

**90 S**

15° E, Switzerland: *"Losses to insurers from environmental events have risen exponentially over the past .*

*"I will place 12 pairs of shoes in a circle around the ceremonial South Pole as a temporary installation.  
Placing the shoes next to each other as a proxy for people across the globe, I aim to conceptually  
diminish the distance between them. "*

75° W, Peru: *"I tell my wife the day that mountain loses its snow, we will have to move out of the valley.*

*30 years, and are expected to rise even more rapidly still." 180°, Tuvalu: "Tuvalu is the first victim of gl*

# **The Longitudinal Installation**

**by**

**Xavier Cortada**

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30° E, Zimbabwe: "We used to be able to grow everything we want but that has all changed." 60° E, Iran: "I

90°S



**Longitudinal Installation** at the South Pole, 2007 (left), and the North Pole, 2008

105° E, Borneo, Indonesia: "There's been no rain, it's horrible. The governor's office has instructed schools

More than 90 percent of our wetlands have completely dried up." 0°, Spain: "There may be a move of wines



**90°N**

and offices to close until further notice." 135° W, Yukon, Canada: "The weather is really unpredictable a

# The Longitudinal Installation

## by Xavier Cortada

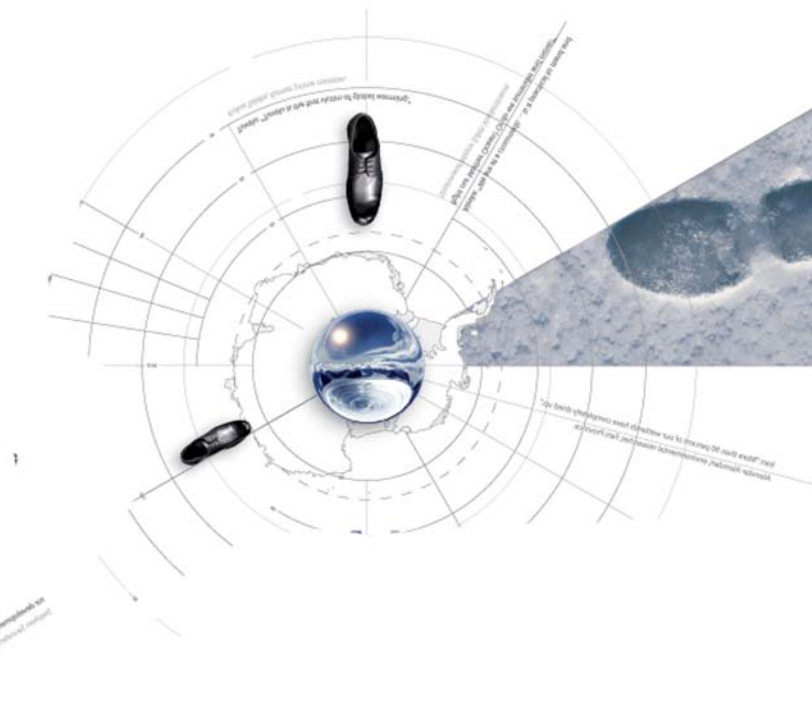
Miami artist Xavier Cortada created art at the North and South Poles to help address environmental issues at every point in between.

Cortada placed 24 shoes in a circle around the North and South Pole, each shoe serving as a proxy for a person affected by global climate change in the world. He placed the shoes inches apart along the lines of longitude crossing the place where these individuals live, conceptually diminishing the distance between them.

### 90S: South Pole Installation

On January 4th, 2007, Cortada, a National Science Foundation (NSF) Antarctic Artists and Writers Program grantee, arrived at the South Pole to perform a series of ritualistic installations including The Longitudinal Installation.

In preparation for the project, Cortada collected newspaper quotes from people across the 24 time



zones about the impact of climate change on their lives. (Please see next page to read them).

In Antarctica, Cortada painted the approximate longitude of the location where the quote originated inside each of the 24 shoes. To paint the shoes, Cortada mixed acrylic paint with soil samples from the Dry Valleys in Antarctica, one of the places on Earth most susceptible to climate change.

