



Mary Mattingly, *Along the Lines of Displacement: A Tropical Food Forest*, 2018; photo courtesy of the artist

2020-2021 Visiting Artist Series Resource Guide : Mary Mattingly

Based in New York, visual artist Mary Mattingly addresses our changing ecologies and climate while posing questions about the sustainability of critical systems that intersect daily life. She is currently developing public-public partnerships around water infrastructure and commons management, has created mobile architecture, and has built floating eco habitats.

In 2016, Mattingly launched a floating food forest on a barge called “Swale”, a social sculpture where people are invited to pick food from an edible landscape in order to circumvent public land laws in New York City that disallow public foraging. She recently transplanted a group of edible palm trees from agricultural zone 10 to zone 5 in upstate New York; the introduced flora accounts for predictions in climatological shifts and how that may affect agricultural zones (see image above).

Mattingly’s artwork has been featured in *The New York Times*, *Le Monde*, *New Yorker*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and on CBS, BBC, NBC, and PBS’s Art21. She is currently the artist-in-residence at the Brooklyn Public Library.

Interdisciplinary connections & topics: water infrastructure, climate change, agriculture, food insecurity, mobile architecture, public urban design, fashion, material origins, sustainability

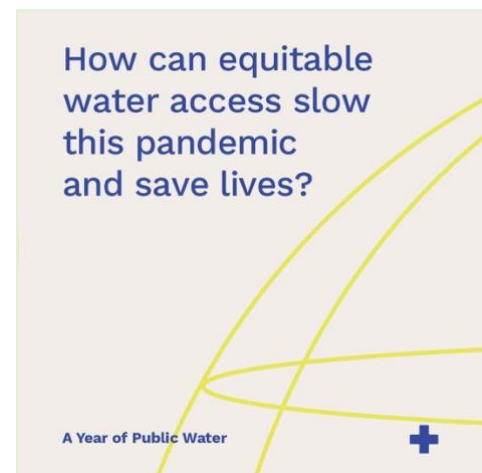
“Art and utopian thought can cultivate systemic social change.
Art can transform people’s perceptions about value, and
collective art forms can reframe predominant ideologies.”
-Mary Mattingly (from *Manifesto*)

Current Project

In collaboration with the Brooklyn Public Library, More Art, NYC Public Parks, Prospect Park Alliance, “[A Year of Public Water](#)” examines the complex history of NYC's drinking watershed, bringing attention to the often unseen labor that people, along with the broader ecological community, undertake to care for water. As the U.S. experiences a heightened health, economic, environmental, and water poverty crisis, millions of people face obstacles to access safe, clean running water daily. Agricultural runoff, byproducts of disinfection agents, as well as aging infrastructure like lead pipes have contaminated drinking water, especially in BIPOC and low-income communities. Addressing environmental, health, and economic conditions in and around New York City's watershed and public water system is a vital precondition for the creation of a more just present and future for upstream and downstream New Yorkers. A Year of Public Water is an invitation to examine our relationship to water in order to co-build more equitable partnerships between downstream water-receiving communities and upstream water-source communities. [public-water.com](#)”



Swale, 2017; photo courtesy of Cloudfactory



A Year of Public Water image @marymattingly

Video Resources

[Floating a Public Food Forest](#)

[Wetland Project](#)

[Mary Mattingly's Waterfront Development, Triple Island](#)

[Mary Mattingly Owns Up \(consumption, responsibility, and living small\)](#)

Web Resources & Selected Projects

[Manifesto](#)

[What Happens After \(repurposing decommissioned military vehicles\)](#)

[Because We Still Have Poetry \(a poetic response to climate change\)](#)

Websites

[marymattingly.com](#)

[swalenyc.org](#)

[public-water.com](#)

Instagram: [@marymattingly](#)