

LETTERS TO THE EARTH Between Despair and Hope



**Spring, 2024
Chapter 2**



**THE GEORGINA CENTRE
FOR ARTS AND CULTURE**

We express gratitude to the Indigenous peoples of the lands from which we came for their efforts to keep earth-based wisdom alive, and to our own ancestors.

We acknowledge and give great thanks and honour to the First Peoples of this land, Canada, which we now call home. They have been the stewards, wisdom, and spirit keepers of the land for thousands of years. We acknowledge their suffering and are grateful for the important contributions they have made, and continue to make, today.

ISBN 978-0-9865184-3-0

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Publisher: Carmel Brennan

Copy Editor: Lillian Yano Blakey

Layout & Design: Carmel Brennan

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To contact the Publisher, email Carmel Brennan: cbrennan@letterstoeearth.ca

Cover Image: Letter to the Earth, by Mark Puigmarti, Canadian Blacksmith

*me by the imagination
piens - Latin: wise man,
are m
rt of y
poisonous,
of you
safe h
I can
will
rient
the
wore
d forgive us
Tombiel*

"But man is part of nature, and his war
against nature is inevitably a war against
himself."

Rachel Carson

LETTERS TO THE EARTH:
BETWEEN DESPAIR AND HOPE
at
THE GEORGINA CENTRE
FOR ARTS AND CULTURE
March 7 to April 14, 2024

MESSAGE FROM THE GEORGINA CENTRE FOR ARTS AND CULTURE

On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers at the Georgina Centre for Arts & Culture, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the artists participating in this version of Letters to the Earth, and all gallery guests who visit this exceptional exhibition.

We are so pleased to be the host gallery and to be working with guest curator Carmel Brennan as she continues to expand this powerful and timely exhibition concept. I am grateful that our paths crossed again and that we were able to say "Yes!" to this show with a very short timeline. Carmel and her team are creating an environment of expression for everyone, from all corners of the earth and all ages and stages of Life, to participate in the simplest activity. Write a letter. The act of setting down one's thoughts on paper, is an energetic transfer and when we write to the Earth, it is transformative. We are deeply connected, and our letters and the expression of the artists remind us of this. Your experience as you go through the exhibition may be emotional. You may also move between Despair and Hope. A gallery is a good place for these conversations and a safe place for this kind of experience. The Georgina Centre for Arts and Culture is committed to continuing to support the development of a robust and healthy community through engaging with the arts and educational opportunities.

Be well.

Charlotte Hale

Artistic Director

MESSAGE FROM THE CURATOR

I want to express my appreciation to the town of Sutton and the staff of the Georgina Centre for Arts and Culture, for hosting this second exhibition of our project, Letters To The Earth: Between Despair And Hope. The initiative for this project, surfaced in September of 2021. I had a personal awakening because of an incident that took place in my own backyard in Canada. While trying to ensure a safe, comfortable environment during the pandemic lockdown, I used an aerosol insecticide to destroy a hornet's nest. After realizing the beauty of the nest construction, I examined my reaction. Do hornets have a purpose for existing? Maybe one of the traits of being descended from a colonial culture is that I simply move forward and eradicate what stands in my way? I wrote a Letter to the Earth when I realized what my contribution was to the state of the environment. We are all responsible for the condition of this planet. What can we do as individuals to slow the progress of climate change? Letters To The Earth: Between Despair And Hope is a conversation between creative individuals who are deeply concerned about the environmental crisis and the Earth. As a practicing artist, and curator, I put out a call for participants in the fall of 2022, for the initial exhibition in 2023 at the Aurora Cultural Centre. The response to the call was tremendous. We have several exhibitions and events booked for the next three years with the intention of keeping the conversation in the forefront about climate change. If you would like to know more about the project, or would like to participate with us, just email me. (carmel@letterstoeearth.ca)The requirement I ask participants to fulfil, to commit to the project, is to handwrite and send to me a Letter to the Earth.

