

ICELAND. MOBILITY, SPATIALITY, VIRTUALITY.

**A one day
symposium
Organised by
(Arts) Territory Exchange
CEMORE
Lancaster university
and Ströndin Studio**

**Defining new touristic relationships
through remote encounters,
distant desires and embodied experiences.**

**Seydisfjörður.
22nd Oct
2021.**

Keynote Jessica Auer

**With artist presentations by Rhona Eve Clews
Berglind Hreiddarsdóttir and many more.**

Image credit Berglind and Rhona



centre for
mobilities
research

Lancaster
University



A one day symposium organised by (Arts) Territory Exchange, Centre for Mobilities Research (Cemore) LICA, Lancaster University and Ströndin Studio, Seydisfjörður, Iceland. 22nd October 2021.

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Iceland has long been considered a home for arts and cultural tourism. From WH Auden's letters from Iceland, where British readers contemplated Iceland from a distance to the Artist Residency Industry which attracts thousands of artists from Europe, the US, Canada and elsewhere every year. This symposium will ask what it is about Iceland in particular that ignites such desire to travel and what has the travel hiatus meant for the touristic imagination? The symposium will investigate our desires as cultural producers, to touch, breathe and tread the Icelandic landscape and explore digital and postal alternatives to encountering 'place' as well as investigating the impact of digital travel on the cultural tourism economy.

In Light of Covid's forced travel hiatus this symposium seeks to think about Iceland through the dimensions of Mobility, Spatiality and Virtuality.

Referencing the text "Understanding and Constructing Shared Spaces with Mixed-Reality Boundaries" (1998) by Steve Benford et.al which describes different properties of "Shared Spaces" and the complex social and performative sphere made of mixed-reality boundaries and the joining real and virtual spaces across what he names as Transportation, Spatiality and Artificiality, it becomes clear that the travel hiatus forced by Covid created a disorientation of these established concepts and their hierarchies in relation to experiencing 'research', 'field work' and emotional connectivity (with loved ones and landscapes) across terrains of the embodied, physical, spatial and cognitive. The in-between spaces, digital terrains deemed as artificial have been deepened as relational and embodied in a new way as we have had to rely on others to vicariously demonstrate and share landscapes and their sensory contents across distances.

As a prompt we will look at these ideas alongside Lucy Lippard's critique of the research trip model of artists 'parachuting in to soak up place' (2018) how can we think about non-extractive and respectful means of cultural production that go beyond re-hashing the typical views of Iceland and ways to merge both remote and on the ground or 'embodied' experiences which may eschew what Jóhannesdóttir (2016) calls the striving towards controlling and owning landscapes as we begin to travel again.

This event brings together contributors who are from Iceland, those who have visited as artists and researchers, those who have settled there and those who have never visited but dream of it from a distance.

About the organisers.

The (Arts) Territory Exchange – aTE is an organisation interested in concepts of mobility, immobility, artists' travel cultures and long distance exchange: Creating a vast global network of connected topographies and reaching to the worlds most isolated places, the (Arts) Territory Exchange facilitates collaboration between artists in remote and wilderness locations such as, islands, deserts, refugee camps, small communities or for those that feel themselves to be 'remote' in other ways, cut of from the networks which usually sustain a practice. Artists are invited to exchange materials exploring ideas of territory, locality and place; documents from their postal/digital exchanges become part of an interactive living archive and evolving resource to be consumable by a global audience. aTE also hosts events, bringing together exchange participants and helping them to realise their collaborations in the form of exhibitions, lectures, publications, 'face to face' and virtual residencies.

Ströndin Studio is an educational and experimental center for photography located in a former fish factory in Seydisfjörður, Iceland. A joint project between artist Jessica Auer, photography professor at Concordia University (Montreal), and Zuhaitz Akizu, historian and amateur photographer from the Basque Country. Ströndin is a place where artists and visitors can become familiar with Icelandic culture and nature and create photographic images in a personal and intimate way. We work mostly with analogue and large format photography, giving importance to physical images and encouraging slow and direct contact with subject matter and photographic materials. Our cultural and educational aims are to develop an understanding of the surrounding environment and place emphasis on how we engage with people, places and art-making. Our projects include photographic research, exhibitions, and publications. We also offer workshops and residencies. Seydisfjörður is a small town in the east fjords with a distinct personality. The fjord was settled during the Viking era and had since preserved special link with Europe, both culturally and commercially. Today, the harbour is major connection between Iceland and Europe, carrying vehicles and passengers on weekly voyages to and from Denmark. Home to Icelanders, artists, travellers, and adventure seekers, it maintains its pioneering and innovative soul. The community has a population of 685 people, two consulates, one hospital, two fish processing plants and four artist residencies... and evolves with the times and with new waves of tourism and art.

The Centre for Mobilities Research (Cemore) is a hub for interdisciplinary mobilities research and an international network of mobilities researchers.

We pioneered the mobilities paradigm and mobile methods to study social change and innovation at multiple scales, from the everyday to the geopolitical, planetary, and interplanetary. Our work examines contested ideas of 'the good life', promoting equality, solidarity, justice, social mobility, sustainability, responsible and ethically circumspect research and innovation.

LICA (Lancaster Institute for Contemporary Arts) encompasses Lancaster Universities teaching and research activities in architecture, art, design, film and theatre. We pride ourselves on the research informed curriculum that underpins all of our degrees. Staff, students, and graduates set agendas in, and make meaningful contribution to the contemporary arts.

Contributors.

Gudrun Filipška.

