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LONGITUDINAL INSTALLATION

By Xavier Cortada

Longitudinal Installation

Artist Xavier Cortada created the Longitudinal Installation in the South Pole in 2007 and in the North Pole in 2008. During both visits, Cortada placed 24 shoes in a circle, each aligned across 24 longitudinal shoe markers and read a quote aloud that revealed a person's experience with climate change from that part of the world. He placed the shoes inches apart along the converging lines of the longitudes crossing the places where these individuals lived, conceptually diminishing the distance between them. His artistic ritual illustrated how everyone in the world has been profoundly impacted by climate change.

24 Global Voices

0° E, Spain:

"There may be a move of wineries into the Pyrenees in the future."

-- Xavier Sort, technical director of Miguel Torres Wineries.

15° E, Switzerland:

"Losses to insurers from environmental events have risen exponentially over the past 30 years, and are expected to rise even more rapidly still."

-- Pamela Heck, Insurance Industry Expert.

30° E, Zimbabwe:

"We used to be able to grow everything we want but that has all changed."

-- Matsapi Nyathi, Grandmother.

45° E, Turkey:

"We are helpless. We're trying to rescue trapped people while also trying to evacuate flood waters that have inundated hundreds of houses."

-- Muharrem Ergul, Mayor, Beykoz district of Istanbul.

60° E, Iran:

"More than 90 percent of our wetlands have completely dried up."

-- Alamdar Alamdari, environmental researcher, Fars Province.

75° E, Maldives:

"In the worst case scenario, we'll have to move."

-- Foreign Ministry spokesman Ahmed Shaheed.

90° E, Tibet:

"The Sherpas of Khumbu may not know everything, but they are suffering the consequences of the people's greed. We mountain people should be careful and take precautions. If we don't save Khumbu today our fresh water will dry up and the problem will be impossible to solve in the future."

-- Ngawang Tenzing Jangpo, the Abbot of Tengboche monastery.

105° E, Borneo, Indonesia:

"There's been no rain, it's horrible. The governor's office has instructed schools and offices to close until further notice."

-- Hidayat, government official.

120° E, Philippines:

"The disaster covered almost every corner of this province - rampaging floods, falling trees, damaged houses. It happened very rapidly and many people did not expect this because they haven't experienced mud flows in those areas before."

-- Fernando Gonzalez, governor of Albay province.

135° E, Japan:

"It's no exaggeration to say that Japan faces a critical situation when describing the rapid decline of marine supply in its domestic waters that is linked to seaweed loss. Tengusa (seaweed) provides food for marine species."

-- Tomohiro Takase, head of the fisheries department at the Hachijojima municipality.



Xavier Cortada. "Longitudinal Installation (South Pole)," 2007.

150° E, Great Barrier Reef, Australia:

"In 20 years' time, bleaching is highly likely to be annual and that will cause shallow-water corals to be in decline. We need to start working out how we can help people who rely on it for their income. It's really quite a stunning fact."

-- Ove Hoegh-Guldberg, director of the Centre for Marine Studies at the University of Queensland.

165° E, Micronesia:

"We have nowhere to go."

-- Ben Namakin, Environmental Educator.

180°, Tuvalu:

"Tuvalu is the first victim of global warming."

-- Koloa Talake, former prime minister.

165° W, Niue:

"Yesterday morning we woke up to a scene of so much devastation, it was just unbelievable. Cyclone Heta was just so fast, furious and ruthless."

-- Cecelia Talagi, Government Secretary.

150° W, Alaska, USA:

"We are at a crossroads. . . Is it practical to stand and fight our Mother Ocean? Or do we surrender and move?"

-- Shishmaref Mayor Edith Vorderstrasse.

135° W, Yukon, Canada:

"The weather is really unpredictable and the ice freezes much later and breaks up earlier. There are more incidents of hunters falling through the ice."

-- Kik Shappa, Hunter, Griese Fiord, Canada.

120° W, Nunavut, Canada:

"Our cultural heritage is at stake here. We are an adaptable people. We have over the millennium been able to adapt to incredible circumstances. But I think adaptability has its limits. If the ice is not forming, how else does one adapt to seasons that are not as they used to be when the whole environment is changing underneath our feet, literally?"

-- Sheila Watt-Cloutier, president of the circumpolar conference.

