

Tah'lum Indigenous Artist Collective Colouring Book

Volume 2: SENĆOTEN



*by Sarah Jim
and Natassia Davies*

Introduction

The purpose of this colouring book project is to create a new way to engage children and adults alike with Indigenous languages; namely, the SENCOTEN language spoken by W̱SÁNEĆ peoples of the BOKÉCEN (Pauquachin), MÁLEXEŁ (Malahat), ƧÁ,UTW (Tsawout), W̱JOŁEŁP (Tsartlip), and W̱SÍKEM (Tseycum) Nations, as well as others along the Saanich Peninsula and Southern Gulf and San Juan Islands.

The images and words in this colouring book were selected by artists Sarah Jim (W̱SÁNEĆ) and Natassia Davies (Coast Salish/Welsh/Scottish with familial roots in T'Sou-ke Nation) to provide a small window into their heritage.

These designs are meant to be enjoyed by the community of all ages. Feel free to colour in the background as well and try your hand at filling in the shapes with designs. This booklet and the designs are not meant for reproduction or sale.

If you want to copy a design but can't access a printer, you can make that happen!

1. Remove the desired page from the booklet.
2. Tape the page to a window.
3. Place a blank sheet of paper over top and tape that to the window.
4. Trace the image on to the new piece of paper.

We would love to see your work! Colour in and share your creation with [@faroutart_](#), [@natassiaashley](#), [@openspacevic](#), and [@tahlumiac](#) on instagram.

This project is brought to you through the generous contributions of **Open Space Arts Society** and **Tah'lum Indigenous Artist Collective**.

Just like an ecosystem, everything is connected and cannot exist in isolation.

The SENĆOŦEN language is intimately tied to the natural world, particularly the Saanich peninsula on Southern Vancouver Island, where the W̱SÁNEĆ nation have resided for time immemorial. Similar to how flowers and pollinators could not survive without each other because they have shaped each other's existence, Coast Salish art and SENĆOŦEN could not exist without the land as the language and this style of art are direct interpretations of our natural surroundings.

Strawberry, KEXMIN, and thimbleberry are some of the many traditional foods and medicines that have coevolved with W̱SÁNEĆ. I wanted to highlight these plants because they can easily be planted in home gardens for accessible harvest. Plus, the Indigenous pollinators love the flowers! The bull kelp was included to acknowledge that the Salish Sea is a significant source of sustenance to W̱SÁNEĆ as we are saltwater people.

Working on the land doing environmental restoration in SNIDŦEĒ, the first W̱SÁNEĆ village site, has opened my eyes to the notion that art, language, plant knowledge, and everything that W̱SÁNEĆ culture encompasses are interconnected in a way that mimics the natural ways of the world. The teachings that have been passed down for generations have made their way to my curious ears and eyes. By working in the community, learning from mentors and knowledge keepers, and tending to the land, I've gained native plant knowledge that has shifted my worldview. Not only do I feel a sense of belonging when I can go outside and recognize/acknowledge the plants that I've built a relationship with, I can also contribute to my community in a positive way removing invasive species and physically decolonizing Indigenous lands. Practicing botanical Coast Salish art opens up dialogue regarding the significance of these native plant foods and medicines. The Coast Salish elements that I've included in my designs establishes a sense of place, signifies their importance, and showcases where Salish art came from; the land. You'll find depictions of the moon throughout these designs. These were included to honour the W̱SÁNEĆ 13 moon calendar. Instead of a 12-month year, W̱SÁNEĆ live within the laws of the land and our activities are guided by the seasons and particular moons.

The WEXES was included to give us hope for the future. We are living in uncertain times, but the frog is a messenger who symbolizes new beginnings and transformation. The frog has its own moon in the 13 moon calendar, the WEXES moon, and this is when it announces the beginning of spring with its song. It shares with us that winter has ended and life is returning to the

