



7 Artists' Immersive Worlds
Boundless Images, Written by Elise Gallant

**The following seven
artists are imagining
a bright future by
repurposing the past.**

Their art is not asking what's better but what's more balanced, what is sustainable and inclusive, and how can the limit be pushed farther. Their work deals in new perspectives, sweet ironies, friendship and fearlessly leaping into the unknown — all in a vast array of media totally unique to each artist.

Ecological consciousness is central for many of these creators. Clare Rojas finds heart and joy through harmonious abstract compositions. Jim Denevan has pioneered sand as a medium for massive-scale drawings that are inherently temporal, often being washed away by the tide moments after completion. David Benjamin Sherry is innovating film photography with vibrant chromatic landscapes that bring a homosexual lens to a typically heteronormative subject. Analia Saban is forging new paths

by radically repurposing traditional materials. Geoff McFetridge's graphic paintings reveal secret meanings in the mundane. Tomás Saraceno imagines an egalitarian future with respect to the changeability of all matter and our need to build connections across social divides. And **Sarah Anne Johnson** transformed her ecological investigations in Northern Canada, Galapagos and Antarctica into voyeuristic snapshots of couples having sex — an unusual shift that draws connections from the balance of nature to our most intimate experiences.

By comparing these artists, a meditative dialogue emerges, uncovering the power of everyday practices and their larger implications. If art has a function, it is to shine light on the darkness, to draw our attention to the things we ignore, and bring new perspectives to a changing world.



Sarah Anne Johnson
Mixed Media

Sarah Anne Johnson is always charting new adventures. Her work spans an array of subjects, from planting trees in the Galapagos to imagining civilizations in the Antarctica. Most recently, she is uncovering the psychology of arousal with dramatic effect.

(Malibu Magazine) Before your new series with sexual images, you were working in the Antarctica. What prompted the shift?

(Sarah Anne Johnson) After being in this cold, vast, lonely landscape, it's natural to want to warm up the embrace of ... I don't know. ... [Laughs.] There's something about opposites that really attract me. And I'm always preaching about personal risk. It's the most important thing an artist can do because other people can't. I don't want my doctor taking personal risks, or my accountant, or my lawyer, or even my plumber. But artists, we can, and so we should. We should make work that is about taboo

subjects or stuff that's difficult to talk about.

(MM) So you jumped from one extreme to the other?

(SAJ) I decided that I wasn't going to put any nos into the universe. I'm only gonna put yesses.

(MM) Why do you paint on your photographs?

(SAJ) Photography is really good at showing you what something looks like, but it's not good at showing you what something feels like or what you've learned from the experience. These interventions match the mood of the image and the energy — from the colors to the framing with whatever I add on it. So, it's a complicated puzzle.

(MM) What's coming up for you?

(SAJ) I have a giant mural going up in Toronto. It's like a 144 feet long. And it's up for two years, so that's a whole different kind of responsibility that I'm really excited about. And my work is going to be in *Playboy* magazine! That's right — big time! **x**

- ◀ **"Black Box"** 2010
chromogenic print, photospotting ink,
acrylic ink, gouache and india ink
28" x 42", edition of 3
©Sarah Anne Johnson,
Courtesy Julie Saul Gallery, New York

- ▶ **"Red Undies"** 2013
Chromogenic print with collage
42" x 28"
©Sarah Anne Johnson,
Courtesy Julie Saul Gallery, New York



- ◀ **"Mountain City"** 2011
Chromogenic print, embossed and screen
printed with photospotting inks
27.75" x 42", edition of 3
©Sarah Anne Johnson,
Courtesy Julie Saul Gallery, New York