105° W, Colorado, USA:

"In Colorado, climate change means less snow, less water, more wildfires, less biodiversity and less economic opportunity, as there is less water available for development."

-- Stephen Saunders, president, Rocky Mountain Climate Organization.

90° W, Nicaragua:

"I closed my eyes and prayed to God."

-- Mariana González, Hurricane Mitch survivor.

75° W, Peru:

"I tell my wife the day that mountain loses its snow, we will have to move out of the valley."

-- Jose Ignacio Lambarri, farmer, Urubamba Valley

60° W, Argentina:

"The flooding has forced us to redesign routes. We thought it would be for a short period of time, but it has been almost six years."

-- Carlos Avellaneda, manager of a trucking company.

45° W, Brazil:

"I am very frightened. One thing goes wrong, and the entire system follows."

-- Jair Souto, Mayor of Manaquiri.

30° W, Greenland:

"They tell us that we must not eat mattak [whale blubber], but this is all we know. Eating Inughuit food makes us who we are, and anyway we have nothing else to eat!"

-- Tekummeq, Town of Qaanaaq.

15° W, Mauritania:

"We are only eating one meal a day. When there is not enough food, it is the young and the old that get fed first."

-- Fatimitu Mint Eletou, Bouchamo.



Xavier Cortada, "Longitudinal Installation (North Pole)," 2008.



Perform the Ritualistic Installation

Perform at Pinecrest Gardens:

The South Pole's Longitudinal Installation has been replicated as a ceramic sculpture on permanent exhibit at Pinecrest Gardens. This participatory art installation invites visitors to recite the 24 quotes, as Cortada did at both ends of the world.

To perform the ritual individually, stand behind the shoe marked with zero degrees and face the red and white pole and read the first quote. Then, move clockwise, stopping at each marked shoe, stand as a proxy for the individual who lives on that longitude and read his/her quote aloud.

Upon completion, participants will stand near the shoe closest to the longitude where they live (e.g. South Floridians would stand just to the left of the shoe marked 75°W) and recite a **25th quote**, their own quote: "How have you been impacted by global climate change?"

Recreate the installation elsewhere:

Select 24 individuals to participate. Have them each remove one of their shoes. Arrange the 24 shoes on the ground in the form of a 16-foot diameter circle. Use a compass to find North. Mark that location as 0° longitude. Walk due South 16 feet and mark that point as 180°. Mark the East and West points of the circle as 90°E and 90°W, respectively. Arrange the remaining 20 shoes along the circle; each should be equidistant from each other in 15° intervals. Have each participant select one of the 24 quotes and stand in a circle in front of their assigned shoe. Starting at 0° and moving clockwise, have each participant touch the shoe and read the quote on behalf of a fellow human impacted by global climate change.



Xavier Cortada, a recipient of the 2006-2007 National Science Foundation's Antarctic Artists and Writers Program, traveled to Antarctica to create a series of art installations addressing global climate change.

About the Artist

Xavier Cortada's studio is located in **Pinecrest Gardens**, where he serves as artist-in-residence, oversees the **Hibiscus Gallery**, and implements his "Florida is...Nature" participatory art project.

Since 2011, Cortada has based his engaged art-science practice at **Florida International University**, with appointments in the School of Environment, Arts, and Society (**SEAS**), and the College of Communications, Architecture + The Arts (**CARTA**).

