SITE SANTA FE PRESENTS GOING WITH THE FLOW: ART, ACTIONS, AND WESTERN WATERS

DYNAMIC GROUP EXHIBITION EXPLORES WATER AND EXTREME DROUGHT IN THE SOUTHWEST UNITED STATES

Opening Celebration: Friday, April 14, 2023, 5:00 - 9:00 PM

(Santa Fe, NM, March 9, 2023) – SITE Santa Fe presents GOING WITH THE FLOW: ART, ACTIONS, AND WESTERN WATERS, a new group exhibition of artists and collectives based in the Southwestern United States, from April 14 through July 31, 2023. Exploring the role of water in the arid Southwest during the current extreme droughts, participating artists will engage not only the indoor gallery spaces at SITE Santa Fe, but also the Railyard Park and other locations across the City of Santa Fe with temporary artworks, interventions, community collaboration, talks, and performances.

“The combination of conventional gallery display and public action is central to this exhibition,” says SITE Santa Fe curator Brandee Caoba. “Installing artwork in outdoor public spaces creates opportunities for discovery and interaction in new ways.”

One such project combining an installation at SITE Santa Fe with off-site activations is There Must Be Other Names For The River. This ongoing collaborative artwork by Jessica Zeglin, Dylan McLaughlin, and Marisa Demarco builds relationships between the Rio Grande and the viewer by combining a visual representation of streamflow data, sound, and performance. The
interior gallery space is activated by a large-scale mural that expands throughout the duration of the exhibition, responding to new streamflow data. Concurrently, *There Must Be Other Names For The River* will reach beyond the gallery walls with a site-specific sound installation along the ramada in the neighboring Railyard Park. A live choral performance will take place at SITE Santa Fe on Saturday, July 29th. More details to follow.

Basia Irland’s contributions to the exhibition draw visitors outside SITE Santa Fe. Irland will display works from her series *Gatherings and Repositories* within the galleries, she also presents *Contemplation Stations in the Santa Fe Railyard Park*. Visitors to these public artworks can enjoy a moment of quiet surrounded by plant matter collected from the banks of local waterways. Additionally, SITE Santa Fe commissioned Irland to create *Ice Books*, ephemeral artworks made from ice embedded with native riparian seeds, that will be released into the river as a public event.

Also in the Railyard Park, artist collective M12 Studio will present a site-specific sculpture in connection with their animated video installation in the galleries. The sculpture, entitled *Fountain (Orphan)*, uses the evocative figure of a water pump as an entry point into the complex relationship between surface water and groundwater in New Mexico and East Texas. Inside, *GIS Land Animation* provides a layered look at land and water use over time and is presented alongside historical artifacts and archival photos. Together, these works pinpoint the use of water resources and highlight endangered spaces like wetlands and playa lakes to better acquaint visitors with the complicated state of water usage in today’s American West.

Artist Paula Castillo’s participatory project *Reverse the Curse* addresses historical and contemporary water exploitation, this time by framing the river as an animate subject deserving of protection, rights, and good health, rather than just a resource to be used. Beginning in 2021, Castillo organized in-person events along the Rio Grande that brought community members together to perform ritual remedios (remedies) for the mal de ojo (evil eye) curse afflicting the river. Cinemagraphs of the ritual remedios will be played on a stack of vintage televisions inside the museum. A new outdoor sculpture entitled *jetty jack* features stills from the events overlaid onto simulacrums of jetty jacks which were used to straighten the Rio Grande in the 1950s and 1960s.

Finally, photographer Sharon Stewart’s project documents the fragile and evolving culture of care surrounding historic waterways in Northern New Mexico. After three decades of photographing the myriad complexities of acequia culture, Stewart was forced to confront the destruction wrought by the 2022 wildfires in Mora Valley, NM. Through Stewart’s lens, visitors to the exhibition will witness the lasting fire damage to local waterways, as well as community efforts to repair this delicate ecosystem.
An audio guide will accompany the exhibition with versions available in English and Spanish.

**GOING WITH THE FLOW: ART, ACTIONS, AND WESTERN WATERS** is curated by Brandee Caoba and Lucy R. Lippard.

**Opening Weekend Events**

Opening Celebration  
SITE Santa Fe  
Fri, Apr 14, 2023, 5-9 PM  
Celebrate the exhibition opening with live music by Felix y Los Gatos, local food truck, and bar by Paloma.

Free Tours Every Hour on the Hour  
SITE Santa Fe  
Sat, Apr 15, 2023, 10 AM-4 PM  
Explore both the indoor and outdoor aspects of this new exhibition, guided by artists, curators, and educators.

Additional events, including an **Ice Book Release**, and a live performance of **There Must Be Other Names for the River** will take place throughout the run of the exhibition.

Event details will be updated at sitesantafe.org.

