

BRIDGETTE MAYER GALLERY

REBECCA RUTSTEIN

ARTIST AT SEA 2023

KAMA'EHUKANALOA / HAWAII

Funded by the National Science Foundation, Rutstein was invited to participate as an artist in residence on board the University of Hawaii's R/V Kilo Moana with a science team from Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in January 2023. The group explored the Kama'ehukanaloha submarine volcano 22 miles off the coast of the Big Island of Hawaii and 1000 meters below the ocean's surface. The purpose of the expedition was to observe potential volcanic activity and to collect fluid coming out of the crater vents to understand their temperature and chemistry.

Rutstein set up a makeshift studio in a lab on the ship. Her paintings evolved from a number of sources: multibeam mapping data being collected at Kama'ehukanaloha, X-ray microscopy images revealing intricate structures created by iron oxidizing microbes that proliferate at the crater vent sites, and visual observations of lava flows, microbial mats and features on the ocean floor provided by the remotely operated vehicle (ROV) Jason.

This was Rutstein's 7th expedition at sea. The paintings she created on the ship and back in her studio will be part of upcoming exhibitions at James Madison University and Oregon State University in the spring/summer/fall 2023.