



Common Threads: Weaving Community through Collaborative Eco-Art

Sharon Kallis

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Disposing of unwanted natural materials can be expensive and time-consuming, or it can present a tremendous opportunity for creating collaborative eco-art. Invasive-species control, green-waste management, urban gardening, and traditional crafts can all be brought together to strengthen community relationships and foster responsible land stewardship. Simple, easily taught, creative techniques applied with shared purpose become the modern-day equivalent of a barn raising or a quilting bee.

Common Threads is a unique guide to engaging community members in communal handwork for the greater good. Sharon Kallis provides a wealth of ideas for:

- Working with unwanted natural materials, with an emphasis on green waste and invasive species
- Visualizing projects that celebrate the human element while crafting works of art or environmental remediation
- Creating opportunities for individuals to connect with nature in a unique, meditative, yet community-oriented way

Combining detailed, step-by-step instructions with tips for successful process and an overview of completed projects, *Common Threads* is a different kind of weaving book. This inspirational guide is designed to help artists and activists foster community, build empowerment, and develop a do-it-together attitude while planning and implementing works of collaborative eco-art.

Sharon Kallis is a Vancouver artist who specializes in working with unwanted natural materials. Involving community in connecting traditional hand techniques with invasive species and garden waste, she creates site-specific installations that become ecological interventions. Her recent projects include The Urban Weaver Project, Aberthau: flax=food+fibre, and working closely with fiber artists, park ecologists, First Nations basket weavers, and others.

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