

2014

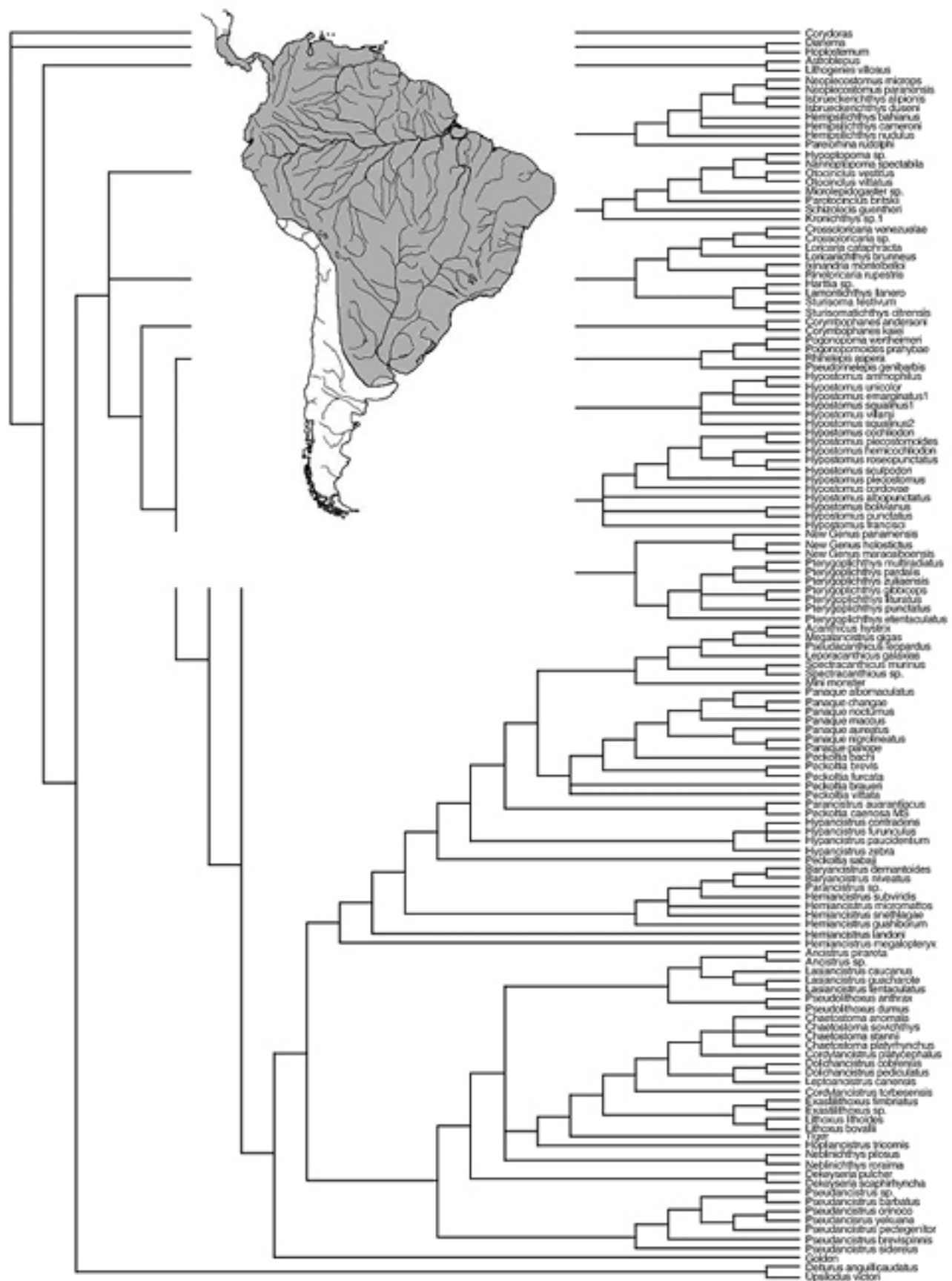
Lonely Loricariidae

Glass fish tanks, pumps, filters, aluminum stadium seating
15 x 10 x 6 feet

Winning proposal for Art Basel
Statements sector; Basel, Switzerland



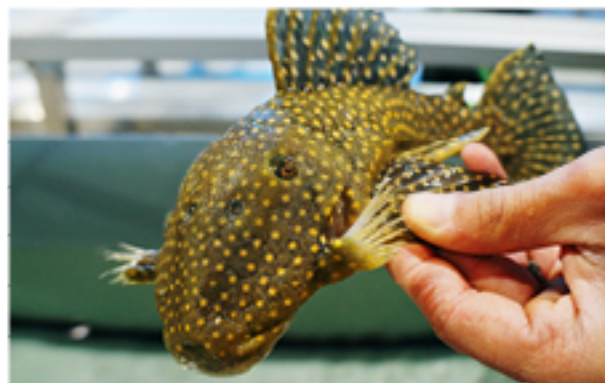
An undescribed species of *Loricariidae* pulled from under a rock ledge in about 3 feet of water in the Amazon, by Nathan Lujan PhD., September 2013. Xingu, Brazil



Phylogenetic tree showing all known *Loricariidae* species along with a map illustrating their natural range (shaded area).



