

#Art4Climate Combining Arts to Reflect Resilience to Climate Change



Photo by: SQ&LB Artist Collaboration

Weaving Narratives of Climate Change

Artists Capture Vulnerability on Photographs and Silk

#Art4Climate

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This article is the latest in our series #Art4Climate, a joint initiative by the secretariat of UN Climate Change and Julie's Bicycle on the work of artists who make the issue of climate change more accessible and understandable by featuring it in their work. It was inspired by a session at the [Salzburg Global Seminar](#) in early 2017.

Artists Susan Quateman and Leslie Bartlett combine two techniques – silk painting and photography – to raise awareness about the impacts of climate change above all on coastal regions, and to highlight the importance of building resilience to such impacts.

As the first step in their creative process, Leslie takes photographs of landscapes such as forest paths and ponds. Susan then uses the images to

make silk paintings with striking colors that help the viewer better focus on the beauty and vulnerability of the landscapes.

“Our artwork gently screams out the words ‘urgency,’ ‘connection’ and ‘resilience’ to the community of activists fighting to achieve the [Paris Climate Change Agreement](#) goals,” says the artist duo. “By depicting the beauty of nature – be it rocks, pathways, seashores or forests – in silk and photography, and weaving narratives of climate change resilience and climate change vulnerability, our stories mobilize people to action.”



Silk painting and photography montage of Wyman Woods, Marblehead, MA, presented as part of the installation “The Resilient Landscapes of Marblehead and Cape Ann”

Art Montages Portray Natural Resilience

Before working together, the artists worked independently – London-born Susan Quateman as a silk painter with a background in environmental planning, and Leslie Bartlett, from New Hampshire in the United States, as a photographer and local historian. The artists started collaborating to create art montages, and launched the SQ&LB Artist Collaboration in 2015.

Living in Boston’s North Shore, the artists combine their contrasting perspectives, forged by their different backgrounds and their complementary artistic techniques, to create unique art pieces.

Several of their exhibitions are presented together with scientific information, in order for the public to better understand the consequences of climate change, such as sea level rise and storm surges, and their effects on coastal landscapes.

In their exhibitions, Susan and Leslie also highlight the importance of preserving these vulnerable natural habitats, because they serve as a natural barriers against climate impacts.



*Summer 2017 outdoor installation of “Resilient Landscapes of Cape Ann,”
Bedrock Gardens, Lee, NH*

Inspiration for Global Climate Action

In a recent exhibition for the US National Park Service, the artists created signs with the phrase “Climate change does not respect boundaries” in English, French, Spanish and Polish, in order to reach audiences in more countries.

“Our works are typically not labeled and not titled, and suggest a local

approach to climate change with global meaning,” they say.

In the context of the upcoming UN Climate Change Conference (COP23, 6-17 November 2017 in Bonn, Germany), both artists hope that participants pay attention to climate art, so that they can reflect on the relationship between the beauty of nature and the urgency to act on climate change.

Susan Quateman and Leslie Bartlett’s collaborative artwork creates a bridge between landscape art and climate science

For more information on the SQ&LB Artist Collaboration, [click here](#).

*#Art4Climate is a joint initiative by the [UNFCCC](#) and [Julie’s Bicycle](#) to spot and propose super recent and new works in this broad field, but we also want to hear from you! Please send any proposals for showcasing to newsroom@unfccc.int or Chiara@juliesbicycle.com. Please amplify our web posts with Twitter hashtag **#Art4Climate** and **#COP23!***
