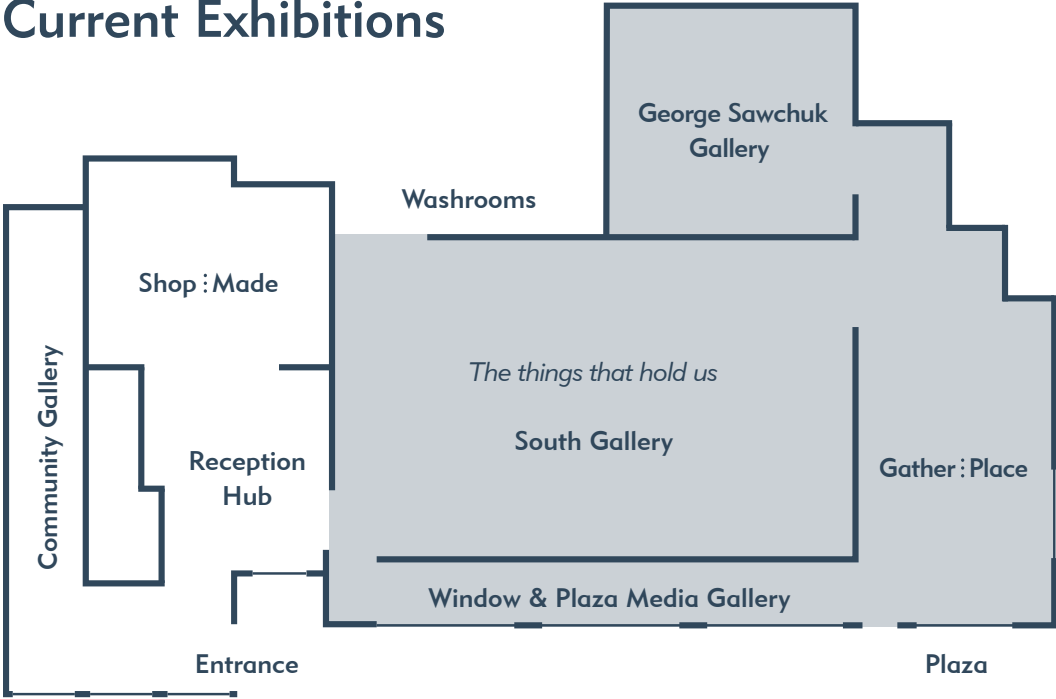




The things that hold us

Comox Valley Art Gallery

Current Exhibitions



Plaza:

Public Place : Sacred Space | 2018 | Traditional Welcome Poles: Karver Everson and Randy Frank | *Crossroads*: Andy Everson | Traditional Indigenous Garden: Elder Barb Whyte

Community Gallery:

Lii moo di nutr paraantii-inaan kayaash ooshchi (The Words of Our Ancestors) | September 30 – November 7, 2026 | MIKI'SIW Métis Association Comox Valley

South Gallery / Gather : Place / George Sawchuk Gallery / Window + Plaza Media Gallery:

The things that hold us | September 19 – November 21, 2026 | Tricia Wasney

The things that hold us

Curatorial Foreword by Denise Lawson

The way to put down the story of time and place and the artist who threads these things together has been tossing about in my thinking as I wrestle with containment of all that could be shared. Perhaps the best place to start is with the artist and gallery.

Artist Tricia Wasney, who has had a sustained art practice in Winnipeg for many years, did not arrive in the Comox Valley “out of the blue”. Past relationships rooted in Manitoba extended their reach to the artist — prairie and west coast merged — becoming a catalyst for the exploration of the shifting influences of time and geographies and have effected the evolution of her solo exhibition: *The things that hold us*.

The Comox Valley Art Gallery’s curated artist residencies merge sustained creative research, experimentation, and development of concept with a quintessential West Coast geography (The McLoughlin Gardens). Repeated residencies potentiate the opportunity to sink deeply into artistic inquiry, encounter the unexpected, develop new insights, and embrace new concepts. For her solo exhibition, *The things that hold us*, artist Tricia Wasney undertook repeated residencies in the Comox Valley

and in Manitoba. Between the initial residency and the final stages of development, Tricia has devoted herself to a rigorous creative process. When the undulating landscape of life pressed into her, Tricia bent into these times letting them find their own place in her work. The bodies of work that fill the gallery reflect her innate curiosity as she took risks to explore her encounters with places known and unknown, her courage as she excavated the dimensions of the familiar and the foreign, navigated the terrains of stranger and being known, and braved the ever evolving reality of change.

This exhibition holds the story of repeated residencies and focused studio practice that have given Tricia time to be in place, time to settle into the complexity of connection — both existing and new, and time to live through what each day, month and year has held. Through articulate use of found materials, Tricia tells visual stories that are delightful, playful, tender, and solemn, as they journey the geographies and relationships of the past, the present and an unfolding future.

In the Artist's Own Words...

This exhibition reflects my experiences over the past four years, beginning with the first residency at the McLoughlin Gardens in 2023. The first room — the Main (South) Gallery — includes work inspired by the landscape of the Comox Valley, especially the ocean shore and gardens at the cottage and my trips to Courtenay, Comox, Merville, Black Creek and Campbell River to find materials at thrift stores. Some pieces were made entirely during the residencies, some were reworked in my studio in Winnipeg and others were made in 2026, a result of looking back and reflecting on how the landscape in the Comox Valley impacted me and how my own Prairie landscape affects me. I made a number of “companion pieces” to connect the two experiences of the land that surrounds me here and that which surrounded me there.



Crab-a-Lariat | Tricia Wasney, 2025 | 17” long | Bolo tie cord and components, crab legs, nail polish

My first year at the residency was a time of wild discovery. Spending a month on the shore of an ocean was an entirely new experience. I was thrilled by the flora and fauna, the changing air, the “disappearance” of the mountains one day and their bold comeback the next, or even just a few hours later. The swaying trees, the clattering of the logs as the endlessly rolling waves washed over them again and again. The ever-present eagles perched on rocks, hunting, swooping, circling. The sea lions sunning themselves on huge boulders. Purple starfish huddled under rocks in tide pools. Small water creatures darting around. And the garden that changed daily — new sprouts, blooms unfolding, trees budding. I was making work almost constantly, finding materials on the shore, on the paths, in the thrift stores. I brought with me only a few tools and metals as I wanted as much as possible to use materials at hand.

I use waste, organic and recycled materials consistently in my art practice, so this room expresses the joy of that. My impulse to do so is grounded in a life-long “mend and make-do” attitude but of course I am also committed to working more sustainably and recognizing the massive and problematic consumer waste in our culture. But another huge reason for my material choices is that I feel pre-owned items come with poignant histories — who owned this, why did they abandon it, how many people touched and interacted with this object and how do other forces, like the ocean, the wind, the rocks, further impact it?

