

Elin M·r Øyen Vister invites you to participate and share a collective meditative sound walk into Bjørndalen, Svalbard. At the departure point we will do a communal warming up exercise and then we move into a non verbal mode lasting around 45 minutes into our walk. We will begin the walk by greeting the valley and then we walk calmly in silence sensing what the valley has to share with us.

It is along the fjords, the inland valleys and in the mountains the pelagic seabirds colonies are to be found. We hope to encounter birds and animals such as the Little Auk , Geese , Brunnich Guillemots , Gulls, Fulmars and maybe even Svalbard Ptarmigan, Polar Fox and the local Svalbard reindeer. We will experience more of Svalbards fascinating rock formations and hopefully we spot some early flowering arctic plants such as the Purple Mountain Saxifrage.

The valley itself will be our guide and as we move through particularly sounding acoustical landscapes, we stop and spend some time standing still, listening. We will make a halt when we are getting closer to the the Little Auk bird colony and do short final listening meditation there. As we complete the meditation, we move into verbal mode and we head back the same way we came. On our way back; let us spontaneously explore the fauna, flora and geology!

I am very grateful for your participation on this walk. Thank you for embracing the idea and for sharing. I have added some links below if you would like to learn more about the seabird colonies and the botany of Svalbard.

Finally I would like to share two quotes from texts that has inspired me during preparations for the walk:

“According to Haudenosaunee, Sky Woman fell from a hole in the sky. John Mohawk (2005) writes of her journey towards the waters below. On her descent, Sky Woman fell through the clouds and air towards water below. During her descent, birds could see this falling creature and saw she could not fly. They came to her and helped to lower her slowly to waters beneath her. The birds told Turtle that she must need a place to land, as she possessed no water legs. Turtle rose up, breaking through the

surface so that Sky Woman could land on Turtle's back. Once landed, Sky Woman and Turtle began to form the earth, the land becoming an extension of their bodies. ...

...These Creation histories can sometimes take days to describe. For the purposes of this article, I would like to focus on a common historical understanding of the origin of the human species - the spiritual and the feminine. These historical accounts, two of many, speak to the common intersections of the female, animals, the spirit world, and the mineral and plant world. What constitutes "society" from these perspectives revolves around interactions between these worlds rather than solely interactions amongst human beings. Both of these accounts describe a theoretical understanding of the world via a physical embodiment - Place-Thought. Place- Thought is the non-distinctive space where place and thought were never separated because they never could or can be separated. Place-Thought is based upon the premise that land is alive and thinking and that humans and non-humans derive agency through the extensions of these thoughts."

– Vanessa Watts (Queens University, Canada), "Indigenous place-thought & agency amongst humans and non-humans (First Woman and Sky Woman go on a European world tour!)", (Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society Vol. 2, No. 1, 2013, pp. 20-34)

"We decided to walk up the hill behind Micalong Creek. The idea was to allow ourselves to be drawn by whatever sights, sounds, smells, movements, rhythms, forces, patterns, entities or living creatures caught our attention. Surrendering control of the route, we let ourselves be led by whatever drew us into relation. We tried to stay open to being surprised - by queer or unlikely encounters - and to pay attention to the mutual affect of these encounters."

– The Common World Childhoods Research Collective (<http://commonworlds.net/>)

A few links:

www.loff.biz (local ornithological association on Svalbard)

<http://deeplistening.org/site/>

www.seapop.no (

Seabirds:

<http://www.svalbardbirds.com/>

<http://www.svalbardbirds.com/fugleguide/omrade1-omtale.htm>

<http://www.seapop.no/no/lokaliteter/spitsbergen.html>

Flora:

<http://svalbardflora.no/>

<https://www.spitsbergen-svalbard.com/spitsbergen-information/flora.html>

Geology:

<http://www.npolar.no/en/themes/geology/arctic/>