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US Foundation Aims to Get Artists Out of Their Workshops

MIAMI – A Miami-based foundation is seeking to get artists out of their comfort zones with a series of projects, including one that inspires them to produce water-themed works by putting them on board catamarans and kayaks.



ArtCenter/South Florida, which is now planning a new project that would put artists to work as municipal employees, is convinced the best way to unleash an artist's creative power is to remove them from their workshops.

"We believe that artists have the ability to see things from a different perspective, that they see beyond what others do and can generate more questions and provide more answers" to certain problems and situations, Spaniard Maria del Valle, ArtCenter's executive director, said.

The foundation launched its ARTSail project this year thanks to a \$40,000 grant from the Knight Foundation and its partnership with another Miami-based institution, the Patricia and Phillip Frost Science Museum.

Revolving around the theme of water and Miami's relationship to that essential resource, ARTSail provides artists with both an on-shore residence and different type of boats to help them with their projects.

American Mark Lee Koven, one of three individuals selected from among 285 candidates worldwide and the first to participate in ARTSail, spent a month in Miami working on a project focused on climate change and its impact on Southeast Florida's coastal areas, which are already experiencing sea-level rise and consequent flooding.

The Miami-born Koven, who currently lives in Utah and has sought to integrate science into his work for more than a decade, told EFE he would incorporate his experience in Miami into an installation titled "Taking One's Temperature."

ArtSail, he said, was an outstanding program that underscored the urgent need to confront climate change in Florida and all over the world.

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