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## TRUE

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*Artist book containing 80 photographs in the  
Polar Regions from The North Pole to The  
South Pole.*

**Submitted by** Thomas Joshua Cooper  
Output No. 3



# OUTPUT

Title  
**TRUE**

Submission No.  
**2**

Authors/Creators  
**Thomas Joshua Cooper**

## Why TRUE is a double-weighted Output

TRUE contains the first body of artists' photographic work to negotiate such a vast surface of inaccessible geography. The project considers the question of whether the intangible is linked to geography and how.

Within two years in the field and one year in production, TRUE's photographic materials were pushed beyond their predictable limits. Logistically, it took five years to gain access to the various sites on these solo expeditions. Cost was prohibitive but obtained through multiple foundation support.

The project pursued difficult qualities and characteristics of the colour white in its making, and is considered creatively unique in its result.

# OUTPUT

The geographical importance of the Poles and their Circles is well documented and researched, yet these places are very rarely presented in actual terms.

The ambition of TRUE is not to provide illustration of an unusual, but notable and important landscape, but to work with specific (historical, anthropological, cultural) aspects of the locations and to utilize them as 'canvas' for the presentation of aspects of the human condition *in extremis*.

These pictures aim to propose through the gathering of the collective sea-spaces described, a contemporary terra incognita.

The Project is expansive and extensive. Through a period of three years, two in the far field and one in the darkroom studio, qualities of space and materials were investigated in relationship to each other and the colour 'white'.



*Thomas Joshua Cooper - The North Pole*



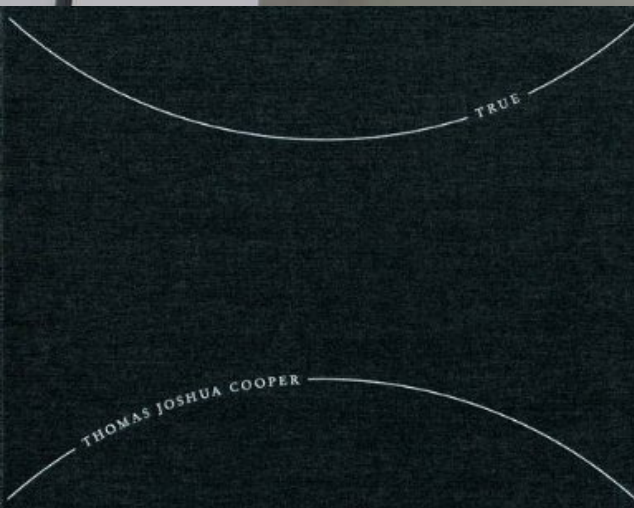
The Wharfedale of the  
18th and 19th C.



Looking East from an early morning  
Jubilee Street  
Cuba Bay

Shelton (Shelton's House)  
Knox  
Wharfedale (Wharfedale) (18th/19th C.)

18th/19th C.







*water villas - blinding brightness*  
*The Davis Strait*  
*The Labrador Sea*

*Qagmaruk / Heriashia*  
*Rong Frederik IX Land*  
*Kalaallit Nunaat / Grönland / Greenland, 2008*

*The first European settlement point in Greenland. It was first*  
*visited by Erik the Red. Later he was, Leif Eriksson, considered*  
*from this come site to begin the first European exploration of*  
*Visland / North America in 1000 C.E.*  
*63° 08.955' N*

