

SF WEEKLY

Off Shore: Garbage, Debris, and Driftwood as Installation

by Laura Jaye Cramer

June 17, 2014



Off Shore, the summer series by local gallery Southern Exposure features a number of artists who explore, celebrate, and examine the waters and bay of San Francisco. The pieces and performances in *Off Shore* range from hidden city waterway walks, to an amphibious bicycle-powered Ferris wheel, to a floating peep show in Bay View. Next up, Brooklyn-based Marie Lorenz takes to the water in her own driftwood boat to collect garbage and debris which she will turn into an installation for the gallery.

SF Weekly spoke to Lorenz about her piece *Drift Boat*:

Can you briefly tell us a little about your background with San Francisco it's waterways?:

I lived in San Francisco between '95 and '98 -- right after arts school, so it's fun to come back and look at some of the places that I used to go here. I've been building boats and exploring urban waterways all of the way back since college. When I first got to San Francisco I was making boats and exploring around China Basin and Islais Creek. That's where I'll go back [for *Off Shore*] to look around. My artwork a lot of times -- although it's sort of changes all of the time -- a lot of times it's sort of about urban waterways and exploring these urban waterways. Some of the interesting things that you run into when the city and water connect.

Southern Exposure describes *Off Shore* as the bringing of, "historical waterways to light, [and to] celebrate a space for outsider communities and imagine the possibilities of water as an expanded territory." In your case, it's a lecture and a collection of found artifacts. What are they and what meaning do these objects hold?:

One of the things that I notice a lot about being out in the waterways is all of the junk that the harbor collects. The boat is made out of driftwood. It's also made out of plywood and fiberglass -- but these big chunks of driftwood kind of guide the form of the boat and the shape of the boat. When you look at it from a distance it looks like a normal little rowboat, but then when you walk up to it you realize

S O U T H E R N E X P O S U R E

that the keel and the gunnel are made out of these found pieces of driftwood. They're very knotty and very irregular. The boat shape is formed around these irregular pieces.

And that's the idea for the project; collecting debris and the boat itself is part of that collection.

Can you tell us a little about the different elements that make up your piece for Off Shore?:

I made the boat [in Vancouver] and brought it here. I'm [going out on it] everyday for five or six day. So each day I'm going to explore a different area and I'm collecting little bits and garbage and I make these sort of macrame rope hangings where I tie the debris into the rope. I'm also shooting video between noon and 2 p.m. everyday so that there is a life stream connected to the Southern Exposure website.

What exactly can we expect for the evening?:

On Wednesday, June 18 I'll be giving a presentation about the trips that I've been taking. [It will be] a narrative about my time in San Francisco and about exploring. I guess the project has three parts; it's the journeys and trips as represented by the live feed, it's the collection of the bits and debris along the way, and it's also this presentation where I'm telling the verbal narrative about what has happened this past week.