

MGZ

GLOBAL DAY OF CREATIVE ACTION



MICRO GALLERIES ZINE

SEPTEMBER 2019

ISSUE
#0

MGZ

ISSUE #0
SEPTEMBER 2019

A PROJECT BY
MICRO GALLERIES

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MGZ: **SNIPPETS OF SMALL ACTIONS AND HONEST THOUGHTS**

This zine has been created during spring and summer 2019 when news of tremendous disasters, natural and political, occurred.

At this moment in time when we feel the worlds' problems are too big to solve, it is easy to lose hope. But still we have the opportunity to dream of positive change that can impact our society in a multitude of ways.

Right now, all over the world there are many people who know individualism is no longer the solution. We can join forces to make people believe again that love is stronger than hate, and tolerance and cooperation are the key to our survival.

We might not find a solution to all our problems but we know that we do not stand alone and together we can make the difference we need.

I was lucky to talk to five amazing people and brave artists and ask them a few questions about themselves, their practice and future projects.

I wish you to embrace the times we are living, learn from each other and that you enjoy the reading.

Olga Trevisan

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INTRODUCTION BY

KAT ROMA GREER (HONG KONG)

In times of austerity, the arts are always the first to be flung to the side. We are all feeling the pinch of this nasty little era where we are left scrambling for money and opportunity. Sounds familiar, right? And right when creative voices could be integral to making the global changes we need made! But artists are a little like the Hong Kong Protestors I am currently living amongst - they can Be Like Water: they find ways to move around, over, through; they reclaim, erode, redefine and rebuild. When conventional spaces don't open doors then we forge a new way. Zines are a slightly-to-the-left-of-the-river way of grasping publishing space from the stranglehold of Murdochian fake news fandana. We are creatives, we have things to say, people to elevate, ideas to propose - so here they are, a huge first for Micro Galleries and an even larger thanks to the exceptional efforts of our indefatigable Artistic Associate, Olga Trevisan.

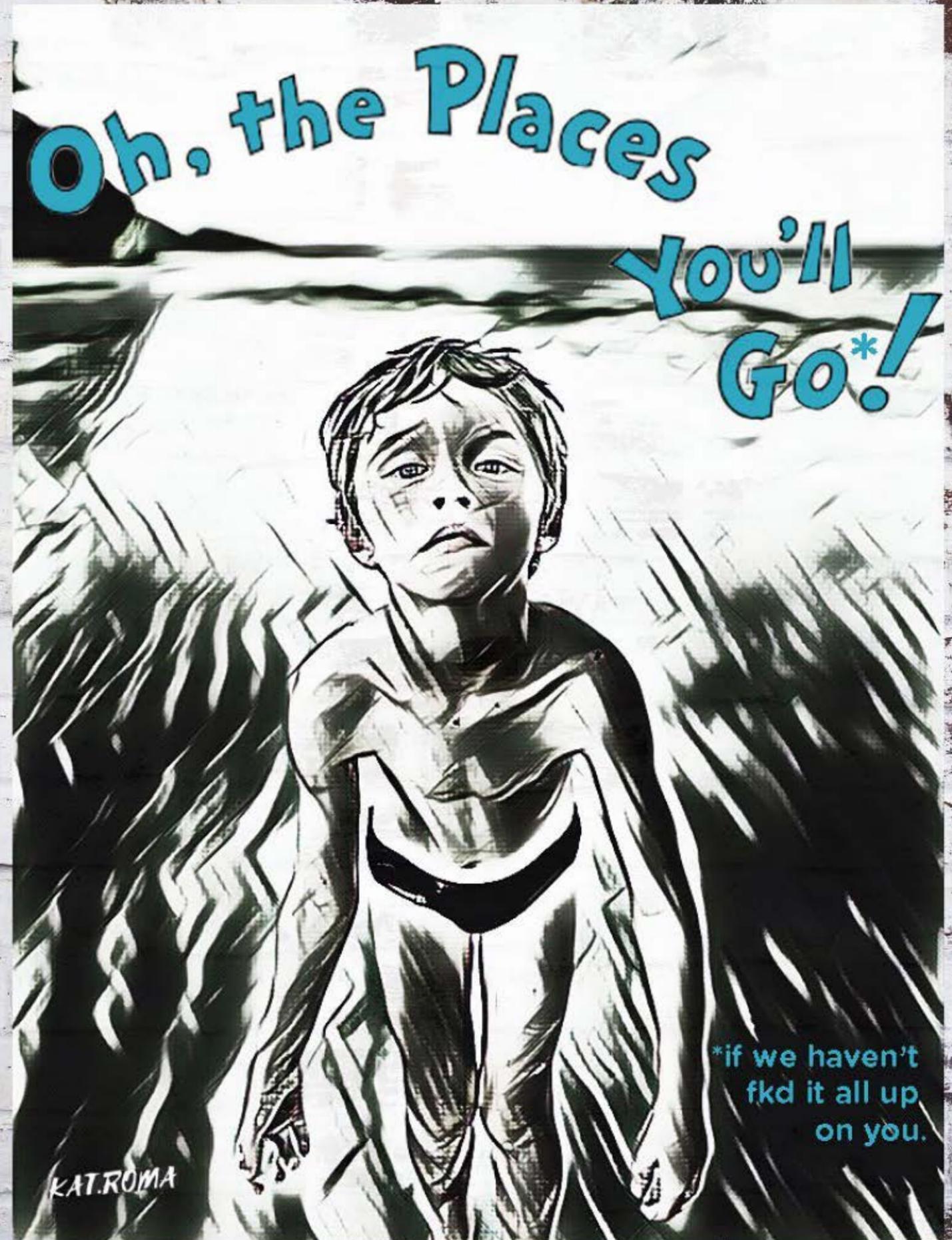
This publication is really everything Micro Galleries is about: a small contribution to a big conversation, where we hope to make tiny positive change that has snow-balling impact. This issue is exploring the hottest topic in an even hotter environment - climate disruption. This month will see world-wide strikes relating to climate disruption and political inaction, and Micro Galleries has ear-marked September 21 as the day creatives are heard. The Micro Galleries Global Day of Creative Action will mobilise people around the world to present works - small and large, professional and amateur, provocative and subtle, to provoke awareness, dialogue and positive change about the most vital issue of our time.

