

RISING WATERS CONFAB 2015

Rauschenberg Residency
CAPTIVA ISLAND, FLORIDA
APRIL 27 - MAY 29, 2015



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Mangrove anchoring sand spit off North Captiva Island on Pine Island Sound. Photo: Buster Simpson.

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Photo illustration: Carrell Courtright.

Back cover: *Fathom Sounding Staff*, 2015. Buster Simpson. Utilitarian agitprop walking stick. Captiva Island, Gulf of Mexico. Photo: Buster Simpson.

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Editor: Buster Simpson
Co-Editor: Anne Focke
Design: Buster Simpson and Todd Metten
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Participants

Buster Simpson (Project Curator), Artist
 Laura Sindell (Project Curator), Artist
 Anne Focke (Project Partner), Writer/Maker of Enterprises & Projects
 David Buckland, Artist/Filmmaker/Director, Cape Farewell Project
 Mel Chin, Conceptual/Visual Artist
 Xavier Cortada, Site-Specific Artist
 Orion Cruz, Environmental Lawyer, Activist
 Gretel Ehrlich, Writer
 John Englander, Oceanographer/Sea Level Rise Expert
 Walter J. Hood, Artist/Designer/Educator
 Lewis Hyde, Poet/Essayist/Cultural Critic
 Natalie Jeremijenko, Artist/Engineer
 Edward Morris, Artist, Co-founder/Director, the Canary Project
 Helen Nagge, Freelance Editor, Collaborator with Mel Chin
 Jeremy Pickard, Playwright/Performer
 Andrea Polli, Environmental Artist/Writer
 Thomas Ruppert, Attorney/Coastal Planning Specialist
 Susannah Sayler, Environmental Artist/Co-founder the Canary Project
 Tom Van Lent, Scientist/Engineer/Science & Policy Everglades Foundation
 Glenn Weiss, Public Art Consultant
 June Wilson, Executive Director, Quixote Foundation/Performer
 Kristie Anders, Honorary Participant

Rauschenberg Residency

Ann Brady, Director	Lori Hendricks, Housekeeper
Carrell Courtright, Studio Supervisor	Terri Schwab, Chef
Matt Gamel, Intern	Jason Stilp, Studio Assistant
Matt Hall, Facilities Supervisor	Jessica Todd, Residency Coordinator

Introducing the Rising Waters Confab

Rauschenberg Residency April 27 - May 29, 2015

Captiva Island sits at the edge of the rising waters of climate change. Increased carbon emissions are affecting global weather patterns, driving rapidly changing conditions in the Arctic. Every place on earth will be affected by what happens in the Arctic. The Arctic is Captiva.

The Rising Waters Confab convened as a focused collaborative residency at Robert Rauschenberg's studio on 20 acres between the Gulf of Mexico and Pine Island Sound on Captiva Island, Florida. Captiva will eventually be paradise lost to sea rise. Perhaps for now it can function as a laboratory for creative planning, and as a model for a graceful transition and migration to higher ground.

Scientist Leonard Berry wrote to Confab participants, challenging us to respond to our era of rampant consumption, a time out of balance with natural systems. He stated that the issue is a moral one, requiring heroic creative effort on the part of human beings. Without action, the alternative is a short chapter in the geologic history book between the fifth extinction caused by a meteorite and the Anthropocene, a sixth extinction of our making.

This document presents what transpired during the five-week Confab, compiled from a variety of sources including a group blog. Comprised of a unique, multi-disciplinary group of participants, working both collectively and individually, the Confab focused on multiple issues using the local as a laboratory for the global. The resulting work falls into the following categories: Science & Fact, Commons, Agitprops, Interventions & Engagements, and Open Studio, which included a public presentation at the Confab's conclusion.

Laura Sindell, Anne Focke, and I partnered in the visioning, curating, and implementation of the Confab, as well as being fully engaged participants in

the creative discourses that ensued. Carrying on in Bob's stead, the RR staff, which Director Ann Brady refers to as the "creative infrastructure," impressed everyone with their knowledge and commitment to the power of the creative force and their awareness and concern for Captiva Island facing climate change.

The intent of the Rising Waters Confab was to further Rauschenberg's lifelong approach to use art as a catalyst for social and environmental change, and to bring together artists, scientists, and other creative thinkers in this endeavor. His efforts in international understanding through his ROCI (Rauschenberg Overseas Cultural Interchange 1984-1991) exemplify that no person is an island.

To reverse our excessive carbon footprint trajectory and avoid the worst of global catastrophes, a unified collaboration is required on a scale never before seen. Do we have it in our DNA to adapt and creatively retool our footprint?

Buster Simpson

Twenty Two Fathom Stretch group portrait in the Gulf of Mexico. Photos: Sage Sohler, Laura Sindell, and Buster Simpson. Photo Illustration: Carrell Courtright and Todd Metten.



Captiva's Outlook

Leonard Berry

If you stand on the shore at the high tide mark and look inland, the horizon (minus all the villas and trees) will be about at eye level. At five feet, the mighty peak of the island is less than the height of the average beachgoer, so the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) predictions of sea-level rise by the end of the century don't look good for Captiva. Their curves suggest an outside chance of up to six feet of sea-level rise by 2100, while conservative estimates range from three to four feet. For sure there will be a steady, measurable and troublesome encroachment month-by-month, year-by-year. NOAA's graph outlines the possibilities and suggests some of the potential timing.

Most likely the perceived impact will be twofold – first the steady rise of the spring and fall high tides moving to the edge of the beach and beyond, damaging the road and coastal homes. Second, and more dramatic, will be coastal storms gaining impact because of the higher, warmer seas. And if we are unlucky, storms may create surges which overtop and engulf the island, eroding the beaches, but maybe also piling debris to add to that five feet of internal height. As a barrier island, Captiva will tend to change form and migrate under natural conditions, probably moving toward the mainland shore. This may happen in any event but there is much that we can do to postpone or even change this scenario.

Of course we need to act, reducing emissions and finding ways to store excess carbon, methane and other greenhouse gases. Anything we can do to enhance this process, we should. But even if Captiva and South Florida could achieve zero emissions, our past actions and limited ability to respond globally mean we face ongoing global temperature rise, melting ice sheets, warming oceans and rising seas.

So, while thinking globally, we also need to be acting locally, especially in vulnerable places like Captiva (and nearby Sanibel where my daughter has a house!). We may not stop water levels rising, but we can lessen the impact by deferring the damage and lengthening the time Captiva remains a beautiful, vibrant part of the world.

Unfortunately, the most obvious measures – structures like sea walls and dykes – won't work. Captiva is a gift of nature, and natural systems are the best defense for rising seas. Mangroves are wonderful shore



Strangler Fig with Ladder Chair. Photo: Buster Simpson.

protectors as the intricate root structures break up all but the greatest waves and at the same time provide the basic structure of a whole ecosystem of plants and animals. Natural or manually reinforced sand dunes are also excellent natural protectors. Superstorm Sandy provided an unfortunate experiment demonstrating that fact. Communities with coastal dunes were much more protected than those that had cleared the dunes to improve the view.

We can also look at the design of our houses and infrastructure. Can water flow through rather than into our dwellings?

With the presence of the Rauschenberg Residency and its low profile to the sea, Captiva can contribute to the awareness of sea-level rise in two unique ways. One is by monitoring the impacts of the rising waters and the effectiveness of the measures taken to ameliorate impacts.

Secondly, through effective communication and outreach, artists and scientists can assist in defining the problem and helping people and communities adapt and deal with it. Thus Captiva is a living laboratory for the artist and an inspiration for the scientist.

IN THE DRY MORNING

*In the dry morning no thunder-talk and
saw palmettos scratch wild lime.
The man who makes charcoal lights
buttonwood fires as fish houses are yanked off
their stilts and dragged to high ground.*

*We're told that these are our last days
and stand shin-deep in water looking for signs:
obedient tides nod and roll; the Everglades flush and refresh their waters.
But down-coast, a key deer drowns, and
a lightning whelk's shell dissolves; the gulf stream slows,
and no Calusa chief calls for rain.*

*In the dry morning we compete
to be first and when that fails,
strive to be last though we are neither.
During the night sea turtles build false nests
and the man who inherited a fortune
scours the beach for coins.*

Gretel Ehrlich
May 21, 2015

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A polychaete worm casting found on the Cayo Costa Island Confab Expedition by Lewis Hyde and is one of many varieties that form worm reefs. Photo: RR Staff.

Finding the Florida Middle Ground

"Observations suggest that the Florida Middle Ground is the remnant of a series of shore-parallel bars that formed as sea level was rising in the early Holocene, approximately 10,000 years ago."

Chris Reich and Helen Gibbons Feb. 2014 USGS Sound Waves.

Natalie Jeremijenko and Mel Chin. Photo: Laura Sindell. ►



SCIENCE & FACTS

Knowledgeable Confab participants, scientists among them, provided a backdrop of facts, references, and sources of information that informed and inspired Confab conversations, research, and projects.

How The Arctic Drives The Climate Of The Temperate World

Compiled by Gretel Ehrlich

In 2005, John Schellnhuber, a climate scientist at the Potsdam Institute said: "Every major ecosystem on the planet is in a state of collapse."

ALBEDO

From the Latin, alba, meaning white. Snow and ice covered lands and oceans in the northern hemisphere---including the Arctic Ocean, all Arctic nations, including Alaska, Nunavut, Greenland, northern Scandinavia, and Arctic Russia radiate solar heat back into space, thus keeping the temperate part of the world habitable.

THE WORLD HAS A MORTAL FEVER

Carbon Dioxide traps heat: Smokestack and tailpipe emissions = a steadily hotter world.

Feedback loop: the warmer it gets, the more surface melt, the less albedo effect.

No snow or ice=more heat.

As the atmosphere heats, so do the oceans. The ocean-atmospheric circulation is chemically complex and dynamic. Warming oceans upload more and more water vapor into the atmosphere. Water vapor, is now the most prolific greenhouse gas in the atmosphere.

OCEAN HEATING AND ACIDIFICATION

As oceans heat up, and become more polluted, the shells of mollusks dissolve, no longer able to sequester carbon at the bottom of the sea.

Corals die. The building blocks of life on the planet become endangered. Planetary heating scenarios increase rapidly and exponentially.

METHANE

As the oceans and atmosphere heat up, permafrost and frozen clathrates on the bottom of the sea melt and outgas methane. Oceans, tundra,



North Captiva Island, Gulf of Mexico. Photo: Buster Simpson.

grasslands, and forests sequester carbon. In the last few years, plumes of methane, some 1000 meters across, have been seen in the Arctic Ocean; methane bubbles have been spotted in 570 places from Cape Hattaras to Maine.

Terrestrial permafrost exists in an apron around the top of the world. This ground has been frozen for 1000's of years. It is now melting in the summer months and uploading methane into the atmosphere, altering weather patterns that fly across the top of the world propelled by the jet stream.

DROUGHT

A hotter world mean less winter snow in naturally arid areas like Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Idaho, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, and up into the Dakotas. As well as Mexico, Australia, South America, Syria, Iraq, much of the African continent, etc.

Less snow and rain means expanding drought. Drought begets more drought as the water table shrinks and aquifers are used up.

In an abruptly heating planet, famine will occur. Aquifers will dry up. Wildlife, livestock, birds, and humans will be searching for water. This is already happening in the central valleys of California where water

is being stolen and sold on the black market. In the Sonoran desert of Mexico, over 150,000 cattle died of thirst in one summer. Declining food production for a burgeoning population means hungry people wandering about looking for food, water, and agricultural jobs.

Drought means that rivers and fisheries decline.

THE JET STREAM

As the difference in air temperature between the Arctic and the lower latitudes lessens, the velocity of the jet stream weakens. Before, the meeting of hot and cold forced air to move rapidly from west to east around the world. Now the jet stream is more like a braided river, meandering around, and frequently stalling, allowing big storms, like Hurricane Sandy to linger.

THE ARCTIC OSCILLATION

An index of pressure systems that roll across the polar north. In the AO's "positive phase," frigid air stays to the north of the jet stream, and temperate air stays south.

In its "negative phase" the opposite happens. Warm air is pushed up into the Arctic all winter, and frigid air masses are trapped in the lower zones of North America.

In the last 7 years the phases of the AO have been switching back and forth, and no one knows exactly why. So in April, jet stream moves and cold air goes north, while New England may have an April heat wave.

Now, even this aberration is changing because of the amount of meltwater coming off the Greenland ice sheet into the Atlantic.

THE AMOC, or THE GULF STREAM

Since the salinity of the oceans change, the conveyor belt of warm water that circulates from Africa north to Greenland has begun to falter. This might mean the UK, northern Europe, and northeastern US will have colder winters; the increase in water vapor means there will be more precipitation in those areas as well. See: the blog called Climate Denier Crock of the Week, and You tube of Mike Mann from Penn State. These have been posted on our Rising Waters blog.)

Weather patterns are changing all over the world because of these abrupt interchanges of hot and cold, moisture and dry air.

ACCELERATED ICE SHEET MELT

The stability of the Greenland ice sheet is imperiled. Surface melt in the summer is well-documented. Huge rivers of water are flowing off the ice sheet and gouging down into the ice. The snow on top of the ice sheet is darkening: industrial soot and ash from western wildfires in summer are caught up in the polar drift and drop down on the ice sheet, decreasing its ability to radiate sunlight back into space. (see Jason Box's Dark Snow project). The dark spots absorb more heat and drill down into the ice, weakening the firn, the compressed snow---the basic makeup of a glacier.

Glaciers ooze down the cliffs of Greenland and move out into the ocean.

Glacial tongues snap off because of the warming water and the pressure from above.

Basal sliding---the movement of ice on bedrock---creates friction, and that heat melts more ice.

Moulins---natural drainpipes of a glacier or an ice sheet---are now overflowing with meltwater that in turn, lubricates the ice.

Subglacial lakes have been discovered. These are suddenly draining, then quickly refilling: an indication that the natural plumbing of the ice sheet is overwhelmed.

Captiva Island, Pine Island Sound. Photo: Buster Simpson.



A canyon bigger than the Grand Canyon has been discovered stretching from Summit to the Petermann Glacier on the NW coast. No one knows how this feature might affect a collapsing ice sheet.

The ice sheet is thus affecting: sea level rise; ocean salinity and therefore the viability of the Gulf Stream; weather, and albedo. What was once a polar desert is now a place of stormy seas, decreasing sea ice, the death of a 20,000 year old pan-Arctic culture, etc.

**POINTS OF NO RETURN:
ABRUPT ANTARCTIC ICE LOSS & SEA LEVEL RISE**

Since 2009, the formerly stable Antarctic ice shelves and glaciers have begun shifting, melting, sliding, and breaking off. Fifty-six billion tons of ice a year is being lost.

Larsen B is set to dissolve in the next 2 years. Larsen C within 200 years. Pine Island Glacier and Thwaites Ice Stream are the fastest melting glaciers in west Antarctica and within the next 100 years will contribute significantly to sea level rise.

As the ice sheets and their outlet glaciers melt, the seas will continue to rise quickly.

Dr Jason Box asserts that "When all is said and done, sea level will rise 70 feet. That's dialed in. It's just a matter of when..." [See John Englander, Pg. 14]

DEALING WITH CONSEQUENCES

Julien Dowdeswell, the head of Glaciology at Cambridge University said: "It's too late to stop it. We can only deal with the consequences."

Climate migrants will be a reality. We can't even deal with the political refugees, much less the millions who will be looking for food, water, a place to live.

We can sequester more CO2 in the ground where it belongs by stopping over-paving, over-plowing, over-grazing. By conserving vast grasslands and forest, creating more soil, leaving plant litter on the ground, letting the wild be wild.

Coal plants must be shut down. They are perhaps the most egregious polluters: Women in Greenland have more mercury in their breast milk than anyone else in the world.

Solar power on all new residential and commercial buildings could be legislated into the building code.

All the brilliant eco-engineering we've had a taste of here, should and must be supported and implemented quickly.

Dr. James Hansen, James Lovelock, and other climate scientist suggest we may need to go to small scale nuclear power plants in order to stop throwing CO2 into the atmosphere. See the You Tube of James Hansen at AGS in San Francisco in Dec 2014. Controversial, yes. But worth understanding the urgency of our situation. Absolutely a last resort....but....

