



Aroussiak Gabrielian, *Future Kin*, 2024. Mixed-media installation. Dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Yubo Dong, ofstudio photography

Armory Center for the Arts | From the Ground Up: Nurturing Diversity in Hostile Environments

08/09/2024 – 02/23/2025 (28 weeks)

11-25 artists

6-25 artworks

4,000 sq ft

Armory Center for the Arts recognizes that climate change impacts equity within our communities. The exhibition *From the Ground Up: Nurturing Diversity in Hostile Environment* for the Getty PST Art: Art & Science Collide initiative will evaluate and shape current exhibition systems by taking a climate-conscious approach to travel, shipping, waste, and collective action during the production and duration of the exhibition.

The project will track the afterlife of waste from fabrication, printing, and packaging, local, domestic, and international transportation of artwork, travel between the exhibiting artists and exhibition team, and support our community and team through internal and external collective action. Our approach acknowledges the current systems in place while reducing our impact on the environment within our community.

Emissions

Emissions were calculated for domestic air travel, taxi travel (Uber/Lyft), car travel, air freight, and road freight. Most of the travel included in this report was by artists traveling from their studio or home to the Armory, production material pick-up, art shipments, and publication shipments. The data was collected with

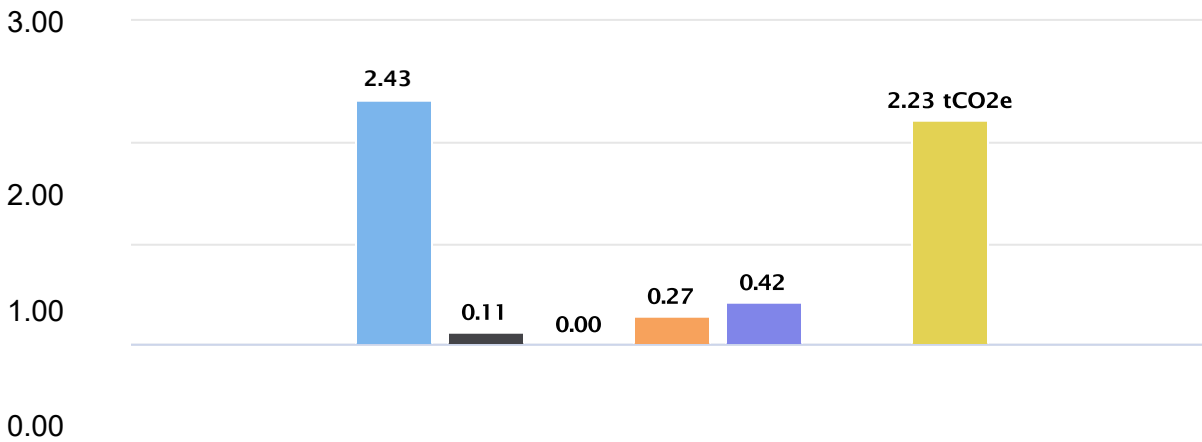
the use of the Climate Impact Report Data Tracker, loan forms, and schedules. Other information, like the weight of artwork, was collected from artists wherever possible.

Tracking emissions was manageable due to scheduling, loan forms, shipping and tracking information, and object data. The challenging aspect of calculating emissions was not having weight information for many of the artworks in the exhibition. The Armory does not have a scale large enough to weigh the sculptures or installations. The accuracy of our travel emissions report is also limited because the Carbon Calculator does not calculate anything less than 0.01 tCO₂e. In turn, the information is lost.

We were surprised at how little the carbon emission calculation was despite all the exhibition local, domestic, and international travel. The barrier to this surprise is visually seeing our calculation's impact on the environment. What does it mean when your total carbon emissions equal 5.7 as a mid-sized organization?

Notes on calculations:

- 0.13 (most travel calculated "Less than 0.01" which we cannot pull that information).
- We could not find the weight for some road freight, so this is not included.



