


SUITE NO. 3

OCEANS

WAVELENGTHS IN THE WILD



WE LIVE IN A STATE OF
FORGETFULNESS. WE ARE
ONTOLOGICAL AMNESIACS,
AND WHAT WE HAVE
FORGOTTEN IS THE WONDER
OF BEING.

SOMETIMES BEING BREAKS IN
ON US: A STUNNING SUNSET,
AN EAGLE IN THE SKY OR
A SNAKE UPON A ROCK, A
SOUL-STRETCHING MOVEMENT
OF BEETHOVEN'S QUARTET,
AND AT THOSE MOMENTS OF
GLORY, BEING BREAKS INTO
OUR BLACK-AND-WHITE LIVES
IN BRIGHT COLOURS.

-Peter J. Leithart, Shining Glory

OREGON COAST

TEMPLES OF TIMBER

*You spoke to me through her. You spoke with me from the sky . . . the trees.
Before I knew I loved you, beloved in you. Whom did you first touch my heart?*

—TERRENCE MALICK, *THE TREE OF LIFE*

HOYT ARBORETUM IN PORTLAND, OREGON

Growing up in Arkansas, I was always surrounded by an abundance of trees. Between makeshift treehouses, rope swings, and the small cabin my family owned outside of town, most of my childhood was spent around oaks, hickories, maples, and pines.

As an adult, I've become a projectionist who curates visually immersive experiences, and one of the main visual themes I've been drawn to is the forest. Being the "man behind the curtain" is incredibly fun. Feeling the energy of the room shift as I change the seasons and hearing the gasps of little children as I layer in softly falling snow is pure magic. Sometimes after an event, people will find me to share how calming the augmented forest was and how, at times, they momentarily stopped paying attention to the program onstage and daydreamed of being in a real forest—whether sitting on a rock or lying in a hammock between two redwoods.

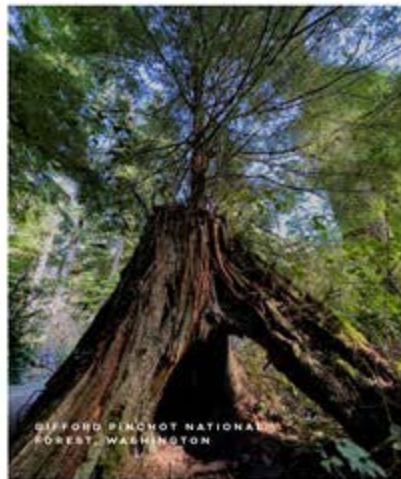
I love bringing the forest to audiences in a unique way. There's nothing quite like transforming a blank and barren venue into a woodland realm using projectors. (Think virtual reality but without the goggles.) And this fascination with projecting trees began to reveal a deeper desire. I was longing for a life in the trees.

So in 2018, I left Nashville, my city of old dreams, and moved out to the Pacific Northwest. My new dream was to find a piece of property filled with evergreens. In the summer of 2022, that dream became a reality when I moved into a newly built cabin surrounded by tall Douglas firs and complete with a covered deck where I spend most of my time (weather permitting). I remember one of the first times sitting on the deck under the forest canopy with my neighbor, Jerry. I had been mulling over what to call this part of the house. The porch? The deck? But it was Jerry who came up with the perfect name.

The Cathedral.

Sacred spaces are one of my love languages. I just love the idea of a place set apart for prayer and contemplation. Many sanctuaries and temples are designed to lift our gaze upward and pull our soul toward Heaven. The ancient architecture transports us to a distant time and speaks of deeper truths beyond our understanding. Cathedrals also have a consistent track record of slowing my pace and quieting my thoughts, while at the same time illuminating my eyes with splendor and filling my imagination with wonder.

Walking among trees often has the same effect on me, which is why evergreen forests have often reminded me of cathedrals. I see



parallels in the structures and shapes, as if the forest were the original inspiration for the hallowed halls of old. Flying over a forest of firs with my drone results in one of my all-time favorite scenes: an endless sea of steeples and spires pointing toward the heavens. Eagles perch on high branches and keep watch over their domain like angels heralding the glory and splendor of God. And the occasional hemlock, with its leaning top, breaks the pointed pattern, reminding me that beauty isn't always expressed in perfect symmetry.

From the ground, these great halls of moss and limb tower high above the forest floor like ancient stone columns. Their green canopies, like the vaulted ceiling of a Gothic nave, pull my spirit upward. The fragrance of juniper, pine, and cedar accents the air like incense blessing the altar. And birdsong fills the realm like a choir singing a hymn. Perhaps all of Creation—with its majestic mountains and awesome waterfalls and towering pines—is God's original cathedral.



