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In today's paper

CORAL GABLES: UM's Julio Frenk steps down and will become UCLA's first Latino chancellor when he takes over on Jan. 1, 9A

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Miami Herald

Russian warships and nuclear submarine enter Havana Harbor under watch of U.S. destroyers



YAMIL LAGE AFP via Getty Images

The Russian navy frigate Admiral Gorshkov, part of a Russian detachment, arrives in Havana on Wednesday.

BY NORA GAMEZ TORRES AND MICHAEL WILNER
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A group of Russian warships that sailed close to Florida shores, closely watched by U.S. destroyers, entered Havana's port on Wednesday morning ahead of Russian military exercises in the Caribbean. Cuban Revolutionary

Armed Forces officials — including the deputy commander of the Revolutionary Navy of Cuba, Capt. Jose Luis Souto Galindo — the Russian ambassador to Cuba Victor Koronelli and a crowd of Russian tourists and curious Cubans gathered at the Malecon, the famous Havana seaside promenade, to watch the Russian missile frigate Admiral Gorshkov enter the port amid a 21-gun

salute.

Early on Wednesday, the top of the nuclear-powered submarine Kazan was visible outside Havana Harbor before it submerged again, Cuban independent media outlet 14ymedio reported.

The official Russian government news agency TASS reported Wednesday that the Kazan, a modern nuclear submarine, is capable of "quietly approaching U.S. shores

within 50 km and carrying out assigned combat missions," according to Mikhail Budnichenko, the head of Sevmarsh, the company that built it.

Open-source satellite data placed the Russian warships just 26 nautical miles from Key Largo on Tuesday morning.

According to TASS and Interfax, a private Russian news agency, the sub-

SEE SHIPS, 4A

What's the secret surprising power of lobster pee?

BY CLAIRE GRUNEWALD
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South Florida loves to catch and eat its spiny lobsters. But there's another lesser-known lobster species whose value extends beyond the dinner plate.

The spotted lobster lives in coral reefs and protects them — in a peculiar way. Spotted-lobster pee appears to act like a repellent to coral predators, creating what a new study by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission describes as "a landscape of fear."

That surprising finding (who even knew that lobster pee?) is just one of several fascinating facts from FWC studies about the role that lobster play in the

SEE LOBSTER, 2A



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Florida has two species of lobsters. The spotted lobster, left, isn't a regular commercial or recreational target like the Caribbean spiny lobster, right.



AL DIAZ adiaz@miamiherald.com

Victor Corone, 66, pushes his wife, Maria Diaz, 64, along 84th Street in Miami Beach on Wednesday. Diaz had a doctor's appointment, and they had to ditch their car in a parking lot on Collins Avenue and walk more than 20 minutes to get home.

Floating cars, closed highways, flooded homes. 'Insane' rainfall deluges South Florida

BY ALEX HARRIS, ASHLEY MIZNAZI AND CLAIRE GRUNEWALD
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An early June deluge has once again turned South Florida's roads and parks into rivers and lakes, snarling traffic, stalling cars and sending residents sloshing through streets, shoes in hand. And it's not done yet.

By Wednesday afternoon, the flooding had grown so severe that authorities closed parts of southbound Interstate 95 in Broward near Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, an area that was walloped by intense rain later in the day. Hundreds of flights were delayed there and at Miami International Airport.

Roads and intersections were rendered impassable in Aventura, Sunny Isles Beach, Hollywood, Miami Beach, Fort Lauderdale and elsewhere in South

Florida. Flash-flood warnings blinked on and off all afternoon, and social-media videos showed floodwater so deep in Hallandale Beach that cars were floating.

One of the many stranded drivers was Mike Viesel, who was caught on his way home in Hollywood in several feet of floodwater. As he slowed, and stopped, other cars surged past him, sending even more water into his car — up to his

SEE RAIN, 3A

Emails about hemp farmer's \$237 million gift to FAMU reveal ominous bank letter

BY DAVID WEISSMAN
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Before Florida A&M announced a questionable \$237 million donation, the university received a striking email from the donor's bank, raising a red flag that the historic gift might not be legitimate.