Gudrun Filipška is a writer, researcher and curator conducting Doctoral research at CEMORE (Centre for Mobilities Research) and Lancaster Institute of Contemporary Art UK under the *Transnationalisms*,

mobilities and borders scholarship. She has published her writing widely and exhibited and curated globally on the subjects of feminist digitality, linguistic landscapes, cultural travel practices, post colonial geographies and cultural tourism. She runs a network called the (Arts) Territory Exchange which connects rural and remote territories through a large postal and digital network and produces research and writing into travel and residency cultures within indigenous territories and locations of environmental instability.

Opening introductory talk - *The near and far and the fast and slow, the complications and ethical entanglements of artists' travel experiences. On foot, by flight and at sea.*

Jessica Auer

Jessica Auer is a Canadian photographer, filmmaker and educator, who lives and works from a decommissioned fish factory in Seydisfjörður, Iceland. Her work is broadly concerned with the study of landscapes as cultural sites. Jessica holds an MFA from Concordia University in Montréal, where she teaches as a part-time faculty member in the Photography department. Her work has been presented in several museums, galleries and festivals, such as the Canadian Center for Architecture, The National Museum of Iceland and the Biennale de la photographie in Mulhouse, France. Jessica's work has been featured in publications and media such as Prefix Photo (Canada), Femmes Photographes (Paris), Radio Canada International, ARTE television network (EU) and the Guardian (UK). While in Iceland, Jessica runs Ströndin Studio, a photographic research facility and educational centre in Seydisfjörður.



Jessica Auer - Birdwatchers Ingólfshöfði.

Abstract

Jessica Auer will take us through her latest body of work "Looking North", a photographic survey of the recent tourism boom in Iceland. Spanning more than five years, Jessica has been exploring the

tourism phenomenon through the genres of landscape and portraiture. Her presentation will focus on her research and experience while living in Iceland, as well as the inherent paradoxes within the travel industry. Jessica Auer's book *Looking North* was published by Another Place Press in May 2021.

Matthias Egeler

Matthias Egeler is a Privatdozent (senior researcher) at LMU Munich, where he is affiliated to the Institute for Scandinavian Studies and the Inter-Faculty Programme in the Study of Religions. His main research interests lie in the literary and religious history of the North-West Atlantic region, especially Ireland and Iceland, and its connections to the Mediterranean. Publications on Iceland travel include a study of the rise of the [motif of Iceland as a country where people believe in 'elves'](#) in Iceland travelogues and, co-edited together with Stefanie Gropper, a volume on the fascination exerted by the Western Icelandic glacier mountain Snæfellsjökull.

Abstract

Seeing Iceland differently: towards a typology of travellers:

One of the most direct impacts of the Covid travel hiatus on my research was the interruption of an ongoing fieldwork-based project on the storytelling landscape of Strandir. With the direct experience of being in Iceland pushed back, one of the things that filled the resulting void was reading historic Iceland travelogues. In recent years, digitization has made many historic texts about Iceland more accessible than they had ever been before, and delving back into this world of the historic written word, one thing that struck me was through how very different lenses Iceland was seen even by well-informed and deeply respectful historic travellers. Focusing on two nineteenth-century travelogues, Konrad Maurer's *Reise nach Island* (1858/unfinished) and Frederick Howell's *Icelandic Pictures* (1893), the paper will explore two 'ideal types' (in Max Weber's sense) of Iceland travellers. Both of them sought and found the supernatural in the landscape, but did so in ways which are fundamentally different: while the one acquired genuinely new knowledge and preserved it for posterity, the other only ever saw what he had brought with him in the first place. Can such different types of historic approaches to travel hold up a mirror to the travel of the present?

Sophia Saemudsdittir

Soffia Sæmundsdflttir (1965) was born and raised in Iceland. She works mainly in painting and drawing and has been active in the Icelandic/international art scene. She's had numerous solo shows and participated in group shows in Iceland and abroad and has collaborated with fellow artists. She has been an artist in residence at ALN, Burden Lake Park, NY, Lukas K«nstlerhaus in Ahrenshoop Germany and at the Leighton Studio's at Banff, Canada to name a few. She's a Joan Mitchell Painter's and Sculpture Award Recipient and a price winner in Winsor and Newton International Painting Millennium Competition. She is a member of SIM and the Icelandic Printmakers Association (IPA) where she was the Chairman 2011-2015 and has also been on the association's exhibitions committee. She lives and works in Reykjavik greater area where she runs an open studio.

Abstract

Places in progress – A different view: In my talk I will address places, what they mean to us, how do we approach them and what draws us to them. What does a home mean in that context and how does our perspective change when we leave that place and then come back home. As a visual artist I am drawn to places for different reasons. Landscape, memory, stories, combine my thoughts with the landscape I make but that also inspires different work; paintings, scrolls, work on paper, drawings and writing. It is inevitable that the landscape I'm in, comes 'out' one way or the other, but what effects it is interesting

and not always known or clear. Is the landscape inside of me? Is there a connection between a person and the landscape that affect how we see it? Are we perhaps as artists constantly looking for a place in the world and traditional paintings and contemporary art give us tools to fit in and get a new perspective. Time is an important factor when we look at, and think of places. Right now "Non places" come to mind as the world has been closed, does that change the perspective?

Taey Lohe

Taey lohe is an artist and writer working between art, literature and social practice, based in London and Seoul. She is interested in the liminal space occupied by women, migrants, and queers as a site of political, cultural and linguistic resistance. She works with spatial installations that combine performance, film, sound, photography and text to explore postcolonial and intersectional realities. Currently her time is invested in collaborative productions, exploring decolonising botany and potential political resonances of the future landscape. (website: <http://www.taey.com>)

Abstract

‘This place smells of grass after rain. This room is truly a traveller’s room. A ghost tells us the story of how she fetched up here. Listening to a breeze that blew the ghost’s clothes when her journey began, we imagine dust blown from a thousand miles away. Dust is born of the air, of human bodies, the change and decay of things. The dust moves with the wind and the people blown by it or struggling against it. The dust is an arrival from elsewhere. It will depart as quietly as it arrived. (T.lohe)’

This artistic research explores the idea of pace-making as a tool to navigate spatial history in relation to migratory experiences. Following on from Massey’s concept of ‘a relational politics of the spatial’, I would argue that linear temporality and singular movement is a colonial construct, and we must pause for a moment on the threshold of change, to look at the nature of migration of living beings including human, seeds, animals and political relations. I’d like to take the opportunity to present experimental writing that explores the idea of defining pace, and puts forward that pausing movement and taking rest are an act of resistance.