What you will glimpse here are some of the key contributors to this upcoming project: the words, thoughts and visuals of some of the most extraordinary creatives that I have the pleasure to convince every day to be part of our small creative gang. They give above and beyond constantly, and I hope as you slide and scroll, you get a sense of this as well as their creative dreams, innovative ideas, alternate possibilities, and the crazy inside each of them that's determined to find new ways to forge forward into a more equitable, just, sustainable world.

Kat Roma Greer
Artistic Director
Micro Galleries

MICRO GALLERIES is a free, independent global arts initiative that uses art as a vehicle to create positive change.

We do this through creative interventions in public spaces, workshops, art tours, symposiums, think tanks, and residencies. We work together with communities who are in some kind of social or creative need, and together create new opportunities, imaginings, and creative possibilities.



GLOBAL DAY OF CREATIVE ACTION 21st SEPTEMBER 2019

Sick of climate inaction? So are we!

So we are starting a new, free movement: a global day of creative action to coincide with the UN Climate Action Summit and youth Climate Summit. While people sit in rooms discussing the urgency of slow change, we will be all over the world, creating small change with urgency!

And we want **YOU** to be part of it.

On the 21st September, we are calling out for you to mobilise within your community, and develop, present and document a public, creative response to climate disruption; impact the world right where you are.

This work can be **ANYTHING**: mural, performance, installation, a reading, a poster, projection mapping, music - anything you want to contribute that heightens the awareness of this issue, and creates positive change - for your community, and the global community. It can be as big or small as you want, it can go for 30 seconds or 24 hours. It's all up to you!

Climate disruption art makes the biggest threat to our existence a cultural reality, and provides a way for us to include the voices of the most vulnerable communities around the world.

So we are going to put climate disruption art everywhere and make it accessible to everyone. **GET INVOLVED!**

HOW TO PARTICIPATE:

- 1 - Head to our website: www.microgalleries.org/dayofaction
- 2 - Choose if you would like to register to create your own work, or register to be part of our open source project
- 3 - We will send you the information package with all the details and the templates you need!
- 4 - Be an awesome community member on 21 September!

JOIN THE GLOBAL DAY OF CREATIVE ACTION

To register or follow the works live on the day, go to www.microgalleries.org

21 September 2019

Creatives from all over the world are presenting works - small and large, professional and amateur, provocative and subtle, to be part of the global conversation about climate change...and we want YOU to be one of them.

Artwork: liina klaus

INSIDE OUT PROJECT



FUGA (Fundacion Gilberto Alzate Avendaño) encouraging communities to use the **Inside Out Project** platform to create the space for awareness, recognition and change. Using Art to tell stories of humanity, empathy and solidarity for a new Bronx. Focus on communities generally overlooked and forgotten, by celebrating them intermix with the common population in large, breaking the barriers that exist in the every day society.

Luis German Gomez Garcia-Herreros
Bogotá (Colombia)
September 2019

INTERVIEW WITH SHANNON DOWNEY (USA)

Hi Shannon,

For everyone who is reading us. Can you please use your words to tell us briefly about you?

I am an artist, craftivist, community builder, and general instigator. I'm a community organiser disguised fibre artist. Everything I do is around building, growing, and engaging community, and just happen to use art to do that.

Do you remember a precise moment when everything started?

I ran a digital marketing company for 10 years and I was connected to devices 24/7. I was always on my phone because I had to be, and I was really getting burnt out from being on a device all the time. I was on Etsy one day and I saw a cross stitch pattern of Star Trek, and I love Star

Trek, I thought "that is so funny and I learnt how to cross stitch in fifth grade and I haven't done it since then" I was just "let me do this one because it is funny". I stitched it that weekend, and I felt so good when I was done because I put down my phone and didn't even think about it while I made something with my hands. So I started stitching everyday and very quickly started making my own art. Things really evolved with the gun violence project that I did. I live in Chicago and am surrounded by gun violence. I had a bullet coming through my bedroom window while I was sleeping. I realised that I had no personal connection to guns. I have never held one, never shot one, but they are so present in my life. That night I stitched a gun and it was different

from anything I've done before. I stitched one to giving myself time to think about it and to process my experience. I put it on instagram (because is not real if is not on instagram) and people asked me if I would make it into a pattern so they could stitch one too. They started tagging me in images of their guns, so I asked them what they were going to do with them. They had no real plan they just wanted to be able to stitch one and think about gun violence.