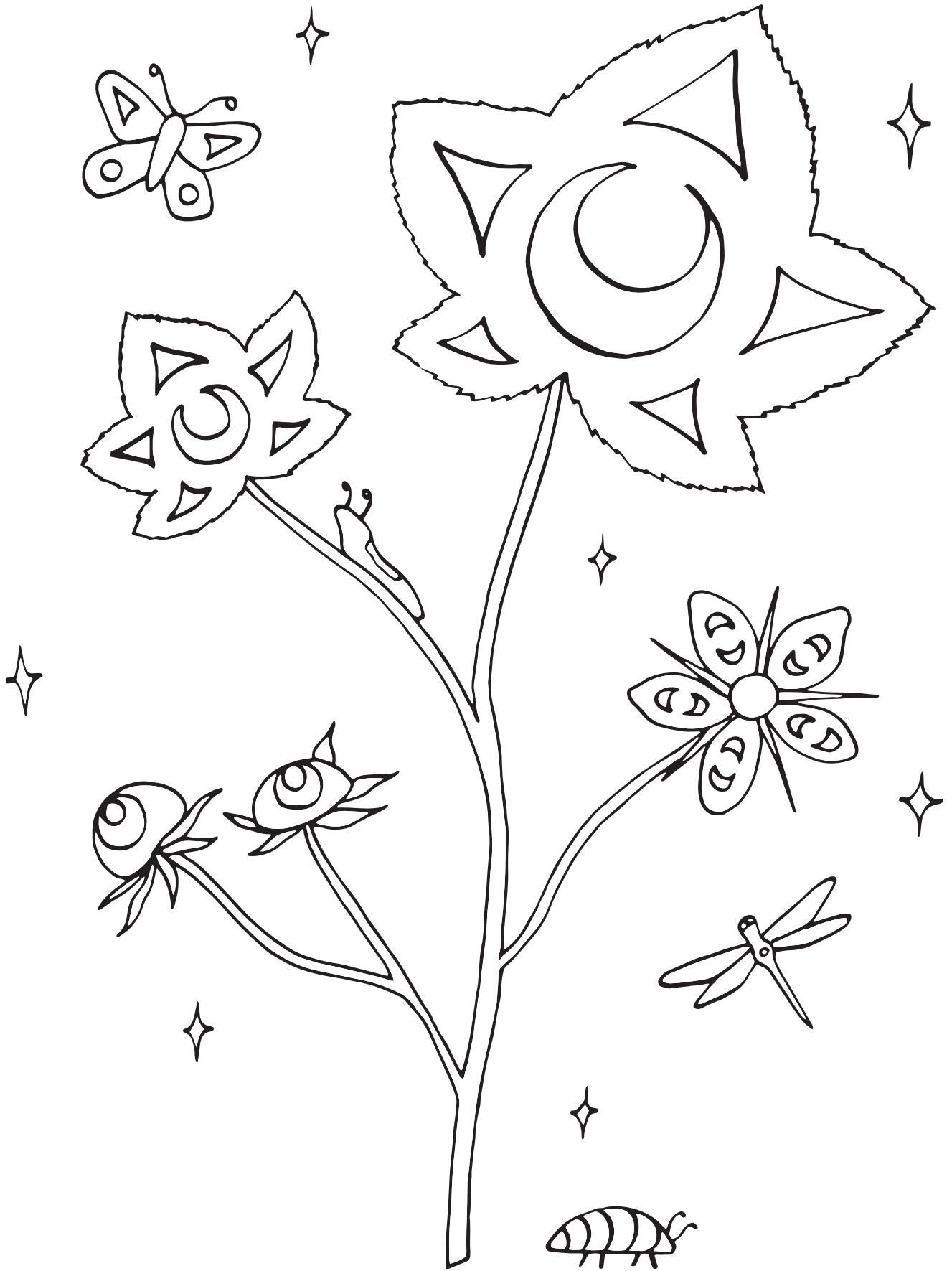
earth. The life of a frog represents transformation because its life begins in water then moves onto land. This also makes it an excellent messenger as it can travel between these two worlds. WEXES is an example of onomatopoeia which is a common feature in the SENĆOŦEN language. WEXES is the sound that the frog makes instead of ribbit.

As mentioned above, nothing can exist in isolation, so I encourage each and every one of you to go outside and connect with the land, water, and sky. If we cannot connect with each other as we have in the past, this can be a beneficial time to connect with the beautiful places and Indigenous plants that surround us.

