

MIXED MEDIA

## Devil and the deep blue sea: Matthew and Julie Chase-Daniel's "Blue Fold"

Michael Abatemarco March 6, 2020



Devil and the deep blue sea: *The Blue Fold*

Matthew and Julie Chase-Daniel almost had to abandon their monthlong National Parks Arts Foundation residency at Loggerhead Key in the Dry Tortugas in September 2017, thanks to the fury of Hurricane Irma. Just days into the residency, the Category 5 tempest swept across the Atlantic, leaving death in its wake. The artists were evacuated and held up for days in a Florida hotel room without electricity. But because the people scheduled for the residency the following month canceled, they ended up with more time than they anticipated. And one month became two.

Loggerhead Key, one of seven small islands located amid 2,900 square nautical miles of protected marine sanctuary, has no permanent residents and is entirely off-grid. That meant uninterrupted time for the Chase-Daniels to create while fully immersed in the natural environment. “The isolation of the island creates a unique rhythm of life, and its dryness, a stark beauty,” the artists wrote in a statement about their experience. “There are no rocks here, no mosquitoes, no hills, no springs or streams, and no large land animals, except the two of us.”

The Blue Fold, an exhibition based on their residency, opens with a 5 p.m. reception on Friday, March 6, at the Center for Contemporary Arts (1050 Old Pecos Trail). The accompanying book, *The Blue Fold: Explorations at Loggerhead Key Dry Tortugas National Park* (Axle Contemporary Press) is available at CCA and on Amazon for \$24.

The exhibition encapsulates the varieties of plant and marine life encountered by the artists and includes Julie Chase-Daniel’s poems and Matthew Chase-Daniel’s photographs of the specimens they found, which include conch shells, hermit crabs, sea urchins, mature and immature coconuts, and a type of soft coral called alcyonacea. The Blue Fold explores the human relationship with nature, as well as climate change and rising sea levels and their effects on endangered coral reefs. The backdrop is a human story of evacuation, disaster, and recovery. General admission is \$5; 505-982-1338, ccasantafe.org; through May 10.

[https://www.santafenewmexican.com/pasatiempo/art/mixed-media/devil-and-the-deep-blue-sea-matthew-and-julie-chase/article\\_683eaa32-5400-11ea-8aef-77874416d716.html](https://www.santafenewmexican.com/pasatiempo/art/mixed-media/devil-and-the-deep-blue-sea-matthew-and-julie-chase/article_683eaa32-5400-11ea-8aef-77874416d716.html)



A detail of one of Matthew's photos, *Sea Urchins* (2017), an archival pigment print