



StepByStep The Global Sea Rises

Proposed sculpture by Ann Jon

I recently had the unique experience of meeting performing artists from Tokelau, Kiribati and Tuvalu, coral atolls in the South Pacific.

They were on tour singing and dancing about the problems they face with globally rising sea levels caused by climate change. I became aware of the very likely possibility that in the near future their land will be lost under water, and with it, a unique culture.

It is unconscionable that such a remote place is being so severely affected by the pollution of industrial countries.

The people on these islands can only appeal for a more humane and less greedy new world order, as they make short range adaptations to the rising sea level and plan for relocation to other countries.

My intention with this project is to draw attention to the vulnerability of one of the smallest atolls, Atafu, in the territory of Tokelau. It sits in a vast ocean with, at the most, two meters of the coral fringe above the water. I visualize a sculptural wall, built as a stacked staircase, with 1 1/2" risers, which step by step will show the high and low tides and how they rise year by year.

For the visual presentation of this idea, I have taken the artistic liberty to show the wall on a very large scale compared to that of the atoll.

The full-scale sculpture will be a 50' long by 4' high. This meandering wooden wall, snaking into the ocean, can be placed upon any low-lying land, even in Louisiana or Florida. The hot orange color refers to global warming and will make the wall visible as it goes under water. The project includes a monthly photo documentation of sea levels in relation to the sculpture.

Ann Jon
Biography

I was born and raised in Denmark. As a child, I longed to see more of the world.

At the age of 18, I came to America and started my art education in New York.

In my twenties, I spent two years carving Carrara marble in Italy, and two years on the Greek island of Naxos, where I set up my sculpture studio and a carving workshop for international students.

I have since settled in the hills of western Massachusetts, where I now have my studio and run a non-profit sculpture organization.

I show my large, outdoor work nationally in New York, Tennessee, Illinois, Texas, Florida, Maryland, and other locations. My smaller pieces have been shown in Manhattan.

In my travels, I have always preferred the backcountry to the cities of the world. I have studied and visited many indigenous cultures where I found inspiration for my work.

I am currently working on a series of *Places I Would Rather Be*, which references mountains and canyons.

I have previously expressed political concerns in sculptural forms, focusing on rivers and droughts. I am encouraged to continue my work with that consciousness.

Atafu is now on my list of sculpture themes and travel.