

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: ***WATERWASH® Welcomes*** commences on Sunday, June 22nd at 12 noon. Press contact: Lillianball@waterwash.org

WATERWASH® Welcomes is among seven projects being presented by Franklin Furnace as part of ***InClimate: Climate Change Solutions, Awareness and Action***, a citywide exhibition that confronts global warming through art, calling upon artists, in collaboration with climate change specialists, to find solutions and antidotes for mitigating or adapting to our world's most catastrophic problem. Our aim is to see the artworks, together with accompanying events, encourage and embolden new and veteran local leaders and community members to build widespread grassroots action on global warming.

Artist Lillian Ball will collaborate with Rocking the Boat to bring participants to the WATERWASH ABC wetland park along the Bronx River in the South Bronx. The venue is the site of a permanent public wetland and grassland park conceptualized for years and completed in the fall of 2011 by the ecological artist Lillian Ball and a team of engineers, scientists, and excavators. With the help of Adam Green, Director, and his crew from Rocking the Boat--a Bronx-based non-profit organization that teaches youths how to build wooden boats and do environmental work on the river--thousands of indigenous plants were used to transform a landfill site covered in invasive species.

For the *InClimate* river experiences, a bus will bring participants from locations around the five boroughs to WATERWASH ABC to see the flora and fauna there, have a picnic discussion about wetland green infrastructure with the artist. Then Rocking the Boat staff will row participants to their home base ½ mile down river so they hear about climate change issues on the water from job skills apprentices, some of whom were involved with the planting at WATERWASH ABC. It was the recipient of a New York State Assembly citation for its green infrastructure approach of using native plants to filter pollutants from the runoff of a 30,000 square foot parking lot. As the plantings mature, WATERWASH ABC offers extensive outreach opportunities to demonstrate how this wetland acts as a natural buffer for sea level rise and storm surge, while improving water quality through a created wildlife habitat.

The recently completed, yet still evolving, WATERWASH ABC is an innovative collaborative green infrastructure solution to storm water runoff pollution in the Bronx River. Ball and the project partners were awarded special citations from the New York State Assembly for cooperation between local business and the community. Job skills trainees from Rocking the Boat planted over 8000 native wetland and grassland plants. Drexel University environmental engineering students and professors have produced two annual reports documenting the project's effectiveness. WATERWASH ABC cleans commercial parking lot runoff before it enters the river, opens private property to public use.

Working with community organizations during the coming year, *InClimate* is going directly to underserved neighborhoods in three of New York City's five boroughs—the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens. Curator Regina Cornwell conceived and is organizing *InClimate* under the auspices of Franklin Furnace. Seven artists/collaborations have been

selected to participate: Lillian Ball, Lynn Cazabon, Billy X. Curmano, Agnes Denes, Alicia Grullon, PlanetaryOne, and Andrea Polli. Their solutions and antidotes may be practical, conceptual or metaphoric and take shape as visual or media art, performance, architecture or design.

Participants must email info@waterwash.org to reserve bus transportation and rowboat ride.

Sunday, June 22, 12:00 noon (high tide)

Saturday, July 12, 12:00 noon

Friday, August 15, 12:00 noon

Friday, September 19, 12:00 noon

Saturday, October 18, 12:00 noon

Franklin Furnace gratefully acknowledges support for *InClimate* from The Compton Foundation; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.; and the National Endowment for the Arts. For their support of *WATERWASH® Welcomes*, we wish to additionally thank the Bronx River Alliance; Rocking the Boat; Wildcat Catering and Hydroponics; and Jean Marie Offenbacher, whose documentary, *BRONX RIVER WATERWASH*, will be screened in the vans that carry participants to Rocking the Boat. The construction of *WATERWASH ABC* was funded by a grant from the New York State Attorney General's Office through the Bronx River Watershed Initiative.

SUBWAY INSTRUCTIONS TO WATERWASH: Take the #6 Lexington Avenue train to Hunts Point. Walk along Bruckner Blvd, crossing the Bronx River on the blue Bruckner Bridge. (The dark blue gate on the left immediately after the bridge is for WATERWASH; if you pass the Gulf station you have gone too far!)

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