



REPORT – November 2008

Disko Bay Expedition 25 September – 6 October 2008

The Cape Farewell Disko Bay expedition departed on 25 September and returned on 6 October 2008. An exploration of place, landscape, discussion and debate with a creative crew of visuals artists, architects, comedians, playwrights, composers, engineers, film-makers and musicians working alongside two science crews, both completing research in the Arctic waters.

Launches

We hosted two launch events in London, a private event for funders and voyagers and a public launch at the Science Museum, IMAX cinema. The Science Museum was sold out and attended by 300 people. The Cape Farewell crew returned to the Science Museum two weeks after the expedition returned to do a smaller event at the Dana Centre, an event of conversation and discussion with voyagers Tracey Rowledge, Marcus Brigstocke, Robyn Hitchcock, Dave Smith, Simon Boxall and Michèle Noach talking about their artistic and scientific responses to the journey. This event was also sold out, with an audience of 130 people. In New York City, voyager Vanessa Carlton hosted a media launch in her apartment, coverage included celebritiesgonegood.com, CNN online and several radio stations in NYC including KTU Cares. The launch helped to increase the media profile of the expedition in USA.

The day the expedition departed, Cape Farewell also received a letter of support from Prime Minister, Gordon Brown.

Itinerary

Starting in the Kangerlussuaq Fjord, the Arctic journey lasted 10 days. It covered 1000 nautical miles. From Kangerlussuaq we traveled to Disko Island and Disko Bay, crossing the front of the Jakobshavn Glacier. This Glacier is retreating at a rate of 1m per hour. It is the glacier that is “draining” the Greenland ice cap the fastest, draining 6.5% of the ice sheet area. The speed it moved doubled between 1997 and 2003, and it now contributes 0.06mm rise in sea level per year (4% of the 20th century rate of sea level increase from one glacier). After visiting the glacier and local town of Ilulissat the voyage continued north to Uummannaq, the most northerly settlement on our expedition. From Uummannaq we visited two glaciers – the Perdlerfiup Sermia Glacier and terminated glacier Sermeq Avangnardleq Glacier where we were able to walk to the mouth of the glacier, over ice. After spending two days around the glacier, we visited our most northerly point, Nuugaatsraq 71.50 degrees north before deploying the ARGO float into the west Greenland current and returning south for our onward travel.

Disembarkments included:

- Godhavn, a settlement on Disko Island with a bay of icebergs surrounding a small town. The geological crew ran a survey from Disko Island to Aassiat on the west coast of Greenland. Here, visual artist Michèle Noach found the Papaver Radicatum, Arctic poppies for use with her artwork as part of the ongoing Cape Farewell/Eden Project collaborations.

- Illulissat Kangia, a World Heritage Site, at the front of the Jakobshavn Glacier, which is the fastest moving glacier in Greenland. Here NASA record the speed of the retreating glacier and our geological crew surveyed the seabed at the mouth of the glacier. Marcus Brigstocke performed his comedy routine to an audience of attentive icebergs.
- Uummannaq, a settlement with a population of 1400. Climate change is directly effecting residents as the sea ice is no longer freezing in the winter they are having to adapt their lifestyles accordingly. In Uummannaq, musicians KT Tunstall, Robyn Hitchcock, Feist, Vanessa Carlton, Shlomo, Martha Wainwright Jarvis Cocker and Ryuichi Sakamoto performed a gig to the local community.
- Perdlerfiup Sermia Glacier, where the oceanography crew were able to measure to depths of 10m the temperature, depth and salinity of the water. Ryuichi Sakamoto recorded the sound of melting ice.
- Sermeg Avangnardieq Glacier - a terminated glacier where we were able to walk over ice to reach the mouth of the glacier. It was the location for a new piece of work by Suzan-Lori Parks and location of Lemn Sissay performed passages to be included in his show 'Why I don't hate White People' at Lyric Theatre, January/February 2009. From this location we heading into the west Greenland current to drop the ARGO float.

Science Teams

Onboard science teams from the British Geological Survey (BGS), National Oceanography Centre (NOC) and Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) completed scientific research during the expedition. Our scientific research was fully funded via the Lighthouse Foundation, Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and BGS - the first Cape Farewell expedition in which the science research was fully funded by scientific institutions, demonstrating a commitment to the level of research being undertaken on the expedition and recognition of Cape Farewell's success in bringing scientific data to the mainstream.