The second room — Gather Place — is about 2025, a year when I lost two people who were very dear to me within the space of a few months; my brother John and Rick’s mom Aganetha. As timing would have it, we were fortunate to be able to return to the McLoughlin Gardens for the residency in May. Once there, we felt deeply another loss, that of neighbour Barry and his dog Eli who had been joyfully anticipated daily visitors in 2023 and 2024. They both passed away in October 2024. On our first day there, Rick went for a walk and came back with a dead bird he’d found on the trail. The bird became a symbol of loss and I wanted to incorporate it into my work. I photographed and drew the bird and later buried it with a tiny bouquet from the garden along the walkway between the McLoughlin Gardens and Barry’s place.

For Barry & Eli | Tricia Wasney | 2026 | key brooch, charms, Eli’s dog hair, fishing lure connector | Seen in *For Them All*



During this time, Rick’s mom, Aganetha, had been in hospital and seemed to recover from... a virus, a heart condition? When we returned from the residency in June 2025, I was immediately engaged with a small two-week exhibition in Winnipeg. The day we dismantled the exhibition we visited Aganetha and she seemed to be ailing; she asked me to make her a sandwich. Later that day she felt she needed to go to the hospital. She never came home after that. We visited daily and she died in July.

The piece hanging from the ceiling, *Maelstrom*, expresses the turmoil of the year and by using black rubber references another artwork that had a deep impact on me, an artwork I have actually never seen. I think that is significant as well, knowing without verification of seeing, it's like an act of faith. *Maelstrom* references both an ocean phenomenon and an emotional state. *Worry a little, worry a lot* and *Fill Me Up* are two works I made following the death of my brother in March 2025. This was an entirely unexpected loss; he was a healthy active guy, eleven years my senior but seemed invincible. It was a shock when he was diagnosed with cancer and died within three months. All these works were made intuitively, as if reacting to events with immediacy, as if conjuring at the very moment of loss. My friend and mentor Barb Hunt described the works this way: "Birds so evocative, still and sad. Makes me think the black is about weeping. ...There's both a prickliness and a softness in *Maelstrom*, like grief and love mixing."

But I do see hope in these pieces, too. Are the scoops, the beads and the birds fading away or are they coming into being?

The third room — the George Sawchuk Gallery — holds relics. Relics are typically associated with saints who are venerated by creating reliquaries that hold a piece of their body or items they have touched. Growing up Catholic, I knew about these objects and saw many when I visited Italy when I was eighteen. I was amazed

by these extravagant and macabre objects often embellished with expensive jewels. I wanted to create pieces that honoured not saints but ordinary people and animals using the humblest of materials. The memorial medals commemorate people I knew and loved and who died. I used items that they had once touched and instead of encasing the objects in vessels like reliquaries I wanted them to be worn on the body. The red-lit box contains the leg bones of a deer that was mauled by a coyote in our yard. Seeing him with his flayed leg was traumatic and I felt impotent, unable to help him. He died under a beautiful big tree by the river the next day and I collected some of his bones a week later. His skull is on the shelf along with the skull of a shorebird I found in Gimli, Manitoba and a rabbit skull we found in Cumberland, Vancouver Island. Like the chaplets worn by saints, I made them all colourful headpieces.

THE ARTIST'S NOTES, WRITTEN OVER THE YEARS OF MAKING THE WORKS ON EXHIBITION, ARE THREADED THROUGHOUT THIS BOOKLET — HER WRITINGS ARE SMALL TRAILS TO WANDER AS YOU FIND YOUR OWN WAY THROUGH.

South Gallery

The Shore, The Store

1. Fish Float I & Neckpiece:

Companion Piece (Red/Blue/Yellow/White) | 2026 | 17" long | Beads, cord, wooden skipping rope handle, paint, game token

2. Fish Float II & Neckpieces:

Companion Piece (Brown Circle) | 2026 | 9" diameter | Beads, copper wire, fishing lure

Companion Piece (Brown Tones) | 2026 | 16" long | Beads, wooden skipping rope handle, stone, cord

Companion Piece (Brown/Yellow) | 2026 | 16.5" long | Beads, cord

Companion Piece (Brown/Orange) | 2026 | 17" long | Beads, cord, stones

Companion Piece (Brown Tones II) | 2026 | 18" long | Beads, cords, fishing lures

3. Fish Float III & Neckpiece:

Companion Piece (Blue/Yellow) | 2025 | 17" long | Beads, cord, nail polish

5	9	10 – 11	12
4		15	
3	14		13
2		16	
1			
6 – 8			

4. Fish Float IV & Neckpieces:

Companion Piece (Red/White/Green) | 2026 | 16" long | Beads, cord, wood

Companion Piece (Red/White/Green) | 2026 | 19.5" long | Beads, cord, fishing bobber

5. Fish Float V & Neckpiece:

Companion Piece (Silver/Orange) | 2025 | 17" long | Beads, cord, nail polish

6. Neckpieces, Brooches, & Earrings –
Top Row (L – R):

Gold Struck | 2026 | 19” long |
Driftwood, gold leaf, gold earring,
brass charm, beads

Profile | 2024 | 13” long | Shell,
driftwood, plastic pearls, paint, pins,
fish hook

Cameo | 2026 | Chain: 30” long,
cameo: 6” x 4” | Sea sponge,
embroidery hoop, military scarf,
thread, beads

Corsage | 2023 | 8” long | Fishing
lures, safety pin

A-lure-ing (Brown/Pink) | 2024 |
18” long | Fishing lures, velvet ribbon,
fish stringer components

Drift | 2023 | 12” X 8” | Wood,
military tie, vintage sweater clip

Autumn | 2026 | 14” x 7” |
Seaweed, crabbing snubber, bails

Reliquary for a Pollinator | 2025 | 18”
long x 2.5” wide | Deconstructed
jewellery, metal flowers, pocket watch
case, fur, honey bee

Crab-a-lariat | 2025 | 17” long |
Bolo tie cord and components, crab
leges, nail polish

Oyster Brooch | 2023 | 3.5” x 3.5” |
Oyster shell, military scarf, fish bone,
brass pin, thread

De-Fanged | 2024 | 18” long | Bull
kelp, fishing lure and hooks, bead,
metal chain

Trolling | 2026 | 11” x 10” | Trolling
snubber, metal chain, driftwood

Inflate | 2026 | 4” x 2’ |
Bladderwrack, ribbon brooch

Suture | 2024 | Seaweed, silk fabric,
embroidery hoop, thread, needle,
found chain

7. Neckpieces, Brooches, & Earrings –
Middle Row (L – R):

Big Catch | 2026 | 19” long | Fish-
ing lure, beads, cord

Sea Foam | 2023 | 7” x 8” | Copper
wire, polyethylene, wooden beads,
fish stringer hook

