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Washed Up: Alejandro Duran's Site-Specific Found Plastic and Trash Installations

by Christopher Jobson on April 18, 2015



Working along a single stretch of coastline in Sian Ka'an, Mexico's largest federally-protected reserve, artist **Alejandro Duran** collects countless bits of trash that washes up from locations around the world. So far he's discovered plastic debris from dozens of countries on this shore of the Caribbean coast which he utilizes for site-specific installations for an ongoing project titled **Washed Up**. By creating aesthetically pleasing landscapes from a disheartening medium, it's Duran's hope to create a harsh juxtaposition that draws attention to the global catastrophe of ocean pollution. He shares in a statement about *Washed Up*:

Over the course of this project, I have identified plastic waste from fifty nations on six continents that have washed ashore along the coast of Sian Ka'an. I have used this international debris to create color-based, site-specific sculptures. Conflating the hand of man and nature, at times I distribute the objects the way the waves would; at other times, the plastic takes on the shape of algae, roots, rivers, or fruit, reflecting the infiltration of plastics into the natural environment.

More than creating a surreal or fantastical landscape, these installations mirror the reality of our current environmental predicament. The resulting photo series depicts a new form of colonization by consumerism, where even undeveloped land is not safe from the far-reaching impact of our disposable culture.

Duran just received the Juror's Award from **CENTER** for his efforts, and has upcoming exhibitions at **Habana Outpost** in Brooklyn and at the **XO KP'IN Retreat Center**. (via **This Isn't Happiness**, **LENSCRATCH**)

