

IN A NEW LIGHT



David Trubridge is a well-known name in Aotearoa's arts community. His wooden lights — with names like Kina, Coral and Kōura — grace many homes and establishments. A recipient of New Zealand's highest designer honour, the Design Institute of New Zealand's John Britten Award, British-born Trubridge sailed into Pacific waters several decades ago and made Hawke's Bay his home. The shapes and forms of his chosen land influence much of his crafted furniture and the now-iconic lights.

This month, he adds "author" to his list of accomplishments with the publication of *The Other Way*, a collection of his photography from voyages near and

far. Among the studies is a stunning series of images from Antarctica, where he was smitten by the continent's light plays. "One theme of the book is light," he says. "I begin in the dazzling light of Antarctica and end in the deep blacks of the waters of Tāmatea Dusky Sound."

Antarctica was the start of a burgeoning interest in photography. He travelled with a small point-and-shoot Canon, a "rather worn out" larger SLF digital Canon borrowed from *Hawke's Bay Today*, and an even older Pentax with colour transparency film. He nevertheless managed to record magnificent images, using everything to hand. "It was very hard getting the exposures right for the 35mm shots in that brilliant

light. I kept taking the same shot on all three cameras because I was so unconfident of the results!"

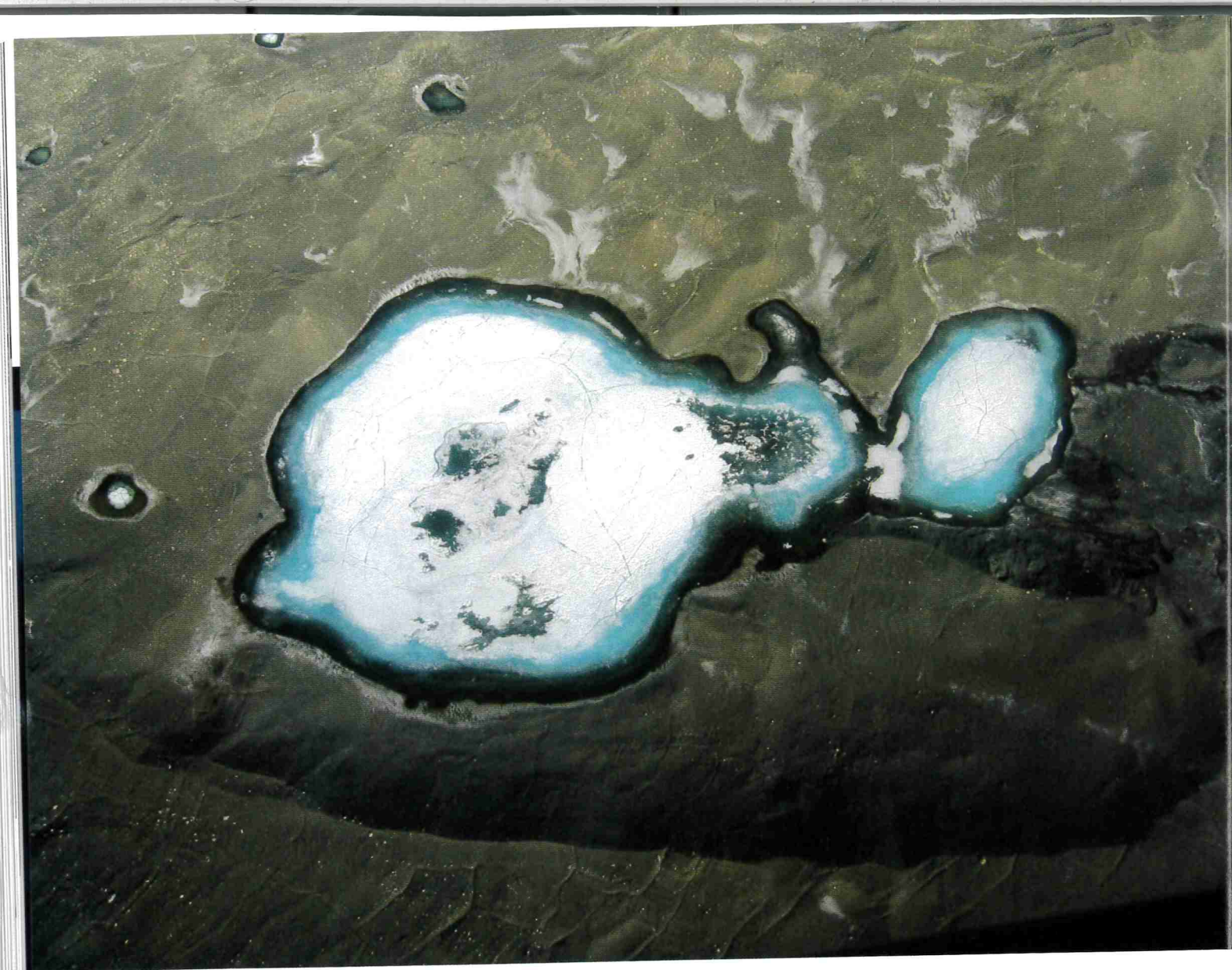
Now, Trubridge sets out with upgraded kit depending on his destination, sometimes using a Canon 5D with a telephoto lens, other times an Olympus OM-D EMII-5 (which he used in Dusky Sound). The results — however aged the camera — are now on the page for all to see.

