

Hunt for the Lost Blog

Sending - 1/13/21

“Sending” is a project about recovering relationships. It is the new phase of [Hunt for the Lost](#). The first phase identified things that were lost and where they could be found. “Evidence” was collected for alternative discourse in contrast to strident pre-election mainstream exchanges. “Sending” considers what it means to give in a world of alternative discourse.

In this participatory piece, you are invited to contribute by using the template provided to create your own sending. The template offered was inspired by the four leaf clover symbol. It signifies luck in the Irish tradition. In this project, it also represents ecological optimism.

What will you send?
(A gentle nudge below)

Send a question to someone you love or a politician.

Send a color to someone you love or a politician

Send foliage from your street or neighborhood to someone you love or a politician

Send a request in exchange of an offering to someone you love or a politician

Send an invitation to someone you love or a politician

Send a compliment to someone you love or a politician

Send a poem to someone you love or a politician

Send a story to someone you love or a politician

Send a map to someone you love or a politician

Send a location to someone you love or a politician

Send a wish to someone you love or a politician

Send a secret to someone you love or a politician

Send a recipe to someone you love or a politician

Send instructions to someone you love or a politician

Send something that involves your window view to someone you love or a politician

Send a poem to someone you love or a politician

Send a memory to someone you love or a politician



A capsule of installations on Governors Island - 11/18/20

Drone footage documenting Hunt for the Lost signage on Nolan Park in October 2020.



Link to <https://vimeo.com/472870937>

Credits to Georgi and Nina Tushev

Featuring Mary Hooper - 11/16/20



"My arts practice is site-specific, using of a wide range of materials and processes to create installations, objects, and sound-works. I often collaborate with artists from different disciplines, writers and musicians, incorporating research into the narratives of place, people, the patina of human occupation, and the geographical impact of the location on the way we live.



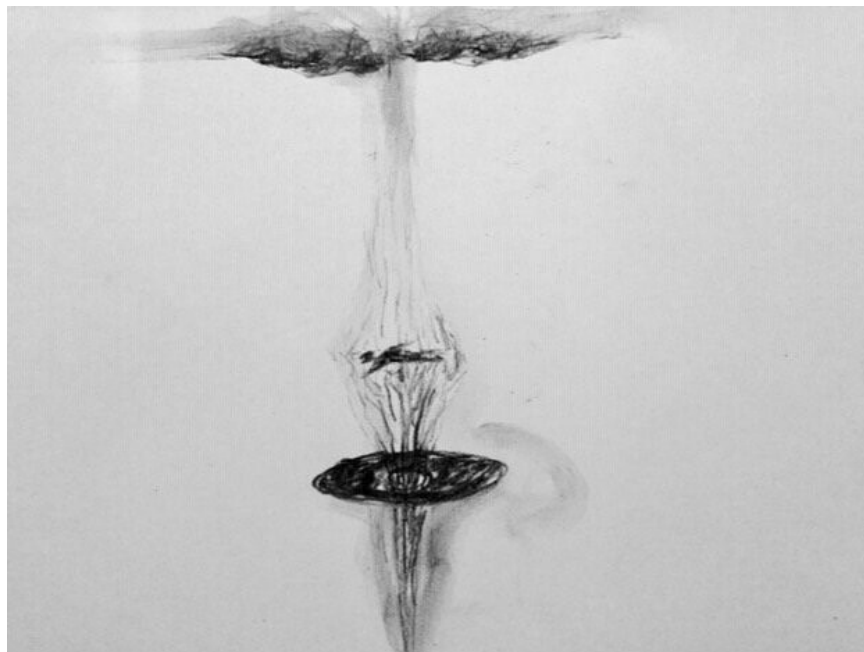
The series of drawings featured were done as a series of morning meditations and one would inspire another, I stopped doing them when the flow became self-conscious as opposed to naturally generative. It is also about the process of creativity and the conundrum being a conscious human with an injection of humor."











Featuring Fredericka Foster - 10/27/20

Fredericka Foster is a painter and photographer living in Seattle and New York City. Water has become her primary subject matter and concern.

“Lucky children discover that what lives outside their skin is a continuation of what is inside. This knowledge becomes a sort of glory; a rich security and happiness. It took me countless hours of conscious connection and most of my life to Internalize this truth. As we dismember the world, grief abides in that same holy space. I attempt whatever small acts are mine to do to honor, to heal, and to experience joy.”



Fredericka Foster



Lost Glacier
Fredericka Foster

How do I FIND a 'LOST' thing? - 10/21/20

Released in August, *Hunt for the Lost* has been an online media project, inviting a wide public audience to respond to 'Lost things.' The project is about creating an alternative discourse that knits together fundamental notions in personal ways across diverse publics. Each week a prompt is released online, exploring something that has been lost. This project emerges in the context of a divided America, and unprecedented pandemic.

