

# Cultural Daily

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## A Plastic Ocean, the Old Man, and the Sea

Adam Leipzig · Friday, June 2nd, 2017

Eight years after it was first conceived, five years after production began, our adventure documentary *A Plastic Ocean* premiered on January 19, 2017. We were entering Inauguration Weekend. A few days earlier, Christian Amanpour, CNN's Chief International Correspondent, shared news of the film in [this report](#). "As climate skeptics prepare to move into the White House, a new documentary is trying to wake us up to the chilling reality of plastic's effect on our oceans," Amanpour declared.

*A Plastic Ocean* opened as the #1 documentary in the U.S., U.K., and Canada.

Our timing was poetic; now it is poetic again, unfortunately so. *A Plastic Ocean* will screen next week at the United Nations, just six days after President Trump withdrew U.S. participation from the Paris Climate Accord.

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Mr. Trump's action is dangerous and upside-down, informed by a dystopic vision of our world in which (I kid you not) he stated that the U.S. is a "disadvantaged" nation. Tell that to 71% of the world's population, who subsist on less than \$10 a day. Our head of state practices authoritarian, Orwellian inversion with no remorse — tragic for our domestic policy, especially perilous for our planet.

Last week I screened *A Plastic Ocean* at the Sun Valley Wellness Festival. One audience member, who sits on major corporate boards, proclaimed, "This is the best environmental film ever made, and I am so happy it is not political."

Thank you for the kind words, sir, but to be accurate, our film is not *partisan*. The film contends that the ocean transcends partisan divides. Our waters are the source of our lives; James Joyce called the sea our "great sweet mother." And so, *A Plastic Ocean* is deeply political, political in the fundamental sense of the *polis*, the common place we inhabit, in that the film concerns common spaces and the common good, stewardship of which is our common responsibility.

On June 6 I will be joined at the United Nations by the film's director, Craig Leeson, [Plastic Oceans Foundation US](#) Executive Director Julie Andersen, and an audience of 600 delegates, NGO leaders, scientists, and engaged citizens. We will screen a condensed, 22-minute version of the film, a version we prepared for educational use, and we'll have a discussion that focuses on

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solutions and making common cause.

On that day, I will be present as a proud United States citizen, standing with the majority of people in this nation and the world, standing on the side of common good and on behalf of our planet; I will be standing against the Old Man and the regressive regime change he represents.

*You may donate to the [Plastic Oceans Foundation](#) to support awareness and further distribution of the film.*

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