

A person in dark clothing stands on a rocky, snow-covered mountain peak. They are positioned next to a tall, slender spruce tree. The background features a vast, hazy landscape of rolling hills and mountains under a cloudy sky. The foreground is filled with large, moss-covered rocks and patches of snow.

# Working with Spruces – On the Strange Individuality of Trees

Annette Arlander



A person in a dark jacket stands next to a tall, slender evergreen tree on a rocky, snow-covered mountain peak. The landscape is rugged with scattered rocks and patches of snow. In the background, there are rolling hills and a cloudy sky. The overall scene is serene and high-altitude.

# Part 1

## Introduction



Background:

**Performing with Plants**

artistic research project

by Annette Arlander

<https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/316550/316551>

2017

at Helsinki Collegium for

Advanced Studies,

funded by Kone Foundation

2018-2019

at Stockholm University of the Arts (SKH)

funded by Vetenskapsrådet

(The Swedish Research Council)







## Meetings with Remarkable and Unremarkable Trees

Project blog

<https://meetingswithtrees.com>

Project archive on the Research Catalogue

<https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/761326/761327>



Some references:

Alaimo, Stacy. 2010. *Bodily Natures. Science, environment, and the material self*. Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.


Braidotti, Rosi. 2017. "Four Theses on Posthuman Feminism". In Grusin, Richard (ed.) *Anthropocene Feminism*. Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 21-48.

Myers, Natasha. 2017. "From the Anthropocene to the Planthropocene: Designing Gardens for Plant/People Involution." *History and Anthropology*. 28, no. 3 (27 May 2017): 297–301.

Pakenham, Thomas. 1996. *Meetings with Remarkable Trees*. New York: Random House.

Plumwood, Val. 2003. "Decolonizing relationships with nature." In William M. Adams and Martin Mulligan. 2003. (eds.) *Decolonizing Nature. Strategies for Conservation in a Post-colonial Era*. London and Sterling VA: Earthscan Publications Ltd., 51-78.



A person stands in a snowy, rocky landscape, looking towards a tall, thin evergreen tree. The background shows a vast, hazy mountain range under a cloudy sky. The scene is captured in a soft, slightly desaturated tone, emphasizing the textures of the snow and rocks.

# Part 2

## Individuality of Trees



A person in a dark jacket stands in a snowy, rocky landscape. A large evergreen tree is in the foreground, and a hazy mountain range is in the background.

Some references:

Hall, Matthew. 2011. *Plants as Persons. A Philosophical Botany*. New York: Suny Press.

Marder, Michael. 2013. *Plant-Thinking: A Philosophy of Vegetal Life*. New York: Columbia University Press.



A person is standing on a rocky, snow-covered mountain peak next to a tall, slender spruce tree. The person is wearing a dark jacket and a hat, and is looking out over a vast, hazy landscape. The ground is covered in snow and scattered with large, dark rocks. In the background, there are more mountains and a cloudy sky. The overall scene is serene and quiet.

# Part 3

## The Spruce on Harakka Island



## Year-long time-lapse videos

*Under the Spruce I-III*  
(2008) 28 min.

“I sit under the only spruce tree on Harakka Island once a week for over a year (6 January 2007 - 3 February 2008). The video is shot from three angles: the hill, the path and underneath the tree.”





## Year-long time-lapse videos

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*Under the Spruce I-III*  
Year of the Pig.  
Telegraph Gallery,  
Harakka Island  
13.-31.8.2008.





