

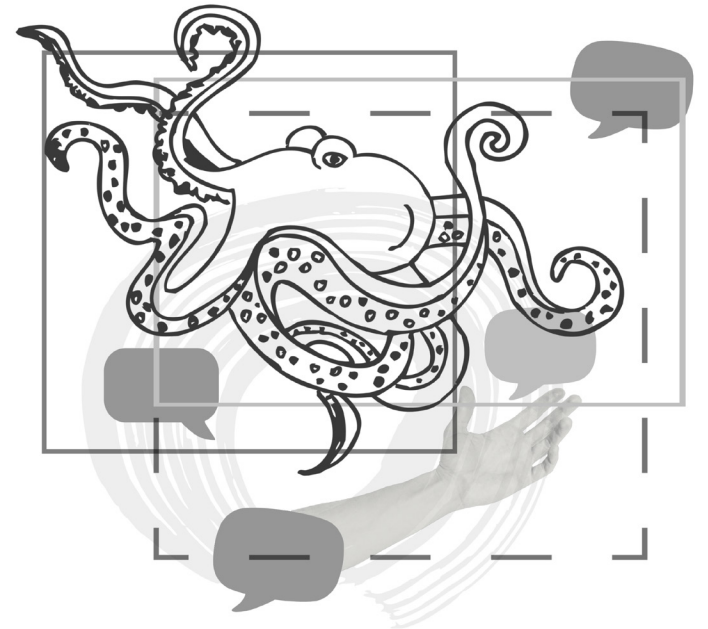
Challenge to Choose  
Exhibition Zine

International Women's Day  
#Choose to Challenge

qathet Art Centre

Programmers notes  
List of participating artists  
Artist statements and bios  
and Poems







.. words infiltrate , , modes of thinking, modes of being , ,

Tentacular thinking, like an octopus, \*reaching\* out in multiple directions at once, (holding) many possible/impossible ideas simultaneously -exploratory-

This exhibition holds space for personal responses that resonate with the theme. Many contributing artists are women, some are not, some chose not to identify. Each // holds an impulse, a stepping out, an explanation; each work plays and speaks to the other by sharing space. in ((non-verbal)) languages: colour, line, symbolism; visual,, and sonic shapes; textures, .

what causes gender is language.

The theme for International Women's Day this year was simple: Choose to Challenge. Engaged in deeper dialogue, we reversed the wording to Challenge to Choose, in an attempt to acknowledge the privileged position inherent in the ability to make choices. Language play and reversal, in order to complexify and confuse. When you feel confused, it tosses you into a different headspace. Looking for meaning in a group of words which are inadequate.

Language does not equal communication.

Dialogue can occur between human or non-human entities - the ways in which these artworks speak to each other by sharing space. The exhibition holds space for discussion. Each artwork is the seed of conversation. The floor is open, art pieces speaking + seeing + hearing & watching & sensing

the ability to choose - the challenge inherent in conscious effort  
- the vulnerability - the fear - the unknown - the energy required -  
the risk of loss - the risk of failure - lack of time - time slipping away  
- apathy - hidden narratives - pressure to make the right decision.  
~ contemplation, thought = action , ? ,

List of participating artists in alphabetical order:

### **Amber Friedman**

In the face of a woman *hand painted using natural dyes and batik on silk*  
My work is an expression of people's energy and a visual of images that come to me in dreams or through a meditative state. I have been a professional textile artist for 15 years and I started to study natural dyes 10 years ago. The last 5 years I have been painting with natural dyes exclusively. I am making all the dyes that I use for my paintings and I am very passionate about this part of my art. I love being connected to the whole process of creating artwork, starting with the colors. I make colors with traditional dye plants from around the world, and plants that grow in my local area.

This painting is part of a series of the energetics of people expressed through colours and shapes. The series will be comprised of 100 different people painted on various materials. The money from each painting will go into a trust fund for the future permanent home for my children and me. Lots of the symbols in this series are from my years studying chakras and the kundalini energy in our bodies. It's also a fun way to explore using colours are statements and to create moods.