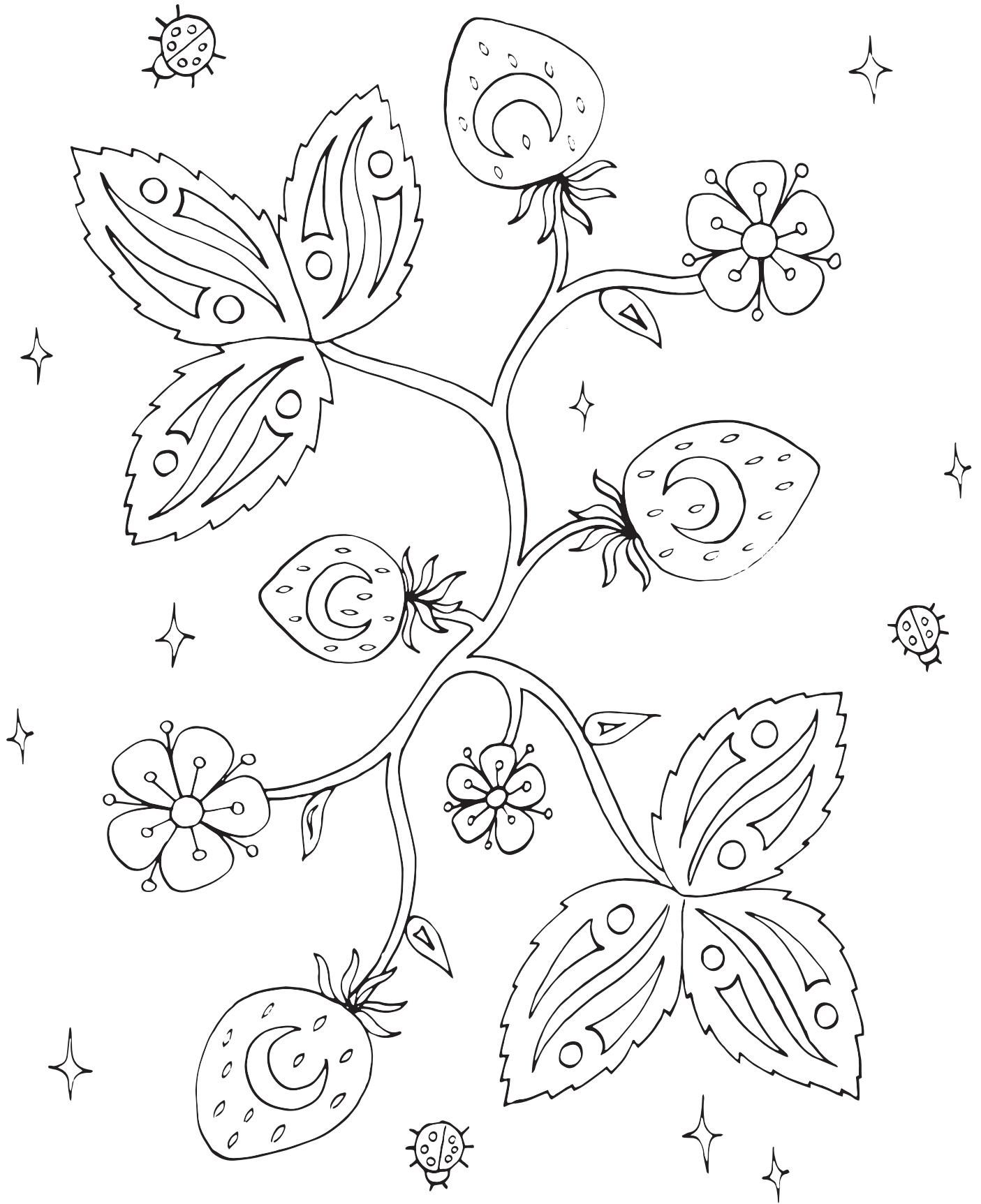
Sarah Jim



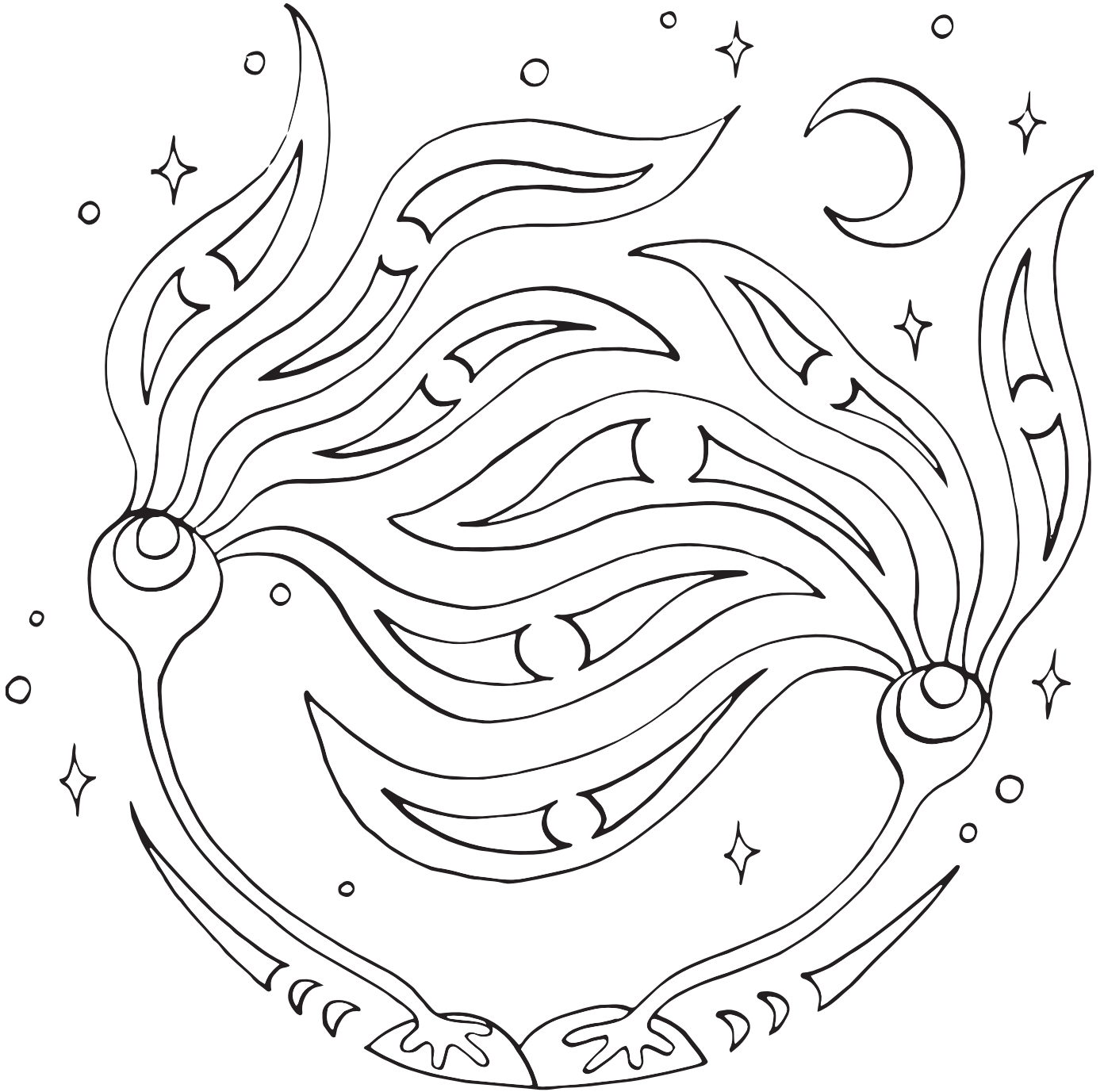
KEXMIN | Barestem Desert Parsley



DEKĀN, IĒC | Thimbleberry

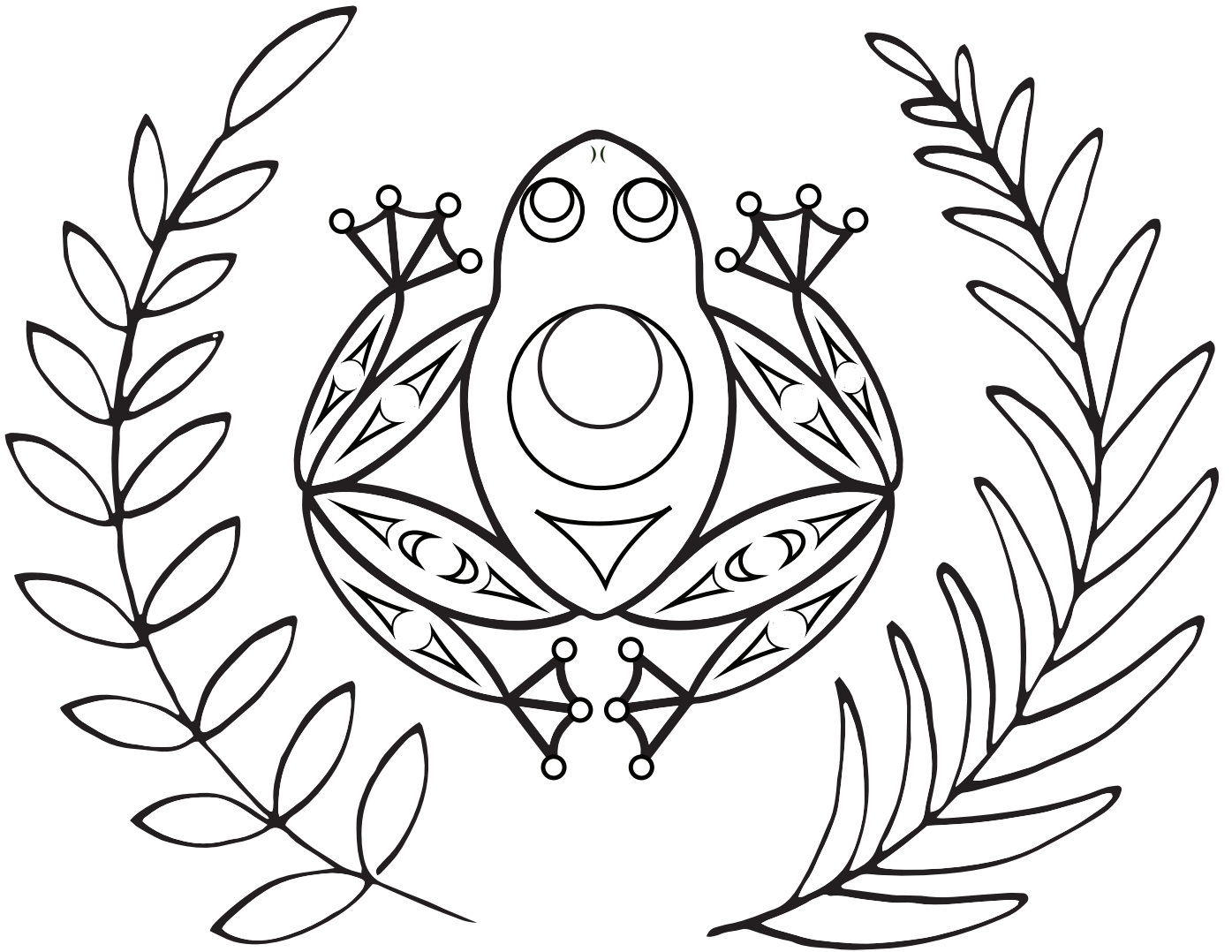


DILEK | Strawberry



ꞑꞐ,ꞑꞒ | Bull Kelp

WEXES | Frog



Having lived the first half of my life knowing little about my indigenous heritage, my later years have been a welcome journey through exploration of my culture and identity.