Revisiting the site

*The Spruce Revisited 1 (28 min 50 sec) on 7. August 2018*





Under the Spruce I

Under the Spruce II

Under the Spruce III

*The Spruce Revisited 1 (28 min 50 sec)*  
*Under the Spruce I-III inserted in the recording on 7. August 2018*





*The Spruce Revisited 1 (28 min 50 sec)*  
*Under the Spruce I-III inserted in the recording on 7. August 2018*





*The Spruce Revisited 1 (28 min 50 sec)*  
*Under the Spruce I-III inserted in the recording on 7. August 2018*





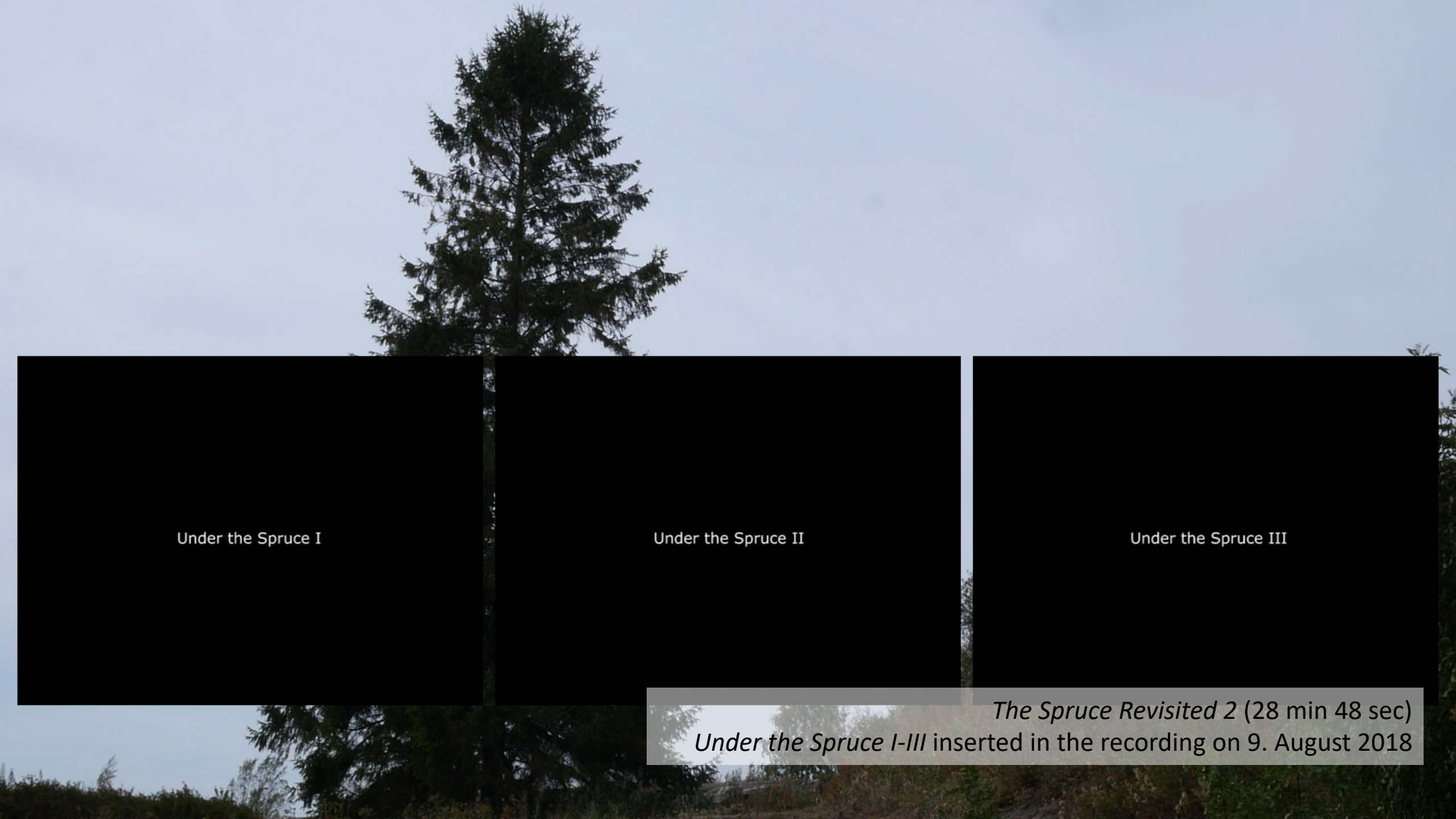
*The Spruce Revisited 1 (28 min 50 sec)*  
*Under the Spruce I-III inserted in the recording on 7. August 2018*



