

FOREST ALPHABET

ARTISTIC VISIONS OF A FOREST IN TRUST TO THE CHILDREN



FOREST TRUST FOR THE CHILDREN OF CORTES ISLAND

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DEDICATED TO CHILDREN AND FORESTS EVERYWHERE

The children of Cortes Island have engaged in a Forest Alphabet art initiative to promote the Forest Trust for the Children of Cortes Island. The Forest Alphabet contributes a valuable educational component and is presented to the public through the irresistible art work of children inspired by a love of place!



"If I had influence with the good fairy who is supposed to preside over the christening of all children I should ask that her gift to each child in the world be a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life..." Rachel Carson

THE FOREST TRUST FOR THE CHILDREN OF CORTES ISLAND

The Forest Trust for the Children of Cortes Island Society has been formed to purchase Island Timberlands forest land holdings immediately adjacent to Carrington Bay Regional Park Reserve on Cortes Island, British Columbia. **These forest lands, the proposed Children's Forest, will be held in trust for all the children of Cortes Island, in perpetuity.** These lands will offer educational, recreational, cultural and spiritual value for all our children. They will provide the opportunity for our youth to embrace and practise stewardship of forest lands and watersheds.



ROBERT BATEMAN ON NATURE AND ARTISTIC VISION

Since my childhood, art and nature have been to me, inseparable. In fact, children the world over love to do art and at the same time love animals - mammals, birds, butterflies and even “creepy crawlers”. They also love flowers and other plant life. Unfortunately, most children grow up around the age of 12 or 13 and go on to more “mature” things. I have just not yet reached that stage and, at the age of 80, it looks as if it is too late.

In fact, nature has inspired artistic vision since our paleolithic ancestors did their cave paintings. But it works both ways. In producing art, the creator of the piece becomes immersed in a bit of nature and so benefits from a rise in consciousness. It also raises the consciousness of the viewers of the art. The result is, one would hope, a desire to preserve and protect nature because, quite literally, nature is in our hands.

TZEPORAH BERMAN ON CHILDREN AND ACTIVISM

What can we do to empower our children so that they believe they can make a difference? The simplest answer of course is the old adage that children learn what they live. How many times have you taken your child, your niece, your nephew, your grandchild shopping with you? Now name the number of times you have taken them to volunteer, to watch the debates in the legislature or at city hall, or even taken them with you when you vote? The sad fact is that the majority of us today have an overdeveloped consumption muscle and an underdeveloped civil society engagement muscle.

Activism is a practice. It is something that we need to weave through our life like exercise or meditation. Our children will engage in it if they know it, if they experience it and most importantly, see the impacts of your or their own activities. Start small. Have a discussion about something you care about, like protecting the forests near your home. Research it together. Debate the issues and make sure that everyone understands all sides of the issues. Encourage them to form their own opinions and then engage decision makers. Write to their Member of Parliament or a Minister or CEO. Better yet, call their office and request a meeting. Join an environmental group and volunteer and take your children with you. Even the smallest hands can stuff envelopes or play with Lego at your feet while you organize. Children learn what they live. At this time in our history when we face grave impacts of our dependence on dirty and dangerous fossil fuels, when we continue to clearcut log intact forests knowing that the majority of the Earth's intact forests have already been destroyed or degraded, we all live the consequences of our action or inaction. Introducing activism into our daily lives will empower our children and ensure they realize their full potential as not just consumers but as engaged citizens.

IMAGINE... A FOREST IN TRUST TO THE CHILDREN...



A is for alligator lizards... sunning themselves on the slopes of Goat Mountain.

The northern alligator lizard, *Elgaria coerulea*, is a secretive species found under rocks and bark in our woodland and herbaceous sensitive ecosystems... and sometimes in our greenhouses and gardens! This fascinating little reptile bears live young, up to 6 or 7 each year.



Sancho

My name is Sancho, and I was 12 years old when I created my alligator lizard art. I am in grade 7 now. My mother bought into a land share on Cortes Island and we have slowly been building a home. We have rented many homes and camped in the summer for almost five years. This summer we finally moved into the upstairs of our own home; even though there is much to complete, it feels great! We love our community and the forests are a big part of that.

I love the peace and quiet that the forest gives, and I feel the sacred places. It is sad that we have to protect and save our forests because the forests are very special places. Who gets to speak for them? I would make sure that the Children's Forest would be respected and have many visitors.

I chose the letter A because I was drawn to it. I used paint and a styrofoam marking pad to create the alligator lizard. I am satisfied with how it turned out.





B is for biodiversity... which makes the world go 'round!

The term biodiversity was first coined by E.O. Wilson, naturalist extraordinaire! Biological diversity describes the full range of life in all its forms - genes, species, ecosystems and the ecological processes that link them.



Kiera

My name is Kiera. I am 12 years old. I have a mom, a dad, a brother and 2 pets. I was born in Prince Rupert, B.C., and have lived on Cortes for five years.

I feel that the forest is a great learning place for people of all ages and it would be really sad to take that away. I have gone hiking in the forest a lot with my family and we go camping. It's really fun to explore the forest to find new things like mushrooms and fungus and little animals. I think it is important to protect our forest so everyone can experience them and learn from them like we do. Clear-cuts are also really ugly. I have a clear-cut by my house and bike past it almost everyday. It is really sad to think that a lot of animals used to live there and their homes were just taken away.

I chose to do biodiversity. My picture shows the variety of species that live in the forest like wolves, squirrels and ferns. I used charcoal pencils, painting & collage for my artwork. I was in grade 6 when I did this artwork.





C is for Carrington's crystal clear creeks... brimming with cutthroat trout.

We are learning that the considerable biological diversity found within each species of salmonid, is the key to survival of the wild stocks of Pacific salmon. Therefore, we need to ensure excellent water quality for the survival of Carrington's unique cutthroat trout, *Oncorhynchus clarki*.



Nola

I was 7 years old when I did my picture. In my family, I have my mom-my, my daddy, my sister, and my dog Rufus, and I have Thorhammer my cat, and Solstice my sister's cat. I live on Linnaea Farm with sheep, cows, pigs, chickens and ducks. My special place on the farm is the hay-loft because I made a fort with the old hay. I help my mom milk the cows, and feed the sheep and pigs and chickens and ducks, and check for eggs.

I like climbing trees and making fairy houses. It's important that animals live in the forests. I like the forest 'cause I can always go there when I'm sad and talk to the trees.

I chose C because I like creeks 'cause they wouldn't be so pretty if there weren't trees. I used thread, sticks, and cloth, and I made a picture of a fish swimming in the creek with trees behind. I made it because creeks are important and also very nice!



D is for
Detritus,



D is for detritus...
**every leaf, needle, branch and bone breaking
down to feed the forest.**

Detritus is exactly that - organic debris from decomposing plants and animals. Detritus is the forest's storehouse of nutrients enabling the growth of the forest giants we have come to love in Grandmother's Grove.



Osha

My name is Osha, and I was 9 years old, and in Grade 4 last spring. I have a mother Sarah, a father Conrad, and a sister Aislin. I like to read big books. I like to play with fir cones. I like to climb trees. I live in the forest. It's important to protect forests because they help us live.