References

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Kaya Barry

Kaya Barry is an Associate Professor at Aalborg University, Copenhagen, Denmark, and a Research Fellow at Griffith University, Australia. Kaya’s research explores the intersection of mobilities, migration, tourism and creative arts practices. Aalborg University kayatb@hum.aau.dk

Abstract

Artists not tourists; residents, or maybe migrants? Tensions of international artistic mobility and

tourism cultures: Over the past decade there has been significant increase in international artist residencies that provide opportunities for artists to travel to faraway places, in order to live 'like a local' and develop their artistic practice. While the concept of an artist-in-residence as a means of facilitating cultural exchange and broadening artistic careers is nothing new, the rise of self-funded artist residencies as a type of artistic mobility and cultural tourism has risen to popularity, particularly amongst early-mid career artists from Western areas.

Nordic countries have been particularly enticing, especially for artists down south in wealthier nations, such as Australia and Aotearoa–New Zealand. Casual conversations amongst artists as being a 'resident', or even 'migrant' during their artistic exchange, indicate some of the unease around this form of creative mobility that inflects neoliberal and elitist, despite being framed as distinct or different from tourism mobility.

In this short presentation I draw from my own personal experiences of artist residencies in Iceland and Finland, alongside ethnographic interviews with international artists and residency facilitators. These preliminary findings hope further understandings on the increasing cultural importance placed on artistic mobility, and the entangled (and rather tricky) questions around sustainable tourism, temporary migration, and aesthetics of consumption practices.

Alison Shields

Alison Shields is an Assistant Professor in Art Education at the University of Victoria, BC, Canada. She received a PhD in Art Education from the University of British Columbia and an MFA from the University of Waterloo. She has exhibited her paintings across Canada and abroad, including a solo exhibition entitled *Studio as Portal* at McClure Art Centre in Montreal (2020) and inclusion in a collaborative and participatory event about Arts-based Research at the Tate Exchange Gallery in Liverpool (2018). Her art practice and research focus on painting, artistic inquiry, studio practices and artist residencies.

Abstract

In June of 2019 I participated in an artist residency with seven other artists in Seydisfjörður, Iceland. The "Wanderlust" residency, titled after Rebecca Solnit's (2001) book *Wanderlust* and held at Strondon Studios and the Skaftfell Art Centre, brought together artists who consider walking as an aesthetic practice. In this presentation I discuss my exploration of the colour blue that began with these walks in Iceland and continued throughout the following year in my hometown of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. I draw from Rebecca Solnit's (2006) *A Field Guide to Getting Lost* in which she describes how blue always exists in the distance. Through this lens, in Iceland I explored blue as a metaphor for longing and desire as I collected blue moments along my journey. In this presentation, I will discuss how this journey in Iceland prompted the beginnings of falling in love with the colour blue throughout the past two years as I walked with blue, yearned for blue, read about blue, painted with blue and continuously reconfigured my experiences with blue. Through this artistic research, the distance of blue becomes an analogy for my artistic process, one that is driven by a sense of longing, getting lost and not knowing. I will present the small paintings begun in Iceland as well as the work that was generated from this work over the following 2 years as I discuss how it evolved throughout the pandemic year when blue truly felt in the distance.

Grace Hailstone

Grace Hailstone's work is rooted in the subject of surreal and imagined landscapes – caves, volcanic lands, and geological forms, often linked to lived experiences and memories of places. Using

printmaking techniques including etching, linocut and monoprint, Grace creates images with contrasting lines and shapes and considered introduction of colours and textures, interpreting the experience of landscapes suspended between reality and fiction. Grace studied in the UK and Paris with a BA (hons) and MA degrees, and has shown her work in the UK and USA.

Abstract

Between imagination and reality: Embodied experiences and transcending the landscape: In this presentation I will discuss the phenomenological impact of the landscape of Iceland as explored through my printmaking practice. As we are facing environmental and existential crises in our current era, we interact with the landscape with a renewed sense of Romanticism and sincerity.

In this metamodern spiritual quest to seek truth in our experiences of nature and ourselves away from the increasingly humanised world, Iceland affords us a nonhuman space to allow us to think differently, outside of the human feedback loop.

My work reimagines my experiences of natural phenomena encountered during my travels to Iceland and represents the link between the body, the landscape, and the mind. I approach it through using photography as a starting point and by a process of drawing, digital manipulation and layering, I reconstruct the memory of the experience to create images which are suspended between reality and imagination.

Holly Chang

Holly Chang is a lens-based artist based in Toronto who is currently completing her MA in Communication and Culture at Ryerson/York University. Chang, as a second-generation Chinese Canadian, maintains cultural ties with her cross-cultural identity and draws on her hybrid background for inspiration. Chang makes use of a variety of photographic genres to quietly unpack the layered emotional nuances that are present with the anxieties that surround a mixed identity. Preferring the aesthetic of film photography, Chang explores how photography can mediate reality and allow experiences to be digested. She often focuses on mundane places or tasks as an act to visualize the blurring of our public and private personas.



Image credit Holly Chang

Abstract

'How to Disappear when No one is Looking' explores the relationship between photographer and landscape and the implications of mediation. Through this research creation project, I was interested in the sublime and the feelings of proximity through distance. This work was created at NES Artist Residency in Skagaströnd, Iceland during the month of April 2019.

