

Polartide

Greg Niemeyer, Chris Chafe, Perrin Meyer and Rama Gottfried

Berkeley Book Chats



Wednesday, Dec 4, 2013 | 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm
Sather Tower and Geballe Room, 220 Stephens Hall

Professor of New Media and Art Practice Greg Niemeyer is faculty co-director of the CITRIS Data and Democracy Initiative. His research focuses on the critical analysis of the impact of new media on human experiences. In 2013, Niemeyer created “[Polartide](http://www.polartide.org)” in collaboration with Chris Chafe (composer and director of Stanford University’s Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics), Perrin Meyer (sound designer, Meyer Sound), and Rama Gottfried (sound artist and graduate student in

Music and New Media).

“Polartide” is a participatory work exhibited at the Maldives Pavilion at the 2013 Venice Biennale using sonification of rising sea water levels from four islands (Kerguelen, Maldives, Venizia, Reykjavik) to inspire awareness of the effects of climate change and remind us that notes of distress can also be melodic. This work places two different fluctuating data sets—sea levels and stock valuations for oil companies—in conversation with one another. Utilizing the digitized tones of buoy bells linked to sea levels (and the corporate jingles of oil companies), “Polartide” signals the growing threat of global climate change and encourages us to understand data in a new way—by listening.

For this Townsend Book Chat, carillonneur Tiffany Ng (graduate student in Music) will present the first ever participatory carillon concert from Sather Tower. The collaborators will connect polartide.org to a real time score for the carillonist and people interacting with the polartide.org website to determine the sounds played from Sather Tower. The carillon will reclaim some of its original purpose as a community semaphore, and the simulated bells of polartide.org will be replaced with real bells.

To participate in the concert you are invited to gather by the steps of Stephens Hall promptly at 12 pm with polartide.org open in your smartphone, tablet or laptop browser.

After the 10 minute outdoor concert, Professor Niemeyer and the collaborators of “Polartide” will convene in the Geballe Room, 220 Stephens Hall to speak more about the work and open the floor for discussion.