**Image Credits:**

Paula Castillo, **REVERSE THE CURSE**, 2022; photo by Don Unser

Basia Irland, **Santa Fe River Ice Book**, 2007-present, courtesy of the artist

**About the Artists**

Paula Castillo is manita artist based in Belén, NM. Paula Castillo attended Yale University after graduating from Belén High School and then worked in an electronics factory, where she began to forge her early career in contemporary sculpture. The complex and malleable intersections between the physical and cultural landscape are the primary source of Castillo's inventiveness. She writes, “The human-made microcosms combined with the expansive natural environment of the North American Southwest have been the catalyst for my interest in the systems and spaces we inhabit.” Castillo creates intimate and large-scale sculptural and performative installations. These works overlap with time across natural and human-driven historiography and ecological processes to reveal the critical interrelationship between humans, place, and environment. Castillo’s work annexes minimalist forms and schemes and reinscribes them with a quietly schizophrenic division between the hyper-organized desire to dissolve into the world and the need to buttress margins. Through these processes, Castillo strives to expose the strangeness of the world and the ideological forces that influence our conceptions of nature and relationships. She utilizes the literal and symbolic aspects of home places to experiment with ideas related to the broader American Southwest region to create allegorical narratives that imagine the immense complexity involved for any entity. The all-encompassing goal of her work is to expose our real, dense, and buried attachments to all “others.”
Castillo holds an MFA from the University of New Mexico in 3D studio, focusing on contemporary theory, ecofeminism, and relational aesthetics. Castillo’s material expertise includes recycled biotic and sculptural metals, steel, wood, paper, cast concrete and acrylic, and digital art. She has received grants from UNESCO, SITE Santa Fe, and Los Alamos National Labs to develop cutting-edge contemporary art encapsulating critical place-making. Castillo’s work is in various national collections, including the National Museum of Women in the Arts and the Museum of Contemporary Native Arts. Publications such as Hyperallergic, Washington Post, and the New York Times have reviewed her work. She is currently developing Reverse the Curse and Corn is People, performative and sculptural installations inspired by her research residency at the Denver Botanic Gardens in 2021. Her inquiry for Landline at DBG focused on traditional healing practices that center the legacy of performance art in the transformative performance pieces of community healers like curanderas and Nahua titiĉih. She is also currently working on three monumental permanent public sculptures, Glyph, Equis, and Trestle, for the Golden Triangle’s Denver Art Museum Campus that reveal Denver’s deep Mestizaje narrative.

Marisa Demarco surfaces and interrogates contemporary truths through performance, worn sculpture, installation, sound composition, and journalism. She’s the founder of Gatas y Vatas festival for boundary-pushing performance and Milch de la Máquina, a women’s performance-art crew. She’s also a leader with Death Convention Singers, the largest noise collective in the Southwest. Her work has appeared in galleries and museums, such as the National Hispanic Cultural Center, the UNM Art Museum, GRAFT Gallery, CFA Contemporary, and at the Carlsbad Museum as part of the Atomic Culture series. Demarco received her MFA in experimental art and technology from the University of New Mexico.

Basia Irland, is an artist, author, Fulbright Scholar, and activist who creates international large-scale community-based water projects featured in her books, Water Library (University of New Mexico Press, 2007) and Reading the River, The Ecological Activist Art of Basia Irland (Museum De Domijnen, The Netherlands, 2017). She is Professor Emerita, Department of Art, University of New Mexico, where she founded the art and ecology program.

Irland’s website, basiairland.com, contains extensive documentation of her work, including collaborations with scientists, essays about global waterways written for National Geographic, and images from her museum retrospective in the Netherlands. She has created world-wide projects, including Waterborne Disease Scrolls that are based on research done with epidemiologists in Nepal, Egypt, India, and Ethiopia; A Gathering of Waters, which fosters dialogue and connects communities along the entire length of rivers that are accompanied by portable Repositories; and Ice Receding/Books Reseeding, hand-carved ephemeral Ice Books embedded with native seed texts that are floated down streams to aid with riparian restoration. She has constructed rainwater harvesting systems and produced documentaries about water.

In 2015-2016, Irland had a major retrospective exhibition at the Museum De Domijnen in the Netherlands. She has lectured globally and was the keynote speaker, along with Amitav Ghosh, for an ecology conference at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, 2018. Irland was invited by the United Nations in France to write a chapter about American rivers for a book, Water Culture, published by UNESCO, and she is a Knowledge Network Expert for the United Nations’ Harmony with Nature platform. In 2021-2022, she represented the United States in the 15 Biennale de Cuenca, Ecuador, curated by Blanca de la Torre. Her projects have been featured in over 70 international publications.
**M12 Studio** is a small artist-constructed studio and non-profit organization committed to amplifying the aesthetics of rural cultures and landscapes. M12's projects vary in form, ranging from large-scale sculptural installations to small books and ephemeral events. M12 Studio has been featured in exhibitions worldwide, including those at the 21st International Art Biennial of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia; Landmark Arts at Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX; the 13th International Venice Architecture Biennale, Venice, Italy; the Kalmar Konstmuseum, Kalmar, Sweden; the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Ireland; the Santa Fe Art Institute, Santa Fe, NM; Corcoran Gallery, Washington, DC; IASKA Australian Biennial, Perth, Australia; Biennial of the Americas, Denver, CO; the Contemporary Museum, Baltimore, MD; and the Center for Land Use Interpretation, Culver City, CA / Wendover, NV. Project Team: Richard Saxton, Margo Handwerker, and Trent Segura.

