

## TRACING THE DEPTHS

*An Interview with Artist Gregory Glynn, discussing his new public art installation at the Bainbridge Ferry Terminal with members of the BIAHC Public Art Committee (PAC).*

**PAC:** *Gregory, what were your intentions in creating “Tracing the Depths?”*

GG: Tracing the Depths is an exploration of the marine environment that exists between Bainbridge Island and Seattle along the path of the ferry. My intentions were to create an artwork that provides a glimpse of that largely unseen world, wondrous and beautiful, yet far removed from our minds because we perceive very little of it.

**PAC:** *Please speak about your process and approach.*

GG: A foremost consideration for this work was the site and the function as a mass transit thoroughfare. I considered the terminal walkway as a portal and a transition point in one’s destination. The walkway is 300 feet long and it made sense to create something that was experienced as you moved through it, grasped more fully over time, through multiply passes. Using photography, audio and text the work explores phenomenal, natural wonders as well as local geography and history.

The sounds passengers hear from speakers suspended over the interior walkway are digital field recordings collected locally onshore or with a hydrophone. Orca whale recordings are part of the center track and were provided by The Center for Whale Research on Friday Harbor. I edited and produced all the audio with help from Doug Haire at Jack Straw Productions in Seattle.

The photos were created in collaboration with Jon Gross, a professional underwater photographer. Jon sourced and formatted images of marine life that exist at various depths along the ferries path. The photos also transition in tone from light to dark and back to light, representing the 700’ change in depth from shore to shore.

The text developed from project notes, research, and conversations with local experts. In sorting through the materials I accumulated I began to look for words that were fun and intriguing. After finalizing word selection I ordered laser cut stencils so my assistant and I could then spray paint the text on the rails.

**PAC:** *How do the words and numbers on the railings and the photographs mounted between the windows work together?*

GG: About half of the words identify the subjects of the marine life photographs nearby. In addition, there are historical references such as **Mosquito Fleet Landing**, dive sites like **Devil’s Boulder**, and landmarks used in navigation such

as **Lone Tree** and **Space Needle**. Ever notice when the ferry steers toward the Space Needle?

Numbers on either side of the railings represent fathoms and feet respectively and correlate to depths of the water along the course of the ferry. 1 fathom = 6 feet. I also used nautical charts to space the markings to scale on the railings. So as you walk along the ramp the depths progress to scale as if you were traveling on the ferry. The photographs of marine life correspond in a similar way, where they are placed in relation to the depth that they are likely to exist. For example, the sixgill shark lives in very deep water and is located near the center of the walkway, representing the deepest part of the ferry crossing, about 700 feet.

***PAC: Many of the words and phrases are unfamiliar. In layman's language, what can you tell us about them?***

### **Devil's Boulder**

This is the name of a popular dive site at the north entrance to Blakely Harbor. Much of John Williams' "Return of the Plankton" and other films are shot here.

### **Intolerants**

This term came up in conversation and refers in this case to species that can't survive the changing conditions of their environment. For example, if they aren't able to tolerate climate change.

### **Creosote Marble**

Creosote Marble is something I discovered on an EPA website that details a dive survey of Eagle Harbor. A photo of the "marble" basically showed creosote that had seeped up through the floor of the harbor.

### **Biological Soup**

This term was used in a discussion about the diversity of organisms living in Puget Sound and their interdependence.

### **Wolf Eel**

The Wolf Eel is truly one of the scariest looking creatures in Puget Sound. They get big too, about 6 feet, and have incredibly sharp teeth! I've been told about some close encounters around Blakely Rock.

***Tracing the Depths** is funded by the City of Bainbridge Island Public Art Program, which is managed by the Bainbridge Island Arts and Humanities Council Public Art Committee (PAC). It will remain installed in the Ferry Terminal Walkway for two years, courtesy of Washington State Ferries. To comment or learn more, please go to the artwork's blog at: <http://tracingthedepths.com>*