

Les métamorphoses de  
la noirceur dans le Nord

The dynamics of  
darkness in the North

Hreyfiafl  
Myrkurs í norðrinu



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Conference abstracts booklet  
Ráðstefnurit

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Imaginaire | Nord  
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## Imaginaire | Nord

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Département d'études littéraires

Université du Québec à Montréal

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Mountaineers of Iceland

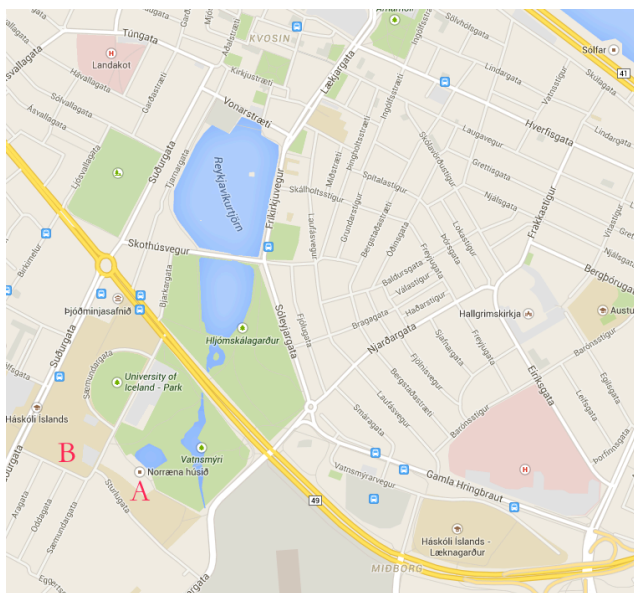


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## Map of the surrounding area



A — The Nordic House — Norræna húsið

B — The University of Iceland, Oddi — Háskóli Íslands, Oddi

## List of participants





“Under a Dark Cloud of Ash and Smoke”

In Icelandic novels, the darkness following volcanic eruptions is of a different kind than the rhythmic and seasonal darkness of winter nights. It is a sudden, unpredictable and violent darkness, representing unforeseeable and merciless fate as well as our inner, dark and uncontrollable forces. Recently, increased volcanic activity in Iceland seems to have made volcanic activity a desirable motif for novel writers. In my presentation, I will study descriptions of volcanic darkness in a few recent novels: *Jón* by Ófeigur Sigurðsson, *Mánasteinn* by Sjón and *Allt með kossi vekur* by Guðrún Eva Mínervudóttir, and compare it to elder descriptions, most notably in *Sælir eru einfaldir* by Gunnar Gunnarsson. In these novels, volcanic activity is often a part of the story line but more importantly the dark fog of ash and smoke is a crucial part of the background scenery, hovering over the characters of the story like an overlying threat, and connecting ancient woes and terrors to the dangerous forces of present times.

Auður Adalsteinsdóttir is now finishing her Ph.D. thesis on “Literary Reviews in the Icelandic Media” at the University of Iceland. She also has a degree in practical journalism, has produced various radio programs on literature and worked as a book reviewer. In the years 2010-2013 she was the publisher and editor of the cultural magazine *Spássián*, writing numerous articles on literature.

Patricia ALLMER

Chancellor's Fellow, University of Edinburgh (United Kingdom)  
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“Northern Light, Gothic Darkness. The Later Work of Mimi Parent”

The art of Mimi Parent (1924, Montréal - 2005, Switzerland) disturbingly refracts the blinding darkness of Bataille's *solar annulus* through the prism of a surrealist pictorialism imbued with a Nordic chromatics that exploits the dark emotional luminescence of Northern Gothic. In the late series of ink drawings *Annus Malus* (2004) this Batailleian dialectic is explicit: a demonic angel holds a candle that scarcely illuminates the deeply-scored tenebrosity of the drawing, its shaft a white strip in the darkness. Tensions between painting's light (as in the glowing window of *Newton* (1995) or the rising moon illuminating a field of dancing eyes in *Sans Titre* (n.d.) and the Gothic darkness of Parent's narrative themes and motifs — the unconscious, Northern fairy-tales, tales of Gothic horror, shattered mirrors and cracked psyches — orchestrate the effects of her paintings. Famous for her dominatrix-objects incorporating her own hair, Parent's delicate and entrancing pictorial work — evocative of Odilon Redon's paintings and Angela Carter's rewritten fairytales — constructs a different, peculiarly Northern surrealism through which to explore the psychic choreographies of light and darkness, and the borders of consciousness around which they dance. Through detailed readings of selected pictures by this critically-neglected artist, this presentation will theorise the dialectics of Northern light and Gothic darkness, the Batailleian — “luminous violence”, in Parent's later works.

Dr. Patricia Allmer is a Chancellor's Fellow in Art History at the Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh. She is the author of *René Magritte: Beyond Painting* (2009) and *Lee Miller: Photography, Surrealism, and Beyond* (forthcoming, 2015). She curated *Angels of Anarchy: Women Artists and Surrealism* (Manchester Art Gallery, 2009) and (with John Sears) *Taking Shots: The Photography of William S. Burroughs* (The Photographers' Gallery, London, 2014). She has edited and contributed essays to numerous volumes and special journal issues on surrealism, avant-garde art, and film studies.

María L. ÁMUNDADÓTTIR

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## “Implications of the Interplay Between Light and Dark for Human Health in the Built Environment”

24-hour cycles of light and dark are one of the most significant factors in the built environment that affect human health and well-being. In addition to stimulating visual responses, light induces a range of circadian, physiological and behavioral responses in humans, including sleep quality, hormone production, alertness and cognitive performance. These nonvisual responses are primarily mediated via a novel type of photoreceptors that contain the photopigment melanopsin. These photoreceptors can function independently of the classical photoreceptors, rods and cones used for seeing, thus the human eye plays a dual role in detecting light. Since the overall purpose of lighting is to serve the needs of humans, the discovery of the melanopsin-containing photoreceptors should be addressed in architectural lighting design and engineering in buildings. Daytime light exposure can reduce sleepiness and improve performance but light exposure should be avoided at night, where it can suppress melatonin production resulting in circadian disruption. Human-centered approaches are rarely applied to evaluate building performance, where conventional recommendations for lighting are mainly based on the amount of brightness at a horizontal work plane. Therefore, this presentation summarizes major implications of the interplay between light and dark for human nonvisual health in the built environment and discusses recent concepts that aim to integrate these findings into practice for supporting healthy lighting design.

María Ámundadóttir is a Ph.D. student at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Iceland in 2008 and her master's degree in Computational Science and Engineering from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich in 2011. Her thesis aims to develop a dynamic model capable of predicting human nonvisual responses to light and to validate novel guidelines that can inform building design and operation. Her research is supported by a grant from the Swiss National Science Foundation.

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Will present with Siobhan Rockcastle

Mandana Sarey Khanic and Marilyne Andersen shall also be credited

## “Mapping the Dynamics of Shadow. The Architecture of Natural Light”

While architecture is composed of static structural elements, daylight space is perceived as a dynamic play of light and shadow. Our perception of architecture is greatly impacted by the intensity and geometry of natural light, which creates dynamic temporal effects through hourly and daily shifts in solar orientation. While most designers can agree that the composition of natural light is an important design consideration for the functionality, experience of, and comfort within architecture, daylight is most often evaluated for its ability to offset electric lighting use and promote energy efficient building practices. Using threshold illumination levels, most industry-standard metrics are concerned with evaluating whether there is sufficient illumination to conduct visual tasks and tend to promote a “more is better” approach to lighting design. While this approach is useful for measuring illumination requirements and evaluating daylight autonomy, there are limited metrics for evaluating the compositional factors of daylight and tools that can illustrate the ephemeral impacts of light and shadow as perceived by the human eye. Using high-dynamic-range renderings of an interior space located at 64°N, we will illustrate the dynamic visual effects of light and shadow through a short film. This film will document the daylight dynamics in two extreme conditions: the summer and winter solstices.

María Ámundadóttir is a Ph.D. student at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne. She received her bachelor’s degree from the University of Iceland in 2008 and her master’s degree in Computational Science and Engineering from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich in 2011. Her thesis aims to develop a dynamic model capable of predicting human nonvisual responses to light and to validate novel guidelines that can inform building design and operation. Her research is supported by a grant from the Swiss National Science Foundation.

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“Perceiving Dynamically in the Dark. Confessions of an Aurora Hunter”

This paper will explore the phenomenon of Northern lights photography (“aurora hunting”) through reflection on personal experience, field observations and document analysis. It will seek to probe both the nocturnal photographic acts involved as such and the perceptual dimensions of experiencing nature under nocturnal conditions, with and without a camera. The aurora borealis is an elusive creature, the successful “hunting” of which requires considerable skills and expertise, as well as fairly high-end photographic equipment. The challenge of aurora hunting, as well as the high potential reward, requires great dedication, often under quite harsh conditions. Aurora hunting easily becomes a passion, which drives people out in the middle of the night, to wait for hours on end in the cold, Northern dark, often to come back empty handed. Recent technological advances have increased the light-sensitivity of digital SLRs significantly and this in turn has led to a certain democratization of northern lights photography. The worldwide web has allowed easy access to information about the likelihood, strength and location of potential auroral activity. Such developments both enhance and constrain the experiential aspect of aurora viewing, which is still the main motivating factor for passionate aurora hunters. The most rewarding encounters between photographers and the Northern lights are arguably those when the hunter allows himself to be captured, emotionally and perceptually, by the celestial prey which can only be seen in the dark.

Dr. Þorvarður Árnason is a specialist in multi-disciplinary environmental studies, focusing on environmental philosophy and politics, with degrees also in biology and experimental filmmaking. His interests include the aesthetic experience of nature, landscape analysis, protected area management, sustainable rural development and tourism as well as perception of global warming. He is the Director of the University of Iceland's Hornafjörður Regional Research Centre. He also works as an independent photographer and filmmaker and published one photo book.

Tiffany AYALIK

Artist (Canada)

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“Harnessing the Dark. A look at Inuit inspiration”

Coming from a land where dark and light have little to do with night and day, I will share my experience with darkness and its relationship to Inuit, past and present. Starting with the origin of the Sun and Moon to fantastic creatures and chilling monsters, we will explore how storytelling has changed to accommodate plays, films and the Internet. I will also speak about my involvement with Human Cargo, a Toronto-based theatre company dedicated to the creation of new theatrical works. Human Cargo brings together theatre artists from different cultural backgrounds to create original, multi-cultural productions. It's our role as theatre artists to explore the extremes of the human condition and to create a safe environment for audiences to engage in a thorough and provocative discussion. The effect of Human Cargo's theatre is overt. We want to instigate social and political change. In Human Cargo's *Night*, a play written by Christopher Morris, the lives of a Toronto anthropologist and 16-year old Inuk girl intersect powerfully during 24 hours of darkness in Pond Inlet, Nunavut. Daniella is a scientist from the big city; Piuyuq is an Inuit girl with big dreams. As the two cross paths, their lives are changed forever.

Tiffany Ayalik was born in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories and is of Inuit ancestry. It was in the North, listening to stories from her elders that she discovered her love of storytelling, and the powerful change that hearing a story can bring about. She graduated “With Distinction” from the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Acting at the University of Alberta and starred in many plays across Canada. She also did some singing and storytelling as a cultural representative for the Northwest Territories at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics. By acting, writing and storytelling, she continues to weave her Northern heritage with her Southern education.

Karlotta J. BLÖNDAL

Visual artist, Iceland

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## “Voiced Darkness”

With The Experimental Society in Reykjavík as a subject, this presentation focuses on *séances* in darkness, art and the in between. The Experimental Society in Reykjavík was a group of people interested in spiritism, active between 1905-1911. It was formed around a certain person who they believed had direct contact to other worlds. This person was Indriði Indriðason but in the minutes he was referred to as the “intermedium”. He was an uneducated young man from the rural countryside, described as a “genius child of nature”. The society housed him and in return he performed *séances* where spirits spoke through him, things elevated, materialized and dematerialized, voices were heard; there were smells and light phenomena and sometimes quite violent incidents. This took place under controlled circumstances with scientific intentions and with live organ music. These minutes were written in the darkness and transcribed into books by hand.

Karlotta J. Blöndal is a visual artist based in Reykjavík. She studied at the Malmö Art Academy (Sweden), where she received her MFA in 2002 and has since been exhibiting, publishing and teaching art. She is currently publishing an artist book, *Raddað myrkrur (Voices through darkness)*, on The Experimental Society in Reykjavík, the first spiritist society in Iceland. She will be exhibiting her book and art works throughout February and March in the Icelandic Art Center and the Harbinger Project Space in Reykjavík.

Guy BORDIN

Postdoctoral researcher, Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales (France)  
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“Inuit’s Perception of Darkness. A Singular Feature”

In the Western traditions, deeply marked by their Judeo-Christian heritage, the dark has always been largely associated to evil, bad deeds and bad thoughts, a belief that still survives today, even in the most secularized societies. The dualistic opposition between the pairs darkness/evil and light/good remains strong and operational in common thinking and categorization. In the Eastern Canadian Arctic, my recent fieldwork among North Baffin Inuit shows that they also tend to adhere to this binary perception. However, I argue that this adhesion is largely the result of their conversion to Christianity and that it was not anchored in their pre-Christian animist beliefs. In this presentation, I will review the ethnographic elements demonstrating that the Inuit from that region did not connote darkness negatively, in strict antagonism to light.

Guy Bordin is an anthropologist and filmmaker. He has been working on the Eastern Canadian Arctic Inuit culture for more than fifteen years. His current research field tackles, with the general background of relations between language and culture, the topic of “night” among the High Arctic Canadian Inuit. He is lecturer in Inuit ethnology at the *National Institute for Eastern Languages and Civilizations* (Inalco, Paris) and in Inuit language at the *Institut des hautes études de Belgique* (Brussels). He has also co-directed five films.



Carmen BRADEN

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## “Ice-Songs. The Sonic Quality of Darkness and Light in Canadian Sub-Arctic Ice”

The purpose of this presentation is to examine how qualities of sound found in the Canadian sub-Arctic’s cryosphere resonate with qualities of light and temperature. This will be approached from a perspective of direct experience with lake ice, as well as from a musical composition approach. The seasonal aural behaviour of Great Slave Lake, Northwest Territories, will act as a guide to demonstrate how we can hear, see, and touch qualities of cold, light, and dark. We can approach ice, cold, darkness, etc. as concepts or realities. Are the aural qualities we assign to these kinds of northern associations inseparable from the thermoception and visual qualities that they also create? How do perceptions of darkness, light, sound, and cold connect? Does it make a difference whether the connection is based in reality or abstraction? And how can music inspired by these environmental sounds from the North still retain these shadings of perception? By examining the sounds made by the ice — the *cryophonics* — in two seasons (deep winter and spring break-up), I argue that the sonic environment can indeed be found to match the visual qualities of light, and the tactile qualities of temperature that exist in each season. Through a comparison of field recordings paired with clips from two original compositions, I will examine how qualities of these sounds can be heard as synonymous with qualities of the light or temperature they are naturally found in, even when transformed through musical compositions.

Carmen Braden is a Master of Music Candidate at the University of Calgary. Her creative research examines natural sonic phenomena, rhythms and harmonies, and draws on a lifetime of aesthetic observations in the Canadian sub-Arctic. Her work has been performed by the Elmer Iseler Singers, the Gryphon Trio, and the Penderecki Quartet, as well as at the 2010 Vancouver Olympics, the Northern Scene Festival, and new music festivals across Canada. In addition to working intensely with environmental sounds, she often composes in collaboration with other mediums including dance, theatre, film, and storytelling.

