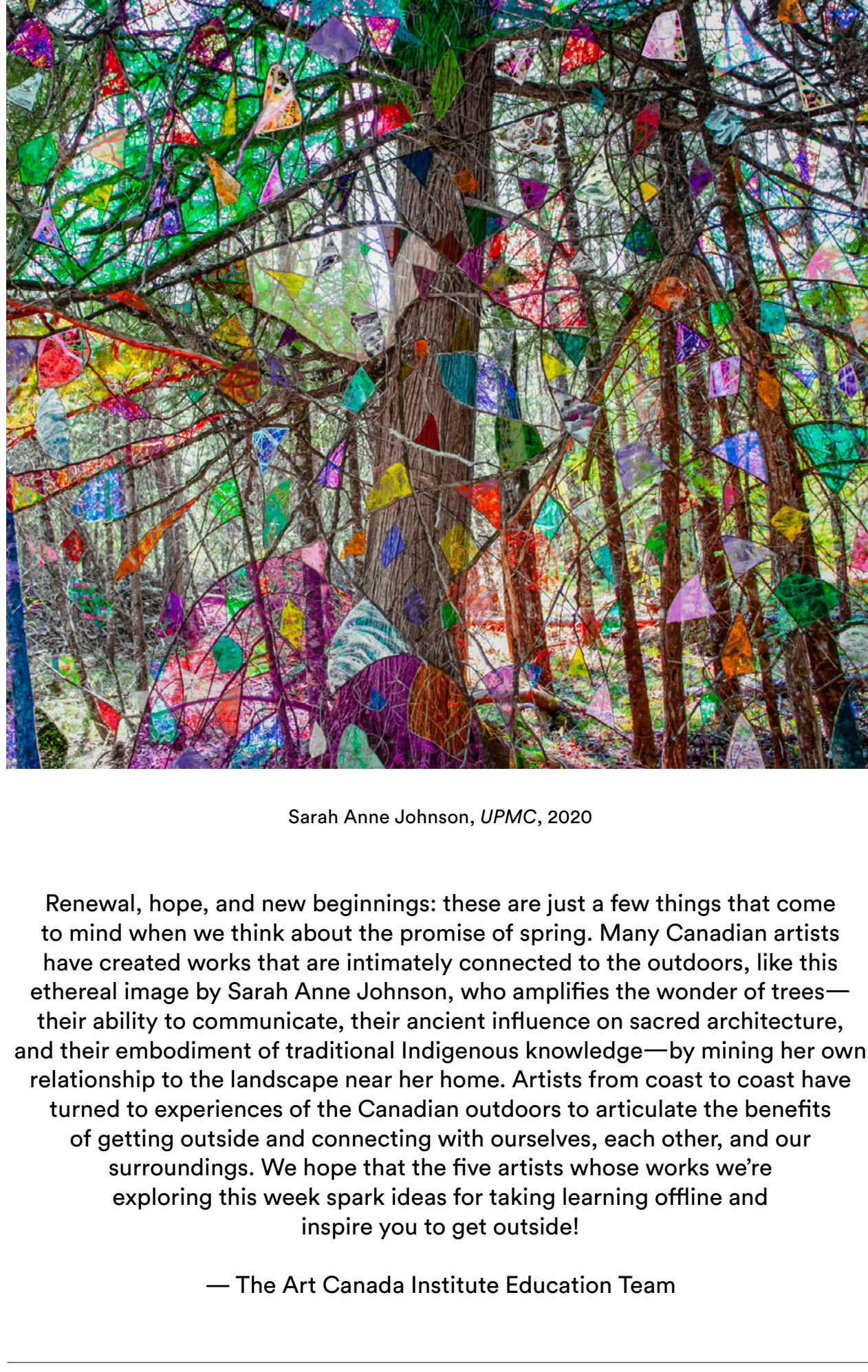


ART, EDUCATION, AND THE GREAT OUTDOORS

From the forest to the night sky,
art to inspire you to go outside this spring

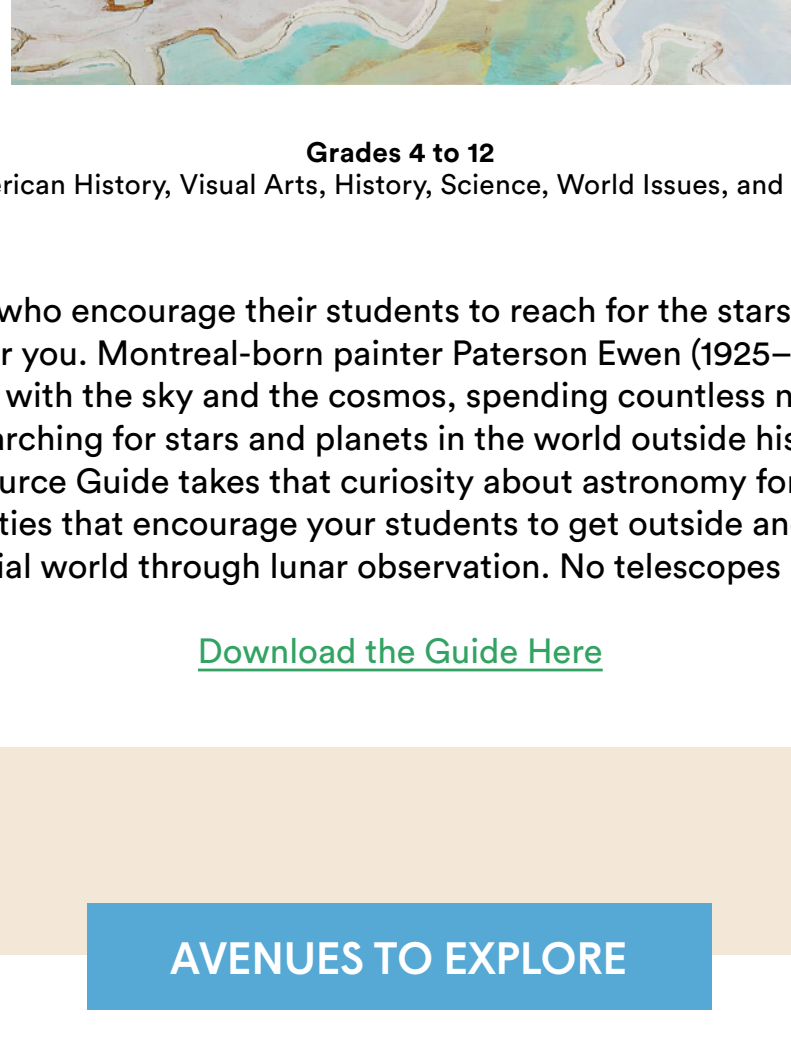


Sarah Anne Johnson, *UPMC*, 2020

Renewal, hope, and new beginnings: these are just a few things that come to mind when we think about the promise of spring. Many Canadian artists have created works that are intimately connected to the outdoors, like this ethereal image by Sarah Anne Johnson, who amplifies the wonder of trees—their ability to communicate, their ancient influence on sacred architecture, and their embodiment of traditional Indigenous knowledge—by mining her own relationship to the landscape near her home. Artists from coast to coast have turned to experiences of the Canadian outdoors to articulate the benefits of getting outside and connecting with ourselves, each other, and our surroundings. We hope that the five artists whose works we're exploring this week spark ideas for taking learning offline and inspire you to get outside!

— The Art Canada Institute Education Team

Explore the great beyond with Paterson Ewen



Grades 4 to 12

American History, Visual Arts, History, Science, World Issues, and more

For those who encourage their students to reach for the stars: this is the resource for you. Montreal-born painter Paterson Ewen (1925–2002) had a fascination with the sky and the cosmos, spending countless nights with a telescope searching for stars and planets in the world outside his window. Our Teacher Resource Guide takes that curiosity about astronomy forward into key learning activities that encourage your students to get outside and connect with the celestial world through lunar observation. No telescopes necessary!

[Download the Guide Here](#)

AVENUES TO EXPLORE

Inform and Empower through the work of Ella Cooper



Ella Cooper, *BODY LAND IDENTITY*, ongoing

How we experience the land is deeply tied to questions of place, belonging, and identity. These relationships are explored in contemporary artist Ella Cooper's empowerment project *BODY LAND IDENTITY*, in which the artist collaborated with four groups of women in Montreal, Toronto, Halifax, and Vancouver to reflect on representations of the Black female body and women of the African diaspora in the Canadian landscape. The resulting work leads by example in inspiring ideas for land-based empowerment projects of your own.

