypocrisy of enshrining whales while systematically slaughtering other mammals such as cows (see e.g. "Whale Hunting" 2009).
16. Beagle Channel Arbitration (*Argentina v. Chile*) (1977) 52 ILR 93.
17. For details, see Government of Australia (2014); and Russian Federation (2014).
18. The nationality of tourists themselves is a pertinent point here: the rise of a Chinese Antarctic tourist market is often remarked in Western media, even while English-speaking nations continue to dominate the clientele.
19. "Polies" incorporate it into their own less formal rituals, such as the "Three Hundred Degree Club," which requires initiates to run naked from a 200° F sauna onto the ice, ideally around the Ceremonial Pole and back, on a day when the temperature dips to −100° F.
20. PDD/NSC-26, "U.S. Antarctic Policy," available at www.fas.org.
21. Similar, although perhaps less obvious, arguments may be made about other stations, with location and the built environment both potentially significant to national identity and sovereignty claims.

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The Gigaton Ice Theatre: Performing Ecoactivism in Antarctica

Leslie Carol Roberts

The Ross Sea, Antarctica, February 1988
Maggi McCaw: I joined Greenpeace because of the whale issue. I went to Antarctica as an able-bodied seaman with Greenpeace because Antarctica is not theirs. They cannot have it.
Me: What do you mean, "theirs"?
Maggi: I mean the people who sit around thinking about exploiting Antarctica as yet another mining site. Those people. Go mine your own countries. Fuck you. The Antarctic belongs to us all. And we want to keep it pristine and free. A World Park. World Park Antarctica.
—Conversation between the author and a Greenpeace activist

In 1987, Greenpeace constructed World Park Base at 77°38′20″S 166°24′50″E in the Ross Sea Region of Antarctica. A team of four activists then lived at the base for one year, and this represented the start of annual occupations of the base by the activists until its closure in 1991. This ambitious campaign was designed to draw world attention to a Minerals

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Convention then being negotiated by the Antarctic Treaty nations. The goal of this convention was to regulate future mining activities in Antarctica. Greenpeace put out a global call for journalists to accompany them south, to report on their activities and to record environmental degradation at governmental bases. While research to date has looked at the theatre of environmental protest and its methodologies (Kershaw 2002), this chapter records specific activities and actions in the Ross Sea, which I witnessed as a reporter and photographer travelling with a Greenpeace vessel. In particular, the idea of Antarctica as "backdrop" for political activism is explored.

As Baz Kershaw notes, there are particular contradictions to ecoactivists' engagement with the media—what he terms "dangerous dancing with the prime agents of cultural commodification" (2002, p. 118). However, this chapter argues that Greenpeace in Antarctica developed a focused narrative of governmental accountability and the consequences of lax human systems for handling waste in a very fragile wilderness. The tactics used included presence, shaming and dissemination of images of a massive waste dump at an American base, a horrifying contrast to the previous stereotypical images of the "ice continent." Far from "documentary film" icescapes, these images showed a world of rubbish and sloppy disposal of heavy machinery—a place poorly managed by humans as a fragile ecology and one where mining would be a complete disaster. In addition, this chapter looks at Greenpeace's signature media strategy of "mind bombs," while considering how words and images were deployed to fix a sense of outrage in the public and inspire support for conservation and protection. With the Antarctic region now facing new local and global sources of environmental threat—mass tourism, increasing ocean temperatures and acidity, plastic pollution—these strategies retain their relevance.

Greenpeace: Enter Stage Left

Summer in Antarctica belies the continent's reputation as cold, dark and lethal. As the donated, ageing tugboat, renamed *Greenpeace*, steams into the vast embayment called the Ross Sea in January 1988, its crew is entirely upbeat, ecstatic even and absolutely united in their mission: they have come to save the world.

In this case "saving the world" is defined by a fight to stop the global community from setting rules for Antarctic minerals' exploitation and, more immediately, to force governmental scientific stations in the region

to clean up their rubbish and effluent. In order to have a formal voice in the minerals exploitation conversation, which is intergovernmental, Greenpeace needs to comply with the rules of Antarctic Treaty nation engagement, including establishing a year-round human presence in Antarctica. This day in January marks a thrilling moment: against fierce odds, the environmental activists have done it. They have survived a year in Antarctica.

The Greenpeace base in Antarctica is diminutive relative to the governmental operations: four expeditioners and a modest environmental science programme, largely focused on refuse and effluent produced by the large nearby US station, McMurdo. All the campaigners and crew of the tugboat and the Greenpeace Antarctic base members are friends. When not in Antarctica, many of them live together in the UK or New Zealand. So when the *Greenpeace* arrives at Cape Evans, in the Antarctic's Ross Sea, on that January day, a particular, small and authentic theatre unfolds: the joy of four humans emerging from a year of polar isolation and welcoming an approaching ship, packed with comrades, come to take them home.

Antarctica has always formed a kind of alien theatrical territory: a phantom ecology for thousands of years, always a place where different types of messages co-existed. These range from the earliest, colonialist instincts to explore and claim by states in Europe, the Americas and Australasia; through the mid-twentieth century, with the historic 1959 Antarctic Treaty, a document that holds these same land claims in abeyance and advocates for a logic of continental peace and research; to the late twentieth century when the Antarctic community decided to set mining regulations, and then rejected these in favour of an environmental protocol. Within each of these periods, there has existed a peculiar intimacy: between humans drawn close by the elements, by disciplinary preoccupation, to the need to cooperate to survive. It has always been, for humans, a theatre of often-obscure goals with sometimes outsized impacts.

It was in the lead-up to the establishment of official mining regulations that Greenpeace became active on the Antarctic continent. I was aboard the *Greenpeace* for close to four months, covering the expedition as a journalist and photographer, and those four—three men and a woman—standing on Home Beach, Ross Island, arms waving wildly, performed a specific and important historical moment. Greenpeace had successfully built and inhabited a non-governmental base over 12 months in Antarctica beginning in 1987. It was no small feat.

Antarctica as News Story

The existence of the base—the material presence of Greenpeace on the continent—created a new narrative pathway, both populist and political, in Antarctica. The World Park Base was a pinnacle achievement of what became one of the most successful acts of environmental advocacy in the twentieth century (Shortis 2019). It also served as a continuation of reporting in and on the Antarctic continent, which began in earnest at the turn of the twentieth century when the earliest motion and still cameras headed south. Those cameras captured a look and feel of Antarctic exploration that would define how the world sees and grasps a performative Antarctic ecology: the "est-iest" continent—highest, driest, coldest. These images proposed Antarctica as the Earth's best stage for enacting courage and selfless bravery under often-dire conditions.

In the twenty-first century, reports of the Thwaites' and other Antarctic glaciers' speedier-than-predicted demise receive global front-of-news-sites placement because of the consequential effect on the entire Earth's climate and geographies, as well as their relationship to human-based activities, such as carbon emissions (see e.g. Shawal 2020). And humans in the twentieth-first century are rallying in a performative manner, most prominently demonstrated by Extinction Rebellion's activities, which include a 2018 occupation of Greenpeace London offices, calling on the older environmental group to join in mass protests and their arrest strategy (Marshall 2019).

Due to the region's extraordinary inaccessibility, much reporting in and about Antarctica has been one of two sorts: science writers and journalists from prestigious publications invited down formally with national scientific expeditions, recounting the difficulty of scientific work, the extreme conditions and the majesty of the environment (National Science Foundation 2018), or independent adventurers engaging in various activities from marathons to more mystical quests. One example, "Breaking the Ice," was a privately funded 2004 Palestinian-Israeli ascent of a never-before-scaled Antarctic peak, and typifies the notion of Antarctica as specific backdrop to adventurous activities—a backdrop that raises the stakes of any activity simply because it is happening in Antarctica. (At the top of the peak, this statement was released to the media: "We have proven that Palestinians and Israelis can cooperate with one another with mutual respect and trust" [Anon 2004]).

