

ROOTS OF PLACE



Welcome to our places of making: forest, kitchen, and backyard studio. As artists and designers devoted to sustainable materials research, we are rooted in our living world. By handcrafting paper, inks, dyes, textiles, biomaterials and ceramics sustainably from natural sources, we hope to add to a conversation of material ethics, bringing scrutiny to the ecological moment we are living in.

Roots of Place emphasizes the following key concerns in sustainable material research: strengthening the ties between our human creations and their origins within the land, bringing emphasis to the embodied act of material research, and highlighting the continuous speculation and innovation within conventional art and design disciplines. The gallery is organized into three types of spaces: the land, the active studio, and the transformed pieces, exposing multiple phases of the sustainable materials research process.

The exhibition is a unique moment of interdisciplinary collaboration, featuring the work of BFA, BDes, MFA, and MDes students. *Roots of Place* marks an unprecedented effort to build a framework of sustainable material exploration that transcends disciplines.

Erick Jantzen
exhibition curator



TEXTILE

AVA BUCKLEY

MELANIE CAMMAN

CERAMIC

MASON SORBARA

BIOMATERIAL

EDEN ZINCHIK

GWENYTH CHAO

PAULA TORRES URZUA

PAPER+INK

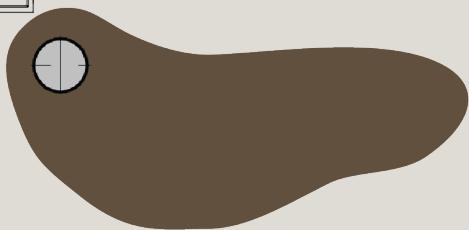
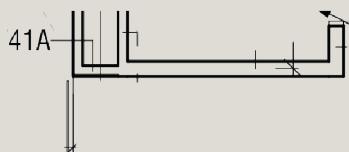
CAMILA SZEFLER

DANIKA OYSTREK

DILVEEN ABI

ERICK JANTZEN

ROOTS OF PLACE



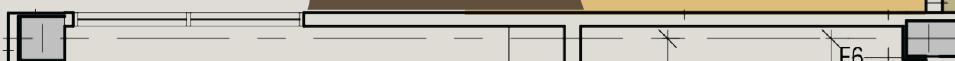
Textile

Ava Buckley

Melanie Camman

Ceramic

Mason Sorbara



Gwenyth Chao

Eden Zinchik

Paula Torres Urzua

Biomaterial

Erick Jantzen

Danika Oystrek

Camila Szeffler

Dilveen Abi

Paper + Ink

AVA BUCKLEY

[Foraged Colour, 2021]

As the seasons transitioned from summer to fall, I committed to learning a new way of making and exploring colour through both an ecological and artistic lens. Collecting my own materials for dyeing meant that I became attentive to the current season and what plants were accessible. In doing so, I learned lessons about their life cycles as they relate to concepts of grief, time, interconnection, and emergence. All of the plants used for dying were foraged from locations in the Fraser Valley, across the unceded traditional territories of the Katzie, Kwantlen, and Sto:lo Nations. Embarking on this research provided me with the opportunity to begin engaging in a reciprocal relationship with my materials. Each stage of the project required patience and care that made

for an intuitive and slow process. As time went on, my weaving became less about the final composition and more about the time spent developing a newfound gratitude for the plants I was using.



*[weighing English
Oak acorns]*



*[red onion skins
for dyeing wool]*

MELANIE CAMMAN

textile

Over the past few years I have been exploring the making of cloth and fabric at all stages. My encounters with the Fibreshed Field School, Sharon Kallis, and Earthhand Gleaners have allowed me to consider and incorporate my love of gardening into my design practice. Using regenerative farming practices to build soil and biodiversity, I have begun growing the materials of my practice: fibre plants - flax and nettle - for making cloth, and now natural dye plants - madder, weld and indigo - for colouring cloth. I have also been learning how to spin and weave as a way to explore my own heritage and family histories. Learning to take raw wool from a sheep into yarn for knitting, and flax from seed to linen thread for weaving has helped me to appreciate the time, labour and community effort it takes to produce enough cloth for even one wearable piece. As my interest and experience grows, so do my connections to the people, plants, animals and life cycles of this place.

[reflection of Pokeberry]



[retting Flax]

MASON SORBARA

This project is an investigation into the properties of wild, found clays and the alchemy and processes in creating clay bodies and glazes with them. The research began in September of 2021 with clay I foraged over the summer from the Hudson Bay lowlands in Ontario. I spent that fall and winter learning about wild clays and how to process them. Every single clay acts completely different and so with each new clay extensive testing is required to unveil its characteristics: firing temperature, melting point, colour, and shrinkage. The majority of this research was done this spring through the Shumka Centre in collaboration with Christa Clay and Janaki Larsen studios, as part of *Design for Regional Resilience*.



[thoroughly drying raw clay from the Harricana River]



[bowls made of clay gathered from West 3rd Ave placed on shards of high fire clay]

EDEN ZINCHIK

[*Phytalism*, 2022]

biomaterial

Phytalism is a meditation on the role of biomaterials within the world as we now know it. This project originated as an exploration of Alganyl, an algae-based bioplastic recipe developed by the Living Matters Lab at University of Colorado Boulder. A way to play around with a material, get to know it better, build a relationship. Quickly the project moved from a place of meditation and exploration to one of irony and confusion. Giving space to the human urge to interpret and represent that which is found in Nature, oftentimes by extracting from Nature. I view this sculpture as a stepping stone in my personal understanding of the roles that biomaterials play in art, a raw way to digest and reflect on the ongoing research.