I asked them to send them to me and I would do something with them. I had no idea what. Within a couple of weeks, I had 150 and I was like "wow-shit, I better really do something!" I gave everyone one more month to send me as many as they could. At the end of that month I had

250 from around the world. I partnered with a n arts program for young people in Chicago who have been shot called Project FIRE and we had an art show. We took over a gallery and we had hundreds of people come to the show. We sold all the pieces and raised over 5000\$ to fund the next semester of their program. The gun violence project was the first craftivism project I started and it showed me the unlimited potential of this type of mobilizing.

Do you have any advice for emerging craftivist? Just start doing! I was actually stitching something similar last night: there is a sweet spot between overthinking and under planning, where you just start doing.

Which is your biggest challenge between digital and analog?

I don't know if it's a challenge so much but I want to find ways to share physical space with the folks that spend time with online. I want to be in a space where I'm actually hanging out with all of them!

That is something that drives me insane. I can have very profound conversation digitally, but then they are across the country or around the world. Yet I'm so grateful I get to meet people, and know and talk to people that I would not cross paths with if it were not for these tools. I try to find ways to make that happen, if I am talking to someone in Chicago and we are having this beautiful online conversation then - no, we are getting together, we are having coffee, stitching together or whatever, we must meet.

Whenever I travel, I try to host a stitch-up so that I can meet the folks that live there that I know digitally.

Which are the main differences you experience between your online and global community and the event and workshop you host?

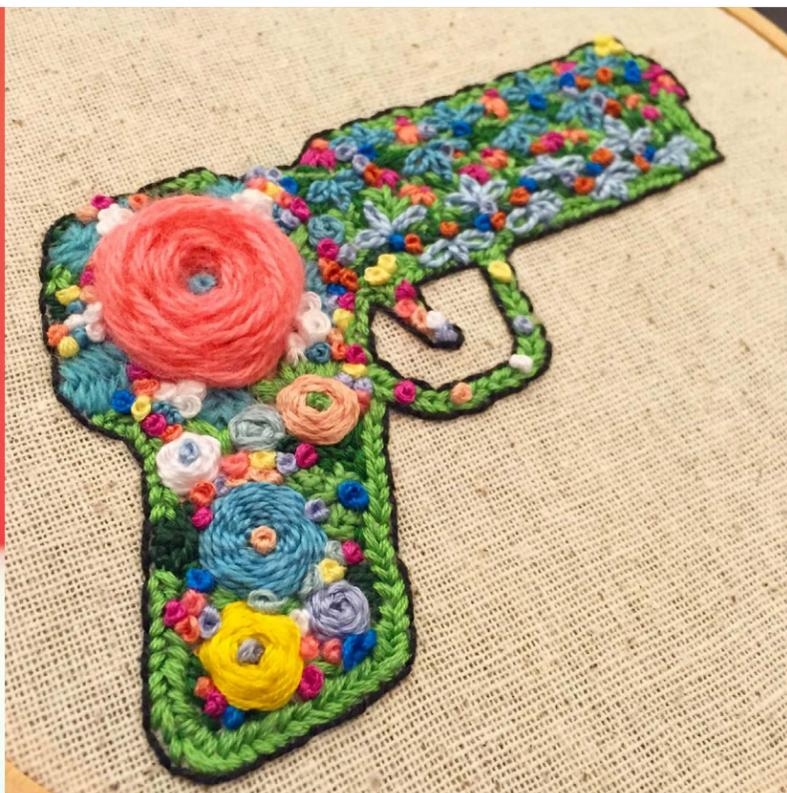
Interestingly, there are very little differences. I mean I don't have any trolls showing up at my workshops yelling they want to kill me, the way that happens online. I think I've managed to model and curate my digital space in such a way that people

understand what is and is not allowed in my digital community spaces. It took years, but it's rare that I have to intervene. People are amazing and once you show them how digital communication can be done - even around hard topics - they are super invested in doing it in a way that is productive and useful.

My workshops and community events have the exact same spirit behind them. I love it!

Do you think there was a need to explore this medium out of it's traditional way?

Yes, if I were to just type out my words and put it on instagram it's unlikely people would stop or engage as much as they do now. It's the fact that the words are embroidered that causes them to pause just long enough for me to hit them with my writing. It catches their attention because it is not the traditional messages you would expect to see stitched out, like "home sweet home" or puppies and kittens. It's "Fuck the patriarchy" for example. I nearly always photograph my pieces



in their embroidery hoops because I want to make it clear that this is the future of this medium. It's all very intentional in order to get people to think differently about the medium and the topic.

- You have very fast reactions to burning topic and you have the ability of taking us off guard -

Yes. I'm a fast stitcher. It's key to my social media success - to be able to respond quickly, or immediately to what is happening in the world. I've gotten really good at working quickly, getting my point across, and doing it quickly. I call them my "quick stitches" and they are basically just for social media. Their job is just to start a conversation or bring attention to a topic.

Street art style and embroidery. Public vs private. Fast and slow.