Internal emails recently

released by the university to The Sun News show that weeks before donor Gregory Gerami presented an oversized check at a FAMU graduation ceremony, a Raymond James Financial Services executive told FAMU officials that previous assurances of Gerami's account balance were inaccurate. "On February 1 and

March 1, 2024, Raymond James issued a letter to client, Gregory Gerami, reflecting the balance in his account," Kirk Bell, a senior vice president at Raymond James, wrote on April 12. "Effective April 10th, 2024, Raymond James will no longer provide a value for the securi-

SEE FAMU, 2A



ERNEST NELFRARD Courtesy of Florida A&M University

Gregory Gerami announced a \$237 million donation to Florida A&M University at a graduation ceremony last month. But many are skeptical after a similar pledge to another school in 2020 collapsed. FAMU's president has put a 'pause' on the gift.



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At the Frost Art Museum, three artists make *Of What Surrounds Me* larger than life

BY MICHELLE F. SOLOMON

Arbust Miami

When Mette Tommerup, one of three artists in the Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum-FIU's summer exhibition, was creating her site-specific installation "Like the Body of a Flower," she says she wanted the viewer to feel as if they were "walking through a field of wild flowers with lots and lots of colors." The Danish-American artist, who works out of Coconut Grove and Little Havana, created four pieces that make up the installation, each named using a line from one of Pulitzer Prize winner Mary Oliver's poems.

It is, in fact, a poem by Oliver in which the exhibit, which also features the work of Cristina Lei Rodriguez and Amanda Bradley, takes its name, "Of What Surrounds Me." A contemplation and a recurring theme in Oliver's work — of how the human and natural worlds intersect, of finding peace and serenity in nature, and of how to navigate nature among civilization's excess — is what the exhibit is all about.

As Oliver has said, for her, the door to the woods was a door to the temple.

Certainly, entering through the doors of the Stella & J. Burton Orr Pavilion is like walking into a temple where you are greeted by Tommerup's Mark Rothko-esque floor-to-ceiling canvas wall tapestry "Which She Adores." To the right, swooping from the ceiling is a red and purple 40-foot by 12-foot canvas, poppy-like with its drenched colors and translucence, almost as if looking through the petal of a flower.

Tommerup has created a giant grid of 64 modular paintings, 24 feet by 24 feet, which takes up the entire end wall of the first gallery. The title, "How to Stroll Through the Fields," is a direct line from Oliver's most celebrated poem, "The Summer Day."

"It is meant to be reminiscent of sunlight as it hits a vast field," she says.

The titles of each of the four works are taken from the poetry of Oliver and come together to form one stanza: "How to stroll through the fields / Like the



Miami artist Mette Tommerup sits with her work at the Frost Art Museum-FIU exhibition 'Of What Surrounds Me.' At right, 'Don't You Think That Deserves a Little Thought?,' 2024, acrylic on raw canvas, 15' H x 12' W. At left, 'How to Stroll Through the Fields,' 2024, grid of 64 each 36" x 36" paintings total dimension 24' x 24'



(Photo courtesy of Karli Evans)

body of a flower / Which she adores / Don't you think that deserves a little thought?"

"The whole idea is to linger in this poetic space," says Tommerup.

She also incorporates a video element, which has become increasingly integral to her practice. "Video is a freeing component and captures the canvas activation in nature. I try to remove myself from the work during these actions and captures the use of a drone due to the large scale.

For Bradley, Oliver's theme led her to incorporate her own writing into her photography.

"It does feel very serendipitous," she says, "this exhibition coming together at a point where I felt ready to combine all of the elements, and this is the first time I'm sharing writing with images."

She describes her practice as "photographic work that explores place and landscape as a means to connect and understand identity, belonging, histories and relationships."

"The exploration of nature and landscape comes from my relationship to Miami and Belize," says the Belizean American. "I

grew up between the two [places] and so I think when I was younger and I got into photography, it became another layer of language for me," she says, adding that photography was a way to understand her place in the world. "It was typically through documenting the site of home in Miami and the site of home in Belize, so I always had this kind of dual relationship with nature and landscape. I've gotten to see two different worlds and allow them to inform who I've become."

For this show, she's incorporated debossed text to layer the legibility of the final image and the super-imposed text.

She has always kept a photo notebook. "A lot of what I write is my reflection on where I am as I am making images, or after or before." Bradley has taken these notes and created a palindrome poem (or mirror poem) as part of her exhibition.

