

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Anastasia Samoylova moves between observational photography, studio practice and installation. Samoylova's work will be presented at the Wilhelm-Hack-Museum, Germany, as part of the Biennale für aktuelle Fotografie (2020); recent exhibitions include Flowers Gallery, London; Dot Fiftyone Gallery, Miami, FL; Museum of Contemporary Photography, IL; Purdue University, IN; Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design, WI; Griffin Museum of Photography, MA; Foley Gallery, NY; Aperture Foundation, NY; as well as numerous festivals in Brazil, Belgium, France, Israel, Netherlands, China, and South Korea. Her work is included in the collections of the Perez Art Museum, Miami; Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago; Art Slant Collection, Paris; and MoMA Library, New York. Samoylova was an artist in residence at the ArtCenter South Florida (2018-2019) and has participated in residencies at Mass MoCA, Fountainhead Studios, and

Latitude Chicago. In 2018, Samoylova was awarded two grants for her ongoing project *FloodZone*: the South Arts Fellowship and Michael P. Smith Fund for Documentary Photography. Samoylova's first monograph, *Landscape Sublime*, was published in 2016 by In-Between Editions, and her newest publication *FloodZone*, with renowned international photography publisher Steidl, was released in 2019. Samoylova has published with *The New Yorker*, *Smithsonian Magazine*, *FOAM*, *Wired*, *Art Press*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Oxford American* and *Bloomberg Businessweek*. She has lectured as an invited artist at George Eastman Museum, NY; ParisPhoto; and School of Visual Arts, NY; among others. Samoylova received her MA from Russian State University for the Humanities and MFA from Bradley University. She is represented by Dot Fiftyone Gallery in Miami, Florida and Galerie Caroline O'Brien in Amsterdam, Netherlands.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It has been an immense pleasure to work with Anastasia Samoylova to bring her *FloodZone* series to the USF Contemporary Art Museum and Tampa Bay area. The museum exhibition provides a platform to raise awareness and discourse around South Florida coastal communities' unique position and vulnerability to sea-level rise within the global climate crisis. On the occasion of her first solo museum exhibition and recent release of the *FloodZone* book, published by Steidl, comprising 80 photographs from the ongoing series, I would like to express sincere congratulations and gratitude to Samoylova for sharing with our audiences her focused vision and perspective around this challenging eco-urgent issue.

I am thankful to curator and writer David Company and Ksenia Nouril, Ph.D., Jensen Bryan Curator at The Print Center for generously participating in the exhibition's education programs. I would also like to extend gratitude to scholars and experts Ulrike Heine, Ph.D., Independent Curator and Visual Studies Scholar; CJ Reynolds, Director of Resiliency and Engagement, Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council; and Stephanie Wakefield, Ph.D., Urban Studies Foundation International Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Florida International University, for sharing their extensive knowledge about the issues related to climate crisis and the Florida environment as part of our panel discussion *Rising Above: Art and Climate Resiliency*. Much gratitude to the members of CAM Club for hosting the Film on the Lawn series and assisting with special events.

FloodZone is generously supported by Oolite Arts and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. Much appreciation to Verónica Flom and Dot Fiftyone Gallery for facilitating the loan of the works for the show. Special recognition to Oxford Exchange and Laura Taylor, Bookstore and Programming Director, for hosting a talk and book signing for *FloodZone*. The artist's gallery talk is made possible through the philanthropic support of Dr. Allen Root in honor of his late wife Janet G. Root.

The success of every exhibition is due to the incredible dedication, professional talent and collaborative efforts of the museum's team. Under the leadership of the Institute for Research in Art Director Margaret Miller, and Deputy Directors Noel Smith and Randall West, the museum staff coordinated the many important and unseen tasks associated with mounting an exhibition. I would like to recognize and express deep gratitude to my IRA colleagues who provided support and enthusiasm for this exhibition: Program Coordinator Amy Allison, Curator of the Collection and Exhibitions Manager Shannon Annis, Preparator Jessica Barber, Digital Media Assistant Marty De la Cruz, Curator of Education Leslie Elsasser, Communications Specialist Mark Fredricks, New Media Curator Don Fuller, Events Coordinator Ashley Jablonski, Curatorial Associate and Preparator Eric Jonas, Chief Preparator Vincent Kral, Research Associate and Photographer Will Lytch, Exhibitions Coordinator and Designer Anthony Wong Palms, Production Assistant Gary Schmitt, Curator-at-Large Christian Viveros-Fauné,

FOREWORD

Sarah Howard, Curator of Public Art and Social Practice, introduces Moscow-born and Miami-based artist/photographer Anastasia Samoylova to the university and Tampa Bay community with her installation *FloodZone*. The effects of the climate crisis as revealed in Samoylova's photographs are at times stunningly picturesque while simultaneously serving as evidence of the erosion of the natural and urban ecologies of the coastal communities of Florida.

