

ICE



# ICE

## PAINTINGS OF THE ARCTIC

**ALISTAIR CARR**

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Pictures available on receipt of catalogue

### **The Maas Gallery**

6 Duke Street St James's London SW1Y 6BN

+44 (0)20 7930 9511

[mail@maasgallery.com](mailto:mail@maasgallery.com) [www.maasgallery.com](http://www.maasgallery.com)

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Source: National Snow and Ice Data Centre, Colorado.

This map shows the shrinking Arctic ice cap. The Inuit, once great nomads, explained that twenty years ago the winter sea ice around Upernavik was two metres thick. Today, it's more like ten centimetres. In 2016, in December, it rained instead of snowed there for the first time.

## **Baffin Bay, northwest Greenland**

'Alistair,' the Inuit warned as he was about to step outside into the swirling snow, 'when you open the door, look left and right for polar bears.' He paused, then stepped back from the threshold of my eighteenth-century hut. 'Actually, *before* opening the door,' he continued, 'look out of the windows to make sure there are no polar bears.'

I had arrived on a small propeller plane in a blizzard and, although I did not know it at the time, it was the last flight for a fortnight due to bad weather. My new home, which great early twentieth century explorers like Knud Rasmussen would have known when it was the bakery, was in the Inuit community of Upernavik. And, perched on a sitting room window ledge, a polar bear skull kept westerly lookout over an iceberg-studded sea to the haunting sound of howling huskies. The Inuit had given me the artist's residency and I felt quite comfortable being among these formerly nomadic people, as I had lived and journeyed in some of the world's remotest wildernesses with desert, taiga and steppe nomads. It had been -35°C the previous week, but the hut was hearteningly cosy and I quickly set to work with my art materials.

The views out to sea were forever changing. Sunset icebergs resembled wartime flotillas, medieval citadels, Hebridean islets and even the craggy dorsal fin of some Triassic leviathan. Littered along the horizon, there was a sense of migration, as if they knew exactly where they were headed. Sometimes, the ocean dazzled with Arctic blue shades and the bergs glistened in the sun. Then, quite suddenly and even mysteriously, giant fingers of platinum-shaded ice would appear and swiftly transform seascape into landscape, with floes from the shore to the horizon. Arctic grey skies would descend while ravens tap danced on the hut's roof, keeping me company, as it began to snow again and bergs fleetingly appeared, then vanished in the chalky haze. Other days, icebergs were invisible in the dust-like snow, then the floes would once more disappear to reveal a glittering Prussian-blue sea and seabed-stranded bergs that, like bay-anchored yachts, had swung around overnight. Once it snowed for days. Drifts buried the downstairs windows and, during these art-filled weeks, the hardy Inuit stealthily hunted narwhals as they have done for centuries.

## **Jakobshavn Glacier**

Concerned about the worsening weather forecasts, I flew five hundred kilometres south to Ilulissat. The Jakobshavn Glacier is a wilderness in itself, unfolding into the distance with fortress-like icebergs; ice islands with slanting cliffs and enticing caves, ice tepees and icy snails, octagons and oblongs, giant marbles and smashed crockery, broken window panes and damaged tiles, pontoons of abstract sculpture, blue organ pipes and white canyons, cubes and Gobi-like geology, even the shimmering suggestion of a ruined village. And then a distant roar, like summer thunder, incongruous in the sunny, blue sky - the sound of a calving berg where the glacier meets the sea.

The silence is as mesmerising as the spectacle. A spoken word would be an intrusion. A jolting crack, from some hidden place deep within the ice desert is very different to the crack of a woodland branch. The sound is accentuated. There is a short echo and a cosseted vibration, as the chords lift up momentarily, ephemerally propelled before evaporating. The sound is a virtuoso performance in a dazzling ice auditorium, as if the glacier is not complete without a voice. It is all-beautiful, all-powerful and all-humbling.