I actually just started a street art campaign because I've always wanted to, but as I'm a fibre artist the medium is not very conducive to street art. When I was drawing out the pattern for the pieces that are part of my new installation, I thought "well these would be very cool wheat-paste posters" and I was like "can I do that? Of course I can!" and I had so much fun that I put them on my website so other people could participate. Now I'm being tagged by people all over the world who are putting my stuff up. Then I had this woman from Paris reach out to me and volunteer to translate them into French! Now I have folks translating them into Spanish, Romanian, Swedish, and German. I'm so excited that people want to translate them

and share them around the world in their native languages.

You've been working on many different projects. Would you like to talk about one you care particularly?

The *Badass HERstory* project which is my like my big/it's going to take the rest of my life project. This project is basically why I do all these workshops - to get people to participate in it. The idea is that women and gender nonbinary folks share their story on a 12 inch x 12 inch piece of fabric and send them to me. I want a million pieces! Then we will stitch them together to create a massive public art piece. It has been an incredibly enlightening experience this part year, working with women on their stories. It's actually quite challenging to most folks (myself included). Making time to think about their life, and their story and then sum it up and share it is no easy process. That said, I watch magic happen in those workshops. True, profound, transformation. It's interesting to see the things they come up with and the connections that their stories make with other stories.

My plan is to spend a year travelling the US in a van to bring the project across the US to get as many people together as possible, meet my digital community in person, and get folks to spend time exploring and sharing their stories. After that, I'll start my international journey.

As you are one of the five selected artists for the 21st of September for the global day of creative action.

When you became aware of the climate crisis?

I feel like it's been forever. I grew up in nature and was taught to respect and care for my natural environment. In high school I remember recycling became a big public action mes-

sage/campaign. In college, the public message seemed to shift to water. It was always just sort of infuriating to me how the more I learned about climate change and our impending doom the more the public messaging was directed at people taking micro actions. Like - why are we not talking about the MASSIVE industrial issues, agriculture, and global policy?! There was not real terror. That's changed. I believe people are actually experiencing terror now. I'm ok with that. We should all be terrified but terrified into massive

action! Unless there is massive global action or some sort of miracle and all of these corporate entities stop their bullshit; we are dead. It's not real uplifting but it's very real. You can tell people to recycle and cut down on single-use plastics but none of that

will matter if we aren't taking massive political action to end the capitalist-driven destruction of the earth by corporations and governments.

Do you feel your life and art practice change since then and how?

My art came out of my activism. The activism came first and then art became a tool for myself and my process. And think subsequently about different things and to engage community. So the art grew out to extend my activism.

Can you briefly tell us about what you are planning to make of the day?

I put together

a group of ten women in Chicago who are environmental experts, activists, and artists. We are doing a few different things. Here in Chicago we have the "Chicago Climate Action Agreement" it was a lot of work by a lot of people and organizations, a very diverse cross-section of Chi-

agoans put it together. It is essentially a constitution of Chicago's commitment to our future as it relates to the impact of climate change on our region. Because we are a city that exists on the Great Lakes, we have access to the largest source of freshwater in the world. Chicago will become a home for climate refugees. Our actions for the day are built around the idea of "what can we be doing now to mitigate? And what can we be doing to make sure we are building a vision of a just future in a time when we will be experiencing massive migration to our area?" Chicago is a sanctuary city right now. How will that status grow and evolve as we start/continue to welcome climate refugees? Many people don't know about the CCAA because is pretty new, so it's going to be a sort of pop up educational campaign.

We are going to have a postcard campaign as well as an interactive flag-building experience. The Chicago flag is VERY important and loved by Chicagoans. The design of the flag is built around symbolism of both our lake and our river. We feel this is an exciting opportunity to design the flag of Chicago's future as a welcoming space for climate refugees. We will have a group stitching the new Chicago flag and bringing to our new Mayor. The postcard campaign is going to be driven by the flag design, and serve as an educational opportunity to teach people about the CCAA, have them sign on to support the agreement, and then mail the postcards to our elected officials who are working on environmental justice issues right now.

I feel like you always find just the right message and it's incredible the mix of feeling you are able to provoke through embroidery. What's your feeling about being today an artists today talking about the urgent and traditional problems that are finally disrupt keeping hope and mood up? What's the biggest struggle?

I don't feel negative about things, it's just this sort of reality that I'm observing and I'm doing what I can to help others see. The thing is - I believe in the power of humans, and the power of humans to change. This is our moment to prove that we are capable of great feats of change. We can. If we don't - we die. It's that simple. If I can help people consider some of these things and take action then I believe I am contributing to what can amount to a groundswell of massive change. There is always hope and I truly believe in humans and those are the two things that keep me do what I'm doing and keep me moving forward in hope and joy.

Do you have questions for out there? What would you like to say to someone who is reading you at the moment?

My question is always: What are you going to do to change the world tomorrow?



INTERVIEW WITH LARA FURST (AUSTRALIA)



Hi Lara,

When did you get closer to photography?

There have been 3 times in my life where I picked up a camera, but twice I put it down because it wasn't the right time. The most lasting time was 16 years ago when my son was born - back in the days of analogue!

Can you share a funny fact about one of your cameras?

My camera has won awards! The company which cleans it has said that it is consistently the dirtiest camera brought in for cleaning! That's because I don't hesitate to get up in the middle of things.

What could be an advice for emerging photographer?