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PSTART Project

- Emissions- Flights
- Emissions - Road Freight
- Emissions - Local Ship
- Emissions - Other Combined
- Emissions Air Freight
- Emissions - Sea Freight
- Emissions - Building Energy

Travel

4.66 tCO₂e

Flight (international), Flight (domestic), Car, Taxi, Research grant related travel (not reported), Research grant related travel is unknown

Shipping

0.80 tCO₂e

Air Freight (international), Air Freight (domestic), Road Freight - Shuttle (long haul), Road Freight – Local. We do not have access to energy data

Catalog

Paperback, Booklet / Pamphlet

Print Materials/Catalog Shipping, Waste / Material, Artwork Fabrication, Programming / Events, Accommodations

Total Emissions 5.15 tCO2e

Waste Summary

Pedestal/Plinth, Vitrine/Display, Single Use Packing, Reusable Packing, Artwork/Fabrication, Wall Paint, Wall Vinyl, Other

Material Sources

New, Reused (Internal Source), Reused (External Source), Reclaimed/Diverted, Other

Material Destinations

Reused, Sold/Donated, Repurposed, Storage, Recycled, Landfill, Composted

Waste reduction strategies implemented, Other waste/material considerations

The From the Ground Up exhibition production required natural elements such as soil, wood, plants, and live and dried flowers. It also required the production materials, paint, speakers, plastic, monitors, vinyl, signage, and gallery guides. As a mid-sized non-profit community arts center, the Armory is resourceful in material use cross-departmentally. In preparation for exhibition installations at the Armory, the exhibitions department lists exhibition furniture that can be repurposed, and contacts our network to decide what can be borrowed.

Other waste considerations include using "Buy Nothing" websites to source cardboard or other exhibition materials from our local community. We donate material using "Buy Nothing" to encourage relationships and support our stakeholders. Our art handlers save plastic, foam, cardboard, lumber/wood, etc. as much as possible to prepare for future exhibitions and shipments. Finding people to donate materials to including soil, amaranth, trash bins, etc., was easier than expected. Our neighbors and network were eager to receive excess materials. The challenge was transportation or timeframe, but we quickly overcame those barriers.

Our team learned that waste is an abundance of materials that can be easily shared, especially with the use of technology and community. We also realized that reducing waste, intentionally repurposing materials, sourcing materials, and fabricating furniture to be reused is a way to decrease expenses in the Exhibitions Department. We are grateful for a roster of artists who are committed to environmental and climate work in their practices. We are also grateful to our individual and organizational partners and networks who assisted in finding people and organizations to donate materials.

Catalog

There is a softbound print publication connected to this project.

Our catalog was designed by Content Object in New York City, NY, and printed by Ofset Yapimevi in Istanbul, Türkiye. We received 4 galleys, 2 publication proofs, printing corrections, and a final shipment of 750 catalogs.

Engagement Summary

Stakeholders engaged in the Climate Impact Report

Curatorial, Exhibitions / Install, Communications / Marketing, Artists, Lenders, Vendors, Fabricators, Audiences, Community Groups, Environmental Justice / Climate Justice Groups, Other (describe)

Climate related event or public program, Climate related educational program, Climate incorporated into exhibition thematic content, Other ways of engaging audiences around climate impact

Our Team

Our project team included Irene Georgia Tsatsos, Curator; Heber Rodriguez, Director of Exhibitions; Janeth Aparicio, Curatorial Assistant; Shoop Rozario, Programs Associate; Danielle A. Hill, Exhibitions Coordinator; and Dave Hughes, Jaymee Sumpter, and Cedric Tai, Preparators. While the Climate Impact Program was coordinated and managed by Danielle A. Hill, each team member contributed to the program in different capacities, knowledge bases, and tasks.

Tsatsos, Rodriguez, and Aparicio developed the exhibition themes and organized artists throughout the research and implementation phases of the grant period. From the Ground Up was realized by Tsatsos after a series of fires in the foothills of the Angeles National Forest that impacted 230,000 people, including herself and her family. She asked the questions “What do we do when the lights go out and power grids fail? When mass populations that are dependent upon transnational capital for basic needs are systemically disconnected from production? Where is the knowledge for securing food and shelter?” The artists selected, in turn, are conscious of their practices and their impacts on the environment.

In the implementation phase of the exhibition, Tsatsos, Rodriguez, Aparicio, and Hill met with artists in production meetings to decide how to display their artwork with the least amount of waste possible. We found ways to reuse furniture and wood from past exhibitions, researched local companies for soil, wood, and live plants, and worked with our prep team in organizing waste and making exhibition installation decisions that limited our footprint on the climate.

