

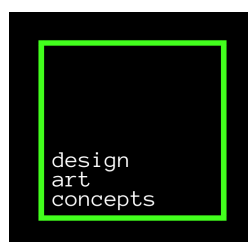
vCIES 2020 Art Project

An Overwhelming Experience:

THE HUMAN - EARTH RELATIONSHIP

Humans have become the single most defining force on the planet, and the evidence for this is overwhelming. Earth and its processes have been affected more than all other natural forces combined. This inaugural **vCIES 2020 Art Project** presents a multidisciplinary and international body of work from several artists combining fine art, photography, short film, and research. **vCIES** participants have created art experiences that engage viewers in an exploration of the complex and indelible human signature on the Earth.

Curated by Maria Apostolidis





*Deconstruct to Reconstruct:
Examining Collective Digital Archives to Tell Her Story*

AREEJ MAWASI

<https://vimeo.com/414652290>

Areej Mawasi's presentation deconstructs digital media tweets to reconstruct new meanings, creating a narrative that depicts a broader perspective of what a tweet can share.

Building upon the notion that knowledge is co-constructed and the fact that technology can afford multiple types of interactions, Mawasi suggests that these interactions can expand our communication with each other to construct new meanings of the world.



Venezuela: Land of Contrasts

Sara Michelle Pan Algarra

<https://youtu.be/6MtxnogbGko>

Once one of the richest countries in Latin America with the world's largest oil reserves, Venezuela has been in political, economic, and humanitarian free fall in recent years. Many observers blame Maduro, along with his predecessor, Hugo Chavez, whose policies pointed toward helping the poor and reducing inequality instead sent the economy toward decline, with political corruption reportedly rampant. "Venezuela Land of Contrasts" is a performance installation that juxtaposes the nostalgia of Venezuela's beautiful landscapes and culture, with the violence of the current humanitarian crisis in the country.

The piece consists of a photo exhibit, pre-recorded stories about the violence in the country, and a small room with a projection with landscapes of nature in Venezuela and wall filled with names of victims from the violence, along with two Venezuelan performers who stand in front of the names, barely moving, sometimes singing songs that are known to Venezuelans.

The physical presence and spontaneity of the performers drives an impactful image to honor the lives of those who have died. This piece captures but an instance of what human actions can do to nature, burying it under a quagmire of political violence. It is a piece about celebrating the beauty of Venezuela,

its people, its nature, its culture; and an act of resistance against the disappearance of the country's beauty, something that every Venezuelan carries with them.



What is buen vivir?

*Images of the meanings of well-being by photographer - researchers living in
Andean Ecuador*

Jennifer Fricas

<https://youtu.be/24gBLwJNB1w>

Jennifer Fricas' art installation presents a series of photographs that shed light on notions of well-being as an embodied interaction between human beings, their environments and each other, from the perspective of Cosmovision Andina, an epistemology of the South.

An overarching implication from Fricas' study is actively addressed by this art installation: the ways in which visual research methods hold unique possibilities for advancing both active community participation in research and the understanding of indigenous knowledges of well-being and practices of development.



Distant Thunder from the East Won't Disturb a Morning Car Wash

Reyila Hadeer

<https://youtu.be/la-UwWfrgQo>

Reyila Hadeer creates a narrative about exile, powerlessness censorship and searching. Through this photographic inquiry project, the oppressed emotional energy caused by a forced ideology, is transformed into images of non-human objects. Images speak, as a form of healing, a way of expressing, and a possibility for carving an invisible home. These photos are created with a certain emotion, worldview, opinion, curiosity, awe, and desire. They are honest moments of a life in exile. In this photography inquiry, objects in the images are more than human, beyond human, and connect to humanity.

This inquiry is situated in the relational flow of life between visible and invisible, human and non-human, stillness and movement. Looking beyond human allows us to delink, feel, reconnect, express, search for inner peace, and open a new dimension of knowledge production. This photographic inquiry presents a new possibility for the reconfiguration of the relationship between human and non-human. This project challenges the current dominant way of knowledge production; at the same time, it uncovers the oppressed indigenous way of seeing/knowing/being.