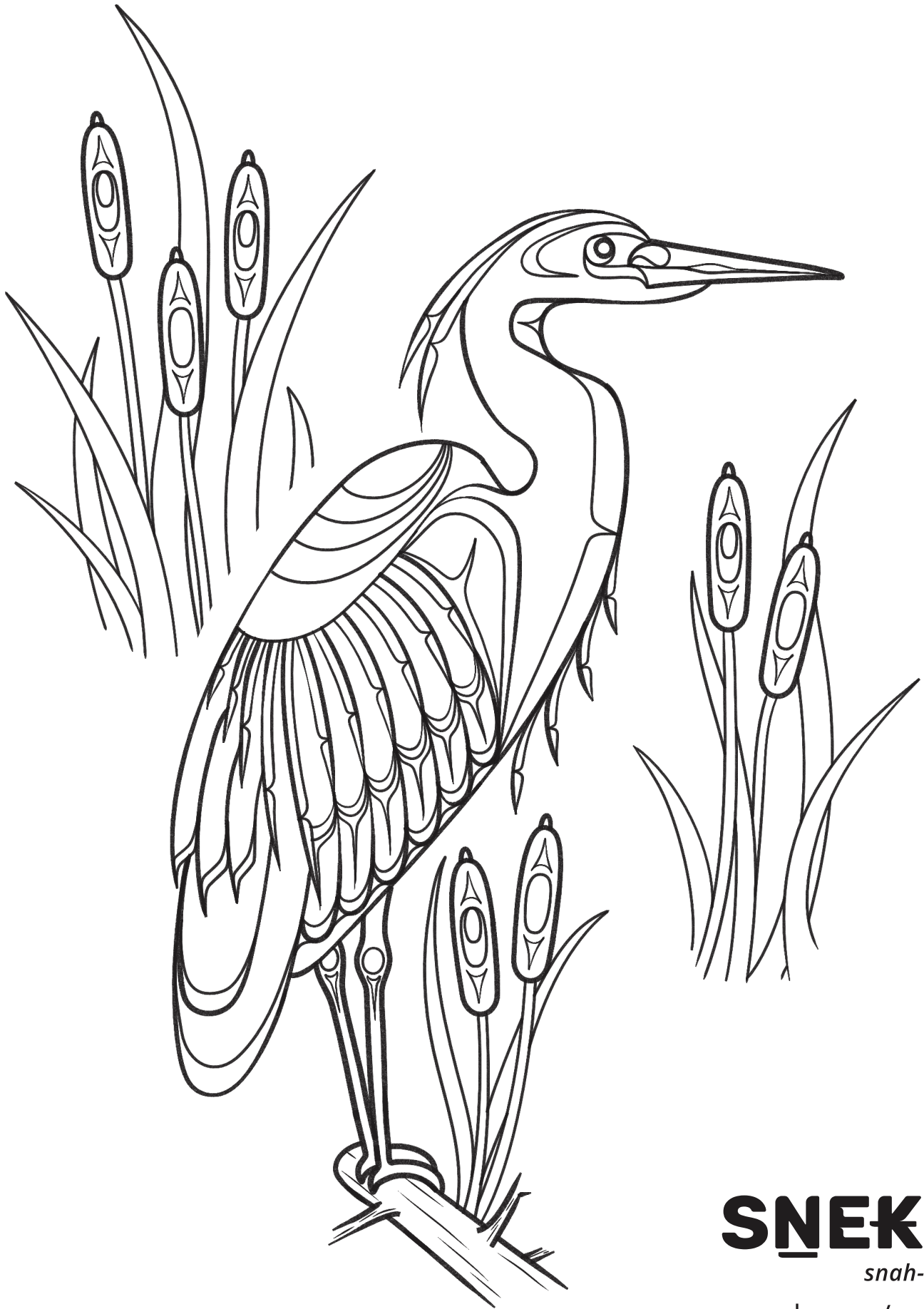
It has been art, mostly, that has taught me much about my indigenous background, so I'm honoured to be able to share some drawings and SENĆOŦEN (sen-choth-en) words with you through these colouring pages, and hope you can learn from it as much as I have.

Some of the animals chosen hold special meaning, such as the heron which represents T'Sou-ke Nation—my nation—and is said to symbolize self-determination and self-reliance. This is something I am proud to say the nation are working hard at achieving. Also special is the frog, representative of the Planes family, my ancestral roots, said to hold power and knowledge. The hummingbirds depicted are flitting amongst wild roses and bring messages of peace and good wishes.

I wanted to include the butterfly because this was the animal I chose to be engraved on my graduation ring (many moons ago) and is said to be a symbol of joy, change, and transformation. My brother graduates this June and I wish all the same things for him as he enters the next exciting phase in his life. Lastly are the Garry Oak tree leaves. I did a summer program in my youth with my nation as an environmental technician assistant where a large part of my role was studying the Garry Oak ecosystem. I think this is when my interest in my indigenous heritage took off—I loved (and still love) learning about our relationship with the land and nature.

I do hope you enjoy colouring these images and have some fun learning to pronounce the words! Memorize them, teach them to your parents, teach them to your friends. Many indigenous languages are disappearing but we can do our part to share what we know. If you post your colourings on social media, use the hashtag **#natassiaashleyart** or tag me **@natassiaashley**. I'd love to see what you do with them! Happy colouring.

