

Dry Tortugas National Parks Artists to Discuss Their Residency and Evacuation from Tiny Off-Grid Island

Real-Life Robinson Crusoes, talk about their experiences during their art residency and last year's Hurricane.

KEY WEST, FLORIDA, USA, March 15, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Imagine being brave enough to spend a whole month on a tiny remote island, accessible only by boat or plane, no hotel, no resort, electricity only from solar power and having no phone, no cell service, no internet. Now imagine you carry in whatever you will need, and spend your days focused on creating art. That was the plan for Matthew and Julie Chase-Daniel last September, after being chosen by the National Parks Arts Foundation (NPAF) as artists-in-residence at Dry Tortugas National Park.

The island, Loggerhead Key, is not for the faint of heart – the description of the residency makes it very clear that you will truly be out there in the middle of the

Atlantic – 70 miles from Key West and 80 from Cuba. For those who are inclined to ask what is an artist residency? It's a fair question. After all, for the most part, artists are indeed residents of someplace or other. A residency is different – it can be sort of like a working vacation that permits one to be prolific, without the stresses and demands of daily life at home. The NPAF puts artists in

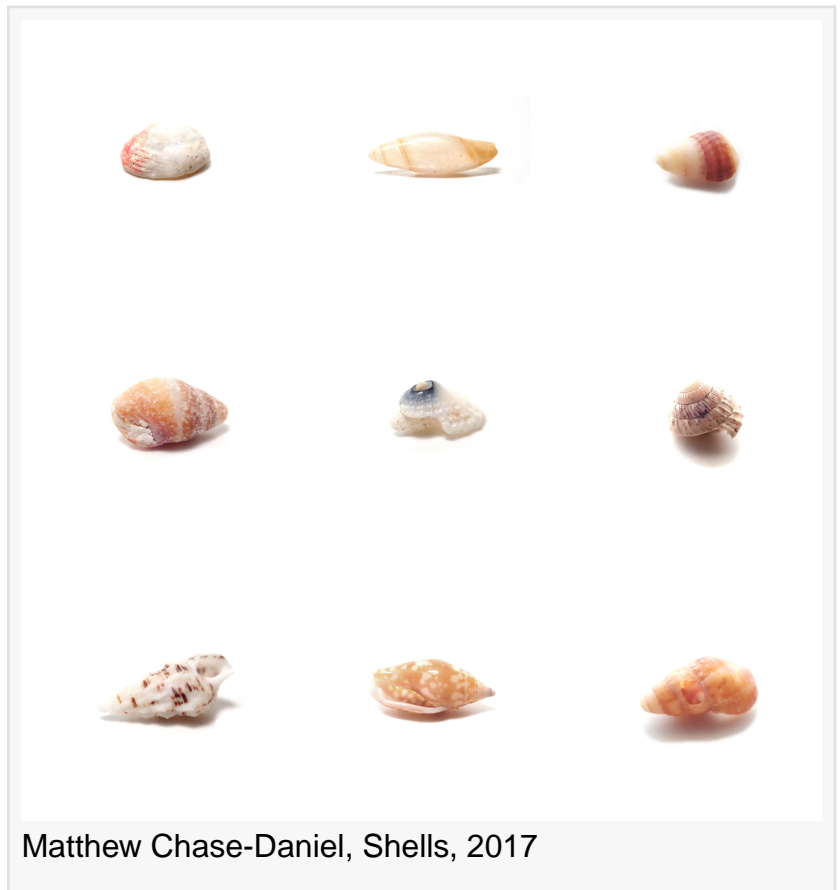
US National Parks, in a program that fosters the important work of looking at our natural world with a unique lens, to share with the public and thereby excite people about the wonderful resource that is our National Park system. Even as these rather adventuresome residencies go, Loggerhead Key is in a class by itself.

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*National Arts Foundation
Program Guide*

The Chase-Daniels have been camping and hiking for decades in an effort to get to the heart of nature and capture its essence in their art, so were prepared for a manageable and even welcome stay. Until the hurricane, that is. Arriving



in early September, the couple were there only a week before being evacuated because of Irma, the terrible category 5 storm. After the NPAF raised additional funds to help with the unexpected expenses that evacuation incurred, the Chase-Daniels went on to spend some time in a hotel with no power, and when the all-clear was given, they were brave enough to return to the island. Alone at that point, they spent their days walking the perimeter (it only took 90 minutes to make a complete circuit), becoming intimately familiar with the flora and fauna of their temporary home. For the highly accomplished couple - Matthew has shown his work around the world and is part of many private and public collections, while Julie's diverse writing has been shared in settings around the globe – the turmoil created by Irma provided food for thought in an otherwise idyllic setting.

Matthew and Julie invite you to join them April 5 for a reception at the NOAA Eco-Discovery Center in Key West. There they will share the art they created as a result of their island stay and evacuation, including "The Blue Fold," a book that came from the experience, which will be available for purchase. The gallery will also be showing Mr. Chase-Daniel's photo-assemblages of subjects from the island – many are rather dreamy and controlled at once, depicting details that show the beauty of various items – coconuts or coral, for instance – spread in a grid on a perfectly crisp white ground. Ms. Chase-Daniel will be reading from her island writings, which touch on many topics. "Everything that's there is countable: six egrets, four peregrines, one osprey," said Ms. Chase-Daniel, to illustrate how small it is, and how well they came to know each part.

Their story is sure to get your imagination moving and the art sure to show details most of us miss. NOAA Discovery Center is kid-friendly and the kids will surely enjoy meeting real-life Robinson Crusoes, so be sure to bring them, too!

(A REVIEW COPY of CHASE-DANIEL'S new book, THE BLUE FOLD, is available upon request.)

More About Dry Tortugas National Park: _Dry Tortugas National Park is remote, and encompasses 100 square miles of which is open water. Within that vast expanse are seven small islands, one of which is home to Fort Jefferson, the most ambitious fortification project in the US, built during the 19th Century to secure American access to the Gulf of Mexico. __Because Dry Tortugas National Park is only accessible via seaplane or boat, it is a perfect sanctuary for the birds and other wildlife that call the islands their home. Sea life is abundant and diverse in Dry Tortugas and the waters shelter numerous coral reefs. Between the biological diversity, spectacular vistas and remote location, Dry Tortugas National Park is an ideal subject for the artists and, thanks to the National Park Art Foundation and the National Park Service, the public will have a chance to experience the majesty of Dry Tortugas through the eyes of accomplished, world-renowned artists. __

More About The National Parks Arts Foundation (NPAF)_: The National Parks Arts Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit dedicated to the promotion of the National Parks of the U.S. by creating opportunities for artworks that are based in our National Parks, National Monuments and World Heritage Sites. NPAF National Park projects are supported by partnerships and generous donations.

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