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Project Title: Curios of the Future

Medium: Polymer clay, resin, mixed media.

Narrative: A curio is defined as “a rare, unusual, or intriguing object.” Most often they can be seen in museum displays or curiosity shops, but rarely does one find a familiar animal or object. Specimens are usually mutated, rare, or artificially changed in some way. The four specimen jars of this display represent endangered species once common to California. Continuously warming waters, man-made chemicals, trash, and toxic algae have changed the Pacific Ocean forever. Cold-water fish move north in search of nutrients unsupported by warm water, while warm-water species (such as nudibranchs, and jellyfish) start to dominate areas once alien to them on the California coast. Some warm-water species (represented under the glass bell) even seem less affected by water acidification, possibly increasing the likelihood that they will remain California coast inhabitants. What will the Pacific look like when its cold-water species are gone, and the warm-water species continue to breed with a limited food supply? Will the cold-water species become the curios of 2050?

(I dedicate this work in part to the aesthetic inspiration of Dr. Frederik Ruysch)

Concept: The final concept of this piece will involve a 34-inch long, 10-inch wide wooden hanging shelf (I could size it down to 32” if needed). I’ve provided a picture of a similar shelf for reference.

Displayed on the shelf will be four glass specimen jars and one glass dome. The jars’ lids will be decorated with clay, seashells, paint, and black sea fan coral, but nothing will reach out into the walkway.



Inside the jars will be sculptures of four different types of endangered species of fish “floating” in resin.

The resin will make it appear as if the fishes have been preserved, and their colors will be muted to reflect this. The glass dome will hold a small collection of species that seem to be reacting more positively to the warm ocean waters and acidification, and these will be depicted in a more lively sense with brighter colors.

Small lights will be set up underneath (or behind) each sculpture, as too much lighting above the piece will glare on the glass. I have also provided pictures of the first finished

sculpture, and some examples of the Dr. Frederik Ruysch specimens that aesthetically inspired me on this project.