Amber Friedman is a textile artist, who lives with her family in Powell River, BC following a lifetime of travel. Friedman was making art from the day she was born, and her focus as a teenager was Photography and Fabric Design. She studied at the New Brunswick College of Craft and Design. Friedman is known best as a textile artist who creates her own natural dyes from plants and bugs to use in her fabric paintings. She is primarily hand painting silk using batik, painting with hot wax as a resist, to create whimsical portraits of energy and other worldly experiences.

### **Angie Davey**

Platforms *Nine 5x7 photographs of shoes.*

How many shoes do you own? In a world where many people don't wear shoes at all, most of us here have at least two pairs. So then we have the luxury of choosing what shoes to wear at the start of each day, based mainly on functionality but also sometimes emotion.

Shoes can be liberating, they can also pinch your toes. We can be both admired for and judged by our shoes. Shoes are expressive! Shoes are the platforms upon which we live much of our lives.

Years ago, I was going through an especially painful break-up and a good friend took me shoe shopping to cheer me up. At the end of the day, I went home with the cutest pair of chocolate brown leather strappy heels embellished with sequined butterflies. I LOVE those shoes -- they were a gift I chose to give myself. The shoes featured here are from my



own closet. I never really thought of myself as having a thing for shoes until I counted how many pairs I actually have (27) and could not deny my emotional attachment to them. With this artwork I wanted to have some fun but on the flip side I wanted to acknowledge how my privilege has enabled me to amass much more than I need.

### **Annabelle Tully-Barr**

Make Medicine and Dare to Despair *spoken word/written word*.

One call to action, one descriptive of motherhood, art and depression. I am a working mother of 2 grown children, passionate about community and rising up after adversity. I am a survivor of many things and have always been pursuing the creative spirits in my life. Now, as I age, I am finding a peace filled co-existence with those spirits, who have helped me to clarify and define my life and responses. And perhaps age has given me a bit more courage to share. I am the artist of my own life and my response to what shows up within it. It is a work in progress.

### **badkaren**

Untitled. *Sculpture: tray made from locally foraged materials: peeled willow, dandelion cordage, morning glory cordage and corn husk cordage.*

Basketry is a new practice for me. I have long been fascinated by it and arranged my life so that I could devote time to learning it in 2020. I made plans to travel to various workshops, but I think we all know what happened to those plans. This practice requires materials to be thoroughly dried, then rehydrated and mellowed until they are properly pliable.

There are certainly many, many videos on the internet and some really excellent books, but no matter how many ways you describe something or show it, it is impossible to really know how something feels unless you actually touch it. The summer of 2020 was a time of much trial and error (mostly error) and many trips to the compost bin as I was challenged to discover when my materials were ready to work. The past year has been a challenge in so many other ways, but I am profoundly grateful every day that I am in a place where I have been able to discover this new practice, despite pandemic-related restrictions. I am also excited to find practical and artistic applications for materials that are generally deemed unwanted or nuisance.

badkaren is a Powell River artist exploring contemporary basketry using materials she collects and processes herself. She is a fervent proponent of zero waste and has a keen interest in using plants considered as 'invasive' or 'weeds' in her practice.

### **Bob Butkus**

If the shoe fits *Collage*

### **Carol Sawyer**

Shadow Puppet *Two-channel digital video. 00:06:15.*

A video installation and group of photographs that document a series of short performances in which Sawyer attaches pieces of cardboard and plastic to her body, effectively turning herself into a life-sized shadow puppet. The characters whose silhouettes are cast on the wall seem to engage in a dialogue with the artist, giving the impression that they are independently animated.

