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June 5, 2021

***Vancouver, Canada:* The Vancouver Biennale invites all parents with school-age children to participate in WE ARE OCEAN VANCOUVER, a free series of online learning videos, art-inspired activity guide, and BIKennale/WALKennale outdoor adventures exploring ocean literacy based on Indigenous knowledge and storytelling. Free intelligent, educational summer fun! Visit vancouverbiennale.com for more information.**

WE ARE OCEAN VANCOUVER has been commissioned by the Vancouver Biennale and is part of the art-science-education WE ARE OCEAN Global Program of ARTPORT_making waves around the world. Curated by Anne-Marie Melster, the project is an artistic contribution to the Preparatory Phase of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) through IOC-UNESCO.

Led by Vancouver-based artists and educators T'uy't'ananat Cease Wyss and Olivier Salvas, the Vancouver Biennale program is unique in its focus on Indigenous knowledge of the ecosystems that affect Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh and Musqueam First Nations land and the surrounding Pacific Ocean. Students learn about Indigenous plant and marine life, the impacts of colonization, and ideas for decolonization activities that support ocean health.

"WE ARE OCEAN VANCOUVER is an outstanding addition to our BIG IDEAS education program," says Barrie Mowatt, President and Artistic Director of the Vancouver Biennale. "If we are to have any hope at all, we need to begin teaching school-aged children about ocean literacy and environmental stewardship in ways that are engaging and interactive. To do so within a framework of Indigenous learning practices amplifies the lesson further to show First Nations people within the context of knowledge keepers, environmentalists and educators."

The WE ARE OCEAN VANCOUVER project consists of four 30-minute videos and a corresponding activity guide with a multitude of fun, art-inspired activities for children at various grade levels drawing upon STEAM-based (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) learning. The entire program is self-paced for parents and children to do as many of the activities as they want, whenever they want throughout the summer and beyond.

A WE ARE OCEAN VANCOUVER outdoor adventure is also part of the program. Two cycling and walking tours are included in the 2021 Vancouver Biennale BIKennale/WALKennale, where families visit the locations discussed in the videos. FREE Family Passes to the BIKennale/WALKennale are available to everyone participating in WE ARE OCEAN VANCOUVER. You'll find the FREE promo code at the end of each video.

"To work with the artists Cease Wyss and Olivier Salvas on creating WE ARE OCEAN VANCOUVER was a true pleasure," says Anne-Marie Melster, Curator. "I learned so much about the interconnection of ocean and land in Vancouver, about ancestral knowledge of Indigenous people in BC and was able to transmit this also to our close partners IOC-UNESCO. I am honored to be able to work on such important topics with engaged artists and to include that in our Global Program to stimulate societal change."

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About The Artists

T'uy't'tanat-Cease Wyss

Skwxwu7mesh/Sto:Lo/Hawaiian/Swiss

T'uy't'tanat-Cease Wyss is an interdisciplinary artist who works with digital media, writing, and performance as her multi-disciplinary arts practice. She is a community-engaged public artist and ethnobotanist.

Ranging over 30 years, her works have always focussed on sustainability, permaculture techniques, and Coast Salish Cultural elements and have included themes of ethnobotany, Indigenous language revival, Salish weaving, and digital media technology. Having concentrated on connecting her Polynesian roots to her Salish roots through weaving and digital media projects, she has recently been given opportunities to collaborate with Indigenous peoples throughout Oceania, specifically Polynesian peoples.

Cease is embarking on a series of national and international Futurisms projects and is currently collaborating with curators, artists and scientists to develop a number of new works. The app on which she collaborated with Olivier Salvat and Anne-Marie Melster through the IOC-UNESCO project WE ARE OCEAN has been a tremendous example of how Indigenous and non Indigenous communities need to unite through a cultural lens in order to raise awareness about sustainability and protecting species at risk and to increase recognition of our part in destruction and potential remediation and restoration of ecosystems.