Lead | 2024 | 12” x 9.5” | Crabbing
rope, rusted cable, fishing line

Spines | 2023 | 4.5” x 2” | Fish
bone, Corplast, safety pin

Pearl Leaf Earrings | 2023 | 2.5” long |
Driftwood, gold leaf, plastic pearls,
brass earring hooks

Hot Pink Earrings | 2026 | 3.5” long |
Fishing lures, earring hooks

Barnacled | 2026 | 18” long | Felted
wool cord, freshwater pearls, sterling
silver

Six-Pack Yoke | 2023 | 15” x 7” |
Seaweed, plastic drink can yoke,
reed, thread

Bow Fish | 2026 | 4.5” x 2.5” |
Wooden fishing lure, vintage bow
brooch

Trolling | 2026 | 11” x 10” | Trolling
snubber, metal chain, driftwood

For Aganetha | 2024 | 3” X 2” | Tie
clips, bee, head pin

Nasty Boy | 2024 | 12” long | Safety
rope, fishing lure and components

8. Neckpieces, Brooches, & Earrings –
Bottom Row (L – R):

A-lure-ing (Black/Green) | 2025 | 15”
long | Ribbon, fishing lure, reclaimed
jewellery

Corked | 2025 | 17” long | Cork
fishing float, wooden and plastic beads,
chain, cord

Careful | 2023 | 9.5” x 6” |
Diamond cartilage seaweed, fresh
water pearls, styrofoam, wire, sterling
silver

Collar | 2023 | 8” x 5” | Seaweed,
stick pins, chain, fresh water pearls

A-lure-ing (Multi-coloured) | 2024 |
18” long | Fishing lures, orange
polyester cord, plastic beads

Fish Stick | 2026 | 4” x 1.5” | Fancy
stick pin, fish bone

Jelly Fish | 2026 | 4” long | Shark
tooth, silver paint brush collar, plastic
price tag fasteners, pin

I THINK THIS WORK IS ABOUT THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF PERMANENCE,
ABOUT FINDING, LOSING, AND FINALLY COMMEMORATING THAT WHICH
HAS BEEN LOST. THE EXHIBITION IS ORGANIZED TO REFLECT THIS TRAJECTORY.
THERE IS A PROGRESSION: ENTERING THROUGH THE MAIN (SOUTH) GALLERY
THAT IS FULL OF COLOUR AND VIBRANCY TO THE MORE REFLECTIVE SPACE
OF GATHER : PLACE THAT IS ABOUT THE MOMENT OF LOSS TO THE FINAL
DARKENED ROOM THAT COMMEMORATES THAT WHICH HAS BEEN LOST.

Pink | 2023 | 11.5" long | Driftwood, salmon lure, polyester cords, fish stringer hook, paint, beads

The OG | 2023 | 17" x 5.5' | Irish moss seaweed, found cable

Forever Earrings | 2023 | 3.5" x 1.5" | Plastic fragments, styrofoam, metal, earring hooks

A-lure-ing (Black/White) | 2024 | 19" long | Fishing lures, velvet ribbon, reclaimed jewellery

Squidish | 2023 | 19" long | Metal chain, beads, fish stringer loop, peach pit scrubber

9. My Garden (L – R):

My Garden: Purple Prairie Clover | 2026 | 17" long | Sterling silver bud vase, earplug, nail polish, head pins, aluminum wire, recycled shopping bag, found chain

My Garden: Yellow Coneflower | 2026 | 17" long x 5" wide | Dogwood branches, handmade clay beads, sterling silver, seed pod, recycled shopping bag

My Garden: Blue-eyed Grass | 2026 | 13.5" long x 4' wide | Tyndall stone, copper wire, found metal chain, rhinestone clasp, recycled shopping bag, head pins

My Garden: Peony | 2026 | 18.5" long x 6" wide | Plastic skipping rope, recycled shopping bag, sterling silver, nail polish

10. Let Go – Top:

Let Go: Milkwood Ring | 2018 | Case: 8" x 6" x 3" | Sterling silver, seed pod, seeds, 22k gold, plexiglass case

11. Let Go – Bottom Row (L – R):

Let Go: Black-eyed Susan | 2018 | 5" long x 2.5" wide | Bone, seed head, sterling silver

Let Go: Giant Hyssop | 2018 | 9" long x 1" wide | Bone, seed head, brass, aluminum, 22k gold

Let Go: Purple Prairie Clover | 2018 | 5.5" long x 2.5" wide | Bone, seed head, sterling silver, 22K gold

12. McLoughlin Gardens (L – R):

McLoughlin Gardens: Poppy | 2025 | 21" long x 7' wide | Plastic skipping rope, recycled shopping bag, sterling silver, nail polish, beaded earring

McLoughlin Gardens: Hellebore | 2026 | 12" long x 7.5" wide | Driftwood, found metal chain, fishing lure, recycled shopping bag, nail polish, earrings

McLoughlin Gardens: Lily of the Valley | 2024 | 17.5" long x 2" wide | Oyster shell, gold nail polish, copper wire, paper, glass beads, found metal chain

McLoughlin Gardens: Columbine | 2026 | 18" long | Sterling silver bud vase, nail polish, head pins, aluminum wire, recycled shopping bag, found chain

13. Landscapes (L – R):

Little Landscapes: Victoria Beach MB | 2024 | All 6.25" diameter | Six embroidery hoops, terrycloth towel, deconstructed jewellery, fabric, moss, stone, bark, hair barrette, plastic tabs

A Kind of Map: Strathcona Park | 2026 | 22" long x 10" wide | Copper sheet, copper chain, sterling silver charms, stud earrings

A Kind of Map: Riding Mountain National Park | 2024 | As installed: | 16" x 20" | Sterling silver, various thrifted items, resin (four neckpieces)

Little Landscapes: Comox Valley BC | 2024 | All 3.5" diameter | Nine embroidery hoops, military scarf, deconstructed jewellery, paint, thread

14. Hanging Sculpture:

Gather | 2026 | 11' | Rope, float, fish-shaped anchor, found plastics

15. Plinth I:

Tree Islands, Churchill, MB | 2020 | Box: 10.5" x 10.5" x 2.5" | Reclaimed wood and hockey puck box made by Richard Dyck; sterling silver, bronze (11 jewellery pieces in box)

16. Plinth II:

Township 13 | 2018 | Box: 9.5" x 9.5" x 3.5" | Reclaimed wood box made by Richard Dyck; sterling silver, gold foil, semi-precious stones, brass, felted wool, steel brooch pins (16 jewellery pieces in box)

THE SOUTH GALLERY SHOWS THE EXUBERANCE OF MY RESIDENCY EXPERIENCES, FINDING MATERIALS AND INSPIRATION ON THE SHORE, IN THE GARDENS, AT THE THRIFT STORES IN THE COMOX VALLEY. IT ALSO INCLUDES WORK MADE ABOUT THE LANDSCAPES OF MANITOBA AND MY EMOTIONAL CONNECTION TO BOTH MY HOME PROVINCE AND TO THIS LAND.