I made my artwork with paper and leaves and glue and pencil crayons and sticks. My picture is about detritus.

The Job of a Fir Cone

*The job of a fir cone is to be eaten by a squirrel,
to be written in a poem,
to be thrown at people, to fall from a tree,
to be brown and have mice tails poke out from it.
The job of a fir cone is to transfer seeds,
to be stepped on, to exist.
The job of a fir cone is to be a fir cone.*





E is for ecosystems... the interrelationship between all living and non-living parts of the whole.

The canopy of the largest Douglas-fir in Green Valley is an ecosystem, Cortes Island forest lands are an ecosystem and the whole earth is an ecosystem! *Oikos* is the Greek root of the prefix eco and it means - home!

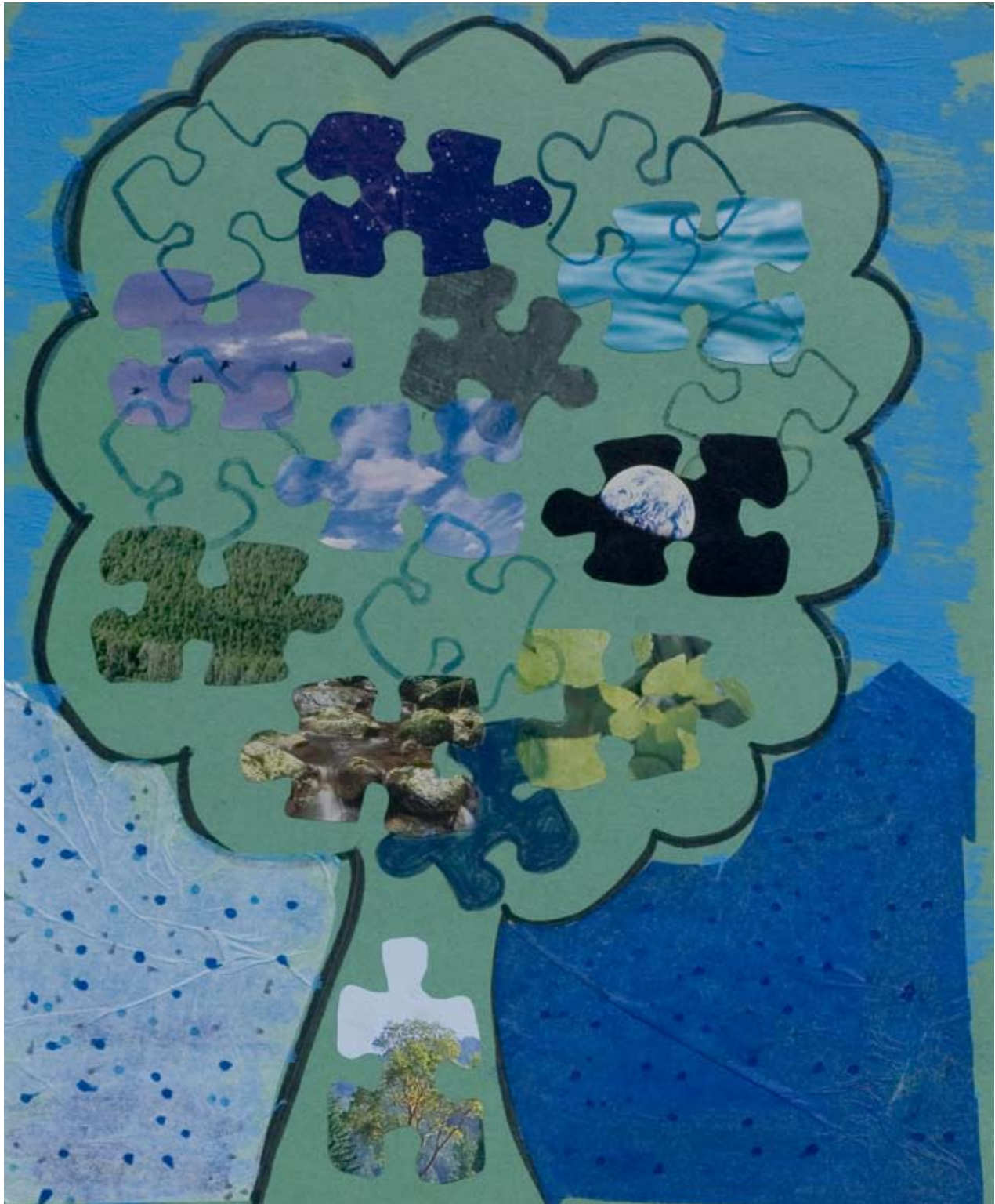


Zoë

My name is Zoë and I am 11 years old. I have a dog named Yentl, Kitty the cat, and many Muscovy ducks. I like riding horses and playing with my dog.

I like living in the forest and going for walks through it. I think the forest is important because it is the home of many wild animals and birds, and it is an important place for many people to enjoy hiking. My favorite thing in the forest is looking at the mushrooms and I love taking close-up photographs of nature.

My picture is made from magazine photos. I went into magazines and traced a puzzle piece over cool things in nature, cut them out and glued them onto a tree to show that E is for ecosystem. It shows how an ecosystem is like a puzzle with many pieces that fit together, and that it needs every piece to be there in order to be complete.





F is for frogs, red-legged and tree... hopping happily through forest and stream!

Worldwide, there is an alarming decline in many species of amphibians. Habitat loss and fragmentation in the Pacific Northwest have left several native species at risk. Of special concern in B.C. and presently blue-listed, is our red-legged frog, *Rana aurora*. Protection of the deep, old-growth forest pools these frogs need to survive must be our first priority.



Laara

I was 6 years old when I did my picture. I have a dad called Hannu, my mom Mary, my older sister Alma, and me, and Hunter our cat who's a boy. I like to climb trees, to draw, to go exploring trails in our backyard, and to go swimming in the lake and at the beach. I like to look for crabs at the beach.

There's a forest that's clear-cut near my house and it looks horrible. I don't want that to happen to the Children's Forest. I think that all the animals and the trees and the fishes are important. The growing salmon need enough shade from the forests.

I chose F for frogs because I like frogs, and I like seeing them jumping about. I don't want them to miss their trees that they jump around. I painted my picture that way because I've seen frogs looking like that, with blue legs and orange toes.





G is for green... the colour of Gaia's glorious garden!

Chlorophyll is the green pigment found in all algae and most of our terrestrial plants. Chlorophyll is responsible for light capture in photosynthesis, the chemical process at the base of life in our forest food chains. Interestingly enough, green is also the colour of the heart chakra!



Owyn

I was 10 years old and in Grade 5 when I painted my picture. I have my brother Liam, my mom Fawn, and my dad John, and my sister Lily, who lives in Philly (Philadelphia), and Pushkin our bunny. I like to skateboard and go walking in the forest picking mushrooms. I like all the unique houses and our community on Cortes Island. I like my house. It's really cool.

Nature is a unique place and being in the forest is peaceful and it locks you away from the outside world. All the animals in the forest are cool. I like the sound of the forests – the birds going, "Squack, Squack."

