

New York Gallery Beat: 6 Critics Review 18 Shows

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Blane De St. Croix, *Dead Ice* (2014).
Photo: Courtesy Fredericks & Freiser Gallery.

Fredericks & Freiser Gallery, Blane De St. Croix, closes June 14.

For De St. Croix's first solo show in New York, the American artist's massive installation—a curved structure that looks at once like a breaking wave, part of a boat hull, a glacier, and on the underside, a snow- and ice-covered boardwalk—takes up almost the entire front room of the gallery. In the second room are two wall-hung collages that at first look like textured, mountainous sheets of ice, but which are actually cut, layered pieces of white paper with intricate ink drawings. In a lengthy essay penned by curator Joseph D. Ketner II, as well as the gallery press release, we learn that last year De St Croix, concerned with global warming, conducted extensive research in the Svalbard Archipelago in the Arctic Circle, exploring abandoned mining towns, traveling on ice breakers, and going on aerial flyovers. There is an in-depth description of "dead ice" as a scientific term for what happens when a glacier ceases to move, and melts in place, shedding ice. But there is little or no connection apparent between this intriguing-sounding subject matter and the works that are on view. Using just a few of the gorgeous, expansive photographs on the gallery invite and artist's own website documenting his travels would have provided much needed context, or at least a better visual backdrop.

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