

Biography

Fulbright Scholar, Basia Irland is an author, poet, sculptor, installation artist, and activist who creates international water projects. Many of these projects are featured in her books, *Water Library* (University of New Mexico Press, 2007) and *Reading the River: The Ecological Activist Art of Basia Irland* (edited with Museum De Domijnen, 2017). These books focus on projects the artist has created over four decades in Africa, Canada, Europe, South America, Southeast Asia, and the United States.

Through her work, Irland offers a creative understanding of water while examining how communities of people, plants, and animals rely on this vital element. She is Professor Emerita, Department of Art and Art History, University of New Mexico, where she established the Arts and Ecology Program. She often works with scholars from diverse disciplines building rainwater harvesting systems; connecting communities and fostering dialogue along the entire length of rivers; filming and producing water documentaries; sculpting hand-carved ice books embedded with native riparian seeds; and creating waterborne disease projects around the world.

Irland writes a blog for National Geographic about international rivers, written in the first person, from the perspective of the river. Her 2015 TEDx talk in Vail, Colorado was entitled *We ARE the River: Urine Watershed – Planting Seeds*. Irland lectures and exhibits extensively and was the only artist invited to participate in the Foundation for the Future's International World Water Crisis Forum in Seattle, Washington, 2010. In November 2015 – February 2016, she had a major retrospective exhibition, *Reading the River*, at the Museum De Domijnen, Sittard, the Netherlands, curated by Roel Arkesteijn.