I chose G for green because I like being in the forest and I just like how the light shines through the leaves.





The Job of a Tree

The job of a tree is to give shelter to support a passerby.

The job of a tree is to be mossy and beautiful, to make oxygen, to take nutrients from the ground, to create soil.

The job of a tree is to give its wood to build a house or a fire.

The job of a tree is to support homes for animals.

The job of a tree is to fall and become a nursery log for other trees and plants.

The job of a tree is to give inspiration.

The job of a tree is to be colossal or small, to have sap, green leaves, to rot, to be rough or smooth.

The job of a tree is to shelter other trees from the wind so that they can return the favour.

Forrest



Forrest

My name is Forrest, and I was 10 years old last spring when I did my picture for the Forest Alphabet. I like running and hiking in the woods behind my house. I also like walking in the Whaletown Commons, and picking plums, strawberries and blackberries with my mom and dad, my brother and our dog.

I love walking through the woods and watching wildlife. Forests are a haven for wildlife, and trees are living things that create oxygen. If I were in charge of a forest, I would make small footpaths for people to walk on and not allow any clear-cuts or logging that isn't sustainable.

I hope this project makes a difference.





H is for habitat...
homes for herons, hairy manzanita, hemlock,
hardhack and humans.

Habitat can be defined as any part of the biosphere where a particular species can live, either temporarily or permanently. Cortes Island forest lands are home to a multitude of species, including ourselves!



Ella

My name is Ella. In my family, there is my dad Adam, my mom Tamara, and Nola my sister, and 2 cats Thorhammer and Solstice. I live on Linnaea Farm, which has an eight-month ecological gardening programme, and five families who live and work on the farm. Linnaea Farm is part of a land trust that Robert Cabot donated; we take care of the land, but we don't own it. I help my mom with sheep, pigs, cows and ducks. I loved the horses we used to have. I helped feed and bring them in.

Forests are beautiful and they create oxygen. They are a safe place for animals and are very important. I would put the Children's Forest into a trust like at Linnaea Farm, or turn it into a provincial park for people to use the trails.

I chose H for habitat because it was the easiest option to draw, and because habitat is so important. I used paint, paper, and pencil crayon. The puzzle pieces were cut from magazines to make a collage. I made a copper tree branch.



I is for insects...
**insects here, insects there, insects in soil,
logs and air!**

Large logs which have fallen to the ground are a main structural component of old-growth. Insects play a key role in the decomposition of fallen logs. Bark beetles chew through the bark connecting outside to inside, which then allows other wood eating insects to join in: mites, termites & carpenter ants.

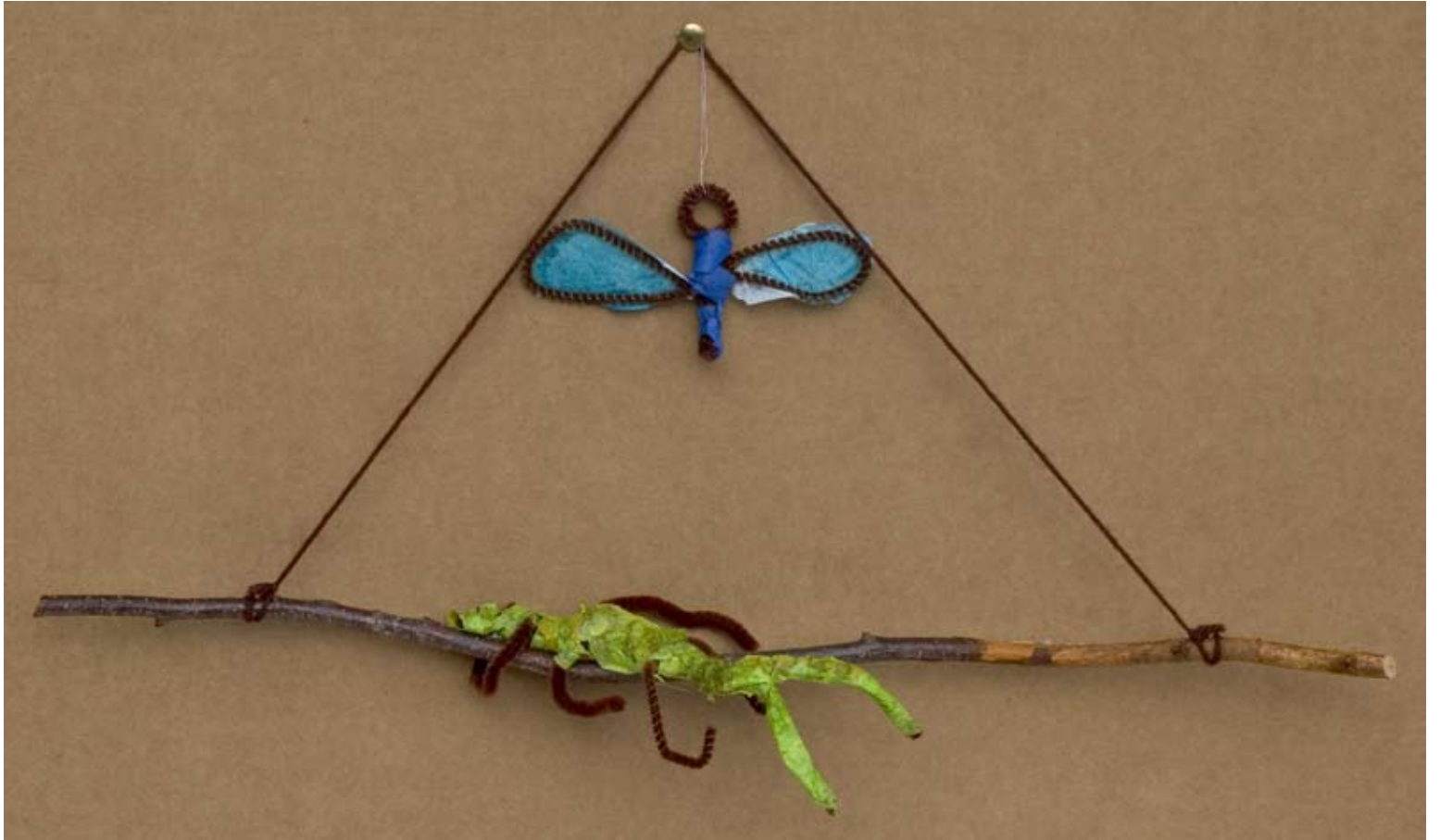


Ruben

My name is Ruben, and I was 10 years old and in Grade 5 when I did my forest art. My mom Chloe works at the medical clinic; my dad Tom is a carpenter; and my sister Mia plays the violin really well. I play lots of Lego and I love to snuggle with my dog Nona and I like to play Capture the Flag in the woods.

I think the trees are living. They have arguments with the wind; sometimes the trees win and sometimes the wind wins. Nature only gives you one chance. Nature is dangerous and very beautiful. Once I got poisonous moss on my lips and eyes and it was very painful. Trees give us oxygen. There are animals living in the forest, and they need the forest for shelter and just to survive. I feel that the forest and trees have given me knowledge. When I am around the forest, it is so quiet. It gives my mind peace; it feels like a meditating place for me. I used moss for the subject of a poem I wrote (*page 36*) because moss has a lot of things about it that are cool and peaceful. We do not bend down very often to look at it. Moss has a lot of jobs that we don't always consider.