The idea of an Antarctic backdrop lending a sense of glamour and adventurousness to unrelated or unremarkable objects and activities has deep historic and cultural roots. For instance, it is impossible to imagine a museum in New Zealand compelling visitors to come take a look at a century-old fruitcake from France. Yet, in 2019 what was called "the world's most famous fruitcake," retrieved from Antarctica after being frozen there for over one hundred years, was prominently marketed as a reason to come to "Breaking the Ice: The First Year in Antarctica," by the Canterbury Museum and the Antarctic Heritage Trust (Canterbury Museum 2019). The fact that both examples discussed here adopted the same title—"Breaking the Ice"—is also telling of the limits of language and shortfalls in human imagination when it comes to ice metaphors and narratives.

If You Can Make It Here, You Can Make It Anywhere

On Ross Island, steam tendrils slowly unfurl from the cone of the Earth's southernmost active volcano, 12,450-foot Mount Erebus. The sea and island are named after James Clark Ross, the British explorer who first recorded these coastlines, and the ageing *Greenpeace* takes its name from the environmental protest group formed in Canada in the 1970s. The early Antarctic explorers followed the colonial mandate around human relational identity to land: territorial expansion and concomitant land claims; potential discovery of sealing and whaling resources; and promotion within the Admiralty, as well as the elevation of individual status. Antarctic explorers returned to theatres packed by a public eager to hear their stories and watch their lantern-slide presentations; they returned as celebrities.

The Antarctic, the only continent without widespread human presence and the related environmental destruction, had long been targeted for special protections by varied groups, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and environmentalists, including the renowned French underwater explorer Jacques Cousteau. The World Park concept can be traced to the Second World Conference on National Parks in 1972, where it was supported by other NGOs, such as the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition (ASOC), to focus global negotiations around Antarctica on environmental stewardship and protection.

The Greenpeace World Park base was constructed during the 1987 austral summer. They were not welcomed to the Antarctic community. According to the official Greenpeace history of the campaign, this was "[n]ot least because countries that already had bases in the region were unanimously hostile to the idea of being Greenpeace's neighbour on the ice. Officially they made it known that they didn't want to mount rescue missions should something go wrong, but their antagonism also masked their reluctance to encourage outside scrutiny" (Greenpeace 2017). As an ASOC statement to the media during the XXVI Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting in Madrid recounts: "Before we left port in New Zealand, officials from the American and New Zealand Antarctic government agencies came to the ship and articulated this message to the crew: *Don't count on any help if you and your old ship get into trouble on this journey. You are on your own*" (Greenpeace 2017). Greenpeace's base also placed pressure on the Antarctic Treaty nations to make stewardship and protection their target at international policy-maker meetings, a shift from the then-current debate about resource exploitation and regulations around future mining scenarios.

Back to Cape Evans, circa 1988: as we dropped anchor on that January day, grey inflatable boats stamped with *Greenpeace* in white were lowered into the denim-blue sea by crane and the crew hustled to pull on orange survival suits. It is one thing to see photos of activists scrambling into small boats on churning seas, heading towards a small base built by hand on a remote ice-covered island and continent, and quite another thing to witness it. What we knew in 1988 was that things looked very grim for World Park Antarctica and persistent physical protest seemed to be the only imperative.

The plan was that we journalists would be dropped off on shore in advance of the crew, to get the best angle on recording the reunion. This staging followed a long regional tradition, in that the composition of Antarctic photographs dating to the early twentieth century "Heroic Age" of exploration were designed to create an aesthetic of "man" versus fierce "wild nature"—nature in this case played by gigatons of ice. Herbert Ponting, who travelled with Robert Falcon Scott on the *Terra Nova* expedition (1910–1913) as documentarian, in one famous image used the ice as "proscenium" showing Scott's ship *Terra Nova* within an eerie ice frame, as though on stage.

Greenpeace named their hut World Park Base—which they had painted an ugly shade of hospital-ward pale green ("donated paint," I was told, in

what seemed like a rare slip in an otherwise aesthetically tight operation). It stood adjacent Robert Falcon Scott's historic hut at Cape Evans—a modest wooden structure built in 1910 and now known as *Terra Nova* hut, after the expedition ship. From here Scott and a small expedition had left on their ill-fated quest to be first to the South Pole. Greenpeace's adjacency elicited outrage from US officials at nearby McMurdo Station. However, when World Park Base was carefully assessed by the United States Navy, which in 1988 acted as support for the US National Science Foundation, it was found to have the best communications equipment in the region. Its main purpose? To disseminate news of environmental degradation and ongoing actions by the group to get a complex clean-up started by the US and New Zealand in the Ross Sea region (Browne 1989).[1]

Another purpose of World Park Base was simply presence on the ice continent. The stakes were high for Greenpeace—as they were for all the environmentalists working determinedly to beat back an international mining protocol for the Antarctic region. The negotiations around mining were due to take place in formal meetings of the treaty nations. As mentioned earlier, in order to join this group—to have a say—a full-time, twelve-month presence on the ice is required.

If It Bleeds, It Leads

When Greenpeace was initially founded in Canada as a splinter group of the Canadian Sierra Club, Robert Hunter, one of the founders, brought a journalistic mindset to the group. He instilled in the group that dissemination of their work via the mainstream media was essential work (Hunter 1979). His fellow Canadian, the media theorist Marshall McLuhan, author of *The Medium Is the Massage* (McLuhan and Fiore 1967), was one of Hunter's influences. "Today, the instantaneous world of electric information media involves all of us, all at once," wrote McLuhan: "Ours is a brand-new world of all-at-onceness. Time, in a sense, has ceased and space has vanished" (quoted in "McLuhan on McLuhanism" 1966).

In his book, *Warriors of the Rainbow: A Chronicle of the Greenpeace Movement* (1979), Hunter recalls precisely when Greenpeace became an international movement because of a series of images. Greenpeace activists had located a Russian whaling ship sixty miles off the coast of Mendocino, California. Hunter and another activist set off in an inflatable boat, to position themselves between the whaling ship and the whales. They believed that their presence would stop the Russians from firing the

harpoon. They were wrong. The harpoonist fired off his weapon, missing the men by five feet, and striking a whale. Hunter recalled how the cameraman was able to capture both the weapon hurling towards them and then the hit, with blood gushing into the air. Hunter states:

> With the single act of filming ourselves in front of the harpoon, we had entered the mass consciousness of modern America—something that none of our previous expeditions had achieved. It was Walter Cronkite himself who introduced our footage to the mass TV audience, footage that was then run on every single television channel in the U.S. and Canada, spilling over in Europe and even Japan. (Hunter 1979, p. 231)

The Russians responded by not killing whales when Greenpeace was in the vicinity. This prompted Greenpeace activists to try meeting with and talking to the Russian whalers, then capturing these discussions on video and film. These images were ignored by the media. Hunter wrote, "If there was any lesson to be learned, or relearned, it was that the mass media, by and large, was not interested in diplomatic exchanges between adversaries… . The only thing besides sex, politics, and sports that grabbed its attention, made its juices run, was violence. A harpoon fired in the vicinity of human flesh was a news flash. Dialogue was not news … " (quoted in Dale 1996, p. 89).

Early media success came as the environmentalists fought to outlaw sealing and whaling. Through these visual images, which Hunter called "mind bombs" (quoted in Zelko 2013, p. 173), Greenpeace indelibly attached gruesome images, both photography and videos, to the terms "sealing" and "whaling." By travelling to remote or occluded parts of the environment, they vividly illustrated what "sealing" and "whaling" actually were—what it meant when people said they were engaged in these activities. The word *whaling* then meant *killing*, blood-slick decks of factory ships, whales pierced and writhing after being hit by high-powered harpoons, blood gushing from gashes in enormous whale backs. The same held true for sealing: fluffy white seal pups looked on with liquid eyes as men armed with knives and clubs killed them for their fur.

