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## **In Time for Earth Day, ArtServe Opens “Pa-Hay-Okee—Land of Grassy Water” Everglades-focused art exhibit opens April 14 with free artist panel discussion and reception**

**Fort Lauderdale, Florida – March 23, 2022** – In recognition of Earth Day, ArtServe will open an environmental art exhibit on Thursday, April 14 titled “Pa-Hay-Okee—Land of Grassy Water” dedicated to the urgency of preserving and restoring Florida’s fragile ecology and Everglades ecosystem.



*Plastic Bag Installation by Jenna Efrein at ArtServe*

With support from [Funding Arts Broward](#), Pa-Hay-Okee kicks off on April 14 with an artist panel discussion from 6 to 7 p.m. followed by an opening reception and preview of the exhibit’s artworks from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Admission is free to both opening night events and to the exhibition itself, which runs through Friday, June 17 from Mondays through Saturdays.

Attending opening night will be [Pa-Hay-Okee Guest Curator and ARTSail founder Ombretta Agró Andruff](#) and many of the Pa-Hay-Okee featured artists.

“Art has become an indispensable method for increasing knowledge, raising appreciation and inspiring action on the environment,” explained ArtServe Guest Curator and ARTSail founder Ombretta Agró Andruff. “We hope that through this exhibition and its accompanying educational program, our audience will explore, fall in love with and learn to care for the life-sustaining ecosystem right in our backyard.”

The idea for Pa-Hay-Okee, a Seminole Tribe phrase meaning “grassy waters,” originated in a [powerful online discussion hosted by ARTSail and ArtServe in 2020](#) with environmental activist Robert Mitchell that explored the environmental complexities of the Lake Okeechobee region and addressed how artists can actively help spur action on social and ecological, resiliency and sustainability issues impacting Florida communities.

Since then, Andruff has conducted expeditions through the Everglades and Lake O. region, interviewing activists, scientists and environmental experts to better understand the challenges faced by the Kissimmee-Lake Okeechobee-Everglades watershed, as it was originally known.

Together with Andruff, ArtServe curator Sophie Bonet has gathered an impactful collection of multi-disciplinary works and performances designed to inspire meaningful discussion, along with public understanding and appreciation for the plight and beauty of the Florida wetlands. Exhibiting artists include Priscilla Aleman, Alissa Alfonso, Elisabeth Condon, Jenna Efrein, Simon Faithfull, Tom Grill, Lucinda Linderman, Deborah Mitchell, Christina Pettersson and Laurencia Strauss.

“Pa-Hay-Okee” artists have captured the beauty, fragility and diversity of the Florida wetlands and the flora and fauna that inhabits them in unique and profound ways. The artists’ contributions span a variety of media, from lens-based work by Faithfull and Strauss, to fiber work and tapestries by Alfonso and Linderman, along with powerful multi-media installations and drawings by Pettersson, Mitchell, Efrein and Aleman, and delicate watercolors by Condon.

The exhibition is timed to Earth Day on Friday, April 22.

Pa-Hay-Okee will feature installations and engagements that promote ecological awareness and explore threats to Florida’s environment, while drawing a sense of urgency to the human impact on South Florida’s fragile ecosystem. Among those works is Efrein’s giant installation of plastic bags that physically overwhelms the viewer, unequivocally imparting the crushing devastation of single-use plastic bag pollution as merely a single component of environmental destruction.

Pa-Hay-Okee concludes on Sunday, June 26 (final day by appointment only). ArtServe will host a closing reception on Friday, June 17 featuring multidisciplinary artistic performances such as poetry reading and video screenings.

ArtServe is located at 1350 E. Sunrise Boulevard, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33304. Call (954) 462-8190 or email [information@artserve.org](mailto:information@artserve.org).

#### [About ArtServe](#)

Named a “2020 Top-Rated Nonprofit” by GreatNonprofits, the leading provider of user reviews of charities and nonprofits, Fort Lauderdale-based ArtServe is an award-winning arts incubator that is advancing the arts for social good as a creative laboratory and hub for experimental artists committed to diversity, equity and inclusion. Now in its 35th year, ArtServe has won several awards for innovation in the arts and is supported in part by the Broward County Board of County Commissioners as recommended by the Broward Cultural Council and Florida’s Department of State and the Division of Cultural Affairs. Each year, ArtServe programs contribute tangibly to the region’s economy, helping 2,000+ artists sell their work, build businesses and engage the community. To do that, ArtServe secures financial support through donations, sponsorships and memberships.

Become a member of ArtServe as either an artist or community member at [www.ArtServe.org/member/](http://www.ArtServe.org/member/) or become a founding member of Friends of ArtServe at [www.ArtServe.org/friends](http://www.ArtServe.org/friends). Requests and questions about the ArtServe facility or programs can be emailed to [information@ArtServe.org](mailto:information@ArtServe.org)

#### [About ARTSail](#)

A nomadic, multi-faceted platform, ARTSail facilitates interdisciplinary practice to cultural producers in the creation of innovative content addressing the climate crisis specific to South Florida. We connect artists with climate activists, scientists, and marine experts to investigate how climate change and man-made pollution are impacting the South Florida waterways and assist them in the creation of tangible outcomes with climate advocacy value. ARTSail’s programs span from artist residencies to educational and outreach programs that help communities move from climate awareness to climate action. It is the only program in South Florida premised on access to ocean-going vessels and scientific practitioners for creative and climate change inquiry. This interdisciplinary engagement facilitates advocacy for public policy by leveraging the masterful capacity of artists to communicate.

For more information: <http://www.artsail.info>

IG: [@art\\_sail](#)

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