THE SONG OF A FROZEN PLANET

BY JAMES EVERINGHAM

When it comes to the sounds of nature, there's a wonderful instability and unpredictability that's really hard to achieve with synthesizers and conventional orchestral instruments. So even if I'm taking field recordings and processing them beyond recognition, having an organic sound source with an interesting timbre, and then working with it in a musical context, is something I've found really lends itself to scoring work. From macro photography of frozen lake beds to vast ice sheets collapsing with immense force, a documentary like BBC's *Frozen Planet II* presents a scale of both extremes, and natural sounds played a large part in the process of designing and writing the score alongside Hans Zimmer and Adam Lukas.

One example is through working with decades-old analog equipment, a process that inevitably introduces noise. But instead of trying to eliminate this noise, we tried to think of it as a musical incarnation of an icy wind—performing the controls of the tape machine to create swells and gusts across the music like an organic vinyl crackle. We also used reel-to-reel tape recordings to look at how we could resemble changing states of matter within a musical technique. Recordings

of acoustic instruments played backward at incredibly slow speeds became soundscapes that were familiar and grounded, yet textural and sporadic in a very uneasy, yet natural way.

We also explored ways to capture the phenomenal complexity of frozen forms with a string orchestra. With eight of London's best players at AIR Studios in London, we set about building a musical tool kit that represented the splintering of ice, the individuality of snowflakes, and the blooming patterns that occur beneath the surface of frozen lakes. With each articulation, we carefully sculpted the ensemble's performance like an organic synthesizer, emphasizing dynamics and allowing the individuality of each player to surge through. In a way, making these recordings was not so dissimilar to photography in its process—the magic of a fleeting moment, impossible to perfectly recreate, captured and stored to be enjoyed or used time and time again.

The sounds of the natural world are full-spectrum aural experiences, rich in dynamic range. And while perhaps not musical in a traditional melodic sense, I find a lot to learn sonically from the world around us—in the patterns and the noise, the rhythms and the stillness.

TIME TO FLY!

A MOMENT TO REFLECT

Take at least five minutes to spend in complete silence. For best results, seek out a location in nature or in a room that lends itself to quietness. Finish by listening to a beautiful piece of music that you aren't used to hearing. Some nice compositions can be found in the "Music for Ice" playlist provided at peekzz.com/wildwonder.

Does practicing silence come naturally for you? Or is it typically an uncomfortable experience? Why do you think that is?

The next time you have a long commute by yourself, choose to spend that drive in total silence. Put your phone on Do Not Disturb and leave the radio or music off. Use this time to cleanse your mind and reset yourself for the next part of your day. And remember, when the boxes float down the river of your mind, simply acknowledge them and speak peace over them.

Establish a quiet hour (or day) in your home. Invite your family or roommates to share some silence with you. Turn off as much electronic light as possible, light as many candles as you can, and encourage everyone to stay off their devices. (Good luck if you have kids!) Let silence be spoken in your home; it has much to tell you.

THE OVERVIEW EFFECT

*We came all this way to explore the moon,
and the most important thing is that we discovered the Earth.*

~ WILLIAM ANDERS, APOLLO 8

The Overview Effect, coined by author Frank White in 1987, is a term used to describe the existential shift in perspective that astronauts can experience when they behold Earth from space.¹ White describes it this way: "There are no borders or boundaries on our planet except those that we create in our minds or through human behaviors. All the ideas and concepts that divide us when we are on the surface begin to fade from orbit and the moon. The result is a shift in worldview, and in identity."

Paired with this otherworldly painting, and similar to a mountaintop experience, comes a stark silence. All the noise from traffic? Gone. Every political debate and division? Disappeared. Pious posturing from self-righteous personalities? Silenced. The petty arguments you had with a family member? Hushed.

In the presence of that glorious, infinite silence, our awareness of reality begins to shift. This new perspective on all of life becomes a loving, patient teacher who, without saying a word, invites us to realign our priorities and purpose. For when we behold something big, we can often be left feeling small. I believe this can be a gift, especially as a counterbalance to the pride most of us undoubtedly struggle with. Because when we recognize how small we are in comparison to the vastness of the universe, what else can we do but be overwhelmed by humility and gratitude?

When we do that, we might begin to feel a level of connection we've never felt before—a connection that reveals deep within us what we might have suspected all along: that all of humanity is one. United in our planet, in our shared human experience, and, if you believe in a Divine Creator, united in being deeply loved by the One who created it all.

¹ "The Overview Effect" (from Wikipedia): The term was coined in 1987 by Frank White, who explored the theme in his book *The Overview Effect: Space Exploration and Human Evolution* (New York: Praeger/Moffin, 1987).

IT SUDDENLY STRUCK ME THAT THAT TINY PEA,
PRETTY AND BLUE, WAS THE EARTH. I PUT UP
MY THUMB AND SHUT ONE EYE, AND MY THUMB
BLOTTED OUT THE PLANET EARTH. I DIDN'T
FEEL LIKE A GIANT. I FELT VERY, VERY SMALL.

~Neil Armstrong, Apollo 11