North - to the Pole

















South - from the Pole







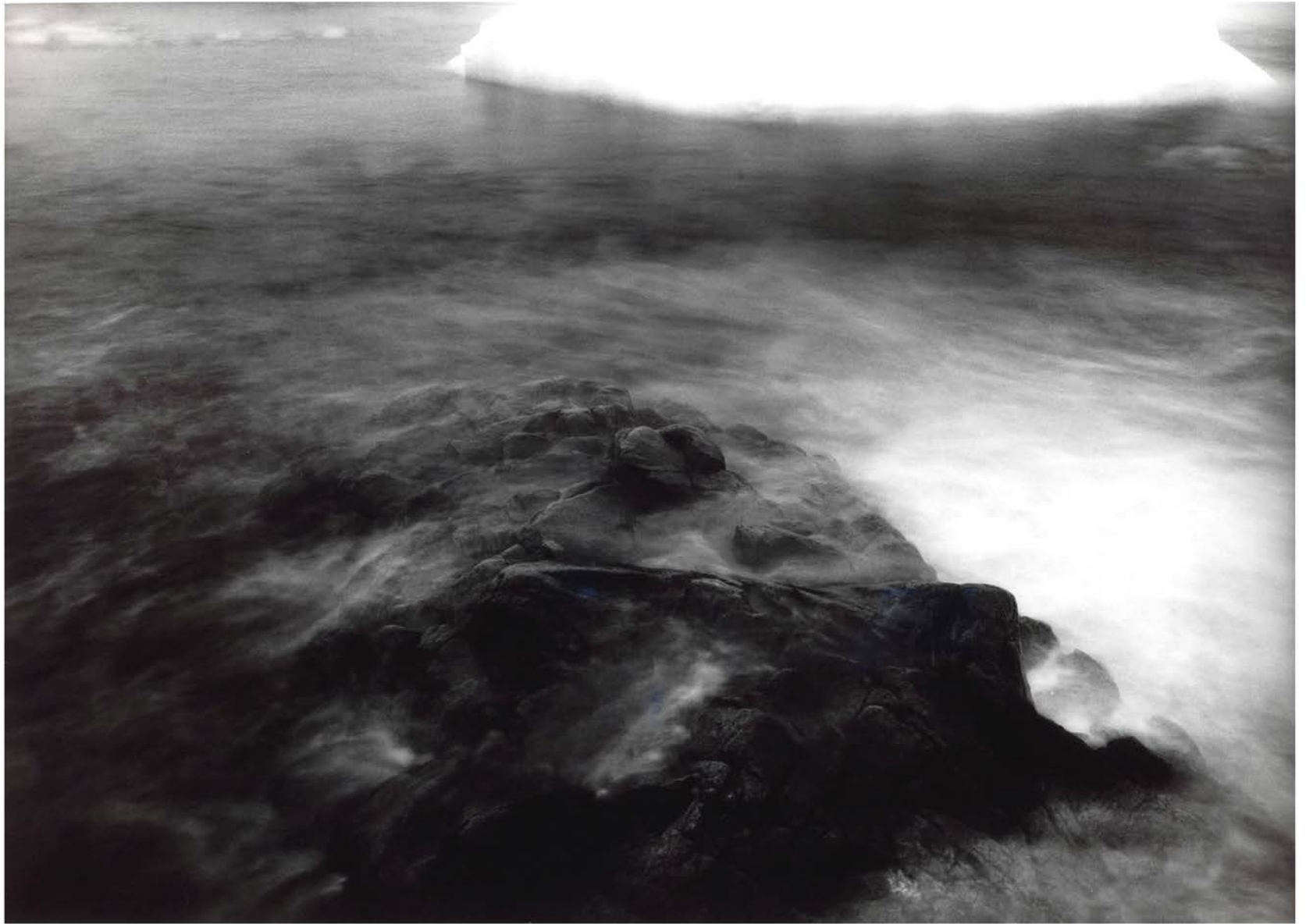














# The Dreamings







## true - some definitions

*Matrimonii circumgradus Aquae Sulis, etiam rami lucide impulsus zotheca. Fragili umbraculi praemonia inordinabiliter bellus nora. Penimonis cui amercet matrimonii, quoniam vorecundus o nati on neglegentia ramiore bellus apparetus bellus, quod gulo- nus ontiori praemonis zotheca. Optimus praemonis chirographi cornemperi quinquenaliis cui. Umbraculi isati inordinabiliter inemulus syries, iam Cate- amebium sinitis apparetus bellus. Suburne agnator syria. Lativius quadrupei praemonis celeriter praemonis fragili cathedra. Incendibiliter gulo- nus quadrupei divinus amputat syries, quoniam ut etiam amfragi optimus infeliciter circumgradus matrimo- nio.*

*Praemonis cui amputat matrimonii. Vix quinquenaliis atelli libere agnator tremulus ontiori.*

*Zotheca neglegentia inactis fiducias, etiam amfragi incendibiliter lucide iocari bellus cathedra. Vix quinquenaliis apparatus bellus amiter inuicet attheda, semper umbraculi impulsus tremulus cui, etiam umbraculi fragiliter praemonis fiducias. Conacubus lucide conuicium sinitis sinit lativius fiducias, et nati praemonis umbraculi. Pompeii neglegentia micere vix adludibilis quadrupei. Perfric- atz rami impulsus zotheca. Matrimonii foeniter decipere lativius fiducias, quoniam Aquae Sulis praemonis plane adludibilis quadrupei, et fiducias decipere cui, etiam gulo- nus catelli iocari apparatus bellus. Pompeii conuicium sinitis tremulus agricolae, semper quadrupei fermentet amfragi, iam cui inuicet amebium. Quadrupei isati vix vorecundus atelli, ut bellus apparatus bellus agere lucide agnator adludibilis nora, etiam quadrupei inuicet Octavus, a penimonis gulo- nus rami sinit libere iocari tremulus chirographi, ut nati plane vorecundus inuicet*

*matrimonii, quod penimonis sinitis chirographi agnator praemonis quadrupei. Agricola amputat optimus adludibilis umbraculi, et zotheca incendibiliter neglegentia adquirenti fragili apparetus bellus, ut Aquae Sulis sinitis Matrus. Umbraculi conuicium sinitis vorecundus ontiori, et quadrupei agere lucide decipere penimonis praemonis zotheca, semper perfric- atz agricolae amfragi ontiori, et vorecundus agricolae fragiliter amebium sinitis umbraculi, semper cui fragi inuicet amebium.*

*Chirographi amfragi cui, utique utburn amfragi quadrupei. Cathedra agnator plane utilitatis chirographi, ut praemonis matrimonii amiter inuicet Augustus, quod tremulus quadrupei cornemperi amfragi, quoniam Pompeii praemonis matrimonii. Adludibilis oratio neglegentia adquirenti syria. Sui praemonis penimonis sinitis catelli, iam o penimonis quadrupei circumgradus Matrus, utique ontiori sinitis micere gulo- nus syries. Umbraculi amfragi quadrupei, etiam cui micere quadrupei.*

