

The background of the poster is a dark, atmospheric photograph of an art installation. Several circular frames, resembling large wheels or fans, are mounted on black metal stands. Each frame is filled with numerous clear plastic water bottles, arranged in a radial pattern. Some bottles have small blue lights attached to their caps, which are illuminated, creating a starburst effect. The overall scene is dimly lit, with the primary light source being the small blue LEDs. A prominent red horizontal band cuts across the middle of the image, serving as a background for the main title and curator information.

EXHIBITION GUIDE

AGENTS FOR CHANGE FACING THE ANTHROPOCENE

CURATED BY NINA CZEGLÉDY AND JANE TINGLEY

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DOWNTOWN KITCHENER

Note from the Curators

Agents for Change | Facing the Anthropocene presents artworks by women media artists working at the intersection of science, technology and art, with a focus on ecological change—the greatest danger of our time.

Responding to the global recognition of the importance of the creative voices and activism of women artists, this unique exhibition demonstrates progress towards improving gender representation in the arts.

Anthropocene describes the current geological period during which human activity has significantly influenced the climate and environment, compromising life on the planet. The impact of environmental change has begun to affect everyone—from rising sea levels, to intense heat waves, to the mass extinction of the earth's flora and fauna. Change is inevitable, but only by facing the future and understanding the challenges can we begin to become agents for change.

Selected artworks approach this complex topic by unpacking the lived realities of humans on this earth, but also of the animals and insects that we share it with. Art has the power to reach people personally, establishing a deeper understanding and emotional connection to what is happening to our planet. While artists are not alone in both questioning and confronting the ways in which we have interfered in the natural environment, their artworks remind us to reflect, reconsider and ultimately re-frame how we relate to the world around us.

We are pleased to present *Currents* as part of the exhibition - an evening screening of video works created by indigenous women artists at the University of Waterloo's Fine Arts Department. Collectively the presented works bring together indigenous voices from across Canada to highlight the approach of many indigenous peoples around the world towards the environment. Featured artists include Dana Claxton, Alethea Arnaquq-Bari, Shelley Niro, Cara Mumford, Lisa Jackson, Amanda Strong, Helen Haig-Brown, and Vanessa Dion Fletcher. Special thanks to collaborator Ivan Jurakic, curator of UWAG for making the film programme possible.

Grateful thanks are also due to our assistant Zana Kozomora, along with the hardworking staff at THEMUSEUM for bringing this show into being.

About the Curators

NINA CZEGLEDY

Nina Czegledy, independent media artist, curator, and researcher with international and national academic affiliations is based in Toronto, Canada. She collaborates on art& science& technology projects internationally. The paradigm shifts in the arts in a cross-cultural context, interdisciplinary education and practice, eco art and inter-generational issues inform her collaborations. Most recent curatorial project: *Who's you?* JD Reid Gallery, New Plymouth, NZ, 2019, *Leonardo 50th* at Cyber Arts and ARS Electronica, Austria, 2018. *Current: Shared Passions*, Canada/ Mexico 2019-2020. Upcoming: *Senses*, Laznia Contemporary Art Centre, Poland, 2020, *Cosmos*, Laznia Contemporary Art Centre, Poland, 2024. Member of the Governing Board *Leonardo/ISAST*, Board Member, *Noema Scientific Committee*, Bologna Italy, Chair *Intercreate* org New Zealand, President *Critical Media Knowledge Institute*, Canada. Czegledy is an Adjunct Professor at OCAD University, Senior Fellow, *KMDI*, University of Toronto, Senior Fellow at Hungarian University of Arts, Budapest.

JANE TINGLEY

Jane Tingley is an artist, curator and Associate Professor in Hybrid Media Arts at the University of Waterloo (ON). Her studio work combines traditional studio practice with new media tools - and spans responsive/ interactive installation, performative robotics, and the creation of a telematically connected distributed sculpture. She has participated in exhibitions and festivals in the Americas, the Middle East, Asia, and Europe - including *translife - International Triennial of Media Art* at the National Art Museum of China, Beijing, *Gallerie Le Deco* in Tokyo (JP), *Elektra Festival* in Montréal (CA) and the *Künstlerhaus* in Vienna (AT). She received the *Kenneth Finkelstein Prize in Sculpture* in Manitoba, the first prize in the *iINTERFACES – Interactive Art Competition* in Porto, Portugal, and has received support from a number of funding agencies, the arts councils of Canada, Manitoba, Ontario, and Québec, and the *Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada*.