At the South Pole, Cortada placed the 24 shoes inches apart in a circle, each aligned with its corresponding longitude as it converged on the South Pole. The artist then walked to the 0 degree longitude, the prime meridian, and walked clockwise around the pole, stopping at each shoe to recite each of the 24 quotes. Please turn to page to read the quotes.

By creating this installation in a continent with no borders, Cortada equally diminished manmade boundaries in the world above it. Voices simultaneously stand in their place (longitude) around the world and inches away from one another. Global problems are shown for what they really are: shared problems.



## 90N: North Pole Installation

On June 29, 2008, Cortada repeated the installation at the North Pole as a New York Foundation for the Arts sponsored artist.

Arriving by icebreaker, the artist placed 24 women's shoes in a circle around the North Pole. Using Arctic sea ice to dilute the paint, Cortada painted the longitudes inside each shoe. He then walked to the prime meridian and repeated the same 24 quotes he read at the opposite end of the earth a year earlier.

While the polar installations encourage us to think globally, Cortada has developed participatory eco-art projects that engage individuals across the globe to act locally.

The artist planted a green flag at the earth's northernmost point to encourage the reforestation of native trees in the world below. Please visit [www.xaviercortada.com](http://www.xaviercortada.com), so you can learn how to implement this and other participatory art projects that explore our connection to the natural world.



- 0°**  
 "There may be a move of wineries into the Pyrenees in the future."  
 Xavier Sort, technical director of Miguel Torres Wineries.
- 15°E Switzerland:**  
 "Losses to insurers from environmental events have risen exponentially over the past 30 years, and are expected to rise even more rapidly still."  
 Pamela Heck, Insurance Industry Expert.
- 30°E Zimbabwe:**  
 "We used to be able to grow everything we want but that has all changed"  
 Matsapi Nyathi, Grandmother.
- 45°E Turkey:**  
 "We are helpless. We're trying to rescue trapped people while also trying to evacuate flood waters that have inundated hundreds of houses."  
 Muharrem Ergul, Mayor, Beykoz district of Istanbul.
- 60°E Iran:**  
 "More than 90 percent of our wetlands have completely dried up."  
 Alarzad Alamdar, environmental researcher, Fars Province.
- 75°E Maldives:**  
 "In the worst case scenario, we'll have to move."  
 Foreign Ministry spokesman Ahmed Shaiheed.
- 90°E Tibet (China):**  
 "The Sherpas of Khumbu may not know everything, but they are suffering the consequences of the people's greed. We mountain people should be careful and take precautions. If we don't save Khumbu today our fresh water will dry up and the problem will be impossible to solve in the future."  
 Ngawang Tenzing Jangpo, the Abbot of Tengboche monastery.
- 105°E Borneo (Indonesia):**  
 "There's been no rain, it's horrible. The governor's office has instructed schools and offices to close until further notice."  
 Hidayat, government official.
- 120°E Philippines:**  
 "The disaster covered almost every corner of this province - rampaging floods, falling trees, damaged houses. It happened very rapidly and many people did not expect this because they haven't experienced mud flows in those areas before."  
 Fernando Gonzalez, governor of Albay province.
- 135°E Japan:**  
 "It's no exaggeration to say that Japan faces a critical situation when describing the rapid decline of marine supply in its domestic waters that is linked to seaweed loss. Tengusa (seaweed) provides food for marine species."  
 Tomohiro Takase, head of the fisheries department at the Machijojima municipality.
- 150°E (Great Barrier Reef) Australia:**  
 "In 20 years' time, bleaching is highly likely to be annual and that will cause shallow-water corals to be in decline. We need to start working out how we can help people who rely on it for their income. It's really quite a stunning fact."  
 Ove Hoegh-Guldberg, director of the Centre for Marine Studies at the University of Queensland.
- 165°E Micronesia:**  
 "We have nowhere to go."  
 Ben Namakin, Environmental Educator.



