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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AlexRenew's Artist-in-Residence Explores Regional Waterways in Torpedo Factory Art Center Exhibit

sTo Len's "RENEWAL" will be displayed through December 27, 2020

Alexandria, Va., (November 9, 2020) — This fall, Torpedo Factory Art Center is featuring the work of AlexRenew Artist-in-Residence [sTo Len](#) in an exhibit called [RENEWAL](#), open now through December 27 in Studio 13. Commissioned through the City of Alexandria's Public Art Program, Len's work aims to elevate the public's personal connection to the wellbeing and sustainability of local water systems. Visitors are invited to view and participate in his ongoing project, inspired by observations of the wastewater treatment process during his residency at [Alexandria Renew Enterprises \(AlexRenew\)](#).

Originally from Alexandria, New York-based artist Len is AlexRenew's first artist-in-residence. Since the start of his residency in September 2019, Len has spent time with various AlexRenew scientists, engineers, and conservationists at local waterfront locations in Alexandria, including Hooffs Run and Oronoco Bay. His artwork brings to light the water recovery process at AlexRenew and the public's relationship to their local waterways. This program is the first phase of a collaboration with [Alexandria's Office of the Arts](#) to bring a public art perspective into AlexRenew's vital mission of cleaning water and its commitment to healthier waterways.

"RENEWAL documents the ways in which I have witnessed and been inspired by the water recovery process," said Len. "From the behind-the-scenes access at AlexRenew to exploring the shorelines of the Potomac, this body of work showcases the imprints that I have collected along the way."

Using *suminagashi* marbling, block printing, *gyotaku* fish printing, and cyanotype printmaking techniques, Len captures imprints and impressions from pollution, bacteria, and other waste found in wastewater and local waterways. The resulting natural patterns and abstracted forms spotlight the unseen and ignored environmental impact humans have on the Potomac River watershed.

RENEWAL provides a behind-the-scenes perspective into the AlexRenew water recovery process. In Studio 13 at Torpedo Factory Art Center, Len displays his active and growing crowdsourced archive. The exhibition will evolve with a water-themed radio show and a public engagement opportunity called *SEEWATER*.

A socially distant photo scavenger hunt, *SEEWATER* engages audiences and raises awareness for the smallest details of water, from Alexandria's sewer system to local waterfront habitats. The full photo scavenger hunt list is available at torpedofactory.org/renewal and contains 40 items for people to photograph and email to Len at seewaterarchive@gmail.com to be included in the exhibition.

Torpedo Factory Art Center, located at 105 N. Union Street in Old Town, Alexandria, is open to the public Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Capacity for Studio 13 is two people at a time within the space. Those who wish to visit the Art Center are asked to adhere to current [Virginia Safer at Home](#) guidelines, including maintaining a social distance with people from different households, wearing face coverings indoors, and frequent handwashing for 20 seconds or use of hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

About the Artist

Sto Len is a printmaker, sound, and performance artist from New York by way of Virginia and Vietnam. Len works within this cultural dichotomy by incorporating issues of place, identity, history, and the environment. Growing up in Alexandria, Sto was influenced by the art and activism of the local punk scene in Washington DC, which he continues to embody through artwork that combines those ethics with experimental takes on traditional craft. Adapting traditional printmaking

techniques, Len creates an updated visual language that engages in our relationship to water, waste and its interconnectivity to a multitude of injustices. Sto has exhibited his work internationally including exhibitions in New York, Vietnam, Japan, London, France, Germany, Australia, Denmark, and Canada. He co-founded the alternative arts space Cinders Gallery in New York, which has exhibited hundreds of artists since its inception in 2004. Learn more at stoishere.com and follow him on Instagram via [@stoishere](https://www.instagram.com/stoishere).

About AlexRenew

Led by a five-member citizen board, Alexandria Renew Enterprises (AlexRenew) is a special-purpose wastewater authority serving over 300,000 people in the City of Alexandria and parts of Fairfax County. AlexRenew treats an average of 35 million gallons of wastewater per day at its Water Resource Recovery Facility, located in Alexandria, Virginia's southwest quadrant. For more information, please visit <http://www.alexrenew.com>.

About Alexandria's Office of the Arts

The Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities promotes the value of arts and culture in Alexandria by nurturing, investing in and celebrating the creative contributions of artists and arts organizations through the Office of the Arts division. By engaging the community, encouraging participation, and facilitating access to the arts, RPCA works with local artists and arts organizations to build a vibrant community for all of the City's residents, workers and visitors. Within the division, the Events and Public Space Activation team strengthens and builds the social fabric of Alexandria. Learn more at alexandriava.gov/arts or follow [@alexartsoffice](https://www.instagram.com/alexartsoffice) on [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/alexartsoffice) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/alexartsoffice). Add to the conversation with #artsALX.

About Torpedo Factory Art Center

Founded in 1974 in a former navy munitions plant, Torpedo Factory Art Center is home to the nation's largest number of publicly accessible working artist studios under one roof. The Art Center is part of the [City of Alexandria's Office of the Arts](http://alexandriava.gov/arts), a division of the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities. Just south of Washington, D.C., Torpedo Factory Art Center overlooks the Potomac River in the Old-Town section of Alexandria, Virginia. Each year, more than a half million national and international visitors meet and interact with more than 165 resident artists in 82 studios and seven galleries. The Art Center is also home to [The Art League](http://theartleague.org) headquarters and gallery, and the [Alexandria Archaeology Museum](http://alexandriamuseum.org). For more information, visit torpedofactory.org or follow Torpedo Factory Art Center on [Twitter](https://www.instagram.com/torpedofactory), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/torpedofactory), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/torpedofactory), and [Pinterest](https://www.pinterest.com/torpedofactory) via [@torpedofactory](https://www.instagram.com/torpedofactory).

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Interview and images available

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Interview and images available

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