Feelings of the sublime can echo immensity. An attempt to capture the sublime allows us to experience this phenomenon and encounter its compelling powers of fear and excitement. The sublime plays a part in this work and its investigation of the artificial infinite. Consider that there is no way to demonstrate the artificial infinite notion as an absolute, only to represent its existence. Absolutes may only exist through representation. To portray absolutes is to make relative and to place it within the context and conditions of our own pre-existing frameworks and understanding of reality. The artificial infinite constructs one's fragility through personal perception. In this instance the sublime depiction will only ever exist as an abstraction and to portray it allows us to perceive it. Through this I urge the viewer to consider how depictions of the sublime as a controlled experience subvert our understanding of this concept.

In this work, I play with the mediation between landscape and photographer to demonstrate these concepts. The research behind this work has been heavily influenced by Land Matters By Liz Wells, The Metabolic Landscape by Gina Glover and Edmund Burke On the Sublime and Beautiful.

Kirsty Palmer

Kirsty Palmer studied at The Glasgow School of Art, graduating from the MFA programme in 2014 and with BA (Hons) in 2010. She has undertaken various residencies in Iceland; SÍM, Reykjavik (2016 & 2018); ArtsIceland, Ísafjörður (2018); Fish Factory, Stöðvarfjörður (2018) and Skaftfell Center for Visual Art, Seyðisfjörður (2020).

Solo exhibitions include QUARRY, South Block, Glasgow (2021); *Matter / Efni*, Skaftfell, Seyðisfjörður (2020); *LANDING*, Glasgow Project Room, Glasgow (2019); *Of A Mountain/ Af fjalli*, Bræðraborg, Ísafjörður (2018) and *I S L A N D S*, Patrioathall Gallery, Edinburgh (2017).

She has received support from Creative Scotland and Bet Low Trust.

Abstract

Rooted in interaction with materials, place and process, Kirsty Palmer's practice addresses ideas surrounding landscape, archaeology and materiality. Recent work considers notions of territory and landscape(s) as sites of memorial; the histories of matter observed or collected and the human narratives constructed surrounding our experiences of place, events and periods of time.

Kirsty's practice is increasingly based in Iceland, and in collaboration with Iceland's landscape. In 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic halted travel whilst she was part way through a two-month residency with Skaftfell Center for Visual Art in Seyðisfjörður. As a result, she spent almost six months based in the town during which she developed a close working dialogue with the fjord through practices such as walking and collecting. Her project 'Matter / Efni', explores photography/ image making as an evolving medium within her predominantly sculptural practice. It looks towards the material substance of landscape, considering elements or fragments which can be viewed as signifiers of large-scale geological shifts or events. In a broader sense, the project also considers the cross-disciplinary human practice of documenting significant sites. Currently in Scotland, Kirsty's dialogue with Iceland's landscape continues through distanced means; livestreams, Instagram, google maps, weather forecasts, Marine Traffic and virtual walks.

Karen Stentaford

Karen Stentaford is an artist and educator in Sackville, NB, a part of the Sikniqt District within the greater territory of Mi'kma'ki. She works in a variety of photographic based media exploring place, absence and memory. She holds the position Assistant Professor (Photography) at Mount Allison University. Stentafor completed the Master of Arts in Photography program at the Edinburgh College of Art. She received her Bachelor of Education, Visual Arts Specialist, from NSCAD University and Mount Saint Vincent University and Bachelor of Fine Arts from Mount Allison University.

Abstract

In June of 2013, I headed to SÁM for an AiR. I planned to explore my connection to the landscape of Southern Iceland with my large format camera and ice fishing tent I converted into a portable wet plate collodion darkroom. I had recently learned the wet plate process (glass negatives and tintypes). The residency facilitated a workflow in which I was discovering the possibilities of a process while discovering a place and letting them influence each other. The introduction of elements from the environment such as local water instead of distilled, changes in humidity, or rain falling on a coated plate all effect the chemical reactions integral to the process, resulting in physical imprints on an image. The resulting photographs depict—but are also directly shaped by—their environment.

Altogether unexpected but following what made sense, I expanded my practice to include tintype portraits. I developed a structure based on an exchange. An exchange of knowledge and time for a one-of-a-kind tintype portrait.

My work has evolved into two iterations of connections rooted in discovery, curiosity and reciprocity – working with the landscape, working with the people.

Kristen Malia

Kristen Mallia is a multimedia artist based in Boston, MA. Her work examines ritual, collection, memory, and preservation through multimedia installation, printed matter, and time-based media. She received her BA in Electronic Media from The George Washington University, a BFA in Graphic Design from Corcoran College of Art + Design, and an MFA from Boston University. Kristen was an Artist-in-Residence at Skaftfell Center for Visual Arts in Seyðisfjörður, Iceland and recipient of an Opportunity Fund Grant from the City of Boston in 2020. She is currently Lecturer in Art at Boston University and Suffolk University.

Abstract

c/o (displacement): I arrived in Iceland armed with rituals from home, anticipating change through context. I flew home with 633 hand-sculpted clay rocks in my baggage and a month's worth of self-addressed letters waiting for me at the post office. Skaftfell in Seyðisfjörður, was, at first, a foreign place that I was eager to explore for creative inspiration; then (and almost immediately after arriving) it became home and time changed and suddenly Boston, MA was a distant memory that belonged to someone else. Seyðisfjörður was a natural quarantine and a refuge from the pandemic-stricken world beyond its borders. I traveled to Iceland and then Iceland traveled home with me; it is ever-present. Clay rocks have transitioned into large ink paintings, ones that became eerily transformed in light of devastating mudslides, despite distance. I open my letters to find a stranger's words, a version of myself who had only just arrived and had no idea how this place would transform her. Objects found on the black shorelines contained within are proof that you can move earth and time, and teleport any time you like. Iceland and identity are in perpetual motion, engaged in a dance, displacing me all the time.