Elsa BRANDER

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“Light Into Darkness. Visualizing the Northern Lights in the Work of Harald Moltke”

The purpose of this presentation is to look at the work of Harald Moltke (1871-1960), who from July 1899 to April 1900 made nineteen paintings of the aurorae borealis in the town of Akureyri, Iceland. Due to technical difficulties in providing colour photographs of the aurorae — colour photography required extremely long exposures — the Danish Meteorological Institute commissioned Moltke as the official artist of the Danish auroral expedition to Iceland (1899-1900). This research draws upon the observational drawings of ten of the nineteen paintings of the aurorae made by the artist during this period. Most prior research on Moltke’s paintings focus on his artistic ability to reproduce the aurorae. But such a focus undermined Moltke’s principal mission that was the scientific representation of the auroral colour spectrum. The drawings made by the artist represent hours of observation of different forms of aurorae and are therefore instruments of scientific practice. Through analysis of Moltke’s work, this presentation wants to study the representation techniques used in the drawings of the aurorae, the production of knowledge and the relationship between the practice of art and the practice of science. Finally, this research will identify how Moltke’s work disseminates knowledge and understanding of auroral phenomena as the archetype of northernness.

Besides her research, Dr. Elsa Brander is working in the field of international development, entrepreneurship and technology in Copenhagen and Brussels. Her Ph.D. looked at the complex interplay between methodology of travel and the traveller’s subjective approach to otherness, focusing on three French scientific expeditions from the eighteenth century.

Nancy CAMPBELL  
Visual Artist in Residence, University of Oxford (United Kingdom)  
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“Sleepless in the darkness. I read their letters home...”

I will present and contextualize a selection of poems concerning Arctic darkness from my forthcoming collection *The Night Hunter* (Enitharmon, 2015) which draws on research completed during a winter residency at Upernavik Museum in Northwest Greenland. The poems chart the dark winter environment of Greenland from Prehistory to the present day, with topics including: light (auroras, constellations, and forms of human lighting both traditional and modern); the psychological reaction of early Danish settlers to darkness (perceived cultural darkness and 24-hour physical darkness); oral literature/storytelling traditions (“all through the night none may yawn or wink an eye”); and Inuit myths concerning the origins of light (“in darkness we are without death”) as well as contemporary spring sun-welcoming ceremonies.

Nancy Campbell's poems, essays and artist's books document the environments and cultures of Northern Europe and the Arctic. She has conducted residencies at ecological and research institutions in Greenland, Iceland, Denmark and the US, and was Artist in Residence at the University of Oxford in 2013-2014. Her books include *The Night Hunter*, *Tikilluarit*, and *How To Say “I Love You” In Greenlandic: An Arctic Alphabet*, which received the Birgit Skiöld Award in 2013.

Daniel CHARTIER

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“The Winter Night is a Black Screen. Lighting in Montréal Public Spaces as Urban Entertainment”

First inspired by the “Plan lumière” (Light Plan) of the city of Lyon (France), the city of Montréal began in the late 20th century an urban lighting program of its iconic buildings. Although this initiative has been designed for all seasons, during the winter night, lighting of the buildings gave a new perspective to the city life. Since then, other projects, this time seasonal, were proposed to animate the city during the darkest months: designers and artists have realized the potential of the winter night to project images, animations and even interactive games on architectural surfaces. Winter festivals, such as "Montréal en lumière" (Montréal lighthouse), "Igloofest", "La nuit blanche" and artistic events such as "Luminothérapie" (Light therapy) have become increasingly sophisticated and now aim explicitly to increase ridership of public areas during the winter, while the very low temperatures (often below -20°C in January), the low light and the effect of “glissity” on surfaces from snow and ice, often left them deserted. The city became alive with the recognition of the winter night as a black screen.

Daniel Chartier is a Professor at the Université du Québec à Montréal and Research Chair on Images of the North, Winter and the Arctic. During the past years, he published a dozen books, including an essay entitled *L'Émergence des classiques [How a Literary Work Becomes a Classic]* (2000), and he directed collective works such as *Le(s) Nord(s) imaginaire(s) [The Imaginary North(s)]* (2008) and *Le lieu du Nord [North as a Place]* (2015). He published an essay on the foreign image of Iceland during the crisis, translated in English in 2011 under the title of *The End of Iceland's Innocence*. He is the director of the International Laboratory for the Comparative Multidisciplinary Study of Representations of the North, which he founded in 2003. His main interests are pluriculturalism, media reception, Northern issues and cultural history. He also directs different research programs on Inuit (Nunavik and Greenland) literature and culture.

Denis CHOUINARD

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“It Ain’t Nothing / Ce n’est pas rien. Obscurity and Cinema”

This lecture aims at trying to understand the use of obscurity in cinema, focusing primarily on the voluntary absence of light in two case studies. From urban German expressionism to the shores of Icelandic and French social dramas, film artists and cinematographers have used light to carve their creative work. And the way they have worked with light, darkness and chiaroscuro — a key factor of visual stimulation — is responsible for creating the rich atmospheres in their cinematic works. But what happens when filmmakers decide to use darkness as a key element of story telling? The first case studies the 1954 Swedish cinematic adaptation of a novel by one of the most celebrated Icelandic writers: Halldór Laxness. Framed and lit by cinematographic genius Sven Nykvist, this work brings up questions about the social depiction of Iceland, notably by the use and non-use of light. The second case brings us half a century later, on the stages of Tour de France, where film artist and visual artist Philippe Grandrieux brings the cinematic language to groundbreaking levels of efficiency through his use of pitch-dark images. But isn’t cinema meant to be “showing” rather than “hiding”? What does obscurity really brings to the cinematic experience? Originating at the experimentations of German expressionists in the early stages of cinema, the use of darkness has not finished to shape our view of the world.

Denis Chouinard is a Montréal-based filmmaker who has worked both in fiction and documentary. His work has been screened at more than 60 festivals around the world and has been rewarded with prestigious prizes. Since 2008, he has been teaching film directing and scriptwriting at l'École des médias de l'Université du Québec à Montréal.

Jóhannes DAGSSON  
Adjunct in Art Theory, Listaháskóli Íslands / Iceland Academy of the Arts  
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### “Comparison in / of Darkness”

Having lived for a considerable time in three places that each have their unique kind of darkness (Reykjavík, Calgary and Edinburgh), both as a real natural phenomenon and as a part of the cultural surroundings, the idea of comparative, analytical study of different kinds of darkness experience seems obvious. But what would such a study consist of, how would one best approach it, what would be the “object” being researched, what is it that makes up a basis for analysis? In this talk, I take a look at different approaches to answer questions of this kind, and make some preliminary steps towards aesthetic or phenomenological comparison between experiences of different kinds of darkness. Using the concept of “place” as developed in aesthetics of nature, I develop a picture of darkness as a cultural construct, and as a vital, but often overlooked part of our environment. The talk is thought of as a lyrical experiment in aesthetics, an attempt to make differences of darkness visible, and at least to some extent understandable.

Jóhannes Dagsson is a philosopher and a visual artist. He did his postgraduate studies in visual art at the Edinburgh College of Art (2003) and his doctoral studies in philosophy at the University of Calgary (Ph.D. 2012). His research takes place at the junction of aesthetics, philosophy of perception and philosophy of language. Jóhannes has had a number of solo exhibitions, and taken part in group exhibitions. He is currently an Adjunct in Art Theory at the Iceland Academy of the Arts.

Paul DAVIS  
Moviemaker, Canada  
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“-40°C”

-40°C is a short feature in which an on-call teacher working in the Canadian Northwest must bike to work in total darkness through ice fog and in temperatures that snap steel. After the screening of the movie, a discussion on the quality of darkness, introducing the vocabulary of nautical twilight, twilight and indirect daylight, will take place. A freeze-frame video will be used to show examples of appropriate and inappropriate urban winter lighting, as well as the conditions necessary to see Northern lights in urban areas. Advancing through the film while stopping images will introduce elements of living in darkness, such as the inappropriateness of industrial scheduling which does not match the subarctic light and darkness cycles. Stopping the video will also be used to show images of people in the documentary who demonstrate the physical and psychological effects of Seasonally Affected Disorder (SAD), from absence of daylight, and its social attributes, such as employee absenteeism, and binge drinking alcoholism.

Paul Davis is a member of the Front des Réalisateur·s Indépendant·s du Canada (FRIC), the national group of francophone moviemakers outside of Québec. He has been making films as an expression of subarctic darkness since 2003, starting with 5 TV shorts for Radio Canada's *Ça vaut le détour*, including *Le Mal D'hiver* which competed in the 2005 Tromsø International Film Festival. His film *-40°C* (2007) made the festival rounds, taking: Best Canadian Short at Planet In Focus, Toronto 2007; Choix du Public at Cinémental in Winnipeg; A+E's 2008 Short Film Prize at the National Screen Institute; Prix du jury of the Festival International du Film d'Environnement at Kairouan, Tunisia, 2008. It was also screened at Cannes Short Film Corner.

Caroline DONAT

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“The Colours of Human Darkness. Murder’s Representation in Québec Novels *Kamouraska* and *Neige Noire*”

In literature, heading North is often represented as a movement of introspection where human darkness may be revealed and put into action. Both Québec novels *Kamouraska* (Anne Hébert, 1970) and *Neige noire* (or *Hamlet's Twin*, Hubert Aquin, 1974) show the imaginary North as the tragic scene where murder is committed. The chromatic representation of human darkness in Northern landscapes is to be discussed through the study of those emblematic works of Québec literature from the 1970's. In the wintery *Kamouraska* with its pervasive snow as well as in the unreal Norwegian Svalbard represented in *Neige Noire*, signs of crime are perceptible through repetitive black, white and red touches, all three colours contrasting together more powerfully in this northern universe. Even so, both novels play with effects of contrast, the three colours stand equally for murder. Indeed, the darkness of criminal intent is not only depicted through the use of black, it is also inseparable from the whiteness of the North. Snow accompanies murderers in their projects, and the persistent light of the midnight sun in *Neige Noire* offers no tomorrow. In these novels, the traditional symbolism associated with white is therefore brought into question. Red occurs finally as a complementary colour, underlining the passage from life to death.

Caroline Donat is a Master's student in Literature at the Université du Québec à Montréal, working on the novelistic representations of law in Northern fiction. As well as being a student member of the Interuniversity Research Center for Québec Literature and Culture (CRILQC), she is a research assistant at the International Laboratory for the Comparative Multidisciplinary Study of Representations of the North. She also holds a Master's of Advanced Studies in Private International Law from the Université Paris II (France), and practiced as a lawyer in France until 2010.



Oksana DOBZHANSKAYA

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Arctic State Institute of Culture and Art (Russia)  
Will present with Vera Nikiforova

“Winter’ Sacred Practice. Night performing of Olonkho”

This presentation is devoted to the analysis of the oral tradition of peoples of the North in the framework of symbolic anthropology. The theme is the performance of epic tales as a ritual communication between world of spirits and world of people. It is based on archival texts and original field data. In the oral tradition of storytelling, a singer of tales is a sacred figure. He is the keeper of “visible knowledge”, and performs epic tales with his eyes closed. Often he competed with a shaman. During the performing of epic tales, the audience could not stand behind the narrator. It was a warning associated with the “other” dangerous world (the back side of shaman's costume was the world of the dead). These restrictions were strictly observed, when we made recordings of Yakut epos Olonkho performed by Daria Tomskaya from Verkhoyansk region of Yakutia. Northern storytelling is correlated with calendar time and space of the winter darkness. In this regard, there is interesting material on the Northern olonkhosuts collected by A.A. Savvin in 1940’s. Analysis of archival texts revealed the following features : 1) Olonkho was performed in the dark time, in a state between sleep and wakefulness; 2) in the final part of the story, all listeners had to be active, because the hero of Aiyy (Image of Light) wins the hero of Abaasy (Image of Darkness). It was a kind of divination for the next year: the victory of light over darkness meant prosperity and favorable time for spring and summer. Thus, night Olonkho was a ritual of wintertime, and olonkhosut created new, brighter time.

Dr. Oksana Dobzhanskaya is a Professor at the Arctic State Institute of Culture and Art Yakutsk (Russia). Her primary field of research is the ethnomusicology of Siberia and, particularly, the music of the aboriginal people of Taimyr peninsula (Nnganasan, Nenets, Enets, Dolgans, Evenki). She wrote three books on that subject.

Monique DURAND

Author, journalist and contributor to the Groupe de recherche sur l'écriture nord-côtière, Cégep de Sept-Îles (Québec)  
monique.durand@cegep-sept-iles.qc.ca

“The Blue Hour or the Mystique of the North”

Darkness is not night. It is the blue hour. When the sun dips below the horizon, leaving only a bluish-purple candescence behind. The absolute. A return to the self, intensely felt. The blue hour lights up the sky, setting ablaze rivers, and illuminating mountain rock like the image evoked by Innu poet Rita Mestokosho. The blue hour, referred to by some as the divine hour. For this conference, I created a highly personal text which, through the lens of the twilight hour or the blue hour, will embody the mystique of the North in Québec literature, specifically the literature of the North Shore. More broadly, this text, which straddles essay and prose poetry, will examine the relationship between nordicity and the quest for transcendence, both secular and religious. How has this literature contributed to build the mystique of the North in our imaginary universe? This will be the crux of my text. Poet Rita Mestokosho writes about her journey across Northern moons and colourful lichen landscapes, her sense of herself as a small sigh within this mystical breath. Therefore, my text also draws his inspiration from such Innu writers for whom nature — its landscapes, fauna, flora and the wild light of the blue hour — constitutes a pathway to wonderment and the divine.

Monique Durand is a journalist, writer, speaker and associate researcher with the Groupe de recherche sur l'écriture nord-côtière (GRÉNOC), affiliated with the Cégep de Sept-Îles. She studied law and political science in Montréal and Paris, and worked for Radio-Canada from 1982 to 2004. She has also produced radio documentaries for Radio France. She published *Carnets du Nord* in 2012, in collaboration with GRÉNOC, as well as two works of fiction, *Eaux* and *La femme du peintre*, with Serpent à Plumes in Paris. She has won numerous awards as a writer and journalist in Canada and France.

Bárbara ECHAÍZ BIELITZ

Research Assistant, Universidad de Chile / University of Chile  
Will present with Diego Gómez Venegas

### “Remoteness of Light”

We will say that there is no such thing as darkness, but rather just what we prefer to call *remoteness of light*. Light moves between the things in which we put our sight and our eyeballs. Also moving around the Earth’s surface, light shows us sunrises and sunsets, as well as closeness of light in Santiago, and its *remoteness* in Reykjavík. Thus, we configure through light, with its movement between the Sun and our territories — that we have named North and South, East and West — the forms of navigation, and the modes to project, among other things, images (or in other words, light). In short, we have called Science the mode of knowing the world from the other side of light, waiting for its arrival. Our presentation consists of a paper — that includes aspects of Latour’s philosophy of science and Kittler’s media archeology approach — and an art installation which visualizes *remoteness of light* through two apparatuses. First, a neo-camera-obscura mounted on a building’s rooftop in Santiago, Chile — with a webcam connected to the Internet — capturing an image of light during the austral summer. The second, a hybrid between a magic lantern and a lamp located in a natural surrounding in Reykjavík, will project in its interior — from a portable screen connected to a 3G network — the light captured in the first apparatus. Through all this we will mobilize, rhetorically, that *closeness of light*, to a territory where there actually is *remoteness*.

