

EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

CANADIAN ART AND THE ENVIRONMENT
ARTISTIC INSPIRATION FOR EARTH MONTHResources on climate change and land stewardship
from the ACI digital learning libraryJin-me Yoon, *Living Time*, 2019

April is Earth Month, a time to raise awareness about the responsibilities that we hold in protecting shared life on earth. Cultivating an ethical relationship with the land is a concern for Vancouver-based artist Jin-me Yoon (b.1960), and is explored in *Living Time*, a series of six photographic diptychs set in landscapes around Hornby Island, British Columbia. In this diptych, a woman positions her body next to a massive tree. Her gestures evoke vital interconnections between human and non-human worlds: standing suggests solidarity, while lying down next to the tree's roots acknowledges both the tree and the earth as sources of life. From examining relational worldviews to exploring ecosystems and environmental policy, land stewardship is a longstanding subject in Canadian art. This April, we invite you to engage your students in conversations about the earth with our selection of activities on art and climate change from the ACI digital library.

Learn more about how Yoon's lens-based works engage with entangled human and land-centred histories in *Jin-me Yoon: Life & Work* by Ming Tiampo.

— The Art Canada Institute Education Team

AVENUES TO EXPLORE

Caring about Climate

Oviloo Tunnillie, *Owl*, 1974

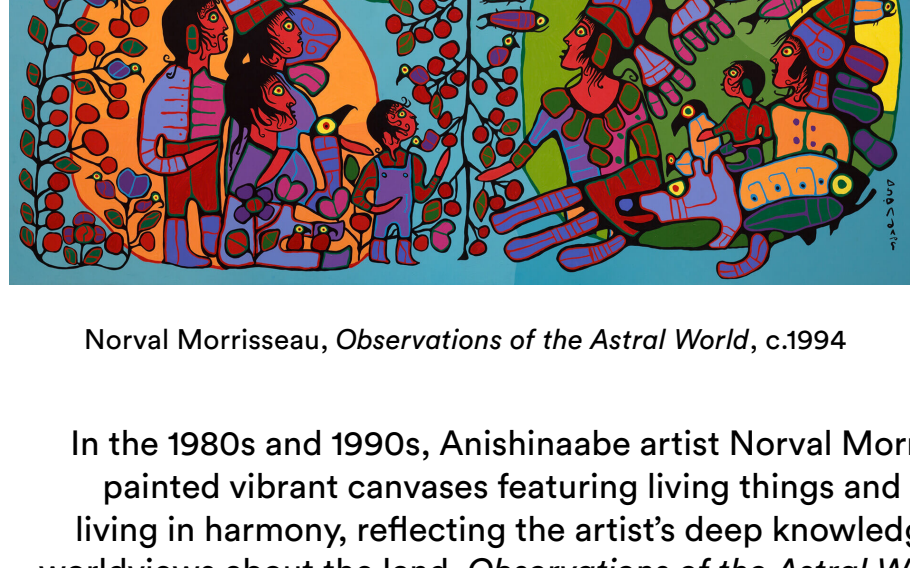
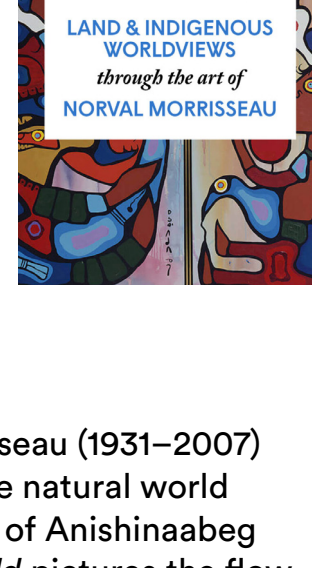
LEARN ABOUT

CLIMATE CHANGE
through explorations of
HISTORICAL & CONTEMPORARY ART IN CANADA

Animals are at the heart of many sculptures by Kinngait-based creator Oviloo Tunnillie (1949–2014), which inspire reflection on the centrality of Arctic wildlife in northern Inuit contexts. Because of its unique geographical location and climate, the Arctic is particularly vulnerable to the effects of a warming world, and it is important to think about the community impact of climate change within this context. Tunnillie, along with photographer Edward Burtynsky (b.1955) and painter Emily Carr (1871–1945), are the subjects of our thematic Teacher Resource Guide on climate change, which outlines three creative activities based on these artists' works that are centred on sustainability and the protection of biodiversity.

Download the [Teacher Resource Guide](#) on climate change.

