

# The Eco Mural Project Hagopian Arts



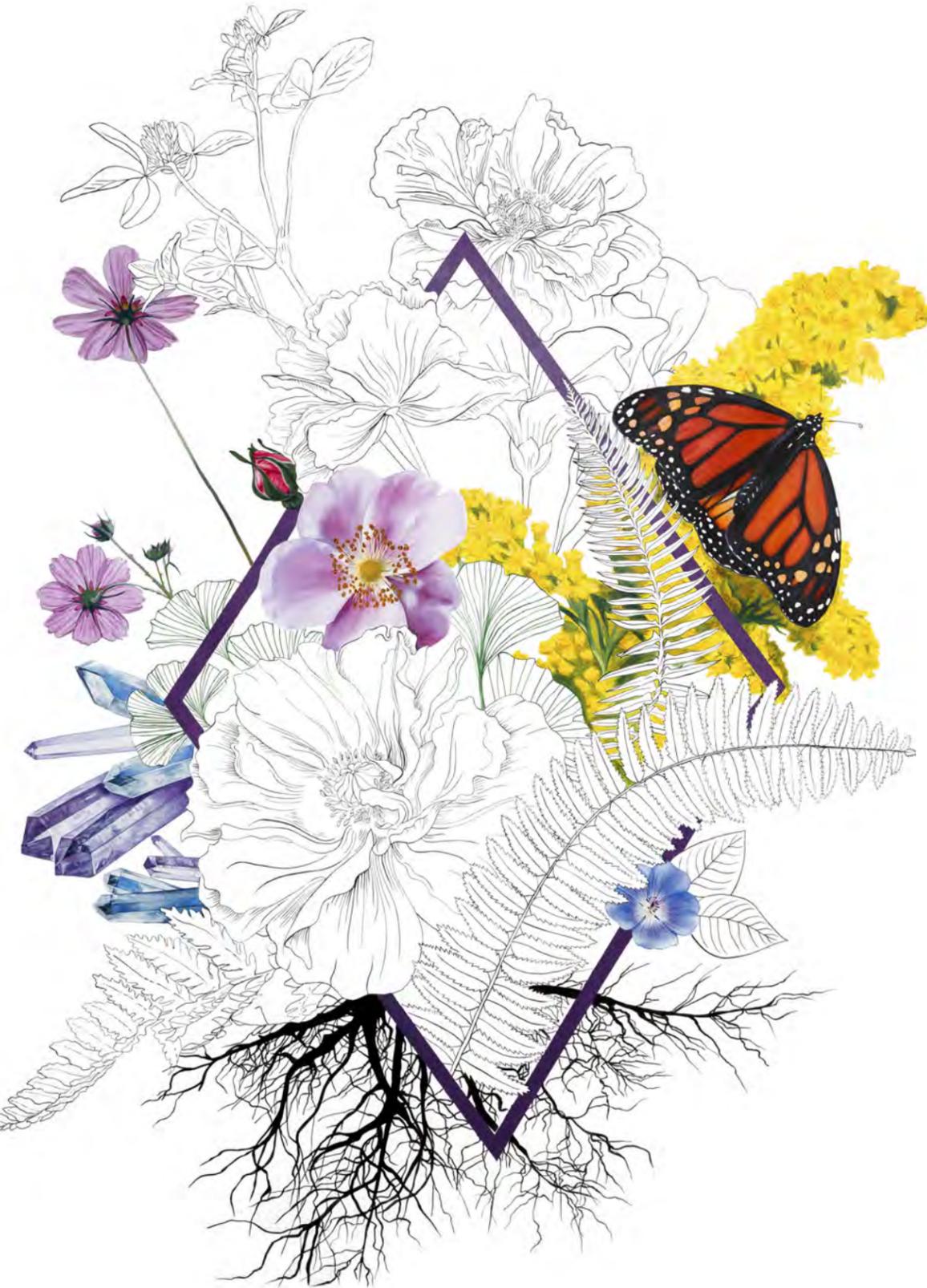
# What Are Eco Murals?

The Eco Mural Project is a series of ecologically-themed public art pieces that have two goals: to beautify blank walls and educate the public about environmental degradation. These pieces are meticulous in every aspect of their creation: they are diligently researched and exquisitely detailed, resulting in one-of-a-kind pieces that transport viewers into an otherwise inaccessible environment.

Each mural contains a QR code that can be scanned by any smartphone and links directly back to our site. There, we have a short write-up about each ecosystem and species and the issues that they face with links to environmental organizations.