Bárbara Echaíz Bielitz (Santiago, 1988) is a designer and art explorer based in Santiago, Chile, where she lives and works. She is a Research Assistant for the Design and Agonism Group at Department of Design in the University of Chile, as well as an independent creative practitioner and researcher, exploring objects and the machine from its technical and social dimensions. She holds a bachelor’s degree in Industrial Design from the University of Chile and has presented part of her work in the 2013 conference of the Ibero-American Society of Digital Graphics and the 2nd National Conference of New Media in Chile.

Tim EDENSOR

Dr. Tim Edensor, Manchester Metropolitan University  
t.edensor@mmu.ac.uk

“Living with Northern Light and Dark”

In this presentation, I exemplify how a sense of northernness is partly constituted by varied, regular experiences of light and dark across space and time. Drawing on everyday practices, rituals and works of art, I explore how light and dark shape particular social rhythms, cultural practices and tourist adventures, and in conditioning perception, undergird the unreflexive sensations and affects through which we inhabit the North.

Tim Edensor teaches cultural geography at Manchester Metropolitan University (United Kingdom). He is the author of *Tourists at the Taj* (1998), *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life* (2002) and *Industrial Ruins: Space, Aesthetics and Materiality*, as well as the editor of *Geographies of Rhythm* (2010) and co-editor of *Spaces of Vernacular Creativity* (2009) and *Urban Theory Beyond the West: A World of Cities* (2011). He is also editor of *Tourist Studies*. Tim has written extensively on national identity, tourism, industrial ruins, walking, driving, football cultures and urban materiality and is currently investigating landscapes of illumination and darkness.

Luiza GABYSHEVA

Professor, М.К.Аммосов аатынан

Арассыыйа Бэдэрээссийэтин Хотугулуу-Илинни үнүбэрсиятэ / М. К.

Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University (Russia)

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## “The Concept of Darkness in the Yakut Language and Folklore”

In Turkic languages, most nominations of darkness derive from the name \**qara* “black, dark”. The figurative meaning analysis of the Yakut words denoting darkness has shown that they extensively “intrude” the ethic concepts domain, are accompanied by negative connotations, and expressively coloured. In addition, the Turkic words meaning “dark, darkness” are used for denoting the northern side of the horizon, a mountain, a dwelling and so on; this results from the wide usage of colour geo-symbolics by the Turks, where the North is related to the dark side of the sky, never lit by the sun, thus, the shadow side. In the mythology of the Yakut and other Turkic peoples, the image of darkness, as well as the black colour, is associated with the Under World and its inhabitants. Under numerous beliefs, the night is the favorite time for spirits to appear; shaman's rituals, as well as performing of the epic, are scheduled for the dark time of the day. In folklore texts, the words denominating gloom serve as the metaphor of death and nonexistence. In the mythopoetic worldview of the Yakut and other Turkic peoples, the opposition light/darkness is a basic and universal one: using the words denoting light and darkness, a person means good and evil, life and death.

Luiza Gabysheva is a professor at the North-Eastern Federal University (Russia), a member of the Russian Committee of Turkic studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences and the president of the Linguistic Society of the North-East of the Russian Federation. She is also the winner of grants from foundations such as the RFBR and the RHF, as well as the author of about 80 publications on folklore, including the following monographies: *Slovo v kontekste mifopoeticheskoi kartiny mira (na materiale yazyka i kultury yakutov)* (*The Word in the Context of Mythological and Poetic Worldview (On the Material of Yakut Language and Culture)*) (2003) and *Folklorny tekst: Semioticheskiye mekhanizmy ustnoy pamyati* (*Folklore text: semiotic mechanisms of oral memory*) (2009).

Veronika GEIGER

Artist and Master's student, Listaháskóli Íslands /  
Iceland Academy of the Arts  
veronika.geiger@gmail.com

“Days and Night”

My installation piece entitled *Light Days, Dark Days* takes its point of departure in the experience of the different atmospheres, qualities and possibilities that a light day and a dark day can give you. What does it mean for your condition to be surrounded by lightness and by darkness? This is of course subjective and has not only to do with the physical light of the day, but also your state of mind. Lightness cannot really fully be understood without darkness. The human ability to change perspective by using imagination interests me and, in this installation, I am linking it to the question of lightness and darkness. My intention is to offer a meditation on these two conditions that I find to be equally important aspects of life. More precisely, the installation will consist of two handmade hourglasses crafted in collaboration with a glass artist. One will be filled with black sand from Iceland and the other with white sand from Denmark. Viewers will have the opportunity to sit and have their own experience with the piece. Which one will you choose?

Veronika Geiger is a Danish artist who studied Fine Art Photography at Glasgow School of Art (United Kingdom) and Land Art at University of New Mexico (United States). She is currently enrolled in the MA Fine Art program at the Iceland Academy of the Arts. She has exhibited in the United Kingdom, the United States, Denmark, Latvia and Iceland. Her work revolves around ideas of gravity, weight, weightlessness, flight, time and considerations of the landscape and places we occupy and inhabit. Her work is primarily lens-based.

Gabrielle GIRARD-LACASSE  
Master's student, Université du Québec à Montréal  
gabrielle.g.lacasse@gmail.com

“Darkness in the Great North of Québec. A Geopoetic Reading of Night in *Tayara's Island*, a Travelogue by Jean Désy”

Geopoetic aims at a better understanding of the human-earth relation. This approach seems to emphasize the quality of darkness in the fictional travelogue of Jean Désy *Tayara's Island*. Inspired by his own experiencing of Québec's Great North, this novel narrates the stay of Geneviève and his biologist father on the virgin island of Tayara, an old friend. Two other young Inuits join the group, Aisara and Putulik, Tayara's son. Alone with four men, Geneviève is amazed by this paradise for fishers and hunters, even if it is hard for her to accept animals' killing. Night times are occasions for the principal character to get over her inner conflicts by sharing moments with Putulik. Quality of darkness allows walks and stargazing. Then a dialogue begins between the Northerner and the Southerner about their opposite worldview. Night creates closeness and an elevation that causes an annihilation of distance between the characters. During their sharing, it is relevant to ask if their sensibility can be related, despite their opposite positions, because of the intensity of the night. Does our human memory keeps in its deepness, universally, a legacy from the original chaos that exceeds language? As far as that goes, is chaos a feature of darkness, which supposes disturbance of order and rationality of daytime? Finally, can geopoetic be a way to reunite people from the South of Québec to the Inuit people, in a way of living that implies sensitiveness and an higher understanding of the territory?

Gabrielle Girard-Lacasse is currently a Master's student at the Université du Québec à Montréal. She did her bachelor's degree in literary studies at the University Laval (Québec). From September 2011 to June 2012, she studied at the Jean Moulin — Lyon 3 University (France). She is actually working over the travelogues of Jean Desy in the Great North of Québec with a geopoetic approach, for her Master's thesis. She is affiliated to *Figura*, le Centre de recherche sur le texte et l'imaginaire and to *La Traversée*, atelier québécois de géopoétique, as a student researcher.

Alain GRENIER

Professor, Université du Québec à Montréal

grenier.alain-adrien@uqam.ca

Will present with Ari Virtanen

“Lights and Shadows as Resources in Tourism. The Case of Polar Destinations”

Even though the Sun constitutes a major factor in the attractiveness of a tourism destination, the role of darkness as natural phenomena has remained relatively unexplored in existing tourism literature. Yet, it would be difficult to imagine any tourist destination in the polar region without the polar nights in winter. The polar regions have dominantly been summer destinations with midnight sun and long summer days to take advantage of. However, there have recently been several attempts in many Northern areas to improve the winter tourism season for potential visitors. If the light is considered at the very heart of a successful tourist experience, and if it represents the most important visual characteristic of a destination, along with the climate and scenery, what happens in the case of the absence or lack of light? Darkness can act as a repulsive factor for many potential visitors. Yet, it may also be transformed into a unique resource that offers exclusive tourist experiences for visitors. The questions are: how does darkness express itself in tourist destinations? What kind of experiences may it offer? Based on literature and non-participating tourist observations by the authors in different tourist locations in Canada, Iceland and Finland, this interdisciplinary study aims to elaborate the different uses of darkness in tourist destination from two points of view: the tourists' experience and the creation of the destination image by the tourism industry. Several managerial implications for tourism business in the polar regions are therefore suggested.

Alain A. Grenier, Ph.D. is a Professor of nature-based tourism and sustainable development at the Department of Urban and Tourism Studies (School of Management, Université du Québec à Montréal). As a doctoral graduate in sociology from the University of Lapland, he began his research with an interest in the contradictory relations between people and the natural environment in the context of tourism management and destination planning in the Arctic and Antarctic regions.



Diego GÓMEZ VENEGAS

Assistant Professor, Universidad de Chile / University of Chile  
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Will present with Bárbara ECHAÍZ BIELITZ

## “Remoteness of Light”

We will say that there is no such thing as darkness, but rather just what we prefer to call *remoteness of light*. Light moves between the things in which we put our sight and our eyeballs. Also moving around the Earth’s surface, light shows us sunrises and sunsets, as well as closeness of light in Santiago, and its *remoteness* in Reykjavík. Thus, we configure through light, with its movement between the Sun and our territories — that we have named North and South, East and West — the forms of navigation, and the modes to project, among other things, images (or in other words, light). In short, we have called Science the mode of knowing the world from the other side of light, waiting for its arrival. Our presentation consists of a paper — that includes aspects of Latour’s philosophy of science and Kittler’s media archeology approach — and an art installation which visualizes *remoteness of light* through two apparatuses. First, a neo-camera-obscura mounted on a building’s rooftop in Santiago, Chile — with a webcam connected to the Internet — capturing an image of light during the austral summer. The second, a hybrid between a magic lantern and a lamp located in a natural surrounding in Reykjavík, will project in its interior — from a portable screen connected to a 3G network — the light captured in the first apparatus. Through all this we will mobilize, rhetorically, that *closeness of light*, to a territory where there actually is *remoteness*.

Diego Gómez Venegas is an academic, designer and media artist based in Santiago (Chile), where he lives and works. He is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Design of the University of Chile where he teaches, researches, and makes artistic production on the design of technical and technological apparatuses, their condition as objects of knowledge, and the controversies they could mobilize. He holds a MFA in Design Media Arts from UCLA, and was awarded with scholarships from the Fulbright Commission and the Chilean Science and Technology Commission.

## “Winter Darkness in Icelandic Fairy Tales”

This paper will discuss Icelandic fairy tales and their localized characteristics. It will look specifically at environmental factors, such as the Icelandic landscape and the seasonal changes in Iceland, placing emphasis on the winter and the winter darkness. Among other things, it raises the question of whether winter is at all visible in Icelandic fairy tales, and if so, at what points and for what purpose, and how is it presented? In order to examine the role of the winter — and in a more narrow sense the context of darkness — the fairy tales will be viewed in the light of the life and living conditions of Icelanders in previous centuries, and their struggle with nature, the long and dark winter, as well as their own existence and mental health. Subsequently, the darkness will be viewed symbolically, along with some consideration of its narratological role within the basic structure of the fairy tales. The general conclusion is that darkness does play a key role in Icelandic fairy tales: not only does it form a foundation for one of the localized oicotypes, but also the background of factor that — because of its narratological structure — demands an opposite, in the form of light, or hope.

Dr. Aðalheiður Guðmundsdóttir is a Docent in folkloristics at the University of Iceland. Her research interests focus on Old Norse literature, Manuscript studies, Fornaldarsögur Norðurlanda, Folk tales, Ballads and *rímur*, the History of dance and the History of magic. Her publications include the monographs *Úlfhams saga* (2001) and *Strengleikar* (2006), as well as numerous articles, the latest being “The Other World in the *Fornaldarsögur* and in Folklore”, (*Folklore in Old Norse – Old Norse in Folklore*, 2014), “*Strengleikar* in Iceland” (*Rittersagas. Übersetzung, Überlieferung, Transmission*, 2014), “The Dancers of De la Gardie 11” (*Mediaeval Studies*, 2012) and “Gunnarr and the Snake Pit in Medieval Art and Legend” (*Speculum*, 2012).

Snævarr GUÐMUNDSSON

Division Manager, Náttúrustofa Suðausturlands / South-East Iceland Nature Center  
snaevarr@nattsa.is

“Quality of Darkness. Mapping the Light Pollution of Reykjavík and in Iceland”

Light pollution is a modern-day environmental problem on a global scale. In many countries, laws or regulations restrict this type of pollution because it hinders darkness and has negative side-effects on ecosystems and animals. Complicating the picture, light pollution is a side effect of artificial illumination on various scales, from road lighting to large cities, which has without doubt enhanced the quality of life for most people. I'll present an estimation of the distribution of the sky glow above Reykjavík and its suburbs. The aim of such a project was to answer fundamental questions about the sky glow and to quantify the change of the night sky. Results of sky quality measurements from the winter of 2009-2010 are shown. Mapping with GIS software gives a thematic graphical overview of the distribution of light pollution in this most densely populated area in Iceland.

Snævarr Guðmundsson is Division Manager at the South-East Iceland Nature Center. His researches link nature to science, especially geology astronomy and glaciology. He has written many articles for newspapers, magazines and books.

Markus HANAKAM

Master's degree, Universität für angewandte Kunst Wien / University of Applied Arts  
Vienna (Austria)

[kontakt@hanakam-schuller.com](mailto:kontakt@hanakam-schuller.com)

Will present with Roswitha Schuller

“Bright Darkness. Darkness as a Medium of Mood in Leisure and Consumer Spaces”

In our lecture, we will try to figure out the various uses of darkness and its qualities in the designing of leisure and consumer spaces. Darkness as means of design in this case stands for a bright and conscious darkness, embellished darkness that is put into scenery in calculation. A first section will take a look on historical settings of leisure spaces, e.g. in landscape gardening and park design, staging darkness would mean to create “hidden” spaces, like the topos of the grotto or the maze. These prototypic figures reappear in modern conceptions like the shopping mall, the amusement park and the adventure land. In a second section, we will discuss another category of darkness as it constitutes a contrast of light with black; this aesthetics is also transported historically via the rise of the medium of photography. A distinct idea of dark space design can be developed from this media-related prototypical images. Finally, we will put these sections in relation, via historical topoi and image conventions towards the idea of white cube, black box and cinematic spaces used not in exhibition technique but in commodity spaces such as shop designs.

Markus Hanakam holds a Master's degree in Art, Design and Education, as well as Sculpture. The works he created with Roswitha Schuller are shown in museums and festivals in an international context, including Videodumbo Festival 2013 at Eyebeam Center for Art and Technology (New York, United States), Rencontres Internationales 2012 at Palais de Tokyo (Paris, France), ISEA 2011 (Istanbul, Turkey) and the 4th Moscow International Biennale for Contemporary Art in 2011 (Russia). Those works focus on cultural production, challenging the role of the artifact therein; as marketing tool, as gaming device, as apparatus and as fetish.