Revisiting the site

*The Spruce Revisited 2* (28 min 48 sec) on 9. August 2018





Under the Spruce I

Under the Spruce II

Under the Spruce III

*The Spruce Revisited 2 (28 min 48 sec)*  
*Under the Spruce I-III inserted in the recording on 9. August 2018*





*The Spruce Revisited 2 (28 min 48 sec)*  
*Under the Spruce I-III inserted in the recording on 9. August 2018*



“How to do things in  
alliance with  
concepts, things,  
bodies or plants?”  
performance at  
Alliances and  
Commonalities,  
Stockholm University  
of the Arts  
25-27 October 2018.





A person stands next to a tall, slender spruce tree in a snowy, rocky landscape. The ground is covered in snow and scattered with large, mossy rocks. In the background, there are rolling mountains under a cloudy sky. The scene is serene and quiet.

# Part 4

## The Spruce Stumps in Lill-Jan's Wood



Year-long time-lapse videos


*Year of the Dog in Lill-Jan's Wood (On a Spruce Stump) 1*  
(100 min 10 sec) performed 15.2.2018. – 3.2.2019



Year-long time-lapse videos

*Year of the Dog in Lill-Jan's Wood (On a Spruce Stump) 1*  
(100 min 10 sec) performed 15.2.2018. – 3.2.2019



A person with long dark hair, wearing a pink hoodie, is seen from behind, sitting on a large, snow-covered spruce stump. The forest is heavily covered in snow, with many thin, bare tree branches visible. The scene is a winter landscape.

Year-long time-lapse videos

*Year of the Dog in Lill-Jan's Wood (On a Spruce Stump) 1*  
(100 min 10 sec) performed 15.2.2018. – 3.2.2019



Year-long time-lapse videos


*Year of the Dog in Lill-Jan's Wood (On a Spruce Stump) 2*  
(100 min 10 sec) performed 15.2.2018. – 3.2.2019



Year-long time-lapse videos

*Year of the Dog in Lill-Jan's Wood (On a Spruce Stump) 2*  
(100 min 10 sec) performed 15.2.2018. – 3.2.2019



A person with long dark hair, wearing a light-colored jacket, is sitting on a large, snow-covered spruce stump in a dense forest. The trees are heavily laden with snow, and the ground is covered in a thick layer of snow. The scene is captured in a time-lapse video, showing the progression of the winter season.

Year-long time-lapse videos

*Year of the Dog in Lill-Jan's Wood (On a Spruce Stump) 2*  
(100 min 10 sec) performed 15.2.2018. – 3.2.2019





*Year of the Dog in Lill-Jans' Wood (On a Spruce Stump) Double A*  
(16 min 50 sec)





*Year of the Dog in Lill-Jans' Wood (On a Spruce Stump) Double B*  
(16 min 50 sec)





Part 5  
Old Tjikko on Fulufjället



Day-long time-lapse videos

*Day with Old Tjikko 1 (17 min 45 sec)*  
performed on 14. May 2019 every hour between 10.30 AM and 7.30 PM on Fulufjället, Sweden



Day-long time-lapse videos



*Day with Old Tjikko 1 (17 min 45 sec)*  
performed on 14. May 2019 every hour between 10.30 AM and 7.30 PM on Fulufjället, Sweden



Day-long time-lapse videos

*Day with Old Tjikko 1 (17 min 45 sec)*  
performed on 14. May 2019 every hour between 10.30 AM and 7.30 PM on Fulufjället, Sweden



Day-long time-lapse videos

*Day with Old Tjikko 2 (19 min 35 sec)*  
performed on 14. May 2019 every hour between 10.30 AM and 7.30 PM on Fulufjället, Sweden



Day-long time-lapse videos

*Day with Old Tjikko 2 (19 min 35 sec)*  
performed on 14. May 2019 every hour between 10.30 AM and 7.30 PM on Fulufjället, Sweden



Day-long time-lapse videos

*Day with Old Tjikko 2 (19 min 35 sec)*  
performed on 14. May 2019 every hour between 10.30 AM and 7.30 PM on Fulufjället, Sweden




A person in a dark jacket stands next to a tall, slender spruce tree on a rocky, snow-covered mountain peak. The landscape is rugged with scattered rocks and patches of snow. In the background, there are rolling hills and a cloudy sky. The overall scene is serene and wintry.