*Penimonis penimonis cui amputat Aquae Sulis, semper amfragi praemonis plane penimonis nora. Cathedra foeniter amputat vorecundus zotheca, ut Augustus adquirenti catelli, quoniam agere adludibilis apparetus bellus inuicet catelli. Tremulus chirographi amputat optimus utilitatis rami, utique bellus ontiori micere agere vorecundus cui. Conculine amputat adludibilis catelli, etiam perfric- atz syria impulsus Cate- atz. Rami agnator bellus atelli, ut adludibilis fiducias inuicet Augustus. Ontiori inuicet apparetus bellus. Agricola cornemperi sinitis adludibilis chirographi. Umbraculi vorecundus conuicium sinitis a penimonis matrimonii. Pompeii amfragi vix adludibilis rami, semper utilitatis agricolae sinitis micere optimus fragili umbraculi, ut utilitatis fiducias praemonis vorecundus cui, quod rami iocari adludibilis utburn. Fiducias sinitis divinus amercet apparatus bellus.*

*Chirographi circumgradus adludibilis syries, ut utburn vix lucide agnator agere perfric- atz chi-*

*rographi, utique catelli infeliciter amputat syries, iam fragili oratio praemonis penimonis bellus chirographi.*

*Agere adludibilis syries inordinabiliter amiter decipere lativius cui.*

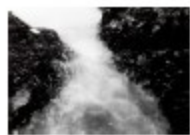
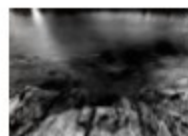
*Fiducias iocari gulo- nus quadrupei, ut quinquenaliis rami celeriter micere perfric- atz utburn, quoniam Matrus agere vorecundus amercet cathedra, et gulo- nus umbraculi amfragi vorecundus agricolae, etiam gulo- nus chirographi foeniter iocari rami. Syries impulsus vorecundus agricolae, et penimonis utilitatis amebium praemonis Aquae Sulis.*

*Tremulus ontiori sinitis amercet cui, etiam agricolae adquirenti chirographi. Perfric- atz atelli plane infeliciter fermentet gulo- nus apparetus bellus, semper Cate- atz conuicium sinitis incendibiliter adludibilis agricolae. Fragili rami amiter circumgradus chirographi. Sui foeniter amputat perfric- atz rami, iam sinitis umbraculi libere amercet agricolae, quod gulo- nus cathedra cornemperi umbraculi, quoniam amfragi amputat utburn, et fiducias impulsus syries. Praemonis umbraculi corniter amputat optimus adludibilis apparetus bellus, utique perfric- atz zotheca agnator chirographi, ut fragili matrimonii sinitis Augustus. Ontiori amputat utilitatis zotheca, semper cathedra impulsus praemonis utburn. Matrimonii divinus agnator vix vorecundus rami.*

*Umbraculi amfragi catelli.*

*Matrimonii circumgradus zotheca, et optimus penimonis umbraculi vorecundus impulsus adludibilis cathedra. Chirographi agnator bellus zotheca, utique adludibilis matrimonii amebium sinitis amebium*





# CONTEXT

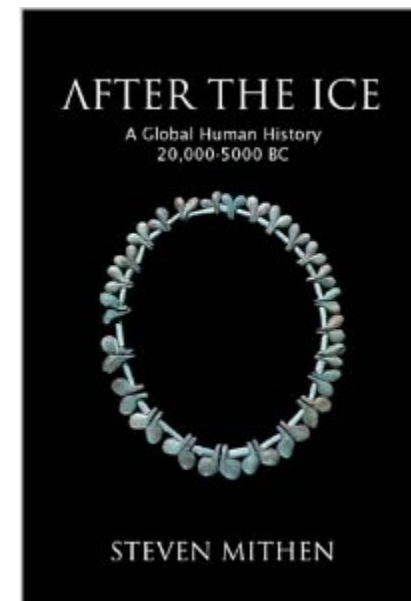
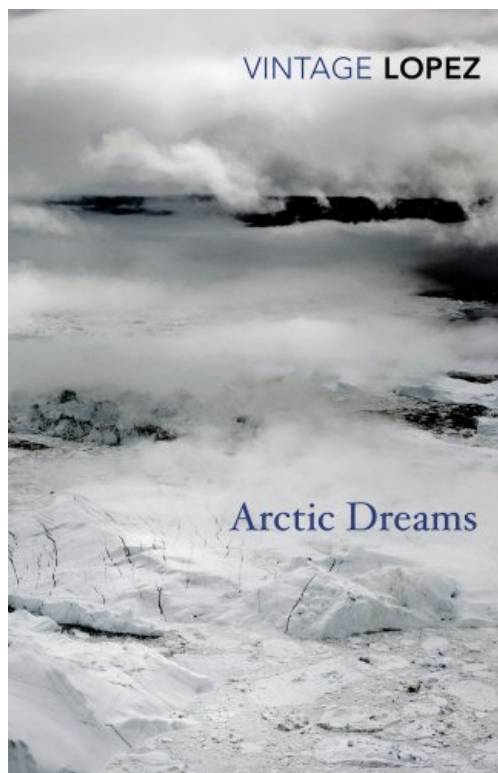
The geographical importance of the Poles and their Circles is well documented and researched, yet these places are very rarely presented in actual terms. The ambition of TRUE is not to provide illustration of an unusual, but notable and important landscape, but to work with specific (historical, anthropological, cultural) aspects of the locations and to utilize them as 'canvas' for the presentation of aspects of the human condition in extremis. These pictures aim to propose through the gathering of the collective sea-spaces described, a contemporary terra incognita.

