

Q&A with ZARIA FORMAN —

Vhcle Magazine Issue 18, Art



Greenland #54, 40"x60", soft pastel on paper, 2013



Greenland #62, 47"x70", Soft pastel on paper, 2013



Greenland #71, 50"x60", Soft pastel on paper, 2014

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Tell us a little bit about yourself

I grew up in Piermont, NY, which is about 30 minutes north of NYC. I went to Green Meadow Waldorf school from 6th grade through high school – a very small school with an alternative approach to education, with which art is greatly infused. After my formal art training at Skidmore College I now exhibit extensively in galleries and venues throughout the United States and overseas.

What is the inspiration behind your work?

The inspiration for my drawings began in my early childhood when I traveled with my family throughout several of the world's most remote landscapes, which became the subject of my mother's fine art photography. I developed an appreciation for the beauty and vastness of the ever-changing sky and sea. I loved watching a far-off storm on the western desert plains; the monsoon rains of southern India; and the cold arctic light illuminating Greenland's waters.





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What do you think is the artist's role in society?

Artists play a critical role in communicating climate change, which is arguably the most important challenge we face as a global community. I have dedicated my career to translating and illuminating scientists' warnings and statistics into an accessible medium that people can connect with, on a level that is perhaps deeper than scientific facts can penetrate. Neuroscience tells us that humans take action and make decisions based on emotion above all else. Studies have shown that art (and in particular drawings, paintings, photographs, and film) can impact viewers' emotions more effectively than an essay or newspaper article. My drawings explore moments of transition, turbulence, and tranquility in the landscape, allowing viewers to emotionally connect with a place they may never have the chance to visit. I choose to convey the beauty, as opposed to the devastation, of threatened places. If people can experience the sublimity of these landscapes, perhaps they will be inspired to protect and preserve them.

What superpower would you want and why?

The ability to fly. Who wouldn't?!

Favorite drink?

A smoothie with coconut water, avocado, pineapple, basil, lime and vanilla.

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Zaria's inspiration for her drawings began in early childhood when she traveled with her family throughout several of the world's most remote landscapes, which were the subject of her mother's fine art photography. After her formal training at Skidmore college she now exhibit's extensively in galleries and venues throughout the US and overseas.

In addition to exhibitions, recent projects include a series of drawings served as set design for the classic ballet, Giselle, ten drawings used in the set design for the Netflix TV series House of Cards, and she led Chasing the Light, an expedition sailing up the NW coast of Greenland, retracing the 1869 journey of American painter William Bradford and documenting the rapidly changing arctic landscape. Continuing to address climate change in her work, she spent time in the Maldives.

See more of Zaria's work in [Vhcle Issue 18](#)

www.zariaforman.com