Howard's curatorial project is in keeping with the mission of the Contemporary Art Museum (CAM) to serve as a platform to provoke dialogue about current social, environmental and political issues through its temporary exhibitions and related educational events. Sarah Howard has extended the importance and educational aspects of Samoylova's sea-level rise project by connecting with a multidisciplinary group of scholars and experts from the campus and beyond, organizing a series of events including a panel discussion and film screening.

Howard's commitment to research artists and produce exhibitions and events that link art practice to social challenges has offered opportunities for student and community participation and the development of informed perspectives. She is recognized locally, regionally and nationally for creating cultural, government and other institutional partnerships for her projects and has consistently developed new audiences for contemporary art, advancing the recognition of the ability of the arts to serve as a catalyst for awareness and social transformation.

In her acknowledgments, Sarah Howard recognizes and thanks the many people who have assisted with realizing *FloodZone*. Socially engaged projects are successful because of the people that come together to collaborate. I want to acknowledge the talented Contemporary Art Museum team under the leadership of Noel Smith, Deputy Director.

Most of all I recognize and thank Anastasia Samoylova for extending her project *FloodZone* to create a new installation for the USF Contemporary Art Museum.

Margaret Miller
Director and Professor
USF Institute for Research in Art

and Chief of Security David Waterman, as well as student interns and volunteers Andrew Ryan, Daniel Sulbaran, and Nicole Otlavaro. It is an honor and a delight to be a part of the IRA team to mount compelling exhibitions and develop engaging programs to expand the dialogue addressing critical issues in our contemporary society.

Sarah Howard
Curator of Public Art and Social Practice
USF Institute for Research in Art

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Dr. Allen Root
in honor of his late wife
Janet G. Root



FloodZone // Anastasia Samoylova

January 17 - March 07, 2020
USF Contemporary Art Museum



Anastasia Samoylova, *Dome House*, 2018, from the *FloodZone* series.

Anastasia Samoylova, *Flooded Garage*, 2017, from the *FloodZone* series. detail

FLOODZONE // ANASTASIA SAMOYLOVA

FloodZone is the first solo museum exhibition to present Moscow-born, Miami-based artist Anastasia Samoylova's ongoing photographic series that reflects and responds to the immediate effects of sea level rise in South Florida. Her images capture the precarious psychological state induced by living in a paradise sinking towards catastrophe, and reveal the role photography plays in generating collective memory and imagined geographies. Informed by Samoylova's focus on photography's ability to obscure reality and craft perception, *FloodZone* also highlights the friction between natural and constructed landscapes by investigating the relationship among environmentalism, consumerism, and the picturesque. The *FloodZone* series brings to the surface the seductive and destructive dissonance between the saturation of the tourism and real estate industries' marketing images of a tropical paradise offering a luxury lifestyle with water views, while vulnerable properties and streets routinely experience high tide flooding, impacting the city's infrastructure and the well-being of its residents. Focusing on this tension between the fantasy promoted by economic interests and the physical realities of day-to-day life in a sinking environment, Samoylova's images construct a contemporary visual archive of the physical measures and psychological consequences of the climate crisis and rising seas on South Florida's shifting coastline.