The project team worked with Rozario and artists to develop programs that highlighted the artist's work while inviting climate justice activists, local organizations, and scientists to share their expertise.

Programs so far have included:

- Communal Amaranth Planting and Amaranth Cooking Workshop with Seed Travels and the Altadena Community Garden highlighting food sovereignty
- Collective Visualization with Hillary Mushkin's conversation exploring paths for artists and scientists to work together and share about water rights legislation, discriminatory cartography, and their effects on Central Valley communities
- DIY Air Filter Workshop led by USC Environmental Justice Research Lab
- Documentary screening and panel conversation for Grasping At The Roots with environmental justice activists Keenan Rhodes and Leah Derray

Our Community

This project focused on collective action because of our values and ready-made practice of departmental resourcefulness at the Armory. We connected with external communities by sharing resources locally, programming with local collectives, organizers, and groups, and developing an internal informal green team. By focusing on this, we encouraged the interdependency of our ecosystems, built a sustainable community culture, and developed experience-based environmental justice education.

Sharing Resources Locally:

- Merge Frames, located on Washington Blvd. and 4 miles from the Armory, donated cardboard sheets they would normally trash. The sheets are used to build boxes for artwork shipments, local artwork pick-up padding, etc. This relationship was built through the Buy Nothing platform.
- Connecting with local arts organizations to borrow exhibition materials as well as loaning our exhibition materials to eliminate a culture of purchasing materials for temporary use.
- Nitro compost soil was collected from Soil & Sod Depot and used for Aroussiak Gabriellian's installation. The rest of the soil, including the trash cans used to store it, will be donated to local gardeners and community gardens.

- Prickly Pear Cactus for Vick Quezada's sculpture was purchased locally from Echo Garden Nursery. The plant will be replanted at the Armory or donated.

Programming with local collectives, organizers, and groups:

- Seed Travels planted an amaranth garden in the front yard of the Armory. The seeds are harvested and used for the exhibition. The amaranth was harvested and used in a cooking workshop. The garden and workshops are examples of food justice and food sovereignty in the community.
- Keenan Rhodes and Leah Humphrey will screen their film documentary about Black-led grassroots climate coalitions in Los Angeles and around the United States on November 17, 2024.
- Filter workshop with Zander Silverman, Research Coordinator in the Division of Environmental Health at Keck School of Medicine at USC.
- Moderated by Irene Georgia Tsatsos, Hillary Mushkin, Olivia Chumacero, and Heather Williams discussed the web of water rights legislation and discriminatory cartography in California's Central Valley.

Internal Green Team:

- Armory Center for the Arts is adding Climate Justice to our Cultural Equity & Inclusion plan, acknowledging the fight for climate justice in Pasadena and the San Gabriel Valley.

Reflections & Takeaways

The Armory's exhibition team realized an organic alignment between the Climate Impact Program, departmental operations, and organizational values. The program also ignited opportunities to rally our community through programming and production to be more aligned with environmental and climate justice. We are grateful to participate in this program and to inspire our team and community to dream of healthier climate futures in the arts sector.

Credits

Irene Georgia Tsatsos, Curator

Heber Rodriguez, Director of Exhibitions

Janeth Aparicio, Curatorial Assistant

Danielle Ariel Hill, Exhibition Coordinator

Shoop Rozario, Public Programs Associate

Dave Hughes, Preparator

Jaymee Sumpter, Preparator

Cedric Tai, Preparator

Climate Impact Report prepared by: Danielle Ariel Hill, Exhibition Coordinator

Climate Impact Report reviewed by: Heber Rodriguez, Director of Exhibitions



Vick Quezada, N-400 Hustle, 2023. Mixed media, ceramics, prickly pear cactus. 30 x 51 x 31 in. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Yubo Dong, ofstudio photography.



Malaqatel Ija, Semillas Viajeras, Seed Travels Malaqatel Ija, Semillas Viajeras, Seed Travels, 2014–ongoing. Photo: Liz Goetz.



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This Climate Impact Report was completed as a part of the PST ART Climate Impact Program, a groundbreaking initiative integrating climate action, community building, and reporting into Getty's landmark arts event, led by LHL Consulting. More information can be found at pst.art/climate.