Embedding journalists into Greenpeace's campaigns was, then, a well-practiced tactic and would play a key role in the theatre of their Antarctic campaign: a camera crew from Maryland Public Television, an Associated Press photographer, an Italian reporter from Milan and me, an American writer and photographer.

And It Begins

The Antarctic does not look, on most days, like the coffee-table books, nor the "nature" documentaries. It's a maritime ecology and many days the sky is leaden. We drop anchor under such a nickel-plated sky. The Greenpeace base, operational at that point for one year, looks particularly small and vulnerable with Mount Erebus, Antarctica's most active volcano, steaming in the background. While we are here, mining negotiations continue apace.

It is January, the start of the Greenpeace ship's month in the region, and a cold, dry wind pushes around blown snow, creating the effect of a light snowfall. In Antarctica—a vast desert—there is only the smallest chance of actual snowfall. The ice began forming 45 million years ago during the Eocene and picked up the pace during the Eocene-Oligocene extinction event. Approximately 61 percent of the Earth's freshwater is frozen into Antarctic ice (Fretwell et al. 2013).

The Greenpeace crew—thirty-two people from the United States, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Spain, New Zealand, Australia, Poland, Argentina and Germany—sail to publicise these ecologies and the proposed minerals regime being negotiated by the Antarctic Treaty nations. What was the convention? Briefly, it was a negotiated set of rules to manage future minerals exploitation. In 1988, there were not the actual technologies to extract oil and gas from the Antarctic. But the consensus among Greenpeace activists is that a legal framework to regulate these activities would serve as a catalyst to develop and deploy them. Therefore, the mounting stakes of minerals exploitation being regulated by a new convention weigh heavily on the crew. They have spent months preparing to support the administrative agenda by creating and enacting the public and behind-the-curtain work of social action protests. Conversation is laced with expletives when it comes to the mining protocol and the general human behaviours of exploitation seen in the rubbish and loose ecological processes at the government bases.

Once we set the anchor, the crew scrambles into action. I am immediately directed to an inflatable boat with the photographer from the Associated Press (AP) and the camera crew from Maryland Public Television. It is a short ride across relatively flat seas, then we hop out on the steep, black, rocky beach, and are told to grab the small boat's painter line and haul it higher onto the beach. This scrappy media team then trudges to the four overwinterers—their faces wind-burned and ruddy,

the three men bearded, their clothes grubby from fieldwork. I awkwardly greet these four who have shared each other's company for the past year, and the strain of their isolation is palpable. On the sea voyage down, crew had briefed me on the alliances, resentments and intimate connections typical of capsular living. The base occupants had each been selected for the skills they brought to the expedition: a German marine biologist for assaying outflow pipes for pollutants at other bases, a Dutch radio operator for all communications, a New Zealand mechanic for maintaining generators and other equipment vital for survival, and a New Zealand mountain climber to lead fieldwork. But they had not endured the sort of rigorous psychological testing that occurred within government operations in Antarctica. Their struggles were characterised as a learning experience for Greenpeace, as the organisation gained valuable expertise in how to select and train an overwintering party.

The months alone are painted across their expressions, in the way they hold their gaze, on us, the new people, for longer than one might in warmer climes: eyes searching our faces, eyes averted away from each other. I recall reading how capsular living in the dark caused for some a condition akin to extreme cabin fever. Over the coming weeks, what is most noticeable is their muted behaviour juxtaposed with their dramatic thoughts. They seem to consider me, a journalist, as a kind of confidant who will automatically understand their sometimes paranoid ideas. As I walk down the narrow ship's alleyways, a door might crack open revealing one of the overwinterers who will gesture to me to come in because they have some story they want me to "break," which often involves complex details of what the Greenpeace base is *actually* there for. I find it humorous but it makes the Greenpeace political staff nervous. So I then spend time explaining how there is no newspaper or magazine in the world that would run a story about "secret missions" at the Greenpeace base. Crazy talk, I add. *All crazy talk.*

The staging of the news photo of the reunion has been carefully planned by the Antarctic campaign director. The four would stand on the beach, waving, with the cameras set behind them, their arms aloft, making excited, sweeping gestures towards the distant ship. But once on shore, the conversation shifts: Is the waving perhaps a boring photo? Will newspapers run it? Does it lack a feeling of urgency? The other journalists and I discuss this. It was not necessarily boring, I argue. Many papers would run this as a stand-alone with a longer caption describing the who, what, where. But on further discussion, the idea is hatched to throw snowballs

at the approaching inflatables bringing familiar Greenpeace compadres from the ship. This playfulness inherent to Greenpeace actions is a tactic that mirrors performative, historic movements like the Dadaists.

As the inflatable skims towards the shore, we get our cameras ready. The prow nudges onto the black beach and the bundled crew jump into the shallow waters, moving towards the four on shore and grabbing and hugging and jumping up and down; the snowball ammunition is never deployed. But the campaign director is not so sure it worked. He asks the AP photographer what it looked like. The photographer feels it was a jumbled mess of sorts. So the decision is made to do it again. After some stage direction about slowing down movements, the boats head out and turn around, and Greenpeace stages another landing. This time we get our shots.

Enter the Scientists

The target for actions in the Ross Sea—outside the kinetic performance of building and maintaining a research station—is the US McMurdo Station, a mere eighteen miles from World Park Base. I fly there over many mornings to take photos, lifting off in one of two orange helicopters Greenpeace had brought south on the ship. We fly in a slow line along the face of the stunning Barne Glacier (Fig. 1). At this point, in 1988, McMurdo is operated through a joint engagement of the US National Science Foundation (NSF) and the US Navy. Over the radio, we are informed that the Greenpeace helicopter is not to land at McMurdo. However, the pilot politely ignores this request. This is part of the action at McMurdo: access for journalists to the site regardless of whether the officials wanted to grant it. Waiting on the ground are the base leader, some other administrators and a group of Navy support personnel looking vaguely uncomfortable. I have been told what to do: walk past them; they cannot legally stop you. It's not their territory per the terms of the Antarctic Treaty.

While the National Science Foundation publicly shared concerns about the effect of tourism on Antarctic ecologies, conservationists, including Greenpeace, raised the alarm on the environmental impacts at their bases, including McMurdo (Tangley 1988, p. 500). The McMurdo dump was a massive open-cast pit where scientists and support staff discarded and burned trash. The photos received widespread coverage in newspapers and magazines around the world. One particular image shows about eighteen Greenpeace crew bundled in hats and mittens, holding a sign in front of

Fig. 1 A Greenpeace helicopter in front of the Barne Glacier. (Photo: Leslie Carol Roberts)

the dump. The sign is bright yellow and in black lettering states, *World Park Antarctica*. Adding to the scene, there are half a dozen smaller posters in French, with hand-painted lettering stating: "Exploration Minerale NON!" ["No Mining in Antarctica"]. The sign sits across the lateral midpoint of the frame, with brown-black dirt strewn with bits of rubbish in the foreground, and the dump rising in the background. Above the dump, hills of the same brown-black soil stretch up towards a leaden sky. There is little ice to be seen. It jolts the viewer in a particular way, by failing to depict an ice dreamscape surrounded by seas packed with penguins and whales. Instead, this photo invites interpretations, such as, *this is what happens when you let people work in an unregulated way*. Greenpeace then took direct quotes from the NSF scientists who ran McMurdo—rebutting Greenpeace's photos and statements of the mess—and ironically juxtaposed signs sharing these words beside garbage in Antarctica: "As far as we know, we've lived up to laws and regulations." McMurdo seemed to be custom-designed to play the role of bad ecological behaviours. We marched to the base's Ice Wharf and recorded images across McMurdo

Sound: discarded auto parts, seemingly hurled into the water, an old lorry and a tractor are visible through the water. This was one of the modes of waste disposal: put it on the sea ice, then the ice melts in spring and the lorry vanishes.

