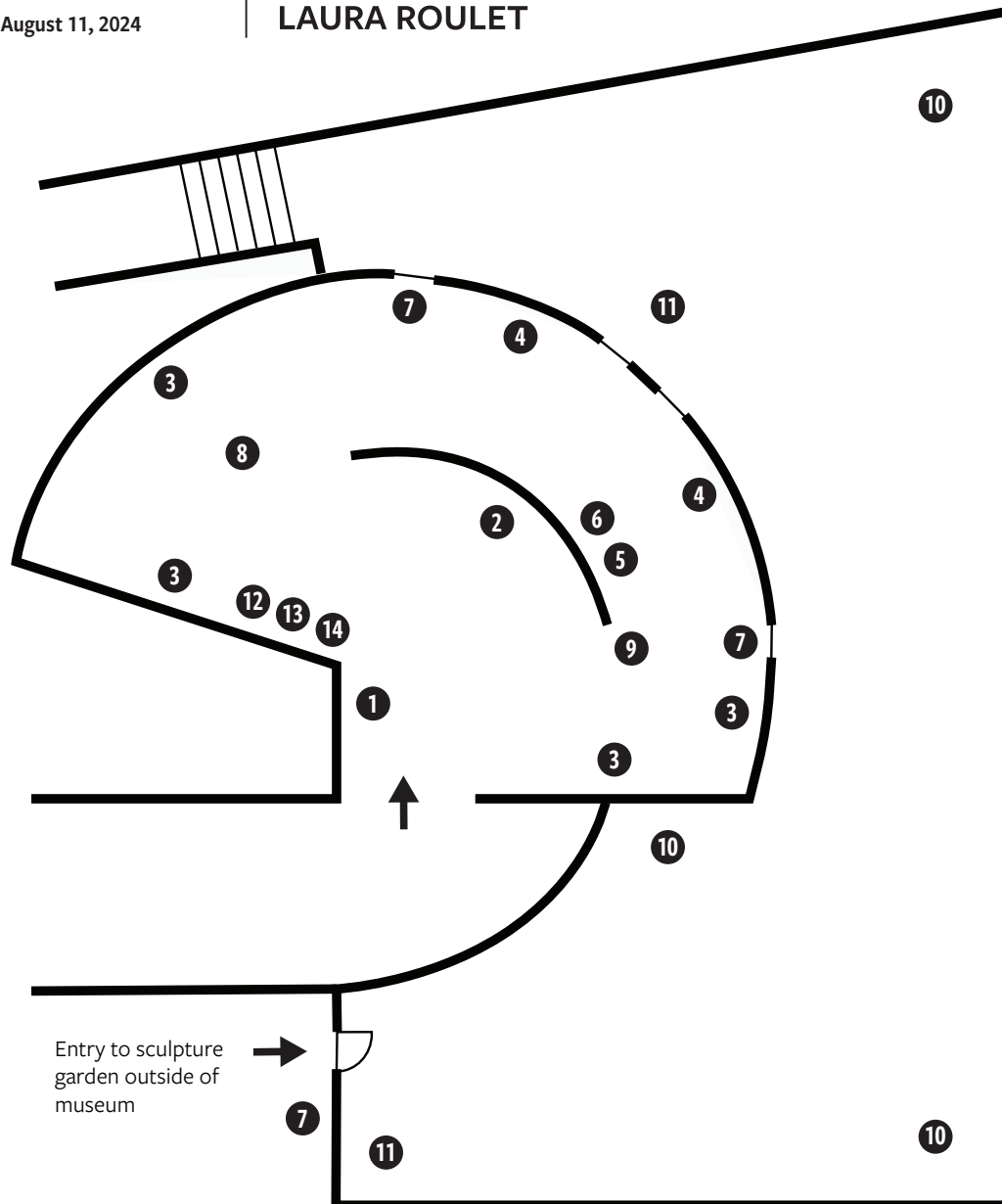


THE HUMAN FLOOD

February 7 – August 11, 2024

ELLYN WEISS
SONDRA N. ARKIN

Curated by
LAURA ROULET



1 *Does Why Matter?*, 2024, three-channel montage/audio installation (color; sound; 9:57 minute loop)

Confronting the reality of climate change, this montage links the cold facts of environmental degradation—images, headlines, and the faces of those displaced—with the positive progress and the beauty we stand to lose.