The Load

My father used to say he lost most of his teeth because of the quarry. Working on the water saw, cutting stone, feet always wet, body jarred by the motion. The quarry near Tyndall, Manitoba, is the site of a unique type of limestone that remains in architectural demand. It has been used in iconic buildings across Canada — the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa, the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Hull, the Chateau Lake Louise in Banff National Park, the Winnipeg Art Gallery and recently the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg, to name just a few. Intricate fossils permeate the soft creamy-grey stone, recording millions of years of life and death. The numerous fossils and mottled surface had it dubbed “tapestry stone.” I worked at the Winnipeg Art Gallery for many years and every morning I loved walking up the grand staircase to my office on the mezzanine, acknowledging those gorgeous patterns made from a complex history. A complex history that includes the mostly unacknowledged one, that grand buildings are usually constructed from the labour of the poor.

My father worked in the near-by quarry as a young man to supplement the income of his mother, a poor immigrant farmer. His parents came to Canada in the last wave of orchestrated farm settlement in the early 1900s from an impoverished

life in Poland. They were rewarded with rocky, swampy land from which to try to coax out crops. Just before the Great Depression began to emerge my grandfather died suddenly, leaving a large family and my father, the eldest son at about age thirteen, essentially in charge of just about everything. My mom would later talk about further difficult times on the farm. She arrived there as a new bride, having grown up with her immigrant Polish parents and large family in the North End of Winnipeg where she’d worked as a hairdresser and a seamstress. Like my father she was the eldest child and she, too, did not finish high school, her family deciding that her help was needed more at home and in outside work to support their income. There was also the sad but widely-held conviction that education was “wasted” on girls since they would just get married anyway. My mom liked her work and the independence it brought. She had a wicked sense of style and made her own fashionable clothes. She was very proud when she was asked by the owner of the sewing factory to personally make him a pure white sharkskin suit because she was such a talented seamstress. Her family’s working class existence was decidedly not fancy (no sharkskin suits there) — my grandparents used every inch of their tiny urban yard for a vegetable garden and they even

had a cow — but it was still a far cry from what she experienced on the farm. There she hauled water from a well a mile away and helped my dad with the farm work and, I’m sure, wondered why and how she’d landed here in the middle of nowhere, often alone, while my dad was doing other odd jobs, fixing broken machinery, cajoling exhausted work horses, and in the fields still trying to pull something good from that harsh land.

My facts are fuzzy now — both my mother and father are no longer here to ask questions of — but I think he was about sixteen when he went to find work at the quarry while also helping to maintain the small family farm. In another life he would have been knocking about with his chums in a school yard somewhere. He seemed to resent this most of all — that he did not get to finish school. He liked school; he was good at it; he was removed by grade seven or eight to work on the farm. When I did well in school and graduated from grade twelve my father was over the moon but when I contemplated university he was perplexed. He thought I had already achieved so much and this added educational commitment likely seemed, to him, unnecessary. Maybe the old “wasted” education trope was rearing its head again, too, although he never expressed that to me. I think he wondered why I would want to put myself through the hardship — he wanted my life to be less difficult than his had been.

From an early age my dad had worked at least two jobs at once, one of them always farming. He told many stories about his life and work which I meant to record but mostly never wrote down. He was an engaging and energetic storyteller. Some stories come back as fragmented narratives, some remain merely as images or impressions conjured when I heard them. Cutting dry tamarack by hand in a frigid winter camp north of Pine Falls, at night striking precious wooden matches strategically to keep the timberwolves at bay. Working at Leonard McLaughlin Motors in Winnipeg, his meagre pay mostly eaten up by the rooming house he lived in that served meals that he could never partake of because of his hours at the shop. Screwing up his courage to ask for a raise that eventually came but was followed by a lay-off. Being sent by his mother as a boy to the local grocery store to purchase bits of flour or salt or awful chicory, that poor substitute for coffee, on credit, something that embarrassed and stung him forever. When he got married and had his own life he never bought anything on credit, saving and waiting until he had the cash to purchase it outright. When he retired from working at the railway, I think he felt it a luxury to just farm, which he did well into his eighties. One does not escape an inherited work ethic easily. He didn’t, my mom didn’t and I guess neither did I.

In 1993, my marriage broke up and I found myself yearning to buy a house

with a small yard that needed a lot of work. I succeeded in this task. The yard was full of dog shit and garbage, (including a pair of black lace panties buried in the soil — surprise!), had no fence and was totally overgrown. The one highlight was a pretty variegated plant that crept under the trees and along the sparse and untended flower beds. Soon I discovered the plant was totally invasive and getting rid of it was nearly impossible. I learned to live with it by tolerating it but not encouraging it, a life lesson if I ever saw one. The yard became my riddle and my challenge. There were beautiful mature oaks that provided shade and comfort although their root systems did mess with the plumbing system. There were three inches of packed gravel where I wanted grass, and grass where I wanted packed gravel for a patio. I incorporated an old crooked and heavy concrete clothes-line base into a new path that I made from second-hand bricks. I became obsessed with creating a space that would be my own, working around or incorporating whatever stood in the way.

Because I was a farm girl, working on the land was always second nature. My dad would not let me do actual farm work — he was from another distant generation and believed it was not girl's work, which at the time I didn't understand. I did understand it was gruelling work and I saw my brother and, later, my brother-in-law do a lot of it. On further

reflection I wonder if he saw his own mother suffer so much on the farm that he just couldn't allow his daughters to do it. I remember another story now when he said his mother was stacking hay bales and called to my very young father to go get Mrs. So and So and he did and a few hours later he had a wailing new sibling. He had no idea she was pregnant, her growing belly hidden under long loose clothing and such things not talked about.

But as for me, I helped my mom with the vegetable and flower gardens and crawled around idle farm machinery. The slope of the combine chute became a slide for my dolls and the steps up to the cab a jagged mountain-side. I rode with my dad when he delivered hay to sheep farmers and to the elevator to sell his grain. I worried about my dad working too hard. I worried about too much rain and I worried when there was not enough. I collected stones and plucked tiny purple flowers from our lawn only learning many years later that they were coveted irises native to Manitoba called blue-eyed grass. They remain my favourite flower. I dipped my dolls in the oil drums that collected rainwater off the edge of our sheds, playing at them visiting a beach which was something we never actually did. My dad didn't do vacations or beach visits or really anything other than work. Now being on my own it felt absolutely essential to work my land, perhaps digging for a connection to my parents. For the first time I had a space that I could do with exactly

what I wished. I wanted to transform it and I suppose I wanted to control it. Weekends I would often awake at dawn and get right to it, pulling, shovelling, digging, clawing, moving the earth.

