From Immigrant Stories to Environmental Dread, EXPO Chicago Gets Dark

The Midwest's mega-fair seems less concerned with the bottom line, making space for politics.

What contributes significantly to EXPO Chicago's overall sense of thoughtful curation are the Special Exhibitions booths scattered throughout the fair, presented by non-profits, museums, and art organizations. The Chicago Artists Coalition’s show is one of these memorable displays that introduce timely social issues to this premier event, along with Itamar Gilboa’s “Food Chain Project,” a portion of which is presented by Tamar Dresdner Art Projects. The sculptural spread of foodstuffs is overwhelming, and intends to raise awareness of global issues such as hunger and obesity, with proceeds from any sales going toward Food Tank. A number of works also grapple with environmental concerns, from “A Library of Tears” — a grim yet graceful display of manmade pollution by Artadia awardee Claire Pentecost — to “White Wanderer” — a meditation on glacial collapse by local duo Luftwerk, who recently unveiled a companion soundscape by the Chicago River.