



## Press Release

May 2006

### **The Ship: The Art of Climate Change**

3 June – 3 September 2006

**Heather Ackroyd and Dan Harvey, Kathy Barber, David Buckland, Peter Clegg, Siobhan Davies, Gautier Deblonde, Max Eastley, Nick Edwards, Gretel Ehrlich, Antony Gormley, Alex Hartley, David Hinton, Gary Hume, Ian McEwan, Michèle Noach**

*'We intend to communicate through artworks our understanding of the changing climate on a human scale, so that our individual lives can have meaning in what is a global problem'*

David Buckland, Director, Cape Farewell

On 3 June 2006, the Natural History Museum, in collaboration with Cape Farewell present *The Ship: The Art of Climate Change*, a free exhibition of contemporary art designed to deepen our understanding of climate change. Shown in the museum's Jerwood Gallery, *The Ship* offers a unique insight into the experiences of international artists and writers who, over the past five years, have travelled to the High Arctic as part of the Cape Farewell project.

'Articles on climate change appear almost daily in the newspapers, and on television and it can appear that such issues are beyond our control,' says Bergit Arends, Art Curator at the Natural History Museum, 'This is why we are trying to use the personal experiences of renowned artists, and the creative vocabulary of art rather than science, to raise an awareness that everyone individually can help alleviate the impacts of climate change.'

Through photography, film and video, sound and painting each artwork is a personal response to the effects of changing weather patterns, disappearing ice, rising sea levels, alterations in biodiversity and the build-up of toxic chemicals in the seemingly pristine landscape of the Arctic.

For *Stranded*, Heather Ackroyd and Dan Harvey retrieved the bones from a carcass of a minke whale beached near Skegness last October. Creating a 6 metre long sculpture using the entire whale skeleton they applied a special crystallisation process encrusting the bones with alum crystals. In the gallery the sculpture will be displayed on a low illuminated plinth. The precious fragility of the sculpture enhances the importance of the whale and how it acts as a barometer in a complex marine environment. Working with fashion designer Jonathan Saunders, Siobhan Davies has created a projection, *Endangered Species*. A tiny woman dances gracefully inside a museum display case, her movements exaggerated by a costume of long bending rods that increase in number as her dance progresses. Whilst at first they liberate by extending the boundaries of her body, the many rods eventually restrict and finally extinguish her small life form.

David Buckland exhibits his glacial *Ice Texts* alongside *The End of Ice* a large-scale video projection of the 42-minute demise of an iceberg. *Nymark (Undiscovered Island)*, Alex Hartley's photographic piece echoes the journeys of the early Arctic explorers in describing the process of finding and naming a 'new' island; one only uncovered in the last

five years by a retreating glacier. *The Svalbard Series*, Gautier Deblonde's photo-essay documents the stark vagaries of human existence in the High Arctic. Other works include photographic representation of Antony Gormley's *Three Made Places*, an ice work created in the High Arctic and Gary Hume's *Polar Bear*. Resonating eerily through the gallery is *Ice Field*, Max Eastley's soundwork of cracking, melting ice.

A 16-page tabloid-sized newspaper accompanies *The Ship* with information on Cape Farewell, artists' biographies, essays on the science of climate change and a 'call to action' encouraging everyone to reduce their carbon usage. In conjunction with the exhibition will be *Student Summit 2006: Climate Change*, a conference from 11-14 July, aimed at improving awareness and inspiring advocacy in young adults (age 16–18). Key speakers include Sir David King (the Government's Chief Scientific Adviser), Nicky Gavron, Deputy Mayor for London and Jonathon Porritt (Programme Director of Forum for the Future and Chairman of the UK Sustainable Development Commission), who will also be joined by artists, scientists and policy makers exploring climate change and its social and global implications.

Cape Farewell brings artists, scientists and educators together to collectively address and raise awareness about climate change. Created by artist David Buckland, Cape Farewell has led a series of expeditions into the Arctic exploring the seas that hold the key to understanding the changes in our weather patterns and climate. Their programme has included three separate journeys on the Noorderlicht schooner 79° North to the Svalbard archipelago. For more information visit [www.capefarewell.com](http://www.capefarewell.com)

### **Burning Ice: Art and Climate Change**

Published by Cape Farewell to accompany *The Ship* exhibition, *Burning Ice: Art and Climate Change* is a 176-page publication comprising 200 stunning colour photographs and illustrations. The book charts the experiences of artists who have voyaged with Cape Farewell including Heather Ackroyd and Dan Harvey, David Buckland, Siobhan Davies, Gautier Deblonde, Max Eastley, Antony Gormley and Rachel Whiteread and the work they have subsequently produced. Extracts from expedition journals complement writings by novelists Ian McEwan and Robert Macfarlane warning of the impacts of climate change.

*Burning Ice: Art and Climate Change* also features essays from leading scientists, advisers and other specialists on climate change, energy efficiency, ocean science and carbon trading. Contributors include Professor Sir David King, Chief Scientific Adviser to H.M. Government; Professor H J Schellnhuber, Director Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research; Dr Valborg Byfield, Oceanographer, National Oceanography Centre and Charlie Kronick, Chief Policy Adviser & Leader, Climate Change Campaign, Greenpeace UK.

Priced £19.99 the publication will be available from the Natural History Museum bookshop and York Publishing Services Ltd on 01904 431213 (from 1<sup>st</sup> June).

### **Notes for editors**

Through its diverse and innovative arts programme, the Natural History Museum aims to promote the understanding and enjoyment of the natural world, communicating the Museum's science through various media. The Museum has exhibited work by different artists such as Tessa Campbell Fraser, Peter Randall-Page, Olly & Suzi and Jan Fabre, and produced performances with companies such as Forkbeard Fantasy, Scarabeus Theatre and Faulty Optic. Website: [www.nhm.ac.uk/the-ship](http://www.nhm.ac.uk/the-ship)

Cape Farewell, in partnership with the National Museums Liverpool and John Moores University, will exhibit as part of the Liverpool Biennial of Visual Arts, 16 September - 26 November 2006. Cape Farewell artworks shown at the

Natural History Museum will tour to the World Museum, the Walker Art Gallery, the Merseyside Maritime Museum and the John Moores University Gallery. Arts Council England is Cape Farewell's major arts funder. Cape Farewell Arts are supported by the Gulbenkian Foundation and The Bromley Trust. *The Ship – the Art of Climate Change* is supported by Toshiba.

**For more information and images about Cape Farewell, please contact Janette Scott, 020 7209 0610. Email [janettescott@capefarewell.com](mailto:janettescott@capefarewell.com) (not for publication) or visit [www.capefarewell.com](http://www.capefarewell.com)**

**For more information about *The Ship* at the Natural History Museum please contact: Becky Chetley or Chloe Kembery, tel: 020 7942 5106 email: [press@nhm.ac.uk](mailto:press@nhm.ac.uk) (not for publication).**