

For Immediate Release: May 16, 2022

Imagine and Share Stories of the Unseen Forces that Animate the Land Around Us in Community-based Art Project at the Art Gallery of Regina

Artists Linda Duvall & Jillian McDonald Challenge Ideas of Art and Western Science with Their Participatory Project *Messages from the Rocks - Stories of the Invisible*

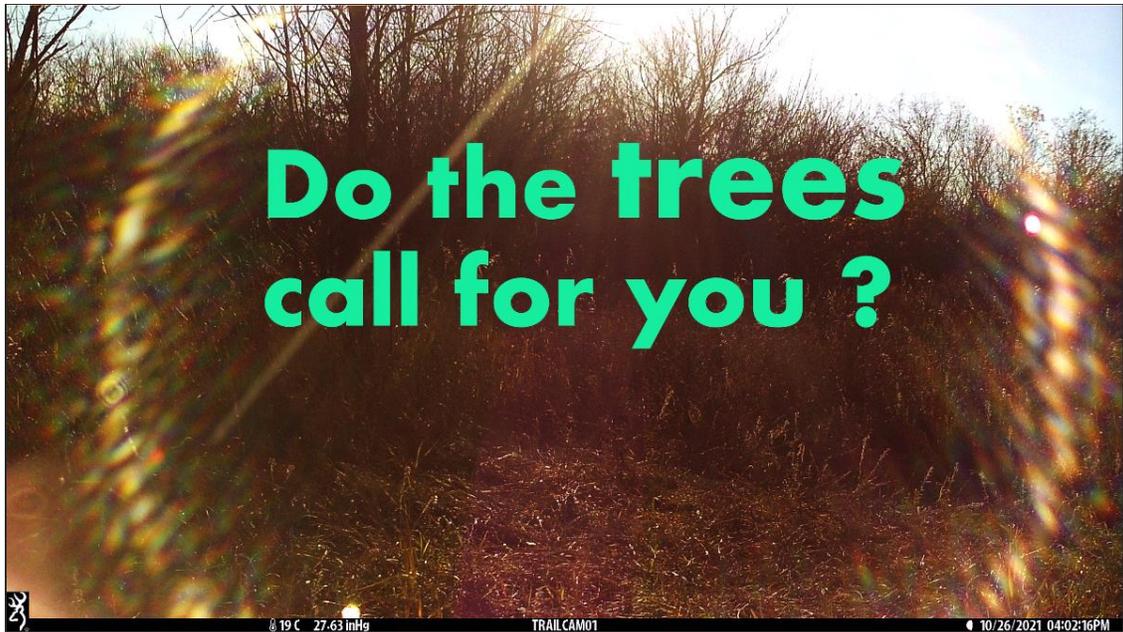


Image: Flag created by Linda Duvall and Jillian McDonald for their project *Messages from the Rocks - Stories of the Invisible* using trail camera photograph from Royal Saskatchewan Museum, Regina Urban Wildlife Project, 2022.

Regina, SK:

Artists Linda Duvall (Saskatoon) and Jillian McDonald (Brooklyn, New York) will spend three weeks co-creating their exhibition *Messages from the Rocks - Stories of the Invisible* at the Art Gallery of Regina with the public, beginning on May 23.

Funded by a grant from Sk-arts Artists In Communities program, *Messages from the Rocks - Stories of the Invisible* is both a community-engaged project and a creation residency. Duvall and McDonald's activities include events, artworks in the public realm and transforming the art gallery into a laboratory for participatory art-making. Their expansive project includes:

- An exhibition co-created with gallery visitors;
- Posters and flags;
- Nature walks;
- An electronics workshop;
- A field guide co-authored with school children, senior citizens and other members of the public.

Duvall and McDonald spent two years connecting with the Land and the people of Regina. Travel restrictions meant that in June 2021, the artists met with vertebrate biologists, provincial building project managers, archeologists, Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and geologists over online video conferences, followed by a one-week residency at the Art Gallery of Regina in August 2021. A key concept for their project emerged from the artists' visit to Regina: listening to the Land and the forces that animate it.

Messages from the Rocks - Stories of the Invisible extends beyond the gallery and expands notions of what Art is. The artists propose Art as a transformative research model that values participation, creation, experience, and the unexplained.

Duvall and McDonald's project shifts ways of understanding the world around us from Western scientific models of proof to an appreciation of the unknowable and the power of imagination. For example, their project includes publicly posted posters and flags printed with wildlife trail camera images marred with light flares and motion blurs, discarded by scientists as worthless. Paired with questions such as, "Do the trees call for you?" and "Have you ever been carried by the wind?" the artists create new value for these "uncinematic miasmas" as stimulators of imagination.