Oceanography

The NOC and SAMS made temperature and salinity measurements in the West Greenland Sea including:

- Water column sampling was problematic due to failure of the CTD system, designed to measure to a depth of 200m, and back up system. However, the team was able to use an alternative device - capable of measuring to 10m depth - observing at close quarters melt water coming off the glacier, Perdlerfiup Kangerdlua. There was little evidence of liquid water entering the sea at the glacier front with the minimum salinities occurred further into the fjord. This indicates that all of the fresh water flow here is as ice, only diluting the seawater as the ice melts on its journey out to the open sea. The sea temperatures were 2°C, 4°C above the freezing point of seawater, and more than sufficient to slowly melt the freshwater of these glacial icebergs.
- Deploying the second Cape Farewell ARGO float in the West Greenland Current, which is already sending back vital data on the temperature and salinity conditions in the High Arctic. The Argo float is one of over 3,000 deployed in the oceans today and is the closest any crew has come to deploying one in the North West Passage. It is already transmitting its information to the international data centre which receives all the information from ARGO float deployment and it will be the first such measurements in this fabled region of the ocean, which was only recently an ice covered wilderness. The float will continue to provide data for the next three years.

Geology

- The science team from BGS used sound waves to image the submarine landscape and the team successfully uncovered beautifully imaged deep channels that had become infilled with up to 250m of sediments.
- They gained data from a variety of settings, and showed that the penetration of the sound waves is possible in an area initially thought to be problematic due to the volcanic rocks and also the type of glacial deposits that can be very coarse and difficult to image through.
- With further work in this area it will be possible to start to piece together a sea-level, glacial retreat / advance story and start to assess the historical impact of climate change cycles.
- Some of the artists including Ryuichi Sakamoto, Laurie Anderson and Michèle Noach were particularly inspired by the sounds generated from the survey and worked with the crew to listen to the sounds and take recordings (both visual and audio) of the surveying.

Programme of Lectures & Debate

As well as completing the science research, the scientists contributed to the daily lecture series that took place onboard the Grigory Mikheev. Talks included:

- Joe Smith (lecturer at Open University) on the socio-political impacts of climate change.
- Sunand Prasad (President of Royal Institute of British Architects) and Francesca Galeazzi (Artist and Engineer at ARUP associates) on sustainability issues and efficiency in design.
- Karen and Ludvig (our two Inuit guides) on Greenlandic Culture.
- Quentin Cooper (BBC Material World presenter) on the role of artists in responding to climate change.
- The series ended with a talk from Marcus Brigstocke entitled 'How to Stay Positive in the Face of Overwhelming Evidence to the Contrary'

Artistic Output

During the journey some of the onboard artistic activity included:

- Tracey Rowledge completing a series of physical drawings emulating the ship's movement
- Chris Wainwright lit/photographed red icebergs and created a semaphore message with Robyn Hitchcock for future exhibition
- Sunand Prasad completed his balloon project – erecting balloons in a square the same size as a tonne of CO₂ – this project was photographed
- David Buckland projected text and footage on a glacier wall. He also began a new work of 46 portraits, each to be accompanied by a chosen piece of text
- Sam Collins filmed the Arctic landscape for proposed new artworks and collaborations
- Laurie Anderson performed her stories to the crew and to camera. She also spent time with the geology crew, listening to the seabed
- Michèle Noach found the Papaver Radicatum, Arctic poppies for use with her artwork as part of the ongoing Cape Farewell/Eden Project collaborations.
- Marcus Brigstocke performed his comedy routine to an audience of attentive icebergs.
- David Noble sent a 350 action from the beach of Qeqertarsuaq to 350.org (global climate change website)
- Suzan-Lori Parks wrote a short new play (part of the 365 play series) which was performed by fellow voyagers
- Lemn Sissay performed passages to be included in his show 'Why I don't hate White People' at Lyric Theatre, January 2009

- Ryuichi Sakamoto recorded the sound of melting ice. He also worked with the scientists to listen to the surveying of the seabed.
- Sophie Calle completed a project burying her mother's diamonds, documentation will follow
- Mojisola Adebayo wrote two new poems about the journey and is incorporating her experience into her new play 'Matt Henson: North Star'
- Francesca Galeazzi completed new work 'Justification of Bad Behaviour' which addresses the various arguments surrounding carbon offsetting
- Robyn Hitchcock wrote and performed a new song 'Chicago, Turn off the Lights' on the Grigory Mikheev
- Musicians KT Tunstall, Vanessa Carlton and Martha Wainwright all wrote songs whilst on the expedition, Martha Wainwright performing hers 'It's Hard' in front of an audience for the first time at the Roundhouse, Camden on 28 October 2008.
- Luke Bullen recorded the new material from his makeshift recording studio on the Grigory Mikheev
- Shlomo, Feist and Jarvis Cocker created the Arctic lo-fi choir from approximately 20 crew members, all performing Feist's 'Sea Lion Woman'
- Southbank Centre provided their Artistic Director, Jude Kelly, with a new script of Paradise Lost, abridged by Greg Mosse. Jude directed onboard the 32 scenes with the Cape Farewell crew of players.

Film Crew

All the activity was recorded by film director Peter Gilbert ('Hoop Dreams' and 'At Death House Door') and his crew, documenting the expedition for a co-production between Cape Farewell and Cactus Three Productions, New York, a feature film to be made for theatrical release and broadcast on Sundance TV, 2009/10. We also worked with cameraman Matt Wainwright to record and edit 13 short video clips about the expedition, all sent to the website during the voyage and since our return used by voyagers in various presentations and events.

Media Outreach

Website

The website is a major tool in our communications strategy from the Arctic. This year we designed and developed a new portal to receive our Arctic journey. It was the ambition of the web strategy to post information about Cape Farewell on websites other than our own, so people were able to stumble upon information about the expedition without coming specifically to our website. We achieved the following:

- Approximately 29,000 visited the Disko Bay blogs (during the 10 day period of the expedition), viewing over 90,000 pages. The largest viewing audience ever to our website in a 10 day period. This increased activity has been sustained, with our average audience at approximately 10,000 new visitors per month (compared to approximately 5,000 prior to the expedition)
- 199 blogs from our onboard voyagers, including blogs from Jarvis Cocker, KT Tunstall and Martha Wainwright during the trip.
- Over 7,500 stories about Cape Farewell were read from the RSS feeder during the expedition
- International websites such as 350.org, treehugger.com, entertainmentweekly.com, guardianonline and people.com featured information about the expedition both from the RSS feeder and also articles written about the journey by journalists and onboard voyagers.
- During the expedition we open our website to comment, allowing followers to comment on the blogs and onboard activity. We also offered the opportunity for website visitors to send questions to the boat. There were over 400 comments from our users.

- Other external outreach included, bliptv for the video files and flickr to distribute our photographs, all our video and audio files were also available via iTunes podcast for viewers to subscribe to, a facebook account, image stream widget which featured images from the Arctic updated daily and featured on partner and voyager websites (eg Marcus Brigstocke), daily email to our subscriber database with news from the Arctic.

Press

There was much press interest whilst we were in the Arctic which has continued since our return. Articles about the expedition included:

- Print - The Independent (printing exclusive blogs from Shlomo, Jonathan Dove and Martha Wainwright), The Daily Telegraph (featuring interview and images of Martha Wainwright), The Times and a cover story in The Word magazine (written by Michèle Noach featuring interviews from the musicians onboard).
- Radio – CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Company) radio broadcasts with Martha Wainwright and Feist – two separate programmes. BBC Radio 6 Sunday show from Jarvis Cocker (26 October) he spent approximately 45 minutes talking about Cape Farewell with Martha Wainwright and David Buckland
- Television - BBC World Service (Quentin Cooper and Shlomo discussing the trip), Andrew Marr Show (Jarvis Cocker spoke about the expedition during an interview for the Andrew Marr)

Conclusion

The inspiration of the journey and work of the crew both onboard and since our return will stimulate future exhibitions and events. The combination of the onboard creative and scientific crew led to a critical mass of activity, culminating in a wealth of positive energy and potential for collaboration. Since our return, these voyagers have been working together sometimes prompted by Cape Farewell, but increasingly the network is developing to produce events and stimulate engagement without our management. The voyage acting as a catalyst for ongoing individual and collaborative activity

Quotes from the expedition

Artists and writers have an important role to play and it is vital that they are fully engaged in the debates about these issues. I am therefore delighted to be able to extend my support to the Cape Farewell expedition to Greenland.