I chose I 'cause I like bugs a lot. I used pipe cleaner, glue, a stick, and some string.





J is for James Creek watershed...
slough sedge and silent streams -
sacred place.

Water is the essence of all life. The watershed is the land base that collects, holds and transports water before returning it to the sea. Community awareness of watersheds is paramount; a community that protects its watersheds protects itself.



Julian

I was 11 years old and in Grade 6 at Linnaea School when our class did the art for the Forest Alphabet. I live on the First Nations reserve, Klahoose, at Squirrel Cove with my mom Caroline, and my sister Eva. I like to play the guitar. I am teaching myself to play the electric guitar. I also like to skateboard. I have been learning some of my language, Coast Salish, from my aunts and uncles. I also dance for some of the Klahoose celebrations.

I think the forest is important to Cortes Island because it makes Cortes feel like home. We walk along some of the trails from Klahoose into the forest and into Von Donop Inlet. We see lots of deer close by and we wouldn't have so many deer nearby if there wasn't a forest.

I chose J because of my name Julian, and my dad's name James. I used pencil crayon, and drew a creek running across and the mountains behind.





Salmon Fry

*silver,
streaked,
black-striped,
snapping,
dashing,
darting swiftly,
hovering,
hiding in the rocks,
blending.*

Angelica

Stinkbeetle

*tiny purple stinkbeetle
hiding on the path,
oops! sorry little stinkbeetle.*

Aidan

Slug

*a black spotted slug,
looks like a cheetah, standing
in the green forest.*

Delphin



Quinn

My name is Quinn. I am in grade 2 and I am 7 years old, but I was 6 years old when I did my picture. I have a dad, a mom, a brother and a dog. Cortes is the most fun place in the universe. My house is near beautiful forests and I love waking up listening to birds.

I would look after the Children's Forest with care and love. I would not cut down the forest. That would be a nightmare for me. Forests are my life friend. I love forests like they are my family.

I drew two forests on both sides of a stream. I love the way it turned out. Every day we worked on it for days and days. Cortes is my paradise.





K is for king gentian... blooming blue in swamps where killdeer call.

The king gentian, *Gentiana sceptrum*, can be found growing in the wetland bogs and meadows of the Delight Lake watershed. Butterflies love the nectar of the rich, blue flowers which bloom in late summer and the fleshy roots are a rich source of medicinal bitters.



Kai

Hi, my name is Kai and I am 12 years old. I live on Cortes Island with my mom, dad, brother and sister. I like to ski and to play basketball and hockey. I also like to snowboard.

I like to camp with my family and friends at Carrington Lagoon (near the proposed Children's Forest). I like to go mountain biking on the trails on Cortes.

I care about the forests a lot because animals live here and it is pretty. I made this picture 'cause I thought it would be neat to do something not so common. I used tissue paper and paint and glue and pipe cleaners.

Mushrooms

*mushrooms lulled in sleepy grass,
hear the lapse of hours pass...
the trickle of the stream.*





L is for lichens and liverworts... just loving the forest life!

Forest lichens grow in sky gardens, high in the canopy of Douglas-fir, Sitka spruce and hemlock. Lichens, with the help of their associated bacteria, capture nitrogen from the atmosphere and chemically change it into a form that forest plants can use; up to 40 pounds per acre of this nutrient gift! This is a forest secret we have only recently learned.

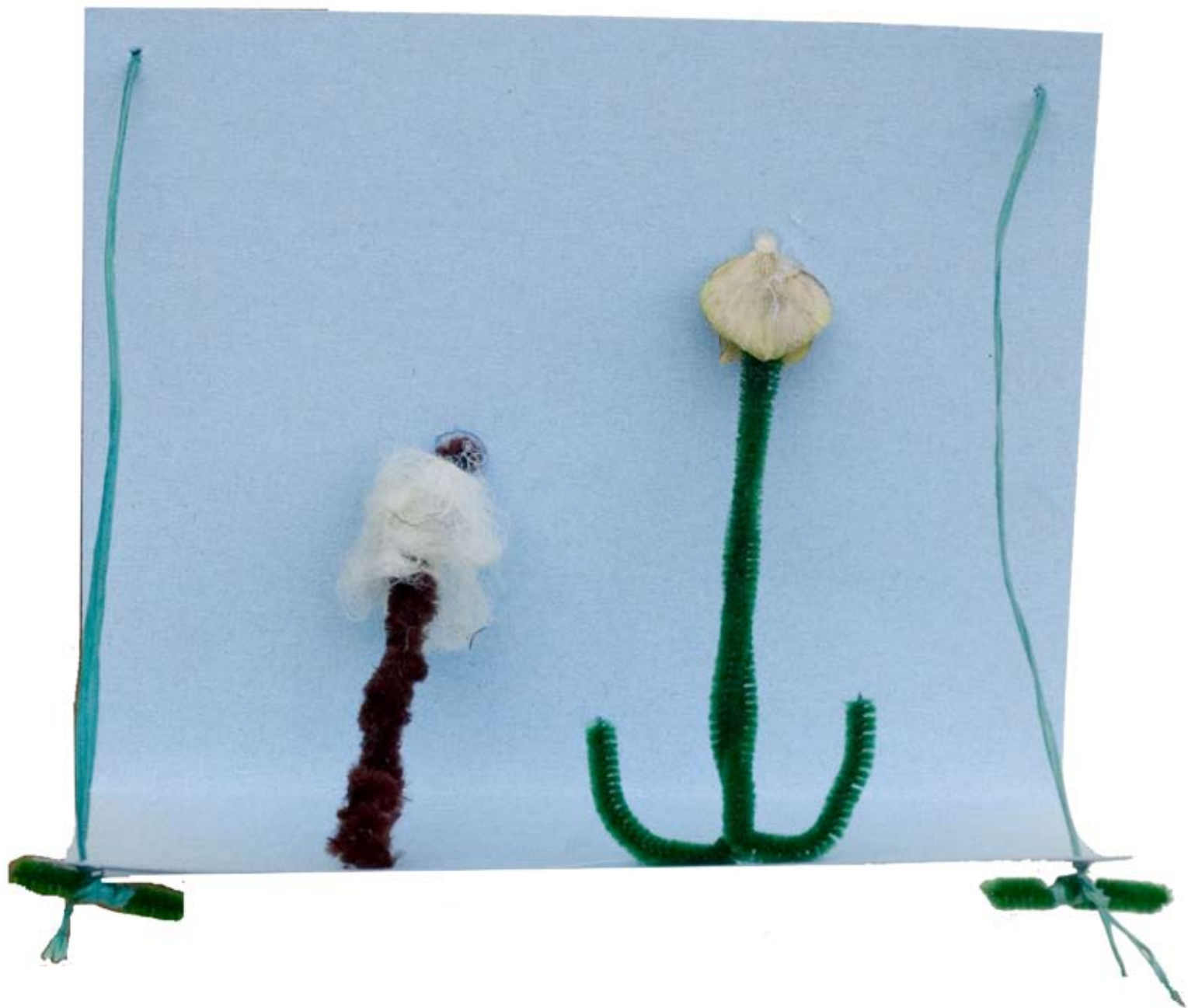


Aidan

My name is Aidan. I am 10 years old. I am in grade 5. I have lived on Cortes for 5 years. I have a mother Colleen, a father Dino, a sister named Kiera, a cat named Tigger, and a dog named Annie. I was born in Nanaimo, B.C.