In April 1988, legendary *Washington Post* columnist and muckraker Jack Anderson reported on this tension between Greenpeace and the NSF scientists, who defended themselves as having inherited a mess from the US Navy, long in charge of Antarctic logistics. According to his report, "The first Greenpeace crew found what [Greenpeace spokesman Paul] Bogart called 'a staggering situation' at McMurdo. NSF has since made some changes, including installing a grinder that chews up the sewage before it is dumped into McMurdo Sound. Bogart thinks the changes are largely cosmetic" (Anderson and Van Atta 1988).

Greenpeace actions included performances of help: let us help you clean up. Bogart noted that the Greenpeace crew had offered to take a ship's worth of rubbish back to New Zealand to properly dispose of it, but the scientists at McMurdo refused the offer. Greenpeace also began to engage with the residuals of the pollution—from the water contamination to the refuse. Photos depict Greenpeace activists gathering rubbish, which included scraps of blown paper, then stacking piles on the base leader's vestibule. These photos offer a subtle and ironic statement, while also engaging in the improvisational spirit offered by a site like McMurdo. On the one hand, the crew was deeply connected to a timeline and an orderly set of time-based tasks. On the other, they were scouting the scene for threads of narrative to spontaneously exploit.

The Outflow Pipes

Political actions by Greenpeace lead the camera to the source of the problem—to the site where the ecological insult occurs. At McMurdo, the first outflow target is a large sewage pipe, pumping, literally, crap into McMurdo Sound. This scenario—untreated human waste in pristine McMurdo Sound—offers a theatre of the grotesque that is captured in images and in the language used to detail it (e.g. Browne 1989).[2]

Picture this: a single activist, astraddle the pipe, shimmy-hopping up on the pipe to the outflow, then holding a vial, collecting samples. In these photos, the actor has her back to the camera or is in silhouette, and the eye is drawn to the action of the movement, to the act of getting that sample, to the effluent flow.

In Antarctica, with scant industrial targets, McMurdo stands out as a peculiarly oversized jumble of junk, Jamesway huts and a nondescript sprawl of dormitories, labs, shops and common buildings. When I was asked about my impression of it later, I compared it to an imagined coal mining settlement on an exo-planet—a transitory place where people came to do specific projects and jobs before returning home. There was no feeling of ownership. It was too grubby for that.

Another kind of outflow pipe—this time for fuel—drips a steady stream of diesel onto the Ice Wharf. In August 1988, the *Washington Post* highlighted a report from the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) stating that McMurdo Sound, adjacent to the US base, was more polluted than virtually any US waterway, and that highly toxic polychlorinated biphenyls and heavy metals were being found in the tissues of penguins and seals. The paper quoted Bruce Manheim, the report's author and an EDF attorney and scientist: "It is incredible that these practices are observed by the U.S. government in the most pristine environment in the world" (Manheim 1988). It was against this backdrop that Greenpeace constructed their base on Ross Island.

A Simple but Complex Theatre of Shame

One of the core methods of persuasion used in ecological battles is shame. In an interview, Jennifer Jacquet, author of *Is Shame Necessary: New Uses for an Old Tool* (2015), notes: "The real power of shame is it can scale. It can work against entire countries and can be used by the weak against the strong" (Corbyn 2015). Shame is the deeply felt experience of being judged, or the fear of being judged, as defective. It is also the act of being judged for who we are, not for what we have done. It aligns with ecological destruction in that it points towards a deep flaw in the individuals enacting the destruction. And it is effective: naming and shaming corruption, privilege and wrongs is used in social justice movements to force individual, organisational and governmental change.

Greenpeace had critical distance from its earlier targets because the organisation never took funds from corporations and did not need to develop a relationship with either the whalers or the sealers whose method for making a living fell in opposition to their belief that seals and whales had the right to live free from human predation. However, using shame to shape behaviours in Antarctica was more complex for a number of reasons. The Antarctic was, in the late 1980s, a place already lauded as a model for

international cooperation, per the Antarctic Treaty that came into force in 1961. In addition, the main residents of Antarctic bases were and are scientists studying Antarctic ecologies. Where sealers and whalers were in the business of animal slaughter for profit, Antarctic scientists were taking on many forms of privation in the pursuit of knowledge—not only to benefit their own careers as scientists, but also to contribute to greater understanding of the Earth's systems for the larger good. Finally, Greenpeace was equally trying to be part of the "Antarctic club" of nations that governs the continent, with their policy analysts arm-twisting delegates at the various meetings. And then there was the fact that, from the 1950s to the early 1980s, "looking the other way" around Antarctic environmental pollution was the norm for the treaty nations. Whistleblowing was not part of the culture.

So as the Greenpeace actions started in earnest in the Ross Sea, and focused on tactical mind bombs (May 1988) and protests at the McMurdo dump, shaming was the main mode—a way of asking the US to change waste-removal policies, while lobbying all Antarctic Treaty nations to declare the continent a World Park. With Greenpeace self-cast as "Antarctic shamer," the government research base managers, scientists and their workers would be called out and publicised, and become targets of protest. As detailed by Elspeth Probyn in her book *Blush* (2005), this sort of shaming occurs when people are held accountable for not displaying the appropriate emotional response. It was not possible for any inhabitant of McMurdo—scientist, staff or navy personnel—to claim they did not "know" about the dump or the rubbish, nor about the outflow pipes and the habit of putting old lorries on the ice and waiting for the spring melt to come at which point—poof!—the lorries vanished into the sound.

The Greenpeace Antarctic theatrics successfully mobilised diverse environmentalists and impacted the treaty nations' meetings where the minerals regime was being formulated. The Greenpeace campaign became a rallying point for political action in world capitals. There was the shame of the individual scientists working in Antarctica and there was the larger shame cast on the Antarctic Treaty nations as inept stewards of the continent so often described as "pristine." If this was the filth in which they conducted science, what would happen when mining companies entered the picture? This was the question of the hour: we are already making a mess; won't extraction technologies simply be a bigger and more horrifying attack on the continent and the surrounding oceans?

And It's a Wrap

On 1 June, two months after we returned from the Antarctic, the language for the Convention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities was adopted and over the following months was signed by nineteen nations (Zang 1991). Greenpeace stayed in the region until 1991, before dismantling their base and restoring the site. Their departure was catalysed by a rapid and complete about-face on the Convention. Australia and France, initially part of the negotiations leading up to the Convention, now refused to sign it. No states ratified it, and it never entered into force. Three years later, in October 1991, representatives of the thirty-nine member-nations that had signed the Antarctic Treaty finalised a diplomatic agreement for the comprehensive Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty, which included an indefinite moratorium on all mining and oil exploration in the Antarctic region.

Greenpeace actions in Antarctica were one of multiple factors leading to the policy about-turn (the Exxon Valdez disaster in Alaska being another). Lou Sanson, Chief Executive of Antarctica New Zealand for 11 years, now CEO at the New Zealand Department of Conservation, offered some thoughts on Greenpeace's legacy in Antarctica. "They have never, ever gotten the credit they deserve for pressing the U.S., New Zealand, and others to clean up their environmental pollution. Their pressure, brought to bear through the World Park base campaign with its journos and electrifying photos, is widely viewed as crucial to the turn from a mining conversation to a protected environment conversation. What they accomplished is astonishing given the difficulty of living and working in Antarctica" (Sanson 2019).

Antarctica is currently in a different kind of precarious position. In February 2020, a heat wave hit the continent and temperatures rose to 64.9 degrees on the Antarctic Peninsula (Readfearn 2020). In 1988, when I called editors about sending photos and features about Antarctica, about half of them would ask me: is that the North or the South Pole? Now when I mention my Antarctic research, there is no confusion about where it is nor what impacts climate change is having on the gigatons of ice that blanket the rocky continent—which raises some thoughts about whether it is time for World Park Base II.

Notes

1. The 2016 viral images of the global Women's March in Antarctica exemplify this idea of how Antarctic imagery, properly disseminated, travels fast: the pink hats against blue ice and bluer water in the summer cold of Antarctica held a particular, higher status among images from the hundreds of marches all over the world.
2. In this same report, covering an initial two-year period of clean-up and better ecological management by the Americans at McMurdo—which directly coincides with Greenpeace's arrival, actions and global dissemination of environmental degradation in 1987, their return in 1988 to build their base and more actions—there is no mention of Greenpeace as catalyst for this.

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Hiking Beyond Roads and Internet: Weather, Landscapes and Performance North of the Arctic Circle

Willmar Sauter

After a long day's travelling by air, bus and boat, and finally on foot, we had reached the first cabin of our Padjelanta hiking tour. Padjelanta, meaning "the upper land" in the Sámi language, is a national park in Lapland in the north of Sweden, far above the Arctic Circle.[1] We had decided to cross it from north to south during one summer week. Quite exhausted by our first uphill walk, we were finally sitting at a table in the cabin, staring out the window. There was nothing to be seen except for a wall of whitish-grey fog. Our more knowledgeable friends told us that we were looking towards Akka, one of the highest mountains in Sweden. Akka is also the name of the leader of the flock of geese that flew Nils Holgersson over Sweden in the novel by Swedish Nobel laureate, Selma Lagerlöf. When the thick fog had moved a little, we caught a glimpse of a creek bouncing down the mountain, swollen with icy water from a melting glacier. Some scattered shafts of sunlight followed. The mist outside our window now

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arranged a rare spectacle that any set designer would envy. A gentle wind moved the fog like lace curtains at an open window. Some bushes became visible at the foot of the mountain, but the more the sagging mist revealed of the uphill stony slopes, the less vegetation could be seen. The wind-driven shreds of fog mocked our imagination. The peak of a mountain came into view but disappeared quickly again. Finally, the icy glacier glittered at the top of Akka, illuminated by the evening sun, like a mirror reflecting the white Nordic light.

The wanderers who watched this spectacular view of Akka were my wife and our very close friends. Together the four of us have travelled and hiked for many years in Europe, Africa and Latin America. I am a theatre and performance scholar with little familiarity with the northern landscapes of Sweden, but our friends—one of whom is a botanist and the other (like my wife) a medical practitioner—have long experience of the Swedish mountain range. Although we prefer to see ourselves as (re-) searchers or explorers, our hiking takes place in our leisure time, far away from home and for pure pleasure. Like many tourists, we resist this label, but our activities certainly meet the general definition of tourism.

On the following pages I want to show how intimately the experience of nature is related to the individuals who undertake wandering of this kind. The viewing of landscapes is understood as a performative activity that includes the positions and conditions of the viewer. As in other performances, the communication between appearance and beholder takes place on sensory, aesthetic and symbolic levels, in a way that fascinated me and my friends both during the week of our hike and while I was attempting to describe these experiences later on.

Agency and Time

There were three agents involved in this dramatic display of a mountain top: the landscape, the weather and the hiker. Much of this chapter is devoted to the interactions of these agents in relation to packed ice, frozen snow and melting water in a performance of knowledge in relation to moving through a landscape. The aesthetics of this travel are in constant flux. At Akka, it was obvious that the weather (mainly the fog and the wind) were in motion, while the hiker and the landscape remained in their fixed positions.

As the term indicates, the hiker is usually also on the move, but how can we imagine moving landscapes? When we stand still and the weather is

fine, or when we sit on a terrace in the sun, the picture we see is stationary. The view is static, stable, frozen: this is the way landscapes have looked for thousands of years. Well, the question is: how many thousand years? From a longer perspective we understand that the earth has changed continuously, but are we aware that these changes also occurred in our prehistory? Here, I am speaking only of the Quaternary Ice Age of the Pleistocene period, which in Scandinavia ended dramatically in about 9000 BCE. Scandinavia and Finland, northern Germany and Poland, the Netherlands and the British Isles were covered by ice for thousands of years.[2] The thickness of this ice measured 2000–3000 metres and the weight of these gigantic ice masses pressed the land down several hundred metres. During the melting process of the ice, numerous inland lakes remained, which were surrounded by the Norwegian mountain range to the west and the leftover inland ice to the east. These freshwater lakes covered large parts of northern Sweden, shaping the present-day landscape of Padjelanta: the water washed the tops of the mountains clean of whatever earth the ice had left; thus, the mountain region is bare of trees and bushes. Around 8000 BCE, the last ice to the east melted, and the water masses flushed rocks and rubble towards the Baltic Sea.

When the rest of the ice had melted away, the next phase of the changing landscape began: vegetation spread out, animals inhabited the empty spaces and eventually humans arrived—we will meet all of them later on our hike.

Crossing a Creek

While geological changes take millions of years, climatic changes occur much more quickly, if a timespan of some thousand years can be called quick. Nevertheless, since the end of the Ice Age, the climate in Sweden has changed several times, also in relation to the temperature of today. It has been both significantly warmer—during the Bronze Age, 2000–500 BCE—and significantly colder, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries AD. Most noticeable to us, however, are the atmospheric changes—that is, the seasons of the year and the daily weather.

In scientific terms, these three phases correspond with the various *durées* presented by Fernand Braudel in his influential book on the Mediterranean (1949). Braudel distinguishes between the long term (*longue durée*), such as environmental changes; lesser periods of economic and social changes; and finally short-term changes, such as individual

events that bring about immediate modifications of history. The geological, climatic and atmospheric changes mentioned above signify in a similar way the changes of various *durées*, but here also the interfoliation of these changes must be accounted for. The climatic changes follow and counteract geological conditions and the "weather" changes every day—but only within the limits that geography and climate allow for.

It seemed possible that we would experience the physical effects of these climatic changes during the next few days of our hike. When one follows the marked hiking trail to the next cabin—a walk of about 15–25 kilometres with a backpack of around 15 kilograms—one will sooner or later come to a creek with water rushing down the hillside, then to a bigger creek, to a small river, to a wild waterfall and eventually to a lake that is part of an entire lake system in Lapland. In the winter these creeks are frozen and, like the lakes, can be crossed on skis, sledges or snowmobiles. In the summer, one has to look for a fordable place and cross the creek on foot. Usually it is enough to step from one stone to another to reach the other side. But during the days we were hiking in Padjelanta, the weather was unusually "hot" at twenty degrees centigrade (really hot in those areas!). One effect of the blazing sunshine was that the glaciers and the snowfields in the top range of the mountains melted faster than normal, filling the creeks with rushing icy water. The stepping stones on which one could otherwise cross the creek were flooded by roaring water. We had to take off our hiking boots, roll up our pants, put on plastic sandals to protect our feet and step into the water. When balancing on the loose stones at the bottom of the creek, with 15 kilograms on your back and your feet in water of zero degrees, two minutes is a long time and five minutes is an eternity. In retrospect, this might be the perfect illustration of the interaction between the hiker, the landscape and the weather in an uncompromising performance with nature.

From the perspective of the *longue durée*, even the landscape has changed. Today, the water of the mountains rushes towards the sea following different channels than it did at the end of the last Nordic Ice Age in the late sixteenth century. For thousands of years, the water of the sea was frozen to ice and the weight of the ice pressed the land down. But ever since the ice melted away, the land has risen again out of the sea, and this process continues in the present—only by approximately half a centimetre per year, but that makes half a metre in a hundred years and five metres in a thousand years. Since the end of the Ice Age—approximately ten thousand years ago—the Swedish landscape has regained fifty of the two

hundred metres it had been pressed down towards the inner spheres of the earth. At the same time, the melting ice has refilled the sea, not least the Baltic. Together, these long-term movements have completely changed the coastlines of Scandinavia, and these processes continue today. Drying our freezing feet and putting on our hiking boots, we continued to the next creek, on and on until we eventually reached the next cabin in the late afternoon.