Xavier Cortada collaborated with composers Juan Carlos Espinosa and Luis Marsans who used recordings of his ritualistic performances at the South and North Poles, respectively, to create soundscapes. Download soundscapes at: [www.xaviercortada.com/?LI\\_voices](http://www.xaviercortada.com/?LI_voices)





- 180° Tuvalu:**  
 "Tuvalu is the first victim of global warming."  
 Koko Talake, former prime minister.
- 165°W Niue:**  
 "Yesterday morning we woke up to a scene of so much devastation, it was just unbelievable. Cyclone Heta was just so fast, furious and ruthless."  
 Cecelia Talagi, Government Secretary.
- 150°W Alaska:**  
 "We are at a crossroads... Is it practical to stand and fight our Mother Ocean? Or do we surrender and move?"  
 Shishmanof Mayor Edith Vordenstrasse.
- 135°W Yukon (Canada):**  
 "The weather is really unpredictable and the ice freezes much later and breaks up earlier. There are more incidents of hunters falling through the ice."  
 Kirk Shappa, Hunter, Grisee Flore, Canada.
- 120°W Nunavut (Canada):**  
 "Our cultural heritage is at stake here. We are an adaptable people. We have over the millennium been able to adapt to incredible circumstances. But I think adaptability has its limits. If the ice is not forming, how else does one adapt to seasons that are not as they used to be when the whole environment is changing underneath our feet, literally?"  
 Sheila Witt-Cloutier, president of the circumpolar conference.
- 105°W Colorado (USA):**  
 "In Colorado, climate change means less snow, less water, more wildfires, less biodiversity and less economic opportunity, as there is less water available for development."  
 Stephen Saunders, president, Rocky Mountain Climate Organization.
- 90°W Nicaragua:**  
 "I closed my eyes and prayed to God."  
 Hurricane Mitch survivor Mariana González.
- 75°W Peru:**  
 "I tell my wife the day that mountain loses its snow, we will have to move out of the valley."  
 Jose Ignacio Lambart, farmer, Urubamba Valley.
- 60°W Argentina:**  
 "The flooding has forced us to redesign routes. We thought it would be for a short period of time, but it has been almost six years."  
 Carlos Avellaneda, manager of a trucking company.
- 45°W Brazil:**  
 "I am very frightened. One thing goes wrong, and the entire system follows."  
 Jair Souto, Mayor of Manaus.
- 30°W Greenland:**  
 "They tell us that we must not eat mattak [whale blubber], but this is all we know. Eating Inughuit food makes us who we are, and anyway we have nothing else to eat."  
 Tekummeq, Town of Qaanaaq.
- 15°W Mauritania:**  
 "We are only eating one meal a day. When there is not enough food, it is the young and the old that get fed first."  
 Fatimtu Mint Elrou, Boucharo.

# Replicate Cortada's Ritualistic Installations<sup>o</sup> at the Poles



# Create

Select 24 individuals to participate in the installation. Have them each donate one shoe to the project. Arrange 24 shoes on the floor in the form of a circle that is 8 foot in diameter. Assign each of the 24 longitudes to the shoes:



- 1 • Use a compass to find north. Make that location your *prime meridian*<sup>1</sup>, or 0° longitude, and place a shoe there.



- 2 • Walk due south for eight feet from that point. Place a shoe there and mark it at 180°



- 3 • Place two shoes eight feet apart, at the west and east points of the imaginary circle, marking them as 90°W and 90°E, respectively.



- 4 • Arrange the remaining 20 shoes along the circle; each should be equidistant from each other in 15° intervals. Mark each shoe with its respective longitude.

# Perform



- 5 • Have each participant select one of the 24 quotes on the following pages. (Have them look up the country on a map and learn a little bit about the environmental issues facing that nation.)



- 6 • Have each participant stand in front of their assigned shoe, holding the quote in their hand.



- 7 • Starting at 0 degrees and moving clockwise, have each participant touch the shoe and read their quote.

<sup>1</sup> the prime meridian is an arbitrarily chosen line that designates 0° longitude and separates the east and west hemispheres. The prime meridian was set to pass through Greenwich, UK, by international convention in 1884.



## Discuss

&

## Research

How do you see the 25th quote?

Have each participant contribute a quote about what they are witnessing in their own community.