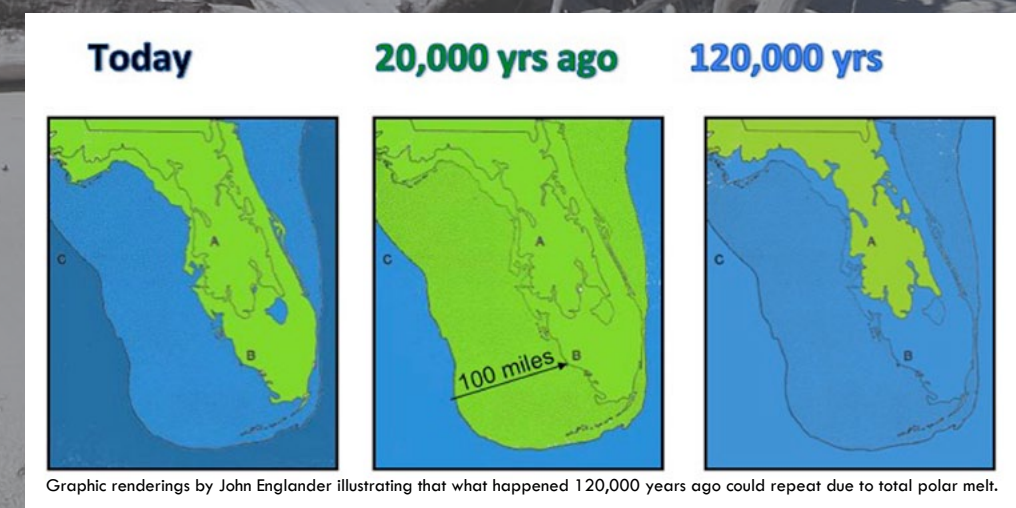
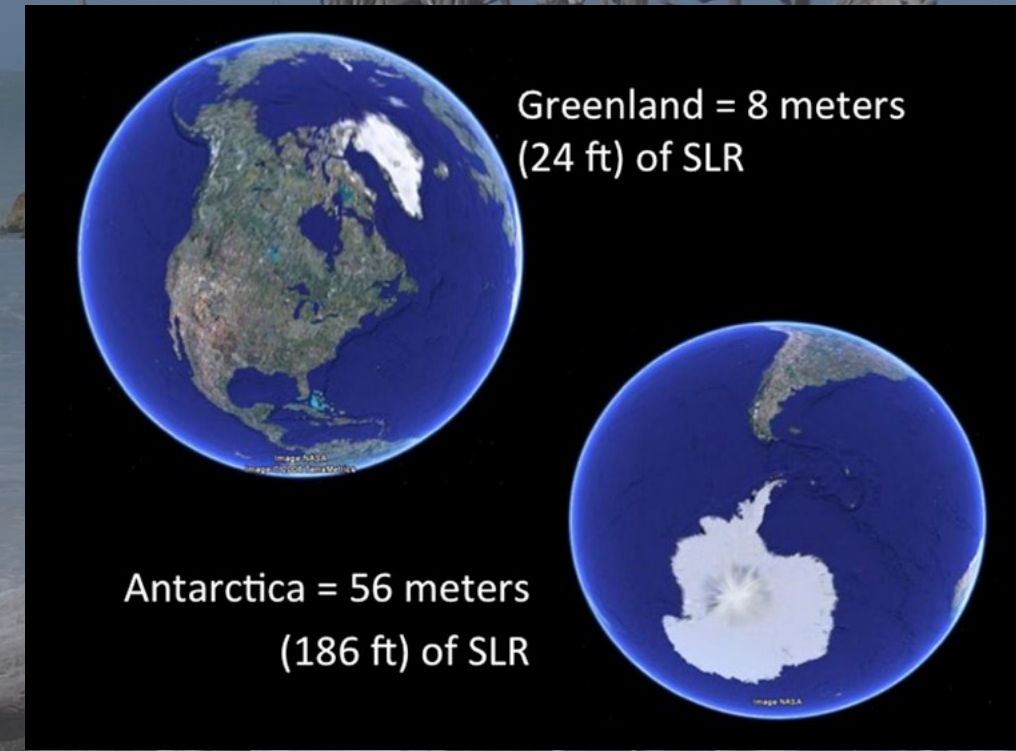
ALL HANDS ON DECK

Jason Box said: "We simply must lower atmospheric carbon emissions. If even a small fraction of Arctic seafloor methane is released to the atmosphere, we're fucked. We have very limited time to avert climate impacts that will ravage us irreversibly."

If we are to be makers of art about rising water, melting ice sheets, severe drought, then it's good to understand the science. It's frightening but also fascinating. We can help change minds, illuminate consciousness, and jump into action with compassion as we digest the whole-world view, the wholes within wholes. Action without compassion is like planting a dead tree. We want walking mangroves and food and water for all!

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote: "I am nothing. I see all."

Captiva Island, Pine Island Sound. Photo: Buster Simpson.

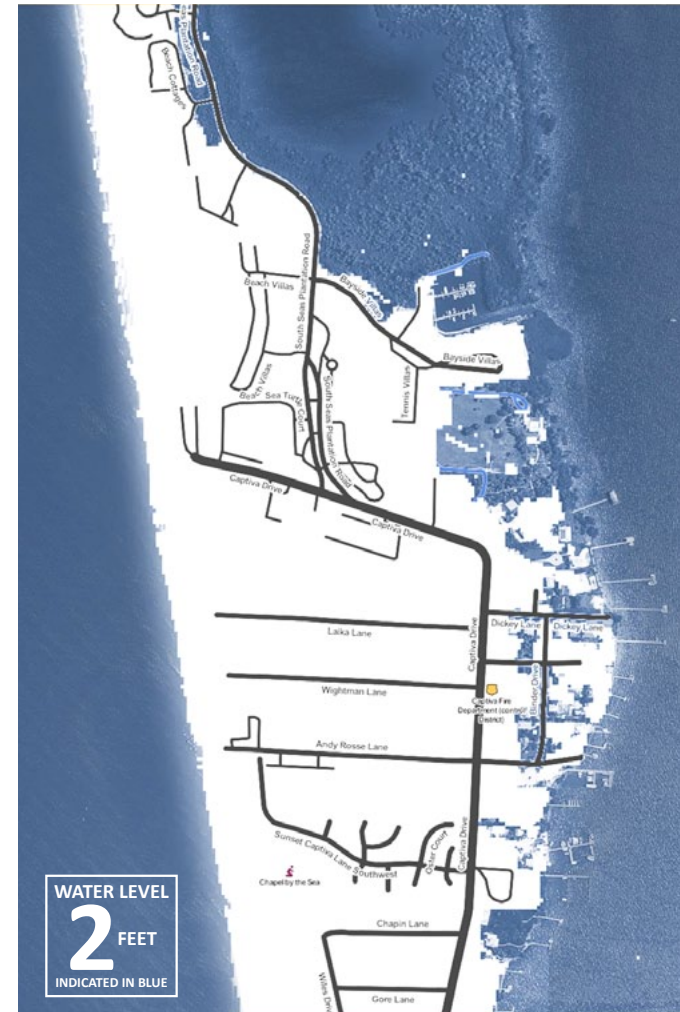


Surging Seas

Sea level rise analysis by Climate Central



Captiva Island in 2015. Robert Rauschenberg Residency outlined in blue.



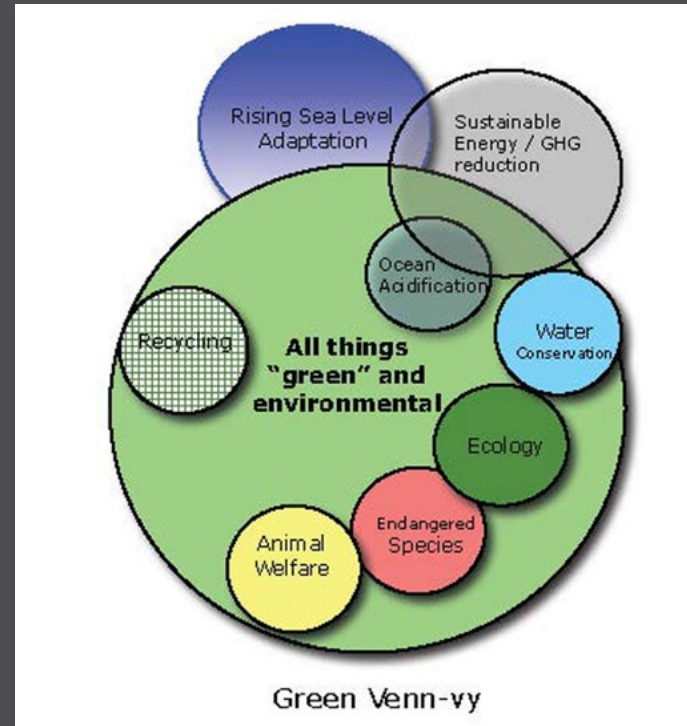
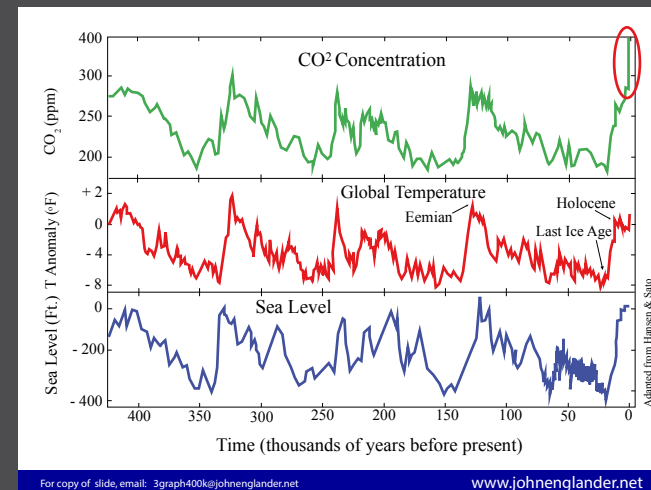
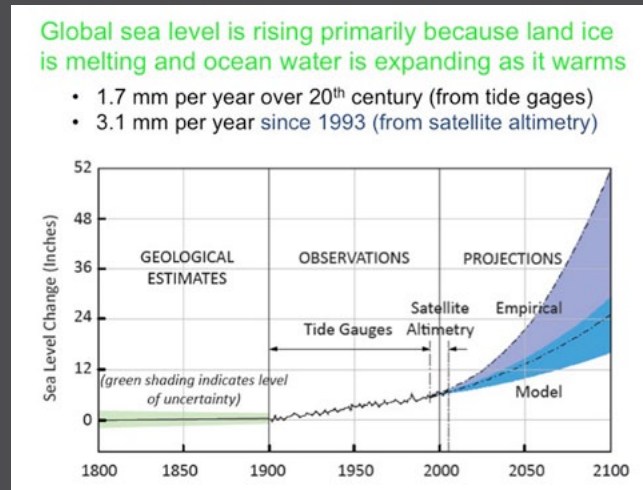
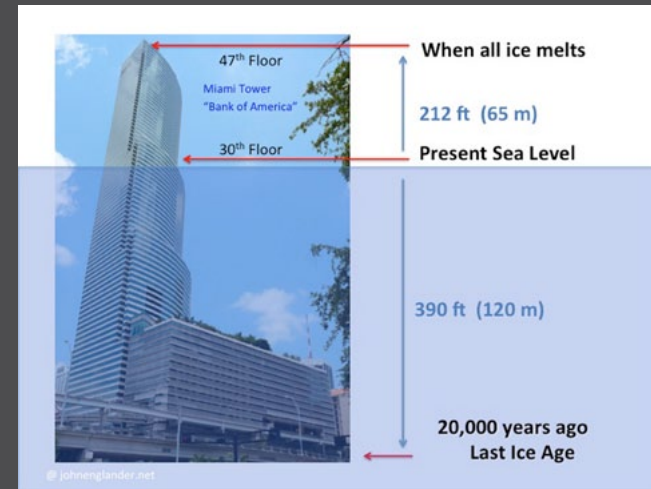
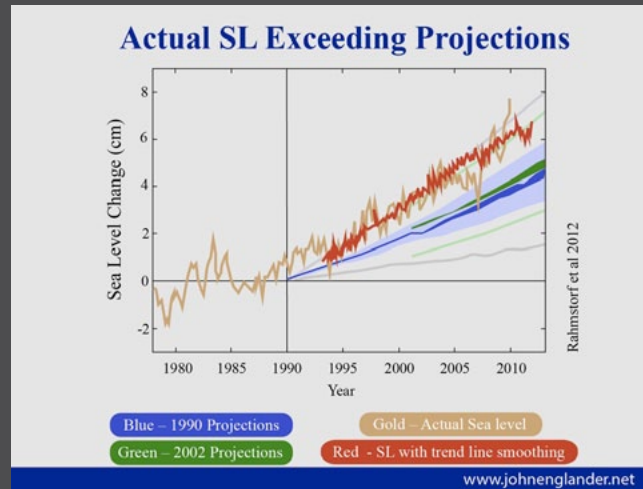
We Have Time to Adapt, but No Time to Waste

John Englander

Melting ice and rising seas are not an opinion... Sea level rise is now unstoppable. The questions are where can we slow it and how do we adapt.

We have choices: isolate, elevate, or relocate.

Diverse issues come under the banner of "green" and environmental. Some are closely related and overlap, while others are quite unrelated, as illustrated on this Venn diagram with overlapping circles. For example, renewable energy, reducing "greenhouse gases" will slow the force of climate change and affect sea level rise, though sea level rise has tremendous other impacts on communities and economics, quite separate from the energy issues. Both of them have aspects and implications beyond the "green issues."



All charts and graphics: John Englander.



In Greenland, Antarctica, and beyond the ice is melting into rivers giant glaciers gradually soften gravity guides them surely to sea

Inexorable, unstoppable we are impotent to halt the rivers of ice two hundred thousand in number mostly beyond our sight and mind

Unseen but in control of our coastal world frozen waters are changing form our ocean planet is reminding us of our place our connection to the sea

Steady shores lured us, invited us to build bigger and bigger as if we were in command. silly us

We have awakened the sleeping polar giants a sea change has just begun this is a new epoch welcome to the anthropocene

It is a revolutionary reality the sea is rising. slowly now she is giving us time to adapt if we dare look at the future

King tides make it clear waters will go from feet to chin we will emerge or be submerged now is the time for us to rise

"Sea-Rise" by John Englander

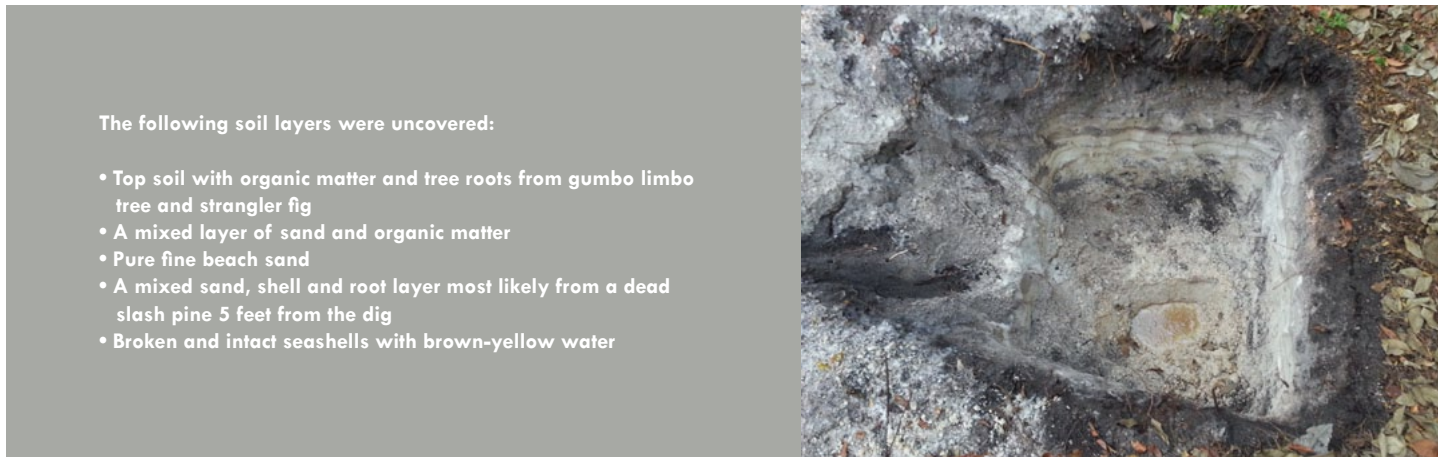
Digging for Water

Glenn Weiss

To discover the depth of the water table on the Rauschenberg Residency property, a hole was dug over two days.



