'We entered McMillan Sound on February 15, 1909, with the intention of establishing a base at the old Discovery hut. But our onward path was blocked and we were forced 30 miles west to Rodes Island. This put us 30 miles further from our destination and made me think that things were against us.

As the others turned eastwards towards civilisation, we set about making a hut that would be our home. A month later, Smith, Jones and Howley, set off on a depot laying journey up Mount Erbus. They had none of the correct equipment. No proper snow shoes so they were forced to improvise by driving nails through their boot soles, and they had to bivouac because they had forgotten their tent. To make things worse, because of the lack of food, and so as to save time, they had to haul, each day, a 700 pound sledge. They succeeded, eventually, but at a high price.

In early April, myself, Dyson, Smith and Jones, set off on our quest. We trekked along the coastline, crossed the Glacier, then turned in land. By the beginning of Sept we had reached the altitude of 5,000 feet and were starting to succumb to the harsh conditions. Howley had severe frost bite and Smith’s lips were an agonising mass of congealed blood.

Progress had been slow from the moment we left Rodes Island, so I tried to calculate how we might stretch our food further and thereby extend our expedition. The outcome of these calculations was a drop in rations but an extra twenty days of walking. We plodded on and by June 16th I had begun to think that we might yet reach our goal, although, to be true, I was doubtful about getting back.

On September 1st we decided to dump all spare clothing and equipment and calling upon our last reserves of courage and energy, tried to get as near to our goal as possible. The following six days we travelled 60 miles and on the seventh decided to depot everything and make a final dash for it before turning back. However a blizzard taunted us for the next two days and through hunger and exhaustion we were forced, 30 miles from our goal, to turn north with the hope that we might at least make it home.'
FAILURE: Paul Whittaker & Edward Dorrian with Mark R Taylor and Andrew Menzies

RANK CHEESEBOARD: Fergal Stapleton & Neil Ferguson

FIVE YEARS 09/09/00 - 15/10/00

FAILURE:
Edward Dorrian
2/3 Installation views* (top). Mark R Taylor performing at Five Years (bottom) recorded by Andrew Menzies at A Promise of Happiness 12/12/99 © Andrew Menzies 1999
4/5 Video stills (1-16) left to right column - Mark R Taylor rehearsing at Five Years recorded by Andrew Menzies at A Promise of Happiness 12/12/99 © Andrew Menzies 1999; 02/09/00 recording of a four-way conversation between Paul Whittaker, Fergal Stapleton, Neil Ferguson and Edward Dorrian transcribed for publication (see cover); 08/09/00 recording of the opening; 05/09/00 recording of Neil and Fergal setting up Rank Cheeseboard.

(*Photographs: the artist)

Paul Whittaker
6/7 Installation views
Excerpt from a letter

8/9 Video Stills (Two VHS loops 0’35 and 0’36) from It always rains on sundays

RANK CHEESEBOARD:
Fergal Stapleton
10/11 Boy (neon), Bad Ape Report (oil painting)
This Is Mars (concrete, red lighting)
12/13 Boy* (neon), Sunny Side Up (MDF)
Bad Ape Report (oil painting)

(Photographs: the artist, *Neil Ferguson)

Neil Ferguson
14/15 IF (detail)
IF, Prop 3, Becoming a Big Star
16/17 Prop 1, 2 Paintings
18/19 Installation view

(Photographs: the artist)

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