Living in Relation

Norval Morrisseau, *Observations of the Astral World*, c.1994

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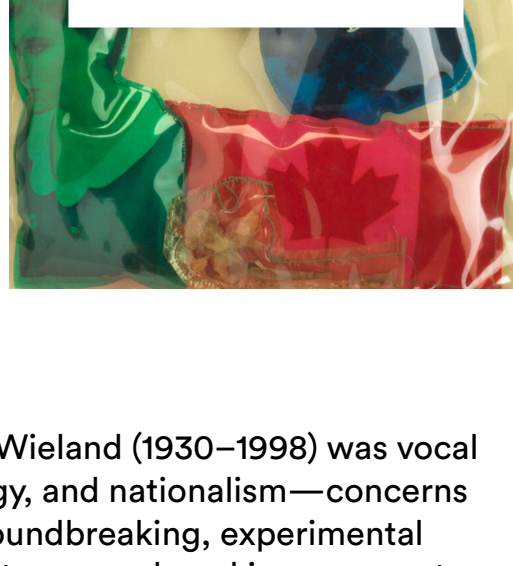
LAND & INDIGENOUS WORLDVIEWS
through the art of
NORVAL MORRISSEAU

In the 1980s and 1990s, Anishinaabe artist Norval Morrisseau (1931–2007) painted vibrant canvases featuring living things and the natural world living in harmony, reflecting the artist's deep knowledge of Anishinaabeg worldviews about the land. *Observations of the Astral World* pictures the flow of communication between the earth-bound world on the left and the many spiritual planes of existence on the right. Though contained within separate circles, these worlds—animated with animals, plants, humans, and spirit-beings—are connected by a blossoming tree in the centre, a visual symbol that gives the impression of a unified life force.

Our [Teacher Resource Guide](#) inspired by Morrisseau's work guides students on how to think about the land in vital relation.

Watch an [educational video](#) on Norval Morrisseau's life and work.

Advocating for the Earth

Joyce Wieland, *The Water Quilt*, 1970–71

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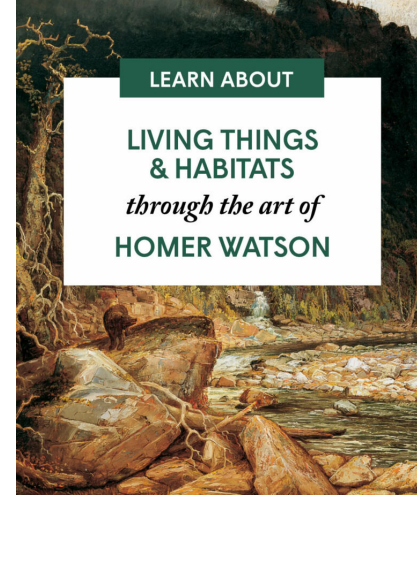
ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM
through the art of
JOYCE WIELAND

Throughout her career, Toronto artist Joyce Wieland (1930–1998) was vocal about issues concerning war, gender, ecology, and nationalism—concerns that were often interconnected in her groundbreaking, experimental multimedia works and films. *The Water Quilt* was produced in response to government-commissioned hydroelectric developments in James Bay, which raised widespread concern for the health of subarctic ecosystems. Through delicate embroidery, Wieland has rendered scientifically accurate botanical representations of Arctic flowers that are threatened by the encroachment of government industry.

Learn more about how to bring Wieland's ecologically motivated works into your classroom in our [Teacher Resource Guide](#) on Environmental Activism.

For more inspiration, view an [online exhibition](#) of Wieland's artworks.

Learning about Ecosystems

Homer Watson, *The Flood Gate*, c.1900–11

LEARN ABOUT

LIVING THINGS & HABITATS
through the art of
HOMER WATSON

Throughout his career, Ontario painter Homer Watson (1855–1936) contended with the paradox of representing nature: he recognized the need to balance an idealized vision of nature's overwhelming power with a faithful rendering of its physical appearance. Produced at a time when Southern Ontario was undergoing rapid settlement, his rural landscapes are revered for emphasizing environmentalist concerns, particularly the need for humans to maintain sustainable relationships with nature. *The Flood Gate* is one of Watson's most celebrated works, and pictures a man opening the floodgate of a dam in the middle of a severe storm, a dramatic scene that conjures the catastrophic consequences that would arise if the dam were to burst.

Watson's paintings reveal his connection to the natural world and are the foundation for classroom explorations of healthy ecosystems.

Download our [Teacher Resource Guide](#) to learn more.

Watch a [short educational video](#) on Homer Watson's life and work.

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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, multivocal 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

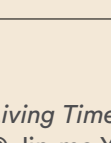
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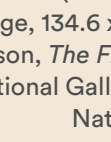
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Image Credits: [1] Jin-me Yoon, *Living Time*, diptych #1, 2019, inkjet print, 71.4 x 76.5 x 3.8 cm. Collection of the artist. Courtesy of the artist. © Jin-me Yoon. [2] Oviloo Tunnillie, *Owl*, 1974, serpentine (Tatsituq), 18.4 x 6.1 x 5.7 cm, unsigned. Collection of the Winnipeg Art Gallery (2016-428). Gift of Marrie Schreiber. Courtesy of the Winnipeg Art Gallery. Photo credit: Ernest Mayer. Reproduced with the permission of Dorset Fine Arts. [3] Norval Morrisseau, *Observations of the Astral World*, c.1994, acrylic on canvas, 236 x 514 cm. Collection of the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (no. 41338). [4] Joyce Wieland, *The Water Quilt*, 1970–71, embroidered cloth and printed cloth assemblage, 134.6 x 131.1 cm. Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto. © National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. [5] Homer Watson, *The Flood Gate*, c.1900–11, oil on canvas, mounted on plywood, 86.9 x 121.8 cm. Collection of the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, purchased 1925 (3343). Photo credit: National Gallery of Canada.