Sincerely,
Carmel Brennan,
carmel@letterstoeearth.ca

Daughter: - Your love
 shows us the generous and
 and welcomes her child
 tenderness. You are im-
 great in your magni-
 exuberance. You shelter
 unfathomable lives.
 Mother: - What do you
 Daughter: - You have been
 way and you resist!
 Mother: - As a good lov-
 my children's insoul-
 how harshly I have been
 raising the earth's ter-
 hypertension, I exploded
 in the form of global
 cataclysms, hurricanes,
 floods and droughts.
 Daughter: - Why did
 did the disobedience
 knowledge start?
 Mother: - You went in
 that promised devel-
 being for all, but
 to be a huge factor
 desires that did

PARTICIPANTS

1. **Dara Aram, Artist**
2. **Valerie Ashton, Environmental Artist**
3. **Kim Atkins, Artist/Educator**
4. **Ron Baird, Artist**
5. **Diana Bennett, Artist/Educator**
6. **Lynn Bishop, Artist/Entrepreneur**
7. **Lillian Yano Blakey, Artist/Educator/Writer/ Activist**
8. **Carmel Brennan, Artist/Educator/Curator**
9. **Nancy R. Chalut, Environmental Artist**
10. **Sarah Cowley, Artist**
11. **Jaya Datta, Artist**
12. **Sheila Davis, Artist**
13. **D. Ahsén:nase Douglas, Artist/Educator/Writer**
14. **Linda Finn, Artist**
15. **Cesar Forero, Architecture, Sculpture, Painting, Public Performance.**
16. **Phil Fung, NATURE HARMONY FOUNDATION**
17. **Dr. Robin Kingsburgh, Artist/ Educator**
18. **Bert Liverance, Artist**
19. **Ian Mackenzie, Artist**
20. **Francis Muscat, Artist**
21. **Joseph Muscat, Artist/Educator**
22. **Mary Ng, Artist/Educator**
23. **Christl Niemuller, Artist**
24. **Aileen Ogilvie (Scotland) Artist/Singer/Songwriter**
25. **Katherine J Palmer, Artist**
26. **Frances Patella, Photo-based mixed media artist**
27. **Mark Puigmarti, Artist, Blacksmith**
28. **Janet Read, Artist/Poet/Educator**
29. **Heather Rigby, Artist**
30. **Susan Ruptash, Artist**
31. **Heather Sebastian, Artist**
32. **Quan Steele, Environmental Artist/Performer**
33. **Dr. Roger Sutcliffe ,Artist**
34. **Dr. Joanna Swann (United Kingdom) Artist/Writer/Educator**
35. **Grazyna Tonkiel, Artist/Curator/Opera singer/Conservationist**
36. **Grade 2-3 Class from St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Elementary School, Keswick**



DARA ARAM

We have an urgent and necessary obligation in joining hands of appreciation and serious efforts for protecting your wonderful gifts that you have given us and work together in creating, harmony, health, beauty, and peace in our most precious world.

Earth Rhythms #1.

acrylic on canvas 32x 32 Inches 2023



VALERIE ASHTON

The idea that our refuse is away - out of our sight and mind - allows us to continue consuming and exploiting our environment without perceived consequence.

Discarded Landscape

Plastic found in river. 18 x 24 inches 2023



Plastic in the Sea

Oil on Canvas 12 x 24 inches 2023

KIM ATKINS

It is estimated that one Giant Garbage Patch in the Pacific is three times the size of France!



The Queen of Diamonds

Stainless Steel 96 x 24 x 24 inches 2023

RON BAIRD

When the sun shines onto her crown and the breeze moves her diamonds, golden reflections dance at her feet, a playful nod to the interconnectedness of all living things.

DIANA BENNETT



Loss of milkweed, drought conditions, insecticide and herbicide use, and habitat loss account for the devastating extinction of the Monarch Butterfly.

MONARCH REQUIEM #1 Collage 21 x 38 inches 2023

LYNN BISHOP

Enjoy, explore, and innovate on this globe while we can.