Matt Williams

I'm an artist and teacher based in New England whose practice is most often photography based. My work often focuses on family, communication, ritual and mark making.

I studied photography at The Rhode Island School of Design, earning an MFA there in 2016. I show work in galleries, make zines and self-publish books. I struggle with many established art-world systems and am interested in exploring and creating new options for artists to employ with regards to both getting their work in front of audiences and making a living from their work.



Image credit Matt Williams, Iceland.

Abstract

I have spent two 6 weeks periods teaching in Iceland, one in 2015 and another in 2018. I have also travelled a handful of other times as I have found the country endlessly fascinating. It has come to represent, among other things, my finding my own agency with regards to my artistic practice and simply calling myself an artist. In 2015 when I accepted a job in Skagastrom, I was still very much enmeshed in the day-to-day raising of my two sons. This group of photographs was made during the six weeks I was away from home. It was a time marked by conflicted feelings. I was excited to be out in the world working but I felt I was shirking my parental duties. It was by far the longest time I had been away from my sons in almost twenty years and the absence and distance was weighing on me more heavily than I realized it would. The making of these photographs became a gesture, and practically speaking a futile one, of connection and reaching out. At times both premeditated and random I

looked in the direction where my sons were relative to me (geographically speaking) and tripped the shutter. There were elements of ritual, faith and love present in my small practice. It was a meditative experience for me. I hope this collection of photographs operates as one for the viewer too.

Aki Poon

AKI POON, a Hong Kong and London based artist, completed an MFA from the Slade School of Fine Art in 2019. Aki Poon is a conceptual artist, working across photography, video, sculpture, installation and performance. Aki's work explores human emotion, fragility, internal and external identities. Her practice is influenced by her own narrative and experience as well as universal observation. Recently, Aki's work has incorporated several mysterious and occult elements, exploring spirituality, consciousness and subconsciousness.

Abstract

Iceland is a spiritual place providing a unique atmosphere for relaxing, healing, meditating and transforming. In 2016, I created the art project 'Transcendence' responding to loss I experienced and addressing the resulting feeling of vulnerability. This work emphasizes the female perspective and is working with water, ice & memory as core materials. The 'Transcendence' photographs can be found here: <https://www.akipoon.com/transcendence> The first photo visualizes my memories. For that I have created five objects reminding the observer of ice-cold ice-sculptures. Those ice-like objects have images embedded, metaphorically conserving memories. The sculptures are placed on a real iceberg, finally. This action symbolizes the emotion and experience of letting someone important go. And finally, the last picture shows me lying on the iceberg itself. This is the final step: transformation through healing through the powerful Icelandic natural power and energy. I hope the audience can imagine this powerful and unique sensual experience of touching, feeling and being on the ice and set my emotional journey in context. Later, I developed the 'Transcendence' project to a gelatin art project '01-02-2019'. The '01-02-2019' photographs can be found here <https://www.akipoon.com/01-02-2019>. In this project, water, gelatin and polaroid are the materials used. Gelatin is one of the materials used for fixing images on photography paper. Source of gelatin is usually bones. I link both of these aspects of gelatin to family bonding and connection. A transformation from melting over dissolving to drying happened. This process makes fading memory and emotions tangible, but all cannot be preserved. I got inspiration from Iceland, the nature and cycle of life.

Amy Tavern



Amy Tavern 'When I think of you'.

Amy Tavern is an interdisciplinary artist whose work focuses on personal memory, emotional response, and place. She has exhibited nationally and internationally with solo shows in the US, Belgium, Sweden, and Iceland. She has taught and lectured across the US and in Europe, and her work as a metalsmith has been included in many publications, most notably, the cover of Metalsmith Magazine. A believer in phenomenology, Amy's work begins with direct experience and walking. Amy is a former Penland School of Crafts resident artist and has completed numerous artist residencies in Iceland including Nes, Textílsetur Íslands, SÍM, and Bær

Abstract

This Place Gives Me Room: Early in the morning on April 28, 2013, I arrived in Iceland for the first time. I remember being excited yet remarkably calm. Later I came to think of this feeling as the feeling of coming home. It's hard to explain why I feel this way about a place I'm not from and I often think I'm being trite when I try to tell others: I feel deeply connected to Iceland. It's emotional for me. When I am there, I am myself.

While I live physically in the United States, a part of me dwells emotionally in Iceland. As a result, I am conflicted. To understand this predicament and my connection to Iceland, I retrace my experiences through recollection and writing, materials and making. Through a combination of accumulation, layering, and chance, [I create drawings, collages, sculptures, and photographs](#) that illustrate psychological spaces, conjure parallel worlds, and evoke homeostasis and a sense of belonging. My work allows me to maintain and even deepen my connections to Iceland from afar until I am able to return again one day.

Valentina Schulte



Valentina Schulte – Kerith

I am a multi-disciplinary artist with a practice focusing on photography, video and sculptural forms based in Sydney, Australia. Through my practice and experimentation with the photographic image, I focus my work on the human experience of the landscape exploring themes of consciousness and

interaction with the land and spatiality through multiplicitous viewpoints.

I have exhibited works in galleries and institutions around Australia, Spain, Norway and the USA along with photographic prizes amongst which being awarded winner of CLIP Award for contemporary landscape photography at the Perth Centre for Photography in 2017 and winner of the 2018 Fishers' Ghost Photography award at the Campbelltown Art Centre.

