



In *Snow in America* (1997), Bernard Mergen states that snow has played a major role in the construction of a certain political, cultural, and artistic identity in the United States. As a climatic phenomenon, a protean symbol, an aesthetic motif, snow has modeled Americans' relationships to their history, their territory, more-than-human worlds, and with their cultural expressions.

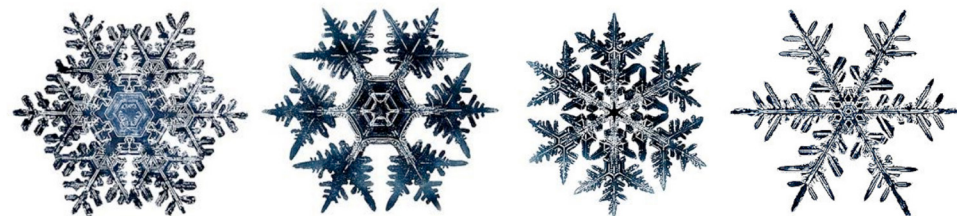
While many Indigenous nations' life ways have been shaped by their capacity to adapt to harsh climates, the colonial conquest of icy territories evinces the attempt to dominate radically different spaces than Europe and to master the impermanence of this element. Nonetheless, snow jeopardizes any desire to control the world both physically and intellectually. Just as snow slips and melts between the fingers of whoever wants to seize it, it will thwart previsions, reshape environments, impose new rhythms, and change perceptions. It can thus lead to intellectual wanderings and recreative or contemplative moments that enable artists to explore new literary, pictorial, and photographic spaces, opening to a new "distribution of the sensible" (Jacques Rancière) and revealing unsuspected political and cultural implications.

While the first event, held at Toulouse Jean Jaurès University in 2024, sought to delineate a cultural history and geography of snow through 19th to 21st c. works of art and literature, the second Parisian conference will bear on the more aesthetic questions they entail. More than a simple motif, snow simultaneously appears as an element, a material, a formation and a matrix of shapes. Between crystallization and melting, layering and disappearance, it erases as much as it reveals, and becomes the "pure form for the unavailable to become manifest" (Hartmut Rosa), challenging seizure, measurement, reproduction, both technical and aesthetic. If snow has indeed shaped the construction of a certain political, cultural, and artistic identity in the United States, how can its visual, sonic or linguistic forms be apprehended? While its precarity is becoming one of the most dramatic markers of our climatic era, what traces, what archives, what (hi)stories does it call for, and what futures may they still generate?

This conference has received the generous support of all the partners listed below:

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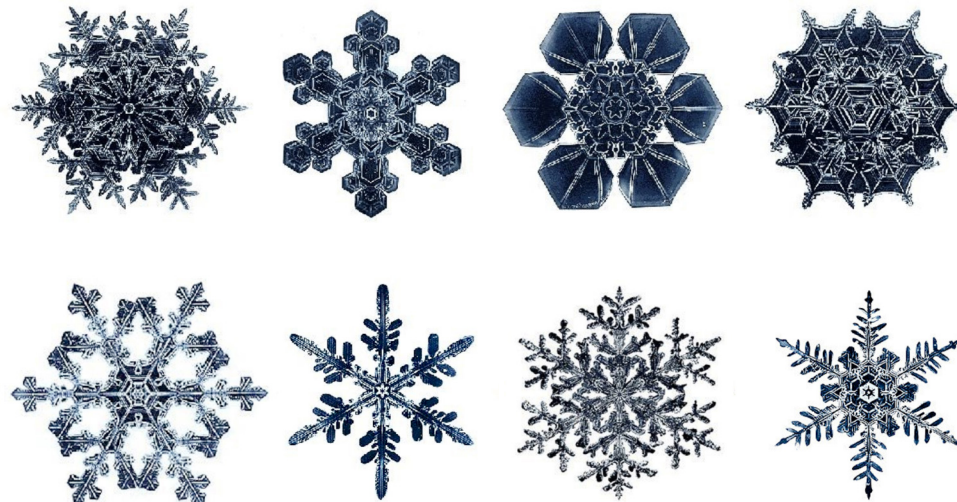


JOURNÉE D'ÉTUDES

Organisation :

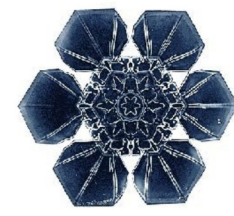
Claire Cazajous-Augé (CAS, UT2J) et Aurore Clavier (ECHELLES-CNRS, Paris Cité)

American Snows II : Nivean Aesthetics



Friday, **December 5**, 2025

U N I V E R S I T É P A R I S C I T É



9h Conference opening by **Claire Cazajous-Augé** (Université Toulouse - Jean Jaurès)
and **Aurore Clavier** (Université Paris Cité)

9h15-10h30 KEYNOTE CONFERENCE

Chair: Brigitte Félix (Université Paris 8)

Shelley Jackson (The New School, New York): *The Snow Project*

10h30 Coffee break

11h-12h15 PANEL 1: SNOW FORMATIONS

Chair: Catherine Bernard (Université Paris Cité)

Yves Figueiredo (Université Paris Cité):

Snow-Flowers and Mighty Chasms: Interpreting the Sierra Nevada Landscape, 1860-1890

Marie Bouchet (Université Toulouse - Jean Jaurès):

Sabine Mirlesse's Frost Portals (2022-2023):

an Artistic and Scientific Exploration of Ephemeral Liminalities

12h15 Lunch break

14h-15h15h PANEL 2: SNOW NEGATIVES

Chair: Anne-Laure Tissut (Université Paris Nanterre)

Thomas Dutoit (Université de Lille):

Alice Munro's No Story; or, "Signs snow paper"

Benoît Tadié (Université Paris Nanterre):

Noir Snows : David Goodis and François Truffaut

15h15 Coffee break

15h45-17h PANEL 3: SOUNDING SNOW

Chair: Mathieu Duplay (Université Paris Cité)

Antoine Cazé (Université Paris Cité):

Snow Trails: Hearing & Seeing R. Murray Schafer's Snowforms

Marie Olivier (Université Paris-Est Créteil):

The Pleasure of Snow in Susan Howe's Thorow

17h Cocktail

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