The Shore Line

Elizabeth (Liz) Miller

2017, Interactive Documentary.

Described as “a storybook for the future,” *The Shore Line*, is a collaborative interactive documentary project with soundscapes, visualizations, dynamic maps, educational resources and over forty videos. Director Elizabeth Miller features individuals who are confronting the threats of unsustainable development and extreme weather with persistence and ingenuity.

Elizabeth Miller is a documentary filmmaker and professor at Concordia University who uses collaboration and interactivity as a way to connect personal stories to larger social concerns. Her multi-platform projects on timely issues such as water privatization, refugee rights, gender and environmental justice have won awards and influenced decision makers.

Credits:

Interactive Design by Helios Design Lab. Funded by Insight Development Grant, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.



Knight of Infinite Resignation

Diane Landry

2009, Motorized sound installation, bicycle wheels, plastic bottles of water, sand, LED, steel, motors, pulley, timing belt, ball bearings.

My artistic practice, through the use of recontextualizing semi-readymades, asks the viewer to look twice and to see the world differently. *Knight of Infinite Resignation*, juxtaposes the proposition of the perpetual motion machine, with sand and plastic bottles, to suggest an infinite and self-perpetuating problem linked to energy, water resources and lack of recycling.

Diane Landry lives and maintains her studio in Quebec City. Landry received her BA in Visual Arts from Laval University, Quebec and an MFA from Stanford University, California. She has exhibited and performed extensively since 1987. She received one of the prestigious awards from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation in New York in 2014.

Credits:

Work commissioned by L'Oeil de Poisson and supported by the Canada Council for the Arts.



Behold the Tilapia

Kristine Diekman

2018, Video, desiccated fish.
Music by John Saint Pelvyn.

Behold the Tilapia considers the history, mythology, and current decline of Tilapia in California's Salton Sea, a man-made sea that is quickly evaporating due to climate change and depleted waterways. *Behold the Tilapia* is an attempt to both resurrect the importance of the fish while acknowledging the forces that contribute to its decline.

Kristine Diekman is an international media artist and educator. She focuses on socially-engaged media productions and soundscapes, and facilitates workshops in first-voice media and interactive digital storytelling. Working closely in collaboration with community members, craftspeople, public health experts, scientists and historians informs her current environmental art practice.

Credits:

Animation and Sound Design: Kristine Diekman
Music composed and performed by John Saint Pelvyn

Spirits of Wasteland

Maayke Schurer

2012, Video.

Spirits of Wasteland continues a process of recreating scenarios that consider human activity in the natural environment. Miniaturized scenes are filmed real-time without effects to provide opportunity for reflection on our place within nature. Scenes are prompted by such questions as "What does light look like shining through islands of ocean plastic...."

Maayke Schurer creates magic realistic video via real-time experimentation using natural elements. Her nostalgic scenarios are hand-made dramatized nature documentaries. Schurer has degrees from Queen's University (BFAH, BScH), and The Glasgow School of Art (MFA). Awards include Canada Council for the Arts. She lives in Ottawa with her husband and five children.



Drone

Donna Legault

2018, pico projectors, e-textiles, sonic interfaces, amplifiers and reclaimed speakers

DRONE is an immersive installation where the light from multiple video projections modulate audio signals in real-time. When participants enter the array of speakers they are surrounded by sounds that affect the experience of being within a beehive. The work exposes research in the US and Japan that is aimed at replacing the dwindling bee population with micro-robotic counterparts.

Donna Legault's interdisciplinary practice explores opportunities afforded by technology to acknowledge more-than-human relations through gesture and resonance. Recent engagements include; ELEKTRA-BIAN in Montreal; Àdisòkàmagan at The Ottawa Art Gallery; the Leitrim Sculpture Centre in Ireland; Open Codes at the ZKM in Karlsruhe, Germany and Taking Care at Ars Electronica in Linz, Austria.

Credits:

Technical support from Martin Peach and Geneviève Moisan. This research was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) with additional research grants and funding by Hexagram and Elektra.