Bio: Carol Sawyer is a visual artist and singer working with photography, installation, video, and improvised music. Since the early 1990's her visual art work has investigated the connections between photography and fiction, performance, memory, and history. Her work has been exhibited in galleries across Canada. Sawyer studied classical singing, focusing on opera and art song, before training in extended voice with Richard Armstrong. She also has an Honours diploma in photography from ECUAD, and a Masters in interdisciplinary arts from SFU. For the past 20+ years she has performed extensively in improvised music contexts. She has released three CDs with her improvising ensemble ion Zoo, collaborated and recorded with American composer and trombonist Michael Vlatkovich, and performed in numerous ad hoc ensembles. Her artwork is represented by Republic Gallery, Vancouver. Her ongoing and expansive project, the Natalie Brettschneider Archive, was recently exhibited at the Carleton University Art Gallery, the Vancouver Art Gallery, The Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, and the Koffler Art Gallery in Toronto. A book produced in conjunction with these four gallery exhibitions, titled Carol Sawyer: The Natalie Brettschneider Archive, was published in 2020.

### **Chrome Destroyer**

1. SUGARTEETH 2. Butterfly Emoji 3. Dawn of the first day *3D animations, looped*

Chrome Destroyer is a multidisciplinary artist who uses digital software to play with classical understandings of light, space, and form. The aesthetic push and pull of seduction and repulsion in their imagery expresses the absurdity and anxiety of being human in the 21st century. CD received their BFA from Emily Carr University of Art + Design and is based in Vancouver, BC.

### **Cyndi Pallen**

Tla'amin Nation 4 Generation cedar *apron made with traditional weaving techniques*



## **Dar Sword**

Invisible. *Mixed media drawing/painting.*

A lot of my inspiration for my pieces comes directly from what feelings are brought forth in me from my surroundings. I primarily focus on black and white sketches as my choice of medium where I feel I can really portray the beauty of my subject in a way that allows a lot of detail, motion and realism. This particular piece I completed while residing in Victoria BC. Everyday for a couple years on my way to work I would pass this gentleman sitting on the curb of an intersection downtown by a 711 store. The majority of people walking by paid no attention to him, like he was just part of the sidewalk. This was a person - I was inspired to draw him - to show how he is practically invisible to most people. One day he was no longer there...I wondered did anyone else notice his absence?

Homelessness has become a normality in our society it seems and I feel this can no longer be ignored. Everyone deserves somewhere warm to sleep at night, regardless of their personal situation.

Bio: Since moving to BC in 2008 I have met many wonderful artists and people with the same appreciation of the beautiful area where we live. I have been able to focus on my art and create pieces which are inspired by my surroundings. While residing in Ucluelet, I became a member of PRAS and participated in my first art shows - Art Splash; a pop up art show and "The Women of the West Coast" part of the Cultural Heritage Festival where I was a featured Artist in Action. I also participated in an art show "Mixed and Merged" in Summerland in 2019.

## **Evelyn Russell**

Untitled, *collograph*. Clark Park, *reduction lino print*.

## **Evangeline Belzile**

Left with Dreams. *Digitized 16mm film*. 00:04:30

A combination of found footage and recorded audio knit together a portrait of a woman finding her father in the realms of sleep. In a way, 'left with dreams' presents the viewer with a challenge - to listen - but also to investigate the ways in which the words inherit meaning.

Evangeline Belzile is a visual artist with a focus on still and moving images. She works primarily with analogue film using the medium to weave together documentary and narrative image making. Evangeline seeks out moments to capture rather than creating and curating them. As such, themes of portraiture, duration, and memory have been knit together to form her practice.

## **Isabel Supina**

Untitled. *Paper lantern*.

## **J. E. Saunders**

Just around the corner *poem*

My poem is actually a song with two verses and a chorus. It is meant to be uplifting. Once in a while I enjoy writing poems and turning them into songs.

## **Jackie McClinchey**

Untitled *Paper lantern*

## **Jazz rico**

1. Kissed my mind 2. Self-Therapy 3. Ella 4. Through Her 5. On Edge  
*acrylic pouring on canvas*.

## **Kat Tucker**

The Judgement of King Solomon. *Alcohol marker drawing*.