The Other Way will be officially launched at Auckland Writers Festival in late August. It is available from selected retailers and davidtrubridge.com/nz, RRP\$99. A special boxed edition is also available, RRP\$299 (see page 10 for more details).

OPPOSITE — Inside the "Imax" crevasse on the slopes of Mount Erebus (so dubbed because a 3D IMAX movie was filmed here). "It was an incredible experience to find yourself deep inside this massive volume of ice that is slowly inching down the slopes of Erebus," says Trubridge. "The light is an ethereal blue and hoar frost formed all over our faces."

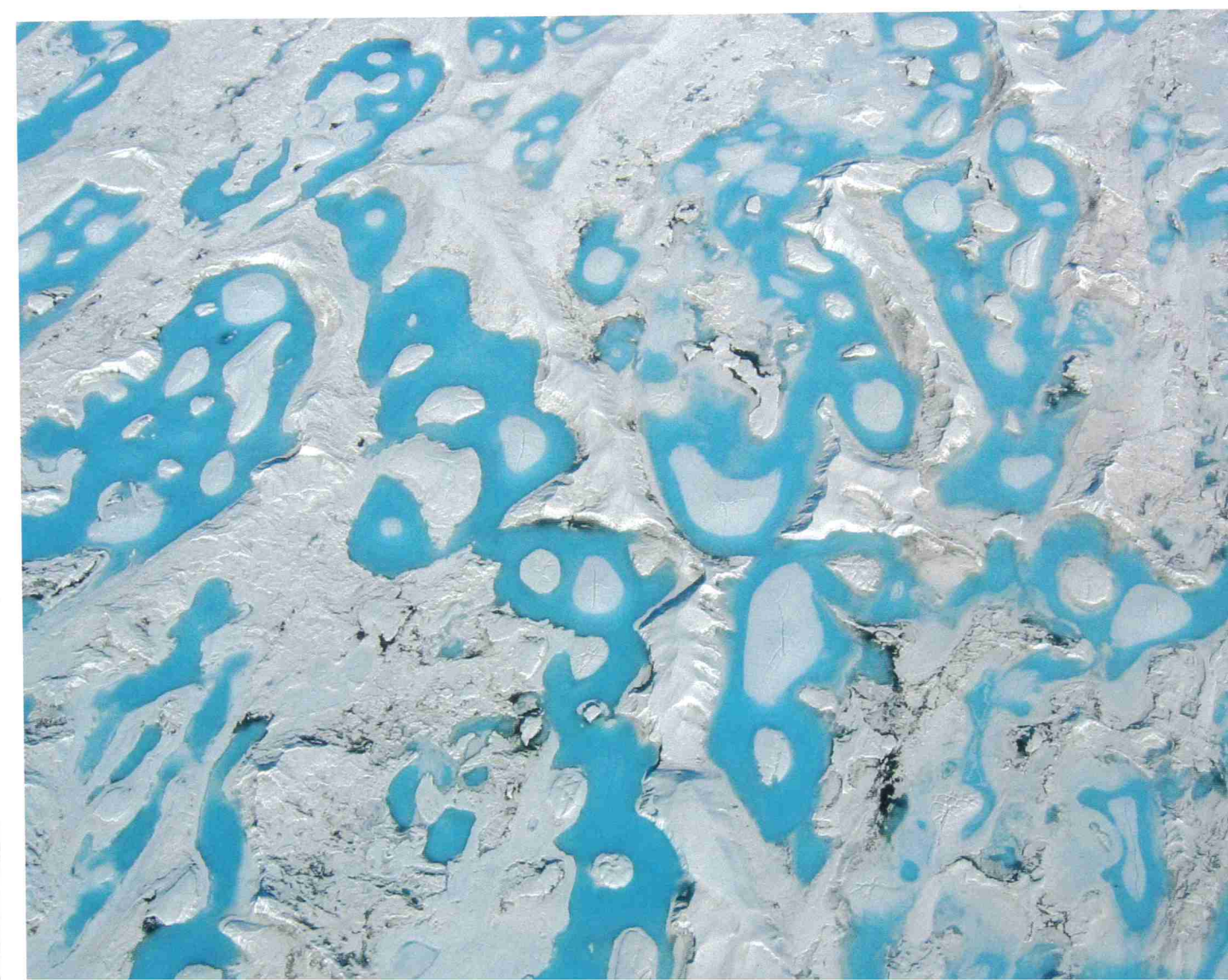
ABOVE — Black Island, seen from Mount Erebus over the Ross Ice Shelf. "I was captivated by the powerful contrast of blinding white and saturated black — the island is 70 kilometres away."