[Learn more about Ella Cooper and this project](#)

Exposed to the Elements: Helen McNicoll's plein air paintings

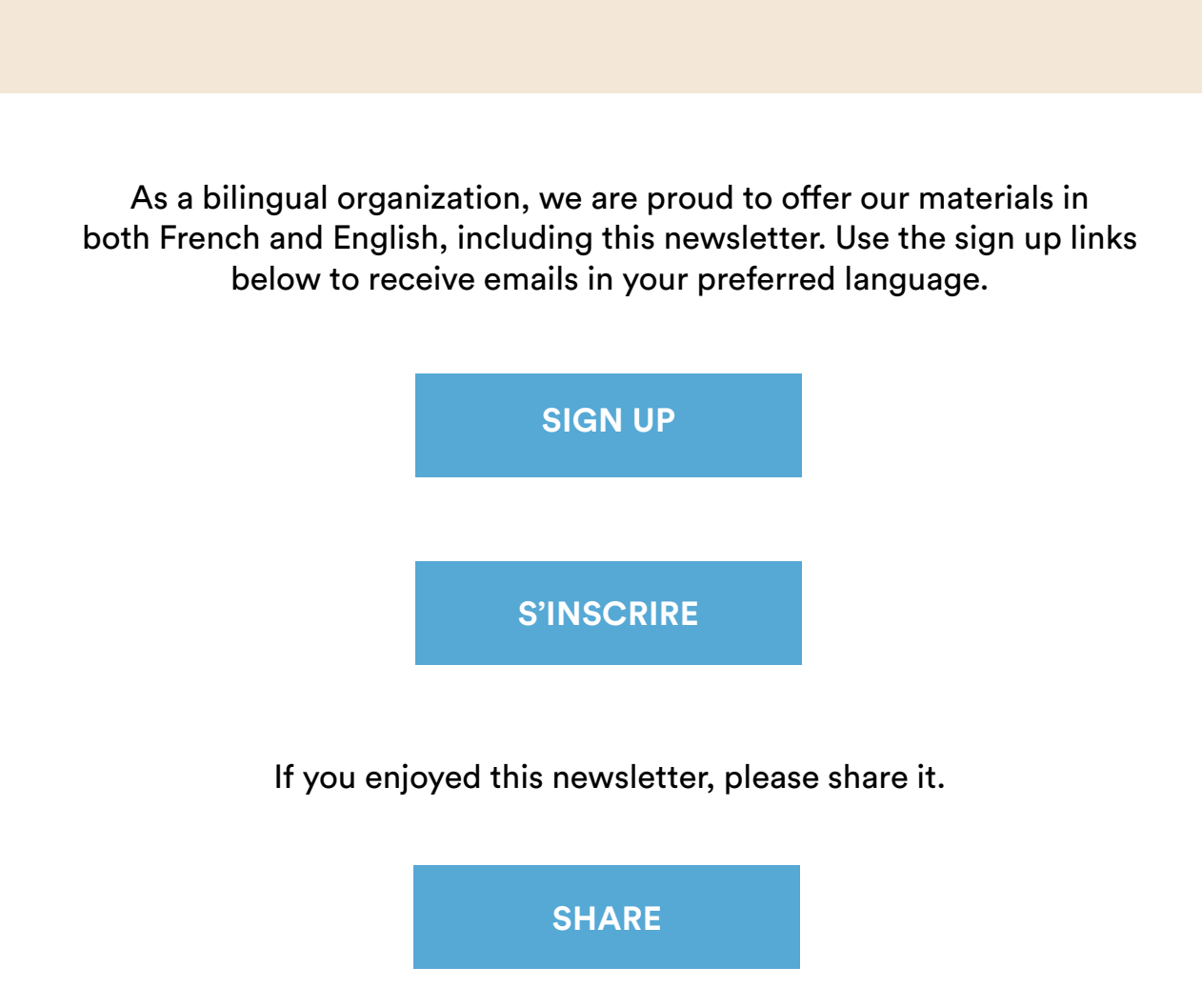


Helen McNicoll, *Watching the Boat*, c.1912

For artist Helen McNicoll (1879–1915), painting was not confined to the four walls of her studio—she liked to take her practice outside, engaging in the “plein air” painting approach that was a favourite of the Impressionists. Being outside was the inspiration for many of her charming childhood scenes, which feature children engaging in outdoor hobbies, from gathering flowers to apple picking to watching the boats go by.

Interested in learning more about childhood in Canada through the art of Helen McNicoll? Our [Independent Student Learning Activity](#) invites students to experiment with activities inspired by historical childhood experiences.