As a mother, advocate, and woman I often question how I can empower myself and others. The Judgment of King Solomon is an archetypal story of impartial wisdom in making a just ruling. According to the ancient story, two mothers make claim to the same baby. King Solomon proposes for the baby to be cut in two and each woman shall receive half, thereby revealing each woman's true relationship to the child. The false mother approves of the proposed resolution while the true mother, revealing love, begs for the child to live in the care of the rival woman. This story of maternal crisis, justice and surrendering could be a metaphorical microcosm for rival conflict and the casualty that so often results. What if the presence of Solomon's wisdom hangs over every interpersonal, familial, cultural, international and global conflict, every flex of dominance? What or who is at stake? This particular piece is a direct application of the Solomon imagery to America's combative climate and by extension, our own. Given this cultural context perhaps valuable questions we might ask ourselves are: What does it mean to speak up, and what does it mean to fight for what is right? Who are the casualties of righteousness? Who is the Mother and who are we? Is there a place for sacrifice or surrender and what might that look like?...Solomon, it seems, is waiting for his ready sword to be stayed.

Bio: Kat Tucker is a mother of two who is honoured and humbled to be able to would live, learn and create on the traditional territory of the Tla'amin Nation. She has a BA in Philosophy, training in Early Childhood Education and special interests in Neurodiversity and Art. When she is not grounded in the vital routines that often govern an accomplished day with small children, it is not uncommon to find her pleasantly lost in thought, searching for patterns and meaning while traversing the vivid worlds within her imagination, wielding whatever implement of expression is available.



### **Kerensa Haynes**

1. Where She Finds Herself, the Illusion 2. She's on Stage 3. Immortal Flower oil on canvas

These images were inspired by the fashion industry. I was interested in the power women in the pictures of magazines hold and the illusions that are created through hair, makeup, clothes, styling, photography & lighting.

Bio: Kerensa has had over twenty years of gallery representation, Adele Campbell (Whistler) with her first solo show at the Bugera Matheson Gallery, Edmonton (2017). She studied Visual Arts in the 1990's at The University of Western Ontario & Game Art and Design at Vancouver Art Institute (2007). She can be found working in her studio.

### **Moira Simpson**

The Least We Can Do (2020) *Documentary film, 52 minutes.*

A small group of women in British Columbia, Canada, are relieved when the Canadian Government votes to bring Yazidi women and girls to Canada as refugees and provide them with comprehensive trauma care for their 'unimaginable suffering'. The women are horrified to later discover that the government has not followed through on all its promises. The Yazidi were brought to Canada and then neglected. Trauma services are inadequate, unplanned, and failing. As the group urges the government to keep its promise, they encounter unexpected support along the way.

Bio: Moira Simpson's work as an award-winning freelance director, cinematographer and editor of documentaries spans more than 40 years and encompasses many National Film Board of Canada, independent and television docs. Her work in film and video has always been informed by a passionate belief that film can be a powerful impetus for social justice.

### **Nina Mussellam**

Challenge to choose to be yourself. *Improvisational patchwork.*

My art is made to please myself. But I like to work outside the rigid quilting box. I like to try something new and experiment with scraps and colour.

Bio: Nina has been quilting since 1983. As a founder of the Timberlane Quilter's Guild, she has enjoyed passing on skills to others as a long time teacher and mentor. She has explored and discovered the history of quilting and needlework, but has also enjoyed the whimsy of improvisational work, the combination of embroidery and upcycled fabrics, and working with different art mediums on fabric.