We are at a pivotal moment in human history: skyrocketing atmosphere temperatures will threaten human life within two decades. In order to protect future generations, we must simultaneously tackle the three prongs of our declining world: climate change, environmental degradation, and biodiversity loss. Each prong is interconnected, requiring a nuanced and multifaceted approach: we must utilize all the tools at our disposal, including international and individual direct action, comprehensive scientific education, and governmental intervention. It is all the more important to ensure future generations are equipped with adequate environmental and ecological education so they can reduce future damage and repair the mistakes of the past.

At Hagopian Arts, we plan to introduce ecological awareness into the everyday routine of citizens by giving metropolitan exposure to habitats in need of conservation. The murals encourage conversation and direct viewers to important resources and foundations that are fighting climate change, environmental degradation, and mass extinction. Given the toxic nature of our political climate, we believe the Eco Mural Project will encourage passerby to focus on what is truly at stake at this pivotal time in human history: our ecological heritage.



# Our Pilot Project

Our pilot piece, titled “**Eco Mural Project 1: Kauai Coral Reef Life,**” was installed in June at One Stop Deli on 49th and Baltimore Street. The piece has since become a neighborhood staple, delighting residents and passerby of all ages.

Below is an example of the QR code we use for the Eco Murals. This code links to educational resources about subjects of the murals.





# Eco Mural Project 2: Arowana



# Eco Mural Project 3: Amphibian



# Public Art as an Educational Tool

Each Eco Mural comes with an educational write-up that is sourced from legitimate scientific institutions. Below are some short excerpts from these essays. The full write-ups are available on our Eco Mural page on the Hagopian Arts website:

<http://www.hagopianarts.com/eco-mural-project/>

## Excerpt from “Symbiosis”

*“...Symbiotic relationships can occur even after death. Bracket fungi are colorful organisms that occur in step-like patterns on decaying trees. They are part of the polypore family, which are related to mushrooms. Polyphores like bracket fungi are crucial to a forest’s ability to sustain itself through nutrient cycling. After a tree dies, decomposers break down the dead wood, releasing its nutrients into the soil, providing habitats for small mammals and insects, and creating room for new growth. Polyphores are unique due to their participation both in the death of their symbiont but also in providing space for its rebirth...”*

*“Symbiotic relationships can be incredibly complex, and result in our most precious and biodiverse ecosystems on Earth. Treasures like the Great Barrier Reef and the Amazon Rainforest are the product of these relationships and are also examples of environments negatively impacted by human interference. Understanding symbiotic relationships is to understand how important it is for every person to participate in restoring balance to these delicate communities: by curbing our carbon emissions, lessening pollution, and preserving ecosystems at risk.”*



## Excerpt from “Kauai Coral Reef Life”



*“Coral reefs are environmentally invaluable: they contain more species per unit of area than any other ecosystem on earth. Stony corals lay the foundation for large reefs: their polyps produce a calcium carbonate exoskeleton that attaches to rocky outcrops around continental shelves, maintaining the shape of our shores. Corals grow into ornate colonies comprised of a hierarchy of organisms that interact through symbiotic relationships. Corals are the nurseries of our oceans: one-quarter of the world’s fish develop and hatch in the safety of reefs. Reefs are home to some of the world’s most colorful, striking, and complex animals on earth, drawing billions of dollars annually through tourism. Coral reefs only make up about 1% of our ocean’s floors, but they are home to a remarkable 25% of all marine life...”*

*“Preservation efforts are taking place across the globe to help offset coral reef degradation. The Nature Conservancy is leading an initiative to triple the coverage of marine habitats by 2020 through cooperation with nearly a dozen governments in the Caribbean. Other organizations have set up offshore coral nurseries, attempting to replenish coral stocks locally. While coral restoration is a slow process, a multifaceted approach can produce wonderful effects: many other movements involved with spreading awareness of responsible boating and fishing practices can also help decrease and offset the human impact on degradation.”*

## Excerpt from “Honey Bees and Pollination”

*“...Bees are the main pollinators for the majority of our staple foods, and much of the grains and alfalfa that we feed to our livestock. If you’ve ever enjoyed fruits, berries, seeds, coffee, grains, nuts, chocolate, or spices such as nutmeg and peppermint, you have pollinators, and especially bees, to thank! Plants pollinated by bees benefit from greater genetic diversity and resistance to disease. These plants also improve the quality of our soil, air, and water. Without bees, the complex ecosystems that depend on most flowering plants would cease to exist...”*

