

Running Water: Riverwork Project and Watershed Cairns

September 20 2016 8:41 PM



ALTON — How we live with water, where it comes from, and why rivers are elemental to life, these questions arise in Running Water: Riverwork Project and Watershed Cairns, opening to the public free of charge, October 7 - November 19.

The Audubon Center at Riverlands, National Great Rivers Museum, and Jacoby Arts Center partner in a Nature + Art series to heighten awareness of our intrinsic assets. Here, art exhibits of pieced, painted textile, glass sculpture, and photography compel a closer look at our most vital resource, fresh water, near the convergence of three

powerful rivers and the Mississippi Flyway. Running Water: Riverwork Project and Watershed Cairns offers a new way of seeing water, our most critical resource. The visual interplay of delicate glass, luminous photographs, and energized runs of textile, creates an unusual flow of imagination and dimension of relationship. At each venue, artists' talks, interactive workshops, regional music, documentary film, and environmental speakers create a rich awareness of our natural heritage, initiate dialogue, and empower citizen science.

Artists Libby Reuter and Joshua Rowan began Watershed Cairns in 2011. "Similar to the stones that hikers pick up and stack to mark a trail, the glass cairns are created by assembling glass found at local thrift stores and mark water's path from land to river. We use them to mark nature's beauty in unexpected local places. Because the glass is fragile, we remove the cairns after they are photographed. Many of the cairns will be displayed with their images in the three exhibit venues," says Reuter.

Running Water

Riverwork Project and Watershed Cairns

Artists: Sun Smith-Foret • Libby Reuter • Joshua Rowan

We don't usually think of water here in the middle of the country. We haven't needed to. The Mississippi River provides a bountiful supply of fresh water to grow crops, move barges. And it provides drinking water for 50 million people. But, we can't continue to take H₂O for granted. Increased demand, climate change, and pollution mean that water is the planet's new oil. And in all that scarcity, the Midwest is the Saudi Arabia of water. - Libby Reuter, TEDx talk, 2015

October 7–November 19, 2016

Unique installations at

Audubon at Riverlands

301 Riverlands Way
West Alton, MO 63386
636 899 0090
Open daily 8am–4pm
Free Admission

National Great Rivers Museum

#2 Locks and Dam Way
E. Alton, IL 62024
618 462 6979
Open daily 9am–5pm
Free Admission

Jacoby Arts Center

627 East Broadway
Alton, IL 62002
618 462 5222
Open Wed–Sat, Noon–4pm
Free Admission

Events at Jacoby Arts Center

Opening Reception

Friday, Oct 7, 5–7pm All are welcome

The Riverlands Story: Establishing a Foothold For Water Resource Awareness and Stewardship

Friday, Oct 7, 7pm FREE

Patrick S. McGinnis, Certified Wildlife Biologist and Systems Ecologist, The Horinko Group, USACE Retired

The Everyman and the Ecologist

Thursday, Oct 13, 7pm FREE

Ryan Hanlon, Route 3 Films, Anthony Dell, Research Scientist, NGRREC, and Natalie Marioni, Director of Environmental Education, National Great Rivers Research and Education Center

River Bend Band

Saturday, Oct 15, 7pm \$10
Traditional bluegrass

The First Secret City

Friday, Oct 21, 7pm FREE
Documentary Film followed by Q & A with co-directors Alison Carrick, C.D. Stelzer, and lead subject Larry Burgan

Effervescent Pop

Friday, Nov 11, 8pm \$10
Gigi Darr, Jessica Butler, Rich Mendoza Trio
Jazz standards and French pop

Honky Tonk

Saturday, Nov 19, 7pm \$10
Daryl Wayne Dasher
Folk & Western Guitar

Gallery Talks Every Saturday, 2pm FREE

Sponsored by



WOOD RIVER
REFINERY



TheBANK
of Edwardsville

THE Audubon CENTER
AT RIVERLANDS



Sun Smith-Foret's Riverwork Project is a more than 300-foot-long pieced, layered, painted and embellished textile, based on techniques from African American Improvisational Quilt Making.

"Our land and rivers are not just rocks and water, but vessels for the lives of all the people who live in the place," explains Watershed Cairns artist Libby Reuter. "The Riverwork Project adds this human dimension to all the exhibits. Segments of the long textile depict a kaleidoscope of people's experiences with rivers. Diverse perspectives are shared by incorporating artwork from local artists and with text about polluted water and the titles of contemporary films featuring rivers."

"Post Ferguson it is clear that we all drink the water and that the Mississippi and Missouri rivers connect us, East Side and Saint Louis City and County." Smith-Foret says, "Through Riverwork Project I purposely invited men and women, young and senior, black and white, to contribute cloth squares and panels to be imbedded in the 300+ foot painted pieced set of textiles for display in public spaces and interiors. The work is all about water, with references from music, film, writing, poetry, current events, protests, history and myriad cultural symbol systems. We are celebrating in the Riverbend our commitment as artists to join other stewards of water, to conserve, protect and teach about water as essential and vulnerable resources, not to be taken for granted. Our current set of installations showcase water as sustainer of all life, water as part of the eco-system, water as part of national and international commerce and transportation systems, water as worthy subject of art."

"We don't usually think of water here in the middle of the country. We haven't needed to. The Mississippi River provides a bountiful supply of fresh water to grow crops, move barges. And it provides drinking water for 50 million people. But, we can't continue to take H₂O for granted. Increased demand, climate change, and pollution mean that water is the planet's new oil. And in all that scarcity, the Midwest is the Saudi Arabia of water." - Libby Reuter, TEDx talk 2015.

The public is invited to meet the artists at an Opening Reception on Friday, October 7, at 5pm, and at 7pm to hear The Riverlands Story: Establishing a foothold for water resource awareness and stewardship, presented by Patrick S. McGinnis, certified wildlife biologist and systems ecologist, USACE retired. Audubon Center at Riverlands is a flagship project of the National Audubon Society offering world class birding along one of the most significant migratory flyways in the world - the Mississippi River. The exhibition and programming are partially funded and generously sponsored by Liberty Bank, Phillips 66, TheBank of Edwardsville, Metropolitan Sewer District, Audubon at Riverlands and Meeting of the Rivers Foundation.