Hy'chka, Thank You,
Natassia



SNEKE

snah-kwa

heron/crane

BY NATASSIA DAVIES | SENĆOTEN LANGUAGE

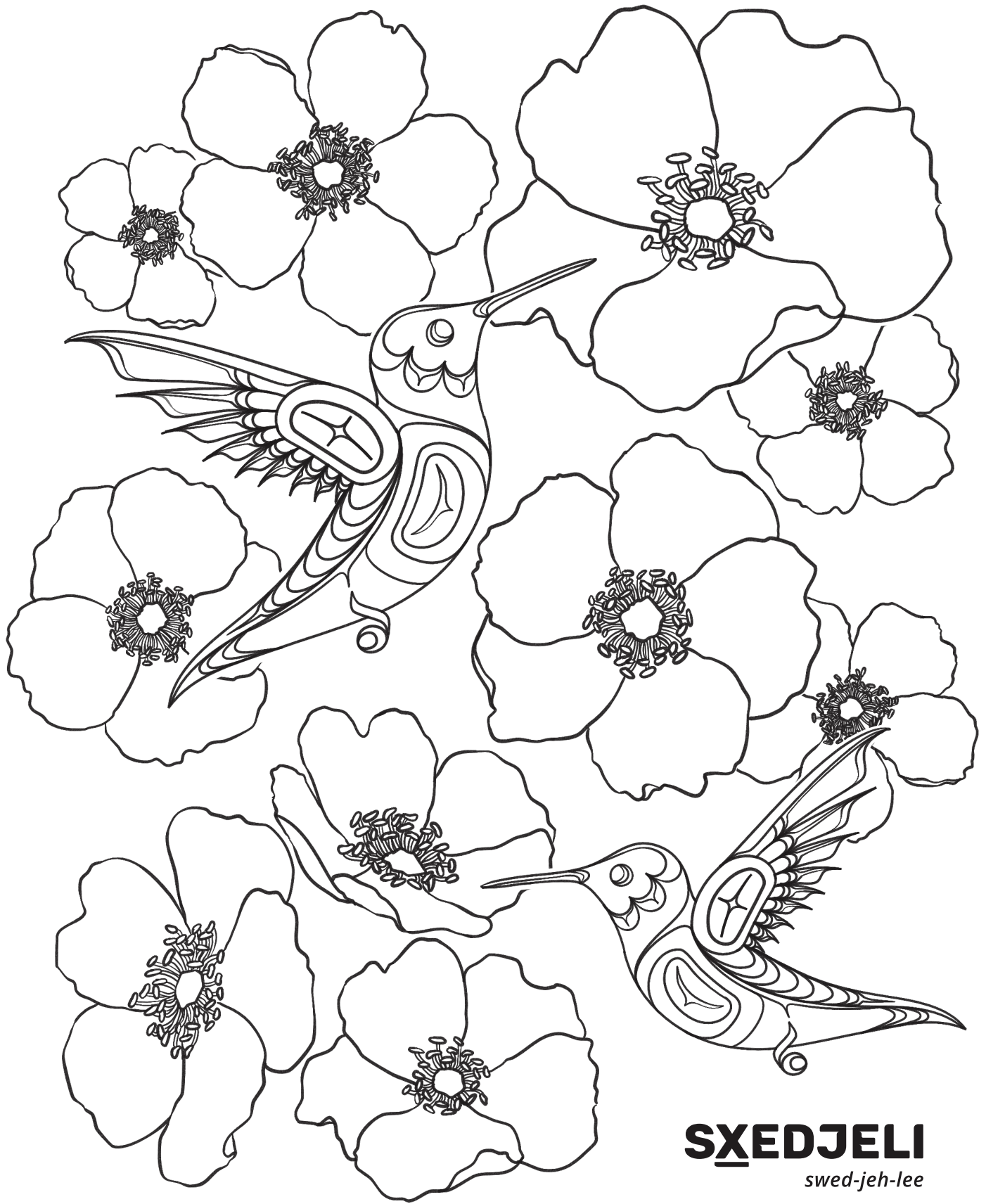


WEXES

wook-us

frog

BY NATASSIA DAVIES | SENĆOTEN LANGUAGE

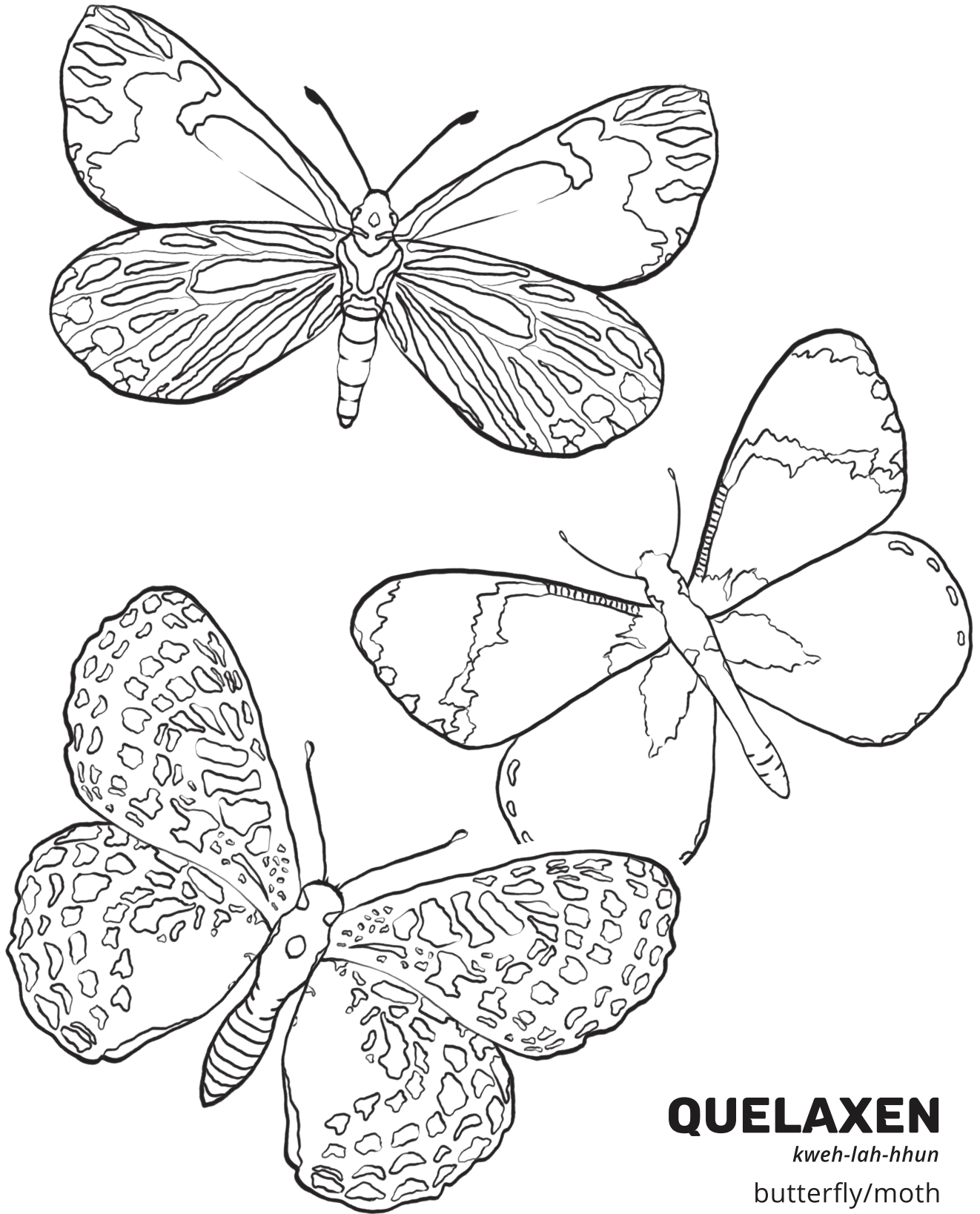


SXEDJELI

swed-jeh-lee

hummingbird

BY NATASSIA DAVIES | SENĆOTEN LANGUAGE

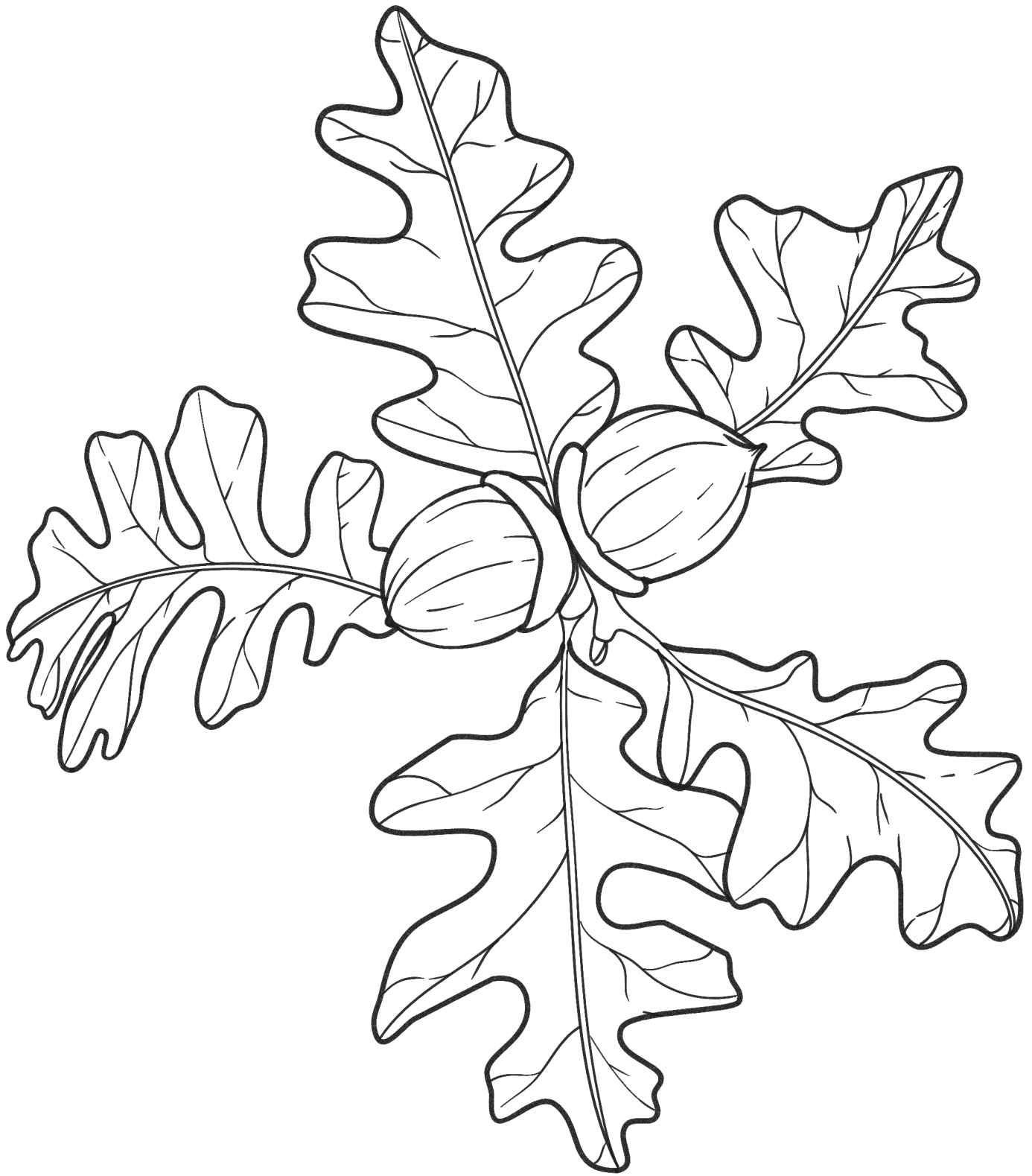


QUELAXEN

kweh-lah-hhun

butterfly/moth

BY NATASSIA DAVIES | SENCOTEN LANGUAGE



STOTŁE

tree leaf

BY NATASSIA DAVIES | SENĆOTEN LANGUAGE

SENĆOTEN Language

Check out these resources to learn more about the SENĆOTEN language!

Online resources

<https://www.firstvoices.com/>

<https://omniglot.com/writing/saanich.htm>

<https://wsanecschoolboard.ca/sencoten-language/>

<http://www.lingtechcomm.unt.edu/~montler/Saanich/WordList/>

SENĆOTEN Videos on YouTube

Books

Saltwater People, Dave Elliott Sr.



Sarah Jim is an emerging artist of mixed ancestry, and is a member of the W̱SÁNEĆ Nation from the Tseycum village. She has received a Bachelor's Degree of Fine Arts from the University of Victoria and emulates her love of nature and native plant knowledge through her artwork. Environmental restoration work has been her main source of inspiration since 2018 when she started working in SNIDÇEĒ, the first W̱SÁNEĆ village site. Working