Trust yourself. Everyone starts off not so great, but it is practice and refining what is important to you that will make you a better photographer. I love photographing people, but I have tried almost everything. Dogs are probably a close second.

I know you are always very busy on different projects, which is the one you care the most at the moment?

The storytelling aspect!

77% of Australians currently believe in climate change, according to the climate institute. The problem is that we think it is going to happen to future generations. My story-telling project seeks to find people who have either experienced displacement due to climate change or simply witnessed the effects of climate change in their environment. I want people to be able to relate to the people in the images and see themselves, so it's quite a diverse span of life we're talking about. I've purposely sought non high profile humans because that relatability is important to me.

Climate Disruption, when you became more aware of the crisis and how has your life changed since then?

I can remember being young (a long time ago) and thinking that hippies barking on about oil running out and green power were loopy. It was a cultural thing - that viewpoint was scorned. I think I really began to realise that maybe the hippies were right after seeing Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth", but it is the last few years that have really made me scared about doing nothing. That baby that started the photography is 16 and I want him to live in a world where we can all survive. **Do you believe artists can connect and explain the urgency of the problem -** I believe that artists can act as interpreters. They are good at taking a message and simplifying it.

What do you see as the biggest struggle?

Focus and finding the hope. It is a huge problem, but we all have to join in.

You are one of the selected artists for MicroGalleries Global Day of Creative Action. What will be your intervention for the 21 st of September?

I will be releasing my portraits and stories online! Who knows, they might pop up elsewhere.

Last thing. Message to the reader.

Everyone thinks that they are too small to make a big change, but there are 24 hours a day whether you are an artist, a professional or Beyonce. You just need to do something and if we all move together, we can make a change.

www.larafurst.com

WHAT ON EARTH

presents

MICRO GALLERIES INTERNATIONAL ARTIST COLLECTIVE

For the entire month of September, **Alan Olejniczak** will be the Artist in Residence with *Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park* and the *National Parks Arts Foundation*. Throughout the month Alan plans to spend my time writing, researching, and taking in the beauty and incredible landscape of The Big Island. Or maybe he'll just lay on the beach, who knows.

While in Hawaii, Alan also plans on participating with *MG's Disrupting Climate Disruption: Creative Day of Action* by installing *Adam Kuby's Sea Level 2080* somewhere on a public beach.

Also in September, *Punch Presentations* in Hong Kong will also start recording his online audio drama *Helt Texas*. It's a play Alan wrote while in Svalbard for his residency with the Arctic Circle Residency. It's a comedy about climate change, sustainability, and contemporary discourse. Then in October, Alan returns to the Arctic with *NES Artist Residency* in Skagaströnd, Iceland. He'll be deep diving into a new screenplay and will hopefully checking out the Northern Lights.

ART WORKS.

Friends

Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park
Kilauea visitor center

ALAN OLEJNICZAK

NATIONAL PARKS ARTS FOUNDATION : N P A F

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Call for Art

DIA DE LOS MUERTOS FESTIVAL

This exhibition is a collaboration between *Redbridge Library & Culture Service* and artist **Hello the Mushroom**. Redbridge Culture and Library Service have developed a project called *The Final Party* which aims to change and break down the taboos surrounding death and to help facilitate positive and normal conversations around death.



If you are interested in submitting artwork please send your artwork to hellothemushroom666@gmail.com

All submissions should be sent by the 15th of October.



INTERVIEW WITH ADAM KUBY (USA)

Hi Adam,

I found it difficult to say only a few words about you. Please tell us something.

What inspires your projects?

I draw inspiration from specific places that I find myself in. I try to engage with the processes and the forces that are at work in a place—be they ecological or human, natural or cultural. Hopefully my works bring people into closer dialogue with those places and processes.

Is the reconnection with the earth and nature what you would like to achieve?

Yes, and more. Sometimes I do that with temporary and ephemeral artwork like what we are going to do during the Global Day of Action and sometimes I do it with more permanent work—or as permanent it can be. Nothing is completely permanent, but with materials that are gonna be around for a long time. That because I work with time, creating work that gives a sense of the longer arcs of time. As humans we think in minutes, hours, days and years, but all around us are processes that play out on a much longer time scale. Geological time, tree time, planetary time and climate time. Some of my works engage with growing trees that will evolve and change over decades and centuries. Other times I work with geologic forces. With “Sea Level 2080” I’m working with climate change and sea levels rise, which is already happening. But it’s not so noticeable to the general public. They are not sensing it yet, not experiencing it yet, but it is happening. On a planetary scale it’s happening extremely fast, but for us humans it’s relatively slow. We don’t yet know how extreme and quick Climate Change is ultimately going to be, but so far it’s outside of our normal human temporal perception.

Can you remember a moment when you chose to follow an artistic career?

I don’t have a specific moment when I decided to be an artist. It was more a winding path. I started out in the fields of landscape architecture and environmental studies, forestry and landscape restoration. I knew that I

wanted to work with the environment and land in an artful way and it took few twists and turns to figure out my own path. For me I couldn’t work in an isolated white box studio, and I knew I had to find a way to make my art integrated into the places that we share. Ultimately I realized that I need to work in the public space to make work that everybody has access to. That much I knew. Then I finally went to art school at the age of 30. At times I thought I should be doing something that more directly helps the environment and the planet, but I kept coming back to art as a way I could be of service.