At 8:03am, May 14, 2015, Glenn struck water at the Rauschenberg Residency on Captiva Island. The brackish water appeared at around 48 inches in a beige layer of broken shells.



The following soil layers were uncovered:

- Top soil with organic matter and tree roots from gumbo limbo tree and strangler fig
- A mixed layer of sand and organic matter
- Pure fine beach sand
- A mixed sand, shell and root layer most likely from a dead slash pine 5 feet from the dig
- Broken and intact seashells with brown-yellow water



A concrete property line marker was dropped into the water.



The backside of the dig mound was carved to expose the layers of each in reverse order.

Photos: Glenn Weiss

COMMONS

Confab participants came together around common meals and conversations and investigated the human consequences of climate change, the need for communication, and the opportunities offered by the commons as an ancient and contemporary way of managing shared resources.

Is it Fair?

Thomas Ruppert

“When the waters won’t recede, the have’s and have-not’s are where the tensions will build.”

Thomas Ruppert
Rising Waters Confab, May 5, 2015

“At the center of today’s debate [about property]...lies a collective failure on our part to think clearly and intently about the institution [of property], how it works, why it exists, and the many shapes it can take, in terms of landowner rights and responsibilities.... In operation, [the right to property] is less an individual right than a tool society uses to promote overall social good. Important truths about this arrangement have largely passed from our collective memory. We need to regain these truths.” *

* Eric Freyfogle, On Private Property: Finding Common Ground on the Ownership of Land”

Is it Fair? -- Reprise

- When there’s loss, who should pay?
- Why?
- What if it requires changing the law?
 - Is it a taking?
- Should the law evolve?
 - When? Why? By what method?

How to Talk About the Climate

Florida Sea Grant College Program

NO	YES
Polar Bears	People
Emissions	Pollution
Carbon	Pollution
Greenhouse Gases	Pollution
Renewables	Clean Energy
“The Environment”	Our Air, Water, Food
Parts per Million	More & More Pollution
Climate Impacts.....	Impacts on People / Extreme Weather
Cap & Trade / Carbon Taxes	Making Polluters Pay
Fossil Fuels.....	Oil & Coal



Are You Packed? 2015. Buster Simpson. Appropriated Fort Meyers Beach real estate advertisement with the addition of Poodle and Tire (after M. Chin, L'Arctique est Paris [2015] and R. Rauschenberg, Monogram [1955]).

Climate Change is Gradual

A performance and conversation with June Wilson

We filled a circle of chairs in the middle of the Dance Studio. After introducing the piece from one of the chairs, June circled us, alternatively running and walking, now and then changing direction. As she moved, she told a story of her nephew. Pauses between thoughts were filled with the sound of her running and walking. A few excerpts follow.



Climate change. I don't mean atmospheric climate change. I don't mean sea level rise. I mean a slow gradual change in what's going on around you. The kind of change that sneaks up, and before you know it, your entire environment is different.

In my senior year in high school, my nephew was a freshman....My nephew was hyperactive, extremely hyperactive. He was naturally in trouble with the teachers.... So, one incident. A second incident. A third incident, and the principal expelled him. Not for anything major, for acting out in the classroom.

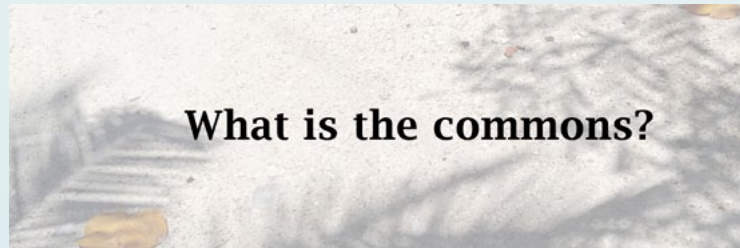


That would become an excuse not to be in class, and not to begin to see the repercussions....Three years in jail. Fifteen years in jail.

It was gradual. The climate change was gradual. Children do stupid things. In the beginning, simply doing stupid things, acting out in the classroom. And it only got worse and worse and worse. Climate change.



Afterward she sat in the circle with us, first to read a prepared text and then for conversation.





Gathering at evening low tide. Photo: Buster Simpson.



Gathered in conversation upon Andrea Polli's inflatable methane couch, and subsequently increasing gas pressure. Photo: Buster Simpson.

With the future in mind, the commons is both an ancient and contemporary way of managing shared resources, such as water and air, creative and intellectual ideas, and scientific discoveries. I suspect that we won't get far toward creating a more sustainable future unless we develop a stronger commitment to the commons and find ways to operate beyond just market and government spheres.

In reaching for that future, the commons "cannot be achieved by individual decision-making alone; rather, they are created and sustained by common action," says Bruce Sievers, another commons thinker I admire. Our Rising Waters Confab – and the meals, offsite adventures, play, and work we do together – are a way to create our own commons and find "the good." In addition to whatever else we do collectively, the conversation itself can be a valuable common action.



Evening dining and conversation at the Weeks House, Photo: Buster Simpson.



Party on Matt Gamel's live aboard / laboratory sailboat, dockside at Jensen's Marina, Captiva. Photo: Buster Simpson.

Commons at Ground Level

Anne Focke

Commons at Ground Level is part of an inquiry into the nature of the commons and its role in a healthy environmental future. Twenty-five panels, each measuring 40x12 inches, were installed along the baseboards of the big studio at the Rauschenberg Residency – a ground-level foundation.

The commons is a social regime for managing a collectively-owned resource.

- Lewis Hyde/David Bollier

A commons is a kind of property in which more than one person has a right of action.

- Lewis Hyde

The commons is a resource *plus* a defined community and the protocols, values, and norms devised by the community to manage its resources.

- David Bollier

A commons may consist of pastoralists in semi-arid regions of Africa managing wild game; lobstermen in the coastal coves of Maine; communal landholders in Ethiopia; rubber tappers in the Amazon; or fishers in the Philippines.

- David Bollier and Burns Weston



Expedition to Randell Research Center on Pine Island. Photo: Sage Sohier.

“We believe that one of the most compelling, long-term strategies for dealing with the structural causes of our many ecological crises is to create and recognize legally, alternative systems of provisioning and governance. Fortunately, such an alternative general paradigm already exists. It’s called the commons.”

David Bollier and Burns Weston, speaking of their book, Green Governance

Imaging Studio at the Residency. Photo: RR Staff. ▶



Commons roundtable in the Bay House kicked off by Lewis Hyde. Hosted by Anne Focke. Photo: RR Staff.

“How do you protect what you own in common? A commons is usually governed by protocols established through customary understanding not by law.”

“Selfishness is a relatively contemporary idea.”



Weeks House kitchen. Photo: Buster Simpson.



Commons Reader. Version 1, May 6, 2015.

Commons Reader

Anne Focke

The *Commons Reader* was a 32-page booklet produced for Rising Waters Confab. It contained descriptions and readings about the Commons, offered as background for conversation and thinking about the commons, especially in relationship to governing natural resources. A few descriptions of what was included follow:

“A Dividualist Creed” by Lewis Hyde, from the Rising Waters Confab blog

“When he spoke to the Rising Waters Confab, Hyde introduced the idea of dividualism as opposed to individualism, of a divisible self rather than a self that is not divisible. ‘A dividualist creed,’ he said, is ‘the demand being that we live for and in one another, not just for and by ourselves individually.’”

Excerpt from Mayordomo: Chronicle of an Acequia by Stanley Crawford

“New Mexico’s acequias are part of an ancient tradition of communal irrigation canals that survives today. Stanley Crawford is a writer and a farmer. He also has taken on the strenuous responsibility of serving as a mayordomo for an acequia (an irrigation ditch system) in northern New Mexico.”

An introduction to Wikipedia’s policies and guidelines

A kind of contemporary commons, Wikipedia calls itself “an open, self-governing project.” This introduction to its policies and guidelines reflects ways that Wikipedia functions as a commons according to terms David Bollier describes in his “short and sweet” description: “It is a resource [information] plus a defined community [its users] and the protocols, values, and norms devised by the community to manage its resources [its policies and guidelines].”

Countless commons of information and creativity exist on the Internet, such as open source software, Wikipedia, social networking, and open access scholarly publishing.

- David Bollier and Burns Weston

Each commons is run in its own particular way, but the common goal is for the people themselves to negotiate cooperative schemes to manage their shared resources for non-market purposes.

- David Bollier

A new commons sector, as complement to state and market, could reinvent some of the fundamental ways we orient ourselves to, and manage, natural ecosystems.

- David Bollier and Burns Weston

Our premise is that we must pioneer new types of governance that allow and encourage people to develop qualitatively different types of relationships with nature itself and, indeed, with each other.

- David Bollier and Burns Weston

Rising Waters Blog

Anne Focke

A blog, set up specifically for the Rising Waters Confab (<http://risingwatersrr.wordpress.com>), collected pictures, dialog, links, related references, and project ideas posted by more than half the residents, some many times. Created as an experiment, it was a work in progress over the course of the residency.

Rising Waters Confab
Rauschenberg Residency: Spring 2015

HOME ABOUT CONFAB LAB PARTICIPANTS REFERENCES

1 Rising Waters Confab

ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG FOUNDATION
381 Lafayette Street
New York, New York 10003
info@rauschenbergfoundation.org
212.228.3283
<http://www.rauschenbergfoundation.org>

WHAT'S HERE
This is a multi-user site. All Rising Waters participants and staff are able to post. Every post appears in the center. To read all the posts by one person click on their name in the left-hand column. To read posts on a specific topic, click on the topic below. And by all means comment on anything you read. We welcome your thoughts!

TOPICS

- Agitprop
- Climate Change
- Confab activities
- Confab Lab
- Florida
- Gretel suggests
- Life on Captiva
- Power of Artists
- Rising Sea Water
- Robert Rauschenberg
- The Commons
- Uncategorized

RECENT POSTS

- Perfect Past/Future House
- A new kind of Cold War
- Andubon's Bird (redux)
- Depicting Endangered Wild Life -- at Rauschenberg Residency
- Culin Fowd on Miami's and Coral Survival
- Can American's Build Dikes? A New Commons?
- Thoth: The Master of Cer for "Drowning Man"
- The Floating City for Miami: The Rich will Survive Rising Seas
- Confab in action, week 5
- Captiva's Outlook

AUTHORS

- andreaopolli
- Earth Engine
- A composition using underwater mics in (better with headphones)
- A short sound comp made from recordings of the pool
- Anne Focke
- Why talk about the when the water's rising?
- Insights on the com Elinor Ostrom
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- Edward Morris
- Hawaii Wins
- Naming Hurricanes for Deniers
- Glenn Weiss
- Perfect Past/Future House
- Colin Fowd on Miami's Dredging and Coral Survival
- Can American's Build Dikes? A New Commons?
- Johnsglender
- My TEDx Talk "Sea Level Rise: Fact & Fiction"
- Sea-Rise, my new poem
- Green Venn-vy
- Junetills
- Climate Change: Beyond the Environmental Movement
- Laura Sindell
- leonardberry
- Captiva's Outlook
- Lewis Hyde
- The Drowning Man Festival
- A Dividualist Creed
- Boston Living with Sea Level Rise
- risingwatersrr
- Essay on Miami Sea Level Rise Apr 2015
- Florida Today and Tomorrow
- tkruppert
- Regaining the Commons and the Dialectic on the "Private"

President Obama: Climate change, and especially rising seas, is a threat to our homeland security, our economic infrastructure, the safety and health of the American people.

Posted on May 21, 2015 by Xavier Cortada (Miami) | [Leave a comment](#)

Bob's stance

Posted on May 10, 2015 by Anne Focke | [Leave a comment](#)

One afternoon, I met this heron on my way to the Fish House, his "elbows" out in a familiar pose. Apparently, he returns regularly.

Climate change will impact every country on the globe. No country is immune. So I'm here today to say that climate change is a serious threat to global security, an immediate risk to our national security. And make no mistake, it will impact how we defend our country. And so we need to act -- and act now.

Climate change, and especially rising seas, is a threat to our homeland security, our economic infrastructure, the safety and health of the American people. Already, today, in Miami and other coastal cities, we now flood at high tide. Along our coasts, thousands of homes, highways and roads, railways, energy facilities are at risk. It is estimated that a further increase in sea level of just one foot by the end of this century could cost our nation \$200 billion.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov>

Posted in [Climate Change](#)

Posted in [Robert Rauschenberg](#) | [Leave a comment](#)

The Floating City for Miami: The Rich will Survive Rising Seas

Posted on May 28, 2015 by Glenn Weiss | [Leave a comment](#)

When researching house boats, I was surprised to learn the company Dutch Docklands purchased the rights to build a floating development in a north Miami lake. Maule Lake was a former limestone quarry for Maule Cement. The project has not yet moved forward at \$12.5 million per house. [Click for Miami Herald article.](#)

Confab Lab

Posted on May 12, 2015 by Anne Focke | [Leave a comment](#)

Two weeks into the Confab, Buster sharpened our focus at an evening Confab charette. In an email later, he reported:

We had a very constructive meeting and have reorganized the confab in a more focused direction now that we have had time to assess people's workflow and their expressed interest in a concerted and directed effort, which comes close to the original intent of the Confab.

We will be working as a design team on multiple levels to create a schematic plan for the property based on the incremental Rising Waters. We'll make an initial pass at a big vision for the next 20-30 years.

The commons is a third way to govern a resource, in addition to government and the market.

- Lewis Hyde, Rising Waters Confab

A commons must have clearly defined boundaries of membership and of the resource.

- Elinor Ostrom

People must be able to develop their own rules for managing the resource.

- Elinor Ostrom

People must be able to devise systems to monitor how the resource is used and to identify and punish people who violate the rules.

- Elinor Ostrom



Conservation moves
Slowly like a Strangler Fig
Hugging trees to death.

Dance, Reddish Egret!
Debate, climate denier!
Feed by confusion!

Three big invasives:
Pine, Pepper, Melaleuca.
Four: the rising sea.

Hurry; be patient.
The slash pine, enduring fire,
Cries stories of time.

Habitat is broken
by habits. You have to
be asking the ques-

tion long enough to
know the age of a turtle,
the fate of a place.

A myth is a poem
(Florida's here forever)
You can't get out of.

Haiku entitled "Week One"
by Jeremy Pickard

Confab meeting around two versions of the 12-person life float. Photos: Laura Sindell.



The Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation shown marking and protecting sea turtle nesting sites. Members of the Confab participated in this community effort during the residency. This site happens to be located in front of Bob's Beach house. Bob was fond of turtles. Photo: Buster Simpson.

Who Should Be Our Allies?

Orion Cruz

One of the questions that came up in Confab discussion centered around the need to convince Republicans and other so-called “conservatives” in the U.S. that climate destabilization is a serious problem. I think this is a question that merits consideration and debate. Are they in fact necessary allies if we’re going to be successful in preventing the worst of climate change? In a recent discussion on climate change aired by Guardian Live, George Marshall argues that they are. He also points to the slogans and attitudes that prevailed at the People’s Climate March in New York last September as being evidence that the growing climate movement isn’t anywhere near inclusive enough.

Is climate change too “progressive”?

Regardless of whether we completely agree with that, there’s no denying that climate change is considered by many to be a “progressive” cause. However, there isn’t any shortage of people trying to reach out to the conservatives. President Obama was attempting to do this just the other day when he emphasized the link between national security and climate change to the Coast Guard. Although I think it’s important to help spread awareness about the seriousness of climate destabilization, I also question how far over the proverbial aisle we want to reach when looking for allies.

I question how far over the proverbial aisle we want to reach when looking for allies.

Consider Jeb Bush’s recent remarks on climate change. He agrees that it’s a serious issue we need to act on, but his idea of a solution is to export more liquefied natural gas to places with more carbon intensive economies. Perhaps fewer allies with a shared vision of the future will be more effective at creating change than a greater number who disagree about nearly everything other than climate change being a serious threat.

Can climate change be an isolated cause?

That brings me to another related question. Is it even possible to isolate climate change as an issue?

To successfully address climate change, are we going to need systemic change, not just carbon markets and a Green Climate Fund?

In *This Changes Everything*, Naomi Klein seems to answer this question in the negative by arguing that if we’re going to successfully address climate change, we’re going to need systemic change, not just carbon markets and Green Climate Fund, etc.

