

NEWS RELEASE

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Cultural Programs of the National Academy of Sciences

New Exhibition by Steve Miller to Open at NAS

WASHINGTON – Known as the “lungs of the planet,” the Amazon rainforest absorbs an enormous amount of the world’s carbon dioxide and produces oxygen. In recent decades, large swaths of the rainforest have been deforested for timber, urbanization, cattle ranching, and plant extracts. Today, roughly one-fifth of the Amazon is gone, and scientists cite this deforestation as a major contributing factor to global climate change. Artist Steve Miller explores the impact of deforestation on the Brazilian Amazon rainforest in “Health of the Planet.” The exhibition opens Aug. 1, 2017, and will remain on view through Jan. 31, 2018, at the National Academy of Sciences.

On a trip to Brazil in 2005, fascinated by the beauty, biodiversity, and environmental challenges facing the country’s tropical environment, Miller began to conceptualize much of the artwork featured in this exhibition. On subsequent visits, he created X-rays of rainforest flora and fauna, with which he is giving the “lungs of the planet” a metaphorical checkup. He incorporates these X-rays into an unconventional range of media including paintings, prints, glass sculptures, and surfboards. Surfboards are an iconic symbol of Brazilian culture, and by printing X-rays of fauna onto them, he has created an “eco-trophy” to replace the classic, environmentally depleting taxidermy trophy. His paintings also include satellite remote sensing imagery of land use and deforestation in the Amazon, which he obtained from Woods Hole Research Center on Cape Cod.

Through the juxtaposition of the X-rays and land-use imagery, Miller reveals the inner structure and beauty of animals at risk and gives a broader perspective on their dwindling habitats. With his bright colors, energetic painting style, and scientific imagery, Miller wants to enable us to acknowledge our place in the natural world and consequential interactions with it.

Based in New York, Miller is recognized as an early pioneer of the “sciart” (science-based art) movement. He has been exploring scientific concepts and experimenting with new technologies in his artwork since the 1970s.

“Steve Miller: Health of the Planet” will be on exhibit at the National Academy of Sciences building, 2101 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. The galleries are open weekdays between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. A photo ID is required and there is no charge. Watch a video about the exhibition at <https://youtu.be/6FoLRLgfN2M>. Miller speaks at CPNAS’ D.C. Art Science Evening Rendezvous on Oct. 26. For more information, visit www.cpnas.org.

Cultural Programs of the National Academy of Sciences sponsors exhibitions, the D.C. Art Science Evening Rendezvous salon, theatrical readings, and other events that explore relationships among the arts and sciences. For more information, visit www.cpnas.org. The National Academy of Sciences is a private, nonprofit institution that recognizes achievement in science by election to membership, and -- with the National Academy of Engineering and the National Academy of Medicine -- provides science, technology, and health policy advice to the federal government and other organizations.

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Press images:



Forces at Play, 2015, acrylic and silkscreen on canvas,
79 x 78 inches



Turtle Eggs, 2016, inkjet on aluminum, 18 x 24 inches



Left: *Black Gator on White*, 2014, rice paper print on fiberglass surfboard,
24 x 36 inches



Archeology of Knowledge, 2016, pigment dispersion, silkscreen on canvas,
79 x 115 inches

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