The approach to your work is subtle, creating a narrative between what is manmade and the environment.

How would you like to describe your process?

Noticing the forces at work on a site is often my jumping off point. After that, there are a lot of different ways a project can go, and a range of options that present themselves. I try to open myself up to collaborating with any of those other forces. When I work with trees, they also become the artist, as they grow and interact with the stone elements, contributing to the composition and its unfolding.

The arctic circle residency is a life changing experience. Can you please tell us about this adventure and what it meant for you?

What an opportunity to be in that remote, beautiful place to experience the planet without very much human presence, pretty much the wildest place I’ve ever been to. Being there helped me see how all the ecosystems on the planet are interconnected and interdependent. Together with 30 other creatives, we were trying to figure out how to capture and communicate what we were experiencing.

The impact you faced being there, was there a controversial feeling shared?

Absolutely, We all felt conflicted knowing that our presence was harmful. Was it worth the impact to be there? I don’t know. I hope so. I hope what we are bringing back to share is worth it. We were of course very careful to minimize our impact on the Arctic, and every time we were on a beach we collected plastic

waste that had drifted into the Arctic. We were very sensitive to the wildlife we encountered, so hopefully our impact was minimal. But almost every human alive in the 21st Century is in some way contributing to the damage to the planet. I think our job as artists and humans is to embrace this existential conflict mindfully and proactively.

You have always connected to the landscape during your projects.

Can you point a moment when you realised we were on a state of climate emergency?

In 2014 I went to an art residency at Yaddo in upstate New York with the intention of redirecting part of my art practice to address the climate crisis. That was a deliberate task I gave to myself and I'm really glad I did. I focused on what I could bring to the climate discussion. And here I am.

Do you think your life has changed since then?

One of the hardest things right now is feeling like there is nothing we can personally do, that the crisis is too big, too daunting,

too hopeless. But I don't want to be sitting on the sidelines. It feels good to try to bring art to the frontlines.

What is the biggest struggle to deliver a positive message on the issue at this point?

I think one thing we can do is convey that we are all in this together, that this is going to affect everyone, everywhere. Yes some places and people (the poorest) are going to be much more affected for sure, but this crisis might finally unite people globally like nothing humanity has ever experienced.

I also want to communicate to the younger generation that we all don't all have our heads buried in the sand, that we are trying to solve this problem for them.

Let's talk about your open source project "Sealevel 2080", which will be installed on various coastlines around the world. Do you already know any place where it will be set?

We are open sourcing this project so that anyone, anywhere along a coastline where the sea level will rise can participate, and we already have people signing up and registering to do

their own version of SL2080: on both coasts of North America, Europe, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Australia, Hawaii, South America. And also specifically in in Florida. Several of us from MicroGalleries are going to be in the Miami area on September 21st. An environmental organization, *Florida Conservation Voters* is activating their network to make installations happen state-wide. The number of people signing on to participate is growing every week. And we are working into send installation packets with fabric and instruction to people in the most vulnerable countries in the world, such as Palestine, Fiji, Morocco. I've never open sourced an artwork. MG Director Kat RG initially came up with the idea as a way of broadening the reach of a project such a Sea Level 2080. And MG "Global Day of Action" is the perfect platform to make that happen. I can't wait to see all the different installations that will happen all over, and how people are going to make it their own, making unique to engage with their community with their coastline. I'm excited to see how this very simple visual illustration of the sea level rising will translate to the general public, and how it might add to the overall conversation.

What are your expectations?

If we get 10 to 20 installations to happen worldwide I will be happy. If we get 100 installations I will be VERY happy. This could be the beginning of an annual event. And I hope that it goes viral over time if it proves to be a good way of getting the message across. So I'll be curious to see what life it has beyond my initial idea.

Doing art in the public realm is like giving birth to a child. You deliver it and then watch how people make it their own. It will always have a different life than the one you imagined for it.

What is your message to the readers?

The climate crisis is happening so all hands on deck! Whatever you can bring to help shift us away from the most destructive path—bring it! For me I need to be in the fight. I can't stand on the sidelines.

www.adamkuby.com

*Kintsukuroi/Golden Repair (2018) Svalbard
Collaboration with Shohei Katayama.*



WANTED CREATIVES
FROM AROUND THE WORLD
TO INSTALL

SEA LEVEL 2080

GLOBAL DAY OF CREATIVE ACTION

21st SEPTEMBER 2019
WORLDWIDE - ON EARTH

REGISTER AT: [HTTP://MICROGALLERIES.ORG/EVENTS/DAYOFACTION/](http://microgalleries.org/events/dayofaction/)



**INTERVIEW WITH
WILSON MURATHA
(KENYA)**

Hi Wilson,

Can you please tell us something about yourself?

My name is Wilson Muratha, I'm from Kenya and I'm 21 yo. I mainly work with everything which is collectable. I work with bottle taps, I do paintings, mixed media on canvas or wood. Each day I like to find new perspectives to work with, experiment with new materials, trying out new things.

Do you remember a specific moment when you chose to become an artist?

My father is an artist, so I was born an artist. I got to learn as I was growing up and I started approaching new perspectives.

Which are your favorite subjects?

I like creating from ideas and anything I visualise which can be people walking, children playing, arguing or matters that can appear in a community.

Can you share your artistic process?

