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COCCOLITHOPHORE

As carbon dioxide in the atmosphere increases, it is absorbed by the ocean which in turn becomes more acidic. This increase in acidity makes it difficult for calciferous species such as mollusks, corals and snails to form and maintain their shells. Coccolithophores are a type of calciferous plankton facing the same unfortunate, hindrance to survival.

Plankton exist at the bottom of the food chain for the large majority of oceanic species and do lots to regulate the ocean. Losing plankton would be detrimental and the consequences it would have on the ocean, earth and all its species would be difficult to comprehend. My piece represents the destruction of Coccolithophores, as a direct result of human interference, and represents it in a very literal and candid way.

Coccolithophore is composed of two twenty-four by forty-eight inch acrylic panels with a six-inch gap separating them. A bold vinyl graphic of a Coccolithophore is fragmented between the two rectangles. The imagery is split in half to more clearly and artistically represent this devastation. The frosted color of the graphic imitates etched glass. I picked this technique in part so that my piece would be void of color and reflect upon how in theory the ocean is on its way to becoming void of life.

For materials, I chose to use acrylic panels to mimic glass because of the many qualities that glass and water share. They are both transparent and are difficult to fix (in the case of shattered glass) and return to equilibrium (in the case of water). It is vital that we make ourselves more responsible for the ways in which we affect the environment. The massive size draws attention to this pressing issue which can no longer go ignored.

Coccolithophore encourages viewers to reflect upon the ways in which they live their lives, which policies they may or may not support and the damage which their actions, and in many cases negligence, are ultimately causing the environment and earth's many species. If nothing else, Coccolithophore exists to provoke a change in its viewers and challenges them to consider decreasing their carbon footprint and overall impact on the natural world.