How can participants act locally to address climate change issues globally?

Participants could research how climate change is affecting other communities along their assigned longitude (whichever longitude their shoe lays along).

Have participants research how humans impact global climate change (e.g. their respective country's per capita carbon output or energy consumption).

# the 24 quotes

## **0° , Spain:**

"There may be a move of wineries into the Pyrenees in the future."  
-- *Xavier Sort, technical director of Miguel Torres Wineries.*

## **15° E, Switzerland:**

"Losses to insurers from environmental events have risen exponentially over the past 30 years, and are expected to rise even more rapidly still."  
-- *Pamela Heck, Insurance Industry Expert.*

## **30° E, Zimbabwe:**

"We used to be able to grow everything we want but that has all changed."  
-- *Matsapi Nyathi, Grandmother.*

## **45° E, Turkey:**

"We are helpless. We're trying to rescue trapped people while also trying to evacuate flood waters that have inundated hundreds of houses."  
-- *Muharrem Ergul, Mayor, Beykoz district of Istanbul.*

## **60° E, Iran:**

"More than 90 percent of our wetlands have completely dried up."  
-- *Alamdari Alamdari, environmental researcher, Fars Province.*

## **75° E, Maldives:**

"In the worst case scenario, we'll have to move."  
-- *Foreign Ministry spokesman Ahmed Shaheed.*

## **90° E, Tibet, China:**

"The Sherpas of Khumbu may not know everything, but they are suffering the consequences of the people's greed. We mountain people should be careful and take precautions. If we don't save Khumbu today our fresh water will dry up and the problem will be impossible to solve in the future."  
-- *Ngawang Tenzing Jangpo, the Abbot of Tengboche monastery.*

## **105° E, Borneo, Indonesia:**

"There's been no rain, it's horrible. The governor's office has instructed schools and offices to close until further notice."  
-- *Hidayat, government official.*

### **120° E, Philippines:**

"The disaster covered almost every corner of this province - rampaging floods, falling trees, damaged houses. It happened very rapidly and many people did not expect this because they haven't experienced mud flows in those areas before."

-- *Fernando Gonzalez, governor of Albay province.*

### **135° E, Japan:**

"It's no exaggeration to say that Japan faces a critical situation when describing the rapid decline of marine supply in its domestic waters that is linked to seaweed loss. Tengusa (seaweed) provides food for marine species."

-- *Tomohiro Takase, head of the fisheries department at the Hachijojima municipality.*

### **150° E, Great Barrier Reef, Australia:**

"In 20 years' time, bleaching is highly likely to be annual and that will cause shallow-water corals to be in decline. We need to start working out how we can help people who rely on it for their income. It's really quite a stunning fact."

-- *Ove Hoegh-Guldberg, director of the Centre for Marine Studies at the University of Queensland.*

### **165° E, Micronesia:**

"We have nowhere to go."

-- *Ben Namakin, Environmental Educator.*

### **180° , Tuvalu:**

"Tuvalu is the first victim of global warming."

-- *Koloa Talake, former prime minister.*

### **165° W , Niue:**

"Yesterday morning we woke up to a scene of so much devastation, it was just unbelievable. Cyclone Heta was just so fast, furious and ruthless."

-- *Cecelia Talagi, Government Secretary.*

### **150° W, Alaska, USA:**

"We are at a crossroads. . . Is it practical to stand and fight our Mother Ocean? Or do we surrender and move?"

-- *Shishmaref Mayor Edith Vorderstrasse.*

### **135° W, Yukon, Canada:**

"The weather is really unpredictable and the ice freezes much later and breaks up earlier. There are more incidents of hunters falling through the ice."

-- *Kik Shappa, Hunter, Griese Fiord, Canada.*

### **120° W, Nunavut, Canada:**

"Our cultural heritage is at stake here. We are an adaptable people. We have over the millennium been able to adapt to incredible circumstances. But I think adaptability has its limits. If the ice is not forming, how else does one adapt to seasons that are not as they used to be when the whole environment is changing underneath our feet, literally?"