Alistair Carr



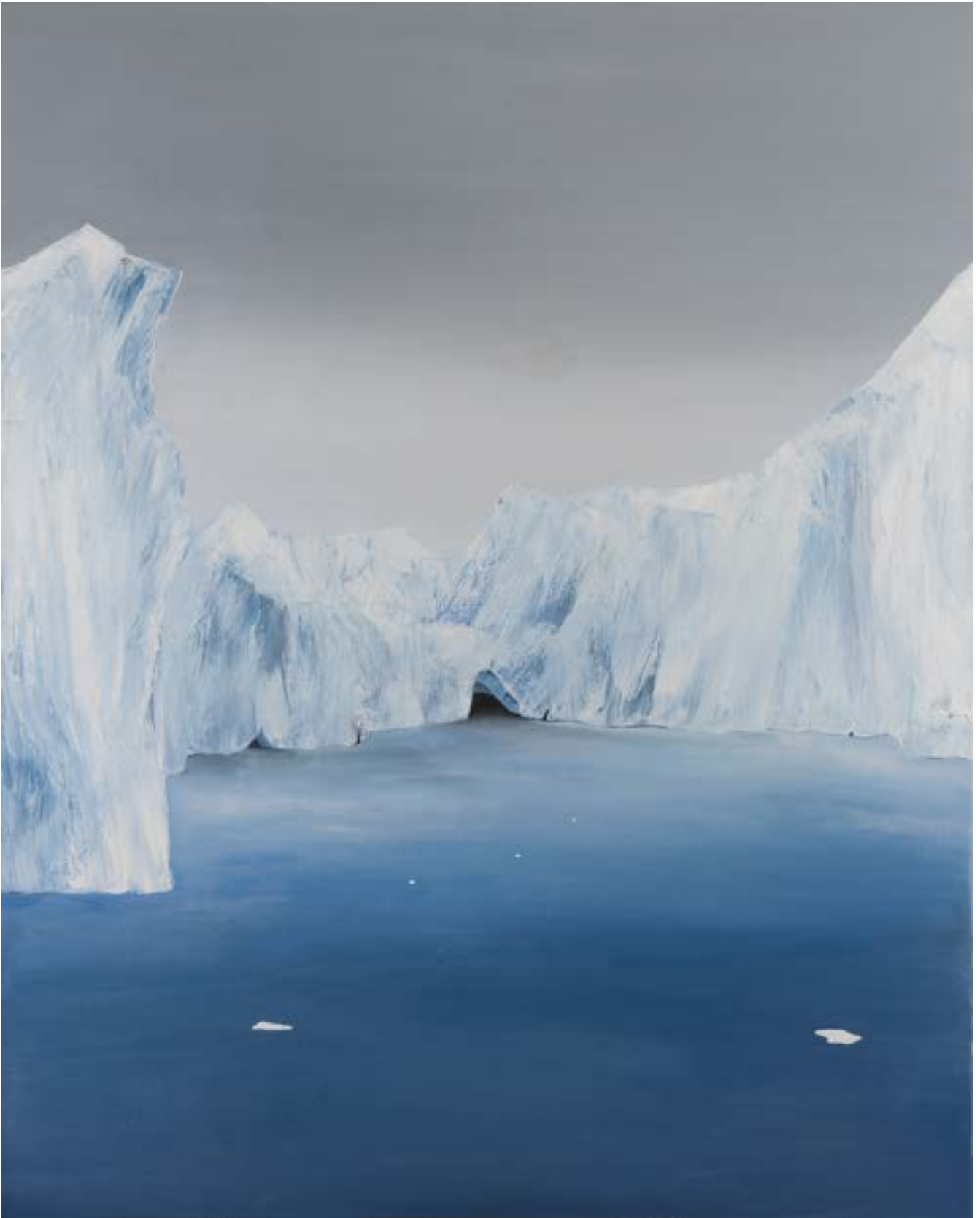
1. **The Last Iceberg** oil on canvas, 122 x 153 cm