Hello,

We have been receiving a number of inquiries about how to participate in this project, *Hunt for the Lost*. Each prompt holds a small/big ambiguous invitation to search within inner and outer terrain. There is no one way, nor "right" way. This weekly blog series: *How do I Find a Lost thing?* explores potential doorways for participating in this project.

The challenges:

The challenge is that we might have to get uncomfortable thinking about what we've lost. The challenge is that it might take time and space.

The entry-points:

The prompt as a reflective space to find process, form, and connection

1. Find a small nuance in a large idea
2. Let the small nuance be an entry-point

Let it begin as a seed:

a hue
a photograph
a scribble
an observation
an inspiration
a memory
an ambiguity

Signage and Branches on Governor's Island, NYC - 10/13/20

The full complement of signage is installed until Nov. 1, except Tues. evening- Thursday afternoon, for mowing. The blue branch assemblage for *Lost Forest* will also be up until Nov. 1.











Behind the Scenes of The Hunt For The Lost - 9/30/20

The Hunt For The Lost, a morality scavenger hunt, grew out of the longer project, “Blued Trees Black Skies,” a collaborative work for which I am the lead artist, with composer Eve Beglarian, instrumentalist Robert Black and choreographer Yoshiko Chuma about ecocide. That work is funded by MAP Fund and scheduled for production in 2022. The Hunt For The Lost is a research detour for me from that collaboration, inquiring into how art might catalyze critical thought, fundamental to democracy. I felt this detour was necessary before the Presidential Election. This research is an effort to understand, why is discourse so difficult now? I wonder how can we cure ecocide, establish environmental justice or resolve racism or preserve democracy if we can’t talk about difficult subjects?

Friday, the Hunt expanded with an assemblage installation for Lost Forests, Found on the Lavender Field on Governors Island. This work is being sponsored by Earth Matter under the auspices of the Trust for Governors Island. The installation and strategic signage for the Hunt will remain up until November 1. Then the assemblage will be made into “Art Mulch,” to support Earth Matter, one of our Governors Island sponsors.

Our original concept from the whole “Blued Trees Black Skies,” team was designed for Governors Island, summer 2020. It would have included a series of assemblages of 20’ long blue-painted tree branches. My goal was to create an evocative spatial environment that our audience might walk through contemplatively before the Presidential Election. At the peak tourist season before the pandemic as many as 16,000 people a day might have passed through the original design for the performance-installation on the island. Now 16, 000 a week can still see the artwork.



Figure 1. Maquette for the Original "Blued Trees Black Skies" proposal with dancer Madison McGain. Aviva Rahmani 2020

COVID changed everything and the pre-electoral discourse during the pandemic exacerbated stress everyone felt across the globe. The refrains I felt and heard over and over again starting with lockdown, were about what had been lost, was being lost, would be lost and sadly, who was at fault? The Hunt for the Lost came out of a series of Zoom conversations between our whole team for, “Blued Trees Black Skies,” and inspired me to detour into a search for the lost this fall on Governors Island.

