

Experimental Climate Change Research

(Boiling Point)

by Paul Walde

For one or more performers: 5 to 20 matching stovetop whistling kettles are set up on a table or series of work stations with a matching number of clear graduated cylinders or measuring cups, a corresponding number of matching portable electric or gas elements and a supply water, sea salt, and a matching number of identical table spoons. This can be set up in a row in a theatre setting or a circle in a gallery setting with the performer(s) inside the circle. A spot light should be used to illuminate each workstation.

The performance begins with the lighting or turning on of the cooking elements- these should be turned on to maximum heat. This can be done in the dark and the light brought up as the elements heat up. Each cylinder will be filled with the exact same amount of water- this could be 1L. To each cylinder a progressively greater amount of salt will be added. With the exception of the first cylinder (which will not get any) this will be one additional tablespoon per cylinder. For example 1 gets none, 2 gets 1, 3 gets 2. Once all the requisite amounts of salt are added the all the solutions will be stirred. If performed by an ensemble, all the solutions including the first (with no salt) will be stirred in unison until all the salt has dissolved. The solutions are transferred to the kettles one by one and together placed on the elements. In the case of a soloist the kettles should be placed on the elements in as quick succession as possible. The kettles are to be boiled dry or until the tone of kettle stops. As each kettle finishes sounding, the corresponding element will be turned off. The performance ends when all the elements have been turned off.

Notes: In the case of 10 or more kettles, teaspoons may be used instead of table spoons. Distilled, previously boiled, filtered, or natural sources such as glacial water should be used for this piece. Do not use straight tap water unless it is left to stand for 24 hours. Any air conditioning should be turned off for the duration of this performance. Any increases in humidity or temperature are intentional and part of the piece.