-- *Sheila Watt-Cloutier, president of the circumpolar conference.*

### **105° W, Colorado, USA:**

"In Colorado, climate change means less snow, less water, more wildfires, less biodiversity and less economic opportunity, as there is less water available for development."

-- *Stephen Saunders, president, Rocky Mountain Climate Organization.*

### **90° W, Nicaragua:**

"I closed my eyes and prayed to God."

-- *Mariana González, Hurricane Mitch survivor.*

### **75° W, Peru:**

"I tell my wife the day that mountain loses its snow, we will have to move out of the valley."

-- *Jose Ignacio Lambarri, farmer, Urubamba Valley.*

### **60° W, Argentina:**

"The flooding has forced us to redesign routes. We thought it would be for a short period of time, but it has been almost six years."

-- *Carlos Avellaneda, manager of a trucking company.*

### **45° W, Brazil:**

"I am very frightened. One thing goes wrong, and the entire system follows."

-- *Jair Souto, Mayor of Manaquiri.*

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"They tell us that we must not eat mattak [whale blubber], but this is all we know. Eating Inughuit food makes us who we are, and anyway we have nothing else to eat!"

-- *Tekummeq, Town of Qaanaaq.*

### **15° W, Mauritania:**

"We are only eating one meal a day. When there is not enough food, it is the young and the old that get fed first."

-- *Fatimitu Mint Eletou, Bouchamo.*

## About the Artist

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*Xavier Cortada "reclaims" the North Pole for nature, 2008.*



## Biography: Xavier Cortada



*Xavier Cortada at the National Science Foundation McMurdo Station, Ross Island, Antarctica, 2007.*

Xavier Cortada has created art installations in the North Pole (2008) and South Pole (2007) to address environmental issues at every point in between. Cortada has worked with groups across the world to produce numerous collaborative art projects, including eco-art interventions in Finland, Latvia and in his hometown of Miami, as well as peace murals in Cyprus and Northern Ireland, child welfare murals in Bolivia and Panama, AIDS murals in Geneva and South Africa.

The Miami artist has been commissioned to create art for the White House, the Florida Supreme Court, Miami City Hall, Miami-Dade County Hall, the Museum of

Florida History, the Miami Art Museum, and the Frost Art Museum. Cortada's work is also in the permanent collection of The World Bank.

Corporations such as General Mills, Nike, Heineken and Hershey's have commissioned his art. Publishers like McDougal and Random House have featured it in school textbooks and publications.

Cortada, who was born in Albany, New York and grew up in Miami, holds degrees from the University of Miami College of Arts and Sciences, Graduate School of Business and School of Law.

# Resume: Xavier Cortada

## SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITS:

- 2009 AntARcTica: Collected Works from the Bottom of the World, Maryland Science Center, Baltimore, MD
- 2009 Sustainable?, Central Connecticut State University Art Gallery, New Britain, CT
- 2008 The Green Project (presented by the Claire Oliver Gallery), Miami, FL
- 2008 Polar Attractions, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, MA
- 2008 EPA (Environmental Performance Actions), EXIT ART, New York, NY
- 2007 Weather Report, Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art, Boulder, CO
- 2007 Envisioning Change, an international touring exhibit presented by the UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme) and the Natural World Museum: Nobel Peace Center, Oslo, Norway  
BOZAR Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels, Belgium  
Ministry of Culture, Monaco (2008)
- 2006 Miami in Transition, Miami Art Museum, Miami, Florida

## SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITS:

- 2009 The Reclamation Project, Martin County Court House Cultural Center, Stuart, FL
- 2007 The Reclamation Project and Native Flags, Miami Science Museum, Miami, FL
- 2007 South Pole Installations, Wolfson Center Gallery, MDC Art Galleries, Miami, FL
- 2007 Antarctica, Kunsthau Contemporary Art Space, Miami, FL
- 2006 The Reclamation Project, Bass Museum of Art, Miami Beach, FL

## SELECTED PUBLIC ART PROJECTS:

- 2008 Art in State Buildings, Frost Art Museum, Miami, FL
- 2008 Monroe County Art in Public Places, Upper Keys Government Center, FL
- 2008 Pinellas County Art in Public Places, Florida Botanical Gardens, Largo, FL

## SELECTED AWARDS:

- New York Foundation for the Arts, NYFA sponsored artist, 2008
- Creative Capital Professional Development Program, 2007
- National Science Foundation Antarctic Artists and Writers Program, 2006-07

## EDUCATION:

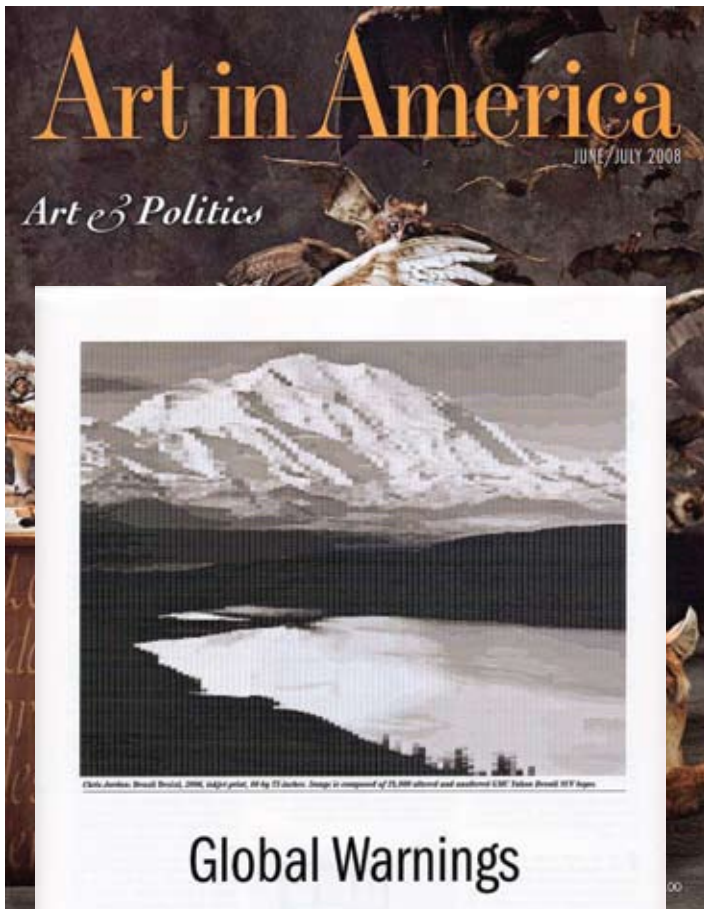
- December 1991 Juris Doctor  
University of Miami School of Law Coral Gables, Florida.
- December 1991 Master of Public Administration  
University of Miami Graduate School.
- December 1986 Bachelor of Arts  
University of Miami College of Arts and Sciences.

## SELECTED MEDIA:

Global Warnings, by Suzaan Boettger, Art in America, Issue No. 6, p. 154-161 and 206-207, June/July 2008.

Kunsthau Miami exhibit. Review by Milagros Bello. Published in arte al día (International Magazine of Contemporary Latin American Art), edition 119, (July 2007).

The Arts: "The Longitudinal Installation: Representing those affected by climate change." Xavier Cortada. Resurgence, edition 243, page 32-33 (July/August 2007)



**Global Warnings**, by Suzaan Boettger, *Art in America*, Issue No. 6, pp. 154-161, 206-207, June/July 2008.

Excerpt from Boettger's Global Warnings article on page 156:

Also participating in both the "Melting Ice" and "Weather Report" were the Harrisons, Jordan, Cuban American installation artist Xavier Cortada and American video artist Andrea Polli. The last two exhibited works from their polar projects in both shows. Cortada's videos and 8-by-10 inch photographs document a trip to the South Pole early in 2007 as part of the U.S. National Science Foundation's Antarctic Artists and Writers Program. There he installed bright flags to mark human events in Antarctica during the past century. More pertinent to the show's theme -beyond the voguish locale for artistic expeditions-- were his documentation and the residue of a strangely ritualistic performance in which he placed 24 identical men's black shoes around the South Pole. From each he drew and read a statement from an individual living in one of the world's time zones (such as: "I tell my wife, the day the mountain loses its snow, we'll have to move out of the valley." Jose Ignacio Lambarri, farmer, Urubamba Valley, Peru).

Today there is a new version of "artist as guide to distant terrains"—akin to the 19th century's Church, Hoede and Bierstadt.



Robert Robinson Antarctic Evening—Boschak Whales, 2008, acrylic on canvas, 18 by 20 inches. Collection Richard Powell Smith, Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco.

stop at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York, the show evoked a compilation of science-fair projects by New Age inventors—more clever engineering than visual dynamics. The accompanying book is a good substitute for seeing the work.

Last November, the PBS series "Art 21" jumped on the bandwagon.<sup>4</sup> An episode of the program was titled "Ecology," seemingly more far topology than precision. Featuring Robert Adams, Mark Dion, Hilpe Mangiam-Quadio and Cristina von Büdingen, it showed work related to natural forms. But only Dion's public-art greenhouse in Seattle, *Nrumbas Firrivers*, which keeps alive a fallen tree and its botanical milieu, directly references ecological systems.<sup>5</sup> Yet Dion's construction implies that our endeavor will need to retreat within such protected environments to survive.

Significantly, it was two smaller museums, peripheral to the art world, that recently gathered large numbers of artists working on environmental issues to shape notable, truly topical exhibitions. "Melting Ice" was organized by San Francisco's Natural World Museum. Founded in 2004 and dedicated to presenting art "through innovative programs to inspire and engage the public in environmental awareness and action," this museum has a small collection in storage; it does not maintain its own exhibition space. Many of its shows, including this one, have been organized in partnership with the United Nations Environment Program to celebrate World Environment Day (June 5) and were presented internationally.<sup>6</sup> Bay Area independent curator Randy Layne

Boettger selected the work for "Melting Ice" and for the partnership's group exhibition "Unlearning Inhabitation: Art Changing Attitudes Toward the Environment," which will be shown at the United Nations in May and June [see Exhibitions sidebar].

Concomitantly on view last fall in Boulder, Colo., was "Weather Report: Art and Climate Change," initiated by the local group EcoArts in cooperation with the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art, and shown there and around the city.<sup>7</sup> This exhibition had the major advantage of being guest-curated by long-active and deeply informed art critic Larry R. Lip-pard. The many works responding to local issues and sites made it impossible for the show to lose: [Pieces by about a quarter of the artists, in some cases the same works, will soon be installed at Drexler's Bank, New York, in a show it inspired, "Feeling the Heat." See Exhibitions sidebar.] The number of participants in these two exhibitions—42 artists or artist groups for "Melting Ice" and 51 in "Weather Report," with only a few overlaps—demonstrates that environmental degradation is definitely influencing artistic production. In fact, the interest goes back almost 40 years, to when New York's John Gibson Gallery mounted "Ecology Art" (May 17-June 28, 1969), with scale models by Claes, Peter Strubbe, Will Inley and Claus Oldenburg, and drawings by Carl Andre, Christo, Jan Dibbets, Richard Long, Dennis Oppenheim, Robert Rauschenberg and "Bob" Smithson (as the gallery identified him). That was the first, and every since, use of "ecology" in an exhibition title; the work, while engaging spatial environments, was certainly not thematically ecological. That came later.

In Brussels last fall, the second stop for "Melting Ice" was the BOGAR Centre for Fine Arts (originally the Palais des Beaux-Arts, for which BOGAR is an abbreviated homonym). The sprawling 1920 structure by the innovative Belgian designer Victor Horta accommodates adventurous programming of music, drama and dance in several theaters; it also houses exhibition spaces and a film museum. By presenting the exhibition at BOGAR's locale on the "Mont des Arts" (the Museum of Fine Arts is nearby), the organizers got a prestigious venue in the heart of the European Union's administrative capital city.

Xavier Cortada: The Shelters, 22 colored flags along 200 meters of the melting ice sheet that covers the South Pole, performance documented in video, 2007.



**90 N**

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