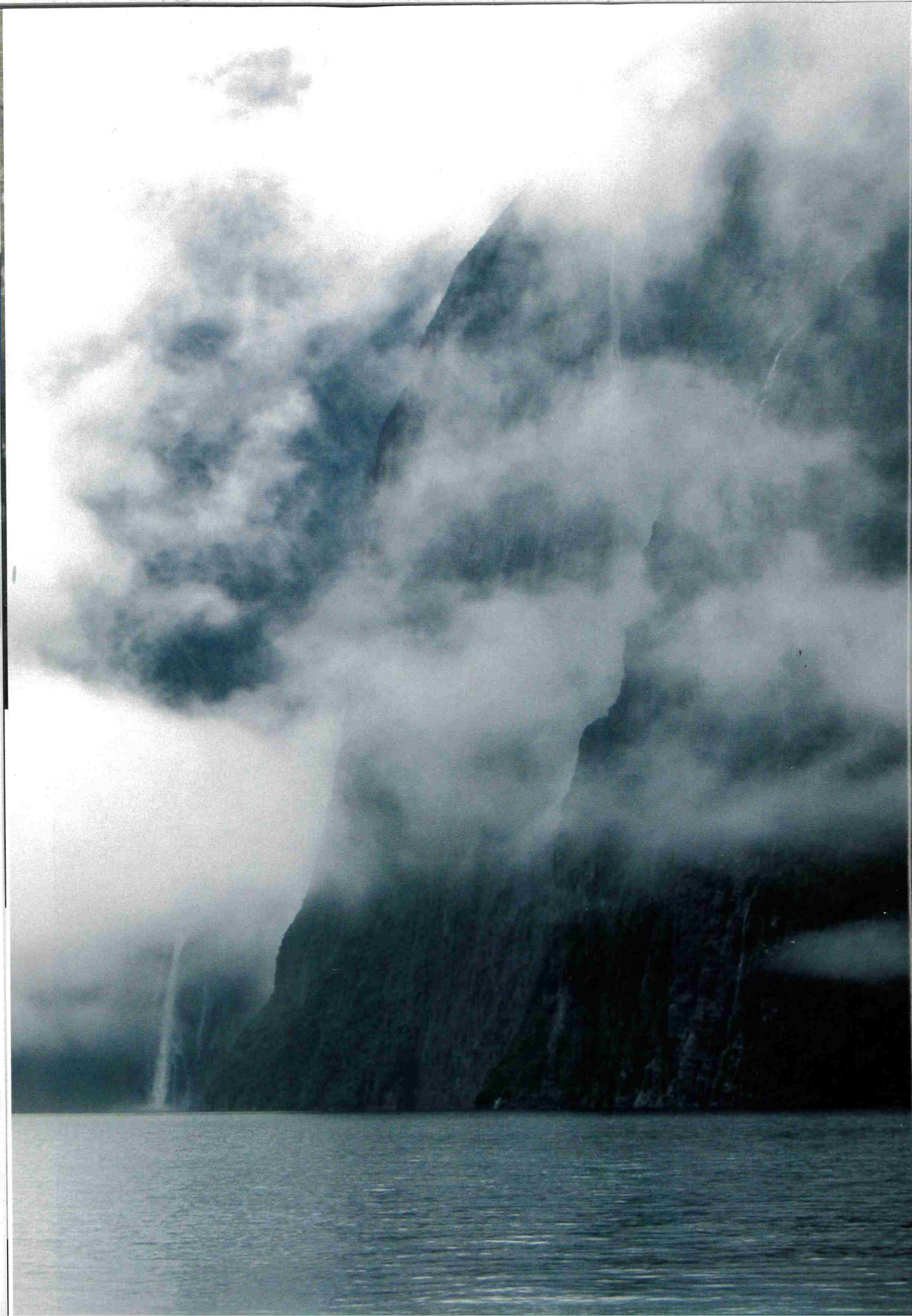




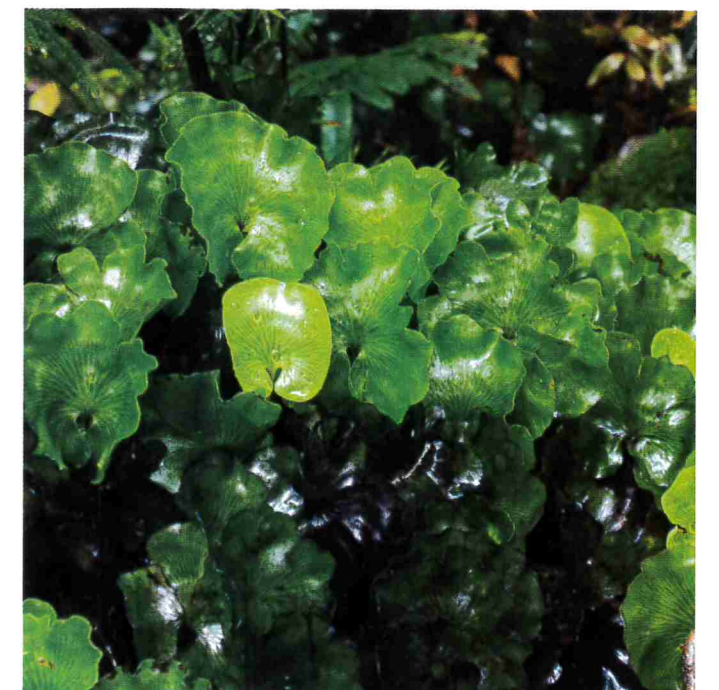
ABOVE — A frozen lake from the air in the Dry Valleys, the other side of McMurdo Sound from Scott Base. Extreme cold dry air sinks into the valleys, scouring out all moisture. OPPOSITE TOP — A feather trapped in the sea ice. “Lone details like these out on the endless expanse of empty whiteness taught me a new way to

