The Climate Change Cookout

Jim Weaver, Fran Kremer, Randall Weaver

The peril of climate change is well established, but underappreciated. Humans are as vulnerable to the impacts of a warming world as snow(hu)mans are to melting at a summertime cookout. ***The Climate Change Cookout*** will merge science, art, and (gallows) humor to make the point that individual choices are one driver of climate change.

We envision snow(hu)mans around a bonfire, built inside the frame of a walk-in greenhouse which symbolizes the atmosphere (Figure 1). The bonfire doesn't burn, but rather is lit internally by electronically-controlled LED smart bulbs. Robotic drums and recorded original piano compositions play in the background. As viewers interact with the installation, each light and sound element responds and reflects the influence of climate change; more intense response is paired to higher carbon output choices. The choices will be quantified by carbon footprint calculators based on peer-reviewed scientific literature and government reports, including the work of the U.S. EPA and the U.N. Toys that represent individual choices will be suspended from the greenhouse roof and contain buttons to make the greenhouse gas choices. A computer will control all features and perform the greenhouse gas calculations.

As a choice is made, for example from the airplane toy for an international flight, the bonfire will respond proportionately to the carbon footprint. A domestic flight or travel by car would produce a smaller carbon footprint and lesser sound and light response. Similarly, a toy house, car, and trash can represent home heating and electricity sources, commuting distance, and recycling options, each of which have known carbon footprints. Choices of these will cause the bonfire to respond proportionately. As the impacts change, a greater or lesser cacophony results.

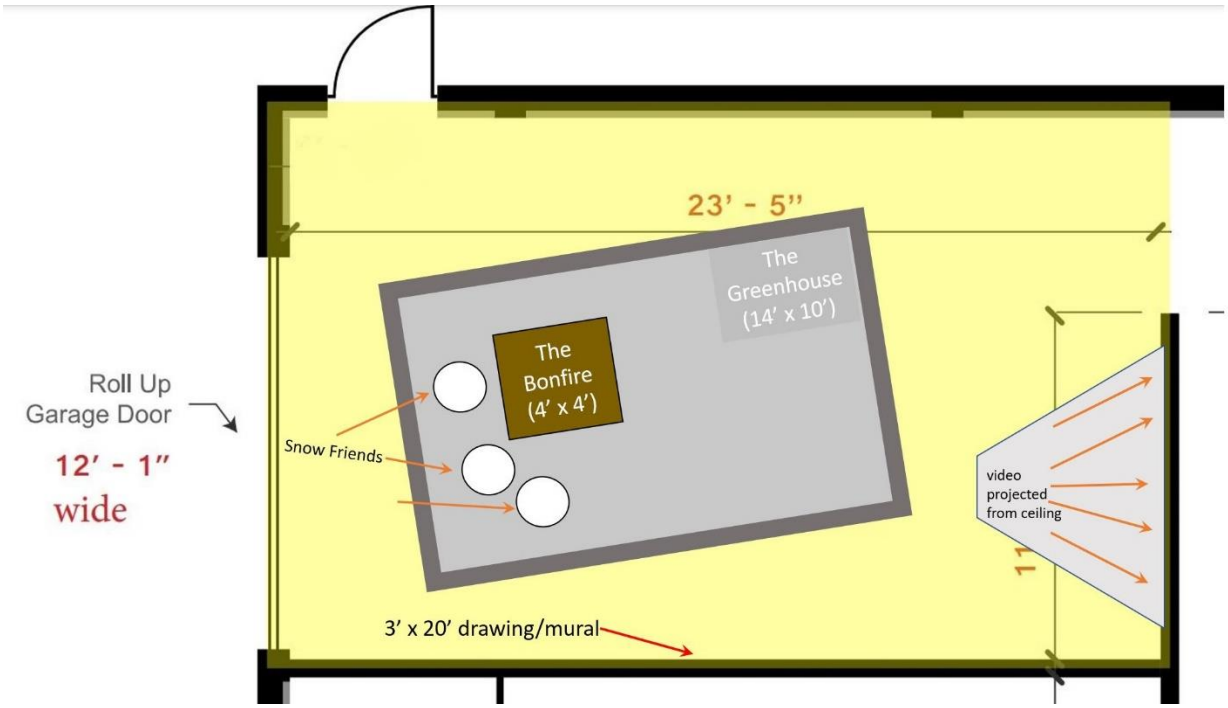
Along with the interactive piece, one long wall of the space will hold a collage/mural (3' x 20') of snow(hu)mans going about their business of toasting marshmallows, playing hockey (recall the "hockey stick graph" of temperature), arguing, skiing, and other pursuits, while scientific papers on climate change pepper the landscape. See Figures 2 and 6. Some snow(hu)mans see the papers and realize their import, others don't. On the end wall a video will play of climate-change related scenes—oil wells, windmills, storm damage and others, as recorded by the artists (Figure 7). When no one is interacting with the toys, the computer will play random bits of music, sound, and drumming.