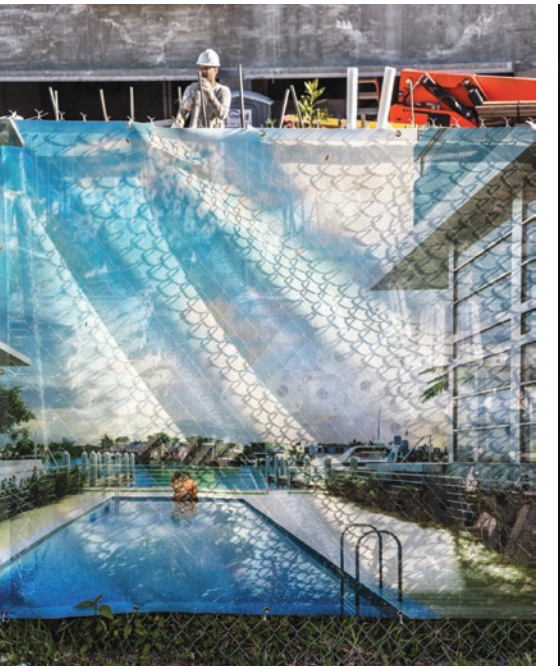
Initiated in 2016 following Samoylova's move to Miami Beach, *FloodZone* developed out of her investigation of the intersections and complexities of South Florida's urban and natural environments. To understand the tension between these ecologies, we must look back on the past century of human efforts to control the landscape for economic interests. From draining the wetland marshes in order to reshape the waterflow of the Everglades, to the dredging of ports and canals to increase economic opportunities and establish newly habitable islands and waterfront developments, Florida's landscape

has been reimagined to serve the consumer industries of real estate and tourism. Built on the low-lying, porous limestone bedrock that makes up much of Florida's geological foundation, Miami is uniquely positioned on the frontlines of the impact of sea level rise. Due to the climate crisis effects of globally warming temperatures, melting glaciers and expanding oceans, the seas are rising and inundating the landscape from within as saltwater seeps into the urban environment up through the aquifer, and into storm and sewer systems.

Trained as an architect and interior designer, Samoylova is inspired by the lush foliage, vibrant colors, art deco buildings and image culture present in Miami's landscape. By integrating these aesthetic sources with an awareness of industry marketing, *FloodZone* examines the conflict between the city as a perceived thriving paradise while its deeply connected economic and ecological resources are under threat from sea level rise. Layering built and pictorial façades with watery and reflective surfaces, Samoylova uses illusion and framing strategies to compress and expand space creating picturesque, imagined geographies. Rather than focusing on the catastrophic devastation brought on by powerful storms and hurricanes, Samoylova's lens captures the slow and subtle changes to the environment, alluding to the creeping anxiety of daily life in an anthropogenic climate in crisis.

As installed at CAM, *FloodZone's* presentation engages viewers in Samoylova's exploration of how images inform and shape our perceptions of our environment. Shifting the terrain to suggest an underwater tableau, the commissioned site-specific installation of *Gator* (2017/2020) confronts visitors as they approach the museum. The large-scale silhouette of a submerged alligator's limbs floating against the exterior window façade is intended to plunge viewers into recognition of the ominous potential for the building to be engulfed by future sea level rise. Inside, Samoylova transforms the galleries by immersing the viewer in cascading waves of color reminiscent of the palette of Miami's tourism industry.

While many of the landscape photographs are devoid of people, the constriction of the natural world by human causes is present throughout the series: green mold creeps, trees survive rooted to concrete surfaces, a nest of eggs rests in a cavity along a sea wall. The aerial shots *Square Lake* (2018) and *Road* (2018) portray the artificial barriers and low-lying infrastructure aimed at keeping the omnipresent water at bay. In contrast, *Flooded Garage* (2017) and *The Tea Room, Vizcaya* (2017) depict contemporary and century-old architectural structures inundated with floodwaters as the tides push back. Illustrating what future sea level rise might look like, *Dome House* (2018) shows the abandoned remains of the now encompassed and inaccessible island residence built off Florida's southwest coast in the 1980s by a wealthy oil businessman. Nature's collision with and adaptation to human impacts are juxtaposed with *FloodZone's* close-up portraits of coastal wildlife in *Flamingo* (2018), *Manatee* (2019), and *Pelican* (2018). *Manatee Rescue Van* (2019) frames an underwater photo of a sea cow on the side of a rescue transport vehicle, signaling the threat to their existence.



Previous page, clockwise from top: Anastasia Samoylova from the *FloodZone* series: *Square Lake*, 2018; *Pelican*, 2018; *Construction on Normandy Shores*, 2017; *Painted Roots*, 2017. Above: Site-specific installation of Anastasia Samoylova, *Gator*, 2017/2020, from the *FloodZone* series. Photo: Will Lytch.

