
the body was devoted to 7 mountains

the sea

&

a single star

Over a 3 month period in 2022, a daily ritual was adhered to that sought to honor the 7 mountains surrounding the city of Bergen, Norway.

6 days of the week were devoted to 6 of the mountains, then on the 7th day (every Sunday) all 7 would be linked in one continuous effort. Alternating the rotation each week, so as to give equal time to all.

Each journey started and ended on foot from the place of residence. Daily milage would vary from 35-50km and elevation gain between 1500-2700m per day. This dictated that 6-8 hours were spent with each mountain, running, climbing, making multiple ascents or circumnavigating their perimeter. Building an intimate relationship with each through time and effort. Willingly subjecting the body to being transformed by them, and the weather they help create.

Before the last descent each day a small sample of earth from a mountain's summit would be collected to mix with local seawater collected earlier the same day. Settling as sediment it would tinge the water, which was then used to apply multiple washes to a canvas. The next time that same mountain was revisited the dried "sediment" was returned and another sample borrowed, to make a new daily wash.

Hundreds of washes compose each "painting".

Jacobus Capone

You cannot stay on the summit forever; you have to come down again... So why bother in the first place? Just this: what is above knows what is below, but what is below does not know what is above... One climbs, one sees. One descends, one sees no longer, but one has seen. There is an art of conducting oneself in the lower regions by the memory of what one saw higher up. When one can no longer see, one can at least still know.

-René Daumal (notes towards *Mount Analogue*)

Jacobus Capone has visited Bergen's syv fjell (seven mountains) with an intensity that probably no one else ever has. He's responded to their pull again and again, heeding their call with relentless commitment over the course of 90 days.

He's honored their smallest traces, as much as their grandest aspects, mixing silt from each mountain's summit with water taken from a fjord formed by glacial melt of the same mountain range, reuniting the two elements with reverence and love.

Surprisingly, despite their all being the same landmass, every mountain's dirt-voice is a different color. That their uniqueness at this scale can be made visible is a revelation. The kind of knowledge that you can only arrive at by gathering it yourself.

When talking about *Devotional Paintings (7 Mountains & the Sea)*, Capone notes a "sparkle effect" created by the hundreds of layers of salt in the seawater mixed with the sediment borrowed from (and returned daily to) each mountain.

When talking about the journey both external and internal that generated this work, he describes a parallel phenomenon: the buildup of a previously unknown charge of energy in his body evoked through a combination of endurance and a daily-deepened expression of devotion.

Capone gave himself over to the earth entirely and emerged from the process more tangibly stardust.

Intellectually, we know ourselves to be composed of this material, but Capone is powered now by the charged interaction of these particles. His physical gestures across a canvas leave glittering trails of this, which also point towards what knowledge can be that it often isn't quite:

These canvases speak in the language of existence. They speak matter, and of a different kind of mattering than we are familiar with. One where being material is the definition of that verb. Being profoundly *of* matter is what it means *to* matter.

Mountains and the sea, both exponentially more substantial forms of material existence than our bodies, are present here in the room in a particular way. The particles of themselves telling the story of how mattering happens: slowly, accretively, through the unfathomable labor of forces that move things from one place to another. These are collaborative portraits – by Capone, working in constant physical dialogue with the mountains and the sea – of what mattering is, of what Earth-ness is.



▲ Lyderhorn

Damsgårdsfjell



Sandviksfjellet ▲

Fløyfjellet ▲

▲ Rundemanen

▲ Løvsakken

▲ Ulriken



Devotional Paintings (7 Mountains & the Sea), 2022
Seawater tinted with borrowed earth from each of the 7 summits surrounding Bergen
70 x 70cm each

The canvases speak of the tension of gravity, of interplanetary relations in the form of weather, of sea-ness and mountain-ness, and of Capone's willingness to discover the full story of his own materiality in order to bring it into communion with these things. He's tuned his being into the frequency of the planet's being and transmits to us the flecks of reflected light that we've forgotten we are.

And then, within mattering, Capone finds something additional that won't sit still on a canvas.

Like the light bouncing off of the salt that is both within and beyond the paintings; like the well of energy found outside of the boundaries of what he thought were his body's limitations; there is something else to know intimately about what mattering is, only accessible during the act of veneration – within the motion of reaching towards what we all come from.

Untitled (body as a constellation) hints at this: the skin as a landscape overlaid with stars, embodiment a set of coordinates guiding us towards the most we can know about mattering without becoming mountains or sea ourselves.

To bring *Falling from Earth* full circle, Capone's body reaches beyond what it has known already. Using the same strategy that he's used to understand mountain-ness and sea-ness – his body as a device for worshipping, for connecting intimately with other forms of matter – he tries to know the stars whose dust we are.

Heather Kaplow



Untitled (body as a constellation), 2022
Giclée print
111.5 x 82.5cm (framed)

Jacobus Capone (b. 1986) has an expansive and multi-disciplined practice where work often stems from self-initiated pilgrimages and performances that incorporate durational activity, measures of time or a sense of episodic memorial. His determination to seek connections with place and to pay homage to human and ecological fragilities instils a tenor in his work that is paradoxically elegiacal and uplifting. Since graduating from Edith Cowan University in 2007 Capone's exhibition history is extensive. He has shown in many cities across the globe and has been included in important national projects that identify influential practice, such as **Primavera 2017** at the **Museum of Contemporary Art**, and **New 16** at the **Australian Centre for Contemporary Art**, and the **Tarra Warra Biennial *Slow Moving Water*** in 2021. The ten-channel video installation *Echo & Abyss* premiered in a solo exhibition ***Beating Heart*** at **Fremantle Arts Centre** in 2021. ***Orisons*** at the **University of New South Wales Galleries** in 2022 was the most comprehensive solo showing of his work to date. 2022 also saw Capone invited to present work in the **Aichi Triennial *Still Alive*** in Japan.



Jacobus Capone: *Falling from Earth* is presented in association with the Perth Festival

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