The ocean and its cultural, economic, and anthropological significance inspire our work. The complexity of our relationship with the ocean and its rich metaphorical, aesthetic and poetic possibilities emphasize the idea that water and the oceans serve as a link between all living things. Regard for bodies of water, constantly shifting and essential for all life, can spark thought, reflection, and dialogue about the radical changes to our oceans and the environment.

Initially conceived to create an artefact that would embody an exact moment in time, we focused on the capture and rendering of 3D-models of ocean waves through photogrammetric and high-speed imaging processes. The waves and accompanying boat forms serve as focal points in sculptural installations designed to communicate information about climate change, sea level rise, ocean health, and to publicize ocean-related research. The glass visually embraces the complexity of what is happening in a single wave in a single moment and makes a connection for the viewer to experience the intricacy of what is happening, on the surface and internally, in that wave as well as the larger ocean environment.

Art, in its many and varied forms, has the liberty and ability to generate shifts in social perceptions and behaviors in ways that science and data alone currently do not, providing a complementary pathway for engagement. Casting the waves and boats in glass illuminates and fosters awareness of our elemental connections with the ocean. By integrating sound, text, and image into the waves and vessels, we bear witness to the cultural and physical shifts caused by accelerated climate change. We are suggesting that a big change can start with a small moment of realization. Our goal is for that realization to spark a positive change in viewers’ behaviors, one that results in conscious and respectful action toward the environment.

This work is the basis for continually evolving installations as a medium for collaboration and innovation. The waves and vessels are a virtual and literal point of connection, gathering the voices of people in communities affected most directly by climate change and sea level rise, and the voices of scientists working in ocean research and climate change. The virtual connection, now being implemented, is activated by QR codes sandblasted on the bottom of every wave, each which will link viewers to various blog sites and links to the full version of marine, geographic, and social scientists’ audio files about place, ocean research that illuminates the oceans’ symbiotic connections with humans.