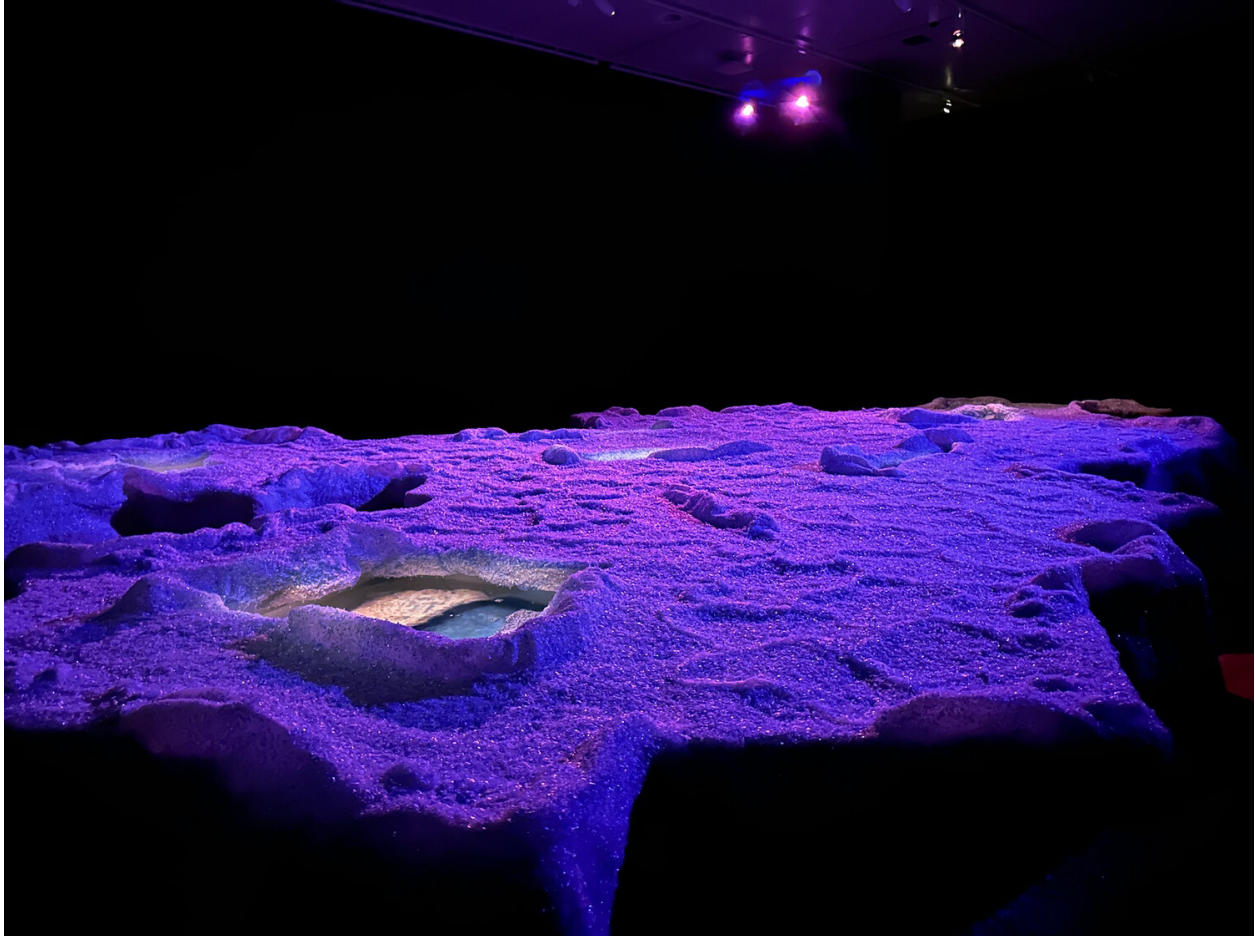


# Blane De St. Croix: *Horizon*

NYU Abu Dhabi Art Gallery



Blane De St. Croix and Joanna Settle, *Salt Lake Excerpt, UAE* (detail), 2023. PET, fabric, screens, water, tanks, light, sound, wave makers, dimensions variable.\*

December 9, 2023

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**Blane De St. Croix**

***Horizon***

October 3, 2023–January 14, 2024

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**NYU Abu Dhabi Art Gallery**

