

ARTS

Franny Choi, Ella Fitzgerald, and More Best Bets for Jan. 26-Feb. 1

Catch two classic films this week, enjoy the Black and Latinx composed Sphinx Symphony Orchestra, and take in Arctic Ice: A Visual Archive at the National Academy of Sciences.

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From *Arctic Ice: A Visual Archive*; courtesy of National Academy of Sciences

***Arctic Ice: A Visual Archive* at the National Academy of Sciences**

Translating science into art—or simply into understandable, everyday language—is not an easy process. (If it weren't tautological to suggest it, you might say the process is more art than science.) The National Academy of Sciences' exhibit *Arctic Ice: A Visual Archive* succeeds in one of its bifurcated halves, but falls short in the other. The project—a collaboration

between artist **Cy Keener**, landscape researcher **Justine Holzman**, climatologist **Ignatius Rigor**, and Navy scientist **John Woods**—aims to raise the alarm about how climate change is shrinking sea ice in the Arctic. One of the two projects on display, “Sea Ice Daily Drawings,” consists of large, wall-mounted groupings of what look like vertical blinds, which upon closer inspection reveal tiny, inscribed measurements of Arctic Sea ice taken in 2019, 2021, and 2022. The project conveys a pleasing minimalism, but its measurements are inscrutable to the layperson, and the otherwise absorbing color shift of the panels from blue to green is unexplained—a lost opportunity to depict the environmental shifts in an easy-to-understand way. Much more successful is the project “Iceberg Portraiture,” which consists of four large aluminum panels that depict four icebergs off western Greenland. Using a digital modeling technique called photogrammetry, the artists combine hundreds of images from ships and drones to make painstakingly detailed representations of the giant ice blocks, down to the individual grooves and crevasses on their surfaces. The panels also provide dotted lines that track the icebergs’ shifting locations over time. One of the four panels spotlights a roughly circular iceberg with melted water collecting in the center; with the meltwater rendered in a deep shade of green, the iceberg suggests an eye, casting an unblinking look into the viewer. *Arctic Ice runs through Feb. 15 at the National Academy of Sciences, 2101 Constitution Ave. NW. Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. cpnas.org. Free.* —Louis Jacobson