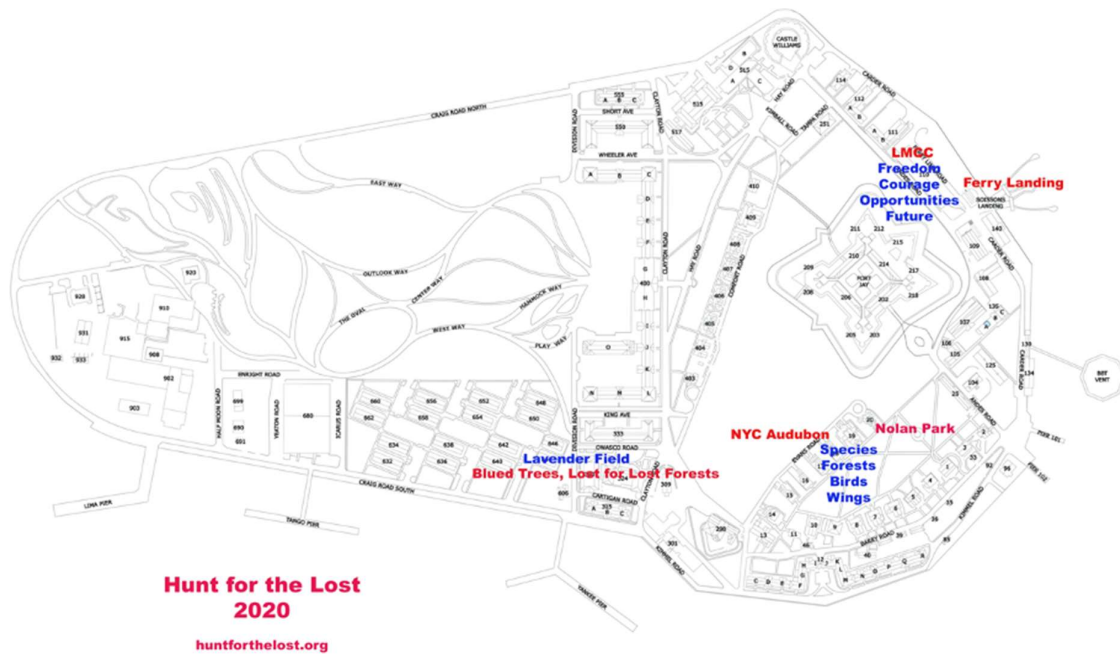


Figure 2. Map of Governors Island with locations of the lost and some found.

How might one promote discourse that isn't overtly political but does address fundamental concerns that drive politics and ultimately determine ecocide and environmental justice, like how we define our values and find a shape for that discourse in art?

How do we think about ideas critically, without falling into simplistic binary traps of right wrong, Democrat Republican, Progressive Conservative divisiveness? Where might I invite the mental space for deeper and more expansive reflection? What does an assemblage installation of dead tree parts, as has been created for Governors Island evoke? How might information be dispersed across space in a tangible form? How might we consider the pre-election period as a time to step back rather than hurtle forwards? These questions are at the heart of all my work now.

I think The Hunt for the Lost might answer a few personal questions that will determine the future forms I develop but it is also a distinct project of its own.



Figure 3. Detail shown of "Blued Trees Lost; Lost forests, Found," installed on Governors Island Friday September 25, 2020

For The Hunt for the Lost, I have been working with two other artists, Ayaka Fujii and Judith Mayer to create a container for this research. As material for the, "Blued Trees Black Skies," collaborative team, the questions driving The Hunt For The Lost will persist into 2022, when I hope to present my part of a culminating work out of all our research with my collaborators.

Signage based on the prompts have been distributed around Governors Island. The branch assemblage, the newest addition to the project, expands on my spatial investigations. Even during the pandemic and two days a week when the signs come down for mowing, weekly traffic until the island closes for the summer averages 16,000 passerby's. If 1% of those random passerby's stops to reflect, I will be very pleased.

PLEASE DO NOT CLIMB

Blued Trees, Lost, an installation honoring lost forests by Aviva Rahmani, sponsored by Earth Matter with thanks to the Trust for Governors Island and MAP Fund. Huntforthelost.org is part of the on-going public art project, *Blued Trees Black Skies* on ecocide, environmental justice and racism.

Featuring Michael Markham - 9/22/20

We are delighted to feature the artist Mike Markham this week, who has contributed a number of “found” items to our Hunt! Categories he has responded to include: Lost Heart, Lost Opportunities, Lost Wings, and Lost Forest.



ARTIST BIO

“My first artistic epiphany occurred when I was taken, as a young teenager, to visit the caves of Lascaux. I've never recovered from the shock of that visit. I was living in Germany during my teenage years, hiking the Black Forest and the Alps, and these experiences were all leading me to a much deeper sense of myself in relation the natural world.

Nature has always been important to me. My earliest memory is of vines, butterflies, and bees in my mother's English garden. I've traveled a lot since then, especially in North America where I've developed a love for the American landscape, but also an awareness of how the natural world has been ravaged and degraded. As human beings we've plundered nature to a dangerous degree.

Among the images included here is that of a flag, made in 2007. I wanted to make a flag that would speak to environmental concerns and I stumbled upon this following story from the Ojibwa culture:

There was a man who decided to set fire to the marshes in an attempt to burn up the world. A blackbird that lived in the marshes saw him going about this task and cried out a warning to the other creatures. The man threw a shell at the bird and hit it on the wings, causing them to bleed. This is how the red-winged blackbird got its colors.

This worked for me on several levels. The red-winged blackbird has long been a favorite creature of mine, its call signaling the arrival of spring. In the above story its warning echoes current concerns that mankind is destroying the world. Coincidentally, I also discovered that the Ojibwa have a tradition of what are called "dream flags". My dream is that this bird's warning would resonate widely today."



Michael Markham, Flag, Nylon, 3x3 ft.

ABOUT MY PARTICIPATION

"Aviva Rahmani's art means to raise concerns about the degradation of our world, both physically and spiritually, and to promote the preservation and/or restoration of a life-enhancing environment. Dialogue and creative exchanges on these vital issues are essential as we press forward into an uncertain future. "Hunt for the Lost" is an opportunity to engage in such an exchange and I felt I couldn't let it pass. I urge others to also participate."