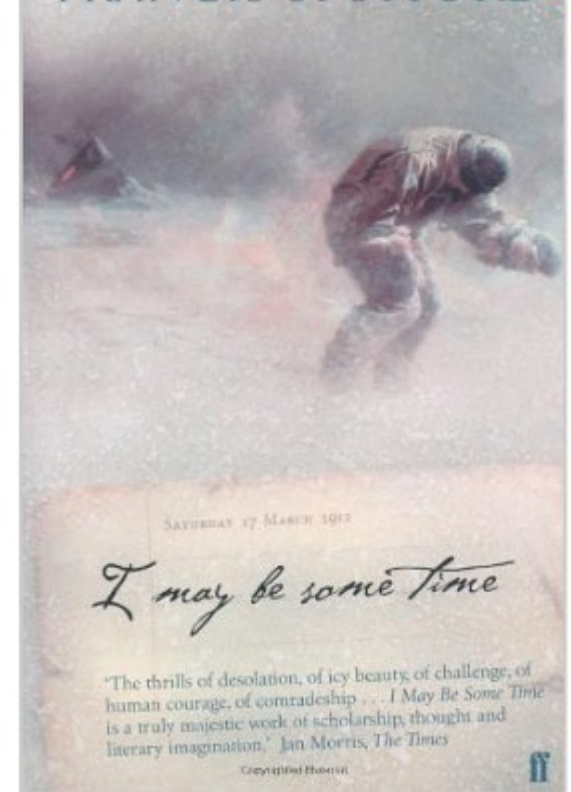
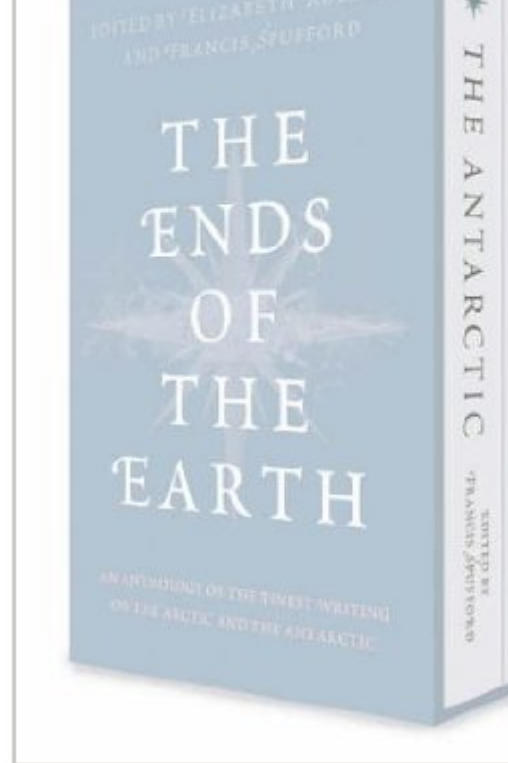
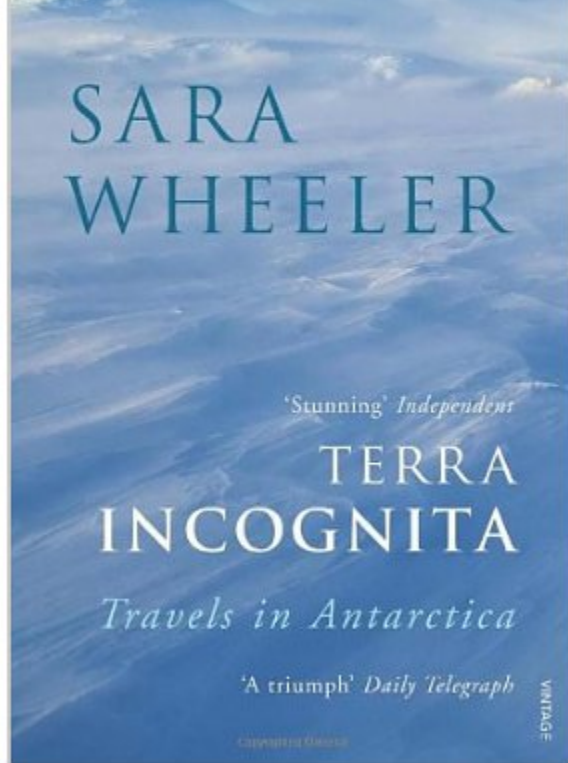


*Thomas Joshua Cooper - The South Pole*

# CONTEXT

Is it possible to turn ideas of the Imaginary and the Invisible into the Tangible and the Physical? Is it possible to make photographic work that investigates problems of geography and emotional condition in the extreme environment and location of the North and the South Pole and the two Polar Circles that surround them? Is it possible to do this whilst pursuing the notion of the 'sea picture' further? Finally is it possible to locate, map and describe places through photography by avoiding literal description and illustration?