Hlynur HELGASON

Visual artist and Assistant Professor, Háskóli Íslands / University of Iceland  
hlynurh@hi.is

“Swan Song. Illumé”

First, *Swan Song* is a video-work displaying a circular walk around the southern branch of Tjörnin, the pond in Reykjavík center. It was shot in the middle of a frosty night in January and is an attempt to capture a flock of swans centered on a slab of ice in the center of the pond, a futile endeavor in the darkness, trying to glimpse the swans against the backdrop of the city lights. The swans, however, are present in the soundscape, their chanting constantly punctuating the hum of traffic and wind, both close-up and from afar. The almost invisible presence of the swans in their “singing” provides a potent reminder of the effect of nature all around, with the city and its bright lights: a beautiful alien scenery. Then, *Illumé* is another video projection, but this time made up of still photographic images documenting each light-post surrounding the path around the bay of Grafarvogur in the eastern suburbs of Reykjavík. The photographs were taken in the middle of the night in mid-winter. Each shows a single light-post centrally framed in its snow-covered surroundings. Throughout the video, which is silent, the images of the points of light slowly fade into each other. The central motif of the work is the singular meeting place of culture and nature, the illumination feebly trying to “enlighten” the unruly snow-scape.

Hlynur Helgason is a practicing artist and media philosopher residing in Reykjavík (Iceland). As an artist he has predominantly worked with site-specific photographic and cinematic installations, often involving the commingling of the human and the material. He currently holds the Assistant Professor in Art Theory at the University of Iceland, Reykjavík. His topics of research are mostly centered on temporality and possibilities of agency in contemporary art.

Toby HEYS

Head of Research in Media, Manchester Metropolitan University (United Kingdom)  
T.Heys@mmu.ac.uk

“Martial Hauntology. A Dark History of Frequencies”

Our multi-sensory installations employ Unsound Systems (directional ultrasonic speakers, bespoke sub woofers, and wearable vibrating SubPacs) in dark humid rooms. Integral to each work is the Dead Record Archive — a chronicle of events, songs, books, scientists, historical figures, technologies, films, laws, etc. that pertain to the ways in which frequencies psychologically and physiologically affect humans. This illustrated archive is composed on the insides of vinyl record sleeves. In this way we use and amplify the other side of sonic culture — the side of the record usually kept in the dark — music as a weapon.

Formed in 1945, AUDINT currently consists of Toby Heys and Steve Goodman/Kode9. Drafted into the research cell in 2009 by IREX2, they investigate the ways in which ultrasonic, sonic, and infrasonic frequencies are deployed to modulate psychological and physiological states. Performances and installations have been carried out at The Academy of Art in Berlin, Art in General in New York, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Herford, Germany. The resulting recordings, writings and illustrations were published as *Martial Hauntology* in a triple gatefold package containing a 112 pages book, a 180g clear vinyl record, and six 12" x 12" “Dead Record Archive” cards on AUDINT Records.

Patrick HUSE  
Visual artist (Norway)  
d-press@frisurf.no

## “Cloudy, Dark and Moody. A Long Gloomy Tradition of Northern Landscape Painting”

The landscape in no man’s land defies our notions of natural comfort or beauty. The nature scenery in Northern landscape painting is often connected to a barren landscape attracted by mountains, deserts and geological surfaces of earthen floor that seems exhausted by thousands of years. We confront the aesthetics of how nature ages. We can often find visuals representing the uncultivated landscape with its own raw naked beauty, common to many parts of our planet. Many Northern painters or painters who have been working in the North have been occupied with the uncultivated land, from Norwegian classical painting to Iceland’s own Kjarval and German Anselm Kiefer or myself. When nature reveals itself as a world apart, without the “family resemblance” leading to recognition, it also becomes a source of information from outside the culturally influenced landscape. Our preferences and understanding of this relationship depend not only on the time in which we live but also on our geographical location and on the cultural sphere to which we belong. Through this landscape, we are reminded that our civilization deprives us of the opportunity to view clearly our own cultural landscape and consequently to analyze and evaluate, because we are inextricably part of the situation we wish to analyze, that we are unable to step outside of it.

Patrick Huse is a Norwegian painter and multimedia artist. After his debut at the National Art Exhibition in 1970, he studied landscape art and conceptualism. His works incorporate techniques such as painting, drawing, photography, video, wall based text material and objects. Since the mid 1990’s, he has challenged landscape art in a way that makes his project unique, always focusing on the relationship between nature and culture, center and periphery. Also, his interest for indigenous people and for the Arctic led him to travel throughout the North, adding an anthropological approach to his art. Throughout his career, he worked with museums, produced books and took part in some social researches in the Arctic.

Gunnar Thór JÓHANNESSON

Assistant Professor, Háskóli Íslands / University of Iceland  
gtj@hi.is

Will present with Katrín Anna Lund

## “Journey Into the Dark. Encountering Aurora Borealis”

Conventionally darkness has been associated with negative forces as it obscures and hides the visually tangible field of daylight. It can however be argued that increasing presence of Arctic regions in global context has re-evaluated the image of darkness and its, sometimes, magical effects. During the last three years northern light tourism in Iceland has been booming and the aurora borealis have become an established feature in the portfolio of winter tourism supply. However, it is a well known fact that the lights are not to be disciplined, neither by tourist promoters nor the scientific community. Although science can tell you what they are and explain their nature up to some extent, the dynamics of their vibrant appearances or non-appearances remain a mystery. Fortunately, mystery sells. In this presentation, we explore how northern light tourism is assembled through heterogeneous mobile substances that encounter in darkness. These include for example energetic charged particles, Earth’s magnetic field, tourists, tour guides, tour providers, weather, and transportation systems. We describe some of the ways through which the northern lights as a tourism product is assembled and how it demands creative performances and improvisations. We suggest that these are mediated through choreographies that entangle human and non-human actors in their play with the elements of darkness and light.

Gunnar Thór Jóhannesson is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Geography and Tourism of the University of Iceland. His research interests are in the areas of entrepreneurship in tourism, tourism policy and destination development, as well as research methodologies. He is a co-editor of *Actor-Network Theory and Tourism: Ordering, materiality and multiplicity*, published in 2012 with Routledge and *Tourism encounters and controversies: Ontological politics of tourism development*, published with Ashgate in 2015. He has published his work in journals including *Tourist Studies*, *Tourism Geographies*, *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism* and *Current Issues in Tourism*.



Ingunn JÓNSDÓTTIR

Museologist, Iceland

ingunn.jonsdottir@gmail.com

## “50 Lux Max. The Prevalence of Darkness, Black Box Aesthetics, and Point-Lighting in Icelandic Museum Exhibitions”

A museum exhibition is a man-made artificially lit space. Different specialists at the museum, such as the curator, the conservator, and the exhibition designer, put it together. Designing an exhibition with objects from the museum collection requires museum professionals to take into account the logic of preventive conservation for minimizing the damage of light radiation on museum objects. Although most professionals generally emphasize darkness as an important way of safeguarding museum objects, in and outside the museum exhibition darkness is utilized both as a building material for the exhibition, and as a stylistic approach, for example to give shape to spaces, as a manner of creating a spatial layout, to direct visitors from a viewpoint to the other, and to set the mood for the overall museum experience. But darkened museum spaces can also directly affect the accessibility of the exhibition space, especially in the case of the elderly, of people with a visual impairment, and of those who are generally less comfortable in the dark. In this preliminary research, the amount of darkness used in museum exhibitions is put in context. Darkness being both an established visual culture and a material in abundance inside museum exhibitions at the cost of light, in the North, in Iceland, and elsewhere in the world.

Ingunn Jónsdóttir is a museologist and a product designer. She has a particular interest in the design of museum exhibitions, new trends and innovative approaches to the communication of museum objects. Ingunn has worked for various cultural institutions such as The Museum of World Culture in Gothenburg (Sweden), Mediamatic in Amsterdam (Netherlands) and The National Museum of Iceland.

Haraldur JÓNSSON  
Visual artist, Iceland

“Dark Matters”

Darkness appears in multiple shapes and is revealed in numerous contexts. In this lecture, I will address this common element from various directions and multiple angles. During the session I will intertwine projects from recent times into the talk, making it an integral part of the surroundings.

Haraldur Jónsson is a visual artist who sculpts in different material and media. His work explores phenomena that arise in the lapses between bodily sensations, perception, emotion and language. His approach to specific places and situations is manifested in various ways in his sculptures, installations, drawings, photographs, sound and performative moments. Recent exhibitions include Hafnarborg (Iceland), Kunsthalle Wien (Austria), Akureyri Art Museum (Iceland), Museum Sogn og Fjordane, Førde (Norway) and Lund Konsthall (Sweden).

Britt KRAMVIG

Professor, Universitetet i Tromsø — Norges arktiske universitet /  
University of Tromsø — The Arctic University of Norway  
britt.kramvig@uit.no

Will present with Berit Kristoffersen

“Dark Ecology. Bridging Art and Science in Arctic Darkness”

This presentation analyzes the potentials of bridging art and science by examining the first event of the *Dark Ecology* project that took place in the border zone of Norway and Russia. Ecology and darkness were encountered through art, sounds, science and commissioned work. By taking Timothy Morton’s presentation as a starting point, there exists no neutral theoretical ground on which to articulate ecological claims. Instead, all beings are already implicated within the ecological, necessitating an acknowledgement of coexisting difference for coping with ecological breakdown. We enter into this dialogue by claiming the need for a more respectful way into how different natures are performed. We explore this in two ways. While scholars have argued that we must think outside the nature-culture divide, we consider ontologies of the indigenous people in the Arctic as guiding devices for dialogue: Can we imagine nature as in/out of darkness? You have to know the colours of darkness in order to live with it. You have to learn to know that darkness is not only dark; it offers possibilities to enter into practices as well as ontologies. This brings us to the Dark Ecology artist Signe Liden, whose performance asked the viewer to walk with her in the tundra. A bow and an arrow were her devices, guiding her in the wounded landscape of Kirkenes (extensive mining). We consider her work to bridge non/indigenous landscape practices, which can be regarded as a decolonial events that *Dark Ecology* will continue to explore.

Britt Kramvig is an ethnographic researcher within the field of culture and planning and is a Professor at the UiT, Finnmark Faculty in the Department of Tourism and Northern Studies (Norway). She takes on a postcolonial position inspired by indigenous, feminist and Science and Technology Studies debates and has undertaken ethnographic work, written and made films on a range of different topics relating to indigeneity, gender and place as well as technology and innovation. She is the Norwegian PA of Arctic Encounters.

Britt KRAMVIG

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Will present with Berit Kristoffersen

“Narrating the Oil Fairy-Tale in the Norwegian North. From Conquering Darkness to the Light Goddess of Sanna. Encountering Different Natures”

This presentation analyses the difference between the stories produced by oil companies and the petroleum authorities on the hand, and the ongoing production of local narratives in Træna and Lofoten on the other. These point in the direction of different ontologies and Arctic futures. We start by exemplifying the most recent used advertisement of the Norwegian petroleum directorate, where Arctic seascapes are performed as dark, unknown and inaccessible. The visual narrative points in the direction of knowledge and technology, as tools to overcome these barriers. These narratives recall that Norway’s oil prosperity can continue through the use of Northern resources. In addition, we analyze the advertisement campaigns of Norway’s partly state-owned oil company Statoil. These narratives aim at overcoming dark and inaccessible nature, first through technological enhancement from taking place “under the water” to more recent mythological references in Lofoten and Træna. In Statoil’s advertisement, Sanna is turned into graphics. As a step-by-step approach, Sanna shows the incorporation of Arctic seascapes into the Norwegian oil fairy-tale. These are two different ontologies and stories that are competing for people’s support by different means and resources.

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Berit Kristoffersen (University of Tromsø, Norway) is a political geographer working as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the projects *Reason to Return* (Norwegian Research Council) and *Arctic Encounters* (HERA) where she looks at new and emerging practices and conflicts related to tourism. Her recently defended Doctoral thesis focused on local and national narratives and strategies as well as geopolitical constructs relating to extending oil and gas activities into Arctic territories.

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Christiane LAHAIE  
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“Artificial Night and Mental Disorder in *Insomnia* (1997) by Erik Skjoldbjærg and its Remake (2002) by Christopher Nolan”

Seasonal depression and mental disorder associated with perpetual night are well-known phenomenon. However, and surprisingly enough, mental health problems related to the Northern midnight sun (which is the flip side of perpetual night) seem of lesser concern. Is it because darkness is easier obtained than (natural) light? What about the representation of “eternal” darkness and that of the even more challenging never-ending day? Cinema, as an art of both light and darkness, has always had to play with this contrast. But what about showing what is not: day for night, night for day? What are the links between these “visual lies” and the characters’ mental state? Ultimately, the paradox emerging from the dynamics of light and absence of light in the North takes us back to the fundamental question of the representation of day and night on the screen. In order to deepen and illustrate these considerations, the representation of artificial night will be examined in two movies where the absence of darkness and the urgent need for its recreation remain central to the intrigue, set in Alaska. Thus, the initial version of *Insomnia* (1997) by Erik Skjoldbjærg and the later remake (2002) by Christopher Nolan will be analyzed in order to underline how midnight sun conditions both slumber and mental health, and how the search for darkness, as opposed to the search for “light”, may serve as a metaphor for a similar quest: truth.

Christiane Lahaie is a writer and a Professor at the Université de Sherbrooke. She is specialized in creative writing, geocritics and cinema. She won the Grand Prix du livre de la Ville de Sherbrooke for *Hôtel des brumes* (2002) and will soon publish a new collection of short stories: *Vous avez choisi Limoges*. Along with Georges Desmeules, she wrote essays on Québec Literature, including *Les classiques du roman québécois* (2007). Her main contribution to the “spatial turn” is *Ces mondes brefs. Pour une géocritique de la nouvelle québécoise contemporaine*, an important study combining fiction and analysis.

Paul LANDON  
Professor, Université du Québec à Montréal  
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“Hof”

A hundred different views of a residential courtyard (*ein Hof*) in Berlin at night are projected onto two walls in a continuous dissolved sequence. The repetitive turning on and off of the lights in the different apartments is echoed by the sporadic rhythm of the slide show that changes images. The sequence is played in a loop and eventually becomes abstract and contemplative. Watching the oscillating windows against the dark background recalls perhaps the wonder at watching a flickering constellation of stars in the night sky or the flashing of neon signs in the dark of the evening. *Hof* proposes the transformation of the domestic everyday presence of the urban landscape at night into the psychological and physiological attraction of the experience of watching a film in a darkened cinema. While the bright lights of the windows in the apartment buildings recall the movie screen and the views into the apartments recall the voyeuristic shots of films such as Hitchcock’s *Rear Window* (1954), the photos taken for *Hof* were not staged and the sequence is non-narrative. The connections viewers may make to scenes from films are arbitrary and random; they are conditioned by the darkness; their imagination wanders and familiar images appear. Darkness becomes cinematic darkness. Dreams become movies. Therefore, *Hof* is a work that reflects upon urban darkness as both a condition of the cinematic viewing apparatus (the darkened cinema) and as a recurrent diegetic device, darkness as a *hors-champ*, an out of frame, in a film’s storyline.

Paul Landon graduated from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Halifax (Canada) and from the Jan van Eyck Academie (The Netherlands). He lives and works in Montréal, where he is a Professor of Media Arts at the École des arts visuels et médiatiques of the Université du Québec à Montréal, and sporadically in Helsinki (Finland), where he is a candidate for a Doctorate in Fine Arts from the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts. Paul Landon is a founding member of the Hexagram Centre for Research-Creation in Media Arts and Technologies in Montréal. His films and artworks have been exhibited around the world and are part of public collections in Canada, Switzerland and the Netherlands.