### **the Noise @the\_noise\_official**

I am the Noise. I am a conceptual and visual artist. I am, at my core, a cultural provocateur. I believe in the free and uncensored nature of art and artistic expression in the larger scope of a free and just society. I work

anonymously for objectivity, privacy, artistic freedom, and independence. By pointing a mirror back at the art establishment and its influence both good and bad on creativity I hope to use the lens of culture to focus my viewers on the subtlety and grandiose nature of life. I use any medium at my disposal to try to disrupt the common understanding and spark a dialogue for open and honest conversation. I am THE NOISE, and welcome to the show.

### **Pam Hunt**

Happy Flowers, Han's Life, Untitled card, and Teddy Bear *Acrylic painting and mixed media*

### **Pearl Faust**

Speaking from Experience. *Photography installation.*

The art is a reflection, a mirror and a reaction to words which are meant to harm and confuse someone who is vulnerable. The titles in the series are direct quotes documented word for word during difficult relationships with three different men. The titles came first and the art developed from that point. The intention is not to shock but rather to express the consequences of verbal abuse through the channels of performance art. The motivating factor behind the work is. All domestic violence begins with verbal abuse. The quotes are demeaning and uncensored, a question of sanity in secret. Despite the onset of mental illness and knowing there is hardship, there is a moment of courage and the choice is made to leave. This woman believes in the power to heal but more importantly, she believes in herself.

Bio: Pearl Faust was born in Toronto, Ontario. Over the years she worked as a drawing and painting instructor, a publicist and an interior designer. Travel destinations have included Paris, Holland, Italy and New York. Pearl began studies at the accredited Ontario College of Art in Toronto. This led to spending her graduating year overseas in Florence, Italy. In addition, Pearl holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree from the University of Alberta. Her themes are expressive and convey the authenticity of human experience. Her influences include Gottfried Helnwein, Jenny Saville, Cindy Sherman and Egon Schiele: artists who work with intensity, honesty and the self-portrait.

### **rabideye - Giovanni Spezzacatena**

we emerge from rust and wax *Encaustic (beeswax and dammar resin) and mixed media on two cradled wood panels.*

Definitely open to interpretation, here are the symbolisms inherent in the shapes and materials used and their evocation for me:

- Beeswax is a feminine symbol of a matriarchal society (bees) where non-queen female worker bees produce this substance; the circle in each piece



is primordial feminine shape – no beginning or end representing life and the life cycle, as they are emerging from the darker masculine rust and dark matter created by the use of cyanotype pigment.

- The use of wood panels always links to the tree from which it derives, and the notion of time, change and growth.

- The dark red, rubbed ink in one of the panels represents the dual nature of blood –as a signifier of vitality and life, but also points to the use of red sealing wax as used on envelopes in the past.

My current work remains quite abstract, and based on simple and often geometric shapes that seem to have initially been clear, precise and clean, but appearing here in a distressed ‘final form’, having been subjected to layering, scraping and resist techniques.

The final effect for me is like that of the surface of a vintage, well-loved old child’s toy, where the bright colours and simple shapes are chipped and scratched from use, revealing perhaps other textures and colours beneath the shiny surface.

Bio:With a background in experimental animation and teaching in his native Montreal and then in Seattle, Giovanni (aka Rabideye) has always worked in multiple media, using his studio as a laboratory for experimental techniques. When not teaching design/animation/interactive design in Montreal and Seattle, Rabideye started working with beeswax, natural pigments and copper on wood panel.

### **Rina Lyshaug**

Narratives from the Emptiest Place *digital video without audio, 00:02:49.*

In this video the physical boundaries of space are challenged and made malleable as the sunlight enters and moves across its surfaces in a room. This visual exploration of depth cues and a slow moving light source illuminates the fundamental components which make up our understanding of the world in the image. The light serves as an image sculptor - simultaneously sculpting the surfaces on its path while carving out a negative space-making which in its totality forms a room. The physical boundaries of this seemingly mundane scene are made malleable, bringing movement to the solid structures presented on screen as the light traces the dimensions of the room through time. This work was presented in October 2020 as a public artwork on the VanLive! screens at Robson St and Granville St for the City of Vancouver.

