



CULTURAL SNAPSHOT
NUMBER FIFTEEN

Landscapes in Dialogue

Thoughts inspired by the *Artists in the Park*
residency, Ivvavik National Park, Yukon

Alice Angus

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Landscapes in Dialogue

On the way out here I saw the trace of a river marked over barren rocks, a spider trail of spilled ink, sharp in places smudged in others, meandering on a bed of flat rock, its boundaries were blurred, featherlike drainage patterns had sketched the surface with traces of life...

Four years ago, in the summer of 2003 I was three quarters of the way into a journey between London and the Northern Yukon, to participate in an *Artist in the Park* residency in Ivvavik National Park in the Canadian Arctic. I landed first in the town of Inuvik, after a twenty four hour journey, and was disarmed by a hot midnight sun and buzzing mosquitos; I realised that I really had no idea what lay ahead in the warm Arctic summer. I met with the project's initiator Joyce Majiski (a guide, biologist and artist). After a few days gathering supplies Joyce, artists Ron Felix, Audrea Wulf and James Ruben, guide Mervyn Joe and elder Sarah Dillon and I, loaded a Twin Otter aircraft and flew out of Inuvik and across the Mackenzie Delta towards Ivvavik.

Out over the curve of the Earth, deep green willow and spruce surround thousands of ponds, lakes and rivulets that are fed and flooded by the Deh Cho or Big River (the Mackenzie's indigenous name). Above the thirteen thousand square kilometres of lush land the sky arches high and wide, weather is visible from far away and the sun is at its highest point tracing a twenty four hour circle high above. The sense of time passing... of the Earth turning... is tangible.



The Mackenzie Delta, Alice Angus 2003



The Mackenzie Delta, Alice Angus 2003

Bordered on the north by the Beaufort Sea and Alaska on the West, Ivvavik National Park sits at the north western tip of Canada's mainland. Ivvavik is in one of the most biodiverse regions of the Western Arctic and its Inuvialuktun name Ivvavik means nursery or place of giving birth. It is a portion of the calving grounds and migration route of the Porcupine caribou herd. It forms a part of the Beringia Refugium; an area untouched by the last glaciation. With little snowfall and water locked in the ice caps sea levels dropped and an ice-free bridge formed between present day Alaska and eastern Siberia. Migrating humans and animals moved across it from Asia into North America about twenty four thousand years ago.

Before I left a friend had written to me, "Have a good time miles from nowhere Alice!". But what is and where is 'miles from nowhere'? Will I end up there? Is it where I have just come from? As I travelled I wondered what the 'middle of nowhere' meant for the

way people view and and behave towards a place. Thinking on this led me to seven thoughts on landmarks, traces, ecologies, time, wilderness, perception, presence.

The middle of nowhere is a hyperbolic allusion to a place well outside the limits of significance or familiarity for the speaker.

Society and Culture Research Guide¹

Landmarks

Flying near to the ground the geological pace of time is etched across Beringia's purple and ochre mountains. Geological events, erosion and climate changes have transformed this landscape many times but at first sight the land seems to sleep. Unglaciaded, the land forms are rounded and heaped in massive ripples like flesh sagging over the gargantuan back bones of hibernating monsters; piled up in humps like the shoulders of dinosaurs or moulded as if by a monumental hand. Sometimes the land falls away to reveal rocky tors and ochre tinged ridges, the sharp spines of iron clad dragons. Or it rolls into purple and grey venerable pachyderms, the ancients of days; great elephant's backs or a rhino's skin mapped with the passing of time. Here and there are single pointed peaks, perfect cones of loose pebbles rising precariously, steep sided isolated hills appearing as soft as the sand in an hourglass. Its as if some gods pondered there awhile at the beginning of all things and let the ochre earth run through their great fingers, doodling with the stuff that made the world. Yet beneath the illusion of timelessness this landscape is not final – it is mutable, fragile, in flux.

From our plane the land unfolded in great detail around us, the pilot flew so low I wondered if he navigated less with a combination of charts and technologies than by recognising landmarks. Everything to me looked unique. I would have no language of wayfinding here; lacking the ability to identify landmarks, to single out that one element, to recognise its uniqueness in relation to its peculiar context. That few of the mountains are named on maps adds to a feeling of boundlessness for someone from the UK where so many features of the landscape are named and so few are free of cartography.