Olivier Salvat

Olivier Salvat is an artist and educator who specializes in arts education and the maker movement in a second-language setting. Originally from Montreal, Olivier moved to Vancouver shortly after completing his Bachelor of Education in Teaching French as a Second Language from the University of Montreal. As he embarked on graduate studies in Media Studies and Curriculum at the University of British-Columbia, Olivier merged his two passions of art and education and began to create artistic work based on educational research. He uses abstract paintings, photography and various media to bring light to social causes and to foster conversations about identity and arts education. Olivier's research and original artworks are inspired by graffiti art, street art, urban culture and contemporary artists from Les Automatistes in Quebec.

When Olivier begins an artistic collection based on his findings, he thinks of a topic in the world that resonates with him. Then, he creates a story with this event, followed by a main character. He asks, "What would this character do, think, or say?" Subsequently, Olivier pairs up with a photographer to generate a visual story, which inspires him for the direction he wants to take artistically with his message.

In 2019, Olivier was chosen to represent British Columbia as an ambassador for Canadian Culture Days. That same year he had his first solo exhibition called Rebel with a Cause that was showcased over a three-month period in Vancouver. Olivier has been collaborating with the Vancouver Biennale as an educator for the Big Ideas in Schools program since 2015.

Olivier continues to create and engage in professional development opportunities for educators and events to support artists and children of all ages. Olivier's collection

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Flamboyant is currently showcased at the Lost Lagoon Gallery and the Pacific Arts Market in Vancouver while his Discover show is on display in Victoria. In addition to frequently being in the media to speak about education and support LGBTQ2S+ causes across Canada, he will participate in various festivals this summer.

About The Curator

Anne-Marie Melster is co-founder and executive director of ARTPORT_making waves. As an international curator and art critic, she has made a name for herself in the field of art and climate change through numerous interdisciplinary art projects with ARTPORT_making waves. She started her career in contemporary art in 1999.

Director of ARTPORT_making waves since 2006, she has collaborated with internationally renowned artists (including Olafur Eliasson, Tino Sehgal, and Barthélémy Toguo), institutions (such as United Nations, UNESCO, Pro Helvetia, Embassy of Switzerland in Paris, TBA21, Grand Palais Paris, IUCN, Kunstmuseum Bonn) and companies to raise awareness about climate change through the arts. She has created art programs for various climate conferences, including the COP15 in Copenhagen, COP21 in Paris in 2015 and COP23 in Bonn in 2017.

Each of these programs involves entire cities in various locations to address civil society as well as the delegates, thereby contributing to social change. Last but not least, she is one of the curatorial pioneers at the interface of art and climate change.

About ARTPORT_making waves

ARTPORT_making waves is an international curatorial collective focusing on art projects that explore climate change and sustainability. Established in 2006, it has organized numerous innovative art and cultural projects that promote tolerance, sustainable development, and the common good. The aim is to raise awareness of socially relevant issues and to stimulate public discussion for societal change.

The collective has drawn attention to the causes, consequences, and possible solutions of climate change through themed exhibitions, film productions, competitions, workshops, conferences and educational programs. As an unparalleled pioneer in its field, it has brought together experts from various sectors, notably the arts, academia, education, and politics, and has collaborated with numerous leading international organizations, including the United Nations, governments, schools, universities, museums, and festivals.

ARTPORT_making waves was founded by Anne-Marie Melster and Corinne Erni. Originating in New York and Valencia, it has grown into a reputable international art network and is registered as a non-profit association in Germany, France, Spain, and Switzerland.

About The Vancouver Biennale

The Vancouver Biennale celebrates art in public space. We transform the urban landscape into an Open Air Museum, creating globally inspired cultural experiences where people live, work, play, and transit. Each exhibition becomes a catalyst for community engagement, learning, and social action. The Vancouver Biennale features internationally renowned and emerging contemporary artists that represent a diversity of cultural perspectives and artistic



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disciplines including sculpture, augmented and virtual reality, performance works, music, and film. As a non-profit charitable organization, the Vancouver Biennale relies on the support of its partners and friends to deliver award-winning programming. Visit www.vancouverbiennale.com for more information.

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