NYU Abu Dhabi

Saadiyat Island, Abu Dhabi

United Arab Emirates

**Hours:** Tuesday–Sunday 12–8pm

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Over the last year, American artist Blane De St. Croix has been in residence in the UAE, to develop four new works commissioned by the Art Gallery at New York University Abu Dhabi (NYUAD). As he was studying the UAE's physical landscape and interviewing regional climate experts, the country was preparing to host COP28, now underway in Dubai. The resulting new works respond both to his study of the physical landscape of the UAE, his interviews with climate experts working in the UAE, and his exchange with faculty from across NYUAD's divisions.

Blane De St. Croix writes, "Having traveled to many spectacular and inspiring, but ecologically fragile, environments, including the Gobi Desert and the Arctic Circle, my studies of the equally beautiful UAE desert reinforced a truth that both artists and scientists tell us: our planet is deeply interconnected, as are the environmental challenges we face. Any solutions we might develop in response must account for this fact. I thank the faculty at NYUAD for their support in developing this new body of work, which I hope will inspire people to think in new ways about how we interact with nature."

Executive Director of The NYUAD Art Gallery Maya Allison commented: "The subject of our environment looms large as COP28 takes place in the UAE, and we, as a global academic institution, have a critical role to play in the path to solutions. Art has a distinct capacity to take the conversation forward. Artists like De St. Croix play a vital role in the work of comprehending more deeply, together with scientists, historians, researchers, climate experts, and policy makers. Just a few months ago, I was pleased to learn that the US National Science Foundation awarded him a grant for his work on the Arctic, which he will continue as his next project, collaborating with two scientists and another museum professional."

The largest new commission, *Salt Lake Excerpt, UAE*, emerged from De St. Croix's collaboration with theater artist Joanna Settle, an Arts Professor and Associate Dean at NYUAD. They co-created this work in response to the salt lake "sabkhas" of the UAE. Together they designed an immersive light, sound, and sculpture installation made from at least 50,000 shredded plastic water bottles.

De St. Croix drew on many areas of faculty research at NYUAD in the course of his residency, resulting in several major new works. His new series of "infinite landscapes" is based on the UAE's deserts, developed from work with NYUAD's Research Visualization and Fabrication lab. He also developed his previous research on the Himalayas, after exchange with NYUAD's Himalaya Water Project, an interdisciplinary faculty cluster based in the Arts and Humanities, who are conducting research on the Himalayas. Those dialogues led to *High Peaks: Himachal (Snow Mountain)*, in which sculptures of Mount Everest and five other peaks loom over the visitor, and appear to be melting and collapsing.

Blane De St. Croix: *Horizon* runs through January 14, 2024, from Tuesday through Sunday, 12-8pm. For more details visit [here](#).

### **About Blane De St. Croix**

De St. Croix's work has been widely exhibited both nationally and internationally. His most recent exhibition titled *How to Move a Landscape* was a major solo presentation at MASS MoCA (US) in 2021. The artist has won numerous awards and distinctions for his sculpture as well as for his research. This year, the US National Science Foundation awarded him a National Science Foundation grant to develop a research project in the Yukon Arctic together with two scientists and a museum professional. He is also the recipient of the Lee Krasner Award for Lifetime of Artistic Achievement, which is the latest in a series of grants the Pollock-Krasner Foundation has awarded him. De St. Croix has also been recognized for his artistic practice by various leading arts foundations through fellowships and grants, such as the New York State Council on the Arts/New York Foundation for the Arts (NYSCA/NYFA) Artist Fellowship for Architecture/Environmental Structures/Design; the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship; the Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant for Painters and Sculptors; the National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in Sculpture; and the Smithsonian Institute's Artist Research Fellowship. The artist has also undertaken prestigious

artist residencies, including several fellowships at both the MacDowell Colony (New Hampshire, US) and Yaddo Artist Residencies (New York, US).

\*Sound design, sound system design: João Menezes. Lighting design: Simon Fraulo. Kawader Research Fellow: Fatema Al Fardan. Construction Design: Michael "Mick" Uveges. Voices: Fatema Al Fardan, Joanna Settle, Logan Settle Rishard, Maryam Alshehhi. Commissioned by The NYU Abu Dhabi Art Gallery.

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