Beringia, Alice Angus 2003

Maps aren't always the best tools for navigation. In the Mackenzie Delta there are hundreds of square miles of water ways to get lost in. If you don't have local knowledge of the route from Alkavik to Inuvik or up the coast to Tuk, you could be make one wrong turn and be lost for a long time.

Joyce Majiski²

I was once asked to make a map of the experience of being under the cliffs of Glen Feshie, a magnificent valley in the Scottish Cairngorm mountains where, in 1840 the Victorian romantic painter Edwin Landseer came to study and paint. Landseer was best known for his skilled and sometimes sentimental portraiture of animals but he also painted the Scottish Highlands. He did so with the deep forbidding sense of awe, fear and mystery that had been central to ideas of the sublime in the late 1700s; to elevate the mind with the "the hoary mountain, and the solitary lake; the aged forest, and the torrent falling over the rock."³ The same ideas that held John James Audubon back from sketching Niagara Falls in the early 1800s,

*What! Have I come here to mimic nature in her grandest enterprise – to add my caricature of one of the wonders of the world to those which I see here?
No – I give up the idea as a vain attempt. I will look on these mighty cateracts and imprint them on my mind – there alone can they be represented!*

John James Audubon⁴

Towards the end of his life Landseer painted *Man Proposes, God Disposes* (1864) in which two polar bears consume the remains of Franklyn's ill fated quest to find the North West Passage in 1845. This was a new vision of humanity in relation to a threatening and unexplained nature. *Man Proposes, God Disposes* was created soon after Darwin's *The Origin of the Species* was published and, "the primacy of man, created (in an instant) by God, was no longer so firmly asserted".⁵ The power of works such as this continued to influence our knowledge and imagination of the Poles. Early in the history of photography whilst poised at the foot of Antarctica's Barne Glacier, the great photographer Herbert Ponting was overcome by "an intense and wholly indescribable loneliness"⁶ – perhaps with the same sense of awe that Audubon came to when he went to sketch Niagara Falls? Today, in news photographs and film of melting glaciers and shifting landscapes, I see shadows of those sublime, desolate and terrifying visions of nature. Waking up in Inuvik the spectres faded in my mind at the sight of everyday life on the summer delta.



Traces



Arctic Poppy, Alice Angus 2003

From the air (and in the imaginations of the temperate zone) the land of Ivvavik, the Arctic Taiga and Tundra are a frozen desert of dry heath, rock and earth. But landing at the junction of Sheep Creek and the Firth River we saw tussocks of grass and wild flowers rise from the valley floor. Islands of colour, embroidered cushions with succulent

jewel like plants, luminescent mosses, ferns and vibrant wildflowers were miniature raised gardens of Babylon, others were spiky like curled up hedgehogs or formed mossy cushioned stepping stones over boggy ground between caribou trails. The Arctic summer is so short and the sunlight so intense that life bursts into being. Inhuman quantities of mosquitoes and other bugs swarmed around us, feeding the bird population and tormenting the larger mammals. The insects proliferate so much that, when high up on wind buffeted hills, the whining mosquitoes take shelter behind my bug jacket. Arid ochre hills shimmered in a heat haze as moss campion burst between rocks and cotton grass shuddered in the wind. A collector of heat, the Arctic poppy followed the sun's daily path filling itself with warmth.

Out on the land there were larger traces of life; ghostly tracks of caribou in their thousands, porcupine shuffling in the trees, ground squirrel and fox scavenging what they could find. Stuck in the pine pitch was a wisp of grizzly hair marking its scratching post with an "I was here". Local stories and archaeologies could tell where trappers, and travellers had walked and hunters waited. High up under crumbling tors and through a heat haze I saw the Dalls Sheep. Far away like a dream remembered it stood for a moment sensing my presence then turned back into its world.



Looking out over Ivvavik, Joyce Majiski 2003

Though life in the Arctic is very fragile it is, at this time of year, abundant. The language of the north I grew up with paints an image of bleakness but, if you know where to look, the myths of desolation fall away.



The fox in the city slips from bin to bin, house to house in the semi silence of night. Sometimes he lives in the centre of the metropolis, so far from suburbia and so deep in the city no-one would expect to see him, "theres no wildlife here" they say. People think he was just a large dog. He is camouflaged by their expectations.



Ecologies

On the third day I was sitting, feet plunged into the cold water of the creek; I had so many mosquito bites my legs were too swollen to wear my boots.