Kristín LOFTSDÓTTIR  
Professor, Háskóli Íslands / University of Iceland  
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## “Going Into Darkness: Exploring Exotic Iceland”

In historical European writing, darkness often is a sign for the unknown, dangerous and primitive. The North was for a long time signified by European scholars as the space of darkness in this sense, with countries like Iceland presented as exotic and sometimes on pair with other remote destinations like Africa. In the presentation, I will discuss Iceland’s position as on the margins of Europe, and how it shapes Iceland’s perceptions as simultaneously exotic and safe; like ‘us’ but peculiar. As such, I take Iceland as good to think with “about the coloniality of power in contemporary Europe” (Dzenovska, 2013) and how Icelanders are constituted as subjects in Western discourses, as well as what it says about the western discourses themselves.

Kristín Loftsdóttir is Professor of Anthropology at the University of Iceland. Her research focuses on whiteness, gender and racial identity in Iceland, in addition to exploring Icelandic identity in relation to postcolonialism, international development and multiculturalism. She directs the research project “(Icelandic) Identity in Crisis” supported by the Icelandic Research Fund and participant in the HERA funded Artic Encounters: Travel/Writing in the European High North project. She published articles in numerous books and internationally recognized journals. She wrote (in Icelandic) *The Woman Who Got a Spear on Her Head. The Strangeness of Methodology*, which received the Fjöruverðlaunin’s Women’s Literature Award as the scholarly book of the year in 2010.

Katrín Anna LUND

Associate Professor, Háskóli Íslands / University of Iceland  
“Journey Into the Dark. Encountering Aurora Borealis”  
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Will present with Gunnar Thór Jóhannesson

## “Journey Into the Dark. Encountering Aurora Borealis”

Conventionally darkness has been associated with negative forces as it obscures and hides the visually tangible field of daylight. It can however be argued that the increasing presence of Arctic regions in global context has re-evaluated the image of darkness and its, sometimes, magical effects. During the last three years northern light tourism in Iceland has been booming and the aurora borealis has become an established feature in the portfolio of winter tourism supply. However, it is a well-known fact that the lights are not to be disciplined, neither by tourist promoters nor the scientific community. Although science can tell you what they are and explain their nature up to some extent, the dynamics of their vibrant appearances or non-appearances remain a mystery. Fortunately, mystery sells. In this presentation, we explore how northern light tourism is assembled through heterogeneous mobile substances that encounter in darkness. These include for example energetic charged particles, Earth’s magnetic field, tourists, tour guides, tour providers, weather, and transportation systems. We describe some of the ways through which the northern lights as a tourism product is assembled and how it demands creative performances and improvisations. We suggest that these are mediated through choreographies that entangle human and non-human actors in their play with the elements of darkness and light.

Katrín Anna Lund is a Social Anthropologist with a Ph.D. from the University of Manchester (United Kingdom). She is the principal investigator in Iceland for the international project, Arctic Encounters: Contemporary Travel/Writing in the High. She also participates in a project called Winter: New turns in Arctic winter tourism, which is based at The Arctic University of Tromsø, Alta Campus and funded by the Research Council of Norway. She has done research both in Spain, Scotland and Iceland. Her research has focused on tourism, travel and the perception of landscape but landscape studies have been central in her work on travel and tourism with a special emphasis on walking and narratives.

Avril MADDRELL

Associate Professor, University of the West of England, Bristol  
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“Gendered Discourses of Northern Lights Tourism, Associated Landscapes and Activities”

The social constructions of light and darkness and their associated spaces have begun to attract attention from geographers and other social scientists. The northern lights (aurora borealis) are a fascinating aspect of the dynamic interrelation between light and dark, associated primarily with latitudes, 55° North and beyond. This presentation explores the discursive representation of northern lights tourism marketed to British tourists with particular attention to interests in winter sports, astronomy and photography, as well as perceptions of nature and landscape, and the embodied, emotional-affective experience of the aurora borealis itself. Grounded in feminist analysis, it highlights implicit and explicit representations of the aurora and associated notions of the unpredictability of nature, aurora “hunting”, wilderness, particular forms of masculinity and femininity, landscape and the sublime.

Avril Maddrell is an Associate Professor in Social and Cultural Geography at the University of the West of England, Bristol and the co-editor of the journal *Gender, Place and Culture*. Her current research interests include spaces; landscapes and practices of pilgrimage and sacred mobilities, mourning and remembrance; gender; geographical thought and practice. She co-edited the following books: *Sacred Mobilities* (Ashgate, 2015), *Deathscapes. Spaces for death, dying, mourning and remembrance* (Ashgate, 2010). She also wrote *Complex Locations. Women's Geographical Work in the UK 1850-1970* (2009, RGS-IBG/Wiley-Blackwell) and was one of the co-authors of *Christian Pilgrimage, Landscape and Heritage* (Routledge, 2015).

Vera NIKIFOROVA

Researcher, Laboratory of Complex Geo-Cultural Studies of Arctic (Russia)

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Will present with Oksana Dobzhanskaya

“Winter’ Sacred Practice. Night performing of”

This presentation is devoted to the analysis of the oral tradition of peoples of the North in the framework of symbolic anthropology. The theme is the performance of epic tales as a ritual communication between world of spirits and world of people. It is based on archival texts and original field data. In the oral tradition of storytelling, a singer of tales is a sacred figure. He is the keeper of “visible knowledge”, and performs epic tales with his eyes closed. Often he competed with a shaman. During the performing of epic tales, the audience could not stand behind the narrator. It was a warning associated with the “other” dangerous world (the back side of shaman's costume was the world of the dead). These restrictions were strictly observed, when we made recordings of Yakut epos Olonkho performed by Daria Tomskaya from Verkhoyansk region of Yakutia. Northern storytelling is correlated with calendar time and space of the winter darkness. In this regard, it is interesting material on the Northern olonkhosuts collected by A.A. Savvin in 1940’s. Analysis of archival texts revealed the following features : 1) Olonkho was performed in the dark time, in a state between sleep and wakefulness; 2) in the final part of the story, all listeners had to be active, because the hero of Aiy (Image of Light) wins the hero of Abaasy (Image of Darkness). It was a kind of divination for the next year: the victory of light over darkness meant prosperity and favorable time for spring and summer. Thus, night Olonkho was a ritual of winter time, and olonkhosut created new, brighter time.

Mary McDONALD-RISSANEN  
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## “Moving Through the Darkness in Atlantic Canada”

Despite the fact that Atlantic Canada is covered with snow and ice for more than half of the year, the image-makers of the Atlantic Provinces' governments give the impression that the sun always shines on the evergreen fields and blue oceans. But in the texts of contemporary writers like David Adams Richards (New Brunswick), Alistair MacLeod (Nova Scotia) and Lisa Moore (Newfoundland) there are clear representations of that other half of the year. This presentation will deal with that latter half by focusing on the darkness that prevails in the stories of internationally recognized writers from the region. The textual representations of people living in extreme weather conditions, the way they cope psychologically and physically with the reality of nordicity will be examined. Therefore, juxtaposing the absence and the problematic aspects of representing winter in all its whiteness and darkness with the artistic imaging from the region will be our point of departure.

Mary McDonald-Rissanen is a Lecturer of English at the Tampereen yliopisto (Finland) where she obtained her doctorate in comparative literature on the life writing of 19th and early 20th century Prince Edward Island women. In the spring of 2014, her book on the same topic, *In the Interval of the Wave*, was published in Canada. Dr. McDonald-Rissanen was born and brought up in Prince Edward Island (Canada) and returns there to spend her summers.

Elizabeth McTernan

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“TRUE NORTH. An Action with a Concrete Ship and a Compass Under a Cloak of Darkness”

Framed by the act of witnessing in darkness, *True North* investigates the problem of the magnetic North versus the geographical North: the fact that, at this very moment, the magnetic North is wandering from Arctic Canada towards Siberia with an average speed of 7 meters per hour. Ironically, the magnetic North, the very point of supposed stability we count on to tell us where we are, leads us astray from geographical North. Even that invisible force that guides migrating birds and compasses is therefore compelled to wander off. In such a world, which North is more real? Which North is *true*? The Nordic ship I will use, named the *Good Enough*, is particular in that it is made of concrete molded over an iron structure and thus has a history of confused compasses due to its magnetized hull. The ship will sail out to open sea, and be allowed to follow its “inner North” (i.e. whatever direction its compass believes to be North). This journey will take place during nighttime, because once darkness sets in, *Good Enough* is set free, the captain guided only by its inner North, the audience blindfolded by the air and left to witness the action in the space of introversion carved out by the night. When twilight returns, the captain takes the boat back to shore. Darkness provides both a timeframe and a device for the internalization of visuality by the viewer. How do we engage with movement without the references of landscape, and how does this question extend to notions of the self with societal landmarks removed?

Since 2005, Elizabeth McTernan has been exhibiting internationally and pursuing overland exploration, processing it via actions, installation, drawing, lithography, sound, and storytelling. Recent awards include the 2013 DIVA grant (Denmark), the 2012 Wassail Project Education Fellowship (New York, United-States) and a special project at Karen Blixen Museum in 2013. In 2014, she mounted solo exhibitions in Ireland and Germany, and spoke at symposiums in Lithuania, Iceland, and Poland. She featured in the Autumn 2014 issue of *Sleek Magazine* and will be an artist in residence at Nida Art Colony, Lithuania, in 2015.

Nina J. MORRIS  
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## “In the Still of the Night”

To be out at night in a forest, by a river, on a moor, in a field, or even in a city garden, is to know it differently. For diurnal humans, nightfall can bring great strangeness, even to the most familiar of landscapes. Nothing is solid in the dark: it is harder to judge depth and distance, details are obscured and colours muted. One is obliged to know the world by drawing on other senses such as touch, smell and hearing. Darkness also calls into question how the human body is in relation to what surrounds and challenges the human sense of bodily presence and boundary. Inspired by Dalziel and Scullion’s *Rosnes Benches* (2014) project in the Galloway Forest Dark Sky Park (Scotland), this presentation aims to provide a starting point for discussion on the multisensory aesthetics of dark landscapes. For Dalziel and Scullion, real immersion in nature requires active concentration and involvement; only through attentive and continuous perception will humans develop the sensory acuity which will help them understand more fully their connection with the natural world (Friesen, 2005). Likewise, I argue that it is only following a period of acclimatization that one is able to perceive and appreciate “the dark” as a textured realm of sensory perception, as presence rather than absence, an embrace rather than a stranglehold.

Nina J. Morris is a Lecturer in Human Geography at the University of Edinburgh. Her interests include landscape theory, sensory perception, darkness, installation art and sculpture, and human-nature relationships.

Anders V. MUNCH

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“Myths of Scandinavian Twilight. Interior Light Designs by Poul Henningsen and Verner Pantón”

Some of the most elaborated speculations on the dim light of the Nordic are to be found in Norwegian architect Christian Norberg-Schulz’s book, *Nightlands* (1997), where he links the magic perceptions of low lights in shifting seasons to the architectural compositions of space, materials and daylight in Nordic buildings. This was a critical opposition to the clear light and abstract white walls of modernist architecture, but there has been other alternative conception of the design of dim and even colour-toned light in Nordic interior design. Most advanced is the philosophy of the electric light design by the Danish architect Poul Henningsen. Far from any nature romanticism, Henningsen worked with quasi-scientific theories and made graduations of light and darker zones better suited for the low intensity light in Northern regions by dimming and toning of the artificial electric light. As a pupil of Henningsen in this field, the Danish designer Verner Pantón went further by designing whole artificial ambiances in strong colours, but with dimmed and cautiously toned electric lights. In a design historical perspective these diverging positions spring out of a familiar objections to the idea of universal functions in modernist design and produces highly contextualized, aesthetical understandings of light and darkness in interior design. But this constellation of Nordic architects and designers questions the myths of a specific Scandinavian understanding.

Anders V. Munch is a Professor in Design Culture at the Department of Design and Communication of the University of Southern Denmark in Kolding. Ph.D. in Art History, his dissertation is entitled *Den stillose stil. Adolf Loos* (2002) (German version: *Der stillose Stil. Adolf Loos* (2005)). He also wrote *Fra Bayreuth til Bauhaus. Gesamtkunstwerk’et og de moderne kunstformer* (2012) and *Design as Gesamtkunstwerk. The art of transgression* (2012). His researches focus on design history and Danish design culture. At the University of Southern Denmark in Kolding, he is part of the largest Nordic research team on the humanistic and cultural perspectives of design.



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“Night Vision. Darkness and Contemporary Abstract Painting”

In her 1997 lecture *Framing Abstraction*, Susan Stewart suggests an alternative to the established narratives for the development of abstract painting. Stewart theorizes that if our experience of the day has enabled the invention of perspectival realism, then nighttime could be argued to have led to the development of abstraction. While the topic of nighttime's diminishing darkness has been recently addressed in books such as Paul Bogard's *The End of Night* (2013), little has been said about the effects of this loss on ways of seeing in abstract painting. Building on Stewart's alternative narrative for the development of abstraction, I will use examples from contemporary abstract painting, as well as personal experiences of nighttime, to argue that darkness is an essential aesthetic experience, yet one that is increasingly threatened. Specifically, I will touch upon the changing motifs of contemporary abstract painting that address our evolving experience of night. Seeing at night is an exciting mode of looking to which we bring an awareness of our own bodies, as well as feelings of mistrust and awe. Forced to depend on other senses besides vision, such as sound, smell, touch, and memory, seeing at night can help us to better understand the myriad complexities of looking.

Katherine Pickering received an MFA in Studio Art from Concordia University's Painting and Drawing Department in 2009 (Québec), and a BFA in Visual Art from the University of British Columbia, Okanagan campus, in 2006 (Canada). She has exhibited and attended residencies in Turkey, Iceland, and Canada, including residencies at the Banff Centre for the Arts (2008), the Vermont Studio Center (2011 and 2013), and the Terra Nova National Park Artist in Residence Program in Newfoundland (2011). She lives in Vernon, British Columbia and teaches painting and drawing at the University of British Columbia, Okanagan campus (Canada).

Paivi Maria PIHLAJA

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“‘Like a Flame of the Northern Lights’. Polar Imagery of Light and Shadow in Nineteenth-Century Finnish Writings”

This presentation studies the allegoric uses of the northern lights (the aurora borealis) through a selection of literary and artistic pieces produced in nineteenth-century Finland. It seeks to show how traditions of depiction were interlinked with central political and cultural conflicts which influenced their adoption as a frequently used emblem in contemporary literary landscapes. The aurora borealis entered the “romantic” imagery together with other similar phenomena expressing the sensation of the sublime, such as storms or lightning. Symbolic connotations attached to light and darkness reflected, overall, the continuing dependence of contemporaries on the seasonal variations of natural light. As the scientific and popular interest in Polar Regions was growing, scientific ventures to solve the mystery of the aurora received great attention. Public interest in science became entangled with other discourses aiming at building a new identity for a Grand Duchy annexed in 1809 from Sweden to the Russian Empire. Symbolism attached to the northern lights was at first symptomatic of Scandinavian “Viking romanticism” underlining old connection with Sweden. Soon, the rising Fennophile movement also became aware of their potential. Through an analysis of various writings and verses, this presentation investigates how the ways to depict the northern lights reflected both popular interest in polar expeditions and conflicting political loyalties and cultural traditions competing over their heritage.