"L-Number" list indicating all unknown *Loricariidae* species that circulate through the European aquarium trade and a map illustrating their unregulated supply routes for exploration to Europe.



Lonely Loricariidae is a sculptural installation that brings together five wild-caught fish from the Amazon Basin whose identities hang between two conflicting knowledge groups: the scientific study and taxonomy of *Loricariidae*, and the commodification of *Loricariidae* in the ornamental aquarium trade.

Of the 100,000 or more *Loricariidae* fish that are both legally and illegally exported each year from South America, there are dozens of new species unknown to science that enter the flow of this international aquarium trade. Once beyond the border of their country of origin, the fish become legal commodities within the market and are arbitrarily assigned an identifying “L” number since they lack a species name.

For Art Basel Statements, David Brooks has positioned these living creatures as spectators on a set of aluminum sports bleachers. Here these fish, who have yet to be studied and named by scientists, become active observers rather than simply the observed.

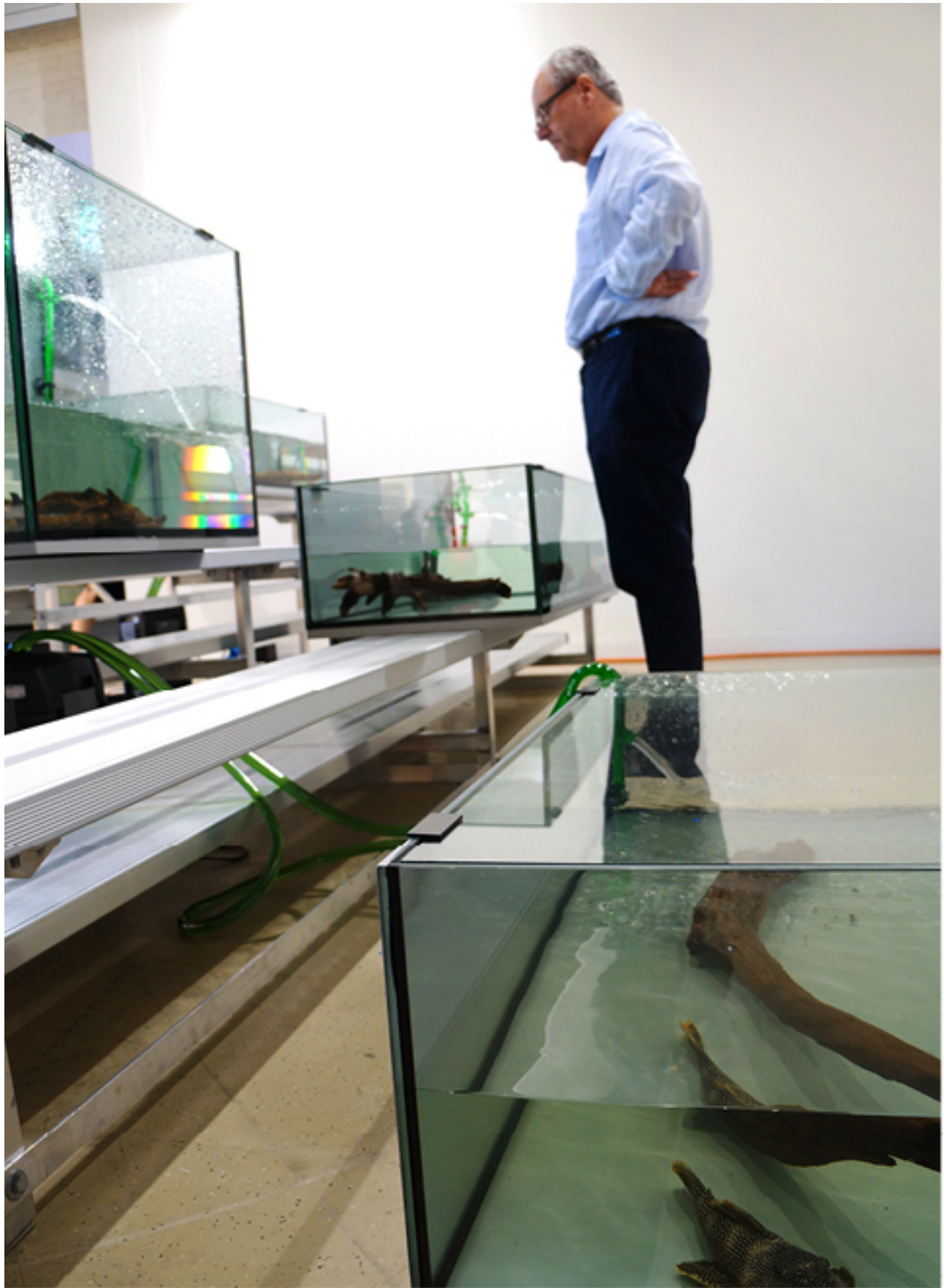
—Excerpted from Art Basel Statements press release



Installation views and details











T-shirts were made and given away in lieu of a press release or publication.
The small, entirely illegible print palpably illustrates how many species
of the *Loricariidae* fish are sold in the market but still unknown to science.