Since we arrived we had been hoping to see some of the many thousand migrating caribou which often cross the Firth River here. We saw only footprints and wondered if they would come soon. I sat for long hours at the creek and began to conjure in my imagination spectres of the people who had been here before.

Sheep Creek is the site of a former gold mining claim, the creek has been widened and gravel is piled across its valley. There is the bleached wooden handle of a shovel, a rusty old sieve and a tatty boot, a wooden stake driven into the ground, the fading detritus of a tough northern claim. Across the breeze there are the stories of the nomadic people and travellers who criss-crossed the land and, way before that, the ancient people who came from Asia. Mervyn says there's still gold in these hills. The Japanese prospector and musher Jujiro Wada was one who came to stake a claim not far from here about a hundred years ago.⁷ Wada trekked the long route up to the Klondyke, thence north via the Firth River and way up to the Beaufort Sea and Herschel Island through the darkness and bitter winter. Centuries earlier explorers had landed on the East Coast unwittingly bringing smallpox to the people of Canada, then later long distance whaling ships came around the north coast, carrying more devastating disease to the people of the Arctic. Whilst Wada and thousands of others chased Gold in the Klondyke, much further south another wave of migration pushed across Canada; some must have been driven by opportunism, but others by hope of a life better than the poverty they left. Some were forced to emigrate as the bleak story of the British Home Children will testify. Tens of thousands of children as young were subject to compulsory deportation and sent, alone, to Canada between the mid 1800s and the early 1900s by religious and charitable organisations. Many became indentured farm labourers. These waves of migration brought colonies of people over the sea and they moved over the land with their religions, laws, language and maps.⁸



Sheep Creek, Alice Angus 2003



Sieve, Alice Angus 2003

In the north west I encountered several cartographies; some borne of European exploration and the naming of places four hundred years ago, and others woven from thousands of years of human habitation and the traditions of Inuvilait and Gwitchin cultures embedded in the land and a different set of place names and meanings.

For many people who grew up near Ivvavik and travelled or hunted here, it is as much a part of their extended environment as a suburban dweller's backyard, local neighbourhood, commuter route, or the places they shop and eat. Ivvavik is the land of the Inuvait people who still use and travel in it. Inuvait culture acknowledges that people are part of the ecosystem and Ivvavik is the first national park in Canada to be created as a result of a partnership between aboriginal people and the Federal government; to protect land for all time under the Inuvait Final Agreement (IFA).

Maps tend not to show the presence of people who move through a place, the tendency is to think of people 'located' in a specific place and leaving clear traces of their existence. Yet the people who live outside a boundary may still be an intrinsic part of the life of that environment, using and traversing the land,

"We had a map of the National Park (Ivvavik) but it didn't have the community that is closest to the park mapped on it, the boundary was here, the park was here, and the community was right on the edge. We (now) show the community on the map to show the connections."

Alan Fehr, Parks Canada⁹

In the world's 'wildernesses' like Ivvavik it is easy for a visitor to be lost in such a reverie of wonder at the grandeur of landscape that they miss the traces of the lives and culture that are part of it.

Time

Still bound to the creek by festering insect bites and the shivers Sarah instructs me to put spruce gum on the wounds and drink a turpentine-like Spruce Bark tea. Only when I have swallowed it does she tell me with her warm Northern humour that it will flush out my system. Hiking boots and 'technical walking socks' are of little use on mosquito-bite swollen legs so I return to the creek hoping to encounter the caribou and sit where the flow of the creek meets the junction of the Firth. Having no mental map of the area that would allow me to walk out – even if I could manage the weeks of hiking – this place becomes my whole world and the blue green calcium carbonate waters flow around me. This river flows through history and into tomorrow laden with stories: who has travelled on it, drunk from it, the wildlife that cross it, live in it, beside it around it and the people who still travel to fish camps and to hunt on the coast where the waters are headed.



Sheep Slot Rapid, Firth River, Alice Angus 2003

With no help from glaciation and taking an unimaginable time it has carved a canyon long and deep in the earth as in the imagination. Thought to be the oldest Canadian watercourse, its freezing waters surge from a time beyond reckoning through deep gorges in the British Mountains. It forms glistening turquoise torrents in narrow canyons, cascades and flows into deep green eddying pools on its long route to the Beaufort Sea.

