

Species in Peril Along the Rio Grande

An exhibition and regional collaboration



EXHIBITION

September 28 – December 28, 2019
at 516 ARTS, 516 Central Ave. SW, Downtown Albuquerque, New Mexico

OPENING EVENTS:

Public Opening Reception: Saturday, September 28, 6-8pm

(member preview 5-6pm, join at 516arts.org/join)

at 516 ARTS • Free

Opening Address & Forum: Sunday, September 29, 2pm

Featuring Kieran Suckling, Subhankar Banerjee, Josie Lopez, Cannupa Hanksa Luger & Brophy Toledo at the Albuquerque Museum, 2000 Mountain Rd. NW, Old Town, Albuquerque • Free

Conversation: Elizabeth Kolbert & Laura Paskus: Thursday October 3, 7:30pm

at the KiMo Theatre, 423 Central Ave. NW, Downtown Albuquerque, followed by reception & Booksigning at 516 ARTS • Tickets: kimotickets.com

COLLABORATION:

September – December, 2019
at multiple venues in Albuquerque and partner venues in the Rio Grande watershed spanning CO, NM, TX and Mexico • Full Map/calendar available from 516 ARTS in August, 2019

PUBLIC INFO:

516arts.org, 505-242-1445 / Preview Video: <https://vimeo.com/343053223>

PRESS CONTACT:

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Regional collaboration examines biological crisis across borders and disciplines

516 ARTS and partners present *Species in Peril Along the Rio Grande*, an exhibition and series of regional public programs responding to the global biological crisis described in the new [UN Report](#) that officially state that nature's dangerous decline is "unprecedented," and species extinction rates are accelerating at an alarming pace. According to a recent [New York Times editorial](#), the report says, "Biodiversity' — a word encompassing all living flora and fauna — 'is declining faster than at any time in human history,' estimating that 'around 1 million species already face extinction, many within decades,' unless the world takes transformative action to save natural systems."

Developed in partnership with the Art & Ecology Program at the University of New Mexico (UNM), *Species in Peril Along the Rio Grande* explores how the river connects us across borders and disciplines, and is designed to provide education and spur dialogue around pressing ecological issues of our time. The exhibition – subtitled *Contemporary Artists Respond* – features commissioned and existing artworks highlighting diverse perspectives on varieties of plants and animals, including flowers, trees, fish, birds, and bees—iconic and overlooked—undergoing mass-die off's and population declines within the Rio Grande watershed. Through the eyes of contemporary artists, the exhibition examines regional flora and fauna and raises ethical and

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cultural questions about human impact on the natural world. The exhibition takes place at 516 ARTS in Albuquerque and is co-curated by Josie Lopez, PhD, Curator of Art, Albuquerque Museum, and Subhankar Banerjee, Lannan Chair and Professor of Art & Ecology, UNM.

Centering around the main exhibition at 516 ARTS, the regional collaboration features public programs including educational talks, forums, workshops, performances and outdoor activities presented by partner venues across state borders and the US/Mexico border as well as across disciplines spanning the arts, science, technology, and environmental activism. These programs take place in Colorado, New Mexico, Texas and Northern Mexico, where partners have been invited to develop their own programming that brings together art and environment to raise awareness and generate activism around species in peril in our region. 516 ARTS is publishing and distributing a map/calendar to all of these activities, which will be available in this August, and is coordinating an awareness campaign to showcase this project as a model for regional collaboration around environmental issues.

Banerjee says, “With arts and stories, informed by science and Indigenous ecological knowledge, *Species in Peril Along the Rio Grande* offers a regional model of building bridges (not walls) across nations, peoples, disciplines and creative practices, to address a global crisis—the crisis of biological annihilation, which includes human-caused extinctions, die-offs and massacres of nonhuman kin with whom we share this Earth. It is arguably the most expansive (if you count casualties) and the most challenging (if you consider mitigation) crisis of our time. This region-wide initiative is situated in the fabled Rio Grande basin and the associated U.S.-Mexico borderland, which is one of the most biologically and culturally vibrant places in North America, and at the same time, one of the most endangered facing numerous threats, including climate breakdown, ongoing fossil fuels capitalism and nuclear colonialism, and the proposed expansion of the border wall. *Species in Peril Along the Rio Grande* aims to raise public awareness, acknowledge past and present injustices, and inspire collective actions for multi-species justice.”

The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalog with essays by Co-Curators Subhankar Banerjee and Josie Lopez, journalist Laura Paskus and others.

