

Review

"This exhibition grounds metaphors and dot similes as messages of contrition that hit home and further sets the table together and apart for a serious argument about our survival."

In partnership with the National Park Service, installed at the formerly known iconic space named the Cliff House is now FOR-SITE's *Lands End* exhibition consisting of 27 artists of various ethnicities, ages, and experiences. FOR-SITE emphasizes their presence is on indigenous land while clarifying the Cliff House surrounding area is the original homeland of the Yelamu of the Ramaytush Ohlone Peoples, the first inhabitants of the San Francisco Peninsula.

While the new tenants (not counting the neighboring Sutro Baths Victorian ghosts). At the same time, the former tenants of the 1863 structure followed with three different iterations of expansions and owner-managers over time. Then, after a succession of weatherly assaults, such as fire and earthquake, is also when the structure went through an iconoclast change of hands.

One of the first 27 artists exhibiting with *Lands End* is titled *The Last Reef* conjures beauty and the ominous play on the last supper. Artist (Gülnur Özdağlar) is the cartography of an ocean suspended from the ceiling. Here, the viewer may see the illusion of subtle shifts with the vibration of natural air. The expressive approach captures the structure of the circular patterns of the Coriolis effect with its forewarnings of spherical clockwise rotations of ocean water at the point in which they cool off and warm up before turning into an actual hurricane.

Each of the 27 exhibiting artworks resonates with shared concerns about our ecosystems. Cheryl Haines curates *Lands End* with care and thoughts about using space. This selection of art reflects artistic sensibilities of social change and the relationship between the earth and our daily interactions. (Jorge Rodriguez-Gerada's) *Forest Focus* eye tells time, while (Shumon Ahmed) gives viewers *Metal Graves 14 and 15* and *When Dead Ships Travel 10 and 12* deconstructs time with massive life-size ships that sit off the shore of Bangladesh, scaring the lungs of our environment. These photos tell the story in b&w and color. Each appears as a distressed object. It offers a glimpse into the impact the industry has on the ecosystem. While artist (Ólafur Elíasson's) is no stranger to the use of space with past installations grounded in light that play on metaphors. In his *Imaginary Dusk Colour*, a circular illusion of light is situated in a room, giving the distance between the viewer and the object.

The classic piece features artist (Doug Aitken's) episodic film video installation titled *migration* (empire) in a color that captivates the viewer's attention. Sudden dramatic entrances of animals seemingly come out of nowhere appear in the interior of a familiar structure like a bedroom atop a well-made bed. The two regal birds stand looking on while one gazes at the other who breaks the fourth wall. In this dance, a lit lamp with a shade with a bit of pun offers visionary light. The viewer can't help but look on, almost in disbelief witnessing two types that model human-like

behaviors. You might find that there are also our new stars in the mise-en-scene. There is no apparent disturbance in the equilibrium of these inhabitants—instead, the film takes the viewer on a journey with an ironic appeal, forces us to gaze at wild beauty. The delicate imbalance of nature is inside an unsuspecting space like a room that offers self-service to the guests; many animals are not shy about dominating their new home. Just wait and see; it gets wild somewhere, like a Fellini movie with a tad-o-wit; thus, seeing animals in this space is a trip.

Another artist work titled *Tombstone* is (Brian Jungen), a Canadian First Nation artist who creates work from "mass productions." A massive hunk of plastic is also reminiscent of deconstructed ice cube trays or the hemisphere of the brain but presumed mass of shipwrecked ice cubes that are actually "step stools" constructed into the shape of a turtle shell. Its position is atop of black file cabinets of which the world's stage dominates. This repetition also organizes principles that exemplify the evil nature of past colonial powers, which destroyed the indigenous communities. This work has captured both a masterwork of the human skull and the hemispheric atmosphere of the world.