There are 27 works that make up the suite in the third gallery. On the interior of a freestanding wall are solarized silver gelatin prints. "These are a different body of work that I think addresses a different layer of my relationship to place."

She shoots analog photography while today's

norm is digital, and experiments with darkroom processes that become part of the art.

"It creates a level of intimacy that's required of visitors where they have to spend time with an image to either find the text in the images or get close to these darkroom prints to be able to decipher or understand what they're seeing."

There is also the concept of memory and time. "In all of my exhibitions, I'm always showing a huge span of time, and that's because new images are made. But there's still maybe something that happened three or four years ago that feels so present in what I'm trying to say."

The passage of time also plays into the works in the middle gallery, where Lei Rodriguez's maximalist installation delves into the process of decay and the nature of resiliency. The dominant art in her exhibition is an installation piece from the collection of the Perez Art Museum titled "Endless Autumn," an interactive sculpture of a Japanese Zen garden, which she created in 2006.

"I was thinking a lot about how the garden was a great way of conceptualizing the relationship between man and nature, and how, especially a Japanese garden, is so controlled by

humans. I was wrestling with those ideas in my work of what is natural ... what is artificial and the tension between something growing wild and something being controlled."

The monumental installation is laden with treasured objects, antiquities and encrusted jewels. She also used plastic as a medium to make the garden. "It really epitomizes the work that I was making at that time. It is this idea of, 'It's fake. It will last forever. The plastic is immortal.' And of course, there's also a critical part of that — that the plastic literally never goes away."

There are six other pieces by Lei Rodriguez, including paintings and a sculpture titled "Decadence Revisited" that is part of the Frost Collection.

"In talking with Amy [Galpin, the show's curator] and Yady [Rivero, assistant curator], they helped me to think through and make connections to tie in works from the past. And I've been working over the last year and thinking a lot about how do I create work that feels accessible to the viewer, how do I create work that can hold an open space where someone can come and meditate, or space out, or discover something?" she says.

If you go:

WHAT: "Of What Surrounds Me": Amanda Bradley, Cristina Lei Rodriguez and Mette Tommerup

WHEN: Now through Sept. 15. Opening reception 2 to 5 p.m. Saturday. Hours 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday.

WHERE: The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum, Florida International University MMC, 10975 SW 17th St.

COST: Free

INFORMATION: 305-348-2890 or frost.fiu.edu

Lei Rodriguez mentions her affinity to poet Oliver's work, which she says relates the writer's own experience, but at the same time is "open enough that I can read it and have my own relationship to it." That's what the artist wants her work to be to a viewer.

She uses a nature metaphor — walking on a trail in a forest that is part of a larger landscape. "It doesn't judge you. It's just kind of a space to be yourself."

While all three of the artists' works are very different in approach, there's a collective connectedness to "Of What Surrounds Me" at the Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum-FIU.

"There are a lot of visual connections back and forth," says Tommerup, "and the beauty of the show is these unexpected visual gems. It demands you to slow down time and linger a while because there are so many discoveries in each work and the interconnectedness of the exhibition as a whole. There's magic in the way that we've created a visual dialogue with one another."

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FROM PAGE 4C

GHOSTLIGHT

authentic actor. Mallen Kupferer is also a discoverer, a firecracker who conveys nuanced teenage attitude, her Daisy bossing her repressed dad around, demanding he meet her on her level of explosive emotion.

De Leon, herself a mainstay of the local theater scene in her native Philippines, fits into this Midwestern troupe

easily, and delivers a beguiling and feisty performance as a serious New York actor who finds herself back in Chicago playing with the locals onstage. She sees in Dan a kindred spirit, and someone who needs a hand, pulling him out of his rut and delivering the shake that he so needs to gain some perspective and insight.

With an understated but tactile beauty, O'Sullivan and Thompson create cinematic worlds in which you simply want to linger, populated with recognizable people with familiar problems, but who greet every challenge with just a little bit more empathy, grace, laughter and creativity than we might see in everyday life.

This is a beautifully life-affirming fable about the power of art to heal, but really, it's the people making the art that heals.



Dolly De Leon, left, and Keith Kupferer star in 'Ghostlight.'

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