### **Sarah Genge.**

One year is a long time to sit, Fearing the air we breathe *documentary/video 00:07:58*

One Year is a Long Time to Sit, Fearing the Air we Breathe is a meditation on the new ways we’ve been forced to find meaning during this locked-

down era. In my last film, 33’ Lot, I wove together six distinct characters, to create a multifaceted collage of life in Vancouver, all linked by their common place of residency: the Vancouver Special. No longer being able to enter people’s homes, I extrapolated this process to my own life and my own home. I filmed nothing; I got bored of filming nothing, so then I created scenes. This film chronicles the process of sitting still and the comfort and discomfort that comes with that.

Bio: Sarah Genge is an upcoming artist and filmmaker who lives and creates on the ancestral, occupied traditional lands of the Coast Salish people: the Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh, and Musqueam nations. Genge’s work explores the subtiles of everyday life and the wealth of information that can be drawn from hyper-focused and highly personal examinations of the quotidian. Sarah dearly misses enjoying conversations with new people.

### **Sari Spencer**

First Step Towards *quilted fabric, embellished with embroidery and beads*

First step towards the sacred feminine. Since I grew up in a Judeo Christian culture, the divine was depicted as male. If you are told that we are made in God’s image where does the sacred feminine fit in? Part of the enequity between male/female and other, I believe stems from this incomplete picture of the divine. My experiences as a woman in this world feeling that I’ve had to use “masculine” traits to “succeed” have left me feeling I have neglected the more joyful feminine aspects of my personality. This work depicts my intuitive response to embracing the anticipation of more joy in my life.

I worked as a medical illustrator for 30 years before moving to Powell River where I do a variety of tasks and creative projects.

### **Shannon Goss**

My Zen Cedar board with shells, rocks, and feathers.

The earth, the air, the water the sky - nature. These are the things that ground me, heal me, de-stress me. My barefeet on the soft floor of the forest, a deep breath of fresh clean air. This grounds me and energizes me. Swimming in the ocean with all its glorious life, de-stresses me, fills my soul with joy. Sitting on the ground gazing at the sky watching birds fly, and clouds drift by, soothes my soul. The best thing of all is the glorious gifts I find on mother earth each on precious and beautiful. Some hang here today.

### **Sharon Dennie**

1. Mother and Child 2. The Grandmother series 3. New Parents Yin and Yang *oil on wood panel BABIES*

Since the death of my brother Michael, two years ago, there has been a heaviness within me. That feeling lifted this January with the birth of his granddaughter, my great niece. This life affirming event inspired me to at-



tempt to express the tenderness, awe and hope that babies bring to us.  
I like the effect of oil paint on wood. The wood grain adds to the composition and feeling of the piece. On the down side, it is not a forgiving surface. Once a mark is made it cannot be changed or painted over, adding an extra challenge if one seeks to capture a likeness.  
The format: Sometimes I choose to work small. I like to think that a treasured piece of art might be slipped into a suitcase if a sudden departure was imminent.

"I like smallness. I like the perverse audacity of someone aiming tiny" - Kyo Maclear, *Birds Art Life*

Bio: I am undyingly grateful to call Qathet region my home for these many years. Presently my days are filled with gardening and painting and, truly, my cup runneth over.

### **Solène Chatain**

No over-the-shoulder boulder holder for me, thanks *ceramic sculpture with glazes*

Here we are, this is our life. What do we go fight? When do we step away and breathe? Musings on these is what I intend to tackle with my sculptures.

Bio: Solène Chatain is an artist from France who has been calling Powell River home for over a decade. Versed into basket, quiver and bag making in bark and leather, she is also a ceramic artist.

### **SueRussell aka Moonshine**

PR Womans Punk Rock Choir *collage and paint on canvas*

PR Womans Punk Rock Choir dares to plow forward with music always, shows how easy one can when we step outside the box. Dare to do it.