And if that’s true, would winning Republicans over on climate change be worth anything if they continued to worship the idea of a free market? And are we even sure we can’t win without them? Recent elections in various countries around the world suggest that progressive parties that focus on inequality and a transition toward renewable energy have been succeeding, even in traditionally conservatives strongholds like Alberta, Canada. The fossil fuel divestment campaign is achieving some big victories and seems to be helping to convince people that investing in fossil fuels is morally bankrupt. The list goes on. But as you know, the battles are going both ways...

Can a smaller, but still sizeable, percentage of progressives succeed without the right-wingers?

What allies do we need to succeed?

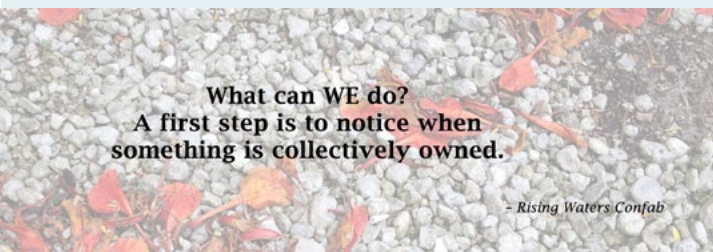
So getting back to the question I started with, how can we succeed? Should the right-wingers be in our sights (to make allies with, of course)? Or can a smaller, but still sizeable, percentage of progressives succeed without them? I don’t know the answer to these questions, but I’ll say one thing, the latter option sounds like a lot more fun.



The Fish House. Originally built in 1942 by J.N. “Ding” Darling, Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial cartoonist, Robert Rauschenberg bought it in 1978. For Rauschenberg, it is said, the Fish House was described as his muse. Photo still from video: Buster Simpson.

AGITPROPS

Agitprop suggests an art form that can be rapidly deployed, is pro-active, insightful, and immediate. The message can be humorous, present a double entendre, or represent a wedge issue. For example, depicting a political denier of climate change, the bobblehead buoys responded to an earlier proposal for “Statues of Brave Heroes of Climate Change,” and the buoys then inspired the development of a “Drowning Man” festival to galvanize awareness and action about climate change. Later, the drowning man idea transformed into “L’Arctique est Paris,” a media intervention intended as a direct action at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris, December 2015.



All the Money In The World But Nothing To Do

J.N. “Ding” Darling published his first conservation cartoon during Teddy Roosevelt’s first term as president in 1901 in support of Roosevelt’s campaign for establishment of a forestry service. The two later became great friends.

Although a staunch Republican, Darling was nevertheless recruited in 1934 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to serve on the President’s Committee for Wild Life Restoration along with two other prominent individuals, Aldo Leopold and Thomas Beck.

Agitprop at Rally

Rising Waters Confab participants and staff join local rally

As *The Santiva Chronicle* reported, “Nearly two dozen speakers, from artists to Realtors and from musicians to Chamber of Commerce representatives, stood at Jensen’s Marina and urged Florida legislators to buy water storage lands south of Lake Okeechobee to reduce damaging freshwater flows into the Caloosahatchee estuary.

“Perhaps the most impassioned speech was made by Ann Brady, director of the Rauschenberg Residency, which is currently hosting a group of artists who are looking to the environment for inspiration.

“Noting that Robert Rauschenberg settled here because of the environment, and the Residency has attracted artists because of the beauty here, she said that because of the legislative inaction to the environment and the denial of climate change by Gov. Rick Scott, ‘Now we are not proud to be a part of this state.’ She added, ‘The governor and the legislature need to do what we told them to do. We are their bosses.’”

Inspired by Lewis’s initial proposal for “Statues of Brave Heroes of Climate Change Skepticism” over dinner the night before, Buster and Ed moved quickly to produce a “rough draft” of the idea in time for the rally.

Although the action received some coverage in the *Chronicle*, the props didn’t float during the press conference itself. Marina owners preferred a nonpartisan backdrop for the event.



Ed Morris. Photo: David Rohn, for *The Santiva Chronicle*.



Photo: Xavier Cortada



High Water Flip Flop, 2015. Buster Simpson. For imprinting messages in the sand. Photo: Buster Simpson



Skeleton and skeleton foot. Images appropriated from the internet. Lewis Hyde.



High Water Pants, iron on transfer kit for wedge issues on the cuff. Buster Simpson.



Study for Drowning Man, Andrea Polli.

Statues of Brave Heroes of Climate Change Skepticism

Lewis Hyde’s dinner inspiration

We propose the creation of life-size monuments to politicians who refuse to accept the established science of climate change. Each statue will be fabricated with a water-soluble body supported by a durable metal skeleton. The bodies could be made of salt, for example, and the skeletons of marine grade stainless steel.

Statues are to be located in ‘rising water cities’ where periodic flooding will eat away the body and reveal the skeleton.

- In Miami, statues could honor Governor Rick Scott (“No ... I have not been convinced.”) and Senator Marco Rubio (“I don’t think there’s the scientific evidence to justify it.”).
- A statue of New York’s Representative Lee Zeldin (“I’m not sold yet on the whole argument”) could be placed on the Hudson River waterfront in New York City.
- Louisiana Representative Steve Scalise (scientists “are raising major questions about the global warming theories”) could be placed in the 9th Ward in New Orleans.

In mild cases of sea level rise, only the feet of skeleton will be revealed. In most cases the entire skeleton will eventually become the monument.

Drowning Man Festival

Lewis Hyde with Others

Developed during a Rising Waters afternoon confab from an idea Lewis put forward, with edits from Andrea, and an image from Buster.

We Propose An Annual Festival Whose Goals Are:

- TO EDUCATE ABOUT SEA LEVEL RISE
- TO SHAME AND RIDICULE CLIMATE CHANGE DENIERS
- TO HAVE FUN

Photo: Appropriated from the internet

The Drowning Man festival will be held in coastal cities and towns threatened by sea level rise. We suggest beginning with sites on Florida's east coast, such as Miami.

The focus of each year's celebration will be a large, effigy figure representing a current and well-known climate-change denier. The figure will float off shore until the final night of the festival whereupon it will be sunk into the sea.

The drowning of the Man will be a spectacle in the spirit of Burning Man, but instead of using fireworks, the Drowning Man will come alive through fountains, mist and other water propulsion and hydraulic technology in a grand celebration of water and its life-giving properties, that at the same time expresses the destructive power of water and the dangers of sea level rise.

Through an open call, artists, designers, engineers and other creative makers will be invited to make proposals for the Drowning Man. Strict design guidelines for the creation of the Man will pose a significant and important challenge that will inspire and encourage innovation in sustainable technology. For example, in keeping with the environmental mission of the Drowning Man Festival, the figure must be made of materials that are either biodegradable, easily recycled, non-damaging or even beneficial to the ecosystem. For example, parts of the structure might be designed to sink and become habitat for fish, oysters, coral or other marine life.

Study for *Wrapped Drowning Man*, 2015. Buster Simpson.
Photo: Sage Sohler.



Participants in Drowning Man will be encouraged to bring or create art works that in some way reflect on climate change. Projects that demonstrate fun and sustainable ways of living on or near the water or revitalize the sea and its shores and wildlife will be encouraged and supported (for example, a floating home that explores small-scale human or water-powered living or an initiative to re-forest mangrove habitats). A jury will select the best of these works and their creators will have the privilege of sinking 'the Man.'

The festival will have an educational component. There may be lectures by climate change specialists, documentary films, pamphlets, etc.

The festival will also be festive with music, performance, and the general, relaxed goofing off that comes from taking a break from energy consumption. It could be held at any time of the year, but the weeks in March when most colleges have their spring break may be ideal.

Drowning Man will have ritual constraints that mark it as time outside of time. There might be an emphasis on gifting rather than market exchange. There might be a moratorium on the use of fossil fuels and artificial light—no gasoline, kerosene, coal, natural gas, or propane, just humans, horses, dogs, solar panels, wind, and falling water; no electric light, just the sun, the moon, and the stars.

Drowning Man Tea Shirt Series, 2015. Silk screen. *Drowning Man Logo Study*, 2015. Silk screen on rag paper. Photo: Laura Sindell.



Five Actions to Stop Rising Seas

Xavier Cortada

On May 11, 2015, at the Rauschenberg Residency in Captiva, Florida, I modeled these five direct actions to stop the rising seas:



Hit it! Beat it up and it will run the other way.



Freeze it! It was ice before; simply refreeze it.



Burn it! Add heat, then watch it boil and evaporate



Bury it! Place entire Gulf of Mexico in a hole to keep it from being above ground.



Eat it! All you care to eat; it's there for you!



...And one last, highly likely indirect action:
F *#K It!

This is the one most have elected to undertake and the one we most need to focus on.

Photos: RR Staff.

INTRODUCING THE CAPTIVA ISLAND

H.V.A.C.* WEDGE

(*Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning)

A UTILITARIAN AGIT PROP DOOR STOP ENABLING YOU TO OFFSET THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE, AVOID EXPENSIVE INVESTMENTS AND COSTLY UTILITY BILLS THROUGH MODERN LIVING

PLACE DOOR STOP WEDGES IN BOTH FORE AND AFT OPEN DOORS TO ENJOY CROSS VENTILATION

The *CAPTIVA ISLAND H.V.A.C. WEDGE* was created at the Robert Rauschenberg Residency Rising Waters Confab as a utility agit prop as a personal response approach to global climate change.

The *Captiva Island H.V.A.C. Wedges* were crafted from found end cuts of 2x6 pine board and based on a wedge found at the Rauschenberg Studio. The limited edition is painted with Port and Starboard red and green acrylic studio paint intended as a navigational aid for proper wedge deployment as door wedges to cross vent issues of climate change.

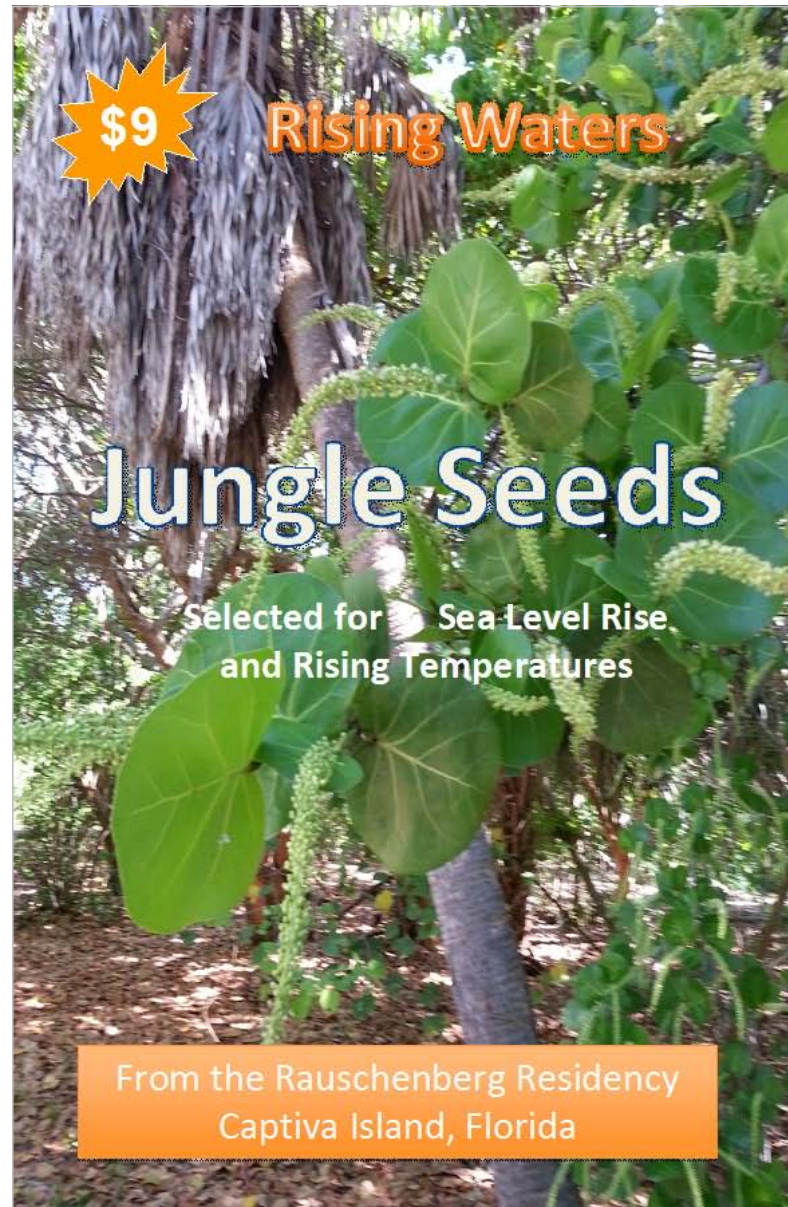
HVAC WEDGE climate change cross ventilation // RISING WATERS CAPTIVA ISLAND 2015



Captiva Island H.V.A.C. Wedge, 2015. Buster Simpson. Photo: Buster Simpson. Photo Illustration: Todd Metten.



Making Ice Bags to Refreeze the Melting Glaciers When They Flow Onto Our Shores, 2015 (in production at the Rauschenberg Residency). Xavier Cortada.



Rising Waters Jungle Seeds: The Story



The Rising Waters Jungle Seeds provide a bit of artist Robert Rauschenberg's environmental vision with seeds actually collected from his estate. In 2004 after Hurricane Charley hit Captiva Island and removed the existing trees, Rauschenberg had 9 acres planted as a jungle. For many years, Rauschenberg participated in ecological activism through his work and design of posters such as the famous first Earth Day poster in 1970 of the American Bald Eagle surrounded by damaged landscapes.

In 2015, the first Rising Waters Confab of artists, writers, performers, designers and scientists was held at the Rauschenberg Residency on the estate. The purpose of the five-week gathering was to discover artworks and artist actions that would spark public action to global warming and the rising waters of the oceans. Rising Waters Jungle Seeds is only one of many works in progress.

Online Planting Resources for Rising Sea Level and Temperatures.

Rising Waters Jungle Seeds website provides the latest news on polar ice melt and a geographic map of jungle planting zones with the number of years until saltwater intrusions or flooding. Most trees die with 2 foot brackish water table.

With global warming the no-freezing line will move north. Rising Waters will annually announce new and future 9, 10 and 11 planting zones in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and the Gulf coast.

Image and video sharing of new jungles and lost jungles.

What's in the Package

Rising Water Jungle Seeds were gathered at the Robert Rauschenberg Residency during the last six months. The seeds are a mix of gumbo limbo, cabbage palm, sea grape, royal poinciana, fan palms, wild coffee and others.



All proceeds support the Rising Waters Confab projects associated with the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation

WARNING LABEL. Unfortunately at this time, we cannot predict when a giant storm surge may pre-empt our planting maps.

Jungle Seeds. Glenn Weiss.



Upside-down house, Sunrise Golf Village, Florida

Haiku entitled "Week Two" by Jeremy Pickard

A myth is a poem
(Florida's here forever)
You can't get out of.

"Idle Speed, No Wake"
And "Business As Usual"
Cry the wading signs.

Thickening tourists
Off collecting thinning shells
On advancing beaches.

Red paint on the roof.
The sound of generators.
The loss of landmarks.

Time is not careful.
A kid runs in a circle,
Mixing the sandbox.

Visit Florida!
Salt floating on the surface,
Hollow underneath.

Visit Florida!
Mangrove beds on every shore.
The Sun-Powered State.

How it's always been:
You fall in love with a place
When you first see it.

Ephemeral fish.
Dolphins, just for a moment.
Manatees gesture.

Illumination.
No need for lucubrating
Under a full moon.