The artists will turn the Art Gallery of Regina into a laboratory for experimentation and co-creation of the exhibition with the public from June 2 to July 31. Pictures, stories, and artifacts contributed by community members all form part of the completed exhibition alongside artworks, such as a two-channel video of the artists' connection across distances through the shared act of digging in their rural (Duvall) and urban (McDonald) backyards and delicately foreboding drawings of holes.

In a series of participatory experiences unfolding over three weeks, the artists invite Regina residents to join them for free "nature walks" led by scientists, knowledge-keepers, and audio artists. The walks are opportunities to discover what we may typically fail to notice: animals in the urban landscape, spirits that live on the Land, and sounds of animals and electronics beyond human hearing.

Another participatory aspect of *Messages from the Rocks - Stories of the Invisible* is an alternative field guide to unexplained events in Regina with human and non-human spirits, wanderers, or legends. Through partnerships

with Prairie Sky School and Nature Regina and connections with the Elphinstone Senior's Centre, the artists invite diverse people to share stories of extraordinary encounters with the unseen and unexplainable.

Public activities will begin with a participatory "rock symphony," presented in collaboration with New Dance Horizons, and a flag-raising ceremony during the Cathedral Village Arts Festival parade on Monday, May 23.

Messages from the Rocks - Stories of the Invisible demonstrates the Art Gallery of Regina's commitment to creating engaging and creative experiences where gallery visitors recognize themselves and their experiences in artworks while challenging conceptions of art as merely decorative.

Experience the invisible through free public activities and create alongside artists Linda Duvall and Jillian McDonald in the gallery. View the full schedule of events at www.artgalleryofregina.ca, drop into the Art Gallery of Regina from June 2 to July 31, and join us to celebrate *Messages from the Rocks - Stories of the Invisible* with a public reception on Friday, June 3, from 7 to 9 PM.

Admission to the Art Gallery of Regina is always free; we request that visitors wear medical masks. We acknowledge the City of Regina's support for our accessible programs.

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Contact us to interview Linda Duvall & Jillian McDonald in English.

Links:

[artists' bios and CVs](#)

[reproducible images](#)

For Calendar Listings:

Exhibition title: *Messages from the Rocks - Stories of the Invisible*

Artist(s): Linda Duvall & Jillian McDonald

Dates: May 23, 28, 29 and June 2 - July 31, 2022

Opening reception: June 3, 7:00-9:00 PM

Short description:

Linda Duvall and Jillian McDonald invite you to share your stories of encounters with unseen forces at Art Gallery of Regina.

Website: www.artgalleryofregina.ca/messagesfromtherocks





Images clockwise from top:

The Dig, Linda Duvall & Jillian McDonald, two-channel video, (Linda Duvall digging on her land in Saskatchewan [left]; Jillian McDonald excavating a hole in her Brooklyn backyard [right]), 2019; Flag created by Linda Duvall and Jillian McDonald for their project *Messages from the Rocks - Stories of the Invisible* using trail camera photograph from Royal Saskatchewan Museum, Regina Urban Wildlife Project, 2022; wildlife trail camera image courtesy of Royal Saskatchewan Museum, Regina Urban Wildlife Project, 2021.

AGR

Engaging.
Contemporary.
Art.

Located on Treaty 4, the traditional territory of the Cree, Saulteaux, Nakota, Lakota and Dakota peoples, and the homeland of the Métis people, the Art Gallery of Regina (AGR) promotes the development and appreciation of contemporary art, with an emphasis on Saskatchewan artists. Our programming focuses on the voices and experiences of Saskatchewan artists and visitors. AGR programming encompasses exhibitions (featuring established, emerging and recreational artists), education, publishing, workshops and artists talks. Through free public exhibitions and dedicated support for artists and innovation, the AGR has over 45 years as a supportive and creative cultural hub connecting artists and our communities.

The Art Gallery of Regina is an autonomous, independent public art gallery with non-profit and charitable status. We are a tenant in the Neil Balkwill Civic Arts Centre located within the vibrant Cathedral Village neighbourhood in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada.

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE SUPPORT OF OUR FUNDERS AND PARTNERS

ARTISTS IN COMMUNITY



CONTRIBUTOR



ACCESSIBILITY FUND



PROJECT PARTNERS

- Nature Regina
- Prairie Sky School
- holophon audio arts
- Royal Saskatchewan Museum, Regina Urban Wildlife Project
- Elphinstone Seniors' Centre

The Art Gallery of Regina gratefully acknowledges the support of its core funders and sponsors: