



Action Pact Boston kicks off series of six public art installations for climate change awareness

By Sam Trottenberg Globe Correspondent, Updated April 19, 2022, 4:40 p.m.



"Transient" by Felipe Ortiz depicts the endangered piping plovers. As the piece is eroded, the image of the birds will fade away to reveal their skeletons. PHOTO BY BOB PACKERT, COURTESY OF THE EXPERIENCE ALCHEMISTS

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Artist Felipe Ortiz kicked off Action Pact Boston’s 2022 lineup of public art last weekend with “Transient,” a multi-layered mixed media drawing of endangered piping plovers on the sidewalk outside the Franklin Park Zoo. This piece is the first of six installations sponsored by Action Pact, a new climate change initiative and awareness campaign formed by the Boston Green Ribbon Commission, the City of Boston, and 40 local cultural institutions. (The Boston Globe is the media partner of the campaign.)

Additional Action Pact-commissioned artists, all of whom are based in Massachusetts, include Yuko Okabe, whose piece will premiere at the Boston Medical Center on May 2; Ethan Murrow; Silvia López Chavez; and Erin Genia. One more artist will be announced at a later date.

“I wanted to do a piece that had a revealing effect,” Ortiz said. The Cape Cod-based artist achieved this by first drawing the plovers’ skeletons in graphite, and then, on top of the graphite, layering the birds in charcoal. Over time, the charcoal will fade away, revealing the skeletons, Ortiz said.

“It does have a shocking quality to it,” Ortiz said. “I hope that people understand the rapid changes of climate change, and the fact that we do need to at least pay attention or be aware of what our footprint is in this environment that we live in.”

Ortiz began “Transient” last Thursday and finished it around 5 p.m. on Saturday, said Jim Olson, the cofounder and principal of the Experience Alchemists, the group that helped commission the six Action Pact artists.

“It was really fun to describe to visitors, mostly kids and families, what the process was, and then see the look on their faces,” said Olson, who was present while Ortiz was creating the piece. “I think people were really, really interested in that magic that was happening through the process that he created.”



Artist Felipe Ortiz working on the skeleton of a piping plover, around 1 p.m. last Friday. PHOTO BY SAM TROTTEBERG

In addition to the public art pieces, Action Pact’s programming includes a dozen climate-themed events and exhibits from Boston cultural institutions, including [“Resilient Venice: Adapting to Climate Change”](#) at Boston’s Museum of Science, The Boston Globe’s [Sustainability Week](#), and a joint project from the Boston Red Sox and the Boston Children’s Museum called [“Fenway Farms at Boston Children’s Museum.”](#)

“I hope that people will start talking about it [climate change] and I hope they’ll start to have emotional feelings about it,” said Amy Longworth, the executive director of the Boston Green Ribbon Commission. “It relates to all of us. It’s change that we’re all going to have to go through. There will be mourning as we lose things, there will be excitement as we develop new ways of living and new technologies.”



More information on Action Pact can be found at actionpact.boston. Felipe Ortiz's work can be viewed at felipeortiz.com. His "Explosive Nature" series will be on display this Friday at the [Rugosa Gallery](#) in Eastham.

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