I climb trees all the time. I like walking in the forest and I like playing Hide and Go Seek in the forest. The forests are special to so many people. In the forests it is very calm and nice and I don't want that to be taken away. That would be like taking away a special place from religious people or a special place from anybody.

My art is about lichen and liverworts. I was in grade 4 when I did my art. Liverworts are prehistoric plants and have been around for a really long time. My art is about the forest. I used pipe cleaners, a cotton ball and two leaves. I picked the leaves and glued them together on the pipe cleaner. I had fun.





M is for mycorrhizae... fungal threads of life spreading their goodness through the forest soils.

The next time you stand on the forest floor, imagine the mycorrhizal net spreading out under your feet! Fungal threads, known as mycelium, wrap around tree root tips facilitating the absorption of essential minerals and water, regulating the growth of new root tips and enhancing the tree's immune system.



Melanie

My name is Melanie. I was 13 years old and in grade 7 when I did this art piece. I live with my mother, father, and our cat Boko. We lived in Tiber Bay on Cortes for two years, and before that we lived in Vermont, but I was born in the Philippines. I play soccer and basketball and I love to ski. I liked living on Cortes because it's one of the places on the earth that is not so developed, there aren't so many people, and there is old growth forest. But I really like being around lots of other kids.

A forest is a quiet place to walk and find mushrooms. It's a nice place to think and to connect with nature. Trees help us breathe by releasing oxygen. They absorb carbon dioxide and help with global warming. If we keep developing the land we will lose all the trees, and that will make the earth warm faster. Some of the people I know in Tiber Bay collect the logs that are adrift in the ocean and use them for firewood or to make shingles, beams, or furniture if it's nice wood.

I painted a tree that had mycorrhizae underneath. I used acrylic paints and gel medium. My painting shows how everything is connected like a spiderweb under the ground. The mycorrhizae help to hold the soil together and break things down to make more soil.





N is for nesting nighthawks... nearly never seen so secretive are they.

The common nighthawk, *Chordeiles minor*, used to be a common sight and celebrated sound above our open woodlands. Development in their nesting habitat, rocky outcrops, and the decline of their favourite prey, moths, have recently put the common nighthawk populations at risk in B.C.



Emmett

My name is Emmett and I live on a farm. I was in Grade 4 and was 9 years old when I did my art piece. I have a big family. I live on a hill with big trees. On the farm, there is a garden programme (The Linnaea Farm Ecological Garden Programme) with garden students. This year they were really nice.

I like the Children's Forest because it is like a rainforest or a jungle. The trees are really big and old. I like to climb trees and look for birds and mushrooms in the forest.

I chose N because I wanted to do an animal, and it was one of the ones left. I like using the bamboo brushes and the sumi ink. Sumi ink is easy to make out of charcoal dust and water. Béene, my art teacher, suggested I hang the cloth from a stick.



FOREST BLESSING

May the Earth's forests forever...
tickle the Earth's heart with their roots,
offer branches for magical play,
provide nesting nooks for wild creatures,
share their ancient, wise counsel,
nourish spirit, beauty, and wellness.
May the Earth's forests forever Be.

Christine Robinson

THE JOB OF MOSS

The job of moss is to grow,
to soak up water,
to make the forest glow.
The job of moss is to be a house or a hiding place for a bug,
to help seal up a broken tree,
to be part of the forest.
The job of moss is to be a sitting place for me,
to be a soft bed for a deer.
The job of moss is to help the forest grow,
to soak up the wonders of the forest.
The job of moss is to be there when needed.
The job of moss is to become the future and to be the past.
The job of moss is to be a million different shades of green
and to be at ease with everything around it.
The job of moss is to flow with the water,
to be part of nature's cycle.
The job of moss is to help the earth hear,
to feel, touch and see.

Ruben

ANN MORTIFEE ON NATURE AS HEALER

When I was a girl I lived on a farm in Africa. There were monkeys in the trees and snakes in the grass, cows in the meadow and chickens in the yard. There were elephants and lions, the primordial rhinoceros and the long-necked giraffe. The sugar cane fields reached up to the jacaranda tree, and in the garden, the golden papaya stood waiting to be picked.

Later, we moved to Canada. Here I met the raccoon and the salmon, the eagle and the bear. A giant Douglas fir and then a cedar made themselves known to me, and beneath their boughs, the beautiful huckleberry was growing.

And now, as I write these words, I am sitting in the dry, hot desert of Southern Arizona, surrounded by the majestic multi-armed saguaro, the purple-fruited prickly pear cactus, and the orange tipped ocotillo. I have befriended a roadrunner. A javelina and bobcat live somewhere nearby, and those sly, clever coyotes sing to me nightly from just beyond my door.

Everywhere in Nature, everything in Nature, the wind, the insects, the thunder, and the stones, everything can be trusted to always and forever be exactly who they are. There are no pretences here. All things live together as they always have, in harmony.

When we submerge ourselves in Nature, we remember something we seem so easily to forget: that we are not alone, that we are a part of everything that is, that we too belong to the grand family of Creation. And when we remember, the loneliness and disharmony that so often keeps us separate from one another and from our own true Self, slowly dissolves.

As if waking from the dream of a busy man-made world, something within us comes alive. We find ourselves surrounded by trustworthy companions, and peace, the perennial healing balm, reconnects us to the Great Heart at the centre of it all.



O is for old-growth... the **ONLY** home for spotted owls and marbled murrelets.

Old-growth forests of the Pacific Northwest are ecosystems dominated by large conifers between 250 and 1000 years old. This forest ecosystem has been evolving for 11,000 years and has nearly been destroyed by 100 years of industrial logging. Speak now for the spotted owl and marbled murrelet, or forever hold your peace!



Aedrin

I was 9 years old when I did my art work. My family lives by the beach on Hague Lake. My family is Mario, my mom Alannah, and my brother Nephelium, who is 7 years old. I like to go on walks and look for mushrooms and explore and take pictures. I want to be a photographer when I grow up. I like to skateboard. I saw a barred owl by the skatepark.

The forest is really nice. I like to bike on the forest trails. In the forest, we might see lots of secretive animals: the marbled murrelet (that also lives in the ocean) and flying squirrels. People should go into the forests to see the nature.

I did O for old-growth. I used cardboard and pencil. I made cardboard stick out for the big trees to make them seem closer, and drew the others on paper.





P is for photosynthesis... sinking carbon into the earth and keeping climate constant.