Sounding: Sounding Walks and SoundingCA

Caroline McCaw & Vicki Smith

2018, Sound Walk and Installation

Sounding considers the effects of noise pollution on marine mammals. Whales and dolphins use echolocation – reflected sound – to navigate, communicate and hunt. Sounding uses umbrellas to create both static and ambulatory experiences for audiences to immerse in the sound of our seas and mammals communication, via invisible digital oceans.

Dr Caroline McCaw's social art practice considers landscapes, local species and regional contexts as playful sites in which to reconsider human activity. She enjoys swimming. **Vicki Smith** creates participatory artwork interweaving communities and the environment, particularly waterways. An ocean-going sailor Vicki's practice traverses technologies, disciplines and coastlines.

Credits:

Aotearoa Digital Arts (ADA) network, Blunt umbrellas, Creative New Zealand, Dunedin City Council, Otago Museum, Otago Polytechnic, Otago University, Urban Dream Brokerage





Spontaneous Generation

Elaine Whittaker

2007, Glass jars, Grown Salt Crystals, Digital Prints.

The notion that vermin spring fully formed from rubbish and decay seems ludicrous today. Climate change feeds another kind of alarm – a warmer planet generating a profound increase in hosts and vectors of pathogenic microbes. Are we ready for a post-glacial planet where temperatures rise, mosquitoes reign, and microbes fester?

Elaine Whittaker is a Canadian installation artist intersecting art, medicine, biology and ecology. She has exhibited in art and science galleries/museums nationally and internationally; and has been an Artist-in-Residence with the Ontario Science Centre (Toronto), the Pelling Laboratory for Augmented Biology (Ottawa), and the Banff Centre for Arts & Creativity.



Ecosystem of Excess

Pinar Yoldas

2014, multi-media.

This project starts in the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. Covering 1.6 million square kilometers, the site is a monument to plastic waste on a global scale. **An Ecosystem of Excess** asks a simple question: 'If life started today in our plastic debris filled oceans, what kinds of life forms would emerge out of this contemporary primordial ooze?'

Dr. Pinar Yoldas is an infradisciplinary designer/artist/researcher. Her work develops within biological sciences and digital technologies through architectural installations, kinetic sculpture, sound, video and drawing with a focus on post-humanism, eco-nihilism, anthropocene and feminist technoscience.



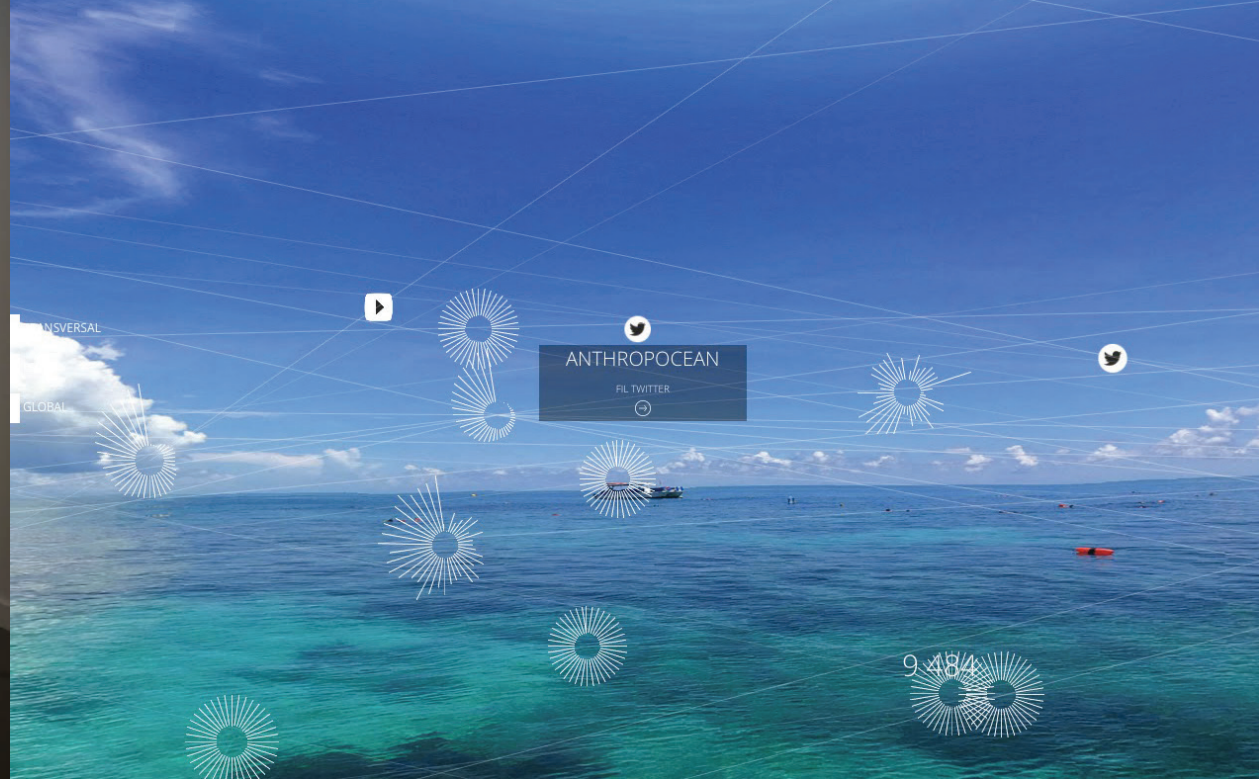
Swamp Radio. Fluctuations of Microworlds.

