



**KASIA CIEPLAK-MAYR VON BALDEGG**- Kasia Cieplak-Mayr von Baldegg is an associate editor at *The Atlantic*. She curates the [Video](#) channel. [More](#)

ALL POSTS | [Follow](#) @faketv · 970 follc



SHARE

EMAIL

## Eerily Beautiful Time-Lapse Music Video of Ice Melting

NOV 15 2011, 1:28 PM ET



1




67

French video artist [Christophe Thockler's](#) poetic music video for [Mimi Goese and Ben Neill's "Cusp"](#) freezes mementos and symbolic objects into blocks of ice that melt over time. The technique is a simple but ingenious way of visualizing memory and forgetting. The video required 40 blocks of ice and 36,000 still photographs, so don't miss the behind-the-scenes video and the interview with Thockler below. Make sure to watch full screen in HD!

Your System Status

**WE'RE SORRY!**

You need to update your Flash Player.



**IMPORTANT:** After installing the required upgrade please reload this browser window to view the video player.


### **The Atlantic: How did you come to do a video for this song, and what was your inspiration for using melting ice?**

*Christophe Thockler:* I discovered Ben Neill's music when I was a teenager and immediately loved it. A few months ago, I did an interview for a [French website](#) and mentioned his albums as a source of inspiration for my visual work. A few days later I received a message from Ben Neill saying he saw the interview and loved my work. It was amazing, unbelievable. We talked about his new project, a collaboration with the talented Mimi Goese called "Songs for Persephone" and we decided to work together on a music video. I listened to the album and immediately felt in love with the track "Cusp." The album "Songs for Persephone" was available in a limited edition with a box containing small objects and bibelots related to the songs.

I wanted to make the video a bit surreal, as a metaphor for time and memory. Objects from the special edition represent souvenirs and I wanted to play with ice to symbolize time, like "what is the effect of time on our memories? Do we remember or forget them?" I really think objects are linked to our unconscious inner self, embodying moments in life. Ice is at the same time a cold prison and a soft cocoon.

**BASF**  
The Chemical Company

Eradicating diseases while helping communities grow stronger?



See how we create chemistry at BASF. >

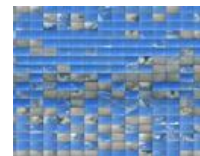
### **MOST-WATCHED VIDEOS**



[Address Is Approximate](#)



[Catching a Ride to Destiny](#)



**VOICES**



JAMES FALLOWS | [Thanksgiving Guest Post #2: 'This Is What Is...](#)



MEGAN MCARDLE | [America's Modern-Day Debtor's Prison](#)



TA-NEHISI COATES | [Michele Bachmann Is Right](#)



JEFFREY GOLDBERG | [Bachmann's Secret Pakistan Nuclear Source...](#)



ALEXIS MADRIGAL | [Forget Shopping, Friday Is Update Your Parents'...](#)



STEVE CLEMONS | [The GOP National Security Debate \(Updated\)](#)



DEREK THOMPSON | [AT&T Merger With T-Mobile Nears Collapse](#)



CLIVE CROOK | [Why Does Polarization Pay?](#)

*This behind-the-scenes video documents the process of making "Cusp" (watch the HD version here).*

**How long did it take to make the video? Tell us about the process.**

The video was really a huge project. It took me two months to do it, working almost 18 hours a day. "Cusp" is entirely composed of still photos. There is no video in it but no less than 36,000 photos. I had to create 40 blocks of ice, putting the objects in boxes with water and freezing them. Taking a photo every five seconds, I melted the ice at different rates with a burner and hot water, to fit the rhythm of the song and to create a sort of organic feeling. Editing the video and adjusting the contrasts and the colors of the 36,000 photos was also a very long process. Some fun facts:

- I did some scenes outdoors but due to bad weather I also did some inside, literally cutting a square of grass from my garden and moving it inside.
- Melting a block of ice took approximately 4 hours.
- 25 liters of water were involved in the making of the video, and probably even more coffee.
- Playing with ice and water near electric cables is dangerous. I almost electrocuted myself twice!
- Running up and down stairs with a tripod and a block of ice in hand is not safe either.

**How did you get into filmmaking?**

I got into filmmaking by coincidence. I studied English art and literature and wanted to be a teacher. I always loved music videos and graphic design, but never realized it until I got my first computer in 2006 and started to try photography and design. In 2007, I put some visuals on the Internet and an English rapper, James P Honey, asked me if I would like to make a music video for him. I was very fond of the stop motion technique I saw when I was younger, in Michel Gondry's videos or Shinya Tsukamoto's movies, and decided to try it. The result was my first music video "Nice Clean White." To my surprise people loved the video; it won some festivals and was exhibited in museums and broadcast on French TV.