Päivi Maria Pihlaja holds a doctoral degree in History from the University of Helsinki. In her thesis, she analyzed the scientific and symbolic importance given to Northern topics in the context of eighteenth-century scholarly relations between Sweden and France. Her current postdoctoral project focuses on nineteenth-century research of the aurora borealis and its cultural significance within the Grand Duchy of Finland. Her special fields of interests include travel writing, cultural history of science and research of the Northern regions during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Neil PRICE

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### “Death in the Dark. Nocturnal Funerals in the Viking Age”

Almost all visual reconstructions of prehistoric life tend to be daylight images. This applies particularly to funeral rituals, and those of the Viking Age (c. 750-1050 CE) are no exception. We already know that the cultures of early medieval Scandinavia, and their diaspora that informs our very concept of the Viking period, produced some of the most varied, elaborate and spectacular responses to death of any ancient people. The great ship burials, chamber graves and burial mounds by the thousands are a justly famous part of the Viking image. However, archaeologists have only recently begun to explore what actually went on during these funerary rites – how long they took, who was involved, how people moved, what was done – interpreting them as a kind of mortuary drama, literally acted out at the graveside. Part of this performative approach naturally involves an understanding of the visual, and it is becoming clear that many Viking funerals were conducted at night, in darkness relieved by fire or moonlight. Excavated burials sometimes contain light-producing objects such as lamps or candles, and traces of burning are common, both around the graves and even inside them; cremations are themselves a blaze of fire. Furthermore, contemporary eyewitness accounts of Viking funerals include an explicit description of a mass warrior cremation by moonlight, involving the sacrifice of both humans and animals. This communication presents the evidence, illustrated with reconstructions, and discusses its implications for our understanding of the Viking way of death.

Neil Price is Professor of Archaeology at the University of Uppsala (Sweden). He is a leading specialist in the Viking Age, the pre-Christian religions of the North and the historical archaeology of the Indo-Pacific region. He also taught at the universities of Oslo (Norway) and Stockholm (Sweden), and, in August 2007, he took up the inaugural Chair of Archaeology at Aberdeen (United Kingdom). In 2014, he was appointed to the Uppsala Chair, founded in 1662 and thus one of the oldest archaeological professorships in the world. He also directed research projects in France, Iceland, Russia, Sweden, Sápmi (Lapland) and Palau.

Elísabet Indra RAGNARSDÓTTIR

Program Producer (Iceland)

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Will present with Þorgerður E. Sigurðardóttir

“Listening to darkness. Soundwalk”

How does darkness sounds? Is it loud or soft, fast or slow, high-pitched or low-pitched? Perhaps, could it be silent? To try to answer those questions, we planned a 20-30 minutes long soundwalk in a closed dark space. For the entire length of the walk, the participants will be equipped with headphones through which they will hear thoughts and stories from individuals that have experienced darkness, along with more abstract approaches on the question of the sound of darkness.

Þorgerður E. Sigurðardóttir is an audio producer in Reykjavík, currently working for RÚV (The Icelandic Broadcasting Service) and the audio production company Innra eyrað.

Gaëlle RENETEAUD

Ph.D. student, Université Paris IV—Paris-Sorbonne /  
Paris-Sorbonne University—Paris IV (France)  
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“Light and Darkness, the Paradox of Xavier Marmier’s Northern Speech”

“There, I have often admired the vast panorama unfolding around me; often at night, at eleven o'clock, the sun was still on the horizon, its burning rays swayed in the sea as a pillar of fire; the sea was calm and only a light breeze wrinkled by playing the blue waves, which then fell lazily like a sheet of silver, and glittered like stars”. The French philologist Xavier Marmier in his work of 1837, *Letters on Iceland*, marvels at the light and the Nordic colours, the blurred line between earth and sky and the loneliness of the traveler who may face landscapes both sinister and desert but always conducive to meditation and daydreaming. This presentation will analyze the perception of light, sublime or disturbing, transcribed in both travelogues of Xavier Marmier on the North, *Letters on Iceland* and *Letters on the North. Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Lapland and Spitsbergen*, and thus show the paradox of his remarks, which range from the sublime praise to the disturbing picture of darkness bordering the horizon of the Northern countries: “all around us, had the appearance of the desert; everything was bleak, dark”.

After studies in History, Geography and comparative Literature at the Sorbonne (France), Gaëlle Reneteaud began in 2011 a thesis entitled *From the scientific wonderful. Changing perceptions of Iceland in France between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries* under the direction of Sylvain Briens at the Sorbonne. Since September 2013, she is a teacher at the Department of Scandinavian Studies at the Sorbonne. Finally she is the author of two recent articles entitled “Evolution of the Representation of Iceland and Icelanders in France, the Contribution of the Philologist and Traveler Xavier Marmier in the Nineteenth Century” and “Iceland and France: Construction of a Dream Space and Fantasized Great North in French Literature in the Nineteenth Century”.

“The Role of the Night and the Northern Lights in the Production of a New Touristic Imaginary of the North”

Our work is based on empirical observation: the development of a tourist offer proposing to observe the northern lights in some Nordic areas. We place these developments in a broader dynamic of changes in our relationship to the night. These changes find a translation in a tourism that takes the night and its environmental resources as objects. This communication focuses on a particular object of these tourist dynamics: the northern lights. We formulate the following hypothesis: the erosion by the urban lighting of the “natural” night and of the accessibility to its “environmental resources” (as the starry sky, for example) provides an opportunity for some areas of low density to convey an image of strong naturalness. In the case before us, large areas of the North put forward three advantages: to striking daytime landscape naturalness they add a good quality of the dark night and a very special nocturnal environmental resource that can be frequently observed in their latitudes, the northern lights. This set seems to become new forms of “lost identity”, new “spaces of nostalgia” for many people living in large metropolitan cities. By questioning the status of the northern lights as landscape object, we analyze the manufacture of a new touristic imaginary linked to the Nordic countries. The northern lights appear to be objects worthy of consideration as markers of a strong degree of naturalness. Through qualitative and quantitative approaches, our empirical material is twofold: iconographic production of landscapes in geographical magazines, and tourism offers promoting the Nordic areas.

In September 2013, thanks to local meetings, Samuel Challéat and Rémi Bénos (Postdoctoral researchers, University of Toulouse - Jean Jaurès, France) founded the RENOIR research group (Nocturnal Environmental Resources, Tourism, Territories). The consortium now includes seven researchers and lecturers from different backgrounds (Toulouse, Paris, Dijon) whose specializations allow the formation of a cross-disciplinary perspective on night as a research object.

Niilo RINNE  
Artist and researcher (Finland)  
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### “Scale of Light”

Darkness is illuminated also by pixels. A high-definition screen gives us 2 073 600 and 4K makes it 8 294 400 glowing squares that create self-luminous images. Those moving images are no longer restricted to private space; their glow is also present in public spaces. In contrast to usual street lighting, this non-site-specific light binds media sphere to public space. While commercials make streets flicker, apartment house windows may pulsate in rhythm during global media events. With my installation for the conference, I aim to bring the concept of *technical image* and the experience of *glow* and *animation* to the core of the conversation concerning darkness. It is planned to fit in to approximately one cubic meter on a table and includes black threads, light canvas, a TV-simulator, led lights, a mirror and a video work screened with a small hand size video projector.

Niilo Rinne is a Finnish artist and researcher with a strong transdisciplinary endeavor and a wide range of interests from cinema and architecture to rites of passage. He obtained his MA in Sociology in 2010 at the University of Turku (Finland), and an MA in Arts in 2013 at the Department of Art of Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture (Finland), where he has also worked as an assistant. In 2011-2012, he studied at the Institute for Art in Context at the Berlin University of Arts (Germany). He has recently worked on the ontology of the cinematic image, memory and the sociology of light, as well as on pedagogical questions.

Siobhan ROCKCASTLE

Doctoral Assistant, École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne /  
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Will present with María Lovisa Ámundadóttir  
Mandana Sarey Khanic and Marilyne Andersen shall also be credited

## “Mapping the Dynamics of Shadow. The Architecture of Natural Light”

While architecture is composed of static structural elements, daylight space is perceived as a dynamic play of light and shadow. Our perception of architecture is greatly impacted by the intensity and geometry of natural light, which creates dynamic temporal effects through hourly and daily shifts in solar orientation. While most designers can agree that the composition of natural light is an important design consideration for the functionality, experience of, and comfort within architecture, daylight is most often evaluated for its ability to offset electric lighting use and promote energy efficient building practices. Using threshold illumination levels, most industry-standard metrics are concerned with evaluating whether there is sufficient illumination to conduct visual tasks and tend to promote a “more is better” approach to lighting design. There are limited metrics for evaluating the compositional factors of daylight and tools that can illustrate the ephemeral impacts of light and shadow as perceived by the human eye. Using high-dynamic-range renderings of an interior space at 64°N, we will illustrate the visual effects of light and shadow through a short film. This film will document the daylight dynamics in two extreme conditions: the summer and winter solstices, drawing attention to the impact of latitude on our spatial perception of daylight.

Siobhan Rockcastle is a Ph.D. student at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne. She holds a SMArch degree in Building Technology from MIT (United States). As a teaching fellow at Cornell University and Northeastern University, she has taught courses in environmental technology, lighting, and studio design and has worked as an architect in the United States. Her doctoral research proposes new metrics that measure the perceptual impacts of daylight in architecture. The Velux Stiftung Foundation supports her presentation through a research grant.



Adina RUIU

Ph.D. student, Université de Montréal (Québec) and École des hautes études en sciences sociales (France)  
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“Nous marchons plus que jamais dans une nuit obscure”. Jesuit Digressions in and on the Canadian Night”

Based on Jesuit missionary writings from New France (17th and 18th centuries), this presentation explores the multiple ways in which the topos of the night defines a particular sense of time and underpins the symbolic definition of a territory. Time of privacy and devotion, of a return to the self, of an encounter with the otherworldly, of astounding turns of events bringing freedom or captivity, of silence, whispering, or exceptional festivities, the night emerges as a highly meaningful timeframe. Long winter nights, associated with harsh weather conditions — cold, ice, snow — epitomize the hardships of the Canadian missions and make for a material parallel to what Catholic missionaries frequently presented as their task: to bring Christian light to pagan darkness. Walking in Isaiah's footsteps (“we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness”), Paul Ragueneau, superior of the Huron and of the Canadian mission, explores — in the aforesaid excerpt — the frontier between the literal and the figurative sense when referring to the destruction of the missions set among the Huron-Wendat. But if darkness bears generally a negative connotation, the night carries more easily diversified and more subjective meanings.

Adina Ruiu is about to complete a Ph.D. in History at the Université de Montréal (Québec) and the École des hautes études en sciences sociales (France), dedicated to the French Jesuit missions in the 17th and 18th centuries to North America and the Ottoman Empire. Author of a book entitled *Les récits de voyage aux pays froids au XVIIe siècle: de l'expérience du voyageur à l'expérimentation scientifique* (2007), she studies travel and missionary writings in an attempt to combine global history, cultural history and the history of emotions.

Anne SALMELA

Artist (Finland)

anne.salmela@aalto.fi

Will present with Anna Turunen

## “The Light Castle”

We created light installations in collaboration with the local community to bring art into the public realm, and into our everyday life in the season of darkness. Presented in the shared public space, our artworks transform familiar places into colourful and magical environments, as lights, colours and pictures chosen by the occupants of the participating houses are shared with the local community. In “Light Castle”, the participants choose a theme or a colour that pleases them, working together with the artists. One dark night, the windows of the building erupts in colourful lights, images and videos about the occupants favorites family memories, hobbies, sports, music, sceneries, etc. The actual constructions are preceded by a long process of conception and planning with the occupants. They reveal something about themselves for the public. In this presentation, we will discuss the ideological background and experiences related to such a community artwork. How did everything start and what kind of process it was to bring occupants to make art together? “The Light Castle” is at the same time intimate and public. We get to visit stranger's homes and see how they live. Light and colours don't mean the same things to everybody depending on the senses, memories and pictures they remind. Intimacy arrives to cityscape through their home's windows. The idea of changing the moment into something else in everyday life, using art and interaction as a tool for expression in a way that everyone can participate and be part of is an essential motive for us.

Artist Anne Salmela creates, together with Anna Turunen, light installations in cooperation with the residents of various housing communities in different cities of Finland. Her aim is to bring art into the public realm and into our everyday life. She studied at the Kankaanpää Art School (Finland) and has a MA in Visual Culture from the Aalto University Department of Art (Finland). She has focused on photography and has created installations and participatory artworks.

Panu SAVOLAINEN

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“At the Roots of the Artificial Public Lighting. An Example from Early Modern Sweden”

The artificial lighting of cities became a public issue during the 18th century. In this presentation, I will focus on the early phases of street lighting in a global perspective, with a case study of the nighttime practices and artificial lighting in the Northern periphery of Europe. The wintery dark affected especially the Northern European towns. However, street lanterns were installed only in Saint Petersburg (1718), Oslo (formerly Christiania, 1734) and Stockholm (1747) before 1800. In Turku, (nowadays Finland, previously a Russian and Swedish town) the first street lighting was established in 1805. My paper focuses on the experiential dimensions of the artificial light, asking how the early modern dim lanterns were described and perceived by the early 19th century individuals. As a physical phenomenon, light is absolute, but as a lived experience, extremely relative. I want to stress the cultural proportionality of the experience of light and darkness, drawing an example from the times before the modernity and artificial light.

Panu Savolainen is a Postgraduate Researcher at the Department of History of the University of Turku (Finland). He obtained his master's degree in architecture in 2009 and in history in 2013. Before his involvement in history he worked in an architectural firm as a planner and in a museum as a researcher. Panu Savolainen is concentrated in overlapping questions in architecture, heritage and history, the spatial aspects of 16th-18th centuries everyday life, architectural history and theoretical aspects of materiality and textuality. He has published one monograph and over ten scientific articles. He has taught architectural history, archaeology and museology at University of Turku.

Roswitha SCHULLER

Artist (Austria)

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Will present with Markus Hanakam

## “Bright Darkness. Darkness as a Medium of Mood in Leisure and Consumer Spaces”

In our lecture, we will try to figure out the various uses of darkness and its qualities in the designing of leisure and consumer spaces. Darkness as means of design in this case stands for a bright and conscious darkness, embellished darkness that is put into scenery in calculation. A first section will take a look on historical settings of leisure spaces, e.g. in landscape gardening and park design, staging darkness would mean to create “hidden” spaces, like the topos of the grotto or the maze. These prototypic figures reappear in modern conceptions like the shopping mall, the amusement park and the adventure land. In a second section, we will discuss another category of darkness as it constitutes a contrast of light with black; this aesthetics is also transported historically via the rise of the medium of photography. A distinct idea of dark space design can be developed from this media-related prototypical images. Finally, we will put these sections in relation, via historical topoi and image conventions towards the idea of white cube, black box and cinematic spaces used not in exhibition technique but in commodity spaces such as shop designs.