[setting up to make the
Alganyl bioplastic]



[making the
wire frame
using a spot
welder]



GWENYTH CHAO

[from a detritivore's senses, 2022]

from a detritivore's senses is one of Gwenyth Chao's iterative works responding to the conditions of living symbiotically with animal kin and plant life in the ruin of our current climate urgency. This re-imagining situates itself in depleted sites where capitalist extraction has exhausted the land of materials and food. In a time where conventional food becomes limited, our planet's inhabitants may turn to notions of composting as a literal and metaphorical response. Perhaps the material "artifacts" of this future will be made from reconstituted detritus or debris. Disrupting the colonial and extractive legacy of subjugating materials under an artist's hand, Chao intentionally negotiates contingencies by sharing the making process with living organic materials.

from a detritivore's senses is one of Chao's sculptures that combines different ingredients, eggshell and green tea in this case, into one biomaterial to experiment how they live and become with each other.



[sifting eggshells]



[setting material to shape]

PAULA TORRES URZUA

biomaterial

[*Cascara, 2022*]

Cascara is about reevaluating the way we see organic residues by exploring the potential uses they may have. All the organic matter we do not consume can be reintroduced into the value chain if we give them the right treatment. The project seeks to reuse these organic residues and develop a sustainable material whose properties can be similar to the current synthetic textiles available in the market. *Cascara* explores the different properties, textures and colors as a way to embrace and communicate the true value of what is commonly seen as organic waste. With this project, we can appreciate the diversity of our natural resources and the synergy they can have when combining them to get the best out of every material.



[adding dried spinach to the glycerin mixture]



[removing the cooled material from the frame]

CAMILA SZEFLER

[50 Mile Sketchbook, 2020 and Curiosity Grown, 2022]

Driven by a curiosity for the potential inherent in living materials, I work with plants and seaweed to transform them into papers and inks for printmaking. Through a process of trial and error, the colours, ranging from the bright oranges of Cosmos Tango to the muted greens of Rockweed, are extracted and captured in paper and fabric. My material investigation with things that grow, particularly those I find locally, continues to offer new possibilities. This, combined with a passion for printmaking, creates an opportunity to innovate on traditional techniques such as silkscreen. The result is work that is evocative of the local environment and captures the joy of exploring sustainable materials.



*[flax, nettle, and tea
tanned salmon skin]*



*[Cosmos Tango
used for dyes
and inks]*

DANIKA OYSTREK

[*chaos & capability, 2022*]

paper + ink

chaos & capability is a material-based exploration of self-care and ritualistic practices with the Earth. Through a set of prompt cards, the user is invited to an intuitive dialogue with their surroundings while reflecting and mitigating their feelings on observed ecological changes. This project investigates the intersection of ecofeminism and dualistic monism by asking the question “How can we build a greater appreciation for feminine ways of being in order to benefit nature?” Through a set of 14 prompts that cannot logically be processed, the user navigates a natural space using intuitive means, reflecting in collaboration with the elements that surround them. *chaos & capability* aids in de-prioritizing ego-based thinking, encouraging deep trust in self, and approaching human-nature interactions from a place of humility.



[*Phormium Tenax boiled with soda ash to isolate the plant fibre*]



[*drying sheets of Phormium Tenax*]

DILVEEN ABI

During the past few months, my work has centred around experiment, environment, and preservation. I have taken soil and minerals within greater Vancouver and beyond to create a colourful variety of pigments, clay, and inks. I used recycled food scraps, unused spices, and winter vegetation to produce inks that then contribute to my artistic practice. Gathering and creating a medium from natural resources has allowed me to develop an overwhelming sense of clarity and understanding of what the Earth offers. My research is the art piece; an opportunity to construct a physical and conceptual response to nature. The natural material has become the medium and catalyst for my artistic journey. Collecting soil from the Chilliwack Valley, breaking it down, and filtering

the soil made a pleasant red clay that I would then use to make a bright red watercolour. The act of searching for colours has taught me to approach the environment with a bold investigation.



[soil paints]



*[clays from
Chilliwack and
Port Moody for
drawing]*

ERICK JANTZEN

[The Here and The Now, 2022]

paper + ink

The Here and The Now consists of three intaglio inks developed from mineral pigments collected and combined with plant-based varnish; rag paper made from discarded canvas; and a three-plate copper etching of the Fraser River and Sumas Valley. The project continues a process of reconnecting my material practice to the land. It exposes tensions in our reliance on extracted resources – in this case, pigment and fibre – and in doing so brings fresh eyes to our globalized, consumptive habits. Furthermore, it speculates on alternative ways of being that bring us into closer community with our ecosystems, informed by what the earth can support. The print, a hand etched map, is an act of meditation on an area that we take for granted but wholly depend on. This region, now used for agriculture, is at risk of extreme flooding as climate change intensifies. The 2021 floods are an indication of what is to come.

[grinding copper pigment]



[prepping canvas for pulping with the Hollander Beater]

Roots of Place is an exhibit taking place on the unceded, traditional, and ancestral territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm, Skwxwú7mesh, and Səlililwətaʔil peoples. The show includes work with materials sourced from these lands, as well as Treaty No. 9 territory, and the unceded ancestral territories of the Katzie, Kwantlen, Stó:lō, Ktunaxa ?amak?is, and K'ómoks peoples.



[Sound]

they speak in whispers, 2022

Generative soundscape from field recordings in coastal old growth forests.
Julie Andreyev, Simon Overstall, and birds, insects, plants, trees and water of Denman
Island (Taystay'ich, part of the unceded traditional territories of K'ómoks and
Qualicum Nations) and Antler Lake, Vancouver Island (Mowachaht/Muchalaht First
Nation).

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A zine designed by
Danika Oystrek & Erick Jantzen

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