Photosynthesis is the chemical process whereby carbon dioxide and water are converted into organic sugars and free oxygen. Carbon is pulled out of the atmosphere and bound into organic material – the carbon sink. Trees provide a large reserve of carbon in this process called carbon sequestration.



Liam

I was 13 years old and in Grade 8 when I did my art. I have an annoying little brother Owyn, and an amazing pet rabbit Pushkin, my mom, my dad, and my big sister. I really like my house; it's creative and slightly dreamlike. It's stackwall. I really like our small community 'cause you know everyone, their relatives, and everyone's everyone!

I think it's definitely important we save this forest. The forests on Cortes Island are magical. They still have their wilderness intact, unlike most places in the world. They're still natural ecosystems, undisturbed, and if we disrupt these ecosystems, it would be like sticking our noses into other people's business.

I used natural materials and 3-D leaves. Photosynthesis happens in the leaves. The sun's rays come down and hit the leaves. I used different kinds of plant materials – the end of a fir branch, dandelion shoot, plant leaves, and glue and crayons. I picked, dried, and flattened as many kinds of leaves as I could pick on the farm – blackberry, apple, alder.





Q is for quiet...
quiet is found in the forest and the forest is found in quiet.

We often overlook the spiritual value of our forest lands. Ancient groves of trees, some several hundreds of years old, give us pause and the opportunity to contemplate our own mortality.



Alma

I have my mom Mary, my dad Hannu, and my sister Laara, and my cat Hunter. I was in Grade 5 and was 10 years old when I did my art work. I like hanging out with my friends, and doing anything with water, even if it's frozen. I also like to bike.

I feel like the forest needs to be protected because it's so special. If we keep cutting down large forest masses, then eventually the oxygen levels will get lower. I would want to make sure the paths were maintained so people could walk in the Children's Forest because it's so beautiful.

My picture is a silent forest with a big flower in the middle. I used coloured toothpicks, watercolor paint, dried leaves, a bead, and coloured tissue paper.





R is for raindrops...
falling from sky, touching earth and flowing
to the sea.

Raindrops are an integral part of the water cycle; condensing from the sky and falling to earth as precipitation. This water then moves through terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems before finally reaching the sea where it evaporates back into the atmosphere, thus completing the cycle.



Bella

I had just turned 7 years old in March. In my family, I have my mom Natasha, my dad Oliver, my nana Kathi, and Coco and Chanel, who are our two kittens. I am living on an old homestead in a forest near Coulter Bay that is part of the Carrington forests. I like to hoola hoop; to draw nature, wild animals and trees; and to do math. I also like to climb trees.

I like the forests because they are a home for animals. I like to look for animal tracks when I am out. One day I was walking up our driveway after it snowed and I saw either wolf or cougar prints. I think it's important not to cut down trees or clear-cut, and to keep areas for wildlife.

I took copper, and with a pencil, I pressed and drew a raindrop on it. I found a scrap of blue cloth and made the background. And on the background of the cloth, I cut out yellow raindrops from cloth and put them on. I felt proud of my art.





When the River Meets the Ocean

*When the river meets the ocean,
the waves lap on each other,
the salmon jump up
and water falls.
Bears come to eat and drink,
eagles dive for dinner,
children come to hear and play.
Grandparents come to teach the young how to fish.
This is a place of life.*

Elijah



Esunda

My name is Esunda, and I was 7 years old and in Grade 2 last spring. My family is my mother Oshun, my father Sean, my brother Elijah, and my sister Nahanni. We live in Manson's Landing on Cortes, and in the summer, I plant a garden. Two of my favourite flowers are nasturtiums and sweet peas. I really love reading books and drawing.

I often walk in the forest with my family, and enjoy swinging from a big maple tree that Nahanni and I built little fairy houses in. I see lots of squirrels running around in the trees. Once last summer I saw a ton of squirrels in the forest running around gathering food. Did you know all the squirrels on Cortes Island have orange bellies and all the squirrels on Quadra Island have white bellies? Our forests are where I learn about things. I want to protect the trees and forests so I can enjoy them in the future. If I were entrusted with forest lands, I would want to protect the trees from being cut down.

I chose R for rain because I like rainforests. I made my raindrop by making a print and then stamping it on a piece of paper.





S is for salmon...
swimming in sparkling, sinuous streams
alongside stinky skunk cabbage.

There are seven species of Pacific salmon, all in the genus *Oncorhynchus*: pink, chum, sockeye, chinook, coho salmon; cutthroat and steelhead/rainbow trout. Salmon have long provided the Pacific Northwest First Nations their staple diet and so it is, that the Klahoose First Nation on Cortes spearheads our local salmon enhancement program.



Mia

I am 9 years old, and in Grade 4. I like to play and listen to music, and I really like sea turtles and books. I go mushroom hunting in the woods with my father. I like racing through the woods with him. We find all sorts of mushrooms. We dry the mushrooms and we fry them with butter and we add them to our eggs in the morning. My dad found a one pound pine mushroom last week hiding under the ground in the forest!

I feel that the trees and forests are special and they are calm and beautiful. People need them to live. Without trees no living creature would be alive. Because if we just cut them down, people will keep cutting them down until there is nothing left. The forest makes me feel peaceful.

I was 8 years old when I did my picture about salmon streams. I used a special kind of paint that is shiny. I used tissue paper. Salmon streams need the forest's shade. The salmon need the forest's shade to live; the shade protects the salmon eggs and helps protect the eggs from predators.





Stream

*The job of a stream is to be a home for the fish,
to make music for visitors,
to be splashed,
for drying out in the hot summer.*

*The job of a stream is to be dammed,
for wading,
for washing away dirt and soil,
for kids to have water fights with,
for being frozen in the winter.*

*The job of a stream is for being warm in the summer
and cold in the winter.*

Jasmine



Jasmine

My name is Jasmine and I am 10 years old. I love to sew and create awesome dolls and clothes. I have a cat, a dog and a gerbil. I like to hang out with my friends, bake yummy treats and listen to loud music.

I like to climb trees and draw when I am in the forest. I am grateful to the trees because if there weren't any trees I wouldn't be alive. That's also why it's important to protect them.

My artwork is about salmon and streams. I used tissue paper for skunk cabbages and did some painting.





T is for trees...
**tall trees, tiny trees, dead trees, nurse trees,
cedar trees - a forest full of trees!**

The Douglas-fir tree, *Pseudotsuga menziesii*, is one of our most common forest giants and was named after the Northwest explorer & botanist, David Douglas. The great size and sheer vertical thrust of these trees make them among the largest and oldest living things created on earth!



Amber

My name is Amber. I was in Grade 1 and was 6 years old when I did my art. My mother's name is Melanie and my dad is Adam. I live on Green Mountain, and the property I'm on is called Raven's Nest. I feel very comfortable in my cozy home. We have a garden. I have a fairy spot and I visit it sometimes. I get gifts from the fairies and I bring gifts for them. I see mushrooms. I also live in Barbados in the winter. I like to swim in Barbados.

I like the trees and forests, and I wish there weren't cities; they take up the whole forest and some animals die. I listen to trees and what they say. They say they don't want to be cut down. They want to stay in this wonderful world they grew up in. If we don't have trees we won't be able to breathe. I would stop them cutting down the trees. I feel that the forests should stay because trees are very important.