Roswitha Schuller holds a Master’s in Art, Design and Education, as well as Sculpture, and a Ph.D. in Art Sociology. In collaboration with Markus Hanakam, she has shown works in museums and festivals in an international context, including Videodumbo Festival 2013 at Eyebeam Center for Art and Technology (New York, United States), Rencontres Internationales 2012 at Palais de Tokyo (Paris, France), ISEA 2011, (Istanbul, Turkey) and the 4th Moscow International Biennale for Contemporary Art in 2011 (Russia). Those works focused on cultural production, challenging the role of the artifact therein; as marketing tool, as gaming device, as apparatus and as fetish.

Þorgerður E. SIGURÐARDÓTTIR

Program Producer (Iceland)

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Will present with Elísabet Indra Ragnarsdóttir

“Listening to darkness. Soundwalk”

How does darkness sounds? Is it loud or soft, fast or slow, high-pitched or low-pitched? Perhaps, could it be silent? To try to answer those questions, we planned a 20-30 minutes long soundwalk in a closed dark space. For the entire length of the walk, the participants will be equipped with headphones through which they will hear thoughts and stories from individuals that have experienced darkness, along with more abstract approaches on the question of the sound of darkness.

Þorgerður E. Sigurðardóttir is an audio producer in Reykjavík, currently working for RÚV (The Icelandic Broadcasting Service) and the audio production company Innra eyrað.

Judy SPARK  
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### “Seeing Without Light. Considering Darkness”

In the Northern latitudes, the long hours of winter darkness and gloom can have a severe impact on humans who need sunlight to maintain physical and mental health. Whether through fear, of the unknown or of other humans, or because of its associations with psychological or even spiritual darkness, it seems that the tendency of the contemporary Western human is to banish the experience of night with increasing levels of electric light. This paper takes the form of a phenomenological exploration of northern light and its receding levels, seeking to explore other potential understandings of darkness. Three approaches will be taken towards this: firstly, I will draw upon my own personal experiences of darkness. These accounts will then be subjected to Maurice Merleau Ponty’s concept of *flesh* since, as a theory of embodied experience, it seems to hold some promise in terms of getting past the notion of darkness being in some way a separate phenomenon both from that of light and from ourselves. Having established that darkness is more than just a quality of light, or its absence, that humans are subject to, Nishitani Kenji’s thinking on the Buddhist phenomenon of *emptiness* will then be considered and from this whether, through its capacity to reflect both the interior and exterior experience of humans, it could have some import in our encounters with darkness. The work will reveal darkness as a vital part of experience that may hold the potential for alternative ways of knowing and, it follows, seeing.

Judy Spark is an artist based in Scotland. She teaches on the BA Contemporary Art Practice (CAP) course at Gray’s School of Art, Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen (United Kingdom). She studied Fine Art Sculpture at Glasgow School of Art from 1989 to 1993 since when she has exhibited her work and undertaken residencies regularly in the United Kingdom and abroad. In 2006, she completed an MA in Environmental Philosophy at the University of Lancaster (United Kingdom). She recently has written “The Environing Air. A Meditation on Communications Installations in Natural Environments” published in *PhaenEx* the electronic journal of the international *Society for Existential and Phenomenological Theory and Culture* (EPTC).

“Dark Histories in Literature”

When the United Nations was formed after the end of World War II, Denmark joined and became a member. According to the UN pact, Denmark was now obligated to treat its colonial positions with a certain amount of responsibilities. It was suggested that Greenland should undergo. The living standards were to match the ones of the Danes. This project was dubbed G-50. In the year of 1953, Greenland got positioned under Denmark (as a county) and remained so until Greenland reached home rule in 1979. The vast development in the country had its tolls on the Greenlandic people. Issues with cultural identity, abuse of euphoric substances, suicide and homicide became more and more visible. As the factories were built, women came out on the job market — resulting in the negligence of the youth. Since ways and traditions were transferred from one generation to another, the country underwent a vast political development; the people left behind were living proof of that. Although many reasons can explain the widening gap between the generations within the Greenlandic society, the political governing may be the principal one. The vast social development and the desire to attain a citizen-of-the-world status seem, from one generation to another, to create difficulties in communicating. The different circumstances, seemingly surrounded by darkness and invisible to the naked eye, are the subjects brought up in a collection of short stories I am currently writing about the living conditions of the poor in the latter generations in Greenland. In this presentation, I will discuss this collection, to be published in 2015.

Sørine Steenholdt is currently a Master's student in Language, Literature and Media at the University of Greenland, where she also earned her bachelor's degree. Having had her attribution to the national short story competition picked among the winners in 2012, Sørine Steenholdt is currently in the process of writing a ten-piece collection of short stories. Subject-wise, Sørine Steenholdt, who is a board member in Kalaallit Atuakkiortut (Writer's guild of Greenland), regularly writes about some dark aspects of Greenland.

Batia STOLAR

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### “Nighttime Projections. Ciril Jazbec’s ‘Magical’ Light Show”

Photography, by its very nature, immerses us in the dynamic interplay between light and shadow. Aside from the technical components that make visual imaging possible in this vein, photographic images also comment on this dynamic interplay when representations of light and shadow become the subject matter of photographic images. In July 2014, *National Geographic* featured the work of photographer Ciril Jazbec while in Greenland working on “On Thin Ice”, a photographic project documenting the effects of climate change on the traditional lifestyle practiced in low-lying regions in Greenland. As reported in Becky Harlan’s *NG* feature, in Uummannaq, Jazbec “witnessed something magical — a photographic experience that made his hairs stand on end”. Coming across the Children’s Home Uummannaq, a home dedicated to helping children by “involving them in the traditional way of life”, Jazbec screened the film *Inuk*. What is described as “magical” about this experience is the screening itself: the film was screened outdoors, projected onto an iceberg at night. The photographs he took of the event comment on the intersections between tradition and modernity, nature and technology, as well as Indigenous and Western cultures. I focus my analysis on the function of darkness in the event and the photographic images documenting the film screening. In particular, I analyze how the interplay between light and shadow serves as a useful metaphor for examining the intersections made visible by the photographic images, and how the use of that interplay within the nighttime photographs further exposes the tensions stated above.

Batia Stolar is an Associate Professor in the Department of English and Assistant Dean in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities at Lakehead University (Canada). Her research interests include visual culture, immigrant writing and film, gothic narratives, and dance studies. She recently published “Afro-Caribbean Immigrant Experiences in the White City: Austin Clarke’s Toronto” and “The Politics of Reproduction in Stephanie Meyer’s *Twilight* Saga”, and is presently co-editing a book, *Reflections on Critical Multiculturalism and Dance in Canada*.



Souvankham THAMMAVONGSA

Poet (Canada)

souvankham@hotmail.com

Will present with Danielle Vogel

“Darkness as Matter. A Panel on the Poetics of Light in Language”

Artists Danielle Vogel and Souvankham Thammavongsa have never met, but their work as poets meet in themes of darkness and light. For both women, thought *is* matter. As human beings, thought — in a sense — is our origin, inherited through our landscapes, languages, and lineages. In her book of poems, *Light*, Thammavongsa writes: “It’s the shape and shapes water / could be, the direction light can travel / to get you,” and Vogel, in her book *A Library of Light*, without ever having read Thammavongsa, seems to respond to her with: “Light lets the grid of a thing respire. Each intersection becomes an *or* in relation.” Thought is our source, it is what connects us across the expanse of our various bodies and countries; it is what we are composed of. In this panel, Vogel and Thammavongsa will read excerpts from their work and speak about having chosen illumination as an artistic medium. What happens when we flood grammar with light? How does light affect memory? What happens when we leave room for darkness, for the unsayable? What happens across languages when we attempt to track language’s ability to organize absence and the unspeakable? Talking through these points and more, Vogel and Thammavongsa will reveal how topologies of darkness and light infer their thinking and how illumination affects how they order, sequence, arrange, and translate languages. They will reveal what it means to understand that, even in language, light relies on darkness as matter, as eloquence, as platform.

Souvankham Thammavongsa is the author of three poetry books, *Small Arguments* (2003), *Found* (2007), and *Light* (2014), all published by Pedlar Press. The collection *Found* was made into a short film by Paramita Nath and screened at film festivals, including Toronto International Film Festival (Canada), L.A. Shorts Fest (United States), Dok Leipzig (Germany) and other places. Most recently, her paper clip paintings were exhibited in a group show “Next,” in Dallas (United States) and *Light* won the Trillium Book Award for Poetry. She was born in a Lao refugee camp in Nong Khai (Thailand), and was raised and educated in Toronto (Canada).

Solveig THORODDSEN

Visual artist (Iceland)

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“North”

This work is inspired from a memory I have from working in a slaughterhouse in a small town in North Iceland. The slaughter season is in September and October while seasons are changing and it's getting darker. People from all over the world come to work there, performing a tough physical labour. Working days are long so you only see the dark outside. Smell of warm blood follows you to the hotel where the workers have accommodation during the season. The carpet in the hotel is meat coloured. In weekends heavy drinking starts. Inspired by this harsh reality, my work presents a specific social structure in the darkness: people killing sheep while all kinds of fluids are floating. It's dark season and that's how we survive it. The installation consists of video taken from driving a car over Öxnadalshéiði in the dark, a two persons conversation set with two carved chair and a small table with a vodka bottle, a 2l of Coke bottle and two glasses on, as well as a meat coloured carpet with stamped sheep cheekbones on it.

Solveig Thoroddsen was born in Reykjavík in 1970 (Iceland). She graduated from The Icelandic Academy of the Arts in 2010 and is now following a Master study program in the same school. She participated in a few collective and one solo exhibition. She is one of the three organizers of the exhibition series *Avant-garður*, held in unusual outdoor places in Reykjavík, a few hours during one single day. She also fulfills social based work in various media; observing communities and communications between people.

Rósa Dögg ÞORSTEINSDÓTTIR

Interior and lighting designer, The Illuminating Engineering Society of Iceland  
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## “Light and Dark”

Richard Kelly described the three elemental kinds of light as focal glow (make it easier to see), ambient luminescence (make surroundings safe and reassuring) and play of brilliants. When designing urban lighting these are the elements that need to be kept in mind. Each space we design is different and requires one or all of these elements. We can go back to old painting techniques like Chiaroscuro that can be an inspiration of creating the environment we want to live in when the sun sets. Projects like Harpa square, Akratorg and Blue Lagoon are all great examples of public places that we are able to enjoy when the sun sets. These projects play with shadows, the expression of darkness and safety. Light is a social element and light in architecture creates the urban environment at nighttime. Buildings, especially iconic buildings, play a big part in these scenarios. An international group of lighting designers called Guerrilla Lighting is a group that mission is to show light as a social element and raise the awareness of the power of light! Over illuminated buildings and unsocial spaces in Reykjavík have been on their canvas and show how only little light as flashlights can be used to enhance places and create contrast between light and dark. To all lighting designers out there: design with the experience in mind, focus on safety and nature. Keep the balance between light and dark. That is the challenge!

Rosa Dögg Þorsteinsdóttir is a well-known lighting designer in Iceland with a background in interior design from ISAD in Milan (Italy). She began her career in interior design while studying lighting design at Reykjavík Technical School (Iceland) and graduated in 2009, now working with her team of lighting designers at Verkis Being from Iceland, the island in the North Atlantic that has 24 hours of daylight during summer and long dark winter nights, has influenced her into exploring the deep relationship between light and spaces. She regularly delivers presentations at professional conferences on lighting in the build environment, influence of light pollution and the quality of the Icelandic night sky.

Pierre TREMBLAY

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“Meta Incognita. Winter Solstice”

The English explorer Martin Frobisher discovered Baffin Island in 1577 and Elizabeth I of England named it “Meta Incognita”, “unknown limits”. It is Canada’s largest island and now part of the province of Nunavut. The southeastern part of the island is known as “Meta Incognita Peninsula” and the isolated town of Kimmirut is found there. Taking place in such a scenery, *Meta Incognita. Winter Solstice* is a new film about the arrival and departure of winter, and proposes a visual experience of reading a section of a database concerned with the nature of time as seen through the flow of light from darkness to light. The music is by Alex Geddie. This presentation will be a new aspect of the project called *Nunavut Lights*, a collaboration between David Bouchard, Bruno Lessard and Pierre Tremblay that started in June 2010. *Nunavut Lights*, is an exploration in visualizing a large photographic archive. The archive – collected from the Internet and analyzed by our automated system — consists of over 35,000 images captured by a weather webcam between the solstices of 2010 and 2011. Using a program specifically created for the project, the data was collected four times every hour, twenty-four hours a day. The work offers a view of a landscape in constant motion, and of itself proposes a critical reflection about digital technologies and new media arts. These images are fragments of light, exposing us for a short time to the undeniable beauty of Nunavut. The new film focuses on the period of greatest darkness: the subtle changes as dark settles upon the land followed by the emergence light as it slowly returns to melt the waters and reveal the earth.

An interdisciplinary artist, Pierre Tremblay is an Associate Professor in the School of Image Arts at Ryerson University (Canada). His artistic practice, combining new technologies and video, questions the world in flux, how we see and perceive. Exhibitions include *Meta Incognita* at The Photographers’ Gallery — The Wall (England), *Dans la nuit des images*, at the Grand Palais (France) and le Mois de la Photo 2009 (Québec) along with festival screenings. His work can be found in France at the Musée Carnavalet, the Bibliothèque nationale and the Musée Rodin.

Anna TURUNEN

Artist (Finland)

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Will present with Anne Salmela

## “The Light Castle”

We created light installations in collaboration with the local community to bring art into the public realm, and into our everyday life in the season of darkness. Presented in the shared public space, our artworks transform familiar places into colourful and magical environments, as lights, colours and pictures chosen by the occupants of the participating houses are shared with the local community. In “Light Castle”, the participants choose a theme or a colour that pleases them, working together with the artists. One dark night, the windows of the building erupts in colourful lights, images and videos about the occupants favorites family memories, hobbies, sports, music, sceneries, etc. The actual constructions are preceded by a long process of conception and planning with the occupants. They reveal something about themselves for the public. In this presentation, we will discuss the ideological background and experiences related to such a community artwork. How did everything start and what kind of process it was to bring occupants to make art together? “The Light Castle” is at the same time intimate and public. We get to visit stranger's homes and see how they live. Light and colours don't mean the same things to everybody depending on the senses, memories and pictures they remind. Intimacy arrives to cityscape through their home's windows. The idea of changing the moment into something else in everyday life, using art and interaction as a tool for expression in a way that everyone can participate and be part of is an essential motive for us.

Artist Anna Turunen, together with Anne Salmela, creates light installations in cooperation with the residents of various housing communities in different cities of Finland. Her aim is to bring art into the public realm and our everyday life. She studied at the Kankaanpää Art School (Finland) and has a MA in Visual Culture from the Aalto University Department of Art (Finland). She worked on experiments in the urban space as well as on videos and animations.

Ari VIRTANEN

Lecturer, Université du Québec à Montréal  
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Will present with Alain Grenier

“Lights and Shadows as Resources in Tourism. The Case of Polar Destinations”

Even though the Sun constitutes a major factor in the attractiveness of a tourism destination, the role of darkness as natural phenomena has remained relatively unexplored in existing tourism literature. Yet, it would be difficult to imagine any tourist destination in the polar region without the polar nights in winter. The polar regions have dominantly been summer destinations with midnight sun and long summer days to take advantage of. However, there have recently been several attempts in many northern areas to improve the winter tourism season for potential visitors. If the light is considered at the very heart of a successful tourist experience, and if it represents the most important visual characteristic of a destination, along with the climate and scenery, what happens in the case of the absence or lack of light? Darkness can act as a repulsive factor for many potential visitors. Yet, it may also be transformed into a unique resource that offers exclusive tourist experiences for visitors. The questions are: how does darkness express itself in tourist destinations? What kind of experiences may it offer? Based on literature and non-participating tourist observations by the authors in different tourist locations in Canada, Iceland and Finland, this interdisciplinary study aims to elaborate the different uses of darkness in tourist destination from two points of view: the tourists' experience and the creation of the destination image by the tourism industry. Several managerial implications for tourism business in the polar regions are therefore suggested.