Abstract

Nightsod: The Resignation of Night: All life, humans, animals and organisms alike, rely on sunlight to sustain their existence. Without consciously realising it, the rotation of the Earth and the resulting fluctuation in the luminousness of the sky influences this natural rhythmic pattern and coordinates our biology and behaviour. It is because of the entrainment of these light-dark cycles that we know when to sleep, when to eat, when to nest and when plants know to grow tall and strong. This pattern is known as our circadian rhythm. It's ingrained in us for our entire lives on Earth, but what happens when these cycles are changed?

It was while traveling through the Icelandic landscape, with the midnight sun on the horizon, that it became relevant to question the potentially disruptive effect of constant 24-hour daylight. What effect does the landscape and environment have on the minds, bodies and biology of the animals, flora and humans who inhabit these places.

This series visualises mountains and glaciers amongst many varied environments displayed in such a way that result in an undulating topography of the landscape. *Nightsod: The Resignation of Night* consists of 39 landscape images, when placed side by side, take the place of a scientific readout, an abstracted Electroencephalographic waveform (an EEG), visualising the pattern and shape of brain wave activity of the human circadian rhythm.

Jay Simpson and Henri Fletcher.

Jay Simpson (M.A. New York University Gallatin School of Individualized Studies 2021, Thesis: *Coyotes, Urban Naturecultures, and Feral Cohabitation in the Anthropocene*) is a wilderness guide, multimedia producer and anthropologist. His research blends ethnographic filmmaking, critical making and queer ecology to enquire into relationships with wildlife and landscapes—from coyotes in The Bronx of New York City to cairns and old pathways in the Westfjords of Iceland. He is a founding organizer of the Walking Collective and lead producer of its podcast. He is also the coauthor of *Walking and Wayfinding in Iceland* with Henry Fletcher.

Henry Fletcher (M.S. Coastal and Marine Management, University Centre of the Westfjords in Iceland) is a facilitator, storyteller, and guide across different ecological zones: mountains, farmland, and the ocean. He spent seven years guiding wayfinding trips for groups of artists and conservation volunteers in the Westfjords to map routes and restore cairns in support of trails and ecotourism development. Henry is an Ocean Ambassador, an organizer of the World Trails Film Festival, and recently completed dry stone work titled the Coralline Cairn in Suffolk, United Kingdom. He is a coauthor of *Walking and Wayfinding in Iceland* with Jay Simpson.

Abstract

Cairns in the Westfjords: In many places in Iceland since its earliest settlement, cairns were created by stacking stones to signify a way of travel. Cairn making was a place-based activity of geological intimacy, a communal practice that marked relationships of people and towns, farms and churches. But as the economy and development of roads reshaped livelihoods in rural areas, the old ways marked by cairns lost their vitality and cairns collapsed from disrepair. Iceland's tourism boom and growing

outdoor recreation is increasingly returning people to remote mountains. Tourists' needs now shape these cairned-ways. But just like the porous substrate underlying these cairns, the tourist industry of Iceland is unsteady in the presence of COVID-19 and climate crisis. What futures are emerging for the vitality of these old ways?

This photo presentation and meditation on cairns of the Westfjords of Iceland seeks to offer intimacy with these material signifiers—while speaking to our relationship to land viewed from afar. When a series of photographs of cairns are shared for audiences around the world, what way forward do these cairns signify? What ceremonies of weathering and crumbling can we remain witness to as international tourism and adventure travel are forever altered by the climate crisis?



Image credit **Jay Simpson and Henri Fletcher.**

Kathleen Vaughn

Kathleen Vaughn is a 'place-based' artist and academic whose studio and community projects balance her love for post-industrial sites and green spaces with critical engagement, and often use walking and mapping as method and form. Her artistic work includes digital and hand embroidery, textile piecing, photography, audio and installation, integrating oral history practices and contemporary art tactics. Current projects include an international collaboration exploring wool as a sustainable material for art and design, with partners in Iceland and New Zealand. She is Professor of Art Education and the Concordia University Research Chair in Socially Engaged Art and Public Pedagogies.

<https://www.akaredhanded.com/> <http://re-imagine.ca> <http://icelandfieldschool.ca/>

Abstract

Imagining Iceland, Again: Re-Conceptualizing Responsible, Reciprocal Visitorship for Post- Pandemic Encounters: The paper explores artists' responsible visitorship in travel from Canada to Iceland, drawing on the author's own residency at the Icelandic Textile Centre (BÍ ndufls) in 2016 (Vaughn, 2017) and her subsequent creation, there, of the Iceland Field School for Concordia University students in the Faculty of Fine Arts. The monthlong, multi-level intensive is oriented to place-based learning and artistic research, from a position of environmental responsibility and reciprocity with our Icelandic hosts (Vaughn, 2019). Originally conceived as a biennial event, the Iceland Field School saw its first iteration in 2018 and has now twice (2020, 2021) been postponed because of the pandemic; we are all hoping and working for a June 2022 session. This hiatus – and the experience of the

pandemic in general – is moving the author to renewed consideration of the motivations, activities, and obligations that we might take up in our return to Iceland, questioning how to make our travel not just carbon neutral but environmentally value-added, the sustainability of practices of artistic making, and what else we might do both to support the Icelanders who welcome us and to interrogate and learn from the socio-environmental realities we see enacted there.

Vaughan, K. (2017). The lure of Iceland: Place-making through wool and wildness at the Arctic Circle. In G. Coutts & T. Jokela (Eds.), *Relate North: Practicing Place: Heritage, Art and Design for Creative Communities* (pp. 106-131). Rovaniemi, FI: University of Lapland.

