



Embodied Pacific: Ocean Unseen Entry

UCSD Visual Arts + Birch Aquarium | Embodied Pacific

10/04/2024 – 10/01/2025 (52 weeks)

11-25 artists

6-25 artworks

2,200 sq ft

Embodied Pacific is a distributed, multi-sited exhibition with seven locations on and around the University of California San Diego campus: one site of which is Birch Aquarium at Scripps.

At Birch Aquarium at Scripps, we are presenting Embodied Pacific: Ocean Unseen, which includes ten art installations. About 75% of the exhibition production utilizes Exhibits existing inventory; for example, we are using 35 Mila 1m x 3m modular walls, 35 of which were already owned by the Aquarium. We are also dismantling and reinstalling an entire framed wall from a previous exhibit, and using dimensional lumber from demolished walls to use to build new plinths and other exhibit needs. Exhibit headers will be hand-painted by staff artists, reducing or eliminating the need for cut vinyl text, and curatorial text will be printed on thick paper, mounted with screwed in furring strips, that can be fully recycled or reused at the close of the show. Twelve of the sixteen artists featured in the exhibition (ten projects, twelve artists) live in San Diego County, reducing need for long distance travel and shipping of artworks.

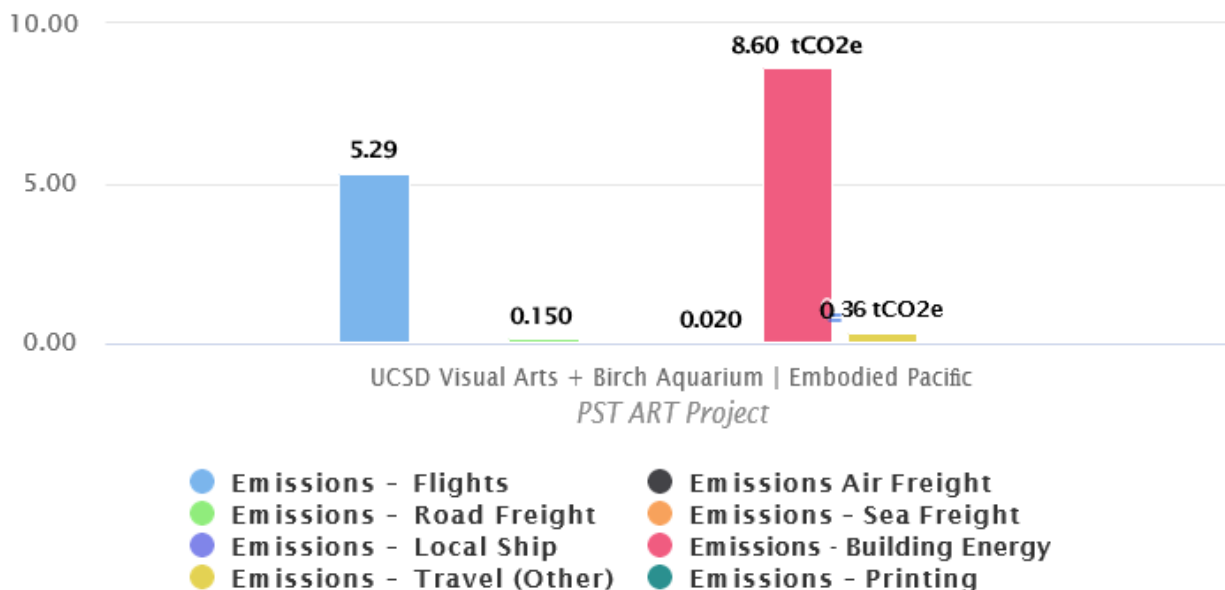
Emissions

The majority of our emissions come from the energy used to power our exhibit space. While we have annual energy usage data for the entire building, this includes energy for animal enclosures (pumps, heaters, lights) and does not reflect the specific energy needs of the *Embodied Pacific: Ocean Unseen* gallery. Using the building's total energy consumption would skew the results, as it includes the substantial energy demands of the animal habitats, which are separate from the exhibit spaces. To ensure accuracy, we worked with our animal care team to gather data and calculate the actual energy consumption for the animal enclosures within the exhibit gallery, as well as the energy use of lights and projectors. From this, we extrapolated the projected energy usage for the duration of the exhibition (one year plus one additional month).

The second largest source of emissions comes from international air travel for one of our artists and partner. It's surprising to see the significant impact that a single flight can have on carbon emissions.