From Studio to Sidewalk: The Power of Public Art

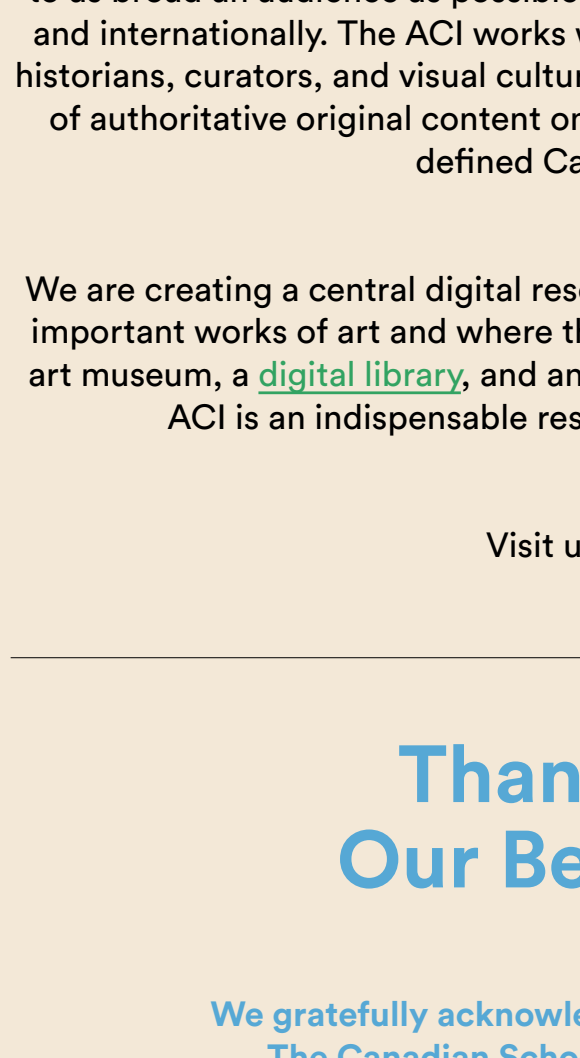


Jordan Bennett, *Ktaqmkuk- Msit No'kmaq*, 2018, mural for the City of St. Johns, Ktaqmkuk (Newfoundland)

The transformation of public space through the art of murals is a remarkable opportunity to connect to our neighbourhoods and communities through art. In 2018, Mi'kmaq artist Jordan Bennett created this incredible public mural on Queen's Road in downtown St. John's as part of the local festival “Identify: A Celebration of Indigenous Arts and Culture”. In doing so, he brought together visual references to Mi'kmaq and Beothuk culture in this tribute to Ktaqmkuk (Newfoundland).

Interested in getting your students involved in a mural project of their own? Check out our [Teacher Resource Guide](#) on Urban Environments to learn more.

IN OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER



June is National Indigenous History Month. In anticipation of this important celebration, we are delighted to be sharing activities from Teacher Resource Guides inspired by the work of Huron-Wendat, Inuit, and Anishinaabe artists in Canada.

As a bilingual organization, we are proud to offer our materials in both French and English, including this newsletter. Use the sign up links below to receive emails in your preferred language.

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About the Art Canada Institute

Launched in 2013, the Art Canada Institute is the only national institution whose mandate is to promote the study of an inclusive multi-vocal Canadian art history to as broad an audience as possible, in both English and French, within Canada and internationally. The ACI works with more than fifty of Canada's leading art historians, curators, and visual culture experts who are dedicated to the creation of authoritative original content on the people, themes, and topics that have defined Canadian art history.

We are creating a central digital resource to tell the world about Canada's most important works of art and where they are located. By functioning as an online art museum, a [digital library](#), and an interactive Canadian art encyclopedia, the ACI is an indispensable resource on Canada's visual heritage.

Visit us at aci-iac.ca

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Image Credits: [1] Sarah Anne Johnson, *UPMC*, 2020, pigment print with oil paint, 91.5 x 79 cm. [2] Ella Cooper, *BODY LAND IDENTITY*, ongoing. [3] Helen McNicoll, *Watching the Boat*, c.1912, oil on canvas, 64.1 x 76.8 cm. Private collection, Vancouver. Courtesy of Heffel Fine Art and Auction House. [4] Jordan Bennett, *Ktaqmkuk- Msit No'kmaq*, 2018, mural for the City of St. Johns, Ktaqmkuk (Newfoundland) in collaboration with Eastern Edge Art Gallery for the Identify Festival of Indigenous art and culture.