

MADE WITH SNOW



Timo jokela



Snow as ecosystem services

The benefits people obtain from the nature are called ecosystem services . In winter, the different states or phases of water, such as snow, frost and ice, create a distinct character for the environment and for the people moving and working in it. Northern cultures have adapted to winter and snow. Dozens of different terms are used to describe the states of snow and ice, most of which are multisensory and illustrate the relationship of activity to winter. This is the tacit everyday knowledge of the North, which has been the basis for developing winter art as a form of environmental art carried out in winter landscapes in the North. Snow, ice and variations in natural light are some of nature's most impressive aesthetic phenomena. Merging 'hunter's practical knowledge' of snow and 'artist's aesthetic relations', winter art opens up new perspectives to see snow as valuable ecosystem services.



Antti Stöckell

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Snow as cultural and social revitalisation in communities

A snowy landscape is not culturally empty. It can also be seen as a cultural ecosystem service. These are non-material benefits obtained through socio-cultural habits, reflection, recreation learning and cognitive development. Besides these many Northern cultures add spiritual and religious dimensions and values to ecosystems. The ecosystem services provided by winter have shaped not only the natural culture of communities but also social relationships. Winter is also a time for action, socializing and re-telling stories.

In northern communities, participatory winter art has been characterized by bringing together people of different ages and generations, and understanding, conveying and renewing the significance of the history and livelihoods of places through art. The basis for winter art activities is the empowering impact of art on communities in a way that respects the northern cultural identity and works for revitalization.

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Snow as an ecosystem service for tourism businesses

Winter art and community events have identified new areas for development that later guided the aims to create new knowledge, innovations and practices for the business sector that utilize design thinking and participatory art activities. By combining the traditional know-how and the sense on snow of the Northern cultures with artistic activities and engineering and design expertise, the ecosystem services provided by winter became an innovation that was widely adopted in winter tourism.

Research and development projects on snow and ice construction and design, carried out in partnership with snow and ice construction companies and the tourism industry, ensured safe use and cost-effectiveness building, and the aesthetic and experimental quality of snow and ice environments. Through training and education, the new knowledge was widely disseminated in Finland and the Nordic countries. Today 6-8 full-size snow hotels, with rooms, restaurants, bars, theaters, art galleries, showrooms and chapels are built in Lapland annually.