on the land has resulted in deep insights of how language, culture, traditional knowledge, and art are all intimately connected to the natural realm. Learning about the direct connection between culture and place has helped empower Sarah as a W̱SÁNEĆ person and a Coast Salish artist. Her curiosity, love, and admiration for the outdoors and native plants continues to propel her in a direction that helps heal the community, land, and herself through plant medicines, native foods, restoration work, and creating place-based artwork. [@faroutart_](#)



Natassia Davies is a visual artist and graphic designer of Coast Salish, Welsh, and Scottish ancestry with familial roots in T'Sou-ke Nation, located in Sooke, BC. She works primarily in the digital art landscape creating illustrations, logos, and other visual communication tools for local businesses and organizations. When not working digitally, she enjoys creating maximalist-style pen and ink drawings and graphite pencil portraits. Natassia has also painted murals that can be found throughout Sooke and Victoria Harbour. You can follow her work on Instagram and Twitter [@natassiaashley](#)

**This project was produced in partnership
with Tah'lum Indigenous Artist Collective
and Open Space Arts Society.**



Tah'lum Indigenous Artist Collective (TIAC) is an organization based on Lekwungen territory (Victoria). Our collective is open and continues to shapeshift. It builds on the strength, passion, and resourcefulness of Indigenous artists, allies, and institutional partners. Our vision is to continue to create a healthy and thriving Indigenous arts community. Our collective recognizes the importance of upholding our Lekwungen host nation's protocols while also being mindful of the many different cultural backgrounds that local Indigenous artists are creating from.

We are grateful to Yuxweluptun Qwal'qaxala (Bradley Dick) for offering a new name for the collective: Tah'lum. In Lekwungen, Tah'lum refers to a wild cherry tree that once existed on Lekwungen lands. This word helps redefine the space with how we harvest creativity and keep our ancestral landmarks alive through such intent.

Find TIAC @**tahlumi**ac on
instagram.

Open Space Arts Society is an artist-run centre based on Lekwungen territory.

Since 1972, Open Space has been conspiring with artists, writers, musicians, and performers to gather and realize their creative visions. Its team of multidisciplinary curators work to present programming across a multitude of arts disciplines, bridging and building communities to form a living cultural space.

Find more at **openspace.ca**