When the iconic Cliff House closed its doors in 2020, it now stands as an open space landing for humans to peruse art like *One Beach Plastic*. For decades, meticulous and obsessive collection of plastics sourced from beaches led artists (Richard and Judy Shelby Lang) to execute on a commitment of practice. The surreal and painterly presentation appears under dim lights (as if warming plates) atop of metal—As you enter the kitchen, soon lured by the appearance of suspected food. While waiting for the chef, you might see an unsuspecting guest walk by (but remember) the space in earnest now emptied of people - former diners (even the surfers were not present). Indeed, this scene sets the authentic appearance of the chef's delight. This installation is wit at play; it flirts with the remains of the days' catch. Now, when you think the chef is ready to serve a large group of people who conceivably wait. On a still-life assembly line is a collection of presumptively fossil bones. These white pieces like bones sometimes look white; other times yellow and could be like penne pasta or a potato chip. Each item placed like a specimen of uncanny culinary delights seemingly to taste. A series of stacked illusions atop white ceramic plates dates the forensics of human habits—tics—in this open space is a kit of imagination.

In contrast, some locals recall those Cliff House meals waiting to be sent out by the now missing waitstaff (perhaps cunning if not ironic) as you do not see where they usually would be cued and ready to serve you your next ocean beach view brunch or dinner. These incantations suggest that perhaps we may never see our waitstaff or food again at the table in these trying times. Yet, these two artists pull off the miraculous with plastic objects, much of which you will identify, inviting you to examine it all as if you were an inspector. You can reminisce and question: what will we consume on our plates if we continue to pollute and compromise the earth and oceans with plastics?

Richard and Judy Shelby Lang may not be in the business of serving food; they have done well by packaging art with a menu containing social and political messages that spin facts.

Repurposed plastics may float, but the environment of human consumption and waste continues to find its way onto, if not our tables, then to the sea.

Another artist (Andy Goldsworthy) *Geophagia* left a massive slab of clay on the table, sitting towards the west and southern windows overlooking the ocean waves. The viewers' attention caught between the dry clay of earth like the drought earth of California. The viewer can contemplate problems that place human behaviors on display by the reflection coming from these artists. Including (Ana Teresa Fernández) *On the Horizon*, whose use of a three-dimensional historic architectural space turns the aesthetics of water sourced from Ocean Beach inside oblong tubes flanked across a stretch of the floor. Also, appear like six-foot tunnels that stand at the vertical. These vertical structures offer illusions of the real to meditate.



Ana Teresa Fernández, *On the Horizon*, 2021; acrylic resin cylinders, Part of the exhibition *Lands End*, organized by FORSITE. Image courtesy FOR-SITE. Photo: Robert Divers Herrick.

This exhibition grounds metaphors and dot similes as messages of contrition that hit home and further set the table together and apart for a serious argument about survival. It ponders questions about the longevity of our most intimate species and the planet.

Spread throughout the building several stories though it is technically three-four levels, and (even though as a young adult I had been here before), this time it felt surreal if not subterranean. While standing at the base level was like floating to the earth's surface. So, it is an appropriate place to position art reflecting on the themes of displacement of plastics, water, species, and space.

Today, its presence is a testament to the decreased number of erasures; if anything has eroded, it is the fertile ground that these creatures once knew. No matter what comes here and goes, the Cliff House as a structure fills the void of displacement with historical memory. Just as the sunken ships of the past, there's a presence here in this open space.

Lands End artist further mentions listing: Allies of the Sea Surf Art, Chester Arnold, Daniel Beltrá, Andrea Chung, Elizabeth Ellenwood, Adam Eli Feibelman, Angelo Filomeno, Iris van Herpen, Carsten Höller, Suzanne Husky, Tony Matelli, Tuula Närhinen, Maja Petrić, Mark Dion and Ana Sherwood, Pae White, William T. Wiley, and Jana Winderen.

The exhibition opened on November 7th and runs until March 27th, 2022. For more about the exhibition visit: For-Site Foundation website at <https://www.for-site.org>

--Imani Maryahm Harrington