Viewers will be able to register their preferences and receive a message recounting their choices (through WiFi email), along with selected background on climate change. The greenhouse gas emissions of the project itself will be offset by contribution to MyClimate.org.

A preliminary budget estimate is $3298 for the project with a high-end estimate of $1000 for shipping.

Contributors

Jim Weaver, Edmond, OK: conceptual design, Java programming, drawing, construction.
Fran Kremer, Cincinnati, OH: musical composition and recorded performance, scientific literature review.
Randall Weaver, Atlanta, GA: electronics, drumming, Arduino programming, construction.



Installation Plan.

Jim Weaver Artist Statement

My artwork emerges from values which accumulated over a lifetime. I grew up during the time when environmental concerns first became prominent, as indicated by the first Earth day, Rachel Carson's book "Silent Spring," the Love Canal disaster, and the establishment of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 1970. This was also a time of social upheaval: urban renewal, the 1968 Democratic Convention, the assassination of Martin Luther King, and protest against the War in Vietnam. Growing up in an inner-city, I longed for wild spaces.

My work mostly uses tooled leather as a textured painting surface and a reminder of the indelible impact of human activity on the natural world. I extend this practice with printmaking from tooled leather pieces, and using my background in science and engineering, the generation of computational art on screen and paper. Regardless of the medium, my background is layered on these media in three areas: the crisis of the environment, the social environment, and the natural environment.

The Climate Change Cookout represents a merger of the natural, environmental, and social worlds. These three are intertwined, not only for global warming, but in a more general way that ecologists and activists have long expressed. The purpose of the exhibit is to cause visitors to think about the coming challenges of climate change and their role in protecting the planet.

Composite CV

Jim Weaver, Printmaking, Tooled Leather, Installation

Education
SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Forest Engineering, BS.
The University of Texas at Austin, Water Resources Engineering, MS, Ph. D.

Employment
Santa Fe Railway (80s), U.S. EPA Research Hydrologist (late 80s to 2010s), Fine Artist (2015 to present).
Developer of environmental simulation software at U.S. EPA.

Galleries
108 Contemporary Gift Shop, Tulsa, 2014-2016, 2020-present
Artists of the Arbuckles, Sulphur, Oklahoma, 2014-2018.
Brayer & Brush, 1013 N. Lee, Oklahoma City, 2016-2020.

Solo Exhibitions
Upcoming 2021 Plants and the Geology that Embraces Them, Myriad Gardens, Oklahoma City.
Upcoming 2021 Trail Drive Commemoration, Graceful Arts, (Jo Decker), Alva, OK.
2020 Trail Drive Commemoration, Chisholm Trail Heritage Center, (Toni Harper), Duncan, OK.
2019 Rocketeer—New Prints from Tooled Leather, (Annalisa Campbell), Brayer and Brush, OKC.
2018 Printmaking from Tooled Leather, Wichita Falls Arts Association, TX.
2017 Printmaking and the Leather Matrix, Wingtip Press, Boise, ID.

Residencies/Grants
Petrified Forest National Park, Oct 2021.
Yellowstone Forever, Landis residency, Gardiner, Montana, Oct 2020 (Cancelled).
Wingtip Press residency, Boise Idaho, Oklahoma City August 2017.
Oklahoma Visual Arts Coalition, special projects grant, Oct 2019.
Oklahoma Visual Arts Coalition, Education Grant, Summer 2017.