2 *We All Had A Home Once*, 2023, Ellyn Weiss and Sondra N. Arkin, mixed media on polyester georgette, 19 @ 84”H x 52”W each

These translucent scrims hang like curtains, memories suspended in time. Each suggests a fragment of a life upended, a home abandoned to the whims of a changing climate. They are not walls, but membranes—fragile, echoing with the stories of those displaced.

3 *The Human Flood*, 2023, Ellyn Weiss and Sondra N. Arkin, mixed media monoprints, 110-foot scroll installation in four sections, height variable

Reflecting the movement of millions of people forced to leave their homes, primarily in the southern hemisphere, because of floods, fires and drought caused by climate change. These 100 monoprints were created collaboratively over the course of two years.

4 *Deluge/Sions*, 2024, Ellyn Weiss and Sondra N. Arkin, t-shirts & pillows, size variable

Disembodied torsos represent the rising tide of those uprooted by environmental disasters and forced to seek precarious refuge in unfamiliar lands. They evoke sandbags that create a barrier with the exterior to illustrate the futile attempts both to hold back rising water and to wall out migrants.

5 *In Search of Refuge*, 2023, Ellyn Weiss, mixed media drawings on paper, 5 @ 84”H x 48”W

These layered ghost images were created while making the scrims in *We All Had a Home Once*. Ghosts are a fitting metaphor for the status we accord to migrants: they are fading shadows that we prefer not to see as humans.

6 *Core Values*, 2023, Sondra N. Arkin, screenprints on dibond, 6 @ 24”H x 24”W each

These are not utopian ideals; they are the very least we owe to our fellow humans facing the devastating consequences of a warming planet, particularly since the climate catastrophes were set in motion by the northern world. **Special thanks to Glenn Fry.**

7 *Can You See Us?*, 2024, Ellyn Weiss and Sondra N. Arkin, clear vinyl digital reproduction 5 @ 90”H x 45”W

Between the museum interior and the sculpture garden, life-sized transparencies of climate migrants reflect the physical and human proximity between the “outsiders” and the “insiders” as well as the separation.

8 *Clear Consumption*, 2024, Sondra N. Arkin, recycled food containers, shredded financial documents, found wood, monofilament, and velcro, 48”H x 77”W x 77”D

A precarious dwelling constructed of recyclable containers and discarded wood. Once filled with fruits and vegetables, the containers are now walls insulated with shredded financial documents, the remnants of power. The juxtaposition comments on the source of the environmental crisis and the problems with the systems that contribute to it.

9 *Humans Passed Here*, 2024, Ellyn Weiss and Sondra N. Arkin, sand and found objects, size variable

Islands of sand tucked into corners of the gallery have items that might be lost or carried on the journey: shoes, eyeglasses, phone numbers, IDs, phones, water bottles... the detritus of humans moving under duress.

10 *Permanent Temporary Housing*, 2023, Sondra N. Arkin, wood, screws, used vinyl banners, staples, size variable

These tents represent a type of refugee housing provided by international NGOs. Meant to be temporary, many have existed for decades and may be sometimes the only home some people know. Are tent cities an appropriate permanent response? Is it enough? Can we do more?

11 *Shelter*, 2023, Ellyn Weiss, wire, fabric, recycled plastic, plaster, size variable

These tents evoke the basic hand-fashioned portable shelters built by migrants to protect their families from the worst of the weather during their journey.

12 *Family*, 2023, Ellyn Weiss, framed monoprint, 10”H x 18”W

13 *Endangered Species*, 2023, Ellyn Weiss, framed monoprint, 14”H x 16”W

14 *At Sea*, 2023, Ellyn Weiss, framed monoprint, 20”H x 24”W

For more information and to order a catalog, visit thehumanflood.com

American University Museum
at the Katzen Arts Center
Washington, DC