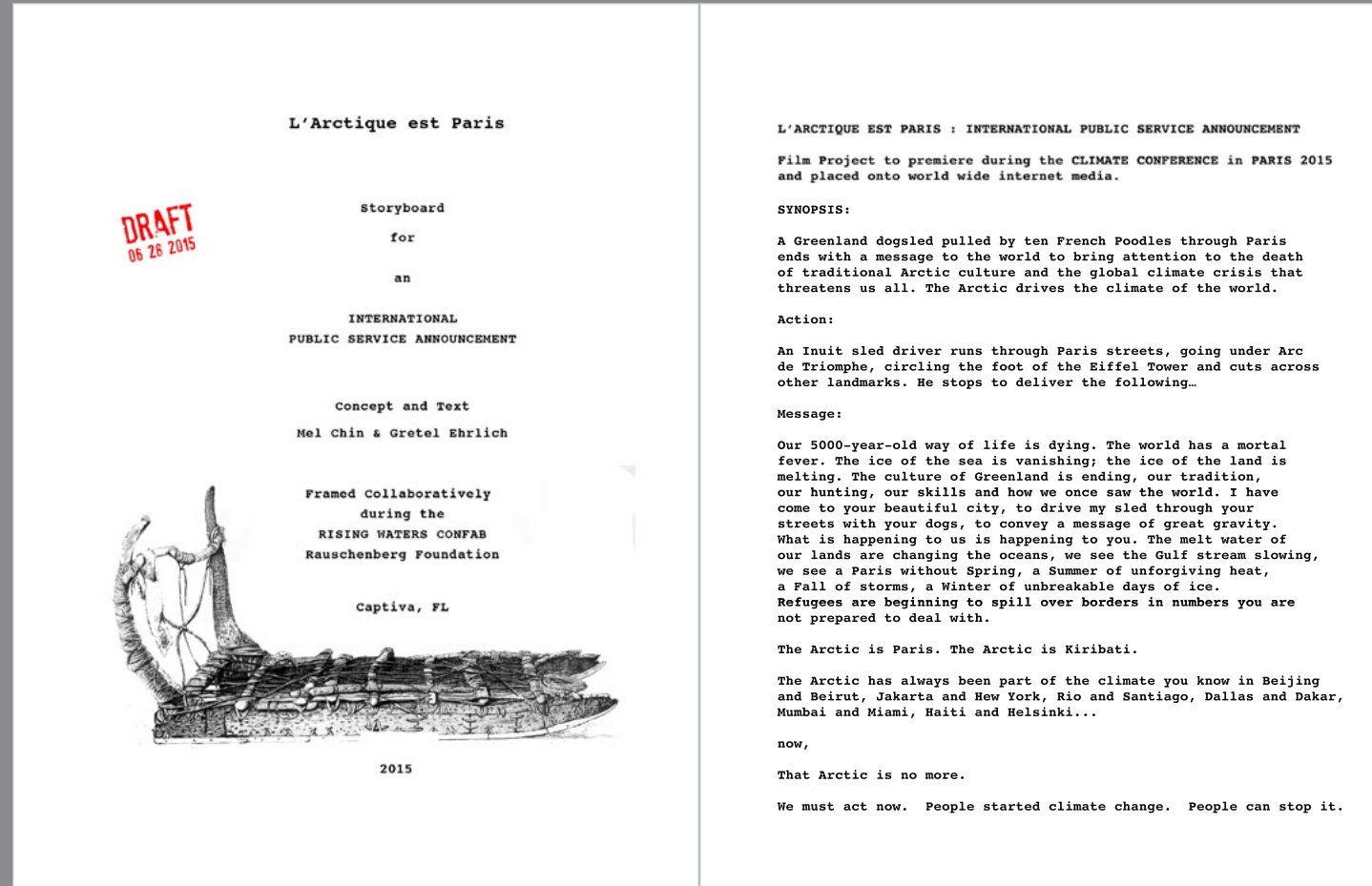
Triumvirate soul:
Eyes, animal, reflection
In the water.

Gracefully she hosts
An ineffective demon
For seventy years

L'Arctique est Paris

An all Confab collaboration.

Lead authors on concept and text, Mel Chin and Gretel Ehrlich.





Opening image:
Sunrise in Paris



She looks up and listens
to the curious sound.



Paris Cafe:
Young man sips coffee.
Sound: In the distance,
dogs' excited barking, yelping...
The sound of a sled on
cobblestones.



The pet dog, head on his
paws, lifts up ...
to pay attention.



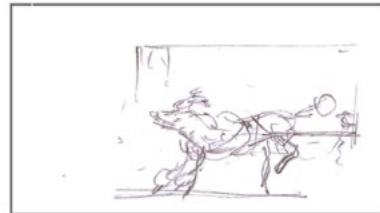
He cocks his head to catch
the sound.



A steady cam
close up on the face of
a Standard French Poodle...
running



A Parisian Apartment:
An elegant woman at
breakfast, reading the paper.
a pet dog naps by her feet.



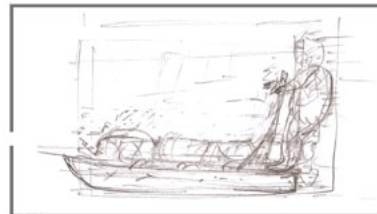
CAM pulls back
reveals the poodle
in harness
running, pulling...
The CAM tracks back.



As the sled pulls forward
the back tracking
Steady CAM:
reveals the whole team
of poodles...



Pedestrians jump aside
to make way
for the SLED barreling
down the street



To the
Sled....



CAM on the ground at the
ARC de TRIOMPHE.
You hear the
DOG & SLED a'coming..



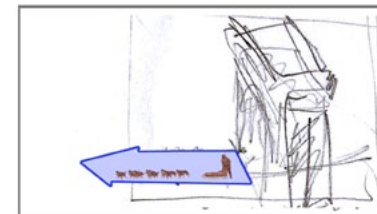
A CLOSE UP
of the INUIT Driver.
He has a serious-determined
countenance.



DOG & SLED races
over the CAM



CLOSE UP
Sled runner racing over
cobble stones.
Clattering, bumping...



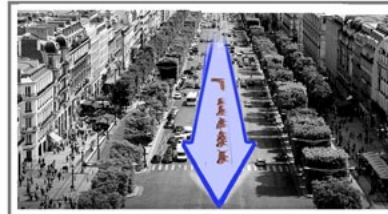
SPEEDS AWAY...



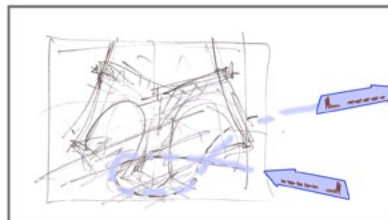
CROSS the SIENE on the PONT NEUF
NOTE: CAM angle TBD



SPEED ACROSS THE The Tuileries



SPLIT THE TRAFFIC ON THE The Avenue des Champs-Élysées



CIRCLE a Leg of the Eiffiel Tower



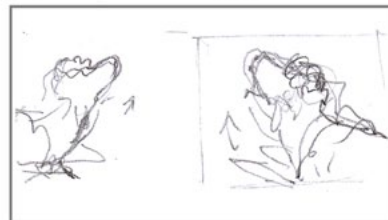
The INUIT TEAM arrives at THE LOUVRE by the GLASS PYRAMID



The Dogs circle and rest...



THE DRIVER disembarks...



Poodles at rest look toward their masters voice ...



CLOSE UP: HE speaks in his Greenlandic tongue:



Our 5000-year-old way of life is dying. The world has a mortal fever. The ice of the sea is vanishing; the ice of the land is melting. The culture of Greenland is ending, our tradition, our hunting, our skills and how we once saw the world. I have come to your beautiful city, to drive my sled through your streets with your dogs, to convey a message of great gravity. The melt water of our lands are changing the oceans, we see the Gulf stream slowing, we see a Paris without Spring, a Summer of unforgiving heat, a Fall of storms, a Winter of unbreakable days of ice.

The Arctic is Paris...

Action: As he says this, the Parisian woman from the apartment walks on and stands behind him. The Arctic is Kiribati...
Action: As he says this, The young man, from the cafe, now in native grab takes his place behind him...



The Arctic has always been part of the climate you know in Beijing and Beirut,

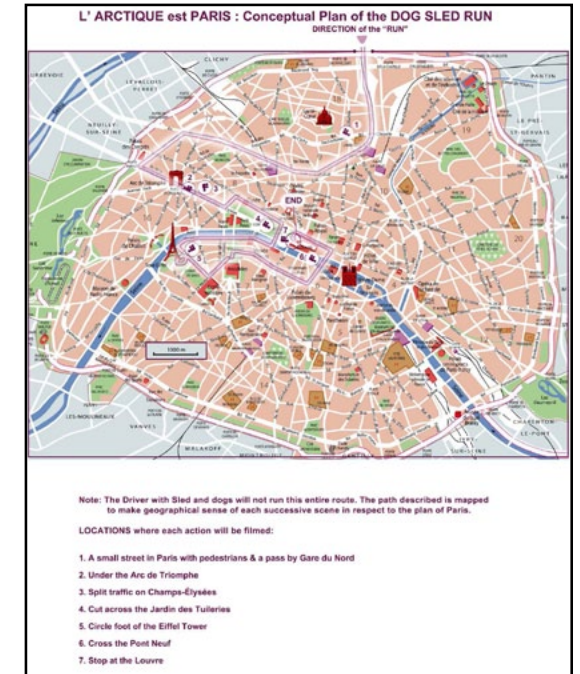
Action: As he continues, different nationalities join behind...and the field increases as he speaks.

Jakarta and New York, Rio and Santiago, Dallas and Dakar, Mumbai and Miami, Haiti and Helsinki...now,

The CAM pulls back: The Plaza is filled with people.

He Concludes:

That Arctic is no more.



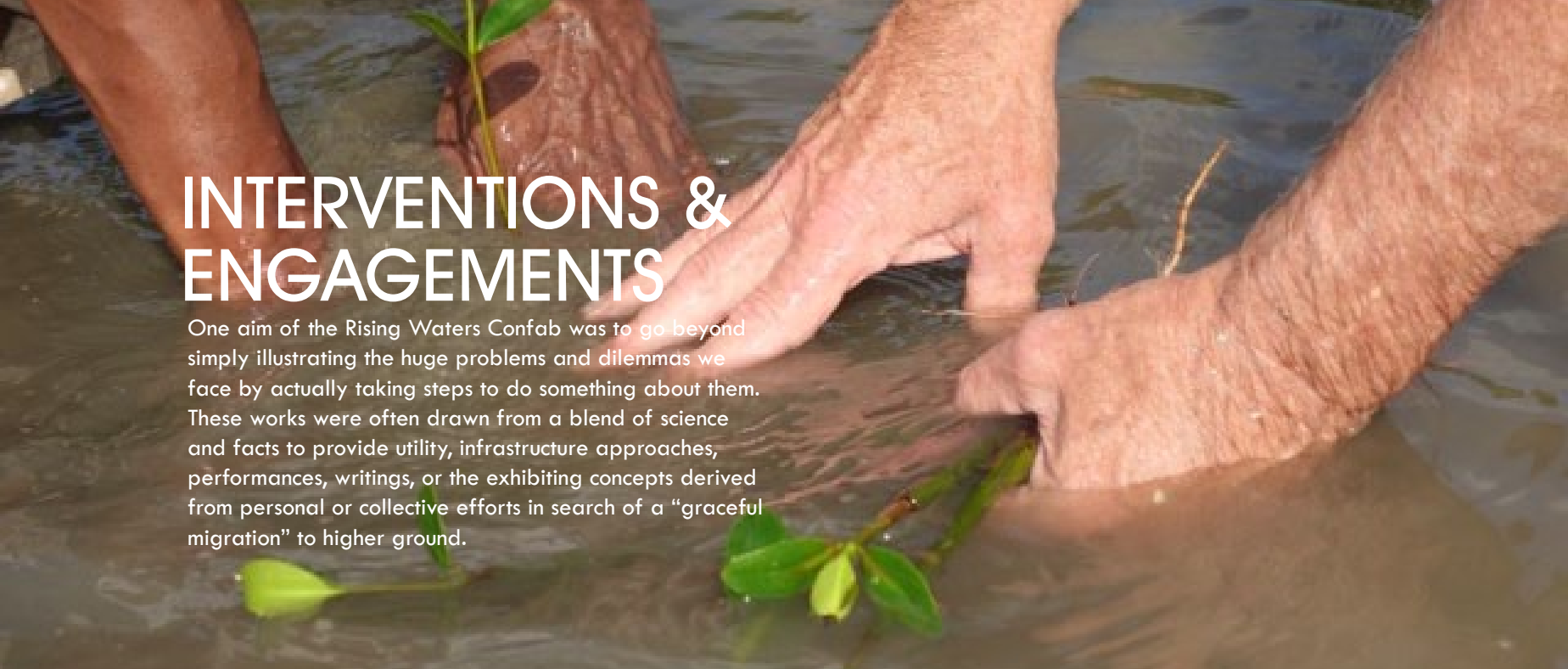
Conceptual plan of Dog Sled Run.



Gretel Ehrlich and Inuit guide on dogsled in Greenland.

INTERVENTIONS & ENGAGEMENTS

One aim of the Rising Waters Confab was to go beyond simply illustrating the huge problems and dilemmas we face by actually taking steps to do something about them. These works were often drawn from a blend of science and facts to provide utility, infrastructure approaches, performances, writings, or the exhibiting concepts derived from personal or collective efforts in search of a “graceful migration” to higher ground.



Mangroves

Xavier Cortada, Walter Hood, and Buster Simpson

Planting mangroves is a hopeful act of faith and a pragmatic first line of defense. As a symbolic effort to reclaim some of the mangrove eco-system on North Captiva, Xavier Cortada, Walter Hood and Buster Simpson, planted two areas with mangroves along a “wounded” section of beach. On another occasion, Glenn Weiss, assisted by Buster Simpson, conducted a test planting of black and white mangroves on a low-lying piece of land on the Foundation property.

With the advent of rising waters in south Florida, we learned from visiting scientist, Tom Van Lent, that the red mangrove is capable of producing biomass at a rate of one inch per ten years, which is presently about the same rate that sea levels are rising. The red mangrove protects the white and black mangroves. Together they form a living barrier critical to maintaining a dynamic habitat as sea levels rise. To that end, action on a comprehensive shoreline land use plan of the highest order needs to be enacted immediately.



Xavier Cortada and Buster Simpson planting Mangroves on North Captiva Island. Photo: Sage Sohler.



Left: Propagule of a red mangrove in hand. Right: Walter Hood and Buster Simpson planting along the east shore of North Captiva Island. Photos: RR Staff.

In addition to being a living shoreline defense, biomimicry studies of the mangrove can teach us about desalination and the anti-fouling of surfaces, characteristics found in the mangrove. The unique prop roots of the red mangrove resemble an engineered catenary arch and suggest structural applications and a natural armature for growing oysters.

The salt marsh is one of the best carbon sequestering ecologies there is. As sea levels rise, the mangrove must be allowed to advance its migration inland in order to nurture a habitat that produces the benefits of carbon sequestering and natural protection against increasing storm events.

◀ Upper: Hood and Simpson planting Red Mangrove propagules. Photo: RR Staff. Lower: Detail of red mangrove prop root structure. Photo: Buster Simpson.

Traditional Calusa lightning whelk used as digging tool to plant red mangroves. ▶
Photo: Sage Sohler.



Display of historic Calusa lightning whelks used as digging tools. Photo: Buster Simpson.



Oyster reef formation on new offshore island. Photo: Buster Simpson.



As with the mangrove, the oyster is capable of building reef structures, which serve to protect shores with the added benefit of filtering potentially polluted waters. Colony of oysters off Captiva Island. Photo: Buster Simpson.

▶ A test conducted by Glenn Weiss to monitor the potential mangrove resettlement on RR property that will be the first to experience rising waters. Photo: Glenn Weiss.



Removing Exotics

Xavier Cortada

In times of rising seas, it might sound counter-intuitive to remove plants like Australian Pine or Melaluca. These exotic invasive trees – which means they outcompete the native flora and replace it with a monoculture that does not support biodiversity – were intentionally planted a century ago to help dredgers drain swamps and wetlands across our state.

These trees can't live in saltwater, so they won't help with rising seas. The rising seas will kill them and everything else. We need to work proactively to replace them with the native plants of our native coastal habitats. These habitats need to thrive so that as seas rise, with luck they can (it depends how fast the seas rise) mitigate upland and sustain our web of life.

▶ Australian Pine removed from North Captiva on May 13, 2015



Raked Free Zone

Buster Simpson

The toxic needles of the Australian Pine raked back revealing the soil for a graceful transition towards biodiversity.

◀ Photo: Buster Simpson



Pine Island Sound Expedition to Stilt Houses



Matthew Hall at the helm, Kristie Anders holding court on bioregionalism to Confab participants. Anders share accounts of what it took to survive Hurricane Charley. Photo: Laura Sindell.