I chose T for trees because I like trees. I thought about what my picture would be. I started with pencil crayon; the border is all kinds of coloured pencil crayon. Then I painted the trees.





Trees

*Red needles, long branches,
and if you look hard enough
you'll see a shine,
a place to play for children,
a home for beetles,
materials for nests.*

Henry

Trees

*beautiful brown trees,
one is brown, one is green
wait... did I just sneeze?*

Sancho



Henry

I am Henry, and I was in grade 2 when I did my tree picture. My family members are Holly and Rob, my mom and dad. We have a garden and make bread. My favourite food from the garden is strawberries. I go to school and read.

The forest is beautiful and makes me feel relaxed. If the forest was not here we would die, so I would care for the forest by not cutting it down. This is how you grow a tree. If you happened to be in a forest, pick up a cone and bring it home. Put it in the ground and watch patiently.

My art is about trees and how important they are. That is why I chose the letter T.





The Tree Story

*The little boy and the little girl got to a secret trap door
and they went through a tunnel of tree roots.*

Tons of roots and roots and roots.

They could barely see any of the dirt there were so many roots.

*An elf led them to an underground cave and popped out of a doorway in a
hollow tree. Then they climbed the outside of the branches to the tippy top.*

Aislin



Aislin

My name is Aislin, and I am 7 years old and in Grade 2. Last year I was 6 years old. I have a mother Sarah, and father Conrad, and a brother Osha.

I like the trees and forest a lot. I live in the forest and I like to climb in trees. I like to be in the forest because they are forests and they are really, really, really nice! And because the forest has lots of trees, and trees produce oxygen so we can breathe in good air. The forest is full of the most beautiful stuff that anybody can imagine.

My picture is about the colourful forest. I stitched fabric with thread.





U is for undergrowth and understory...
filtered light, deer browsing huckleberry -
a magical place beneath the canopy.

Understory plants are adapted to a range of conditions from open sun to constant shade. These plants provide essential food for insects, animals and wildcrafting humans.



Delphin

My name is Delphin, and I was 11 years old and in Grade 6 when I did my art work. I have a mom named Samantha, a dad named Mike, a dog named Max, and my cat named Motley. We're getting another cat named Hawk. I like skateboarding and hanging out with my friends. Me and my dad went in a sailboat race around Marina Island last summer, and we won. Sometimes I go out on my dad's 45-foot schooner charter boat, the *Misty Isles*.

The forests are usually a lot older than we are. They have the right to stay. If we cut down our forests, we'd be destroying a lot of animals' homes like squirrels, birds and wolves.

My painting is two trees in the shape of a U for understory, with a huge sun between the trees shining down. I sketched out my art in pencil first, then I used paint.





V is for voice... our very valuable voice in speaking for the forest - vital, vigilant and victorious!

The Oxford dictionary defines voice as: an opinion expressed, the expressed will of the people, the right to express an opinion.

Find your voice and speak for the forest!



Erik

My name is Erik and I am now 12 years old. I lived on Cortes Island for 3 years after my mom and dad moved us to Cortes from Manitoba, to spend more time with us in a very secluded and safe place. When my parents first told me we were moving, I didn't know what to say. I didn't know what to expect. I had lived in Manitoba my whole life. But I was still excited to see more of the world. It was amazing to see the ocean on the west coast of Canada for the first time. I had never seen that much water in my life!

Walking in the forest was a daily occasion. Every time, my breath was taken away by the wide variety of shades of green. I loved, and will always remember, finding chanterelle mushrooms in the bush on the walk back from the bus. To know that I wouldn't be able to see the forest anymore, made my heart stop. It would be soul crushing to see the mystical and magical forest of Cortes Island destroyed. The forest opened my eyes to nature and changed my life.

I chose V because I thought it was the most important letter, because if we didn't have our voice, we would have nothing. My picture shows a head, representing us, the Cortes community, and the decisions we make and our executed ideas. I live in Victoria now, but I think about Cortes every day.





W is for wild wolves... warily winding their way through forests.

The coastal grey wolf, *Canis lupus*, is very much a maritime wolf. These wolves feed on clams, salmon, harbour seal and river otter, in addition to their traditional fare of deer and raccoon. They also regularly swim between Cortes Island, the BC mainland and neighbouring islands.



Mackenzie

My name is Mackenzie and I am a member of the Klahoose First Nation. My ancestors have lived on Cortes for a very long time. I live with my adopted mom and sister in the forest. It is fun living on Cortes. I like playing outside in the garden and making fairy houses.

We have very big trees on our land! I like being in the forest and playing. I feel free in the forest and it is fun there. Everyone should be grateful for the trees because they give us air.

My letter is W for wolves. I was 7 years old when I did my picture on wolves. I liked the way my picture turned out. I like to hear the wolves howl at night and I think that they are pretty. Wolves need the forest to live in so we cannot cut them all down or the wolves will have no home and that would be sad.





The Job of Earth

*The job of earth is to be stepped on,
to be run on by all the animals,
to be dug in,
to make a soft landing for the pine cones.
The job of earth is to be stabbed by tree roots,
to be mushy,
to be covered in sticks,
to be fed by the dead,
to grow facial hair where your garden is.
The job of earth is to make homes for animals.*

Emmett



Sascha

My name is Sascha, and I am the youngest in my family. I moved to Cortes from Manitoba in 2007 and started kindergarten at Linnaea School. How I experienced Cortes is crispy winters, warm lakes, salty seas, incredibly magical mysterious forests! Everything a jam-packed island paradise could have.

The first time I went for a walk in the forest with my dad, I saw a sculpture of mystery. The biggest wonder you will ever see - I saw a tree that is extra special to me. And that's a secret I'll never tell! If you would like to come to this magical place, come for a month in the summer. I won't tell anything else because that's for you to find out! When you're here, walk around Kw'as Lake Park. Then you will find the secret of Cortes.

I chose W because it was one of the letters left to choose. It was a good choice because I saw two of the large black wolves one day by the Whaletown Commons on the way to the ferry! First I started with a picture of the forest in pastel, then I drew a wolf in pastel, then I stuck magazine trees on my picture, then I made the wolf a silhouette. Next, I took a black piece of paper larger than the pastel and stuck it on the back. Finally, I stuck all different kinds of leaves on the outline on the black piece of paper. Then I was done!





X is for X...
the sign we make when asked if it is OK to
clear-cut our forests.

The paradigm of industrial scale, clear-cut logging is no longer viable in this new millennium. Old-growth coastal Douglas-fir forests are rare, of very high conservation value and unquestionably defended on Cortes Island!!