Cultivating Nature

The next morning was dark and dull. Heavy clouds surrounded the cabin and rain drops could be heard on the window ledge. We ate our porridge with dried apples and powdered milk—energising, tasty and almost weightless in our rucksacks. Water, by the way, does not need to be carried because the water in all the creeks and lakes is drinkable and naturally chilled. After some reluctance, we were back on our trail, seeing nothing but the stones and roots on the track. Our raincoats protected us from the wet weather.

After an hour or so we arrived at a fence with a gate. Since the trail continued on the other side, we opened the gate, went in and closed it again carefully so that we were now inside—but inside what? On closer inspection (or just drying the raindrops on our glasses) it turned out that this was an enclosure used by the Sámi people for gathering their herds of reindeers.

Besides pulling the heavy sleigh of Santa Claus in Disney cartoons, reindeer are indeed remarkable animals. In geographical terms they are spread throughout the circumpolar north, from Siberia and Scandinavia to Greenland and North America. They are thoroughly adapted to a life in ice and snow: their air-filled fur keeps them warm and with their broad hooves they can dig for food, even in deep flurries. In summer, they move to high mountains to escape from flies and mosquitos; in winter they return to the forests in the valleys. They roam about the mountains as if they were wild animals, although each one now belongs to a particular owner. During the warm season, the herds seek out the remaining snowfields, and even the edges of glaciers, in order to get rid of the plague of insects that harasses them. In autumn, they move closer to the coast, driven by hunger to find grass, herbs and the important ground lichen.

Originally, they conducted these seasonal migrations on their own, but today railway lines, roads and the changing waters of power stations

interfere with their natural pathways. The reindeer-keepers direct them with dogs and helicopters. In May the reindeer calves are born, and run freely after their mothers. When they are big enough, the Sámi reindeer owners gather the herds in fenced-in areas like the one we had just entered. They chase them into a narrow spot where they can get hold of the calves in order to mark them with their individual family sign. For many Sámi people the ownership of reindeer is profound, and the marking of the calves is a significant event in Sámi life. They follow the herds up into the mountains in the summer, where they live a few months in provisional settlements called *visten*. We met the inhabitants of such a settlement later in the afternoon. For the time being, we continued hiking, watched occasionally by a group of reindeer standing with their backs against the rain and probably wondering who these four rucksack-bearing hikers might be.

The rainy weather dominated the landscape completely until noon when, all of a sudden, the clouds parted and blue holes appeared at the horizon. As we unpacked our lunch and started our gas burner, the landscape opened up, the sun looked out and we experienced another of these swift changes of weather for which the mountain range is famous.

Landscape Aesthetics

The change of scenery from reindeer eating in the rain to a spectacular sunlit mountain range, including rocks, boulders and stones, glaciers, waterfalls and lakes, is the effective work of nature: the weather as stage designer. The similarity to a historical theatre is striking, and it puts one in mind of the magnificent eighteenth-century theatre of Drottningholm, with its original stage machinery. Just as the ropes, moved by the invisible capstan, manoeuvre the flat wings into a new position to display a new endless perspective, the retreating clouds expose completely new scenery. In the case of the open change of flat wings (a *changement à vue*) in the Drottningholm Court Theatre, we would not hesitate to speak about the aesthetics of the eighteenth century. Standing on a hill in Padjelanta, overlooking a panorama of mountains and lakes, prompts a similar notion of beauty. But is it reasonable to speak of aesthetic experience in front of nature?

Moses Mendelssohn, whose children received their musical education from the sons of Johann Sebastian Bach and who himself died three years before the French Revolution, was one of the earliest philosophers to write about aesthetics as a philosophical discourse.[3] For Mendelssohn, this

also included the experience of nature, although aesthetically his main interest was directed towards traditional art objects like paintings and poems. He related aesthetic experience to beauty—which was quite common at the time—stating, "It [beauty] enchants us in nature, where we find it originally, albeit slightly distracted" (Mendelssohn 2006, p. 189).[4] Important here is the "we find it," meaning that it is the beholder who realises the beauty and thus creates the aesthetic experience. Immanuel Kant supports this view in his famous *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (1790). For both philosophers it is the aesthetic experience that constitutes the basis of aesthetics, not the observed object alone. Mendelssohn goes so far as to assume that our capacity to experience beauty in nature has positive effects on our morals and our sense of justice. Only when the German idealists after Friedrich Schiller turned their primary attention to the artwork, which the beholder has to learn to appreciate, were the aesthetic values of nature marginalised.

Standing on a melting patch of snow, overlooking the vast waters of Lake Vastenjaure, I found myself in the middle of an age-old philosophical discourse: the beauty of nature as aesthetic experience. Padjelanta cannot be reduced to a picture postcard; it has to be experienced. Just as a postcard does not do justice to great works of art, it is the personal confrontation—including the touch of the icy water and the smell of melting snow—that enlarges the experience into an aesthetic sensation. And I like the idea that the pleasure of viewing sunlit glaciers would improve my social sensibilities—hoping that Moses Mendelssohn was right.

Ice for Living

The way to the Staloluokta Sámi settlement with its stately hostel for hikers was longer than we expected. We could see the village at Lake Virihaure long before we arrived. Maybe it was this view that made the last section of the trail so tiresome. In contrast to the cabins along the way, where only volunteer hosts kept some order amongst the visitors, Staloluokta is a settlement with inhabitants who stay there for the entire summer.

For Sámi people, the experience of time appears in great measure to be circular. Of course, the individual person relates to the linear time of birth and death, but for the reindeer-keeping Sámi, the continuous change of the seasons is a dominant feature of life. In autumn, when the reindeer have returned to the lowland forests, the Sámi also return to their houses and the children go to school. Life has a certain regularity, including the

autumn slaughter of the reindeer and the distribution of the meat (we usually buy a box of 10–15 kilos, which the producer delivers to Stockholm in person). Snow comes early in the north of Sweden, mostly in September, while daylight rapidly gets shorter and shorter. In November the sun disappears completely—and only reappears in February. In the middle of the day, the snow lights up the landscape for a few hours. While the time around midwinter enforces some passivity concerning outdoor activities, early spring gets very busy. Daylight gets longer while snow covers the ground and ice transforms lakes and rivers into the main transport routes. This is the period when snowmobiles are heard all over the mountains. They move easily in this winter landscape, transporting all that is necessary for the next summer. As soon as the snow melts and the ice on the lakes is washed away, all transport is by boat or on foot—or, today, by helicopter (inside the national parks, only the Sámi people are allowed to fly helicopters).

Finally, the snow is gone—this can be as late as May sometimes, and in some places even June—and the Sámi reindeer-keepers follow their herds up into the mountains. In former times the summer settlement consisted of "cots"; that is, tent-like huts built of the scarce sticks that can be found locally, tightened with mud and grass. Today, Staloluokta is a gathering of small houses, albeit without electricity and internet access. When we approached the village, we met a number of youngsters travelling in the opposite direction to reach the reindeer enclosure for the marking of the calves. Formerly, this was an arduous task that was carried out with dogs; today the gathering of the herds is accomplished by low-flying helicopters. But the festivities that accompany this occasion are the same.

In Staloluokta we had the chance to buy freshly smoked char (fish) and soft, round bread cakes that were baked over an open fire. The woman who sold these and other items to the hikers coming through the settlement told us that she stays up in the mountains for about three months. Her husband keeps the reindeer with the help of their son, while their teenage daughter spends her time either with her mother or with other youngsters in the village. Lately, new technologies have been installed, such as solar cells producing electricity and improved accessibility to the world wide web. We saw a television antenna on the roof of her house and asked whether they had watched the football world championship in Brazil that was nearing the final games. No, she knew nothing about football, but her son had seen the game last night. She called out her son's name with a surprisingly loud voice that could be heard all over the place. The

son's response came from an earth closet further up the hill. He opened the door and shouted back the result of the match and how crazy the game was that he had seen on television. After a while he came down to us and told us more details about the football championship that we had missed because we were cut off from the internet.