Envisioning the Academic Arboretum

Amy Scott Metcalfe

<https://youtu.be/KW1DjrycflM>

"Envisioning the Academic Arboretum" is a photo essay that consists of ten fine art photographs taken on the Vancouver campus of the University of British Columbia. The series contains "portraits" of ten trees, each with a unique position and profile from which we might consider knowledge ecosystems that include other-than-human lifeforms. In relation with the human imagination, trees offer a vision of inter-generational time, transporting us beyond our own life course. As well, trees within landscaped environments, such as the university campus, contain histories of movement and transplantation, incorporating these localized or transcontinental migrations into their material presence. In the academic campus environment, trees are silent witnesses to educational change as well as climatological shifts. Furthermore, the academic arboretum speaks of Western epistemology and scientific categorization, supplanting localized tree species and ecological systems. Each tree has a story to tell about prevailing within the conditions that surround us, pointing toward the future that is just beyond our sight.

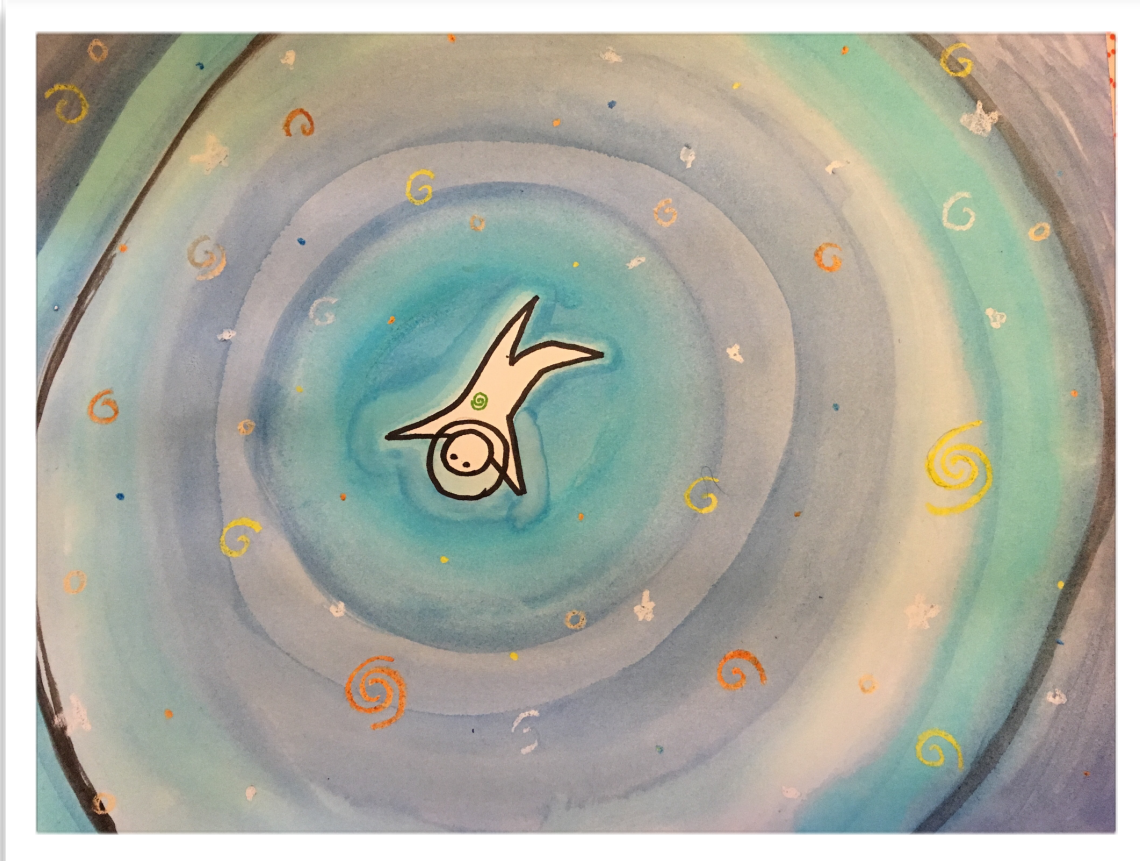


Delphinos

Maisa Mreiwed

Maisa Mreiwed's designs and artwork reflect her personal journey woven together with her connection to nature and fabrics as well as her studies of archaeology, art, religious iconography and the history of fashion. She presents a multimedia art project that examines the semiotic properties of textiles and their role in instigating change. Her research interests include the cultural, socio-political, historical and religious narratives of art, traditional costumes, textiles, and embroidery, as well as art and design training and development.