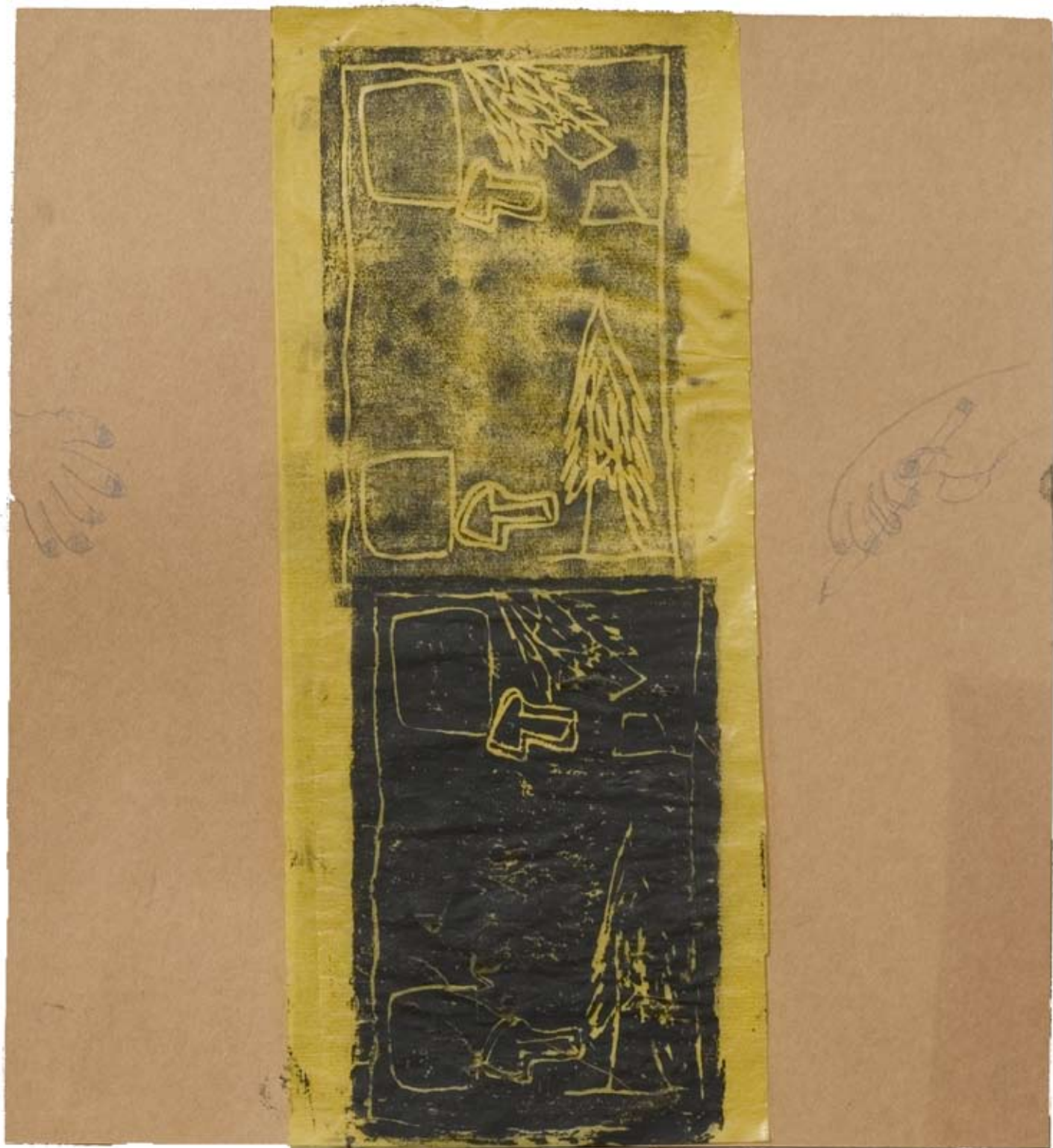


Elijah

I was 11 years old when I did my art for the Forest Alphabet. I have a brother, a mom and a dad. My favourite activities are dirt-biking up the mountain behind our home and in Larson's Meadow, and mountain-biking, BMXing, and going on the trampoline. I go into Campbell River to play hockey and I like to play basketball.

The forest is important to me because I like to spend time playing in it. My home is in the middle of the forest, sitting at the bottom of a mountain. I like being able to go out my front door and walk right into the forest. It is important to save our forests for all the future generations. The forest provides wood to build our homes, heat our homes, and is home to all the animals. There are deer, cougar, raccoon, mice, bats, squirrels, bugs, birds and wolves living in the forests on Cortes Island.

For my piece of art, I made a print by carving a design into styrofoam and then painted it with ink to print it onto paper. My piece of art shows a legal contract allowing the forest to be clear-cut with a big X through it, and it has a big √ beside saving the forest. I think we should stop clear-cutting and should selectively log so that we will have forests for the future.





Y is for you and me... feeling at home in this wild place!

Henry Beston, artist and environmental activist, has defined place as, “a part of the whole environment that we claim with feelings.”

Yes, these forest lands are our home place and we do claim them with our feelings!



Angelica

I was 12 years old and in Grade 6 last year. I have my mom, and my dad, and my cat Midnight, and five chickens and two hamsters, Yogi Bamba and Zuma Zamboni. Since I was three years old, I liked to hang out with friends, go to the beach and walk in the forest. I also like to climb trees.

We should save the Children’s Forest for people, to make trails for walking and for a campground. But there would have to be no-trace camping and leave no litter. The forest and animals have been here so long and they should be protected. Kids and their parents could go to the forest and be calm and protected.

I used watercolour paint. I used tempera paint for the trees, and cut them out as a collage. I used salt and water for the background.





Z is for zeal...
and that's how we feel about protecting our
forests forever!!

Imagine... the forest lands of the James Creek watershed are
to be entrusted to all children of Cortes Island, in perpetuity.

That's how we feel about protecting our forests forever!!



Eira-Shay

Hello, my name is Eira-Shay. I was born on Cortes and live there part time now that I am in the city for high school. I miss my home incredibly much, and I am very grateful that I was raised in such a beautiful, and friendly environment.

The forests on Cortes are amazing and so alive! The diversity in them is incredible and I can't imagine Cortes without them. If you ever go on a walk through them, you should just sit and listen; even that is enough to change your mind about cutting them down and the money it would bring. They are strong, beautiful and just as much a part of this island as we are.

My art piece was for the letter Z. It represents the zeal that we have to stop people from cutting down our forests. I used copper foil to make a fist, representing where we stand, and that we fight to protect our forests forever. In the back, I used black construction paper and paint, to make a night sky. To me, this represents eternity to show that we will never give up. Around the hand I have cut out pictures of forests and nature. It is supposed to look like the fist is breaking through them, to represent the strength we have to keep the forest alive. I used red as the colour for STOP because it is a power colour, to show that we have the power to stop the big logging companies from taking our forests, and that we will use it.



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Please make a pledge to support land purchase today!

Please direct pledges and enquiries to:

directors@corteschildrensforesttrust.org

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For more information go to: www.corteschildrensforesttrust.org

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FOREST ALPHABET

features the original artwork and voices of 33 bright-eyed and beautiful children from Cortes Island, speaking out for the protection, in perpetuity, of the Children's Forest - a place they call home in the rainforests of British Columbia.

Their work is endorsed in dedicated contributions by renowned Canadian wildlife artist **Robert Bateman**, Greenpeace International's former Climate and Energy Co-Director **Tzeporah Berman** and Canada's iconic singer and playwright **Ann Mortifee**.