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Contemporary Arts Practice and Outer Space: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach (3)

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SHIFTING SPACE PERSPECTIVES: A SPACE PROSPECT ON THE ANTARCTIC AS PART OF
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Abstract

This project is under development as part of the Antarctic Biennale which is ‘an international socio-cultural phenomenon that uses artistic, scientific, and philosophic methodologies to address shared spaces such as Antarctica, the Ocean, and Outer Space.’ (<http://www.antarcticbiennale.com>). The project takes a space perspective to examine three major themes:

1. Tangible (outer) space Space to most of the people seems to be a vast place above us which one can imagine but neither feel or touch. In Antarctica, however, there are opportunities to “touch space”. Martian rocks can be found close to the Transantarctic Mountains because the geology and the environmental conditions allow these fallen rocks to be preserved for up to millions of years.

2. Life in extreme conditions Lake Vostok in the midst of the Antarctic continent lies 3000 metres below the ice surface. Scientists and engineers have been drilling down expecting to find a subsurface lake with ancient/alien life forms. Going to space, has also always been the search for life. This question drives humans to explore our solar system and beyond. Which traits we need to sustain ourselves far away from our home planet can be explored and trained in Antarctica. Further, one could argue that climate change, global warming, population growth, migration, development of megacities and disruptive political developments have created extreme conditions on earth already.

3. Globally shared (research) spaces Antarctica offers similarly to the International Space Station a permanently inhabited shared research space for a global community that fosters international collaboration for common goals and the peaceful use of research.

The above-mentioned topics are being addressed using artistic strategies and investigations. They intend to display how to make outer space tangible, to reflect on living in extreme conditions and to discuss connected values and limitations of shared spaces. The main outcome are small temporary installations on Antarctic land in answer to topic (1) and (2) and interviews with the participants of the Antarctic Biennale related to topics (2) and (3). The project described in the paper investigates these selected themes from a cultural relevant viewpoint derived from a space perspective.