The *FloodZone* installation includes a series of back-to-back mounted photographs on freestanding supports within the color-shifting walls of the gallery. Similar to the advertisements one encounters at a shopping mall or the slick vinyl promotional banners mounted to construction site fencing to obscure the latest wave of real estate developments, the images flatten and confuse the pictorial space to distort our own understanding of the images' perspective. By documenting the conflict between the economic interests to market South Florida while its sustainability is under threat, Samoylova's *FloodZone* reveals photography's power to make the artificial seem real.

Pushing past the artifice of Miami and South Florida's image as a luxury playground, *FloodZone* portrays the realities of living in a flooding landscape with the anxiety of when, where and how much water will come. Disorienting perspectives composed of reflections, aerial views, and framing methods that compress the physical world with images of hyper-rendered fantasy and bewilder our spatial reading of

the photographs, Samoylova's images destabilize our understanding of what is real to generate an awareness of the unsettling nature of living in a changing climate. Faced with the impending threats to the social and economic vitality of Florida's coastal communities, city agencies, urban planners, environmental policy advocates, and non-profit organizations strive to implement climate adaptation and resiliency strategies to protect the cycles of real estate investment and tourism that support its existence. As the tidal boundaries continue to expand and the land becomes more unstable, *FloodZone* suggests a shifting of knowledge and perceptions, a radical reimagining of our future geography and societal relationships to the landscape that will empower us to collectively rise above as nature pushes back.

Sarah Howard
Curator of Public Art and Social Practice
USF Institute for Research in Art

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

All artworks from the *FloodZone* series by Anastasia Samoylova

All artworks courtesy of the artist and Dot Fiftyone Gallery, Miami, FL

CAM Exterior

Gator, 2017/2020
print on vinyl film; site specific installation
dimensions variable

Genevieve Lykes Dimmitt Lobby Gallery

Flamingo, 2018
dye-sublimation print on aluminum
40 x 32 in.
Edition 1/5

Green Hull, 2018
dye-sublimation print on aluminum
40 x 32 in.
Edition 1/5

Manatee, 2019
dye-sublimation print on aluminum
40 x 60 in.
Edition 1/5

Road, 2018
dye-sublimation print on aluminum
40 x 60 in.
Edition 1/5

West Gallery

Camouflage, 2017
archival pigment print
40 x 32 in.
Edition 2/5

Concrete Erosion, 2019
dye-sublimation print on aluminum
40 x 32 in.
Edition 3/5

Construction in South Beach, 2017
print on vinyl
50 x 40 in.

Construction in South Beach II, 2017
print on vinyl
50 x 40 in.

Construction in Sunny Isles, 2019
print on vinyl
50 x 40 in.

Construction on Normandy Shores, 2017
print on vinyl
50 x 40 in.

Dome House, 2018
dye-sublimation print on aluminum
40 x 60 in.
Edition 1/5

Eggs, 2019
dye-sublimation print on aluminum
40 x 32 in.
Edition 1/5

Flooded Garage, 2017
dye-sublimation print on aluminum
40 x 50 in.
Edition 1/5

Fountain, 2017
dye-sublimation print on aluminum
40 x 50 in.
Edition 2/5

Green Mold, 2019
archival pigment print
40 x 32 in.
Edition 5/5

Manatee Rescue Van, 2019
print on vinyl
50 x 40 in.

Masts, St. Petersburg, 2018
archival pigment print
40 x 32 in.
Edition 1/5

Painted Roots, 2017
archival pigment print
40 x 32 in.
Edition 3/5

Park Avenue, Miami Beach, 2018
print on vinyl
50 x 40 in.

Pelican, 2018
archival pigment print
20 x 16 in.
Edition 1/5

Pink Sidewalk, 2017
archival pigment print
40 x 32 in.
Edition 1/5

Reflection in Biscayne Bay, 2018
archival pigment print
40 x 32 in.
Edition 1/5

Roots, 2017
archival pigment print
40 x 32 in.
Edition 2/5

South Beach Reflection, 2017
archival pigment print
40 x 32 in.
Edition 5/5

Square Lake, 2018
dye-sublimation print on aluminum
40 x 60 in.
Edition 1/5

The Tea Room, Vizcaya, 2017
dye-sublimation print on aluminum
40 x 32 in.
Edition 1/5

Water Shade, 2018
dye-sublimation print on aluminum
40 x 32 in.
Edition 1/5