

Completing Aganta Kairos: Capturing Metaphysical Time on the Seventh Continent

Jim Madsen, Laurent Mulot and Christian Spiering, ICRC 2021

What is this contribution about?

This poster describes Aganta Kairos, a project by artist Laurent Mulot motivated by neutrino science, that explores ways of knowing, and the different ways people find their place in the universe. Aganta Kairos began with conversations with members of the ANTARES experiment in France. The goal for the artist was to use the ghostly cosmic neutrino to weave together people around the planet who have disparate ways of knowing. This poster gives an overview of the project and then describes how the IceCube Neutrino Observatory at the South Pole became the seventh and final site when a commemorative plaque was installed there, completing Aganta Kairos.

Why is it relevant / interesting?

Just as scientists use many tools and techniques to study the universe, artists too must invent ways to probe, explore and to communicate. Mulot sought to investigate questions about our cosmic origins and recognize different approaches to addressing them, ranging from science to mythology to the magical spirit of shamanism. His quest began with conversations with members of the ANTARES experiment; a sky map of the neutrinos detected deep under the water by ANTARES from 2008 to 2011 inspired Mulot to focus on the shores of the six oceans. He included Lake Baikal, the largest freshwater lake by volume and also the deepest, as an ocean in spirit. The choice of sites was also inspired by the underwater (or for IceCube, under ice) neutrino telescopes.

What has been done?

A plaque was designed and permission to install it at the IceCube Laboratory at the South Pole (Figure 1) was received from the US National Science Foundation. Geoffrey Chen (University of Chicago) filmed the inauguration ceremony performed by witnesses Andrea Dixon (US Antarctic Program), John Hardin (WIPAC), Josh Veitch-Michaelis (WIPAC) and Martin Wolf (WIPAC) following a script provided by Mulot.

What is the result?

A video of the installation ceremony is available for the viewing at (<https://vimeo.com/552375740/b151da78de>). (*Copyright Laurent Mulot, courtesy of Françoise Besson gallery. No copy of any kind nor public use permitted.*) Aganta Kairos has already appeared in several exhibitions while it has been under development, including the International Biennale of Lyon in 2013/14, and will be presented during the next Biennale at Bleu du Ciel Gallery Lyon in its final version in the fall of 2022. For this exhibition, a monumental video work showing seven synchronous videos of the seven Aganta Kairos inaugurations will be presented as well as a sculpture mixing water from the seven sites.

A catalog entitled **Aganta Kairos: from the six oceans to the seventh continent** will be published in 2022. It will include sections written by Mulot's scientific partners, text by the contemporary art critic Paul Ardenne, and selections from the series of photographs of Aganta Kairos.



Figure 1: The witnesses heading to IceCube Laboratory (left) and standing by the temporary plaque installed December 21, 2020 (right).