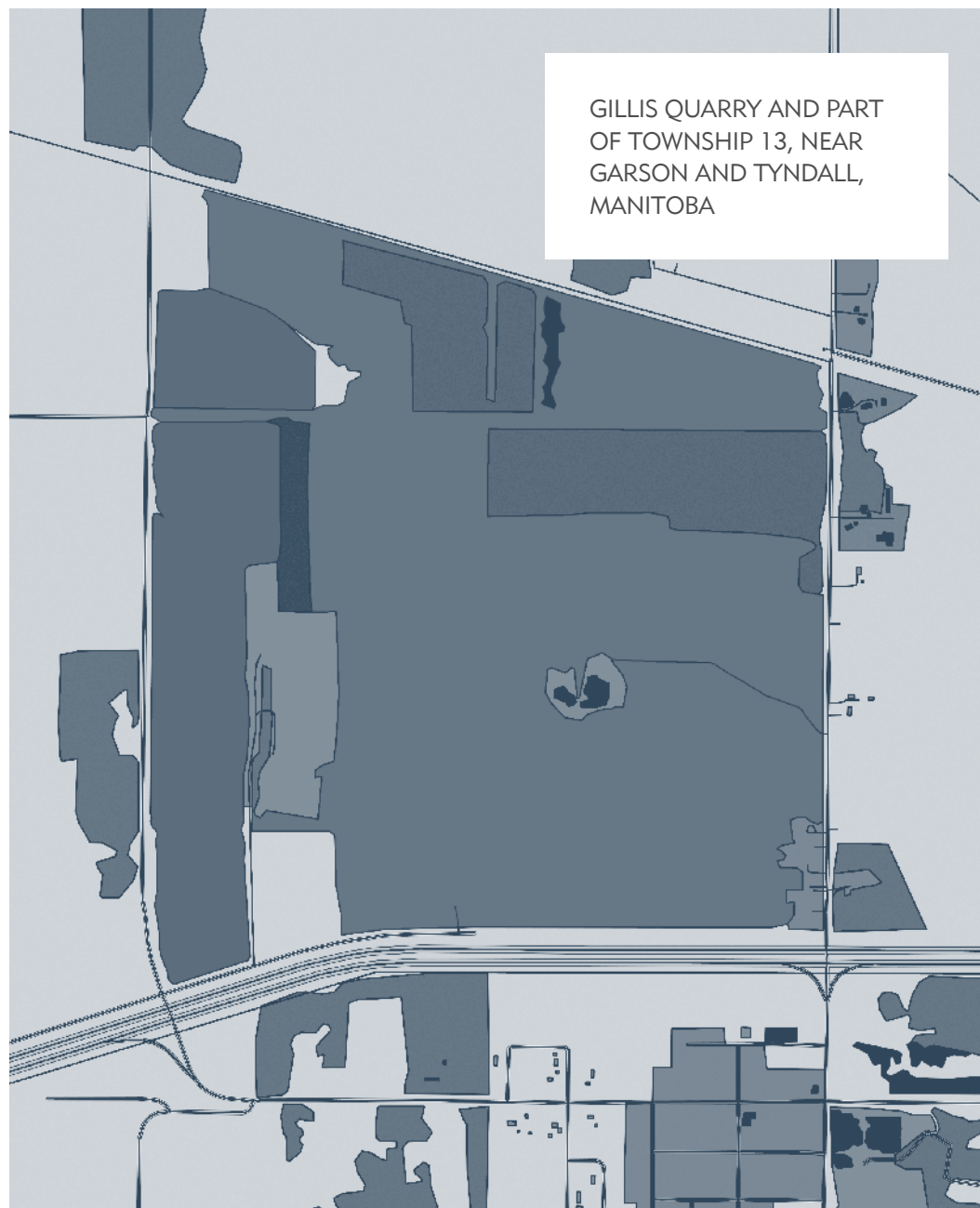
I discovered that the quarry in Tyndall had a slag heap full of cut but unmarketable stone that one could cart away for a very reasonable price. Tyndall stone is a favoured patio material but expensive to purchase in more pristine condition in garden centres so I borrowed my dad's half-ton and headed out to the quarry for the odd-sized and discounted stone. I was like a kid in a candy store only the candy was hard and heavy and rough around the edges. I loaded up the truck cautiously, unsure how much weight it could take. My first trip was modest and on the way home I stopped to see my dad to ask if I was damaging the axles. I can still see him now peering into the truck box, assuring me that the load was fine, that I could have brought even more. And then he started pointing to certain pieces of stone noting faint colours that I never would have noticed. This one came from the east side of the quarry, this one from the west, this from a deeper pit, and so on, depending on the subtle intensity of blue or yellow or green or grey. Everyone notices the fossils but this delicate colour variation came from intimate interaction with the stone and understanding the layout and context of the quarry. It came from understanding relationships.

I miss my parent's stories. I should have loaded them up to the brim when I had the chance and carted the whole damn thing away with me.

THE LOAD WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN PRAIRIE FIRE MAGAZINE IN 2019.



My Garden: Blue-eyed Grass | 2026 | Tricia Wasney | 13.5" long x 4' wide | Tyndall stone, copper wire, found metal chain, rhinestone clasp, recycled shopping bag, head pins



