



# The DEANERY PROJECT

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## ***Recalling Mourning***

***Artist: NAT chantel, 2021***

### ***Artist Statement***

***Recalling Mourning*** is a collection of twelve nested forms hollowed out from the inside which are based on free-fallen branches and roots. These structures are intended to be engaged with by the artist and community to clear stories of the past and invite space for healing through sounding-off and calling into the land.

This nature-based installation is a reflective response to on-going devastation from generations of people being discarded, displaced, uprooted and silenced. It calls forward our right to live, to breathe, and be of voice. We are all of the land, and just as the earth, we remain here still.

These nested shapes are an offering of shelter that protects and holds the energy of our voice and the history of our experiences. In remaining on and of the land, the sculptures become an offering to the land itself and generations of wildlife.

As forms of the earth these installations will regenerate life back into the earth, maintaining balance to renew energy and offer new life growth, both to the land, and the people who engage, find, and meet the body of this work, and the nature of their own sound.

By calling-in to the land we can release known and unknown trauma that is of our experience, and that of our Ancestors. In sound we honour and remember the inherited strength of our people; the resilient quality and power we have to persist and be of voice. The land hears our songs long before and after our sound.

### ***About the Artist***

As an interdisciplinary artist, my medium of expression changes, yet, the context remains familiar and focused on recalling voice. Trauma from the erasure of body and self, and the conditions surrounding distortions in identity are addressed to show how communication alters and imprints our sense of self-worth. Themes of home, silence; containment and belonging recur in the body of my art. Through subtle movements and repeated actions, I explore repercussions of contact and its relationship to being silenced, with the intention to give space for connection and healing.

NAT chantel

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***The Deanery Project*** is an environmental and arts learning centre. Occasionally we have programs on site that close the property in the upper parking area to the public. Closure dates will be noted on the EAC 50 Things app, and on our website. During those times there will be access to the Woods installation only. This will be sign-posted from the lower parking lot. When the main site is open, please sign in at the Hall for Covid contact tracing, mask indoors and mind social distancing. Thank you!

***50 Things*** is an ***app-guided, interactive art adventure in celebration of*** the Ecology Action Centre's fiftieth anniversary. Throughout Nova Scotia are fifty original works created by artists from multiple disciplines



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There are three access points to *Recalling Mourning*.  
The Field, the Woods and the Water.

### ***The Field:***

With your back to the parking area in the open, grassy field at the Deanery, move towards the right, you will meet two nested sculptures or “sound wells.” These are accessible to all bodies who wish to welcome themselves on the land. Trace the shapes with your own movements. Sound into the land. Recall Your Own Voice.

### ***The Woods:***

Along the wooded edge of the parking area, move down four steps leading to the nature trail. Walk forward until you meet a slight bend. Turn right. Move through Fern lane (the path of ferns), follow the sign “Nature Trail.” Rocks will be under your feet. Pass the uprooted tree. Acknowledge the Tree Nursery nested on the right. Step forward. Another Nature Trail sign will be on the left of the path. Turn right (close to the tree nursery.) Walk forward. Keep to the right, there is a slight winding around a Spruce tree. You can enter the space on either side.

In front of a tall yellow birch, a community of nested sculptures rest. Walk slowly around each. Give sound as you move. Pause. Become still. Breathe. Listen to the land. Call any sounds into the nests. Your voice is protected. Release everything. Cry. Scream. Speak. Sit in nature’s sound. Meet yourself in the silence, there is sound there too.

**\*\*Note**, this space is home to a rare plant called ghost-pipe, which is supportive to healing pain. Please step forward with intention. Go slowly to see.

### ***The Water:***

From the grassy field, move down the Coastal Path leading to the water. One nested sculpture is visible on the left. Move slowly around it. Make Sound. Sit with the Land. Welcome Your Voice. Return to the water.

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### ***A Collaborative Beginning:***

Lead your way through the Nature Trail, across the road, move forward on the mossy forest’s path. In the far reaches of the trail, a nest holds council with a tree. This is the first joined offering created by the Artist, and a friend of the Deanery. We stand together with the Land; who remains in collaborative voice.

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***Ghost Pipe***, the Deanery Project, Ship Harbour, NS. (Photo by Michelle Doucette)

Ghost Pipe, also called Spirit Plant and Bird’s Nest in reference to both its color and the shape of its roots, is a flowering plant without chlorophyll. It does not obtain energy from the sun as most plants do, and was once believed to absorb nutrients from decay, however, it sources its life connecting into the roots of the tree and fungi which support one another’s life.



*Ghost Pipe* is a strong ally for those who may be experiencing a personal/spiritual death and rebirth, assisting in embracing those great shifts within us. It is a sacred plant which survives in complex relationship with mycorrhizal fungi in the earth. The white tissues of this plant are said to resemble the structure of the brain stem, alluding to its powerful medicine in healing neurological disruption: trauma, grief, anxiety, insomnia, sensory overload, [PTSD, epilepsy, and migraines.] Much of our buried trauma and grief lies in a deep place within us. Ghost Pipe can help us recognize these patterns and cycles of stagnancy and seek new ways of inner alignment.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://chicorykin.com/shop/ghost-pipe-essence>