2. **Jakobshavn Ice Cave I** oil on canvas, 153 x 122 cm



3. **Jakobshavn Ice Cave II** oil on canvas, 153 x 122 cm





4. **Jakobshavn Ice Cave III**  
oil on canvas, 122 x 153 cm



5. **Jakobshavn Calving**  
oil on canvas, 122 x 153 cm







6. **Jakobshavn Ice Wall I** oil on canvas, 76.5 x 152.5 cm





7. **Jakobshavn Ice Wall II** oil on canvas, 122 x 153 cm



8. **Arctic Ice I** oil on canvas, 122 x 153 cm



9. **Arctic Ice II** oil on canvas, 153 x 122 cm



10. **Growler II** oil on canvas, 122 x 153 cm



11. **Growler III** oil on canvas, 122 x 153 cm



12. **Growler I** oil on canvas, 122 x 153 cm











13. **Aerial Ice Floe**

oil on canvas, 122 x 153 cm



14. **-30°C Ice Rainbow** oil on canvas, 76.5 x 152.5 cm





15. **Baffin Bay I** oil on canvas, 76.5 x 152.5 cm







16. **Baffin Bay II** oil on canvas, 76.5 x 152.5 cm



17. **Baffin Bay Sunset I** oil on canvas, 101.5 x 101.5 cm





18. **Baffin Bay Sunset II** oil on canvas, 60 x 79.5 cm



19. **Baffin Bay III** oil on canvas, 101.5 x 101.5 cm



20. **Baffin Bay IV** oil on canvas, 30.5 x 81cm



21. **Brooding Iceberg** oil on canvas, 30.5 x 81 cm



22. **Baffin Bay Sunset V** oil on aluminium, 23 x 61 cm





23. **Baffin Bay Sunset III** oil on aluminium, 61 x 61 cm





24. **Baffin Bay Sunset IV** oil on aluminium, 23 x 61 cm



25. **Baffin Bay Iceberg I** oil on aluminium, 40.5 x 30.5 cm



26. **Baffin Bay Iceberg II** oil on aluminium, 40.5 x 30.5 cm



27. **Baffin Bay Iceberg III** oil on aluminium, 61 x 61 cm



28. **Baffin Bay Iceberg VI** soft pastel on paper, 59 x 41.5 cm



29. **Baffin Bay Iceberg IV** soft pastel on paper, 59 x 41.5 cm



30. **Baffin Bay Iceberg V** soft pastel on paper, 59 x 41.5 cm





31. **Ice Floe I** soft pastel on paper, 57.5 x 39.5 cm



32. **Ice Floe IV** soft pastel on paper, 57.5 x 39.5 cm



33. **Ice Floe III** soft pastel on paper, 57.5 x 39.5 cm



34. **Ice Floe II** soft pastel on paper, 57.5 x 39.5 cm



35. **Ice Floe V** soft pastel on paper, 41.5 x 59 cm



36. **Ice Floe VI** soft pastel on paper, 41.5 x 59 cm



37. **Hut View I** charcoal on paper, 42 x 59.5 cm





38. **Hut View II** charcoal on paper, 42 x 59.5 cm



39. **Hut View III** charcoal on paper, 42 x 59.5 cm



41. **Hut View V** charcoal on paper, 42 x 59.5 cm



40. **Hut View IV** charcoal on paper, 42 x 59.5 cm



42. **Hut View VI** charcoal on paper, 42 x 59.5 cm



43. **Hut View VII** charcoal on paper, 42 x 59.5 cm



45. **Hut View IX** charcoal on paper, 42 x 59.5 cm





44. **Hut View VIII** charcoal on paper, 42 x 59.5 cm



46. **Hut View XI** charcoal on paper, 42 x 59.5 cm



47. **Hut View X** charcoal on paper, 42 x 59.5 cm