The final two categories contributing to our overall emissions are road shipping and other travel.

Emissions by Category



Travel

5.65 tCO2e

Flight (international), Car, Train, Public transit, Bike/ walking/ other zero emission travel

Shipping

0.17 tCO2e

Road Freight - Dedicated Truck (long haul), Road Freight - Local, No dedicated shipment (i.e. hand carried, produced on site)

Building Energy

8.60 tCO2e

We have access to energy data, This exhibition included work with unique energy consumption

Total Emissions 14.83 tCO2e



Embodied Pacific: Ocean Unseen - Unbleached by Scott McAvoy

Materials & Waste

Pedestal/Plinth, Artwork/Fabrication, Walls, Wall Paint, Carpet, Acoustic Panels

Material Sources

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

Material Destinations

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

Waste reduction strategies implemented, Designed for disassembly, Plastic/petro-based materials, Bio-based materials

For this project, we prioritized using sustainable materials and methods. We experimented with alternatives like wallpaper paste instead of plastic-based adhesives and produced many components in-house. Designs were modular, made for disassembly or permanence, and replicable—like benches and headsets—using sustainable, traditional materials that future teams could reuse. This approach reduced costs and minimized waste while saving future design time.

The process taught us valuable new skills. For example, Abby mastered new projector software, and Brian worked with CNC machines. Sustainability challenged us to think creatively, breaking from “how it’s always been done” to explore innovative solutions. Collaborating with artists brought fresh perspectives, though not all were equally open to sustainability.

One challenge was the extra time required to research and test alternatives. Using conventional materials like PVC vinyl would have been quicker, but we deliberately made time to explore better options. In doing so, we scaled up our knowledge, tools, and team, adding new expertise and fostering flexibility for future projects.



Waves of Knowing Section in Embodied Pacific: Ocean Unseen, La Jolla Forest by Dwight Hwang and Oriana Poindexter (left) and Passengers of Change by Danielle McHaskell, Joe Riley and Audrey Snyder (right)

Catalog

There is no print publication connected to this show.

Engagement

Stakeholders engaged in the Climate Impact Report

Curatorial, Exhibitions / Install, Artists, Vendors, Fabricators

Climate related wall text, Climate incorporated into exhibition thematic content, Climate incorporated into messaging/communications

Our Team

The project team engaged deeply in the Climate Impact Program in various ways. All full-time team members attended an initial info session to ground themselves in the program's goals and practices. Megan Dickerson actively participated in CCLAM meet-ups, exchanging ideas and learning from other leaders in the field. Rob embraced the philosophy behind Barter, exploring creative ways to share and repurpose materials.

Tina meticulously itemized every element used in the exhibit—right down to the screws—although she humorously settled for listing "mixed fasteners" instead of a full inventory. She also thoroughly enjoyed calculating the exhibit's emissions and collaborating with Husbandry and Animal Care staff to dive into data-driven sustainability practices.

Our Community

The project connected to external communities around climate impact by actively engaging with artists and museum partners to share sustainable practices and inspire collaboration.

Reflections & Takeaways

Participating in the Climate Impact Program deepened our commitment to sustainability while expanding our creativity and adaptability. We learned that pursuing environmentally friendly practices requires time and effort to research alternatives and break from familiar methods, but the rewards are significant. By focusing on sustainability, we developed new skills, gained insights from collaborating with diverse artists, and discovered innovative approaches to design and production.

The program reinforced that sustainable choices can also be cost-effective and practical, often relying on traditional, accessible materials. It encouraged us to think beyond immediate solutions and design with longevity and multi-generational use in mind. This shift not only reduced waste but also improved our processes and tools, setting us up for future success.

Ultimately, the Climate Impact Program taught us that prioritizing sustainability isn't just about materials—it's about changing mindsets, fostering flexibility, and embracing innovation to make meaningful, lasting impact.

Credits

The report was collaboratively developed by Megan Dickerson and Tina Mau. Megan brought her expertise in sustainability and actively engaged with external partners through CCLAM meet-ups. Tina played a crucial role in meticulously itemizing every component used in the exhibit, right down to the screws, and took the lead in calculating the project's emissions. Her detailed approach ensured that all aspects of the project's environmental impact were thoroughly documented.

The process involved close collaboration between Megan and Tina, combining Megan's strategic vision with Tina's precision in data collection and analysis. They held regular meetings to discuss progress, share findings, and integrate their respective contributions seamlessly. Tina also worked closely with team members in Husbandry and Animal Care to gather necessary data.



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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.