*Richard Saxton* is an artist and University of Colorado professor whose work focuses primarily on rural knowledge and landscape. He is the founder and creative director of M12 Studio.

*Margo Handwerker* is a practitioner with M12 Studio and serves as chief curator and director of the Texas State Galleries at Texas State University.

*Trent Segura* is a practitioner with M12 Studio and independent graphic designer.

*Dylan McLaughlin* is a multidisciplinary artist looking critically to ecologies of extraction and threatened ecosystems. He weaves Diné mythology, ecological data, and environmental histories, while holding space for complexity. What transpires is the sonification of relationships to land, through experimental music composition and improvised performance. In his multimedia installation and performative works, he looks to engage the poetics and politics of human relations to land. He is a current recipient of the NACF LIFT award. He received his BFA in new media arts at the Institute of American Indian Arts, and his MFA in art and ecology at the University of New Mexico. He is currently an Early Career Fellow at the University of Texas at Austin.

Born in Edinburg, Texas, on the South Texas borderlands with Mexico, educated in finance and economics at the University of Texas and Harvard University, *Sharon Stewart* now resides in the mountain village of Chacón, Mora County, NM. For three decades, she has extensively photographed the economic, social, familial, and religious influences that define the cultural landscape of Northern New Mexico in *Exit West: A Cultural Confluence*. Stewart's engagements with her community have included serving on its Agua Pura Mutual Domestic Water Association board, coordinating the successful effort to save Chacón's 125-year-old postal service, and contributing to a yearly celebration of Mora Valley rituals and traditions, La Cultural Cura. As well, her long-form survey of El Cerrito, NM, *El Agua es la Vida (Water is Life)*, explores village life and acequia culture. This and her photo narrative, *Toxic Tour of Texas*, portraying the efforts of grassroots environmental activists to protect the health of their land, water, air, families, and culture from the effects of hazardous waste policies of government and industry, are included in the *Water in the West* Project and Archive. The eleven-member photographers self-directed projects to document the politics and history of water use in the American West. Stewart is now actively chronicling the continuum of effects from the 2022 Hermit's Peak and Calf Canyon conflagration in her home valley.

*Jessica Zeglin*’s work centers on knotty particulars of intersections between human and ecological social systems, emphasizing listening and awareness towards our fundamental
entanglement with other’s lives. Her works in drawing, sound, textiles, and installation begin from a research practice founded in concepts of deep time, process, and emergence; looking critically at personal, colonial, and layered histories of living and contested space. Her work has been shared through venues such as the UNM Art Museum, the Studios at Mass MoCA, the Tallgrass artist residency, the Weisman Art Museum, Trapdoor Projects Gallery, in zines and artist books, through soundwalks, and through conversation. She holds an MFA in art and ecology from the University of New Mexico and an MPH in public health administration and policy from the University of Minnesota, and maintains a studio practice based in Albuquerque, NM.

Thank you
Support for GOING WITH THE FLOW: ART, ACTIONS, AND WESTERN WATERS is generously provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, SITE Santa Fe Board of Directors, and the SITE Santa Fe Annual Exhibition Fund.

Additional funding is provided by the City of Santa Fe Arts and Culture Department and the 1% Lodgers’ Tax.

About SITE Santa Fe
Guided by artists, rooted in New Mexico, SITE Santa Fe celebrates contemporary creative expression. SITE Santa Fe aspires to be an internationally recognized destination for art and artists, and a community resource for creativity and learning.

Founded in 1995 to establish the first international contemporary art biennial in the United States, SITE Santa Fe is a non-collecting art institution committed to supporting new developments in contemporary art, encouraging artistic exploration, and expanding traditional museum experiences. Since its launch, SITE Santa Fe has presented 11 international biennials, more than 100 contemporary art exhibitions, and works by hundreds of emerging and established artists from around the world and right here in New Mexico. SITE Santa Fe also presents a wide range of public and educational programs that include conversations with artists and curators, performances, film screenings, concerts, hands-on workshops, and collaborations with dozens of local schools and community organizations.

VISUALS AVAILABLE
FURTHER INFORMATION ON SITE SANTA FE CAN BE FOUND AT SITESANTAFE.ORG
FOLLOW SITE SANTA FE ON FACEBOOK, TWITTER, AND INSTAGRAM

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