

THE ECOLOGY OF FREEDOM: JURORS' STATEMENT

This exhibit is the result of a partnership between the Crow's Nest Baltimore and ecoartspace, an inclusive, non-competitive platform for artists and scientists addressing environmental issues internationally, based in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

The Ecology of Freedom is the result of an open call for broadsides issued in the summer of 2024. A broadside is a large sheet of paper printed on one side. Historically, broadsides were used as posters in Europe to express political opinions, announce events or proclamations, or advertise. In this case, we called for broadsides inspired by the work of philosopher and environmentalist Murray Bookchin, author of *The Ecology of Freedom: The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy* (1982), from which the show takes its name.

In that book, Bookchin wrote that "the domination of nature by man stems from the very real domination of human by human," which is to say, by the emergence of social hierarchies. He advocated for a free nature, meaning a freeing of humanity from the desire to dominate nature; a shift towards a more self-conscious reharmonization between people and the more-than-human world, a perspective shared by Indigenous peoples for thousands of years. Bookchin also proposed a political philosophy of Social Ecology to address the environmental catastrophes we face, including the transpersonal and economic systems that enmesh us. These ideas resonate powerfully in Baltimore, where climate and environmental injustice and a legacy of racial and economic injustice are closely related.

On this basis, we called for visual work addressing the following themes:

- Equitable access to clean air and water
- Protection of undisturbed soils and regeneration of soils
- Protection of communities against extreme heat and flooding
- Plastics Recycling/Reuse
- Rights of Nature
- Indigenous Knowledge

In response to the call, we received over 200 submissions from 80 artists based in the United States, Canada, and Europe. We selected twenty-four broadsheets, based on their suitability for the format, the strength and clarity of the message, and their aesthetic qualities. Prints of the selected broadsides are available for pick up at the Crow's Nest free of charge while supplies last. They can also be download freely on the ecoartspace website to print and distribute anywhere and everywhere.

Leonardo Martinez-Diaz, Founder, the Crow's Nest

Patricia Lea Watts, Founder, ecoartspace