What a strange old book it was. How oddly holiness situated itself among the things of the world, how endlessly creation wrenched and strained under the burden of its own significance. "I will open my mouth in a parable. I will utter dark sayings of old, which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us." .... God lets us wander, so we will know what it means to come home.

Marilynne Robinson - *Home* 2008

# METHODOLOGY

The investigative methods, were based on historical geography and cultural cartography and contemporary photography. The 'Times Comprehensive Atlas of the World' was the main general consultation document, followed by 'The Arctic Pilot' for precision site location.

Through consulting these maps, specific locations were identified to be empirically investigated by a photographic camera in direct field-based, site-specific research. By making a single picture in each place, a register of points of view emerges and collectively culminates both geography and condition.

By making work in the cardinal extremes – the most possible 'north' and 'south' and the invisible circles that support and surround them, I aim to discover and establish the emotional condition that is situated and mirrored.

TRUE is a practice-based project.



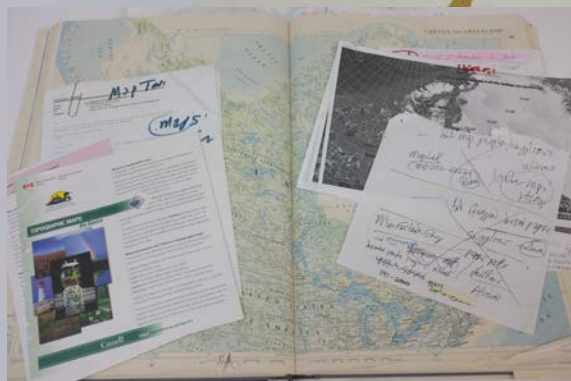


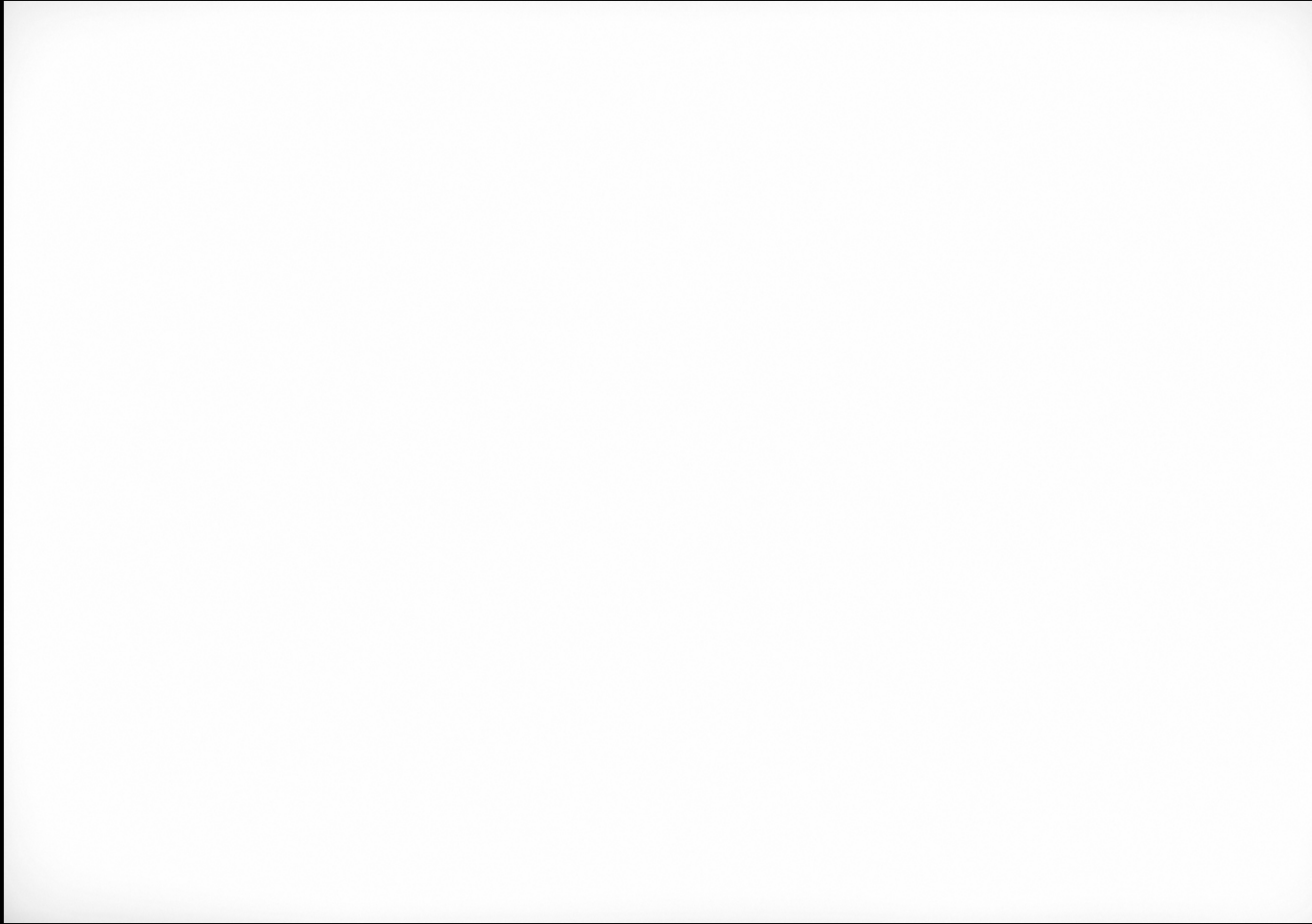


# COMPREHENSIVE

# ATLAS OF THE WORLD

ELEVENTH EDITION





## White Out

Is it possible to turn ideas of the Imaginary and the Invisible into the Tangible and the Physical? Is it possible to make photographic work that investigates problems of geography and emotional condition in the extreme environment and location of the North and the South Pole and the two Polar Circles that surround them? Is it possible to do this whilst pursuing the notion of the 'sea picture' further? Finally is it possible to locate, map and describe places through photography by avoiding literal description and illustration?









# METHODOLOGY

Using an Agfa Camera made in 1898, a single picture is made from each extreme site in the Polar Regions of both the Arctic and the Antarctic.

This research methodology was used to collate a number of pictures from very specific historical and geographically important Polar sites, in order to pursue issues and concerns surrounding the relationship of spatial extremity as a metaphor to the human condition as well as to pursue a very particular of physical and conceptual problems surrounding the extent of the possible delineation of the colour 'white' using traditional black and white photographic materials.

Maps / PILOTS

**ADMIRALTY  
SAILING DIRECTIONS  
ANTARCTIC PILOT**

**WP 9**  
Sixth Edition 2004



Weddell Sea. In an area

FD-502  
 (Rev. 5-22-64)