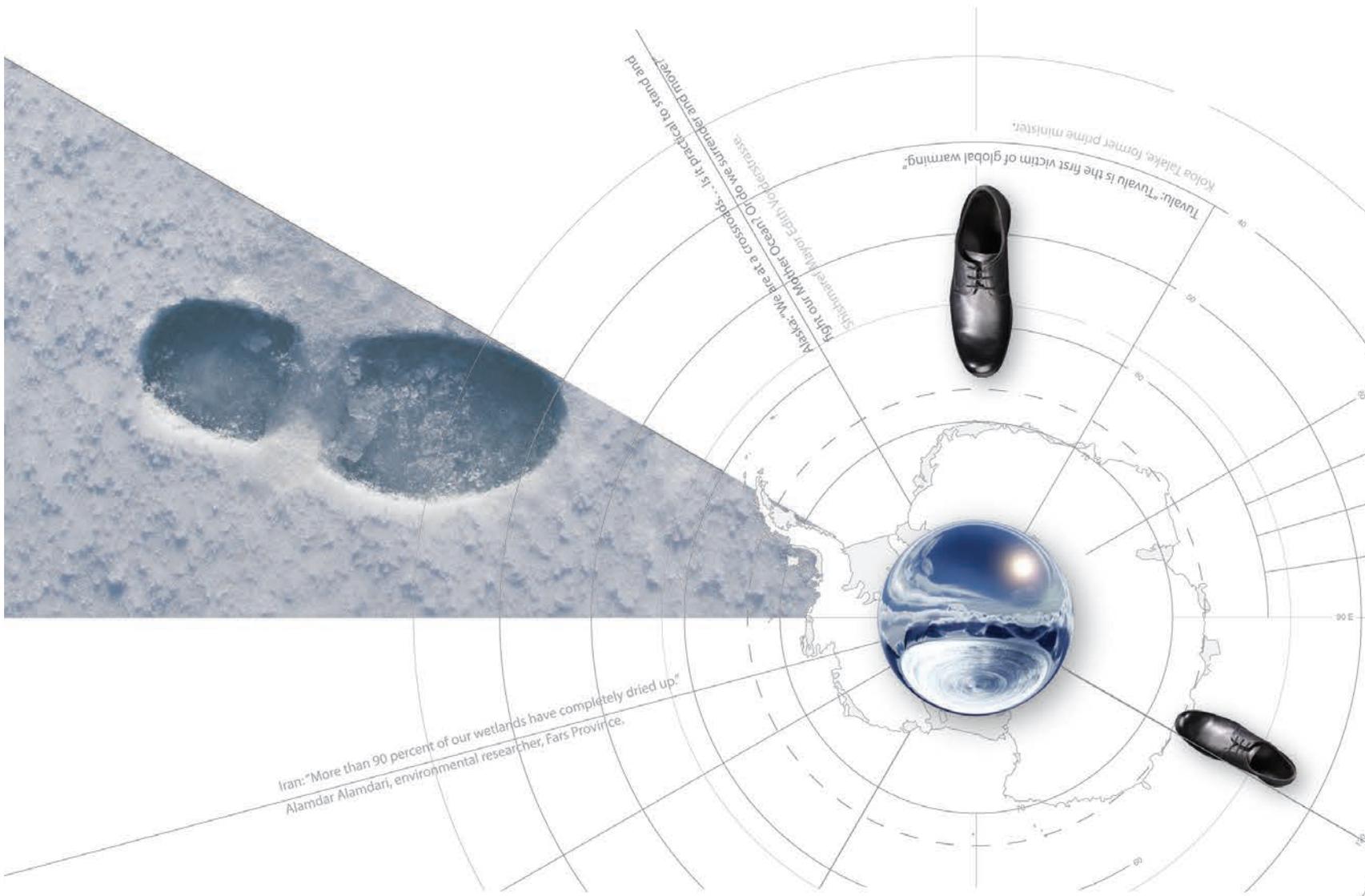
Cortada has worked with groups globally to produce numerous collaborative art projects, including environmental installations in the **North** and **South Pole**, peace murals in **Cyprus** and **Northern Ireland**, child welfare murals in **Bolivia** and **Panama**, AIDS murals in **Switzerland** and **South Africa** and eco-art projects in **Taiwan** and **Holland**.

Cortada has created art for the **White House**, **CERN**, the **World Bank**, the **Museum of Florida History**, the **Florida Botanical Gardens**, **Miami City Hall**, **Miami-Dade County Hall**, the **Frost Science Museum**, **Port Everglades**, and the **Florida Turnpike**.

His work is in the permanent collections of the Perez Art Museum Miami (**PAMM**), the **NSU Museum of Art** in Ft. Lauderdale, the **Whatcom Museum**, and the **Frost Art Museum**.

Cortada, who was born in Albany, New York and grew up in Miami, holds degrees from the **University of Miami** College of Arts and Sciences, Graduate School of Business and School of Law.

Learn more at www.cortada.com



www.longitudinalinstallation.org

"[Cortada] placed 24 identical men's black shoes around the South Pole. From each he drew and read a statement from an individual living in one of the world's time zones (such as: "I tell my wife, the day the mountain loses its snow, we'll have to move out of the valley." Jose Ignacio Lambarri, farmer, Urubamba Valley, Peru)."

Global Warnings, by Suzaan Boettger,
Art in America, Issue 6, page 156, June/July 2008.



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