

International Art Exhibition on Gender and Climate Change in conjunction with COP15 to set the stage for Second Anniversary Celebrations of the Global Gender and Climate Alliance on December 17, featuring U.S. Speaker of the House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi.

Copenhagen, December 15, 2009--The Speaker of the House and dignitaries from international organizations such as the World Conservation Union, and government representatives from Denmark, Finland, South Africa, and Grenada will speak at the celebration, which will take place at Hall 55 of DGI byen, where the exhibition (Re-) Cycles of Paradise by ARTPORT_making waves is currently showing.

(Re-) Cycles of Paradise, which was commissioned by GGCA, features international artists who present thought-provoking and interactive art installations focused on women as agents of climate change solutions. Through video, photography, drawings, and large-scale sculptures, artists such as Subhankar Banerjee (India/USA), Meschac Gaba (Benin) and Kim Abeles (USA) explore links between the destruction of nature and the suffering of women, revealing hidden or unknown aspects of the interrelation of gender and climate change. Gender issues are scrutinized as part of a process to reverse climate change. "Paradise" is no longer a long-lost ideal world but can be recreated as a contemporary, more sustainable place on earth.

Anne-Marie Melster, Corinne Erni, and Oliver Orest Tschirky from **ARTPORT_making waves** are behind the exhibition. They explain about (Re-) Cycles of Paradise: *"Art can inspire change, and that's why we are particularly pleased to bring this exhibition to the very place where crucial decisions will be made for the future of the planet. The quality and depth of the works reflect an increasing awareness of topics like Gender and Climate Change in the international art world."*

Rebecca Pearl, Coordinator of the GGCA, adds: *"The global climate change negotiations are not yet responding to the human impacts of climate change that are already being felt around the world. This exhibit is a wake up call--that women's leadership and knowledge is critical to environmental sustainability and that measures to address gender equality could reverse the high rate of female mortality in disasters from Hurricane Katrina to the Asian Tsunami."*

EVENT DETAILS

**Reception in Celebration of GGCA's Second Anniversary
Thursday, December 17, 2009, 4PM-6PM
in conjunction with the exhibition (Re-) Cycles of Paradise (on view from Dec 7-18)
Hall 55, DGI byen, Tietgensgade 65, 1704 Copenhagen V**

Speakers:

Julia Marton-Lefèvre, *Director General, International Union for Conservation of Nature*
Honorable Nancy Pelosi, *Speaker of the House of Representatives, United States of America*
H.E. Dessima Williams, *Ambassador of Grenada to the United Nations*
H.E. Rejoice Mabudafhasi, *Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, South Africa*
Ines Alberdi, *Executive Director, United Nations Development Fund for Women*
Ahmed Djoghlaif, *Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity*
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark
Secretary General, Ministry of the Environment, Finland
Monique Essed-Fernandes, *Interim Director, Women's Environment & Development Organization*

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(Re-) Cycles of Paradise

(Re-) Cycles of Paradise features works by Kim Abeles (USA), Subhankar Banerjee (India/USA), Charley Case/masalla (Belgium), Meschac Gaba (Benin/ Netherlands), Anita Glesta (USA), Nnenna Okore (Nigeria/USA), Frances Whitehead (USA), and Insa Winkler (Germany).

Kim Abeles' "smog paintings" explore the harmful consequences of air pollution for women. Generated from smog particles on recycled, handmade paper, they represent the number of women who die every year of breast cancer.

A photography and video installation by **Subhankar Banerjee** featuring Gwich'in Steering Committee Chairperson Sarah James (www.gwichinsteeringcommittee.org) will highlight her efforts to bring attention to how climate change and industrial development affect her community and the ecology of the Arctic.

Charley Case's installation with a film by masalla (Chiki Lopez, Gustavo Caraballo, and Case) invites visitors to walk through floor paintings and dangling remains of boats used by refugees to recreate the passage of African women refugees through the Strait of Gibraltar, looking for a better life up North.

Meschac Gaba framed large linen towels used by women—who often smuggle illegal petrol across borders—to swipe the faces of motorbike taxi drivers in Benin, creating Saint Veronica-like images with traces of sweat stained by air pollution.

A video installation by **Anita Glesta** addresses how privatization of water and the relationship between tradition and urbanity affects women in the Bolivian Altiplano as an example of the complexity that women must confront in the contemporary world.

Nnenna Okore's installation of fifty containers in the shape of pregnant bellies made from handmade paper and wax, assembled randomly on the floor, shows how a woman's maternal qualities can be extended towards the restoration and preservation of natural resources.

Frances Whitehead's video installation, "Climate Heroes," is a study on women scientists, community and civic leaders, and activists who have been doing crucial climate adaptive work at a global scale for decades.

Insa Winkler's curtain made of special water purification ceramics is shaped in a strong symbolic image: a woman carrying water on her head. The curtain is sprinkled with water and hung next to a sculpture made of hundreds of recycled plastic bottles.

The exhibition can be visited at Hall 55 in the popular conference center DGI byen, where most official side-events by the Danish Foreign Ministry for delegates, conference participants but also the general audience are held.



ARTPORT_making waves is an international art project that raises awareness of current social and political issues worldwide through theme-oriented exhibitions, residency programs, and artists collaborations. **ARTPORT_making waves** aims at creating sustainable networks of artists, curators, galleries, and art collectors to promote a true globalization of the artistic discourse, giving a voice to promising artists from all over the world. At the same time, **ARTPORT_making waves** encourages the cross-fertilization of art, science, and politics. The collaborative programs will bring forward new and exciting ways to inspire positive changes across borders. **ARTPORT_making waves** is a fiscally sponsored project of the New York Foundation for the Arts, a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. **WWW.ARTPORT-PROJECT.ORG**

The Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA) is a joint initiative of numerous United Nations and international non-profit agencies that is raising awareness about the gender dimensions of climate change. **WWW.GENDER-CLIMATE.ORG**

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