Ari Virtanen holds a Masters' degree in tourism from the University of Lapland (Finland), with a profile in marketing. He is lecturing on sustainable development in the Nordic countries at the School of Management of the Université du Québec à Montréal.

Danielle VOGEL

Professor, Brown University / Wesleyan University (United States)  
vogel.danielle@gmail.com

Will present with Souvankham Thammavongsa

“Darkness as Matter. A Panel on the Poetics of Light in Language”

Artists Danielle Vogel and Souvankham Thammavongsa have never met, but their work as poets meet in themes of darkness and light. For both women, thought *is* matter. As human beings, thought — in a sense — is our origin, inherited through our landscapes, languages, and lineages. In her book of poems, *Light*, Thammavongsa writes: “It’s the shape and shapes water / could be, the direction light can travel / to get you,” and Vogel, in her book *A Library of Light*, without ever having read Thammavongsa, seems to respond to her with: “Light lets the grid of a thing respire. Each intersection becomes an *or* in relation.” Thought is our source, it is what connects us across the expanse of our various bodies and countries; it is what we are composed of. In this panel, Vogel and Thammavongsa will read excerpts from their work and speak about having chosen illumination as an artistic medium. What happens when we flood grammar with light? How does light affect memory? What happens when we leave room for darkness, for the unsayable? What happens across languages when we attempt to track language’s ability to organize absence and the unspeakable? Talking through these points and more, Vogel and Thammavongsa will reveal how topologies of darkness and light infer their thinking and how illumination affects how they order, sequence, arrange, and translate languages. They will reveal what it means to understand that, even in language, light relies on darkness as matter, as eloquence, as platform.

Danielle Vogel is an artist and writer who grew up on the South Shore of Long Island (United States). She is the author of *Between Grammars* (Noemi Press, 2015), the artist book *Narrative & Nest* (Abecedarian Gallery, 2012) and *lit* (Dancing Girl Press, 2008). She has exhibited her work most recently at the Rhode Island School of Design Museum, The University of Arizona’s Poetry Center, and the Abecedarian Gallery (United States). She teaches at Brown and Wesleyan Universities (United States).

Marcos ZOTES

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## “Unstable Spaces”

Public space has lost its most essential quality, which is precisely its ability of being public. The increasing restrictions imposed over urban public space are clearly manifested in the city, both through its architecture and its diverse mechanisms of control. As a result, public space has become a highly controlled environment that is defined by exclusions, where only certain types of users, activities and behaviors are permitted. How can we as citizens confront this limited notion of public space? We must acknowledge diversity, instability, and conflict as positive aspects of urban life. Looking at these factors through UNSTABLE’s extensive body of work, this presentation explores the role of artistic practices that use light as a medium to temporarily transform and redefine the urban experience in order to question our relationship to the city.

Marcos Zotes (Madrid, 1977) is a Reykjavík-based architect and visual artist with output ranging from buildings to interactive installations and public art interventions. He is the founder of multidisciplinary design and research laboratory UNSTABLE and partner at architecture studio BASALT Architects. He holds a Master of Science in Advanced Architectural Design from Columbia University (New York, United States) and a Professional Diploma in Architecture from London Metropolitan University (United Kingdom). His work has been widely exhibited in museums, galleries and public spaces across Europe and North America.



## **Presentation of the International Laboratory for the Multidisciplinary Study of Representations of the North**

Since its founding in 2003, the International Laboratory for the Multidisciplinary Study of Representations of the North, located at the Université du Québec à Montréal, is a centre for research, documentation and expertise on images of the North, Winter and the Arctic in literature, film, popular culture and arts visuals. It aims to facilitate comparisons between the different Nordic cultures, namely Québec, Inuit, Scandinavian (Icelandic, Norwegian, Danish, Swedish), Finnish, English Canadian, Russian and Alaskan cultures.

Since January 2015, the Laboratory also hosts the Research Chair on Images of the North, Winter and the Arctic (la Chaire de recherche sur l'imaginaire du Nord, de l'hiver et de l'Arctique).

The Laboratory was founded and is directed by Daniel Chartier.

### **Past conferences organized or co-organized by the Laboratory**

Versailles, 2013: « Cold: adaptation, production, representations, effects / Le froid: adaptation, production, représentations, effets » with the Université de Versailles – Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines.

Montréal, 2012: « Vers une cartographie des lieux du Nord. Mémoire, abandon, oubli / Att kartlägga nordliga platser. Minne, förlust, glömska / Mapping Northern Places. Memory, Abandonment, Oblivion », with the University of Stockholm.

Montréal, 2012: « Musiques et imaginaire du Nord et du froid / Music and the Imaginary of the North and the Cold ».

Paris, 2008: « Où commence, où finit le Nord? Nordicité, frontières territoriales / Where does the North begin, where does it end? Nordicity, borders and territories », with the Sorbonne Paris IV.

Rouen, 2007: « Identités du Nord / Northern Identities », with the Université de Rouen.

Stockholm, 2006: « Couleurs et lumières du Nord – Colours / Lights of the North – Färger och ljus i norr », with the University of Stockholm.

Turku, 2005: « Comparaisons nordiques ».

Paris, 2004: « Le(s) Nord(s) imaginaire(s) », with the Centre culturel suédois.

Montréal, 2003: «Les exigences du parcours dans la littérature. Nomades, voyageurs, explorateurs, déambulateurs», with the Centre de recherche Figura.

Montréal, 2003: «Problématiques de la représentation du Nord en littérature, cinéma et arts visuels».

### **Book series**

*The Laboratory publishes 4 book series, 3 in cooperation with the Presses de l'Université du Québec. These books are published in 6 languages: French, English, Swedish, Danish, Icelandic, and Inuktitut.*

«Jardin de givre» (Presses de l'Université du Québec)

*Books in this series are published in French, with some bilingual publications.*

To be published: 3 Greenlandic novels translated in French (Mathias Storch, Augo Lyngé and Kelly Berthelsen), an Anthology of Inuit Literature from Nunavik.

Maurice Constantin-Weyer, *Un homme se penche sur son passé*, Québec, Les Presses de l'Université du Québec, coll. «Imaginaire | Nord Jardin de givre», 2014 [1928], 294 p.

Maurice Constantin-Weyer, *La loi du Nord*, Québec, Les Presses de l'Université du Québec, coll. «Imaginaire | Nord Jardin de givre», 2013 [1936], 282 p. Introduction, notes et chronologie de Nova Doyon et André Fauchon.

Aqqaluk Lyngé, *Des veines du cœur au sommet de la pensée. Poèmes (1970-2008)*, Québec, Les Presses de l'Université du Québec, coll. «Imaginaire | Nord Jardin de givre», 2012. Introduction, notes et chronologie de Marianne Stenbaek.

Marie Le Franc, *Héliér, fils des bois*, Québec, Les Presses de l'Université du Québec, coll. «Imaginaire | Nord Jardin de givre», 2011 [1930], 278 p. Introduction, notes et chronologie de Rachel Bouvet.

Markosie Patsauq, *Le harpon du chasseur*, Québec, Les Presses de l'Université du Québec, coll. «Imaginaire | Nord Jardin de givre», 2011 [1969], 191 p. Introduction, notes et chronologie de Daniel Chartier.

Taamusi Qumaq, *Je veux que les Inuit soient libres de nouveau. Autobiographie (1914-1993)*, Québec, Les Presses de l'Université du Québec, coll. «Imaginaire | Nord Jardin de givre», 2009, 153 p. Introduction, notes et chronologie de Louis-Jacques Dorais.

Emmanuel Crespel, *Lettres du père Crespel et son naufrage à Anticosti en 1736*, Montréal, Imaginaire | Nord, coll. «Jardin de givre», 2009 [1742], 263 p. Introduction, notes et chronologie de Pierre Rouxel.

Xavier Marmier, *Deux émigrés en Suède*, Montréal, Imaginaire | Nord, coll. « Jardin de givre », 2007 [1849], 161 p. Introduction, notes et chronologie de Maria Walecka-Garbalinska.

Henry de Puyjalon, *Récits du Labrador*, Montréal, Imaginaire | Nord, coll. « Jardin de givre », 2007 [1892], 202 p. Introduction, notes et chronologie de Daniel Chartier.

Remy de Gourmont, *Chez les Lapons. Mœurs, coutumes et légendes de la Laponie norvégienne*, Montréal, Imaginaire | Nord, coll. « Jardin de givre », 2006 [1890], 145 p. Introduction, notes et chronologie d'Éric Trudel.

Alexandre Huot, *L'Impératrice de l'Ungava*, Montréal, Imaginaire | Nord, coll. « Jardin de givre », 2005 [1927], 312 p. Introduction, notes et chronologie de Daniel Chartier.

« Droit au pôle » (Presses de l'Université du Québec)

*Books in this series are published in English or French.*

To be published: *Le froid / Cold, Dispossessed, the Inuit from Hebron.*

Maria Walecka-Garbalinska, Stéphanie Bellemare-Page, Daniel Chartier and Alice Duhan [ed.], *Le lieu du Nord*, Québec, Presses de l'Université du Québec, coll. « Droit au pôle », 2015, 258 p.

Sharon Rankin [ed.], *A Bibliography of Canadian Inuit Periodicals*, Québec, Presses de l'Université du Québec, coll. « Droit au Pôle », 2011, 279 p.

Sumarlidi R. Ísleifsson [ed.], *Iceland and Images of the North*, Québec, Presses de l'Université du Québec, coll. « Droit au pôle », 2011, 611 p.

Daniel Chartier [éd.], *Le(s) Nord(s) imaginaire(s)*, Montréal, Imaginaire | Nord, coll. « Droit au pôle », 2008, 335 p.

Adina Ruiu, *Les récits de voyage aux pays froids au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle. De l'expérience du voyageur à l'expérimentation scientifique*, Montréal, Imaginaire | Nord, coll. « Droit au Pôle », 2007 [2006], 138 p.

Daniel Chartier [éd.], *Bibliographie sur l'imaginaire du Nord (Arctique, hiver, Antarctique) / A Bibliography on the Imagined North: Arctic, Winter, Antarctic / Bibliografi över föreställningen om det nordliga: Arktis, vinter, Antarktis / Ritaskrá um bið ímyndaða norður: Norðurskautið, veturinn, Suðurskautið*, Montréal, Imaginaire | Nord, collection « Droit au pôle », 2007, 744 p.

Amélie Nadeau, *Une passerelle entre le réel et l'imaginaire. L'univers musical dans les Chroniques du Plateau Mont-Royal de Michel Tremblay et L'Oratorio de Noël de Göran Tunström*, Montréal, Imaginaire | Nord, coll. « Droit au pôle », 2005, 146 p.

« Imagoborealis » (Presses de l'Université du Québec)

*All books in this series are published in 3 Northern languages (until now: English, French, Swedish, Icelandic, Inuktitut and Danish)*

Bob Mesher et Danielle Shaub, *Labrador*, Québec, Presses de l'Université du Québec, coll. « Imagoborealis », 2014, 90 p.

Antoine Rouleau et Élise Lassonde, *Hiver*, Québec, Presses de l'Université du Québec, coll. « Imagoborealis », 2009, 48 p.

Daniel Chartier et Ólöf Gerður Sigfúsdóttir [éd.], *Norður / Des enfants islandais imaginent le Nord / Íslensk börn ímynda sér Norðrið / Icelandic Children Imagine the North*, Québec et Reykjavík, Presses de l'Université du Québec et ReykjavíkúAkademían, coll. « Imagoborealis », 2009, 48 p.

Daniel Chartier [éd.], *A.C.R. Grønland / L'univers mystérieux et intime du Nord disparu / En personlig og gådefuld verden fra et forsvundet nord / The Private and Mysterious World of a Lost North*, Québec, Presses de l'Université du Québec, coll. « Imagoborealis », 2009, 48 p.

« Isberg »

*Books in this series are multilingual.*

To be published: *La frontière*.

Valérie Bernier, Nelly Duvicq et Maude Landreville [éd.], *Une exploration des représentations du Nord dans quelques œuvres littéraires québécoises*, Montréal, Imaginaire | Nord, coll. « Isberg », 2012.

Fabienne Joliet, *Umiujaq. Inuit silami takugnanigna / Umiujaq. Regards inuits sur le paysage / Umiujaq. Inuit Views on the Landscape*, Montréal, Imaginaire | Nord, coll. « Isberg », 2012.

With other publishers / in other series

Jean Désy, Daniel Chartier and Louis-Edmond Hamelin, *La nordicité du Québec. Entretiens avec Louis-Edmond Hamelin*, Québec, Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2014, 152 p.

Daniel Chartier, *The End of Iceland's Innocence. The image of Iceland during the economic crisis*, Reykjavík, Citizen Press, 2010 / Ottawa, Ottawa University Press, 2011, 240 p.

Rachel Bouvet, André Carpentier, Daniel Chartier [éd.], *Nomades, voyageurs, explorateurs, déambulateurs. Les exigences du parcours en littérature*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2006, 240 p.

*Globe. Revue internationale d'études québécoises*, vol. 8, n° 1, « Les modernités amérindiennes et inuite », sous la dir. de Daniel Chartier, 2005, 253 p.

Joë Bouchard, Daniel Chartier, Amélie Nadeau [éd.], *Problématiques de la représentation du Nord en littérature, cinéma et arts visuels*, Montréal, Centre de recherche Figura sur le texte et l'imaginaire, 2004, 171 p.

Information on publications can be found at [www.puq.ca](http://www.puq.ca)

## **Documentation centre**

The Laboratory has one of the largest specialized libraries on images of the North, Winter and the Arctic. Its documentary centre has about 70,000 literary works, essays, films, images and articles.

The Laboratory has developed an innovative set of databases continually updated by its researchers. On February 1st, 2015, these databases had about 70,000 files, representing more than 500 000 pages of analysis, distributed as follows:

- an annotated bibliography of more than 6,000 literary works from the Inuit world, Québec, Finland and Scandinavia;
- an annotated bibliography of more than 22,000 studies on images of the North, Winter and the Arctic, and on Northern issues;
- an annotated filmography of more than 2000 films;
- a database of more than 14,000 excerpts classified by elements, figures and thematics linked to Northern images;
- a database of about 28,000 illustrations (photographies, drawings, etc.), which are individually described and analysed.

The interconnectedness of the database allows to interrogate it with several criteria and keywords; these criteria are used to link thousands of images of the North, Winter and the Arctic found in literature, visual arts, popular culture and film. To carry out its work, the Laboratory is equipped with nine computers, two servers, and various video, photography, scanning and projection equipments.

All researchers are welcome at the Laboratory. Access to the collections is based on the principle of a collective and bilateral contribution.

Director : Daniel CHARTIER, professor, Research Chair on Images of the North, Winter and the Arctic

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