OPENING WEEK EVENTS:

Opening events during the first week of the exhibition include: the **Public Opening Reception** (6-8pm) and a **Member Preview** (5-6pm) including a private walk-through with curators and artists on the opening day of Saturday, September 28; as well as the following special events:

• **Sunday, September 29, 2pm: Opening Address & Forum**

This event features an invocation by **Brophy Toledo**, Cultural Leader, Jemez Pueblo; a keynote talk by **Kierán Suckling**, Co-Founder & Executive Director of the Center for Biological Diversity, who writes and lectures on the threats to, preservation of, and relationships between cultural and biological diversity, and maintains the most comprehensive endangered species research and management database in the United States; and forum with exhibition Co-Curators **Josie Lopez**, PhD, and **Subhankar Banerjee**, and exhibiting artist **Cannupa Hanska Luger**, who is building a life-sized ceramic buffalo skeleton for the exhibition. This event takes place at the Albuquerque Museum and is free and open to this public.

• **Thursday, October 3, 7:30pm: Elizabeth Kolbert & Laura Paskus in Conversation**

516 ARTS, in partnership with Lannan Foundation, welcomes Pulitzer prize-winning author Elizabeth Kolbert in conversation with New Mexico journalist Laura Paskus. Elizabeth Kolbert is the author of *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*, a book about mass extinctions that weaves intellectual and natural history with reporting in the field. It was a New York Times 2014 Top Ten Best Book of the Year and is number one on the Guardian’s list of the 100 Best Nonfiction Books of all time, and won the 2015 Pulitzer Prize in the General Nonfiction category. The New York Times writes, “Our planet has suffered five mass extinctions, the last of which occurred about 66 million years ago, when a giant asteroid believed to have landed near the Yucatán Peninsula set off a chain reaction that wiped out the dinosaurs and roughly three-quarters of the other species on earth...In *The Sixth Extinction*, the writer Elizabeth Kolbert warned of a devastating sequel, with plant and animal species on land and sea already disappearing at a ferocious clip, their habitats destroyed or diminished by human activities. This time, she made clear, the asteroid is us — and we will pay heavily for our folly.” Laura Paskus has been writing about environment issues in New Mexico for 17 years, reporting for magazines, newspapers, and public radio, focusing in particular on climate change, water, energy and southwestern rivers. A former archaeologist and tribal consultant, she currently hosts a monthly show on New Mexico PBS, *Our Land: New Mexico’s*

Environmental Past, Present and Future. Her book, *At the Precipice: New Mexico's Changing Climate*, is forthcoming from UNM Press. This event takes place at the KiMo Theatre and is followed by a reception and booksigning with Kolbert and Paskus at 516 ARTS (for ticket holders).

TICKETS: \$10 general / \$8 / members / \$6 students, available at kimotickets.com.

PARTICIPANTS TO DATE:

EXHIBITION ARTISTS INCLUDE:

Michael P. Berman
Kaitlin Bryson & Hollis Moore
laura c carlson
Agnes Chavez
Suzi Davidoff
Catalina Delgado Trunk
Marisa Demarco, Dylan McLaughlin & Jessica Zeglin
Jaque Fragua
Jessica Gross
Cannupa Hanska Luger
c marquez
Daisy Quezada
Nicasio Romero
Mary Tsiongas & Jennifer Owen-White

PUBLIC PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

Subhankar Banerjee
Michael P. Berman
León De la Rosa, PhD
Cannupa Hanska Luger
Ma. Eugenia Hernández, PhD
Amaris Ketchem
Elizabeth Kolbert
Alex Levine
Josie Lopez, PhD
Laura Paskus
Kierán Suckling
Brophy Toledo
Sam Truett, PhD

PARTNERS INCLUDE:

NEW MEXICO:

Art & Ecology Program, UNM
Bernalillo County Public Art Program
Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Program
Flower Hill Institute
National Hispanic Cultural Center
NM Senator Tom Udall's Office
Roswell Museum & Art Center
Sierra Club, Rio Grande Chapter
Southwest Environmental Center
STEMarts Lab & BIO STEAM Lab
The Taos Land Trust
University Art Museum at NMSU
UNM Museum of Southwestern Biology
Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge
WildEarth Guardians

MEXICO:

Visual Arts Program, UACJ
El Museo Contemporaneo de Ciudad-Juárez

TEXAS:

Ballroom Marfa
El Paso Museum of Art
The Rubin Center for the Visual Arts at UTEP

COLORADO:

RedLine Contemporary Art Center

NATIONAL:

Center for Biological Diversity

Look for the comprehensive Map/Calendar published by 516 ARTS, which will be available in August.

For more information on all of these programs, visit 516arts.org.

Check out the Preview Video at: <https://vimeo.com/343053223>

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IMAGES, page 1, left to right: Cannupa Hanska Luger, *At What Cost: Extraction*; Suzi Davidoff, *Simplified World/Aplomada Falcon and Grasses*; Michael P. Berman, *Perdido*; Elizabeth Kolbert, photo by Nicholas Whitman