Vaughan, K. (2019). Teaching and learning with Canadian students in north Iceland: Towards the posthuman. *Education in the North 26(1): Education in a Post-human Age*. Available online at <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/education/research/eitn/journal/577/>

Thomas Chen

Thomas Chen is an early-career researcher whose primary interests lie in machine learning, computer vision, and the cryosphere (Arctic, Antarctic, and alpine regions). He serves on the U.S. Technology Policy Committee of the Association for Computing Machinery. As much of his work lies at the nexus of artificial intelligence and earth science, he is also an active early-career scientist member of the European Geosciences Union and the American Geophysical Union. Previously, Thomas has presented work at a number of conferences, workshops, and meetings, from NeurIPS workshops, to Applied Machine Learning Days, to the Open Data Science Conference, to Machine Learning Week Europe.

The island country of Iceland is full of architecture that represents its rich cultural heritage going back centuries. From turf houses like the Glaumbaer at Skagafjörður Folk Museum to church buildings like the Holakirkja in Holar (the largest stone church constructed in the country), many structures that harken back to the Viking era still remain today. These sites attract thousands of tourists annually, and their maintenance and preservation is a key priority, both for national pride/heritage purposes as well as a means of economic revenue. Assessing damage or other maintenance issues in these structures is an important part of this work. To monitor historical infrastructure, we propose the use of modern technology, namely unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) or drones, as well as artificial intelligence. After collecting large datasets of overhead imagery using drones, we train deep learning models such as convolutional neural networks that help to label severity of damage or other imperfections on the structure. In addition, the algorithms help to semantically segment the damage to show exactly where it is occurring. In turn, this information that is obtained in an automated fashion enables rapid response and more targeted maintenance and allocation of resources.

Caroline Kelley

Caroline Kelley has presented and exhibited work in galleries and museums in Europe, N. America and China and participated in international residencies at The Arctic Circle, Banff Centre for the Arts, Stiftelsen Kulturhuset USF, Artist Residency in Motherhood and the Santa Fe Art Institute for which she was awarded a Joan Mitchell Foundation grant. Caroline published a monograph with Peter Lang Oxford entitled, *Women Writing War: The Life-writing of the Algerian moudjahidate*, as part of the series, *Studies in Contemporary Women's Writing*, edited by Gill Rye, Professor Emeritus at the IMLR, School of Advanced Study, University of London, UK. From 2013 to 2014, she was a Fellow in Multi-Disciplinary Research at the Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation (APRAF) in Berlin, DE. She lives with her husband and son in the Paris metropolitan area, France.

Abstract

Souvenirs of Iceland: Twenty years ago this autumn, I left New York City. It was exactly two weeks

following 9/11 and JFK International Airport was somber, quiet. It was my first journey to Iceland, a place that had captured my imagination. Over the summer, I'd purchased a one-way ticket on Icelandair. At the time, the airline offered a deal whereby travelers could opt for a brief layover in Reykjavik, at no additional cost, before continuing on to their final destinations. I planned to stay in Iceland for several days then head to London to begin graduate studies at Oxford. In this brief talk, I want to explore the concept of the 'souvenir', as reminiscence, as it's primarily defined in French, a memory of an experience from the past, as well as the souvenir as object, the 'photo-souvenir', for example, collected during one's travels. The 'souvenir' is something that often surfaces in my work, in the Arctic Circle Project, especially, which was partly inspired by trips to Iceland in 2001 and 2003.

Katie Lone Craney and Morag Patterson.

Katie Lone Craney and Morag Paterson are a part of an Arts Territory Exchange remote residency-through-correspondence between their homes in Alaska, Scotland, and Italy. Their dialogue revolves around intimacy of knowing place through geomorphology, naming, geological time, and postcolonial futures. Both have visited Iceland, Katie for an artist residency and Morag initially on a personal visit, then latterly running creative photographic workshops.



Image from the collaboration between Katie Lone Craney and Morag Patterson.

Abstract

For the symposium we propose to reflect on how we exist in place, both in person and remotely, and our reflections of the only place where our physical paths have overlapped, Iceland. We plan to make a short video of our local landscapes overlaid with narrative and interspersed with imagery from our time in Iceland. Narration will be a response to desire, touch, distance, and sensual experience of both our homelands and Iceland's 'exotic'. We will share extracts from dialogues and questions posed to each other about our experiences in Iceland.

Carly Butler

Carly Butler is an interdisciplinary artist who lives and works on Vancouver Island in Ucluelet on the traditional territory of the Yuułuꞵ̓ it̓ at̓ . Her practice reinterprets nautical knowledge around navigation and survival to reflect on longing, regret and nostalgia. Carly has an MA in Art History and studied fine art at Central Saint Martins in London. She completed a BFA at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and was a finalist for the prestigious RBC Canadian Painting Competition in 2014. Carly has recently exhibited at Campbell River Art Gallery, Hatch Art Gallery at the University of British Columbia, Queens Museum, New York, and the Today Art Museum in Beijing. She has been collaborating remotely with Gudrun Filipska in the UK on S Project, a long distance walking and navigation project since 2016.

<https://carlybutler.com/>

@carlybutlerart

Abstract

The S Project, Skirting around Reykjavik. Carly Butler and Gudrun Filipska: This talk explores a remote/virtual walk across Iceland made as part of S Project; a collaboration between artists Carly Butler and Gudrun Filipska as they virtually walk towards each other (UK - Canada) with avatar markers fuelled by their domestic pedometer steps – tracing carefully mapped and plotted routes across the world. The Great Circle Route of their journey (Great-circle navigation is the practice of navigating a vessel along a great circle - the shortest distance between two points on the globe, a technique used by mariners) takes Filipska across Iceland. Here we reflect on the experience of this virtual journey: the tediums and temporal jumps of Street View, vicarious tourist experiences, the fascination with other peoples photographs and the wider ethics of borrowing and lending as we develop various 'distant' residency experiences for those unable or unwilling to leave their own homes.