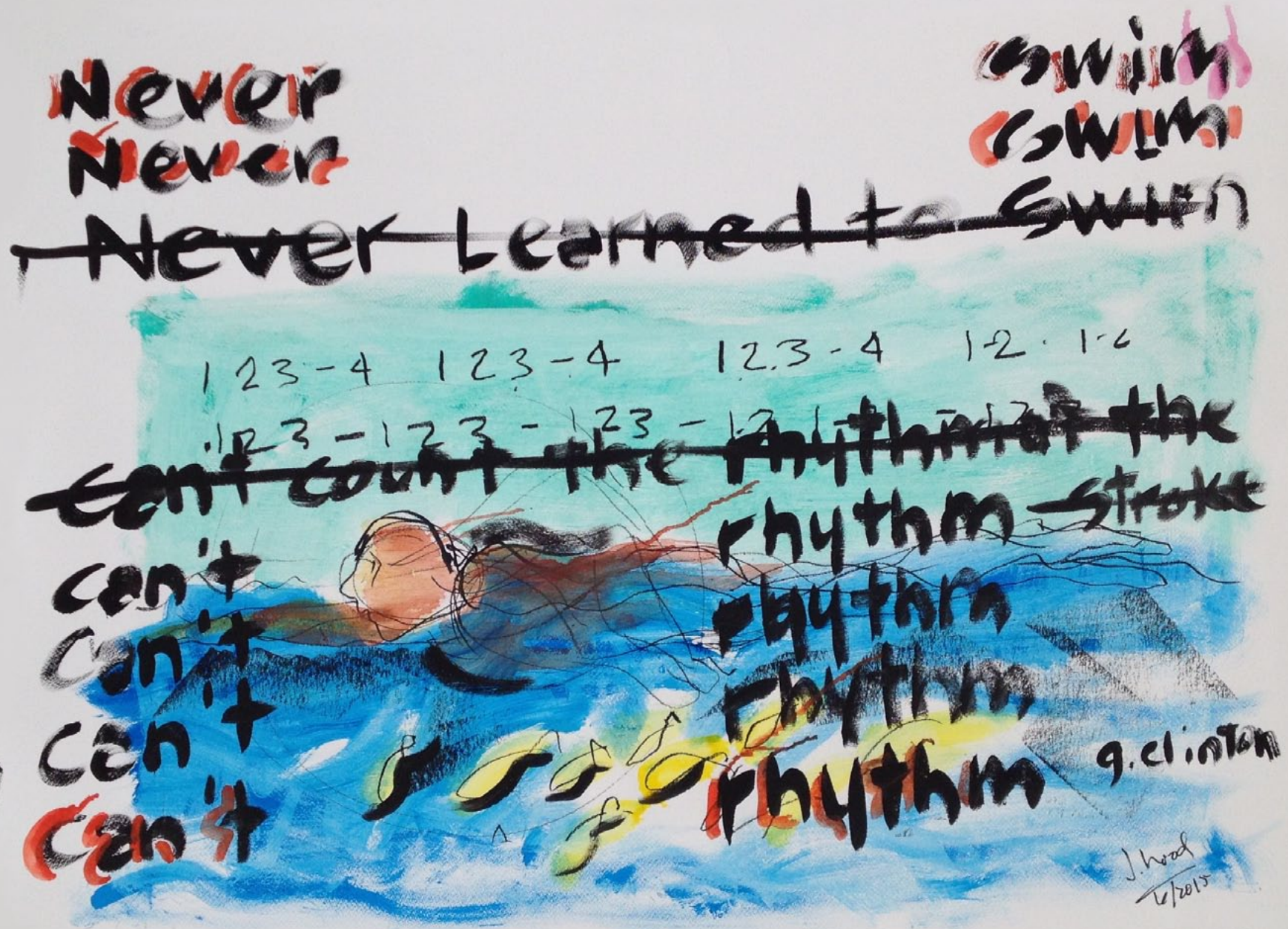
Self-contained stilt structures with cisterns. An example from the past, a model for the future. Photo: Buster Simpson.



Weeks House historic rainwater cistern. Photo: Buster Simpson.

Stilt houses near Captiva - Pine Island Sound, Florida. 1967. Photo: Nixon Smiley. State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory, <http://floridamemory.com/items/show/40443>.



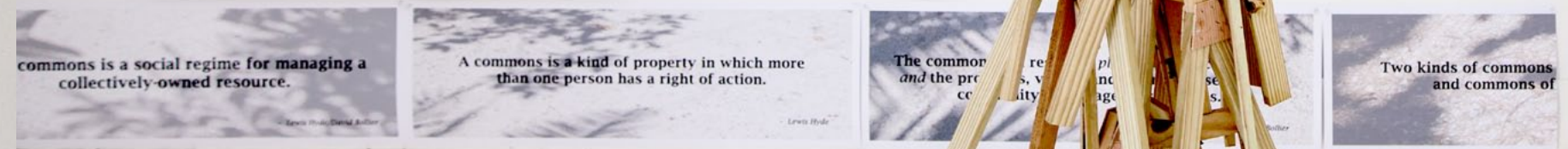


Underwater Affair and Palm Column

Walter Hood



Palms around the Waldo cottage. Photo: Buster Simpson.



Palm Column. Walter Hood. Sculpture study inspired by tectonic of palm trunks wood construction. Commons at Ground Level. Anne Focke. Continual series running around the base of the large studio. Photo: Laura Sindell.

◀ Underwater Affair. Walter Hood. Watercolor on paper. Photo: Laura Sindell.

Hurricane Remodel...Hire an Artist

Lewis Hyde

A study on natural and intervention deconstruction.



Gordon Matta-Clark



Gordon Matta-Clark



Gordon Matta-Clark

Don't let The hurricane

remodel your home

hire an artist



Photo: Laura Sindell

The Graceful Retreat

Buster Simpson

Inspired by the proliferation of elevated septic systems on Captiva Island, the need to float a composting/digester system will eventually be necessary. Participant Andrea Polli suggests the system could be a resourceful one, capturing gasses in a floating bladder for heating and cooling the floating domicile, a transition from pole or mangrove support to a pontoon boat house to follow the receding shoreline of rising waters. The houseboat becomes a self-supporting system, collecting rainwater and solar energy and recovering resources from compost.



Study of Adaption, mangrove bio mimicry and bladder gas generator to replace septic system based in conversations with Andrea Polli and Buster Simpson. Photo collage: Buster Simpson.



Shell midden, St Petersburg, FL. Photo appropriated from the internet.



Septic tank mound, Captiva, FL.



Calusa Shell Midden, La Costa Island, FL. Photo: Laura Sindell.



Andrea Polli and Buster Simpson with bladder model on top of existing septic tank midden.

National Midden Mound-ument Preserves

Buster Simpson and Andrea Polli

Modern day landfills serve as monuments and gauges, the contemporary equivalent of the Calusa shell middens from the Pine Island Sound, including Captiva Island. These middens pale in size and mitigation requirements compared to the global landfill sites at sea level. All these modern day middens will need to be moved to higher ground.

The Calusa, a pre-consumer culture that presumed detritus of one process a resource for another, considered their middens as a foundation for their dwellings, temples and areas of importance. The lightning whelk shells that sustained them as a food source also provided the high ground in storm events.

On Captiva Island today, mounds conceal septic tanks that serve as a midden of liquid scat. The mounds provide the hydraulic pressure to disperse liquids into a shallow trench close to the rising water table. Captiva could serve as a laboratory for temporary pragmatic prototypes addressing climate change. Innovating infrastructure such as gas-generating composting commode, along with solar and wind power, will provide a graceful reprieve to the eventual need for a Graceful Migration, as Andrea Polli illustrated.

Globally, the proliferation of landfills existing at sea level that will be affected by climate change will require an international effort. Reprocessing and "metro mining" recyclables and then barging the tailings to high ground provides an opportunity to create earthworks of utility and poetry on an even larger scale than *Effigy Tumuli* by Michael Heizer, taking the form that reflects our intellect of this time, creating a cultural legacy, *Mitten Mounds National Park*.

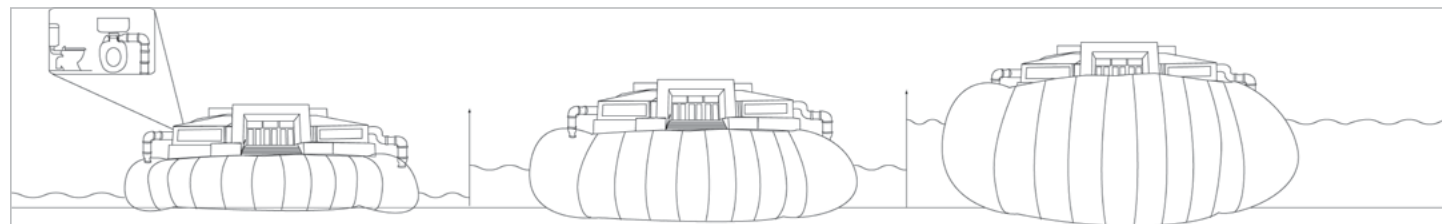
"Civilization now moves more earth and stone than all the world's rivers put together."

Gas tanks at the Rauschenberg Residency. Photo: Laura Sindell

Rising Gas

Andrea Polli

Rising Gas is a project to slowly raise Rauschenberg properties in response to sea level rise using large biogas bladders under each building filled by human and non-human bio waste. The pressure from the gas would not only lift the buildings, but would provide fuel from the biogas as needed to the community during hurricane emergencies.



Ad hoc approach using an inflatable sofa to double as a bio bladder. Studies on existing bladders in common use. A design for a large biogas inflated bladder to elevate and possibly float the main RR studio to high ground, as part of the Graceful Migration. Photos and drawing: Andrea Polli.



RR retrofit simulation of a standard flush toilet into a biogas generator by directing the gas to an inflatable Bio Sofa. Polli is shown examining duckweed, which contains more protein than soybeans, performs bioremediation to rid unwanted nitrogen and phosphates, and has many benefits as a habitat enhancer. Photos: Andrea Polli. Inset photo: Laura Sindell.



Islands and Global Forces // Cretaceous-Tertiary Boundary

An email/blog dialog between Rising Waters participants, Andrea Polli and Buster Simpson

Andrea

Andrea Polli left the Residency for four days to participate in a project on Santorini, an island in the southern Aegean Sea. While away, she wrote to the Confab:

I just wanted to share an image of the island and some text from my visit to “Aural Lighthouses” on Santorini. It is part of Performance Studies International’s “Fluid States” project being held in places around the world. When I arrived, I was handed a piece about Santorini by Hermione Spriggs and Curtis Tamm (excerpted):

1. Saint Irene is an island whose history atrophies in layers. Each layer presents a pinnacle of cultural splendor, its energy and potential climaxes alongside the subterranean force that fuels its destruction. Socio-economic climates of the past can be measured in success against the scale of the volcanic eruption which cemented their fate, all of them etched in acidic clouds of particulate laden pumice ash. Seven iterations of Akroteri, the island’s most ancient city are stacked, each balanced atop the ruins of the

last. It is as though cultural and earthly forces were dancing together, supporting each other’s acceleration towards an inevitable excess in capacity - a breach in boundaries, a moment of overspill.

2. The island’s children are known for their mood swings and tempers. ‘Volcano babies’ as they are known, resonate with the turbulence of something only they can bear.

...

8. What if we privilege catastrophe, revel in the accident and consider human demise as part of a cleansing cycle?



Santorini, Greece. Photo appropriated from the internet.

Buster

Two days later, Buster replied:

Andrea, I love this story of the cultural history layering at Saint Irene. The effects on its inhabitants may be a foretelling, and with it, the possibility of “human demise as part of a cleansing cycle.”

Prior to your arrival, I presented some work involving my investigation at the Cretaceous-Tertiary boundary in Gubbio, Italy, from last summer’s Civitella Rainieri Residency, where proof of the “fifth extinction” occurs in a seam of limestone 60 million years ago. This seam is part of one of the best exposed limestone uplifts in the world and reveals a very long geologic history of marine life, magnetic reversals, tectonic plate movement and the seam where iridium anomaly discovered by Alvarez draws a connection to a large meteorite impact in the Yucatan with the fifth extinction.

The stratus of uplifted limestone read literally like pages of a book, much like your Saint Irene cultural history of alternate layers of basalt and culture as if a book laid flat. Perhaps Saint Irene will be read someday also as an uplifted stratum revealing history’s layers of a conglomerate matrix of cultural detritus collated with basalt. The metaphors continue to Pope Francis.

The Cretaceous-Paleogene (K-Pg) boundary found in the limestone formation of the Bottaccione Gorge section at Gubbio, Italy, presents the best evidence of the extraterrestrial cause of the fifth extinction event of the planet recorded within the layers of life’s limestone strata. With the K-Pg event, mammals and birds emerged as the dominant land vertebrates in the age of new life. Although the geologic process of limestone offers a sequestering of carbon, its process cannot keep pace with our Anthropocene consumption. It will not be a meteorite that will necessarily mark the end of our Anthropocene epoch, but us.

More about the seam is here, in a review of a book by geologist Walter Alvarez (UofC, Berkeley): http://berkeley.edu/news/media/releases/2008/12/18_alvarez.shtml.



Sounding Staff, Gubbio K-Pg site, Civitella Rainieri, 2014. Photo: Buster Simpson.



Fathom Sounding Staff. Captiva Island, Gulf of Mexico, 2015. Photo: Buster Simpson.

Voxel Frog // Mangrove

Buster Simpson

Amphibians, and in particular frogs, have served as an early indicator species for acid rain, like ironically the canary has in the coal mines, and now the salmon runs of the Pacific Northwest. With the pH of oceans becoming increasingly acidic due to unabated emissions of carbon dioxide, the impact on marine life has reached lethal levels. Ocean acidification is affecting algae, diatoms, and the Coccolithophores that David Buckland's work presents. These living forms sequester carbon and their demise ultimately feeds further acidification.

The soft limestone Voxel Frog is a three-dimensional pixilation of a frog resting in the shallow waters amongst Captiva Island's red mangrove. Made of CaCO₃, the Voxel's ability to purge acidic waters is both real and, like the ocean coral and limestone bedrock of Florida, the Frog Voxel will slowly dissolve in acidic oceans ironically both purging ocean acidity yet off-gassing CO₂. The karst limestone cave formations in northern Florida are a result of such action. Any benefit from the earth's capacity for natural remediation is presently unable to offset our carbon effluent and, although the pH shift will be subtle, its effects on marine life will be profound.

One limestone voxel from the pixelated frog was drafted for David Buckland's open studio presentation as a 'stand in' for chalk, a variety of limestone. David's investigations of phytoplankton as bio sequestration of carbon are represented in his images of the Chalk Cliffs of Dover and documentation of Coccolithophores and associated processes of sequestration presented at the Open Studio on May 27.



Voxel Limestone Amphibian Amongst Mangroves (ongoing series since 1991). Photo: Buster Simpson.



Seat with Table, coral (limestone) installation at Coral Castle Homestead, Florida, by Edward Leedskainin (1887-1951) Photo: Buster Simpson.