I collect things, like a lot of items, I collect and collect... so when I see I'm done with this part I start putting the different collected items together and see if I can imagine something with these elements. If I find

something and have the story I can pin them down on the wood and after that I can add something else. The perspective can be focussed to one element, and I can paint and splatter everything so I can have an original piece. It's very similar to sketching.

How is the artistic community in your town?

There are many artists in Kenya, but most of them are underground artists, so it's very hard to make a living. Even if there are many artists we mostly have an individual practice because some artists that are here only want to copy so they can duplicate it. I have a few friends that have approached a different style, they live far from me but we are still together.

Do you believe artists can connect and explain the urgency of the climate crisis keeping the hope and mood up?

Yes artists can connect and everybody can spread the word. Artists coming together are like one mind, and ideas will pop up and mix and explore, it's like an artist bomb that blows up everything, but first we have to educate and then

only entertain, possibly create employment through the process. It's a fun adventure! The biggest problem will be to make people accept that the climate is changing and they need to take their responsibility.

You are one of the artists selected and featured by Micro-galleries on 21st September Global day of action, related to Climate Disruption. Can you tell us a bit of your art intervention?

I thought how trees contribute a lot to climate, and people cut many of them. So I want to be a voice of the trees, I know I am a small piece in a big picture hoping i can clear a dull vision. The tree I planted when I was a baby is not even mature at this time but the moment to take that tree down takes just minutes. We are planting less and we cutting more. I believe trees have a connection with our past, and if we lose our past we won't have a future where to stand on. The trees stand for our past. There is a tree called "Mugumo" in the Kikuyu and it's never cut. Cutting down the tree befalls a bad Omen. We should not be cutting down our roots. Now it is the time in which we need to plant. I would like to create a collective action in a public space near

my home area, so people can come around and if they have questions I will be there answering, and also asking some questions to them so they can go and think about this. It will be a great day!

How can you be so positive?

Every problem has a solution. People put me down about my artwork. They didn't want me to do art, because there is no future they say. The only way they can put you down is to make you feel that you are useless, you are nothing. But I look back and I see my past and I'll go like that until the day I die. So being positive is one thing people cannot take away from me.

Do you have questions for out there?

What would you like to say to someone who is reading you at the moment?

I would like to ask everybody, what will it cost and take from you to plant one tree?

INTERVIEW WITH VIVIEN POLY (FRANCE/INDONESIA)

I'm curious, tell us a bit about you, how did you start to make art?

It started paste-up photography under the name of « Plastic Overdose » and had my first exhibition in Yogyakarta. The idea was to highlight the plastic issue by portraying people with a plastic on their head.

In Indonesia there are a lot of artists communities open to some collaborations. I was very often invited to join various collective street-art actions. So that is how I got more self-confident pasting up things on walls and using paint as well. Then I decided to make a series of black and white close up portraits of Indonesian people that I called « I will Survive, in Java » as a reference to the art community called « Survive Garage » that has been forced to relocate due to some pressures of local radical communities. That was the first series where I probably found my own style. That's basically how everything began, out of necessity.

I always wanted to be more creative, in my previous jobs I had to work with other people's art instead of my own. It was very frustrating! I really wanted to take the « risk » of producing something and showing it to the world. It happened to be very healthy for me, because at the end of the day - no matter what the result was - I had the feeling to go forward in a creative process.

Do you have any suggestions to emerging artists?

It's very difficult to answer, because I am still in the process of empowerment and don't have that much experience after all. But if I had to give an advice anyway I would say first work on yourself because it's the ferment of your art. And second don't be afraid to make something shitty... history won't remember it anyway! And last advice, never ever listen to another artist's advice!

What's going on now? What's your current project you care the most?

The orangutans project. It's a series of portraits of orangutans in the same style I generally use for humans. The main difference is that beside the fact that they are animals it's very difficult to get close to them especially when they are going to be released

in the forest. The regulation is very strict because they need to be kept wild enough if they want to survive in the jungle. And as I don't want to use any telephoto lenses like the majority of wildlife photographers would do, I admit it would be technically speaking much easier to zoom in from far away but I have the feeling that this is not what the series is all about. So I got in touch with a rescue centre in Yogyakarta called Wildlife Rescue Centre (W.R.C) who is doing a fantastic job by rescuing different species of wild animals. There are some orangutans who are being kept safe before they will be transferred to a rehabilitation center and then released. So I can easily get close to them and capture some emotions.

The goal of this series of portraits is to highlight the necessity of protecting the rainforest. 50% of the profits made from the sales of the photos will be donated to some local NGO who buy lands in the rainforest to make sanctuaries to protect biodiversity and at the end it will also help fighting the climate crisis we are globally facing. Because one hectare of rainforest in Kalimantan is about 1000 Euros, after all it's a relatively small amount of money for such a big surface, I figured it would be a way to efficiently use art as a direct response to environmental issues.

You are one of the 5 selected artists and you also participated at the art residency "Disrupt Climate Disruption" do you remember the precise moment when you became more aware of the issue, how your life has changed since then?

It was two years ago that I read the book "*How Everything Might Collapse*" by Pablo Servigne and Raphael Stevens, the book talks about the inevitable collapse of our model of society and the inevitable destruction of our environment. I became more conscious about the necessity to prepare myself and act. I feel concerned about the future especially for my six years old son who will have to face things that we were not prepared to.