Challenge to choose to do it use are as the voice.

Always the ocean.

Wowman

Mother

Following the ways of the wild woman.

### **Tammy Dawn**

Swim in your own lane *collage*.

I made this after doing humanitarian aid research, confirming that those in need are kept needy, and dependant on aid. It felt like a bandaid to a class based system that keeps the hands of those in need stretched, without tackling the source of the problem; a loss of potential of women and girls from a gender biased system.

### **Yoko**

*Origami crane mobile*

## **THE BITTER ROOT**

This prisoner sings above corrupt order and misunderstanding

I am innocent

and, perhaps it is true

for the child reaches out tenderly to accept the curse of a bitter

root in trust

There are no walls to hold this spirit in any way but true to that

which is highest

No fetters so tight I cannot break free with a simple word

or

even a slight wish to do so

This prisoner sings to rise above the belowly in a last sonata

An Outcry

from the truest victim rising

- Pearl Faust



**Dare to Despair** (or Beware of Despair) by Annabelle Tully-Barr

I think I will find great artists, writers, singers, musicians,  
sculptors, painters  
and select only the MOTHERS;  
only those who have pieces of their hearts  
walking outside of their bodies  
to look at the great TRUTH in their work  
so that I may come to know the core  
of this rotting, fetid, fertile and glory filled  
garden.

Why do my hands shake, when I am in despair?  
Are they sifting all of the points, through trembling fingers,  
leaving only the pointless?  
How can I be filled with all knowing one day and be standing on  
a ledge, the next?

Darkness yawning before me,  
hell of my own making,  
all of the lost moments, maelstrom of wasted time,  
thundering regrets, lightning flashes of hurts inflicted.

The black dog again,  
sores weeping, smelling of death  
and tail wagging in a shameful, simpering begging.

Love me.  
Nose slimes into trembling hand.  
Love me.

**Make Medicine**, by Annabelle Tully-Barr

(Written after ARWG meeting, January 25, 2021. Inspired by Adriana's beautiful close-up face and eyes during that meeting, her evident passion and the other medicine makers present.)

**Make medicine;**  
with your words, your spirit,  
your authentic  
HEART.

**Make medicine;**  
with your breath  
breathing IN the discord and unrest,  
breathing OUT the compassion  
and PEACE of deep connection.

**Make medicine;**  
with your stories,  
your wounds and their healings,  
your learnings and  
observations.  
Maybe in this time of  
WAITING  
for medicine from  
the OUTSIDE,  
we need to make medicine  
on the INSIDE.

Make a story of CREATION.  
How was YOUR world made?  
How does it SUSTAIN and RENEW?  
Are you PART of that CREATION?

I SAY YES!  
YES! YES!  
We are ALL part of that creation!  
We are all painters on this vast, unfolding CANVAS.  
We are all in poetic conversation;  
in an energetic dance;  
in a kinetic clashing of atoms!

We are in this TOGETHER, truly,  
we ARE,  
TRULY.  
WE ARE.

**Make medicine.**



Just Around The Corner  
Where there's a mountain  
There's always a river nearby  
Where there are storm clouds  
Around the corner waits a blue sky  
So hitch your pants back up  
You little buttercup  
It may be raining, but it won't last,  
Put on your best damn smile cuz you're goin' in style  
Troubles will be a thing of the past.  
When your ship don't come in  
You still give 'em your bodacious grin  
When the blues got you down  
Turn your frown right upside down,  
So hitch your pants back up You little buttercup  
It may be raining, but it won't last,  
Put on your best damn smile cuz you're goin' in style  
Troubles will be a thing of the past.

J. E. Saunders

introductory text, image, and catalogue design: Laurance Playford-Beaudet  
printed at The Art Centre 2021  
font is Gill Sans MT





The Art Centre  
**Public Gallery**

215 - 6975 ALBERNI STREET



Powell River Council  
for Arts & Culture



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