# Dragon on a Snowflake

Text by Jon Merritt

When water freezes, its molecules bind together in either hexagonal, cubic, or trigonal arrangements. Under the right conditions, the most common hexagonal variety can proceed to bunch and branch into the six-pointed structures that we know as a snowflakes or "hexagonal ice." Temperature is but one condition, however, snowflake formation is delayed when absent a microbial population within the water vapor. Pure water at freezing temperature will often form into crystals in an instant the moment a microbial colony is introduced.

Some species of bacteria depend on snowflake travel, and are only able to multiply upon reaching dead vegetation at the end of their journey. And likewise, this inorganic cycle of precipitation is semi-dependant on the bacteria, and an organic-inorganic symbiosis may here be observed. Interestingly, unique geometric snowflake compositions are generated each time as individual expressions within this eons-old, repeating process.

The snowflake-in-descent, a site of intense interplay of organic and inorganic expression inspired a walkable model which later became Dragon on a Snowflake. This was not a true model, but would be more closely identified philosophically as a tracing of the site (in the sense of the French verb "tracer"), a trailblazing, opening-up of an idea

about the snowflake-in-descent -- as a subject of geometric art.

In place of more familiar kinds of microbes which might inhabit a clump of hexagonal ice, other creatures sympathetic to the project were introduced: the snowflake cluster proved to be an ideal setting for the geometric, nature-traced creatures to find themselves animated. They were also given artificial intelligence programming which would enact a different outcome each time the cluster was revisited, by way of random number generators.

Dragons are the largest inhabitants of the snowflake cluster of Dragon on a Snowflake, followed by Arboreal Models, Animalian Boats, Firedogs, and Lobsters.