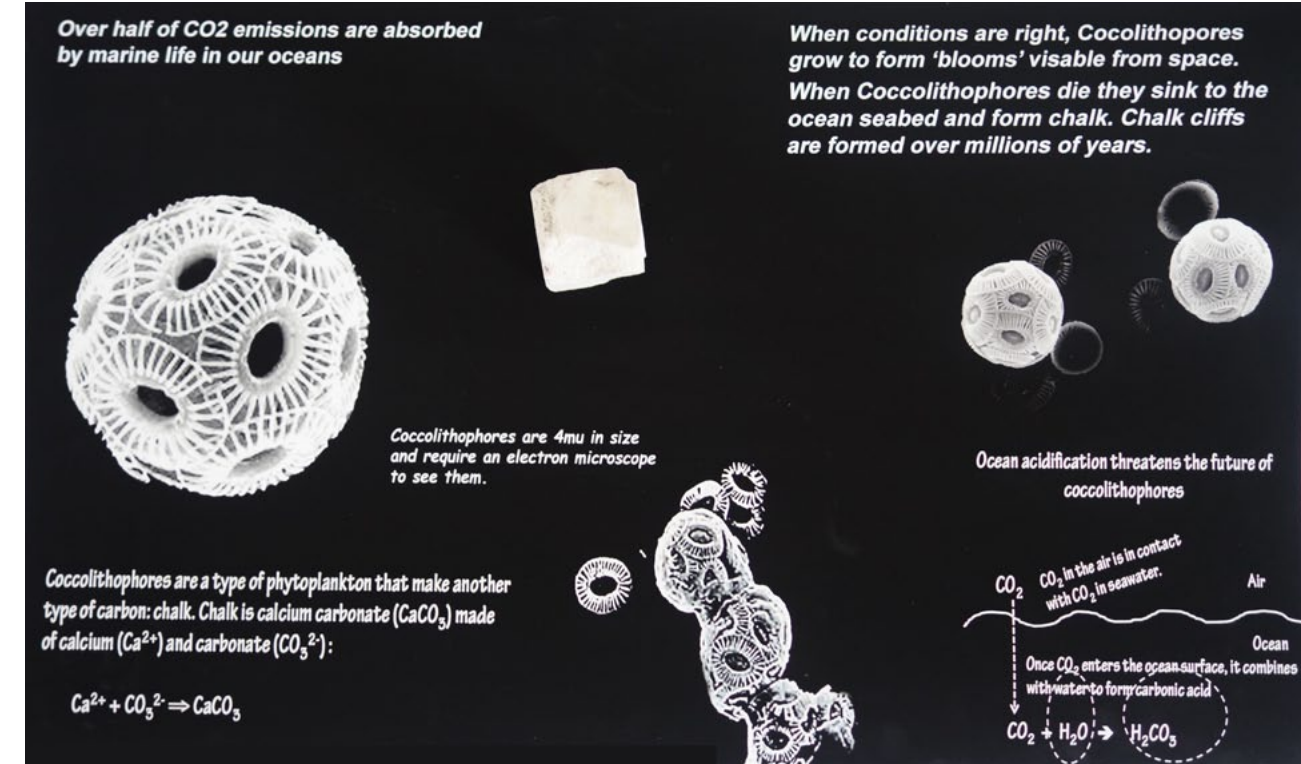


Diagram of Coccolithophores with text, David Buckland. Archival inject on paper, 2015.



Image of Four Shells. Image appropriated from the internet.



pH paper, Pine Island Sound. Photo: Buster Simpson.

Coccolithophores

David Buckland

The connection of the limestone coral bedrock of Florida, the large limestone uplift in the Apennine Mountains of Italy, referenced on the preceding page, and the White Cliffs of Dover represent a significant carbon sequestering system and potential resource. Both these limestone formations (the Dover cliffs are a form of limestone called chalk) are formed by marine life that is vulnerable to the acidic levels now increasing in the ocean. With the acidic dissolve of the calcium carbonate, CaCO₃, the problem is compounded.



Hi David

so here is how it works:

there are three forms of inorganic carbon:
 CO₂ (carbon dioxide)
 HCO₃⁻ (bicarbonate ions)
 CO₃²⁻ (carbonate ions)

These three forms are in equilibrium with each other. if cells use CO₂ for photosynthesis, a little bit of the HCO₃⁻ in seawater is converted into CO₂ (to maintain the equilibrium). Cells use HCO₃⁻ for calcification and once it is inside the cells they convert it into carbonate ions, and at this point they combine with Ca²⁺ to make CaCO₃. So you should think about carbon in dissolution rather than just CO₂. So when carbon is removed by cells from seawater either as CO₂ or HCO₃⁻ (remember that CO₃²⁻ do not penetrate cell membranes), CO₂ from the atmosphere penetrates the surface ocean and dissolved in seawater to maintain the CO₂ equilibrium between the upper ocean and the atmosphere. That's why the oceans are the largest carbon reservoir on Earth and that's why the oceans sequester most of the carbon on Earth.

The reason why most calcifies are vulnerable to acidification is because with acidification, CO₃²⁻ decrease in seawater turning seawater 'corrosive'. When this happens, there is dissolution of chalk in seawater to maintain the equilibrium between solid phase chalk (calcium carbonate: CaCO₃) and its dissolved components (calcium ions: Ca²⁺, and carbonate ions (CO₃²⁻).

Do you have a headache now?

:)

XXX

Dr Debora Iglesias-Rodriguez

"So here is how it works," Letter to David. David Buckland Archival inkjet on paper 2015.



White Cliffs of Dover, Chalk from uplifted sedimentary Coccolithophores. Archival inkjet on paper. Photo: David Buckland.



Open Studio, Photo: RR Staff.



Discounting The Future, David Buckland. Archival inkjet on paper.

◀ Aerial view of Nunivak Island (Alaska) showing a bloom of carbon sequestering Coccolithophores. David Buckland, Archival Inkjet on paper.

Charcoal Sketch 2 for Neptune (A Play About Water)

Story and script by Jeremy Pickard
Music by Nate Welda, lyrics by Jeremy Pickard & Nate Welda

The boy is waiting for Eternity.
He waits for hours, becoming thirsty.
The bottle of water tempts him to drink,
But he is committed, and keeps waiting.

Whale carries the girl to Antarctica.
She finds the great ice palaces collapsed.
She weeps, and her warm tears melt her footing.
Solitary Penguin does not notice.

The boy emerges in a grass river.
Once more he tries to fill up the bottle,
But the river disappears into drought
And he is left standing on barren earth.

The girl is swimming to find her brother.
Her innocence allows her protection:
She speaks to Sea Turtle, who guides her south.
The turtle dies, and the girl is alone.

The boy fills the bottle with fresh water,
But thirsty and proud, he drinks it all down.
The sea intrudes into the aquifer,
And he is forced west by a brackish wedge.

The girl finds the villages deserted,
The sled dogs shot, the polar bears hungry,
The great ice fields deteriorated.
She weeps, and her warm tears fill the ocean.

Tormented, the boy drinks Eternity.
There are no more bottles to replace it;
He must journey to fill it up again.
He heads underground to the aquifer.

The Sea God appears to the drowning girl,
Says "All you know is unreliable"
And disappears into the frozen depths.
She swims alone to the top of the world.

The boy confronts Water God in the clouds,
Demanding security and rainfall.
She resigns, and offers the boy her job.
He accepts, but wonders how to proceed.

An early draft of NEPTUNE was produced in 2009 in New York City by Jeremy Pickard, composed by Brielle Korn, and directed by Sarah Hughes.

The raw first third of a new draft of NEPTUNE was developed at the first Rising Waters Confab, a 2015 Rauschenberg Residency. It was presented on Tuesday, May 12, 2015 in the dance studio, performed by Jeremy Pickard and Hanny Zuniga.



Photos: Sage Sohler.

OPEN STUDIO

Open Studio expresses both the close, ongoing proximity residents had to each other, in a permeable working and living relationship, and also an installation that concluded the residency. The foundation hosted this final Open Studio and invited the community to visit and view the investigations and results of the Confab's output. The reward for Confab residents was not only witnessing the community's response but also being able to step back and see for themselves what had been accomplished.



Photo: Buster Simpson.



Photo: RR Staff.



Photo panorama: Buster Simpson.



Photo: RR Staff.



Photo: RR Staff.

SOS Life Float and Reliquary

Buster Simpson

A twelve-person life float suspended approximately 29 feet above sea level was repurposed into a floating metaphor for future sea levels. In the netted "hold" of the life float, bottles serve as reliquaries for participants' "messages in bottles" intended for future contemplation.

The messages in bottles were sealed and buried at the bottom of a one cubic meter pit: a hand dug low-carbon footprint excavation by Glenn Weiss while in search of the water table. There they will remain until released precipitated by storm surges, beach erosion, or by their own buoyancy, bobbing to the surface to float to some new shoreline and await discovery.



Preparing messages in bottles for future discovery. Photo: Laura Sindell.



SOS Life Float with messages in a bottle offering at Open Studio. Photo: Buster Simpson.



Detail of reliquary message bottles. Photo: Buster Simpson.



Burial of bottled messages in collaboration with Glenn Weiss. Photo: Buster Simpson.

If you have found this bottle floating in the ocean or on a beach, then our worst fears of 2015 may have occurred. Humanity failed to act and the glaciers in Greenland and Antarctica have melted away. A majority of Florida south of Orlando is below sea water. The great of River of Grass - the Everglades - flows no more.

If you found this bottle while constructing a new structure on Captiva Island, then either global warming reversed itself or Captiva is becoming a city on stilts. In 2015, we were very concerned about the emerging superrich (the 1%) and the declining income of working people. I am guessing that you are under-contract to the superrich for the stilt house.

Of course, the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation may have taken the advice of some people from the Rising Waters Confab and sold the land before the land speculators and developers lost faith in south Florida. Therefore you are accidentally destroying our 2015 messages to the future art project. Don't worry, I am glad that the Rauschenberg Foundation can safely serve contemporary artists with the money, but now from some other location on higher ground.

Several other bottles with notes were placed in a hole in the ground and then covered with earth. The approximate 1 meter X 1 meter X 1 meter hole was dug by me, Glenn Weiss, to find the water table. A silly idea, but digging seemed an antidote to any abstract discussion among the artists, scientists and writers at the Rising Waters Confab. Artist Buster Simpson from Seattle asked everyone to write messages for glass bottles from beverages consumed during the five weeks in April-May 2015.

*Glenn Weiss
Delray Beach, Florida*



Detail of message bottle. Photo: Buster Simpson.

Suggesting Palm Readings

Laura Sindell

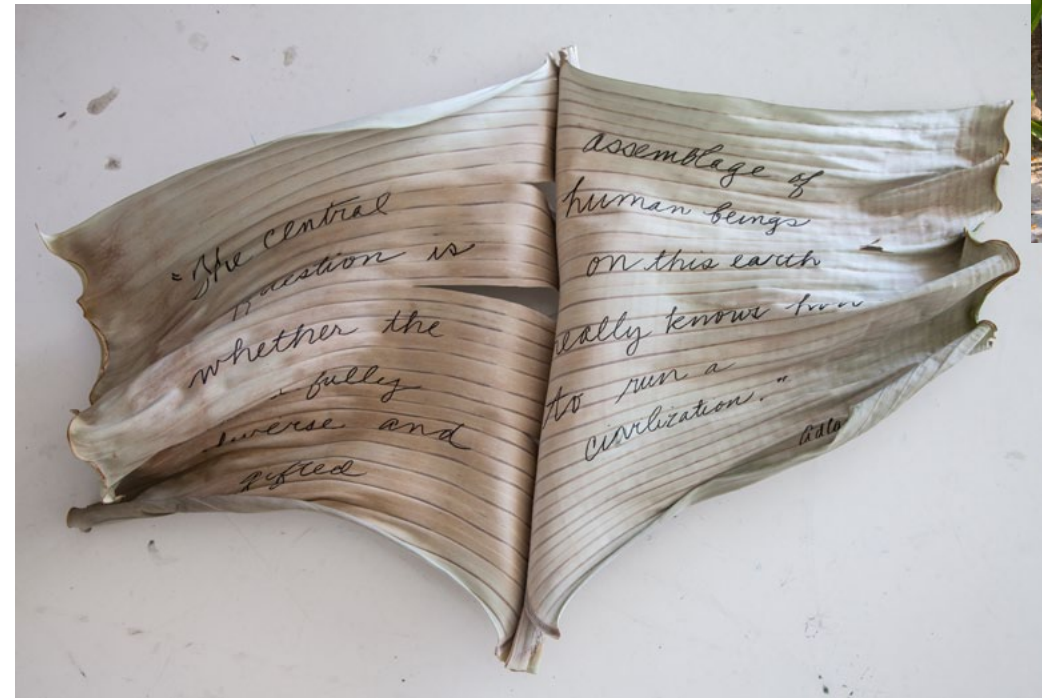
Assumed the role of initiate to the science of climate change. Human action is compelled to construct, change, form, affect, label, nature rarely left in stasis.



Suggesting Palm Readings installation. Leaves, ink, tin stencils, table, chair, clippers. Photo: Laura Sindell.



Leaf Safari. The artist gathering her pages. Photo: Buster Simpson.



Stevenson Leaf. Leaf, ink. Photo: Laura Sindell.

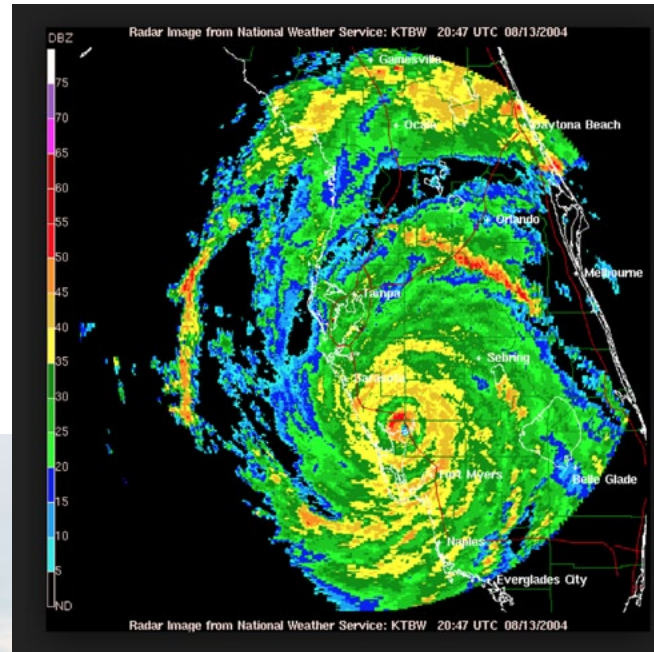
Charley and Bob

Andrea Polli

Charley and Bob is a sound work that can only be heard under water.

One of the effects of the sea level rise and global warming is larger and more frequent hurricanes. A special sound system in the pool presents stories from the devastating Hurricane Charley told by Kristie Anders and Matt Hall mixed with sonifications of meteorological data from 1991 Hurricane Bob that creates a fully “submersive” experience.

Hurricane Charley passing over Captiva Island. National Weather Service.



Andrea Polli on Jensen Dock, Captiva with sound equipment. Photo: Sage Sohler.



Underwater sound piece, *Charley and Bob*, during Open Studio exhibition. Photo: RR Staff.



Swimming pool becomes buoyant during Hurricane Charley flooding. Photo appropriated from the internet.

Luxury Island – American River Archive

Edward Morris and Susannah Saylor

Luxury Island depicts four islands submerged by rising seas. They are pretty pictures of places that are each important in some way or another in art history and are also luxury tourist destinations. How do we evaluate the relative worth of such places in light of rising sea levels? The images are accompanied by the following quote from Marx: “The savages of Cuba regarded gold as a fetish of the Spaniards. They celebrated a feast in its honour, sang in a circle around it, and then threw it into the sea.” – Karl Marx

The fetish of gold. The fetish of art. The fundamental role of commodity fetish in establishing the conditions of anthropogenic climate change and sea level rise. The piece is an effort to chew through our discomfort at these connections, in light of our drive to be climate activists and simultaneously to have an art career.

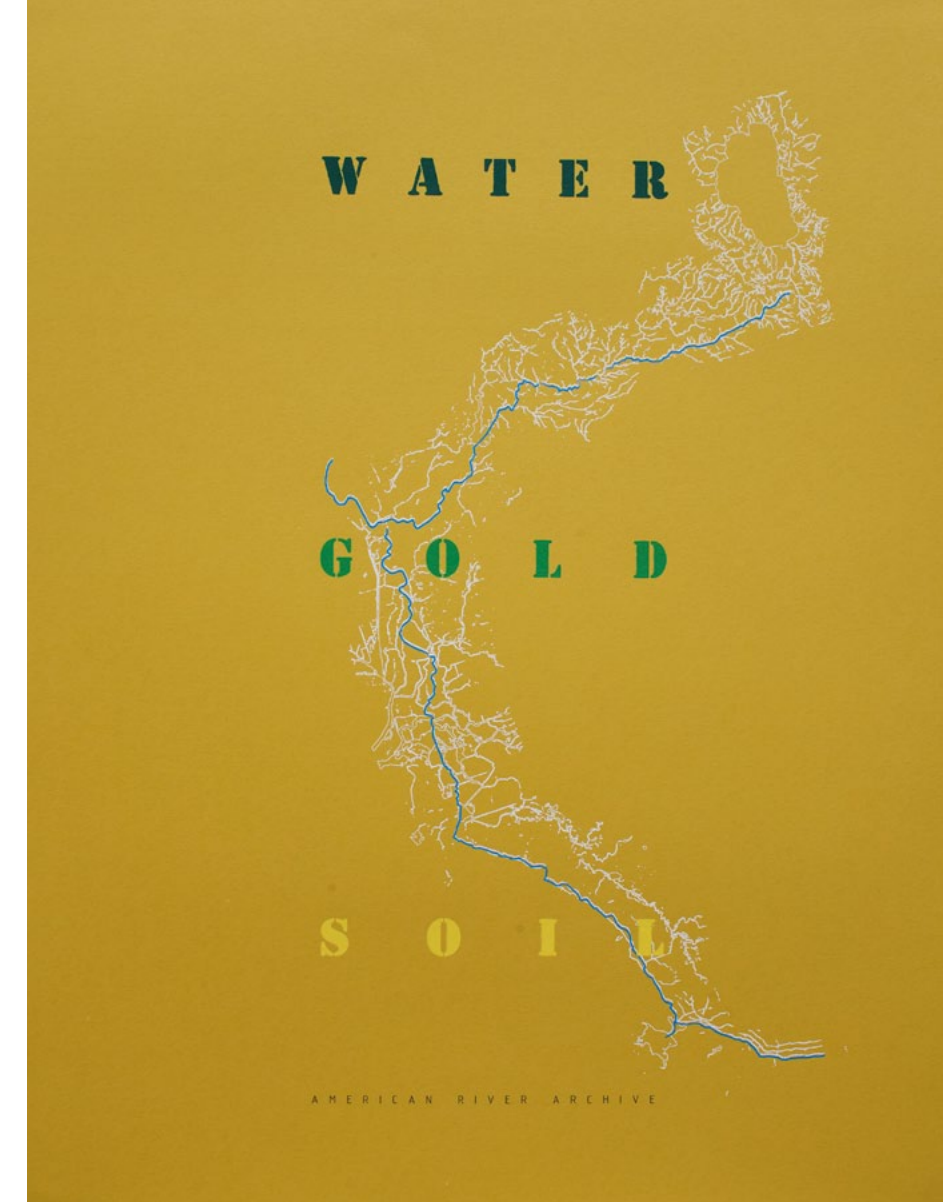


Luxury Island. Set of 4. 14" x 14" each. Archival inkjet images. Saylor / Morris, 2015.