Gordon Brown, Prime Minister

Ryuichi had told us when he played his recording of an underground glacial stream that it was the most beautiful sound he had ever heard. The sound of water that was frozen solid before human beings even existed, heard for the first time, unspoilt, no particles of plastic. Baby water. Old as the earth.

KT Tunstall from Arctic Diaries www.capefarewell.com

I have an idea of the project I'd like to create in response to the problem of Climate Change. I got the notion before I started this journey. Working and talking with the artists/scientists/crew on board and meeting Greenlandic people along the way has helped me develop it. Inch it along. But I'm not a drum-beater. I'm not one of those writers who has a point to make/an issue to impart. Never have been. So we'll see what happens but I am ready to get to work. Maybe everything I've done so far is a warm up for this.

Suzan-Lori Parks www.capefarewell.com

The odd thing is despite having come to the Arctic last year, written and performed loads of material on climate change, talked to countless school children about the environment, done battle with on-line sceptics (flat earthers), met my MP to demand the government reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the UK, greened up our house and cycled my son to school... harmful climate change continues and CO2 emissions are going up! It's baffling; I mean I fail to see what more I can do... Still, I thought I'd give it one more serious push this year, by coming to the Arctic again to find new solutions, exchange ideas with the brilliant people aboard, ask the scientists what's to be done and when and continue to spread the love for mother earth - then if it's still getting worse by 2009 I'll give up and buy a Humvee, wrapped in a plastic bag, flown over from New Zealand, out of season, with a glove box full of delicious oil toffees and George Monbiot's severed head.

Marcus Brigstocke www.capefarewell.com

Two standard responses to the problem of global warming are that either it's not really happening or, if it is, there's nothing we can do about it now so why not leave all the lights on? Well, it is happening, and the sooner we tame our energy emissions, the sooner the earth can return to being habitable for the citizens and other creatures of the 22nd century. Time is unlikely to stop when we die, it just seems that way sometimes. It's true that we on this Cape Farewell expedition used aviation fuel and diesel to get here, but we will take the story back with us and spread it like butter on the toast of our item-rich society. As the scientists aboard research the effects of ice-melt on the ocean bed, and trace the possible mutation of the Gulf-stream through salination tests, we artists are being exposed to a landscape that cannot fail to affect our work.

Robyn Hitchcock www.capefarewell.com



Cape Farewell Disko Bay Expedition
25 September – 6 October 2008
www.capefarewell.com

Crew List

Music

KT Tunstall (musician)
Laurie Anderson (musician)
Vanessa Carlton (musician)
Martha Wainwright (musician)
Jarvis Cocker (musician)
Feist (musician)
Robyn Hitchcock (musician)
Ryuichi Sakamoto (musician)
Jonathan Dove (composer)
Shlomo (beatbox artist)
Luke Bullen (musician)

Performing Arts & Spoken Word

Lemn Sissay (poet)
Marcus Brigstocke (comedian)
Suzan-Lori Parks (playwright)
Mojisola Adebayo (theatre maker)
Jude Kelly (artist/director)
Ruth Little (theatre)

Applied Arts & Architecture

Julian Stair (ceramicist)
Tracey Rowledge (artist)
Francesca Galeazzi (artist/architect/engineer)
Sunand Prasad (President, Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA))

Scientists

Dr Simon Boxall (oceanographer)
Dr Carol Cotterill (marine and coastal geoscientist)
Emily Venables (oceanographer)
Dave Smith (engineer, British Geological Survey)

Media Team

Lori Majewski (dosomething.org)
David Noble (youth leader)
Quentin Cooper (journalist, The Material World BBC)
Peter Gilbert (film director)
Joe Smith (senior lecturer, geography)
Nathan Gallagher (photographer)
Graham Hill (founder, treehugger.com)
Matt Wainwright (camera man)
Zak Piper (camera man)
Adam Singer (camera man)

Visual Arts

David Buckland (lens based artist)
Sophie Calle (visual artist)
Sam Collins (visual artist)
Michèle Noach (cartoonist)
Kathy Barber (artist and designer)
Teresa Elwes (artist and activist)
Prof. Chris Wainwright (artist)

Written Word

Nicole Krauss (novelist)

Cape Farewell Core Crew

Hannah Bird
Vicky Long