We also asked whether her husband might be willing to take us on a boat trip on the lovely Lake Virihaure, and especially to the narrow strait where the waters of the lake in front of us rush down thirty metres to Lake Vastenjaure—the lake we had admired as an aesthetic view the day before. But her husband could not help us at this time of the year, because the marking of the reindeer calves demanded all his attention. His brother-in-law was not interested in giving us a ride either; he had just caught 86 char and was busy packing them into boxes so he could transport them to his home in one of the coastal towns on the Baltic Sea. In a few hours the helicopter would fly him to the carpark where his car was waiting.

All of them had known Staloluokta since they were children. Their parents and grandparents had come here every summer for as long as anybody could remember. *Stalo* is a mystical giant in the mythology of the Sámi people, and *luokta* means "bay" in the Sámi language. In spite of the Sámi's pagan mythologies and tales, the village has its own church, a sweet little cot with a cross on top. Of course, this church is never locked. The story of christening the "Lapps" in the eighteenth century is, however, a grim and unworthy history of Sweden. Christian priests were sent out to destroy the magic "rune drums" of the Sámi people and to enforce the Christian faith on them.[5] In the nineteenth century, a particularly strong branch of a Protestant sect spread among the Sámi people and held a firm grip over large parts of the population.[6] The relationship of the Swedish government—and also of the Swedish people—with the Sámi population is complicated and, for much of its history, shameful, as is so eloquently captured in the recent Swedish movie, *Sámi Blood*, in which a young woman tries to escape the circular order of tradition.[7] The Sámi people living in the icy region of Northern Scandinavia (including Norway, Finland and Russia) were often dealt with unfairly by the national authorities; only lately have they been able to establish their own parliamentary representation (the *Same Ting*), to deal with their own affairs. In the early 1970s, a Sámi theatre group called *Dálvadis* was established. It was transformed into an official theatre company in 1991. Now known as *Giron Sámi Teáhter*, it performs mainly in Swedish Lapland, but visits all areas where Sámi languages are spoken.

The lady who sold the fish and bread felt sorry for us because we would not see the full mountain flora this summer. Spring came very late, which meant that certain spring flowers would only bloom in the middle of summer. If autumn came early, with snow already in August, then the summer vegetation would not have a chance to come into bloom at all. She showed us a few rare species of flowers, and our friend, a botanist, was carried away with enthusiasm.

Ice for Pleasure

The dining room in the hostel had a wide window front overlooking Lake Virihaure, with the Norwegian glacier-covered mountains in the background. While we were talking, we could follow the sun along the horizon, as it touched the mountains only briefly, and a new day was born. This was one of the most amazing experiences in the far north of Scandinavia: the midnight sun that never sets.

During dinner, our hiking companions met some friends they knew from earlier tours and there were others who recognised them from professional connections. All those sitting around the table and sipping after-dinner coffee and tea shared a great love of the mountains. They had many experiences of hiking and skiing in the Swedish mountains—and to some of them, winter seemed to be even more exciting than summer. We heard numerous stories about dramatic conditions, mostly caused by sudden changes of the weather. What would you do if you were calmly moving through the beautiful snowy landscape towards the next cabin and all of a sudden a strong wind whipped up, dark clouds covered the sun and you realised that you would not make it to the next point before the storm buried you in snow? Well, you would quickly build your own snow shield, creep into it and wait until the storm abates. It takes skill, courage and strong nerves to survive such situations. Other stories were told about getting lost, misreading maps, misjudging temperatures, breaking through the ice of a creek—but most of what we heard was about the seemingly unlimited pleasures of the mountaineer. Of course, many of these stories were (slightly?) dramatised, more challenging and more demanding than reality, comparable to the stories that are told by other enthusiasts such as sailors, hunters and maybe academics, when they brag about their amazing adventures on the way to or from international conferences.

These people were so taken by the world of rocks, glaciers, snow and water—as well as the botanical variety the mountains display during the

short summer and the endless snowfields of the winter—that an outsider like me could only listen in silence. Their exclusive focus on the mountain world was at times tiring, but their knowledge and enthusiasm easily made up for it. The continuous interaction between the landscape, the weather and the hikers seemed to have endless variations. At the same time, it is noteworthy to hear the difference between the Sámi people and the mountain hikers. The former make a living in the mountains, whereas hikers (like us) visit these places for pleasure. The experiences were, however, also to a large extent similar: the sudden changes of weather, the cyclic repetition of the seasons, the eternal stubborn performance of nature.

To Higher Regions

In Staloluokta we had decided on a three-day excursion to Lake Sårjåsjávrre at the Norwegian border. We followed the river Stálojåhkå upstream, which meant a relatively steep trail, starting at a height of 479 metres and ending one and a half days later at 818 metres. Although this part of our hike was quite demanding, we were richly rewarded whenever we stopped. The warm weather had accelerated the flowering of the many small plants that now sparkled in yellow, pink, red and white, with a few blue exceptions. Our friend the botanist pointed them out to us, calling their names in Swedish and Latin and, although I forgot both of them very quickly, they demonstrated the great variety of plants in this icy climate. Our botanist had made an inventory of those mountain flowers when he was a student, so he knew that there are up to two hundred different species to be found in a valley like this one. It was the overflowing variety that fascinated me: their colours, their ways of growing, their location and not least their size, for every plant exists only in miniature form—such a contrast to the grandeur of the icy mountains.

It is not only plants that survive these harsh weather conditions. Numerous animals have also made the high mountains their habitat. We were not able to see all of them; some are extremely shy (such as the Arctic fox), others (like the wolverine) are quite rare. One of the more common mammals in the mountain range is the lemming. At times, one could almost step on them on the trail, but the little yellowish, mouse-like creatures would immediately defend themselves by hissing with rage at the intruder. There are years when the lemmings are particularly numerous, which favours the birds of prey and the foxes, for whom the lemmings are a primary food source. Even the birds of prey, such as the snow owl or the

rough-legged buzzard, are specially equipped to cope with life in the Arctic area. Once in a while we saw a buzzard high up in the air.

Our meeting with a ptarmigan provided a rare experience that is worth retelling. The bird was sitting not far from the trail as we approached. When we were only a few metres away from her, she hobbled away from us, dragging her loose wing along the ground. The first impression would of course be that she was badly hurt—unless one is fully informed about the true purpose of this manoeuvre. She was actually protecting her chick in a nest nearby by pretending—yes, pretending!—to be hurt so that a fox would chase her and therefore leave her nest in peace. Her goal would then be to save herself by flying away at the last moment. The reason for this theatrical behaviour is of course that the poor ptarmigan has to build her nest on the ground, where it is easily accessible to nest robbers, because there are no trees and bushes. We are up in the high mountains where the vegetation is pressed to the ground by the ice and snow of the long winter.

Seeing, touching and talking about flowers and observing the birds and the lemmings made us forget that we were climbing uphill all the time. After eight hours we arrived at the cabins of Staddajåkkå in the late afternoon. After a short meeting with the hostess, we went to our place and stretched out on our beds fully dressed. Within minutes all four of us fell asleep and only woke up two hours later, just in time for dinner. The last part of the hike up the Staddajåkkå, a tributary creek to Stálojåhkå (the river we had followed during the day), had been very tiring, even though we had not thought so much about it while we had been on our feet.

When we bought some freshly baked bread from the hostess later in the evening, we were drawn into a more personal conversation with her. I think we asked her the usual question about feeling lonely, spending weeks up here at this camp all by herself, and she told us that she had become used to being on her own when she was very young. Born to Sámi parents in the late 1940s, she was taken to a "Swedish" school far away from their village. In an attempt to educate the "Lapp" children as Swedish citizens, the government demanded that all children, irrespective of origin, go to a Swedish school. Since the authorities were not prepared to establish schools where the Sámi people lived, these children had to be sent to schools in the coastal areas. They were billeted with Swedish families and prohibited from speaking their own Sámi language among themselves, either at school or in their new homes, not even with their own sisters and brothers. We knew this sad part of Swedish history from books and museums, but none of us had ever met a person who had actually experienced

such degrading, reprehensible treatment. We stood there, ashamed of our country, ashamed of the misdirected ambitions of a post-war government that still thought along the racist categories propagated by the Swedish Institute of Racial Biology, established in 1922. We could only assure our host that we were sorry for her experiences, but our evening was filled with concern about the damage that such misdirected political ambitions had caused to individuals.