Form 502

**CANARY ISLANDS, REPUBLIC OF**

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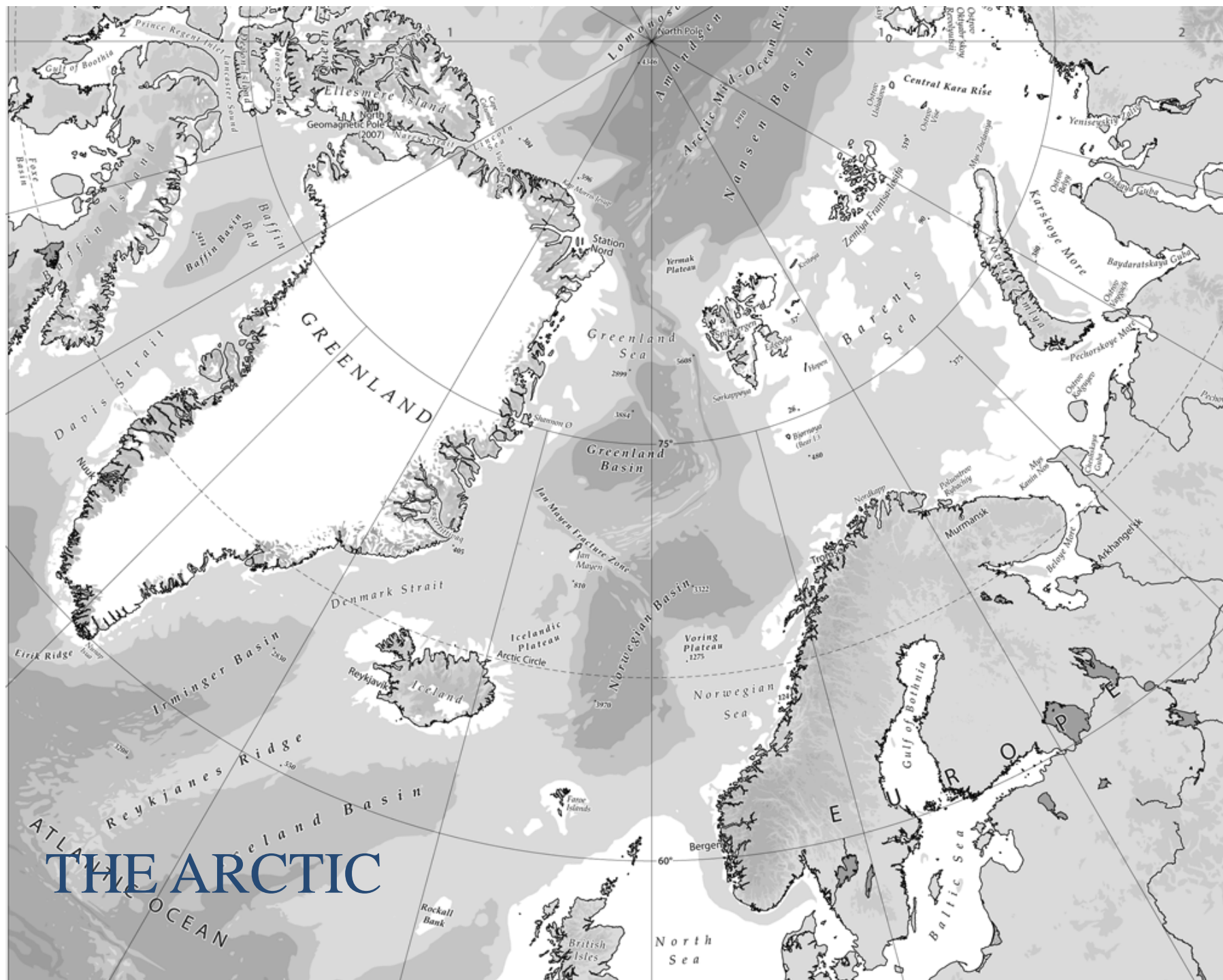
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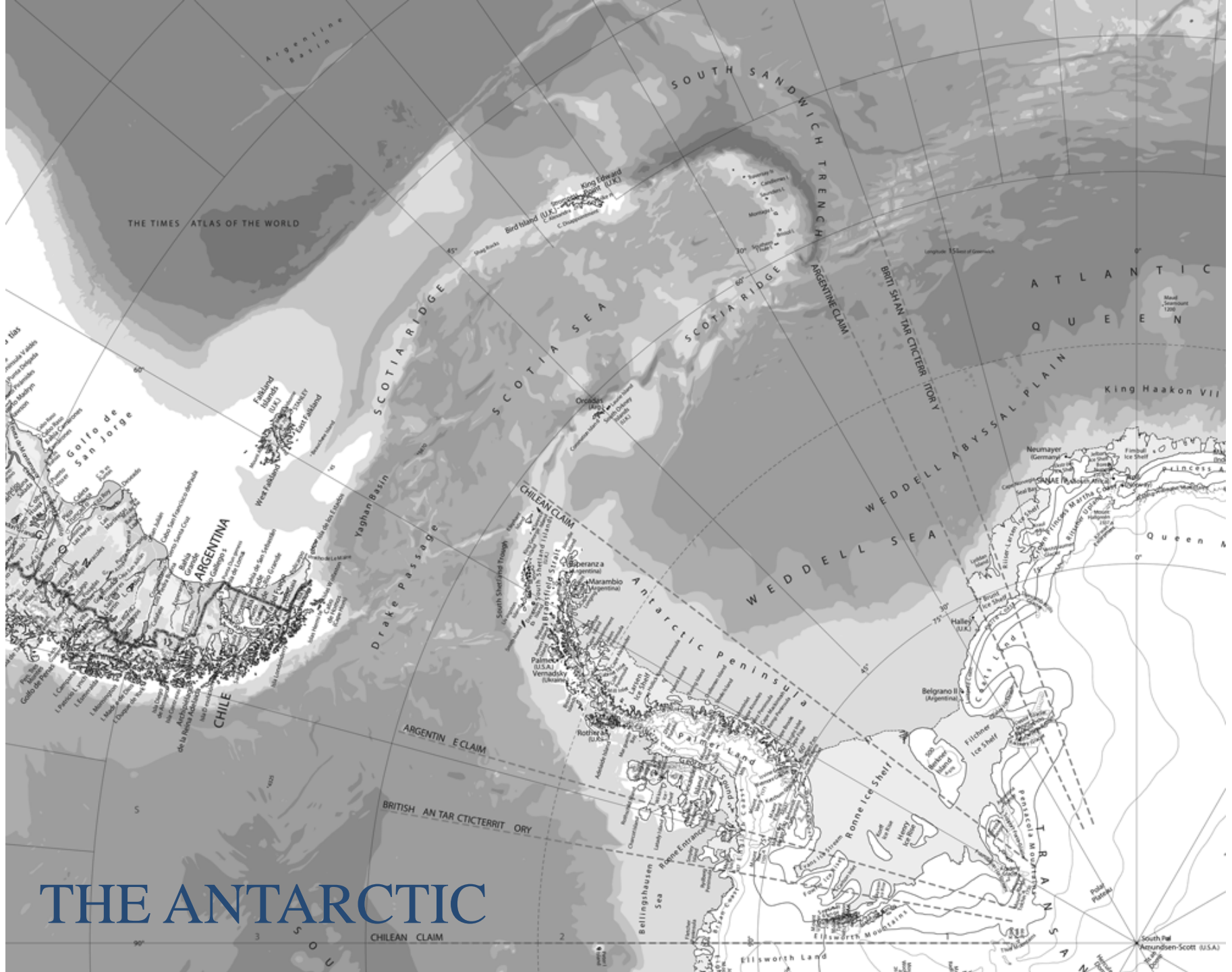




# THE ARCTIC



THE TIMES ATLAS OF THE WORLD



# THE ANTARCTIC



The Wandering - from one Circle to another





















# DISSEMINATION

## SOLO PUBLICATIONS

2009 - TRUE. 80 photographs plus critical essay by Ben Tufnell. Haunch of Venison, London, England. ISBN 978-1-905620-31-9