Do you believe artists can connect and explain the urgency of the problem keeping the hope and mood up? What's the biggest struggle?

Of course I think artists can play a major role in depicting and explaining the situation but keeping the hope is another story and I don't think that's our role. I believe artists are meant to



bring a vision not naively saying it's going to be better tomorrow! If artists connect together then they have more chance to offer another model to the society than the one that is totally destroying the planet today and that's where art is connected to activism... that's actually a real question I'm asking myself everyday: Where is the limit between art and activism? And how to keep this relation balanced?

Let's talk about the Global Day of Creative Action on 21st of September. Can we have an idea of your art intervention? What do you plan to do?

We are going to do a mural with a parity of gender artists in Yogyakarta (Indonesia). There will be some talks with local experts who will explain us what are the main consequences due to climate change these past years here in Java. This will involve artist communities like « Survive Garage » and Sesama. The idea is to have some inputs and data that we could rely on to create our mural. I'm very curious about

what will be the final result of such a collective work!

You spend a lot of time traveling in Indonesia but you are strongly connected with Europe, can you name a few things that come to your mind that you can relate to the two countries?

It's very difficult to compare because it's two opposite mindsets, way of life, everything is so different. That's probably why I love this country so much. I like the Javanese approach of the community. I've noticed quite often that in order to take a decision everybody would sit in a circle and listen to each other one by one and naturally there will be some sort of compromise that will lead to a solution very organically. They have a great sense of respect and politeness. It is also not necessarily natural for a western mindset to put its ego down a bit and to accept to let our individuality melt into a community. But the good thing is that it is very impolite to say no, so everything can be possible!

SAY IT LOUD
presents
BEN TARANTO



Ben Taranto is an interdisciplinary artist based in Melbourne. His practice shifts between art and earth sciences, while balancing the physical with the transcendental. For SAY IT LOUD he wrote a short text talking about his work and his vision intersected with Extinction Rebellion movement.

*Human driven climate change is transforming and disrupting the natural rhythm of our planet.
The amazon is burning out of control.
Glaciers around the globe have receded by hundreds of metres.
Coral reef systems of the world are bleaching en masse.
Earth's current carbon count is at 390 parts per million.
For 200 000 + years prior, this has peaked no higher than 280 parts per million.
We have science to thank for telling us this.
For our viewing discomfort, we also have high definition satellite and drone enabled imagery that captures the devastating effects we humans are having on the planet.
This has all happened in the last 250 years of accelerated industry and it doesn't look like the machine has an intention of slowing down.
Who is driving this ship?
We are currently in a climate and biodiversity emergency.
These messages are news headlines that need to be reported to Earth's population on a regular basis.
We are being lied too every day. The truth is being kept from all of us and worse, it is being manipulated.
We are pitted against each other by our own governments. Indigenous people of the planet are disrespected and disregarded.
We can relearn about our connection to land and ocean from them if we stop and listen.
Their practices are still alive and well.
The rest of the world is either obliviousness or dazzled by shiny new products. Or suffering from major grief and Inequality or worse... struggling to maintain basic survival needs such as personal safety, shelter, healthy food and fresh water.
We have a choice.
We can unite globally and act now against ecosystem mismanagement or continue to let our planet burn, deplete and be polluted for future generations.*

This image is a collaborative piece between East London street artist ESP and Melbourne artist Ben Taranto. ESP designed the Extinction

*Rebellion abstracted hourglass symbol in 2011 and Taranto's relief sculpture, **Biologically Foul** was created in 2009 using polyurethane silicon and foam. The sculpture flips the concept of naturally occurring organisms - such as mussels and barnacles - inhabiting marine vessels and equipment back onto humans.
We humans and our invasive cities and waste are the true bio foul.
We have the ability and technology to live in harmony with the earth and not to foul it - for many of us this choice is out of our control.
World governments and those that lead us need to act on our behalf.*

We need to send them this message now.

*September is already warming up to be a month of creative disruption and climate action.
October 7th is flagged as the beginning of a global week (and more!) of action against climate inaction by our governments.
Join in whichever way you can!
Stay safe in the process.
Buddy up.
Organise yourselves into working support groups.
Look after each other and promote a regenerative culture.*

*The Extinction Rebellion movement began in London, UK late last year and since then has gain accelerated momentum in an attempt to match the speed of themachine.
Greta Thunberg inspired millions of young people to sacrifice school days in order to learn about the power of aware and focused humans and about non-violent direct activism.
Non-violent direct action (NVDA) is a proven means of disrupting society to pressure governments to act and make the extreme changes needed to slow the extreme effects we humans are having on our planet. It is timefor us to demand change, the time for inaction has expired, and we need to ACT NOW.*

WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER!

RHIANNON HOPLEY
TOBY PENNEY
palimpsest: palim(p)sest
- a landscape of memory.

Penny Contemporary Gallery,
Hobart Tasmania
Sept 27th - Oct 21st

RACHEL HONNERY
Residue of a Polar Past

Airspace Projects
10 Junction Street
Marrickville NSW 2204
Australia

October 4th - 20th
Artist Talks 19th October 3 - 5 pm

Ever wondered what your
favorite zine
could talk about next time?

SUBMIT YOUR IDEA

trevisan.olga@gmail.com