

BLURRING THE LINES

BETWEEN ART, TECHNOLOGY AND CULTURE

Q&A WITH PETE FROSLIE

Get to know Pete Froslic, artist behind *Leviathan: Elegy for Ice*, in this Q&A with director/curator, Jessica Kinsey. The exhibition, which first opened at SUMA in October 2019, evolved in January as Froslic continued to transform the museum's newest exhibit space into an experimental extension of his studio. If you saw the exhibition during the fall semester, but have not returned this spring, plan on visiting the museum to experience the second iteration, which has been extended through the August 29, 2020.

Q: HOW IS THE "LEVIATHAN" MANIFESTED IN YOUR WORK?

PF: I have long been fascinated with the relationship between global political and economic structures and emerging issues of climate and environmental change, which I understand through the lens of the "Leviathan." I have been mining e-waste and traveling to document fragile ecosystems, including the Arctic bogs of Maine, USA, and Svalbard, Norway, at the North Pole, and am interested in both the Biblical Leviathan, the sea monster, and Thomas Hobbes' book *Leviathan* (1651), about social contract theory. Using tech media, including electro-mechanical and game engine-based procedures, the current work sends electrical signals through metals extracted from e-waste to seed an Arctic ocean simulation.

Q: WHAT TYPE OF TECHNOLOGIES DID YOU USE IN THE SPACE AT SUMA?

PF: The space provided an opportunity to experiment with several technologies, including custom software, which has been generating a simulated ocean during the exhibition. During the second iteration, I was able to incorporate an additional element that sends electrical signals through a ring, currently growing in the wall vitrine, and then passes them, via Bluetooth, back into the simulated ocean. Ultimately, the software and physical object are sharing information to create the projected image.

Q: WHAT'S NEXT FOR YOU?

PF: Although postponed because of the pandemic, I am continually evolving the *Leviathan* work through a series of exhibitions that will ultimately finish in 2021 for an exhibition titled *The Future is Present* at the Laumeier Sculpture Park in St. Louis, Missouri. That iteration will include work being done with machine learning, which includes a modeled Artificial Intelligence that is currently learning to draw icebergs. For a future residency, I will travel to the Atacama Desert, where I will work on summoning the Leviathan in the driest place in the world.



LEVIATHAN
ELEGY FOR ICE