Rain pours off distant hills, and after many days of precipitation the river changes shape. It rises and floods the creek, the water loses its bright cobalt tinge and in spate, it boils and crashes, bulges out into huge standing waves and deep swirling holes the colour of mud. It bursts upwards trying to find space for itself. Trapped in the canyon this maelstrom boils and thrashes as it thunders down between high cliffs, urgently rushing towards the coastal plain, finally to the sea and thence to a receding ice edge. All the while, across the sea to the eastern Arctic the water meets chemicals migrating from the south; poisonous heavy metals that settle and magnify in the food chain.

The bulk of anthropogenic activity driving global change occurs outside the Arctic and is therefore only weakly coupled to changes occurring in the Arctic. This decoupling of causes from the effects of Arctic change reduced the likelihood that people will modify their behaviours globally to slow the rates of Arctic change.

F. S. Chapin¹⁰



24 hour day, Alice Angus 2003

The sun circles high above as day flows into sunfilled night, the shadows of trees draw natural sundials tracing time, the mountain's shadow rises and falls on the valley wall, reflections of the clouds criss-cross over the land. If you are not used to the phenomena of twenty four hour daylight the lengthening shadows indicate the approach of night and it is disorienting when they simply expand and then contract as night never falls. Night has been put away, archived, shelved and stored until autumn. I am tripped up by time. Let loose from the boundaries of day and night in a place where we don't carry bankcards, phones and housekeys I welcome the vertiginous freefall away from time.



Swimming in the sea off a Greek island where it was possible see the bottom through deep clear water, I got vertigo, as if I might at any moment drop down through world. Australian marathon swimmer Tammy van Wisse was unnerved by her swim up the 24 mile 700 foot deep Loch Ness, she said she "was in a constant state of panic". The loch water is blackened by peat and the steep mountains that surround it cast long shadows; the sun might be shining behind the hills but the loch is black and outside of time. When I was there I felt that if I looked

for too long into the water I might fall and be swallowed up by the watery abyss. On a foggy day when the loch is still it reflects the mist, blurring the boundary between air and water so that being in a small boat is like flying.



Idea of Wilderness

At last I was walking again out on a high hill, not bound by twilight or nightfall. On a good day you feel you could walk forever – Joyce calls it “being sucked into the green”. Currently less than two hundred people a year visit Ivvavik, many of whom are on eco-tours, taking a journey of a week or two by raft down the Firth to the coastal plain. There are no roads – to drive or to walk from the nearest settlement would take many days. Many visitors come for a wilderness that means ‘not meeting other people’.

“Have good time miles from nowhere!” rang in my mind. When we think of a place and the people in it as ‘wilderness’ and, by definition, disconnected from our own lives how does the language affect the way we behave towards that place? Does the creation of wilderness reserves, as William Cronin says, “give ourselves permission to evade responsibility for the lives we actually lead ... to an extent that we live in an urban industrial culture,” and no longer see ourselves as part of nature? The language of wilderness can become something that isolates an area in an aura of protection, and separates it from our lives.¹¹



Climbing to tors, Joyce Majiski 2003



Getting to tors, Alice Angus 2003

There is an disjuncture between the view of homeland and the western notion of wilderness as barren. This concept of wilderness is at odds with the people of the Arctic who view the land as homeland and a place of food, culture and life. To many people the Arctic is still shrouded in an aura of romanticism portrayed, as it has been through the history of polar exploration, in paintings, literature and latterly photographs, as a landscape of sublime desolation. To some, I expect, it's not a place but an imaginary landscape far away from their everyday lives. But to the people who live, and have lived there, it is surely home; a place alive with the struggles of everyday life.

"To many environmental organizations the Arctic is wilderness to be preserved. To industry it is a frontier and a source of energy and minerals to be exploited. But to the 155,000 Inuit living in Canada, Alaska, Greenland and Chukotka in Russia the Arctic is home with all that this implies".

Sheila Watt-Cloutier¹²



Distant caribou, Alice Angus 2003

Across the arctic global warming and pollution alter the landscape; permafrost melts and the treeline advances more than it has done in living memory. The Arctic Haze of pollution, visible since the Industrial Revolution in North America, combines with clouds to increase their ability to retain heat. The seasons and weather are unpredictable and the land feels unfamiliar. Traditional techniques are no longer reliable. Such is the speed of change that, as phenomena and species are lost, new ones arrive and, in some cases, there are no indigenous names to describe them.¹³