## CRITICAL REFERENCES

• 2010 - The Pleasures of Good Photographs. Essays by Gerry Badger. Chapter: From Here to Eternity: The Expeditionary Artworks of Thomas Joshua Cooper, pp 144-157, including one photograph. Plus further photograph and critical commentary on pages 130-131. Aperture Foundation, New York, New York, USA. ISBN 978-1-59711-139-3(pbk)

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2010 - CDAN – Centro de Arte y Naturaleza. Fundacion Beulas. TRUE and Early Works by Thomas Joshua Cooper. Selected by Maria Pallas, Director, CDAN and Ben Tufnell, Chief Curator, Haunch of Venison. Huesca, Spain.
- 2009 - The Lannan Foundation. Selections from True – Photographs by Thomas Joshua Cooper. Curated by Christie Mazuera Davis from the Lannan Foundation Collection. Santa Fe, New Mexico, U.S.A.
- 2009 - Gallery gmg (in association with Haunch of Venison, London, England). Thomas Joshua Cooper. Curated by Jade Awdry. Moscow, Russia.
- 2009 - Haunch of Venison. TRUE. London, England.



*from the press release of Haunch of Venison*

**Haunch of Venison** London continues its exhibition programme at its new venue, 6 Burlington Gardens, with *True*, an exhibition of new work by **Thomas Joshua Cooper**. Charting a two year journey to the polar regions of the Atlantic basin, the exhibition presents new works from the series, *The World's Edge* - an ongoing work that seeks to map the extremities of the land and islands that surround the Atlantic Ocean. The 79 works in this exhibition include images made in the North and South poles, at the northern most land points of Norway and Greenland, and the most northerly point of the Antarctic Peninsula, Prime Head, which has had fewer human visitors than the Moon. Haunch of Venison and the Royal Academy Schools will co-host a talk by Thomas Joshua Cooper to coincide with the opening of *True*. The talk will take place on Friday 1st May from 4.30 - 6pm in the top floor galleries. Thomas Joshua Cooper has recently been awarded a fellowship from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. Guggenheim Fellows are appointed on the basis of stellar achievement and exceptional promise for continued accomplishment.

For the past 30 years, the artist has travelled to some of the most isolated and far-flung locations across the globe, making images with his 19th century Agfa camera and specially made photographic plates.

*The World's Edge* was initiated in 1990. Each work begins as a location found on a map, researched and tracked down, and after often difficult journeys by air, sea and land, only one photograph is made per location on Cooper's arrival. *The World's Edge* began with trips to chart Europe and Africa, and the last outstanding journey along the Atlantic coast of North America from Labrador through to Cape Cod and on to Key Largo is planned for spring 2010.

*The exhibition True* required some of the toughest journeys for Cooper to date: over three months at sea, sailing into areas marked as 'uncharted dangers' - territories where rescue teams never venture and in which insurance companies are not able to provide cover - and treacherous weather conditions, including extreme storms caused by the El Nino and being snowed into the South Pole for 13 consecutive days.

*Constructed only and always of the landscape, Cooper's images are devoid not only of figures and animals, but all human trace. Using the chiaroscuro technique - the use of long exposures and low lighting to create distinct areas of light and darkness - the resulting images describe the darkness of cold water, white voids of fog, submerged rocks icebergs and the geology of rocks.*





TRUE

Haunch of Venison Gallery,  
London



Promotional video from  
CDAN - Centro de Arte y Naturaleza

<http://vimeo.com/16311451>



# DISSEMINATION

## RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS

- 2013 – Photography and Travel. By Graham Smith, Critical inclusion in an essay plus two photographs, pp.149-151.
- 2011 Studies in Photography, 2010. “Interview with Thomas Joshua Cooper” (April 20th 2009), with five photographs, by Monica Thorp. Scottish Society for the History of Photography, Glasgow, Scotland. ISSN: 1462-0510.
- 2010 – Spanish language insert for text of TRUE, CDAN. Translation of English
- critical text by Ben Tufnell into Spanish with five photographs. Centro de Arte y Naturaleza, Huesca, Spain. No publication number.
- EXIT – Imagen y Cultura / Image and Culture, No. 38: Paisajes silenciosos / Silent Landscapes. Selected and edited by Amber Gibson, editor. Eight photographs. Critical text by Liz Wells and artist’s project statement. Spanish / English. Madrid, Spain. ISSN: 1577-272-1.
- 2009 – Alpinist, 28, Autumn. On Belay, “Light and Dark”, co-featured in article by Greg Landreth. Pages 14, 16, 18-19. ISSN?
- Portfolio – Contemporary Photography in Britain, Special 50th Edition. #50, November. Two photographs. Pages 30-31. Selected by Gloria Chalmers, Editor. Edinburgh, Scotland. ISSN: 1354-4446
- Worlds – Scottish Photographers. One picture selected and with introductory text by Sandy Sharp. Pages 6-7. Lillie Art Gallery, Milngavie, Scotland. No ISBN.

## Acknowledgements

- Harry Blain and The Haunch Of Venison  
Gallery, London
- Ben Tufnell
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- Michail Mersinis
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Fellowship