The Main Sequence Star, the Sun
Mixed media- off cuts of steel and aluminum. 48 x 60 inches 2022

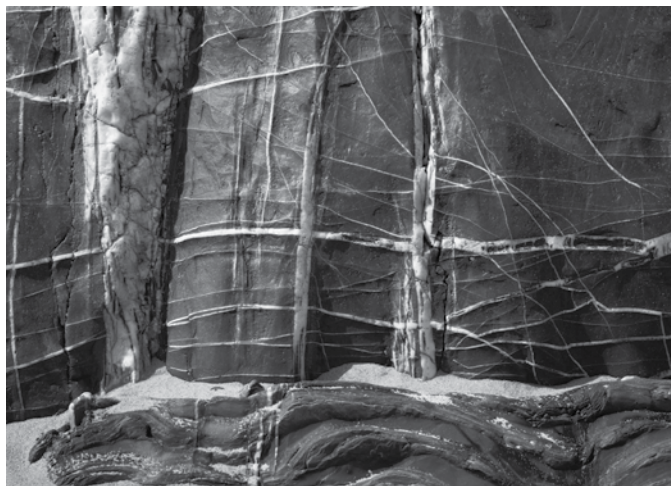


LILLIAN YANO BLAKEY

As stewards of the earth, human beings have the responsibility of protecting the natural environment.



VANISHING Watercolour 12 x 30 inches 2024



CARMEL BRENNAN

Humans are just a speck in the notion of time.

Beside the Ocean of Time

Photography 22 X 28 inches 2023

NANCY R. CHALUT



High Stakes

Oil on Canvas 12 X 10 inches



Clear Cut

Oil on Canvas 12 X 10 inches

Survey stakes, mirrored faces of many in a beaver's home and finally the ultimate rape of our forests off to produce prefabricated jungles of short sightedness.

SARAH COWLEY

We have ignored The Messenger for too long. Today we see, feel, hear what our Living Planet has been shouting out.

The Messenger

Metal, clay, bone, fabrics, beads, wood
28 x 36 x 20 inches 2024



JAYA DATTA

Unless we change
our ways and
save our planet,
we would pay for
our mistakes, and
it would be the
doomsday - the
end of human race.



A Day of Reckoning

Acrylic on Canvas 48 x 36 inches 2023

SHEILA DAVIS

Plastic production causes
greenhouse gases, contributing to
global warming.

Integration

Oil/acrylic on panel. 24 x 24 inches 2023

D. AHSÉN: NASE DOUGLAS



Laying Down Tobacco

Oil on Canvas 24 x 36 inches 2019



Elk (the Four-legged Being)

Oil on Canvas 24 x 48 inches 2018

If we carried in our hearts a feeling of gratitude for what the Earth provides and did not place us above all other beings while recognizing their inherent right to life, would the Earth still be in environmental decay as it is today?

LINDA FINN

Fire Marked the Land Like Language is my message of hope for the future, hope for the earth.

Fire Marked the Land Like Language

acrylic on wood, found wood assemblage

54 X 48 X 1.5 inches 2023



CESAR FORERO



We should not accept the deterioration of the planet as normal but do every possible act to reverse the damage we have caused.

Roots on the Rock 1 & Roots on the Rock 2

Photography on Silk 40 x 60 inches 2023 (Performance Photos by **LISA MURZIN**)



PHIL FUNG / NATURE HARMONY FOUNDATION

Food sovereignty and community-based food production systems are interconnected concepts that emphasize the importance of local communities having control over their food systems and the means to produce and access food sustainably.

ROBIN KINGSBURGH

To live locally,
simply, and
connected to the
Earth would spare
us this calamitous
tale.

Ash Borer codex

Digital Print (1/1) 30 x 20 inches 2024



BERT LIVERANCE



Greenbelt

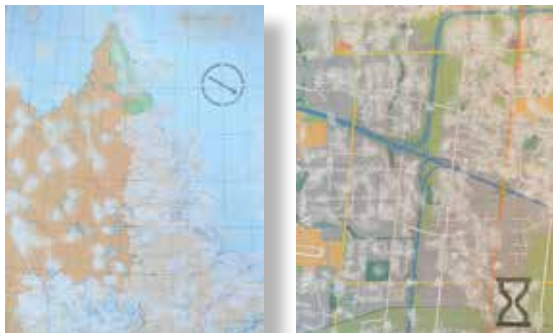
Oil on Canvas 19 x 40 inches 2024

Save Ontario from
the big blue hand.

You have the
power! Your vote
matters!

Only you can stop
the big blue hand
from destroying
our province.

IAN MACKENZIE



The unholy alliance of the pure profit motive and geopolitical agenda with scientific research and technological innovation has caused havoc. The effort of most governments to solve the environmental problems can only be described as perfunctory at best.

Under Pressure & Out of Time

Recycled road map & graphite on wood panel 14 x 11 inches 2022

FRANCIS MUSCAT



Rebuilt

wood, cast glass 24 x 24 x 10 inches 2022

Beavers do what beavers do and many trees fall. The peripatetic Beaver decided to make my pond one of his homes, an invitation for me to react, comment and eventually act. The similarity in which the trees fell intrigued me, the way the wood fibers were violently pulled apart spoke to me. I needed to try to collaborate with my new neighbour.

JOSEPH MUSCAT



I dedicated three large acrylic paintings/collages to the evolutionary existence of our planet. The second, Turning Up the Heat, looks at our blue planet surrounded by red and orange colours, suggesting the warming up process of the planet.

Turning Up the Heat

Acrylic on Tarpaper 57 inches in Diameter 2006

MARY NG

The unholy alliance of the pure profit motive and geopolitical agenda with scientific research and technological innovation has caused havoc. The effort of most governments to solve the environmental problems can only be described as perfunctory at best.

Why the Havoc?

Acrylic 19 x 35 inches 2023



CHRISTL NIEMULLER



Visiting Rankin Inlet

Acrylic on board 18 x 24 inches 2023

The harsh climate made it hard to imagine global climate change could have an impact here, but the permafrost near Ranklin Inlet, was melting, the seas were freezing over later and opening sooner. This made it more difficult and dangerous for the local hunters. Life here was fragile, food security vulnerable and the environment controlled all outcomes.

AILEEN OGILVIE



Croft No.4: An Aural Biography of Place

25-minute sound installation

The way water flows in, around, and with the landscape, is noticeably being impacted by the climate crisis.



KAT PALMER

Humans conduct themselves as if they are the main character in the story of the earth but indeed, we are just bit players, incidental to the main story.



The Green Will Remain

Acrylic on canvas 18 x 24 x 1.5 inches 2024

FRANCES PATELLA



Burn With Reflection

Mixed-Photography & Acrylic paint 18 x 20 inches



Burn with Blue Tree

Mixed-Photography and Acrylic paint 36 X 36 inches

Fire is integral as it stimulates the germination of savannah species. Throughout history people have used fire to clear land and invasive species, while regenerating the forests.

MARK PUIGMARTI

The remaining stump here is the life-giving host for a multitude of new life. Nature does prevail.



Nature Prevails II

forged steel 14 x 14 x 16 inches 2024

Climate change melts the permafrost layer causing landslips, transportation barriers, creating havoc with existing housing in the north where houses are set on pillars inserted into the permafrost layer.

JANET READ



Melting Land,

60 x 48 inches oil on linen



Sailing the Greenland Ice: melting coast

6 x 18 inches, variable on metal or paper

HEATHER RIGBY

The weight of the boat and the oncoming large Wave signify the hope of potentially surviving the human driven Climate Change we currently face.



Rouge Wave

Balsa/Cedar Woods,
Marble, Acrylic Paint
16 x 52 x 48 inches
2024



Wind Horse

16x 12 x 8 inches Bronze

SUSAN RUPTASH

This work is intended to draw attention to the individual tree in the forest, to bring the memory of the tree into the gallery.



Tree Skins Sekishu Banshi Tsuru,
Oguni Snowbleached 18g & Fukunishi
Udagami 40g heritage washi w/
konnyaku and linen thread
86 x 30 x 10 inches 2022

QUAN STEELE

There are nano plastics in the tissues of every living organism on the planet. Do we need to understand how nano plastics will affect our health? Absolutely!



Swimming Death

Mixed Media 46 x 46 x 3 inches 2024

Wild Caught

2024 Mixed Media 15 x 14 x 3 inches

HEATHER SEBASTIAN



The Mother's Exhale

Acrylic on canvas 48 x 36 inches 2024

The dreamers are listening. Our hearts beating with yours. It will all end. Some day. Just as it began. But we are here with you. Exhaling. Thank you for being our mother.



JOANNA SWANN

To save the planet as we
know it, we need new
attitudes, new thoughts, new
processes.

So, what are you giving up?
What are you going to do
differently?



To Whom It May Concern, 2023

Handstitched version of letter. Unbleached and undyed single-stranded linen thread, unbleached and undyed Khadi cotton fabric, and (unseen) unbleached and undyed organic cotton thread.

8.9 x 8.6 inches

ROGER SUTCLIFFE



Letters to the Earth #1

Woodcut on Legion paper, Graphic Chemical oil-based ink, lettering Indian Inkpencil 22x18 inches 2023



Letters to the Earth #5

Woodcut on Legion paper, Graphic Chemical oil-based ink, lettering coloured pencil 22x18 inches 2023

GRAZYNA TONKIEL



I have a dream that one day the digestive enzyme is isolated and produced at scale. I have a dream that one day we can use it as a way out of our environmental plastic crisis. I have a dream that one day my dream will be caught.

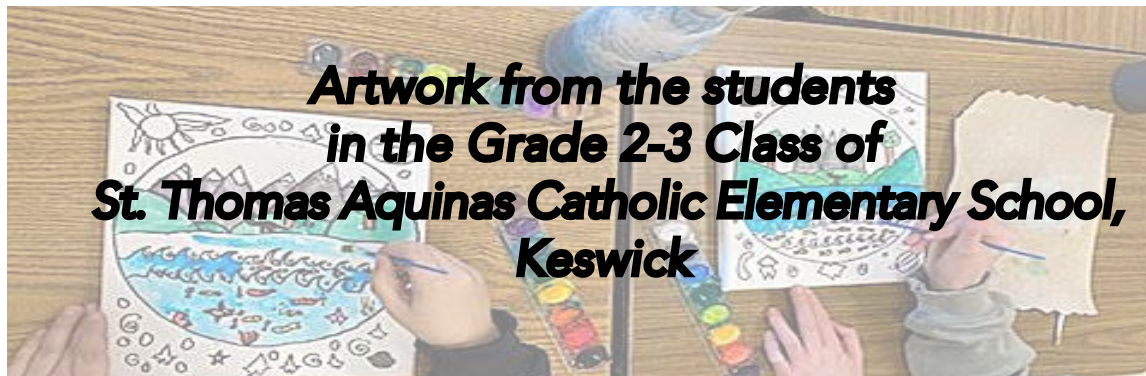
Dream Catcher

Mix Media -art pencil drawing on wood and gold leaf, wisteria and wild wine twigs, wild turkey feathers, clay beads. 39 inches diameter 2024



Artwork from the students in the Grade 2-3 Class of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Elementary School, Keswick

**Artwork from the students
in the Grade 2-3 Class of
St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Elementary School,
Keswick**





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"We are diverse. We are one in Christ."

York Catholic District School Board



**THE GEORGINA CENTRE
 FOR ARTS AND CULTURE**

pts to start a letter to The Earth
times have all ended up sounding prepared
iculous. I do feel incredible remorse for all the
life affected by climate change.

not remotely an expert on all the known sciences, but
re sake of basic understanding I will oversimplify the
ous. The Earth consists of physical matter and energy.
infinite number of complex actions and reactions in
peating, non-repeating, and adaptive patterns are happening
instantly. Most animals and plants/organisms live and die
a possibly brutal, but harmonious cycle within this complex
network. Human kind at one time did also fit into this cycle,
it in recent centuries this has not been the case. Exploiting resources
and focusing on financial prosperity has blinded almost all
umans to going along with this short term gain strategy.



THE GEORGINA CENTRE
FOR ARTS AND CULTURE

The Earth
does to it.
again reset. It does
it takes, and what
Therefore, my Let
hopeful plea to the
and to make the
work in harmon

Sincerely
Doris Pugh

