

TAVARES STRACHAN

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SUN

In 2013, artist Tavares Strachan represented the Bahamas National Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale. Strachan's exhibition, *"Polar Eclipse"*, focused on US Commander Robert Peary's "discovery" of the North Pole. The expedition relied on the talents of Matthew Henson and the skills of four Inuit guides, and though Henson had explored Polar Regions with Peary for 22 years, the Commander gave no significant credit of this historical breakthrough to him nor the Inuit members. It was through Henson's 1912 autobiography, that Henson's narrative and his crucial role was able to emerge from obscurity and his contributions are now widely discussed and debated.

Like *"Polar Eclipse"*, *"The Other Side of the Sun"* centers on these and other overlapping narratives of presence and absence, as well as concealment and revelation. In April of 2013, Strachan traveled to the North Pole, and in his panoramic photograph "Standing Alone," documents the difficulty of putting any marker on this conceptual point (the North Pole) since the ice shelf covering it is constantly shifting and often moving several miles within minutes. The exhibition includes a poignant indication of future responses to the polar ice cap through the forty Bahamian children, whom Strachan invited to Venice in February 2013, where they performed a traditional Inuit song about preparing to enter the wilderness. *"The Other Side of the Sun"* examines Strachan's obsession with exploration, more specifically with the disruption of familiar expectations for someone born on a small island.

Excerpts were taken from the original text written by Dr. Robert Hobbs who curated the Bahamas National Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale with Jane Crutchfield and Stamatina Gregory. *"The Other Side of the Sun"* will be on view at Mestre projects from April 18th 2018 to September 22th 2018.