

# Nature's Call

Summer is sizzling at the Frost Art Museum with its "Florida Artists Series: **Tori Arpad and Kate Kretz**," a striking exhibit in which divergent approaches to confronting ideas about the body embrace conceptual and visceral perspectives with élan. The exhibit pairs the work of Arpad and Kretz, both associate professors of art at FIU, in compelling fashion.

Arpad's multimedia installation "**confluence**" explores the transient relationship between earth, water, and the body in South Florida. "The work is based on the belief that human beings aren't separate from or opposite to nature, but rather we are embedded within its cycles," she reflects. This ethereal piece showers the spectator in an inviting sensory cascade. Entering the space, one encounters a brace of hand-crafted books filled with text and imagery. A postcard-size video mounted on a wall reveals someone serenely kayaking through the Everglades, the sounds of a paddle knifing through the water barely perceptible under the coo of a Vedic mantra.

In another room, 8000 glasses of water are massed across the floor. Above, eight vertically split screens depict close-up video imagery of water, mangroves, earth, and light in a meditative swirl, unmarred by the condoblighted horizon beyond.

In "**Grace & Shame**," with bluntly primal wit Kretz claws at the guts through works that hint at a vulnerable psyche rent by internal civil war. "The function of art is to strip us bare, reminding us of the fragility we share with other humans across continents and centuries," Kretz asserts.

Her "psychological clothing," **She wears it well** or psychological states one might wear, is riveting and intensely provocative. *Defense Mechanism Coat* bristles with 150 pounds of roofing nails while plushly lined in scarlet velvet, stitched over with thick veins and subtle arteries. *Fertilization Dress* is coated with embroidered pearls, sperm-shaped and fighting up the bodice to reach a lurid, flame-red sacred heart. Art-loving chin-strokers and knee-jerkers of the world, unite! — **Carlos Suarez de Jesus**

The exhibit opens Friday, June 17, with a reception from 8:00 to 10:00 p.m. at the Frost Art Museum, Florida International University, SW 107th Ave and SW 8th St, West Miami-Dade. Call 305-348-2890, or visit [www.frostartmuseum.org](http://www.frostartmuseum.org).



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