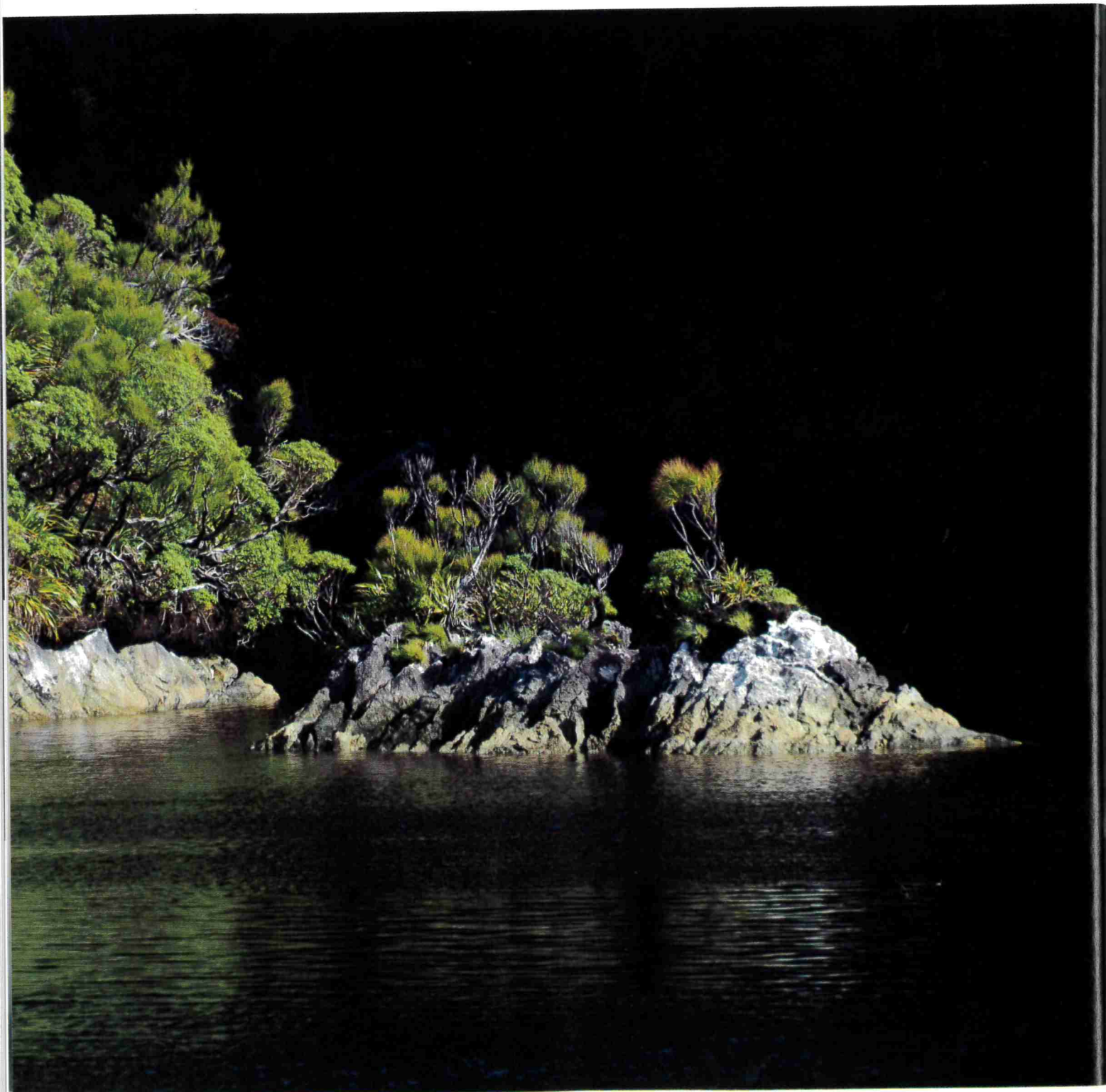
see landscape — telling these minute stories.” OPPOSITE BOTTOM — The surface of the Koettlitz Glacier, seen from a plane. “I had never seen the surface of the earth looking anything like this. It was so unexpected and staggeringly beautiful that tears trickled down my face as I tried to focus my camera.”