A Glance of Ice

Lake Sårjåsjávrre, the goal of our excursion, was now only six kilometres away. The trail was climbing steeply uphill. Like the reindeer we had seen the previous day, we were ourselves crossing snowfields in the blazing sun. Finally, we reached the gorge and a grand view opened up before us (see Fig. 1). For a moment, the landscape, the weather and the hikers all held their breath: the mountains in the background, the lake, the little cabin to

Fig. 1 The extraordinary landscape. (Photo: Sylvia Sauter)

the right, and just behind it the roaring outlet of the lake into a waterfall, which we could hear but not see. We hurried down to Lake Sårjåsjávrre. On the shore we found a plant with pink flowers, a small Moss Campion (*Silene acaulis*). The water mirrored the icefields of the Norwegian mountains in the background. On the water we discovered a gigantic ice floe that seemed to move very, very slowly. The cabin was open, but no host welcomed us. Instead, eight beds were waiting in two spartan rooms. The cabin was originally built by a man called Consul Persson, an entrepreneur in the late nineteenth century who bought a large area in the region for mining purposes. All that remains is this cabin, which is now part of the public trail. Behind the cabin, only metres away, the water from the icy lake rushed down in a waterfall some sixty metres high. The mass of the water was intimidating. Lake Sårjåsjávrre is fed by two large icefields: the Lina Glacier in Norway and the Ålmåjjiegna in Sweden. Both were probably melting at a faster-than-average rate in the unusually warm summer weather, giving full force to the flow of the lake towards its outlet and into the waterfall that eventually became the Stálojåhkå river (the river we had followed all the way from Staloluokta).

When we looked up from the spectacular dance of water, we realised that the mighty ice floe was on its way to the lake's outlet. Slowly it came closer, drawn by the increasing speed of the water. When, finally, the first pieces arrived at the outlet, the half-metre-thick ice broke off as if it were a piece of cake. Huge splinters of ice bounced down to the next level of the waterfall, broke into smaller pieces and were washed further down and so on. The mass of the ice that was still swimming on the water of the lake pushed on and ever bigger pieces broke off into the cascade of water and ice (see Fig. 2). The cracking of the breaking ice was deafening. Then, all of a sudden, the noise stopped—or rather went back to its earlier level. The huge mass of ice had now travelled down the fall. At the bottom of the waterfall, small pieces danced in the clear water like in an exclusive drink in a fashionable bar. We had our lunch and stretched out in the sun in the hope that another ice floe might arrive while we were here (it did not).

Contemplating the view over Lake Sårjåsjávrre made me aware of the extreme contrasts we were experiencing. In front of me were these tiny pink flowers, blossoming for a short period in the middle of a landscape that made a significant and eternal impression. The ice of the glaciers had built up over hundreds of years: the drops of water now melting at the edge of the glacier had fallen down as snowflakes at the time when Jesus

Fig. 2 The outlet. (Photo: Göran Abel)

was born. On one side, there was the icy water of the big lake; on the other, the cosy cabin with its fireplace. While the distant mountain range of Sulitelma glittered in the sun, motionless and majestic, the water beneath pushed its way into the lake and further down into the valley with unrestrainable power. And there was I, the hiker—an insignificant human in the middle of a magnificent landscape.

This existential notion of human littleness in the face of the forces of nature, especially in this grand surrounding, hit me unexpectedly. I had no intention of pondering my being in the world, not even my being in the mountains. The impulse came from the mountains, from the water, from the view: its beauty. The aesthetic pleasure of these grand views, combined with the dramatic effects of those powerful waterfalls I had just experienced, made me reflect upon my own place in this world. I had never noticed how easily Kant's theory of "purpose-free" aesthetics connects to profound thoughts about human conditions. In front of me I had a marvellous example of survival—not the survival of the fittest, or of the most

well-adjusted, but the survival of beauty: this tiny patch of pink Moss Campions was just as purpose-free as Kant's aesthetics. They were growing there in their own right; they did not need a justification: they were pure nature. These sweet, pink flowers stand for much of the flora and fauna of the mountain range: they have found ways of surviving the harsh climate and the darkness of winter, exploiting the short summer season with its bright nights, and scale has become part of their survival kit. Can this idea of scale be transferred to human experiences? I think so, because nature performs for us, the beholders. We react to what we perceive not only by voicing admiring "ahhs" and "ohhs" but by engaging in reflective responses. We become part of a dialogue between natural and human conditions. The performance of a landscape is always directed towards the observing wanderers. Nature is never just nature.

Not even in these remote areas of the mountain range does nature remain untouched. The very presence of the four of us disturbed the purity of the natural setting. The discreet marks along the trail, and not least Consul Persson's cabin, tell the tale of human interaction. But unlike life in the big cities, our capacity to affect the icy landscape of these mountains is reduced to almost nothing. This includes even the Sámi people: their acceptance of circular time is much stronger than whatever city people can imagine. To follow the rhythm of the reindeer herds is mandatory, a basic fact of Sámi life, which enforces traditions and limits the freedom of the younger generation. Cultural ambitions intrude into processes prescribed by nature. The talk we had with the Sámi hostess about her school experiences came to my mind. Representing Swedish society in "her" country made me part of the conflicts between natural conditions of life and enforced changes of culture. On our way home, we were to fly over a hydroelectric dam that had controversially flooded large areas of reindeer breeding grounds.

Is the experience of Lapland any different from other landscapes? Yes, it is, I would contend. We have been hiking in the Sierra Nevada in Spain, along the coast of the Azores Islands and outside the Serengeti steppe in Tanzania. All these places are more or less densely populated—people actually live there on a permanent basis. This is not the case in the icy landscape of the Swedish mountains. Both the Sámi people and the mountaineers roam about these mountains in the summer and in the winter, but they do not live there. They all live somewhere else. They come in the icy winter and in the chilly summer only for work or for pleasure. Meeting

them is a constant reminder that we are guests with a temporary licence to take advantage of what nature offers.

The experience of pure nature is, of course, an illusion. The moment I put my foot on a glacier, the ice is no longer untouched. Maybe even my looking at it changes the landscape—it is filtered through my own associations and experiences. In the end, it is my viewing of it that lends the landscape its aesthetic quality. It is for me and all other visitors that the landscape is performing. This is probably why the mountaineers we talked to in Staloluokta return to this region again and again. And for the same reasons we carry our heavy backpacks and endure the barefoot crossing of creeks filled with ice cold water. The aesthetic experience triggers reflections about nature, mountains, ice: being exposed to it opens one's thoughts about human conditions.

The next day we were back in Staloluokta, where we waited for the helicopter that would bring us back to gasoline reality, to roads and to the internet.

Notes

1. I am particularly grateful to Göran Abel, who supported this chapter by filling in various gaps in my geological and botanical knowledge.
2. See maps in Fredén (2008).
3. Moses Mendelssohn was born in Dessau in 1729 and died in Berlin in 1786.
4. This is my translation; the original text is "Sie [die Schönheit] bezaubert uns in der Natur, wo wir sie ursprünglich, aber zerstreut antreffen" (Mendelssohn 2006, p. 189).
5. Rune drums, sometimes also called troll drums, were small, ceremonial drums with red figures of humans and animals painted directly on the skin of the drum.
6. In particular, Laestadianism, which is an extremely pious Protestant sect in Sweden.
7. In Swedish this is *Sameblod*.

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[1] Note: Page numbers followed by 'n' refer to notes.

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