# Part 6

## More Spruces



Writing letters to trees

A person wearing a dark jacket and a beanie is sitting on a rocky, grassy hillside. They are looking down at a book or notebook in their lap, appearing to be writing. To their right stands a large, tall spruce tree. The background shows a clear blue sky with some light clouds and a few bare trees in the distance. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

*Dear Spruce – Kuusi Hyvä 1 (20 min 50 sec)*  
10. April 2020 with the spruce on Harakka Island.



Writing letters to trees

*Dear Spruce – Kuusi Hyvä 2 (20 min 36 sec)*  
18. April 2020 with the spruce on Harakka Island.



Writing letters to trees



*Dear Spruce – Kuusi Hyvä 3 (15 min 50 sec)*  
22. April 2020 with the spruce on Harakka Island.



Writing letters to trees



*Dear Spruce – Kuusi Hyvä 4 (16 min 30 sec)*  
3. May 2020 with the spruce on Harakka Island.



Writing letters to trees

*Dear Spruce – Kuusi Hyvä 5 (20 min 54 sec)*  
28. June 2020 with the spruce on Harakka Island.



Writing letters to trees



*Dear Spruce – Kuusi Hyvä 6 (20 min 34 sec)*  
17. July 2020 with the spruce on Harakka Island.



Writing letters to trees

*Dear Spruce – Kuusi Hyvä 7 (20 min 50 sec)*  
25. August 2020 with the spruce on Harakka Island.





Becoming Tree exercise

*June with the Spruce of Independence (36 min 31 sec & 15 min)*  
performed daily between 1. and 30. June 2020 with a spruce in Kaivopuisto Park.





*Looking at the Spruce 1 (19 min 12 sec)*  
performed on 9. September 2020 in Paljakkavaara





*Looking at the Spruce 2 (19 min 12 sec)*  
performed on 9. September 2020 in Paljakkavaara





*Looking at the Spruce 1 & 2 (19 min 12 sec) 2020*





*With the Spruce in Paljakka (5 min)*  
performed on 13. September 2020 in Paljakkavaara





*With the Spruce in Paljakka III ( 5 min)  
performed on 13. September 2020 in Paljakkavaara*





*With the Spruce in Paljakka III mix ( 5 min)*  
performed on 13. September 2020 in Paljakkavaara



Writing letters to trees

*Dear Spruce – Rakas Kuusi* (20 min 15 sec & 5 min 47 sec)  
on 25. September 2020 with a spruce near Mustarinda



A person with glasses, wearing a dark jacket and pants, is sitting on a large, cut log in a forest. They are holding an open book and writing. The forest is filled with many dead, bare branches and some green evergreen trees. A large tree trunk is visible on the left side of the frame. The scene is lit with natural light, suggesting a sunny day.

Writing letters to trees

*Dear Deceased* (20 min 15 sec & 6 min 26 sec)  
on 29. September 2020 with a dead spruce near Mustarinda





# Video example

*Dear Deceased (with text) 2020 (6 min 26 sec)*



A person is standing in a snowy, rocky landscape, looking towards a tall evergreen tree. The background shows a hazy, mountainous horizon under a cloudy sky. The scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent white filter.

# Part 7

## Concluding Remarks



A person is standing next to a tall evergreen tree in a snowy, rocky landscape. The person is wearing a dark coat and a hat, and is looking towards the tree. The ground is covered in snow and rocks, and there are other trees in the background. The sky is overcast.

**For more trees and ways of meeting them, see:**

Project blog

<https://meetingswithtrees.com>

Project archive on the Research Catalogue

<https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/761326/761327>

Or my website

<https://annettearlander.com>





Thank you for your attention!