

The New York Times

New York Art Galleries: What to See Right Now

Lina Bo Bardi's swoon-inducing furniture; Heidi Bucher's phantomlike sculptures; and Josh Kline's chronicle of a 'calamity in progress.' May 8, 2019



Installation view of "Josh Kline, Climate Change: Part One" at 47 Canal. Display cases hold melting blocks of ice that cause water to rise around dollhouse-size buildings. Credit Josh Kline and 47 Canal, New York; Joerg Lohse

While young people around the world are [calling for action](#) on climate change, artists imagine and simulate its effects, as Josh Kline does in "[Climate Change: Part One](#)" at 47 Canal.

This exhibition envisions a future somewhere from 2040 to 2060, unfolding over five dimly lit funhouse rooms (without the fun). Tables and display cases hold melting blocks of ice that cause water to rise around dollhouse-size legislative buildings molded in mud gathered from the Potomac River. Water from the melting ice collects in buckets beneath the tables and cases and will be refrozen and put back in the sculptures throughout the show.

Elsewhere are sculptures of buildings created in wax, also melting. (They will be recast and reinstalled.) In the final room, giant vitrines with eerie orange and purple light contain round vessels encasing miniature scenes of work or leisure: tiny computers, office equipment and beach chairs. It's like staring into a flooded version of our already memorialized future.

The gallery release written by Mr. Kline serves as a stern policy-brief-as-speculative-fiction. We're living in a "soft dystopia" now, he writes, but when/if the Antarctic ice sheet becomes unmoored and the world's major cities are flooded, this will become a "hard dystopia" as people scramble for resources around the globe. In the same way specially fabricated doors embedded with sodden-looking fragments of national flags divide the exhibition, we are on a historical "threshold" between present and future, prediction and reality. Mr. Kline's show offers a metaphorical-conceptual forecast, after which you can join young protesters in the streets.

– MARTHA SCHWENDENER