Township 13

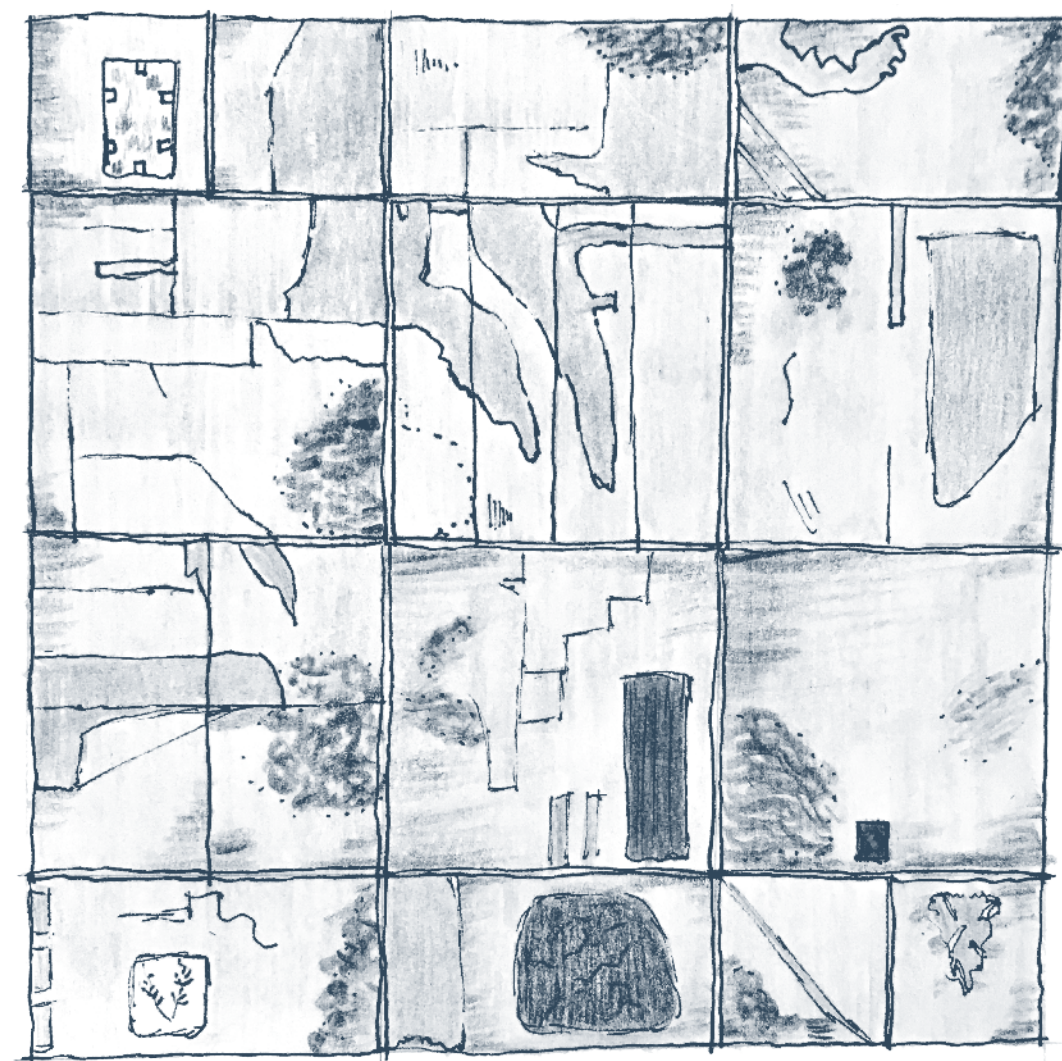


Illustration from the artist's sketchbook of the Gillis Quarry and part of the township near Tyndall, Manitoba, where her grandparents lived and worked on a small farm.

Gather : Place

Maelstrom

17. West-facing Wall:

Fade | 2026 | 8.75" X 6.75" |
Seven framed drawings in India ink
on watercolour paper

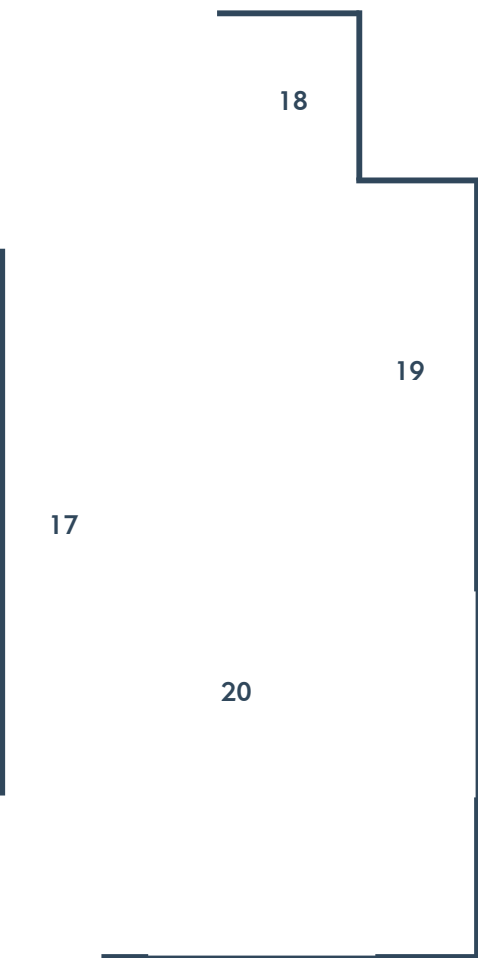
18. East-facing Wall I:

Fill Me Up | 2025 | Installed: 25"
x 60" | Shelf: 60" long, 3.75" wide |
Shelf made from reclaimed wood, 23
small wooden scoops, India ink, cord,
sand

19. East-facing Wall II:

Worry a little, worry a lot | 2025 |
Installed: 33" x 60" | 23 hemp cords
with wooden, plastic and glass beads

IN THIS ROOM, GATHER:PLACE,
ARE WORKS THAT, TO ME,
SIGNIFY THE MOMENT
OF LOSS, OF THE IMPACT
OF CATASTROPHE OR TRAGEDY
AS IT HAPPENS, OF COMING
INTO BEING AND ALSO
TO FADING AWAY.



20. Hanging Sculpture:

Maelstrom | 2026 | Garlands: 12'
long | 40 garlands made from recycled
rubber inner tubes, hockey pucks,
non-stick shelf liners

The most powerful work of art I've (n)ever seen

It was eventful. My partner Rick
had been sent by the Winnipeg Art Gallery
to set up an exhibition in Caracas.
We had just started living together after
a fractured and complicated courtship.

Torrential rains in the Caracas
had caused mudslides that killed, injured
and displaced many of the region's poorest
citizens who lived in barrios on the sides
of the steep hills.

Rick had been invited to a dinner party
at the home of the curator. On the way,
almost there, the axle broke in the cab
in which they were travelling. Others of their
party, arriving separately, had been robbed
at gun point nearby. When they arrived
at the apartment complex, the elevator
broke down.

I was at home making and canning
horseradish beet pickles.

When Rick arrived at the curator's
apartment he said it was full of art,
as curator's homes often are. One piece
that he described as "a runner of roses"
particularly captured him. It was a series
of framed drawings of roses running
along the breadth of two walls. The artist,
the curator explained, had a dear friend
who was dying from AIDS. The artist
visited him in the hospital regularly. He
would bring a rose and draw it, recording

its decay until it was completely dead.

This was at the height of the AIDS
epidemic, when almost everyone I knew
knew someone who was impacted
by the disease. People were dying, others
were suffering their deaths.

The curator described another work
by the artist. He cut petals from black
rubber and fashioned roses. Hundreds
of them. Maybe thousands. I don't know.
Rick didn't actually see this work. I certainly
didn't see this work.

But those black rubber roses.
They have stayed with me. The material,
the colour, the form, the repetition, what
they represented. I've thought of them
a thousand times. Maybe a million times.
And I've thought about how I was at home
making my mom's beet pickle recipe
and worrying about my new partner
and torrential rains and car mishaps
and gun violence and broken-down
elevators. And I've thought about people
dying in mudslides, and from AIDS,
and that an artist was commemorating one
of those acts of dying. An artist making.
An artist making roses.

