

CURATORIAL INFLUENCES & INSPIRATION

An immersive installation, *ARGO* underscores the profound influence of water. Light and water share emotional and physical properties: both provide life or hope, and instill fear or trust. *ARGO* addresses events formed by and affecting water, and how Baltimore's water systems are precariously changing.

The Greek myth of *Jason and the Golden Fleece* and the archetype of the hero's quest serves as the inspiration for *ARGO*. The storyline mirrors the obstacles faced by Jason and his warrior crew of Argonauts. The installation was initially inspired by Dante's *Paradiso 33*. Projected imagery on the exterior of the structure will ask the audience to consider the broadest definition of what an ecosystem can mean, beyond the pristine sense of "nature". Dante described Argo casting a shadow from the water's surface on to Neptune, at the ocean floor.

*One moment is more lethargy to me,
Than five and twenty centuries to the emprise
That startled Neptune with the shade of Argo*

*My mind in this wise wholly in suspense,
Steadfast, immovable, attentive gazed,
And evermore with gazing grew enkindled.*

*In presence of that light one such becomes,
That to withdraw therefrom for other prospect
It is impossible he e'er consent;*

Chapter by chapter, the video underscores the challenges facing local aquatic environments. *ARGO*'s shape, video, and illuminations speak to an enveloping sensibility; inviting the public to consider their role as stewards. The goal is not to yearn for the unspoiled, but for the audience to consider the relationship between the numerous elements of an ecosystem: biological, social and cultural. By highlighting the effects of human development on water through industrialization, fracking and urbanization, this work presents the audience with their own quest: to champion and advocate for the health of water systems in Baltimore and beyond.