



Press Release

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Artist seeks mementoes of places before they sink without trace

People living in Scotland's vulnerable coastal areas are being asked to make their mark on an exhibition addressing key environmental concerns.

They are being urged to scour places at risk from rising seas for eye-catching items that can be included in one of the exhibition's artworks.

The show's curators hope that people living in endangered areas such as the Hebrides, the Northern Isles and the Firths of Forth and Clyde will take up the challenge.

A People's Archive of Sinking and Melting – begun by American artist Amy Balkin in 2011 – is a poignant, constantly evolving record of the approaching threats posed by climate change.

The crowdsourced collection of objects will be part of an exhibition called *The Normal*, which opens at the University of Edinburgh's Talbot Rice Gallery on 29 January.

People can send the gallery any object that they find at a threatened location – debris, flotsam or jetsam – as long as it *weighs less than 8oz (225g)*.

Gallery staff will arrange and present the objects with guidance from the artist. Once the exhibition closes on 10 April, the items will be forwarded to Balkin, who will add them to the archive, which now contains items from six continents.

Alongside found objects from the natural world the archive includes everyday items – a tube of toothpaste, a broken phone charger and a US dollar.

Each has been plucked from places since ravaged by sea level rise, glacial melt, flooding, drought and other forms of extreme weather driven by changing climate.

In any other context, these individual objects would be unremarkable but; when viewed as part of a meticulously curated work of art, they have an eerie resonance.

The gallery will continue to collect objects for the archive in the run up to the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), to be held in Glasgow from 1 to 12 November.

Curators are also happy to accept items from inland areas at risk from the effects of changing climate.

The Normal showcases a range of perspectives from established artists on pressing global concerns. It has been developed in response to what the curators describe as the 'wake-up call' of Covid-19.

Key themes are the pandemic's impact on communities, health, work, nature and even ideas about progress. *The Normal*, says Talbot Rice Director Tessa Giblin, affirms the urgent need to rethink our relationship to the natural world.

It brings together artists from around the world who are attuned to this singular moment in history. Taking part are Amy Balkin, Anca Benera and Arnold Estefan, Boyle Family, Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg & Sascha Pohflepp, Gabrielle Goliath, Femke Herregraven, Jarsdell Solutions Ltd, Kahlil Joseph, Tonya McMullan, Sarah Rose and James Webb.

To get involved with the Talbot Rice exhibition, please go to: <https://bit.ly/3nYvUMy>

An interactive map by non-profit news organisation Climate Central shows which parts of the country will be hit by rising tides in 2050 unless dramatic action is taken to halt climate change: <https://bit.ly/3nVhooT>



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