

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA, AUSTRALIA

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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Creating art on remote sub-Antarctic voyage

Two Australian artists are creating art in one of the most unlikely and remote places on Earth – aboard a scientific voyage to the Southern Ocean.

Choreographer James Batchelor and visual artist Annalise Rees have joined an interdisciplinary team of scientists and researchers on Australia's Marine National Facility research vessel *Investigator* as part of a 58-day IMAS voyage to test whether active underwater volcanoes nourish phytoplankton by supplying needed iron.

Institute for Marine & Antarctic Studies (IMAS) Professor Mike Coffin, Chief Scientist of the voyage to the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Heard Island and McDonald Islands region, recruited the two artists to join the expedition.

"Art enriches science, and science enriches art. These two collaborative artists epitomise our goal of translating nature into knowledge," Professor Coffin said.

James Batchelor is a young choreographer from Canberra known for his immersive and thought-provoking performances. He's gained support from the Australia Council for the Arts and the ACT Government to research ideas for a new performance work.

"This is an incredible opportunity to be experimental and completely redefine how and where my dancing takes place. It is overlapping the practices of arts and science in a unique way.

"Being part of this expedition is challenging; it is a complete immersion in a foreign world, where new systems of navigation and communication are constantly being constructed and deconstructed."

Each day James dances, writes, draws and records in different parts of the ship to capture and translate the qualities specific to each space. He is also developing a film project on board, which will be a window to the physical life and processes taking place on the ship.

Annalise Rees is a visual artist from South Australia currently based in Hobart, undertaking her PhD at the Tasmanian College of the Arts, University of Tasmania.

"This is a rare opportunity to be part of something very few people have a chance to experience. To be able to use this trip as part of my PhD research and respond via my creative practice is extremely exciting.

"Being a part of this voyage opens up a dialogue between the artistic and scientific disciplines. They both utilise drawing based methodologies to track, trace and record information about the world we live in and our human interactions with the world."

For Annalise, this voyage is contributing to her research into drawing as a primary means of encounter with unknown and unfamiliar environments. She is experimenting with how her drawing can be an embodied way of engaging with the world, translating an experience that is both seen and felt.

After the voyage, James and Annalise will work together on a collaborative dance and visual arts project supported by the Artshouse Culture Lab Program in Melbourne.

The work, to premiere in 2017, will question how we sense and communicate space, the process of defining the unknown and how it can be translated to other physical mediums.

Further information on the voyage is available at:

- http://www.imas.utas.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/784981/IMAS-Investigator-voyage-departure.pdf
- <http://www.imas.utas.edu.au/home/home-features/imas-investigator-voyage>
- <http://blog.csiro.au/investigator>

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