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Worlds Between and Within

Caitlin Shepherd

Caitlin Shepherd's art series, *Worlds Within and Between*, was created during a two-year period as a graduate student who was navigating through the academic journey of two graduate programs: International Education Management and International Policy and Development.

The selected images reflect the engagement of deep spiritual and existential inquiry that occurred during this time alongside of the curricula provided on campus; the creation was a means to process and engage with the invisible lessons taking place concurrently with coursework.

After the time that passed since coursework completion, the artist believes that these images capture the aforementioned "concealed" learning that occurred behind the backdrop of program learning objectives. The art engages the viewer in an exploration of the unplanned transformation that occurs when one engages deeply in critical self-reflection in relation to the subject matter encountered through an education program.



Incubation of Community Education in Super-Aged Society

Yingxue Yang

<https://youtu.be/iaolmlQsRes>

Yingxue Yang's research interests include lifelong learning, education reform in contemporary China and gerontology as they span across various topics such as community, welfare, environment, self-government, culture, and history within the field of social education, mainly in the East Asian region.

Organizer: MAKINO Atsushi, Professor of the Graduate School of Education, and the Vice Director of the Institute of Gerontology at the University of Tokyo. His main research interests include social education, lifelong learning, community development, and education in aging and birthrate-declining society in Asian countries.

Participation by The Social Education and Lifelong Learning Theory Laboratory of the University of Tokyo.



Basic Education Coalition

<https://youtu.be/zAKJORjxnIk>

In this rapidly changing world, we cannot fully know the demands of the future workforce and its leadership. But we can do is provide the youngest children with strong foundations to responsibly engage with a more than human world. Through this interactive art exhibit, the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Group of the Basic Education Coalition (BEC) reminds CIES participants of the reason for our collective work: Healthy and curious children are the global leaders of tomorrow. In addition to building competencies in emergent literacy, mathematics, and science, ECE is the foundation for developing executive functioning and interpersonal skills that will be essential in a deeply interconnected world. During conflict and crisis, ECE helps families build resilience and rebound from adversity. Quality pre-primary education can close the equity gap for disadvantaged and vulnerable populations and prepare children for future leadership. This exhibit displays original work by children and educators around the world, collected by BEC members during implementation of ECE programs. Please take a moment to reconnect with your inner creative and use the provided art supplies to contribute to our community mural.



Locating The Unknown

Qais Assali

<https://theunknownmsu.weebly.com>

How to use art, design and visual communication tools to unpack geopolitical identities?

From this question, artists & designers from Palestinian Association for Contemporary Art (PACA) and Michigan State University (MSU) created new forms of exchange, challenging borders of language, politics, geography, technology and time-scale to use as points of departure.

In opening this collaboration, two opposing names were given to the exchange. From Palestine: "Non-Geographic, Non-Political Dialogue" and from Michigan: "Critical Geopolitics in Collaborative Practices." Immediately the desire to make non-political art clashed with the importance of addressing the poignant positionalities of the collaborators in relation to one another.

These works were created in a liminal space between two groups entangled within the reality of an occupation. The MSU Global Travel Registry classifies Palestine simply as "Unknown." Inevitably, this act invents a new set of borders between what is "unknown" and what is acknowledged. This systematic erasure represent this exchange more than either of the names had created initially.



Loxa

Myriam Hernandez

[Art Presentation Here](#)

LOXA is a virtual reality short film that invites you to discover the world of a 15 years-old student who lives in the mountains of Chiapas, Mexico.

This experience gives you an intimate perspective of Loxa's life. Her family has lived in the same conditions for generations, they are peasants and they speak Tsotsil - a Mayan language. In this virtual journey into their village, you can experience how interconnected they live with the Earth. Loxa takes care of 11 sheep and works in the fields after school. She is the first female in her family to get into high school and learn to speak Spanish. Her story portrays how indigenous communities conserve a lifestyle embedded with Nature. This is an authentic story, produced by Escalera Foundation, that aims to give visibility about the challenges that indigenous youth face to accessing education, while also recognizing their cultural richness and wisdom. Loxa is an example of how women from these communities are foundational for preserving and nurturing traditions and linkages with the Planet.

Thank you!