



Climakaze's mermaid mascot.

Ines Grimaux

## Climakaze Art Fest Returns With Music, Mermaids, and More

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Amid South Beach's general fanfare and chaos, a mermaid attempting to sell her tears to passersby might seem like commonplace. However, pedestrians on Ocean Drive and Lincoln Road this weekend should know this aquatic creature does not make an appearance every day.

The mermaid is part of Climakaze Miami's annual program, a weekend filled with art and performance designed to draw awareness to climate change and the tangential issues the world's warming causes for sea and terrestrial life around the globe. Elizabeth Doud, the event's founder and mermaid portrayer, began Climakaze in 2015 as a way to present the realness of climate change to her audience in an engaging, thought-provoking manner.

"As an art maker, I see there are these obstacles to make this interesting to an audience," Doud says. "So I thought it would be great to have a place where we could make this more exciting."

Doud has spent roughly 25 years working in the arts, and Climakaze emerged from her search to find a way to combine her studies relating to ecology and the environment with her aptitude for performance. She believes art is one of the most persuasive mediums for exploring complex topics such as climate change because of the connection it can provide between the audience and the issue. "The arts is one of the only spaces where we can keep that connection alive," she says. "I think the arts is going to be very important in that process."



Las Áñez will perform as part of Climakaze this Saturday.

Andrés Garzón

Climakaze, which is produced in collaboration with Miami's FUNDarte, will take place during Earth Day weekend. The events will include a production of *The Mermaid Tear Factory* this Friday and Sunday as well as a bike/dance/swim "triathlon" and a Las Áñez concert Saturday. On Sunday, there will also be the creative writing lab Dear Climate, which Doud believes will help participants become more emotionally aware of what climate change means for Earth.

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"We have a lot of anxiety about climate change we haven't been able to express, and if we can get that out, we can make some good art," she says. "I think we are all

subconsciously heartbroken that the Earth is dying... We don't have a way to express that grief and make peace with it."

Though one might expect a somber overtone at these events, Doud is dedicated to ensuring they're fun and approachable. Ever Chavez, the founder and executive director of FUNDarte, believes Climakaze creates a space where individuals can explore these issues through a creative lens.

"FUNDarte wants art to be a place for social inquiry, and in this case, performance art, music, film, poetry, and play help us understand our fragile and beautiful ecology," Chavez explains. "Maybe people will come away provoked and inspired to take action and to form community around climate issues, but positivity and celebration is really important too. The arts let us imagine the world we want to create."

**Climakaze Miami.** *Friday, April 20, through Sunday, April 22, at various locations in Miami; [climakazemiami.org](http://climakazemiami.org). Admission ranges from free to \$25, depending upon the event.*