*“The EPA has taken action under President Obama towards funding extensive research into the decline of pollinator species, but recent victories in the tightening of regulations on pesticides and improving environmental standards have been lost due to the defunding and deregulation imposed by the Trump Administration. There are many steps that individuals can take to ensure we protect our cherished pollinators: participation in community gardens, planting of native flowers and plants, and voting for representatives that will limit habitat loss and support a robust crackdown on pollinator-killing pesticides. Citizens who are interested in learning more are encouraged to visit the following organizations and donate to their research and rescue efforts in maintaining wild bee populations worldwide.”*



# What We've Accomplished...

In the months since we began this initiative, we've made a great deal of progress in creating relationships with groups interested in partnering with us. So far this includes **One Stop Deli, Belltown Realty, The Barn, Shift Capital LLC, University City Housing, South Street Headhouse District, The Philadelphia Senior Center, The Center For Emerging Visual Artists, and Paradigm Gallery, Spak Properties, Davis Pharmacy, Red Lotus Spa, and Black Hound Studio**. We are also proud to announce that we have begun partnerships with a handful of local environmental education and conservation groups. A few include **The Cobbs Creek Environmental Education Center, John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge, and The Pennsylvania Audubon Society**. As this initiative grows, we've had the privilege of establishing collaborations with several internationally renowned wildlife photographers who have graciously offered to provide high-resolution imagery of species and environments at risk to incorporate into future eco murals. We are currently using a stunning photo of a leopard from Yaron Schmid for our CFEVA project, and have three more Eco Murals in the works: two marine-themed pieces, and a frog perched atop a lotus.

In 2015, 2017, and 2018, Hagopian Arts was awarded a fellowship through The Center For Emerging Visual Artists to run a yearly mural-making workshop that bridges the generational gap between elementary students and seniors within the NewCourtland Network. This year, we incorporated the Eco Mural Project into the CFEVA workshops by including participants in the design process, asking them to envision when they feel most connected to nature, and what environmental issues are dear to them. We design the mural, incorporating their ideas, and paint together using a paint-by-numbers system. We have had great success with these workshops, giving attendees the chance to create a domino effect of change that starts with the mural and causes conversation and action through artistic teamwork.

We're thrilled to announce that the Eco Mural Project will be featured in the Philadelphia International Airport's **Art at the Airport Project** in December 2019. All Eco Murals completed up until then will be showcased in the exhibition, which will feature large-scale vinyl decals of the murals, progress shots, and information on our partners. The Art at the Airport Program places artwork in the view of an average of 82,000 travelers daily, making it an invaluable source of publicity for the project and future installations. Each new piece in the Eco Mural Project will be featured in this exhibition, with information about the murals and any external sources of funding.



# Hagopian Arts

Kala Hagopian is a Philadelphia-based muralist best known for vibrant, highly detailed public art pieces. She was born in rural Peacham, Vermont, and was highly influenced by a childhood spent in nature. Kala has been a working artist in Philadelphia since 2005, and received her Certificate from the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in 2009. After graduating, she co-founded her first mural collective, Chroma Dolls. In 2015 she established Hagopian Arts, a company that has gained a reputation for luminous and environmentally minded murals. Kala describes herself as a “fine-art muralist,” specializing in meticulous realism interspersed with bright pattern and atmosphere. Hagopian Arts recently began the Eco Mural Project, an initiative that seeks to raise environmental awareness by introducing depictions of natural ecosystems into urban spaces.

In her role as co-founder of the former Fine Art Collective Chroma Dolls and as the founder of Hagopian arts, Kala has worked with numerous education and community outreach programs such as: The Philadelphia Marathon, The School District of Philadelphia, The Philadelphia Women’s Conference, The Offices of Victim Advocates, Cancer Treatment Centers of America, Zappos Art, Beautify Earth, Neighborhood Bike Works, The Hillside School, The Philadelphia Mural Arts Program, The Philadelphia Animal Welfare Society, RAW: Natural Born Artists, Shore2Love, The Philadelphia Free Library, The Center For The Emerging Visual Artists, Project Street Art, The Youth Violence Reduction Partnership, Sobriety Through Outpatient, JEVS Human Services, The American Foundation For Suicide Prevention, Horizon House, Fairton Correctional Institute, The Boys & Girls Club, at-risk youth and adults, as well as a range of participants of all ages.



**Hagopian Arts Social Media:**

[www.hagopianarts.com/eco-mural-project/](http://www.hagopianarts.com/eco-mural-project/)

[www.hagopianarts.com](http://www.hagopianarts.com) | [instagram.com/hagopianarts](https://www.instagram.com/hagopianarts) | [facebook.com/hagopianarts](https://www.facebook.com/hagopianarts)

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