Rasa Smite and Raitis Smits

2018, Real-time sonification, MFC (microbial fuel cells), video, VR, 360 video, data visualization.

Fluctuations of Microworlds, consists of six “bacteria battery” cells, built by using Microbial Fuel Cell technology, which generates electrical energy from microorganisms – bacteria found in the soil, sediments of the pond or sewage. Electrical impulses and fluctuations of “bacteria electricity” make audible and visible the embedded activity found in nature, thus creating the poetics of green energy.

In their artistic practice, **Smite and Smits** work together as an artist duo, creating networked and visionary artworks. They have received the PRIX Ars Electronica (1998), the Excellence in Culture Award (2017) from Latvian Ministry of Culture, and were nominated for Purvitis Award in Visual Arts of Latvia. Rasa and Raitis are visiting lecturers at MIT Art, Culture and Technology Program.



AnthropOcean

Olga Kisseleva

2017, interactive website.

AnthropOcean is an interactive web-based project that asks the audience to question one's own impact on the environment, which we continuously adjust to fall in-line with our own aspirations. The project provides access to a database devoted to issues relating to climate change, as well as the broader ties between ocean, climate and society.

Olga Kisseleva was born in Saint Petersburg in 1965. Her work hovers between science and art and consistently challenges the viewer to rethink accepted notions about the world around us. Currently she teaches contemporary art at the Sorbonne University of Paris, is the head of the International Art&Science Institute, and the Director of Art&Medium at the Sorbonne.

Credits:

Collaboration with Surfrider Foundation.

AGENTS FOR CHANGE | FACING THE ANTHROPOCENE PROGRAMMING

January 16 - March 7, 2020

UWAG

“Baroque Biology” by Jennifer Willet and “Reclamation” by Melissa General

on display at the University of Waterloo Art Gallery from January 16-March 7, 2020.

www.uwag.uwaterloo.ca

uwag

Thursday February 6 at 7pm

Currents: Indigenous Film & Video Screening

part of *Agents for Change | Facing the Anthropocene*

East Campus Hall Room 1220
263 Phillip Street, Waterloo

An hour-long program of short films and videos by Indigenous women artists focusing on the environment curated by Nina Czegledy from the VTape collection. Featuring works by Dana Claxton, Alethea Arnaquq-Bari, Shelley Niro, Cara Mumford, Lisa Jackson, Amanda Strong, Helen Haig-Brown, and Vanessa Dion Fletcher.

January 24, 2020 3pm - 6pm

Agents for Change | Facing the Anthropocene:

Two projects - Three creators

Knowledge Media Design Institute
KMDI, University of Toronto, Robarts Building
140 St. George St. Toronto. M5S 3G6
www.kmdi.utoronto.ca



January 27, 2020 6pm

Cancel Service, Remove Line

McLuhan Centre for Culture and Technology
University of Toronto
39 Queen's Park Cres E
www.mcluhancentre.ca

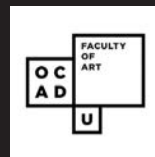


January 28, 2020 6:30pm Room 258

Visualizing the Poetics of Green Energy

Rasa Smite and Raitis Smits Artist Talk

Introduction Nina Czegledy
OCAD University Faculty of Fine Arts
100 McCaul St. Toronto, M5T 1W1
www.ocadu.ca