One day we see five caribou. Hoping they herald the arrival of thousands we wait for the rumbling of hooves to flow over the valley. The Porcupine Caribou are the largest migrating herd and nearly quarter of a million move through the Yukon, the North West Territories and Alaska. Pregnant cows lead the herd out of Ivvavik and into the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR); in particular, onto the 1002 lands – an area rich in oil reserves. Calving there is a defining characteristic of the herd, they return to it every year. So important are the calving grounds the Gwitchin people refer to them as the “sacred place where life begins”. The herd is central to the lives and culture of the many First Nations people who live in its range. If the ANWR is opened for drilling many people believe it will result in untold damage to the herd and the people whose lives and traditions depend on it. But with some people reliant on the caribou and others on an economy derived from oil the issue is complex.¹⁴

We saw only five caribou and watching their hair float in the river I hoped that this wasn't a warning, like the fable of *A Christmas Carol*, a prescient dream where we are shown a grim future if the present doesn't change.



Loading Twin Otter, Alice Angus 2003

Perception

A few days before we leave there is a break in the rain and I smell something cold and familiar from Scotland. Then the snow came, in July. We all piled outside to look at the white mountaintop laughing and enjoying the shifting northern weather.

It was hard to leave, it had taken me all the fifteen days to begin to see details beyond the obvious. I'd only just arrived and in one juddering shift I was to be back in London. Stopping in Inuvik I was greeted by the unique sight of the utlildors carrying water and utilities above the permafrost, and the houses that sit slightly raised. Built in the mid 1950s, in a matter of years Inuvik has become a modern town, its architecture gives me the sense of a temporary camp, reminiscent of Edwin Muir writing, in 1935, on the new Glasgow suburbs;

"(the houses) have a curious paper or cardboard like appearance, as if they were stage properties belonging to some huge travelling company, which will one day be packed up and taken away to an enormous store room. They do not seem to be attached to the landscape..."¹⁵

It was the warmth of Inuvik's welcome that gave it solidity, tied it to the landscape.

I was sad to leave, to began a journey in airplanes of increasing size. From the tiny bush planes whose interior had tell tale signs of being repaired by an identifiably human hand, to the huge precision built airliner that brought me across the atlantic. While the coming of the railroad tore through history and ruptured time, the age of mass flight has collapsed and fragmented the world. Our experience is fleeting, fast, fragmentary and fluid; no longer do we move across it powered only by our own energy, by foot or paddle.

Recently I was researching the industrial history of Leeds and found an excerpt from the The Leeds Intelligencer of 1823 that told of an, "Esquimaux Indian (who) exhibited surprising feats in his canoe [in the Leeds Canal basin]... proof of the admirable dexterity of his countrymen." Brought to Leeds, perhaps via the industrial whaling feet that sailed out of Hull, I wonder who was this man was, pulled across time from the Arctic to industrial Leeds. Who watched him and what became of them? His story resonates down the years and comes to meet me, colliding with my fragmented, disjointed knowledge constructed from books, stories, archives, histories and hindsight of the political and social ideals of the time. The story emerge from phantoms of ice and disappears again through the fragile membrane between life and death, memory and forgetting. ¹⁶



Leaving, Alice Angus 2003

I had flown in from and returned to London and, though they are remote from each other, the more time I spent in the North Western Arctic the more I saw connections between the two. For many of us the urban environment is hostile, full of unknown territories, its own kind of wilderness. Yet if we can understand that there are struggles for survival that are similar wherever you are, then we might be able to start to find out how the connections John Muir talks about can come together to inspire change.

"When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it is tied to everything else in the universe."

John Muir¹⁷



Presence

I had gone to Ivvavik thinking about the way electronic technologies mediate presence and how the use of telepresence technologies link places. I looked into the possibility of using a satellite link to upload regular streaming media clips online. Finally arriving there this seemed an absurd idea, calling into question my assumption that telepresence technologies could convey a meaningful sense of 'presence' and connection between places. Citizen Band (CB) radio has long been a vital mode of communication in remote northern communities. The park's radio sat in the main living area of the camp and the regular call, "Inuvik, Inuvik, this is Sheep Creek, Sheep Creek", became a comforting daily ritual. There is a red telephone box on the road between Bettyhill and Durness on Scotland's far north coast in a place where it seems that all roads end and the sky meets the wind-blown sand. In the morning it is shrouded in fog, and there it seems to wait, an icon of the 'Conquest of Solitude', with infinite patience for the final calls of travellers and lost souls who drift between this world and that. Using the CB radio from Ivvavik made me think of that telephone box.¹⁸