OPPOSITE — Doubtful Sound. “Mountains come alive for me in weather. They are no longer aloof in a hard blue sky but softened and breathing in the moisture-laden air. Clouds snag on cliff faces like sheep wool on a fence.” ABOVE — Trubridge explored Tamatea on a stand-up paddleboard. “The peat-laden waters quickly drift down through amber to inky-black depths.” RIGHT — “This is a filmy fern that flourishes in the damp, dense forest cover. Pukenui/Anchor Island is a predator-free reserve. It’s the home of highly endangered birds like kākāpō, tīeke, mōhua and kākārīki.” OVERLEAF — Earshell Cove — “the wonderfully protected anchorage on the west side of Mauikatau/Restoration Island.”





IRIS BLOOMING

Award-winning singer-songwriter Reb Fountain counts Jacinda Ardern among her fans – the prime minister gave Aussie PM Anthony Albanese an LP of the singer's latest album, *Iris*, when the pair met in Sydney this June. Fountain is embarking on an eight-date tour of New Zealand, kicking off in Hamilton on 22 July and ending in Hastings on 27 August.

She spoke to Elisabeth Easther about migrating to Aotearoa by boat, music as therapy and the intertwining of art-making with motherhood.

You were born in San Francisco – how did you react when your parents told you the family was moving to New Zealand?

I was six, so I didn't really have an opinion. But I do remember the boat ride over. The *Oriana* was pretty old-school, not like the Princess cruises of today. There was a pool on board and a disco lounge; there was also a massive storm and everyone was sick. I remember needing to go to the toilet but I couldn't get in because everyone was vomiting. My recollections are clearly very much from a child's perspective.

What was it like, being a new migrant in Aotearoa in the 1980s? Even though we looked similar to the people you'd see in the Ōtautahi suburbs, we were very different

culturally and for a while I felt quite isolated. My dad created a songbook and we'd hang out with other migrant families who'd come around for singalongs. Music was our way of connecting, of feeling like we were part of something. That's a very common migrant story, of keeping culture alive with music.

Going further back, what are the roots of your family tree?

My father's family is Scottish, and they migrated to Nova Scotia and my mom's side is from Ukraine. Her family went to Edmonton north of Vancouver. My grandmother Florence walked across the border from Canada to the United States with my mom and all their belongings. She was very religious, loved television evangelists and cowboy music and she wrote a lot of her own patriotic religious songs. On my dad's side everyone was musical, whether it was the fiddle, guitar, piano or singing.

Did you have lessons, or did you learn more by osmosis?

Definitely osmosis. I'd listen to Mom harmonising and think, how does she do that? Because I wanted to do it too. Although I found it challenging to learn music and I'd beat myself up for not getting stuff straight away.

When did music become more than just a hobby or a family tradition?

When I was about 13, I re-engaged with dad's songbook, with tunes by Woody Guthrie, Odetta, Gordon Lightfoot, Janis Joplin. Then, because I knew four chords, I

realised I could make my own songs, so I put my melancholic poems to music. From there, it grew into thinking about song structure, how to use music to engage with the world and I was able to express myself in a more positive way, as opposed to other outlets like self-harm or drinking. Talking about how I felt in a song felt safe and helped me make sense of things I couldn't articulate any other way.

"I loved being a mum, being there for my kids, but it was hardcore. I'm so grateful for that time, especially the DPB and training incentives. It's a travesty those things don't exist anymore."

When writing songs evolved into performing you were still a teenager, potentially at your most self-conscious. How difficult was that?

I joined my first band when I was 16, and learned how to jam and perform, but I was so nervous. I remember being onstage at the Carlton Mill tavern in Christchurch for Battle of the Bands. This is when you could still smoke in bars and I was on stage, standing stock-still with a bottle of bourbon and a cigarette, because I was terrified. But somehow, I expressed