<http://www.sprojectarchive.com>

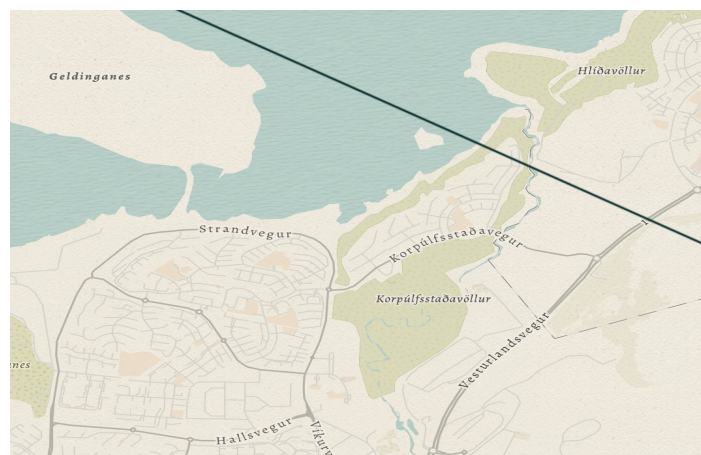


Image from the S Project virtual map – Carly Butler and Gudrun Filipska.
<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/c08a129af28c4d7ca1a1185cda2996e6>

Berglind Hreiðarsdóttir and Rhona Eve Clews.

Berglind Hreiðarsdóttir is a visual artist from Hafnarfjörður, Iceland. After completing her studies at the Iceland University of the Arts she contributed to setting up Studio B6 in Reykjavík; a darkroom space and gallery. In 2020 she moved to Malmö where she focuses on darkroom

photographic practices and researches her own connections to the photographic object. Since May 2018 she has been part of Arts Territory Exchange, communicating via letters, images, films and video files with Rhona Eve Clews as a collaborative method of creating art. Currently studying horticulture in hopes of developing interdisciplinary practice between the plant subject and art. <http://www.berglinhdreidarsdottir.com>

Rhona Eve Clews: Whether melting her body into the innards of her home photocopier, filming erupting geyser postcards found on eBay or crawling on her belly to enter macro-pollen perspectives, Rhona works with image, text and performance, poetry, humour, SF and trauma theory to collapse ecological distance. Physically performing her compulsion to meld minds with multiple subjectivities and clamber inside other 'bodies,' she draws on her past of growing up a hippie and training as a psychologist and psychic to re-situate photography, writing and filmmaking into expanded, somatic, eco-feminist practices led by feeling, equality, sensuality and mutuality. She has performed for Black Mountain College Museum and Arts Center, USA and previous exhibitions include 'VEGETATE'; 'Future Impermanent'; 'Envisioning Other Worlds' and 'New Approaches to Photography'. She has completed residencies in Australia, USA and UK and holds a Bachelors in Psychology, a Postgraduate Diploma in Photography and an MFA in Fine Art (Media) from Slade School of Fine Art. Rhona was Guest editor for the SF and contemporary art issue of 'Vector', the academic journal of the British Science Fiction Association (BSFA) and is a recent recipient of Arts Catalyst' School of Broadcasting (2020-21) exploring the potential of collective broadcast for relationship, dialogue and exchange. She teaches expanded photography and writing and has co-curated exhibitions including 'Women in Photography' (2019) and 'you're mulchy green, you're verdant matter' (2019).

Abstract

Opening to the Other: Rhona and Berglind will discuss their long distance collaboration, letter writing and intermittent meetings involving their respective performative and documentary photography practices and their interests in landscape, embodied practices, *becoming* landscape and feminist ecology.



Image from the correspondence between Berglind Hreiðarsdóttir and Rhona Eve Clews.

Other contributors

Beth Clayton

Beth is a practicing artist and writer based in Falmouth, Cornwall, UK. Place has an ongoing pivotal role in her discourse around the subject of climate health, which she explores through her practice with stop-motion animation, walking, and running. bethclayton.net
@bethhclayton

Beth will be providing a written response to the event in particular the presentation by Berglind Hreiðarsdóttir and Rhona Eve Clews.

India Boxall

I am interested in psychogeography, spiritual ecology, and interconnectivity as mutable practices that make-towards reparative modalities in and of our concurrent Oil Age. Imaginative interplays, enfoldings, and encounters emerge through a creative research-led exercise of un/knotting and un/knowing the past to inform the present and the future.

Recent ambles, events, and site-specific projects include *fracture of one*, a collaborative and site-specific residency at Salt Space Cooperative, Glasgow (2021); *Those Who Possess Dirt*, a collaborative and site-specific residency and exhibition at New Glasgow Society, Glasgow (2021); *dust (h)as a spirit*, risograph artist print commissioned by Windfall* Editorial to accompany interview and article in Issue 3, (2021); *In Spate: a river is a passage*, sensory essay for *Viral Ecologies: Issue 2*, (2021); and *leaking: the worksite-as-flesh*, commissioned text by Generator Projects, Dundee (2021).

India Boxall will be providing a post-event written response, in particular to the work of Berglind Hdottir and Rhona Eve Clews.

Alex Knight

In 1989 Alex Knight Co-Founded the Fat-Cat record shop going on to establish the record company of the same name. The Brighton-based label boasts an eclectic selection of artists ranging from song writers to contemporary classic composers and techno to Malian Takamba. Early signings included Icelandic acts Sigur Ros and Mum, and in recent years several scottish artists have joined the roster including the Twilight Sad, We Were Promised Jetpack, PAWS. The label's output reaches into many styles including experimental rock, electronica, psychedelic folk and post-punk. He's a renowned DJ and regular contributor to 1BTN radio.

Alex Knight is in audio conversation with Rhona Eve Clews exploring their experiences of the Icelandic music scene. This will also be accompanied by an audio playlist of Icelandic music created by them both



(arts) territory exchange