Epilogue

Shortly after my return I took a sea kayak and set off up the Caledonian Canal in the Highlands of Scotland. A masterpiece of engineering by Thomas Telford, the canal joins Loch Lochy, Loch Oich, Loch Doufour and Loch Ness to open a route through the mountains from east to west. At the Inverness end of the Caledonian Canal, the Clachnaharry Sea Lock juts out beyond the shoreline to give boats sufficient depth to transfer from canal to sea. As I walked along the canal bank the land dropped away and I was left on a high wide wall with a canal in the middle and sea on either side reflecting the sky, I seemed to be on a wall of water that traversed the heavens. And then the canal stops, its gates open to the Beaully Firth and thence the North Sea, looking over to Kessock Bridge I could see traffic flowing north and south while hearing trains passing behind me. All these flows and tides of movement crossing geographies and histories. After being contained by the canal it is a thrilling emergence into a world of uncontained possibilities that reminded me of the freefalling endless daylight in the Arctic. I felt I could step off the end and walk across the ocean.

Notes

1. Society and Culture Research Guide at <http://www.123exp-culture.com/>
2. Author's interview with Joyce Majiski, artist and guide
3. H. Blair, Lectures 1783, quoted in the Tate Britain Collection Displays by Martin Myrone available at <http://www.tate.org.uk/servlet/CollectionDisplays?roomid=1904>
4. J.J. Audobon, *Ornithological Biography*, the excerpt on Niagara can be seen at <http://jjaudubongallery.com/Niagara.htm>
5. G. Shearing, *Fierce Friends: Artists and Animals 1750-1900*, at http://www.carnegiemuseums.org/cmag/bk_issue/2006/spring/feature1.html
5. F. Spufford, *I May be Some Time: Ice and The English Imagination*, Faber and Faber, London, 1997 p326
6. Information on Jujiro Wada came from copies of the Dawson Daily News circa 1906, copies of mining claims and other material shown to me by the Dawson City Museum and Historical Society.
8. Information on the British Home children can be found on the Child Migrant Trust website: <http://www.childmigrantstrust.com/Index.htm> and Liverpool Museums Website <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk>
9. Author's interview with Alan Fehr, Parks Canada, Yukon
10. F. S. Chapin quoted in: *Arctic Nations' Wealth Key to Management of Climate Change* at <http://news.bio-medicine.org/>
11. W. Cronin, 'The Trouble with Wilderness or Getting Back to the Wrong Nature', in J. Baird Callicott and Michael Nelson, Eds., *The Great New Wilderness Debate*, The University of Georgia Press.
12. S. Watt-Cloutier, quoted in Vital Arctic Graphics at <http://www.vitalgraphics.net/arctic.cfm?pageID=1>
13. Arctic Haze further information http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arctic_haze
14. Information on the Porcupine Caribou Herd can be found in K. Heuyer's *Being Caribou: Five Months On Foot With An Arctic Herd*, Mountaineers Books, 2005 and from the Porcupine Caribou Management Board <http://www.taiga.net/pcmb/>
15. E. Muir, *Scottish Journey*, Mainstream Publishing, Edinburgh, 1979 p163
16. Leeds Intelligencer, 20 November 1823 from Discovering Leeds at <http://www.leeds.gov.uk/discover/>
17. G. Erlich, *John Muir Nature's Visionary*, National Geographic, 2000
18. R. V. Bruce, *Bell, Alexander Graham Bell and the Conquest of Solitude*, Cornell University Press, 1990

Alice Angus

Alice Angus, co-director of Proboscis, is an artist inspired by rethinking concepts and perceptions of landscape and human relationships to the land. Over the last six years she has been creating a body of art work exploring concepts proximity and remoteness, technology and presence, against the lived experience and local knowledge of a place. In 2003, Alice was the only non-Canadian to participate in the first Artist in the Park residency in Ivvavik National Park in the Northern Yukon, organised by Parks Canada. This essay is inspired by the experience in Ivvavik and by her long term collaboration with artist and guide Joyce Majiski that began on the residency. Information on Ivvavik can be found at http://www.pc.gc.ca/pn-np/yt/ivvavik/index_e.asp

CULTURAL SNAPSHOTS

A series of essays, polemics and manifestoes designed to provoke comment and debate on the contexts in which Proboscis works. Cultural Snapshots are commissioned and edited by Giles Lane.

<http://proboscis.org.uk/publications/snapshots.html>