

apexart

2015-16 Unsolicited Program Proposal by
Shona Kitchen, Aly Ogasian, and Jennifer Dalton Vincent

Setting Out

Setting Out presents a multidimensional view of contemporary expeditions. It recognizes an aspect of expedition as it relates to military, colonial and capitalist activities. It teases out the progressive and positive threads of the worlds of adventure and discovery from the tangle of pernicious connotations. It argues that contemporary explorers abide by a methodology of seeking wherein they create the ground for their expeditions as their process of exploration unfolds.

In its original use, the term expedition implied "setting out with aggressive intent" to procure a "prompt supply" of something desired. Today, the frontiers of contemporary expeditions exceed physical geography, greeting their horizon in a space shared by science, society and technology.

Yet, seeking is not without consequence. Expedition technologies, whether they be Google maps or reconnaissance drones, establish an experience of remote viewing, which paradoxically creates a greater distance between the viewer and the subjects or landscapes being viewed. The troublesome end of this effort is the celebration of technology as it allows for breadth and depth of expedition yet ignores the human potential and personal borders involved.

Setting Out presents our now-a-day explorers as polymaths and tinkerers whose process of discovery is inquisitive and multi-faceted, forensic and poetic. At once archaeologists, engineers, scientists, and artists, their intent parallels their forebearers, though their tools and approaches differ. What remains the same is the eager hunger of human impulse to explore the unknown, and the role of creativity and ingenuity in knowledge-seeking.

Charles Stankievecch's *The Soniferous Æther of The Land Beyond* is a film and sound installation shot at the northernmost settlement on earth, the Canadian Forces Station Alert in Ellesmere, Nunavut. The film examines remote outpost architecture, military infrastructure and the embedded landscape. By way of a time-lapse tracking camera, Stankeveich probes and investigates the military spy outpost glowing within the winter darkness, calling to mind an abandoned space station.

Part of an established sub-culture of wreck-finders, Peter Merlin works as an archivist at NASA's Armstrong Flight Research Center at Edwards AFB. As a member of the Aviation Archaeology Field Research Team, Merlin collects and pieces together subtle clues from interviews with pilots, FOIA requests, historic photographs and field research in order to locate crash sites that have been deemed lost.

James Balog's *Extreme Ice Survey (EIS)* is a long-term project that documents the effects of global warming on glacial ice, occupying a space between art, journalism, and science. It is the most wide-ranging glacier study ever conducted using ground-based, real-time photography, and provides compelling and shockingly beautiful visual evidence of the dramatic effects of human impact.

Setting Out will also feature the work of: Eve Laramée (artist), Robert Smithson (artist), Josh Forgione + Bruce Coffland (engineer, image processing, Airborne Sensor Facility NASA), Center of Land Use Interpretation (research and educational organization), Aly Ogasian + Shona Kitchen (artists), Jennifer Dalton Vincent (writer)