George Sawchuk Gallery

Relics

21. Touch-screen:

For Them All | 2026 | Interactive display | Wooden frame and screen configuration by Richard Dyck

22. Plinth III:

For Them All | 2026 | Album: 11" x 8.5" x 2" closed, 18" open wide | Victorian photo album, brooches

23. Plinth IV:

Reliquary for a Young Buck | 2025 | 13" high x 4" deep | Wooden liquor bottle, deer leg bones, fabric grass, plexiglass, electrical light and switch

24. Projection:

For Them All | 2026 | Projection

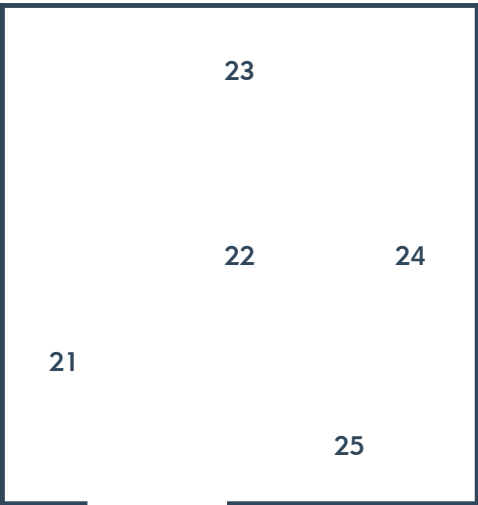
IN THIS PLACE OF REVERENCE,
THE WORKS HONOUR PEOPLE
AND ANIMALS AND RELATION-
SHIPS THAT HAVE BEEN LOST
BUT NOT RELINQUISHED.

25. Chaplet & Crowns:

Chaplet for a Deer | 2025 | 10" long x 4.5' wide x 4" high | Deer skull, bracelet, charm

Crown for a Seagull | 2026 | 6" long x 2" wide x 1.5" high | Bird skull, nail polish, beads

Chaplet for a Rabbit | 2026 | 3" long x 1.5" wide x 2' high | Rabbit skull, ring, beads, feathers



Animals and I

I have had pets since I was five or six when we got a German shepherd to protect our farmyard. Because I was the youngest kid, he protected me, too, and became my first real friend. My dad named him Duke and my mom trained him to stay in the yard unleashed. A regal and imposing figure, he could appear very intimidating but he was gentle and kind to me. He was a tough and smart dog who lived outside all year. His hide would get oily and thick like that of a wild animal, at least that's what I imagined because I'd never actually petted a wild animal. Sometimes my mom and I would attempt to give him a shower, me applying shampoo to his back and my mom spraying him down with the garden hose. He was not too keen on that.

I find I am becoming more and more attached to animals as I grow older. I don't usually cry easily but I often get blubbery when I see someone out walking their dog. Just that, some random person on the street with their dog and I well up. I find I need to say, often in a shaky voice, "hey buddy" or "beautiful dog" or "what a sweetie" or ask if I can pet them although now, during the pandemic, touching anything seems like a bad idea. I have two cats I adore. They were shelter rescues who were found together and seemed already to be good friends. They have distinctly different personalities; one is calm, the other nervous and wary.

They are sweet, frustrating, loving, confounding, hilarious. I can't imagine a home without animals. I can't imagine my life without animals.

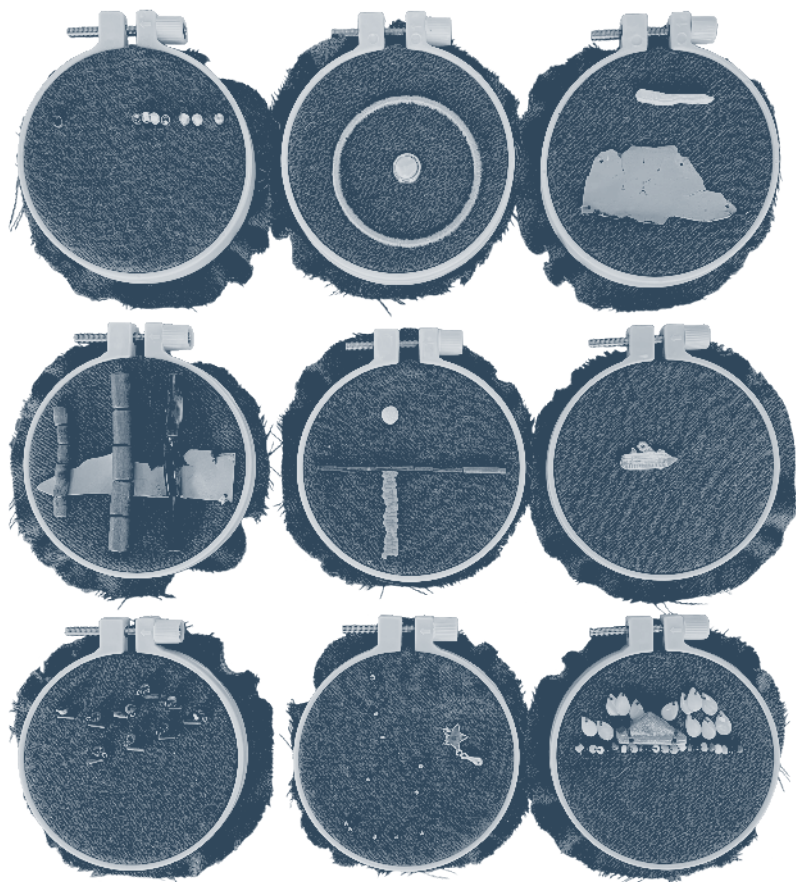
I live near a river where there are many wild animals. I often hear owls hooting through the open bedroom window in the late evening or early morning, though I rarely see them. Occasionally, like last night, I hear more sinister calls that sound like cries of pain and anguish. That's when I draw the cats closer to me in bed. At quieter times I lay in bed and just wonder at the multitude of animal activity outside, from the tiniest insect to the largest mammal, that I may never see or even hear at all.

I did see and hear something remarkable this summer. A woodchuck has lived under our garden shed for several years, a solitary and rather shy creature with a beautiful auburn coat. This summer, to my surprise, there were two adult woodchucks and four babies. For a few weeks in June, I was mesmerized by these tiny critters that soon ventured out from under the shed to explore the garden. When I appeared the mama would let out a sharp yip and the family would scurry back under the shed, then slowly all poke out their little heads to stare at me from under the footing of the small building. I would lay on my belly and talk to them and tell them I meant them no harm.

I was doing some work in the yard one day, and as I came around a corner I stopped in my tracks as I saw the mama on her hind legs against the wall of the shed with two of the four babies suckling at her teats, the other two at her feet jostling for their turn. I stood there

in amazement. Then the yip came and they all dispersed. A moment of wonder.

ANIMALS AND I WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN PRAIRIE FIRE MAGAZINE IN 2021.



