

The Group of Under 7: Roseberry Preschool

# if you go down to the woods today





The young artists from Roseberry preschool (The Group of Under 7) were invited to respond to George Sawchuck's Forest Gallery work located in the woods behind his home in Fanny Bay. The exhibition of this work presented at the Comox Valley Art Gallery, runs concurrently with *The Book of George: The Life and Art of George Sawchuk*, from June 28 to August 9, 2014.

## if you go down in the woods today...

These words seemed fitting for an inquiry into the wonder of George's *Forest Gallery*.

We wondered what surprises would await the children? We were curious about how they would make meaning from the wide range of treasures the forest held?

Our investigation began during the first visit to the Forest Gallery. The children were immediately captivated by their direct engagement with the artwork. **Look**, a child exclaimed with delight.

***There's a book in the tree!***

***It's hanging from a chain!***

***Over here everyone, look another fish!***

***A tap on a stone!***

***There's a flag on top of this house!***

***Let's get it out!***

***Look! look! A flying fish!***

***Look, an orange curtain!***

The beauty of the work held by the forest and surrounded by the spring growth, animals and birds, offered new ways for seeing the world. The children pondered as they explored and delighted in these rich juxtapositions...books inside trees, clocks, and red rocks on a green moss covered stump, curtains revealing and concealing, doors, bells and bicycle wheels, threaded together by familiar and mysterious words found inside and outside of things. The delight of the surreal and the unexpected greeted the children and parents at every turn of the trail.





Later the group found a soft patch of earth on the forest floor where they sat on a green woven mat to sketch their ideas and observances of George's work and the Forest Gallery that surrounded them.

Inspiration was found in a sculpture which invited a physical response to its round plastic floats that swung on long ropes, suspended from a cedar cross beam.

The children were drawn to the painted stones, some of which were hiding behind doors cut into cedar trees, and others which were found inside metal cages of various sorts. The children were also captivated by a flying fish hanging between the orange curtains, suspended from a cedar bough.

Upon returning to the preschool the teachers showed the children the photographs of the trip and documented their responses and memories.

We asked the children: ***What gifts could we give to the forest?***

***What has the forest given us?***

Another trip was planned which provided an opportunity for different kinds of engagement and responsive art-making. The visual delights the children discovered in the forest allowed them to respond and process their ideas in new ways.

As the teachers asked more questions to facilitate a deeper investigation, the children expanded their inquiry to broader issues. The resulting exhibition if you go down in the woods today holds the children's discoveries and responses.

**IF YOU GO DOWN TO THE WOODS TODAY**

**JUNE 28 to AUGUST 9, 2014**

**Opening Reception: Friday, June 27**

**6pm make art project + water tasting + sugar cookies**

**7pm opening remarks**

**The Group of Under Seven:**

**Alyssa Holding**

**Sunny Smallerberg**

**Willa Kneeland**

**Owen Young**

**Jacob McCannel**

**Nina Barry**

**Stella Payne**

**Zoe Hockin**

**Shea Harris**

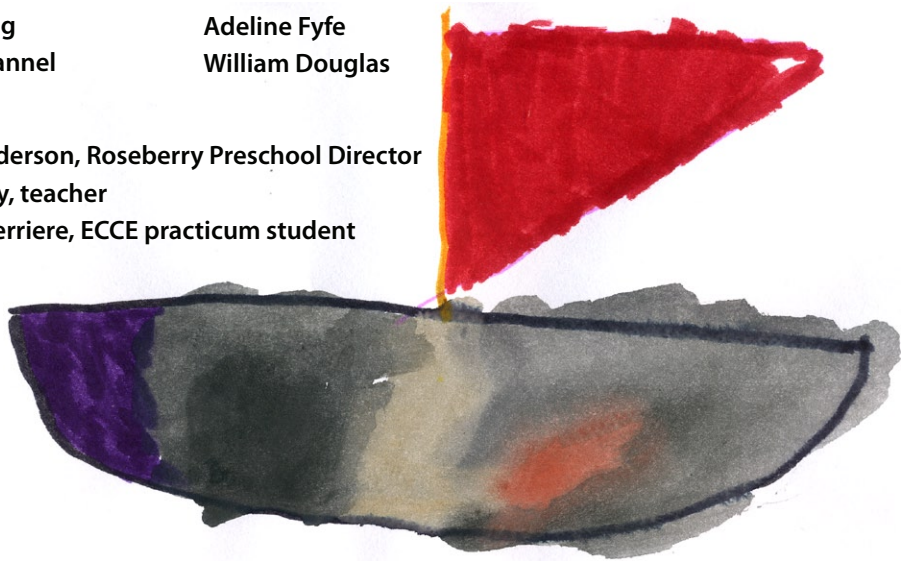
**Adeline Fyfe**

**William Douglas**

**Lesley Henderson, Roseberry Preschool Director**

**Emily Henry, teacher**

**Ashley Laverriere, ECCE practicum student**



**CVAG** [comoxvalleyartgallery.com](http://comoxvalleyartgallery.com)  
**580 DUNCAN AVE COURTENAY BC V9N2M7**

**GALLERY: TUE - SAT 10-5**

**GIFT SHOP: MON - SAT 10-5**

**PH: 250.338.6211**

We gratefully acknowledge support from the Government of Canada, the Province of BC, the City of Courtenay, the Town of Comox, the Comox Valley Regional District, the BC Arts Council, the Canada Council for the Arts and BC Gaming. We especially thank our members, donors and volunteers.