This poster is part of an ongoing project titled *American River Archive* by Saylor/Morris (The Canary Project) with Brett Snyder. The project looks to understand current issues around water use in California by focusing on a single flow of water: the American River. As a whole, the project consists of original photography, historical images, audio, maps, posters and other visual material. The poster shows the watershed of the American River from its origin (the headwaters of the South Fork) to its end use in industrial agriculture. Highlighted in blue is the flow of water the artists are following, documenting and studying. The words WATER, GOLD and SOIL highlight the various forms of extraction have occurred along the river throughout history to the present day. As with other water flows in the West, the “American River” is no longer a river at all, but an elongated site of capture and distribution, with a definite beginning but diffuse end.



Edward Morris. Photo: RR Staff.



American River Archive. 19"x25". 5-color silk screen prints. Saylor/Morris with Brett Snyder. 2015

The Water Table

Jeremy Pickard

A performance produced for the Rising Waters Open Studio, Rauschenberg Residency.



Photos: Laura Sindell.



Photo: Laura Sindell.

Photo: Laura Sindell.

The Water Table

created by
Jeremy Pickard
in collaboration with
Tom Van Lent, scientist
Andrea Polli, sound & projection
James Brock, performer
Jake Eveker, performer
Nicole Oldja, performer
Amanda Luise Pereira, performer
big thanks to
Xavier Cortada
Carrell Courtright
Matt Gamel
Matt Hall

Mapped and built before
Content created today
Never to return

Performance approx. every 10 minutes
One person at a time

Pinhole Cameras

Laura Sindell

These are repurposed objects that tell the story about the rising waters of climate change. Rather than face an overwhelming tide of issues, focus is through one infinitesimally small point of view. Unique photographs with long exposure times, lensless, light sensitive paper negative.



Tourist II Cohiba Cuban cigar box camera resting on fish cleaning table. Exposure: 3 minutes including manatee swimming by Fish House view of rising waters, Pine Island Sound. Photo: Laura Sindell.



Tourist II Cohiba Cuban cigar box camera resting on dock post. Exposure: 7 minutes. Fish House view of rising waters, Pine Island Sound. Photo: Laura Sindell.

Calusa Camera Selfie. 800-year old Lightning Whelk shell, tin globe bank, ball jar lid, tape, tripod, photo. Photo: Laura Sindell.





More Sugar, Dear?

Laura Sindell

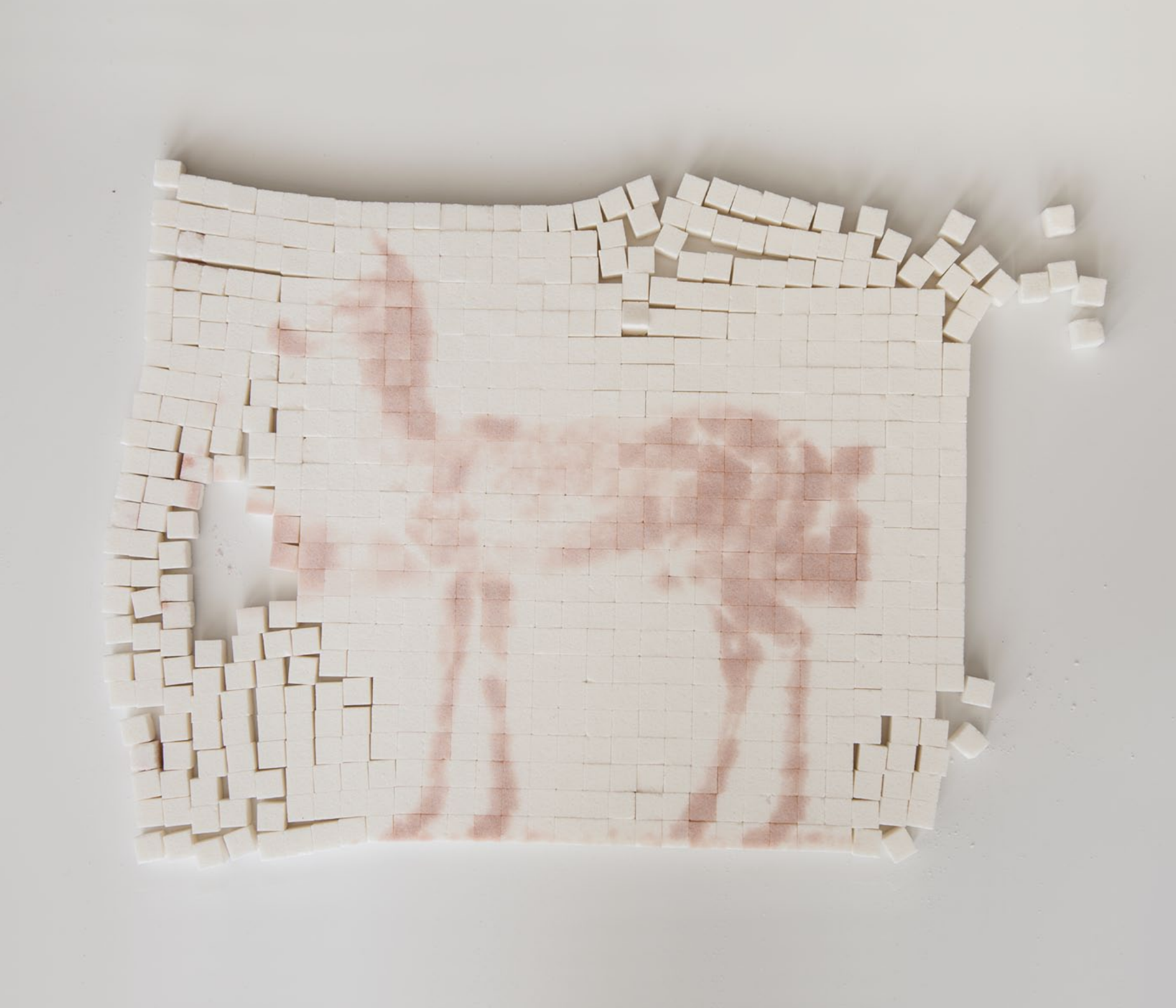
Sea Grape jelly silkscreened a Key deer onto sugar cubes, portraying the animal, which is iconic to the Everglades just as the polar bear is to the Arctic. The deer are facing extinction due to their diminishing habitat in the Everglades. Necessary water is being diverted to Big Sugar agricultural land rather than flowing south to the Everglades. Served at the open house to sweeten iced tea with a lament, a few salt water tears from the deer.

More Sugar, Dear? Sugar cubes, sea grape jelly. Edible. ▶
(Thank you, Carrell Courtright.) Photo: Laura Sindell.

◀ Pinhole Camera Ensemble. Calusa Camera, Cohiba Camera (Castro's brand), Tourist II Globe Camera with pinhole view pierced at Captiva, Mermaid/Merman Matchbox sourced from Rauschenberg scrap box, Dutch Biscuit Tin, English Mint Tin. Photo: Laura Sindell.

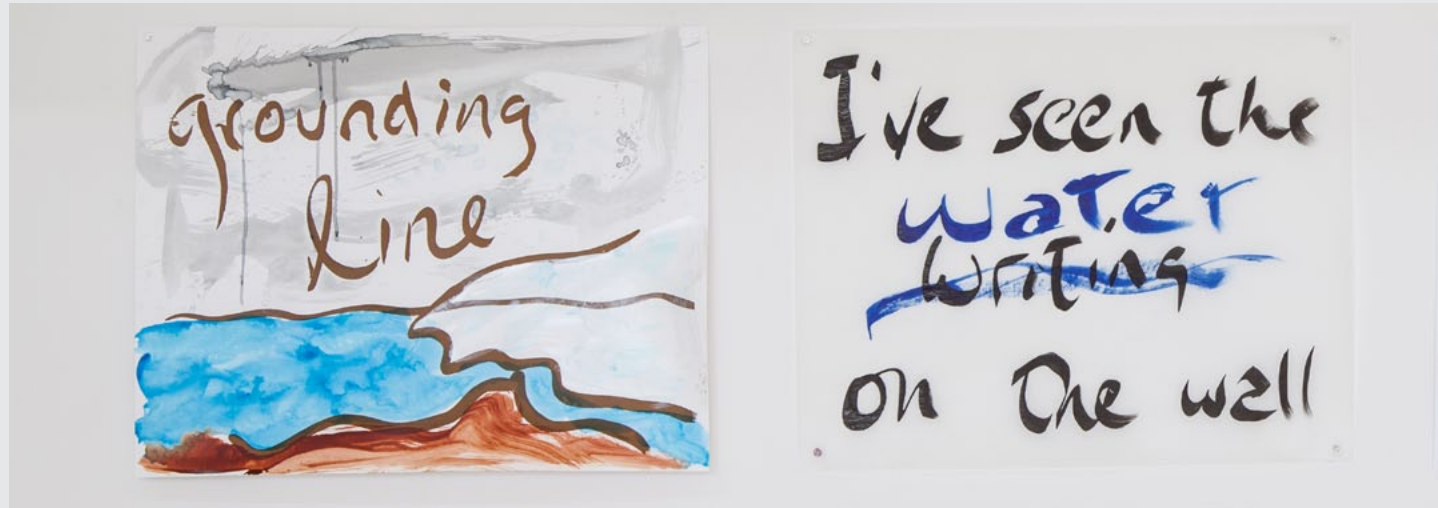


◀ Laura Sindell explaining the function of her pinhole cameras. Photo: RR Staff.

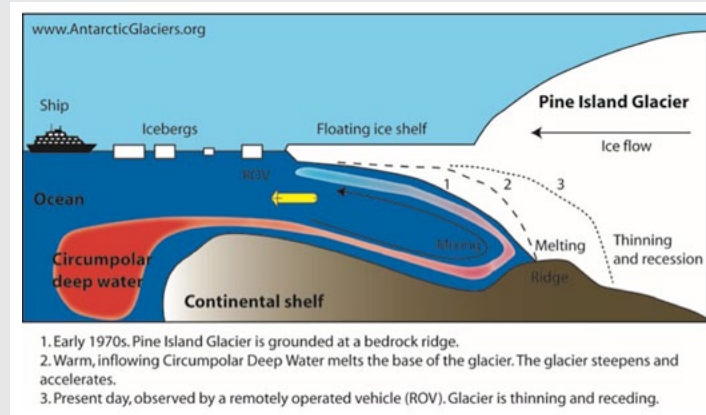


Grounding Line – I've Seen the Water on the Wall

Lewis Hyde



Grounding Line and I've Seen the Water on the Wall. Lewis Hyde. Photo: Laura Sindell.



John Englander presented this illustration referring to a bedrock ridge crucial to holding back a major sea rise event when Pine Island Glacier loses its "grounding line" to the undermining of warmer ocean currents. Lewis Hyde's painting referred to as a "grounding line" and that precarious moment approaching. Diagram: John Englander.

The Manatees at Blue Springs

Lewis Hyde

I myself burned a thousand gallons to come south to see you, dear manatee, my trail of carbon dioxide rises toward the sun as your gray-green back rises toward the surface. We come to worship in the small area where our greed has been held back (a little rope strung with white floats marks the edge); we have left our cars in the parking lot and come to stare across the fence in an elegiac mood nicely watered by the condensation dripping from the cooling exhaust pipes. On their side of the line, the manatees float, their broad backs inscribed with the white hieroglyphic scars of our hurry; on our side we stand with our black tattoos, and all this gravity, and our hands covered with fingers.

One of 14 panels, accordion fold book, inkjet printed. 2015. Photo: Laura Sindell.



BECOMING WATER



DEATH AND POETRY

In dire times
limestone drowns and
mangroves stop walking.
Sea turtles lay
eggs that do not float
and the beach suffers
the improprieties of "nourishment."

In dire times there is only
now, now, now, and here in the
obsidian moonless night
a green turtle swims
out of
a green wave.

In dire times swift
rivers of wind and warmth dissipate and
walls of fire spot forward. Whole alphabets
of ice are severed: Larsen A, B, C,
and the tongue of the last glacier snaps.

In dire times parts of speech go limp. There is
no talk except for the one who says
"I do not see the ice wanting to come back," and it doesn't.
Polar bears go brown: even nanoq's albedo is lost,
but the bear with the human face keeps beckoning....

-Gretel Ehrlich 2015

Fathom's Portal

Buster Simpson

Fathom's Portal consists of a combination of international and historic measurement systems printed on a appliqué that frames the entry into the large Rauschenberg studio. One of the portal's measurement systems is based on the fathom. As a collective effort, participants of Rising Waters Confab gathered at water's edge on the Gulf of Mexico and extended their arms, each representing a fathom, or 6 feet. Standing at the ocean edge of rising waters, the effort became a collective fathoming expressing the impending sea level rise.

Fathom is derived from the Old English word *fæðm*, corresponding to the old Frisian word "fadem" meaning embracing arms or a pair of outstretched arms. As a verb, fathom is the process of comprehension, to understand the reason for something.



Fathom's Portal, Robert Rauschenberg Residency, May 2015. Photos: Sage Sohier and Laura Sindell. Photo Illustration: Carrell Courtright. Technical Drawing: Todd Metten.

Stacked Chairs

June Wilson

"After seeing Bob's piece, *Soundings* – images and flashes and chairs stacked up – and hearing Matt say that he created the work with the idea of Russia and the U.S. being able to sit together and talk during the Cold War, I began thinking.

"What does it mean for us to all sit together and talk to each other. And what does it mean to not be together and talk to each other. Then I began seeing chairs stacked up into structures, all stacked on top of each other, because of our inability to talk collectively together."



Photo: June Wilson.

Table to Deploy // The Arctic is Captiva

Buster Simpson

Bob's aluminum studio chairs around a conference table consisting of a repurposed 12-person life float, and supported by 4 five-gallon water jugs. Chairs and life float transformed into dogs and sled (after *L'Arctique est Paris*

by Gretel Ehrlich and Mel Chin and Confab). Installation photos in RR studio and photo of forest fire on Pine Island by Buster Simpson.



Photo: Buster Simpson. Photo Illustration: Todd Metten.



THE ARCTIC IS CAPTIVA 2015

Rising Waters Confab - Rauschenberg Residency

Installation photo in RR studio and photo of forest fire on Pine Island by Buster Simpson. ▶
Photo Illustration: Carrell Courtwright and Todd Metten.

HVAC



Confab meeting with participants gathered around *Table to Deploy* as conference table.
Photo: RR Staff. Photo Illustration: Todd Metten.

Fathom Sounding Staff, 2015. Buster Simpson. Utilitarian agitprop walking stick. Captiva Island, Gulf of Mexico. Photo: Buster Simpson.