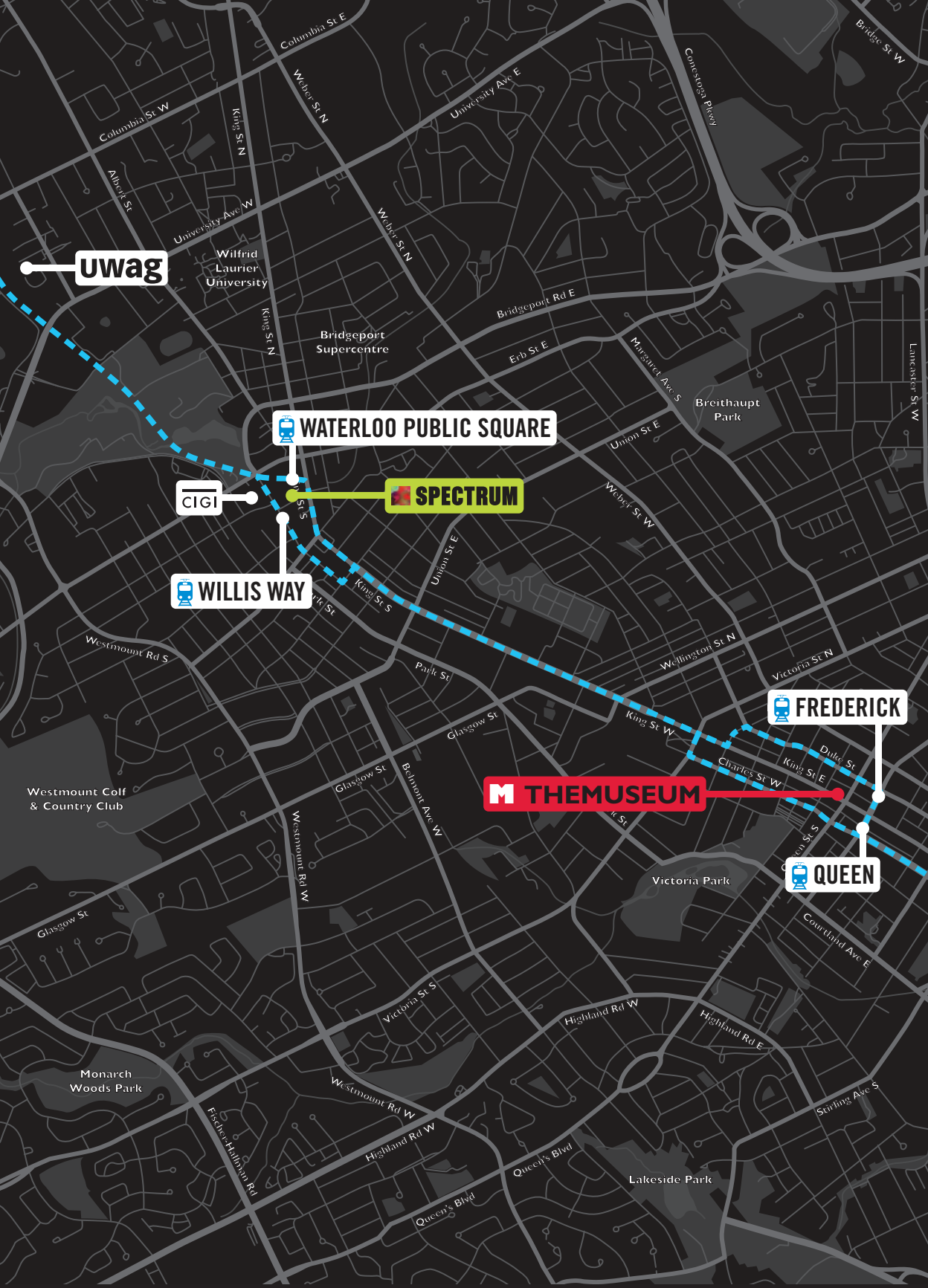


ALARM

RESPONDING TO OUR CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Agents for Change | Facing the Anthropocene, the third installment in DIGITAL DYNAMICS is one of four important exhibitions as THEMUSEUM weighs in on our climate emergency. Please visit THEMUSEUM.ca for more information on our exhibitions and programming.





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CIGI

SPECTRUM

WILLIS WAY

THE MUSEUM

FREDERICK

QUEEN