**What's next for you?**

"Cusp" was released few weeks ago, so I really hope this video will be seen by many people, because it's (like my other works) directly aimed at the viewer, playing with his feelings and his own memories. I really wanted to do something special with this project so I am creating two series of limited edition photos from the video, a large format limited to 15 prints and a smaller one limited to 50 prints. For more information about the prints, please email me at [christophe.thockler@gmail.com](mailto:christophe.thockler@gmail.com). In December I will host a screening of my videos in Le Musée de l'Image in the French city of Epinal, during the GeNeRiQ Festival. I am also looking for artists to collaborate with on music videos and album packaging. Ladies and gentlemen, send me your tracks!

For more work by Christophe Thockler, visit <http://www.christophethockler.com/> or his [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#). For more music by Mimi Goese and Ben Neill, see <http://www.mimigoeseandbenneill.com/> or their [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#).

Via Vimeo's [HD channel](#).

**RELATED VIDEOS**



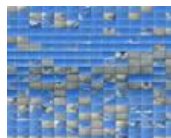
Lydia Davis's 'The Cows'



Marisa Silver's 'Three Girls'



Address Is Approximate



A History of the Sky

**CORRESPONDENTS**

ANDREW COHEN

[Giving Thanks \(Media/Law Edition\)](#)

THANASSIS CAMBANIS

[Egyptian Protesters Turn Against Once-Beloved Military](#)

D.B. GRADY

[Mr. President, The Republicans Mean Business](#)

VIEW ALL CORRESPONDENTS

**In Focus**

THE BIGGEST STORY IN PHOTOS



[Scenes From Egypt's Unfinished Revolution](#) | NOV. 23 2011

**SUBSCRIBE NOW**

SAVE 59%! 10 ISSUES JUST \$2.45 PER COPY

NAME	ADDRESS 1
ADDRESS 2	CITY
STATE	ZIP
EMAIL	

SUBSCRIBE

**NEWSLETTERS**

Sign up to receive our three free newsletters

Web2PDF

CHECK OUT MORE VIDEOS



SHARE EMAIL

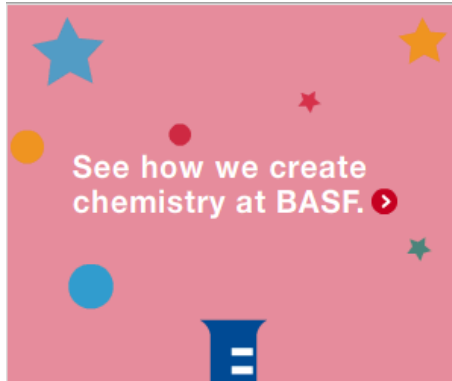
PRESENTED BY



Sponsored Links

Elsewhere on the Web

- 8 Old Wives Tales that are Actually True (from Environmental Graffiti)
- 10 U.S. Cities With the Cheapest Cost of Living (from Kiplinger)
- No Shirt Necessary: Would You Wear a Bra Top? (from StyleCaster)
- Why Being Overweight Causes Pain: 5 Facts (from HealthCentral.com)
- Top Ten Bombers: The Soviet Tupolev TU-95M (from HowStuffWorks Videos)



[what's this]

JOIN THE DISCUSSION

After you comment, click Post. If you're not already logged in you will be asked to log in or register.

Like 1 person liked this.



Empty comment input box.

POST AS ...

Showing 0 comments

Sort by Oldest first Subscribe by email Subscribe by RSS

Real-time updating is enabled. (Pause)

Comments powered by DISQUS

KASIA CIEPLAK-MAYR VON BALDEGG'S ARCHIVE

Navigation filters: RECENT POSTS, BY SOURCE, BY DATE

S U B S C R I B E | F I N D | R E C E N T | T H E A T L A N T I C | M O N T H L Y | G R O U P | N E W S L E T T E R | P A R T N E R S | C O N T A C T | A B O U T | P R I V A C Y | T E R M S | S I T E M A P | S I T E F E E D B A C K

COPYRIGHT ©2011 BY THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY GROUP. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. CDN POWERED BY EDGECAST NETWORKS.

- This Week on TheAtlantic.com (sample)
- This Month in The Atlantic (sample)
- 5 Best Columns from The Atlantic Wire (sample)

I want to receive updates from our partners and sponsors

EMAIL input field and SUBMIT button

MOST POPULAR

- National Geographic Photo Contest 2011
- World War II: After the War
- The 8 Best Innovation Ideas From Around the World
- All the Single Ladies
- Scenes From Egypt's Unfinished Revolution
- Forget Shopping, Friday Is Update Your Parents' Browser Day!
- The Amazing History and the Strange Invention of the Bendy Straw
- DOCUMERICA: Images of America in Crisis in the 1970s
- How the Rest of the World Sees Thanksgiving: Shopping Day
- IBM's Killer Idea: The \$100 DNA-Sequencing Machine