Little Landscapes: Comox Valley BC | Tricia Wasney | 2024 | All 3.5" diameter | Nine embroidery hoops, military scarf, deconstructed jewellery, paint, thread

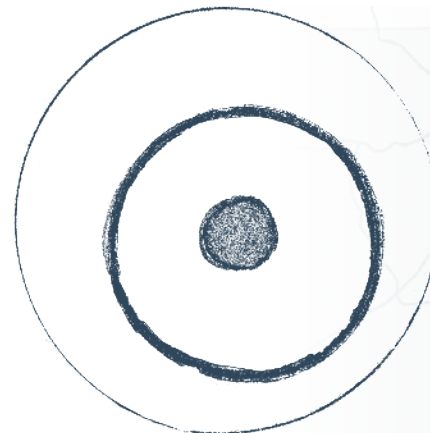


The McLoughlin Gardens artist residence



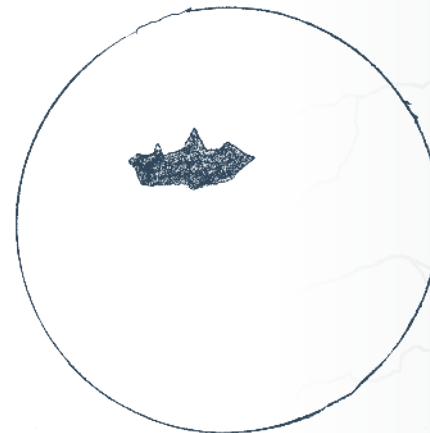
Installation of *The things that hold us* exhibition at the Comox Valley Art Gallery

Sun halo
May 14
8:32 am



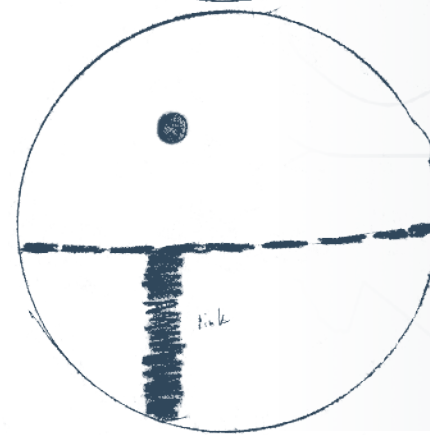
"Sun Halo"
child's bracelet

huge cruise
ship
May 19
7:57 pm



"The Mother Ship"
charm

Wanda Koop
moon
May 22
9:22 pm



"The Moon Last Night"
mother-of-pearl tie pin

Illustrations from Tricia
Wasney's sketchbook while
at the McLoughlin Gardens

The McLoughlin Gardens Artist Residence

The Comox Valley Art Gallery Curated Residency Program was established out of a desire to provide extended research and site-specific production opportunities for artists, collaborators and curators presenting within the gallery's convergent programs. This program supports deep and sustained artistic practice by facilitating meaningful relationships between artists and the local community and site-specific research, providing working and living spaces, hosting artist talks, and curatorial consultations to support and develop works for exhibition.

Accommodations are provided for participating artists at CVAG's artist residence CVAG Next Door and through a collaborative relationship with the McLoughlin Gardens Society.

BRIAN & SARAH
MCMOUGHLIN PARK, 814
TASMAN ROAD, MERVILLE,
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Map data from OpenStreetMap
(openstreetmap.org/copyright)



Family Portrait: Ostreidae, Fucaceae, Bryophyta | Tricia Wasney | 2024 | 8" x 3 | Antique frame, sea shell, seaweed, moss, military scarf

Window & Plaza Media Gallery For Them All

Video:

For Them All | 2026 | Video: 2 min, 22 sec

Reception Hub Feature Artworks

North-facing Wall:

Family Portrait: Ostreidae, Fucaceae, Bryophyta | 2024 | 8" x 3 | Antique frame, sea shell, seaweed, moss, military scarf

Mini Maelstrom | 2026 | 12" long | Innertube rubber, thread

For Them All: For Aganetha | 2026 | 3" x 2.5" | Ribbon brooch, wax drawing by Aganetha Dyck, locket



Tricia Wasney at the McLoughlin Gardens. Image courtesy of Richard Dyck



Tricia Wasney Artist Biography

Wasney’s studies in landscape architecture, film and literature impact her art work which aims to tell stories through diverse methods including narrative jewellery, craft-based practices and installations. Artist residencies in Belfast, Northern Ireland; Churchill, Manitoba; Athens, Greece; Riding Mountain National Park, Manitoba; Plug In Institute of Contemporary Art, Winnipeg; Lake Winnipeg; Manitoba, and the Comox Valley on Vancouver Island have further expanded her thinking and art practice. She has received numerous grants for her art work and writing from the Winnipeg Arts Council, the Manitoba Arts Council and the Canada Council for the Arts and has shown her work in galleries in Canada and internationally.

TO DISCOVER MORE, VISIT:
WWW.COMOXVALLEYARTGALLERY.COM/THETHINGSTHATHOLDUS.



580 DUNCAN AVENUE, COURTENAY, BC, V9N 2M7
250.338.6211 | WWW.COMOXVALLEYARTGALLERY.COM
HOURS: WEDNESDAY – SATURDAY 10AM – 5PM
ADMISSION: FREE | DONATIONS APPRECIATED

Acknowledgments:

The Comox Valley Art Gallery is grateful to operate on the Unceded Traditional Territory of the K'ómoks Nation.

Programming is made possible thanks to our FUNDERS: City of Courtenay, Canada Council for the Arts, BC Arts Council, Government of Canada, Province of BC, Comox Valley Regional District, Town of Comox | LOCAL SUPPORT: ABC Printing & Signs, Hitec Screen Printing, and SD71 Printshop | COLLABORATOR: McLoughlin Gardens Society.

ARTIST'S ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: "First of all, a million thanks to my partner in all things, Richard Dyck, whose love intelligence, humour, and skill sustain me. Thank you to the Winnipeg Arts Council and the Manitoba Arts Council for supporting the creation of this work. And to Martina Riva, Nicole Coulson and Sarah Crawley for helping with many hours of cutting rubber inner tubes for *Maelstrom*. Deep gratitude to all the incredible CVAG folks who have embraced me."

Glen Sanford, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Denise Lawson, DIRECTOR OF CURATORIAL PROGRAMMING

Dave Lawson, TECHNICAL MANAGER

Taylor Robinson, COMMUNICATIONS & DESIGN MANAGER

Gabriella Wong Hernández, CURATORIAL ASSISTANT

Jojo Jaeger, GALLERY ASSISTANT

© 2026

Comox Valley Art Gallery,
All rights reserved.



City of
Courtenay

Canada



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des arts
du Canada



BRITISH
COLUMBIA



BRITISH COLUMBIA
ARTS COUNCIL
An agency of the Province of British Columbia



Comox Valley
REGIONAL DISTRICT



WINNIPEG
ARTS COUNCIL

MANITOBA
ARTS COUNCIL



CONSEIL DES ARTS
DU MANITOBA



McLOUGHLIN GARDENS
CREATIVE RESIDENCY