Selected Juried and Invited Group Exhibitions (2015-2020)
2020 Concept/Survey, Oklahoma Visual Arts Coalition (Heather Pesanti), Tulsa, Feb-Mar.
2020 Environmental Crisis, Eltham College, (*) London, UK, Feb-Mar.
2020 Guns in the USA, 8680 Gallery, (Robyn Parker Feehan), Frisco, TX, Mar-Apr.
2020 On Point: Illustration Open, Surface Gallery, (Chris Boote), Nottingham, UK, Aug-Sep.
2020 Political Discourse 2020, Las Lagunas Gallery, Laguna Beach, CA, Oct.
2019 Please Touch the Art, Tulsa Community College, (*) Tulsa, OK, July.
2019 State of Craft, 108 Contemporary (Kristin Olds), Tulsa, Dec.
2019 We Belong to the Land/Nous Appartenons à la Terre, Clermont-Ferrand, FR (Erinn Gavaghan), Dec.
2018 Ambiguity of Guns, New Orleans Art Center (Christina Juran), Jan.
2018 Art Elevated, Garment District Association, (*) New York, NY, Oct.
2018 Resolutions, DNA Galleries, (Lindsey Harkness), OKC, Jan.
2018 Steamroller Print Festival exhibiting artist, Artspace at Untitled, (*) Oklahoma City, April-May.
2018 Visionmakers Triennial, 108 Contemporary (Emily Zilber), Tulsa OK, Nov.

Fran Kremer, Music Composition and Performance

Education
Indiana University, Chemistry, B.S.
University of Cincinnati, Environmental Engineering, Ph.D., MS

Employment
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Senior Scientist, 1987 – present, Pianist - performer, composer

While I have devoted my life principally to research in solving environmental problems, the creativity in approaching this is akin to how one approaches artistic pursuits. Since my undergraduate studies, I have viewed the striking similarities in music and science. While at Indiana University, I pursued chemistry and music, in its classical forms. However, while there, I had the privilege of studying with David Baker who blazed the trail in garnering acceptance of jazz in American higher education, building one of the first jazz programs in an American university. It was this exposure to jazz improvisation, the spontaneous composition, that inspired not only my music but also how I approach my environmental research. Intrinsically, this is to view problems in a non-linear way and to be open to new paths toward solutions and expression.

This integration of art and science is captured by Hans Ulrich Obrist, the Artistic Director of Serpentine Galleries in London: “For me, the idea of curating can be expanded. Curating science, curating art, music and theater and performance and not only bring those things into art but bring art into those areas.”

Randall Weaver, Electro-Mechanical Device Fabrication, Drum Programming

Education
Georgia Institute of Technology, Mechanical Engineering, BS.

Employment
Schneider Electric, Design Engineer (2013-2016), Cooper Lighting, Product Development Engineer (2017-2018), Coca-Cola Freestyle, Fluidics System Engineer (2018-2020), Flock Safety, Manufacturing Engineer (2020-Present)

Relevant skills and experience
2004-2010. Performed with my amateur rock band Buzz Brothers and the Georgia Tech Drumline
2008-2013. At Georgia Tech, programmed using Java, Python, C, Matlab, Visual Basic, HTML, and CSS
2012. Created a water distribution and usage computer model using Java for a USEPA student project.
2017-Present. At my last three positions I have assembled circuits using solder joints, terminal blocks, and cage clamp connectors. The Climate Change Cookout will require this type of assembly.
2020-Present. At Flock Safety I own manufacturing test fixtures for our android-based devices. I develop test stand programs in Python and use Github for collaboration and version control. I program raspberry Pi computers and Arduino microcontrollers which can be used for interactive projects like the Climate Change Cookout.

Supporting and Related Images

Figure 1 The Climate Change Cookout Concept Sketch.

Figure 2 The Climate Change Denier (II).

Figure 3 The Climate Change Denier

Figure 4 Yes, This is What We Are.

Figure 5 It's Never Really Gone.

Image Details

1) The Climate Change Cookout concept sketch.
2) The Climate Change Denier (II), 2020, Pen and Ink
3) The Climate Change Denier (I), 2018, Acrylic on Tooled Leather
4) Yes, This is What We Are, 2020, Reclaimed Lumber, Books, Tooled Leather Belts, Oyster Shell. Texts: **Books** Walden & Civil Disobedience, Henry David Thoreau; Narrative of the Life of Fredrick Douglass, An American Slave, and Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Fredrick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs; Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee, Dee Brown. **Tooled Leather Belts:** Extinctions, Okjkull Glacier, Artificial Intelligence, Gig Economy, Mass Shootings.
5) It's Never Really Gone, 2010, Acrylic on Tooled Leather and Discarded Materials.

Not pictured:

6) Brooklyn Art Library, Sketchbook Project #15, "*The Climate Change Cookout*," call number 375.47-1. https://www.sketchbookproject.com/library/S265059. Examples of snow(hu)mans at play: similar to appear in the collage.
7) Oil Well Near Okarche, Oklahoma. www.jww-art.com/extraction. Video example.
8) Campfire, Acrylic on Tooled Leather, Electronics. www.jww-art.com/campfire electronically-enabled artwork example.