



## COMOX VALLEY ART GALLERY

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### RE. CLAUDE DESJARDINS - "SOLDIERS OF PEACE" PROJECT

Claude Desjardins arrived at the Comox Valley Art Gallery one day in February with an outrageous idea – to create a work that would be the counterpart of Qin Shihuangdi's 5000 life sized terra cotta warriors. Her project would be to create 5000 female "soldiers" on the continents of this earth – not with the accoutrements of war, but with symbols of peace – open hands to hold the flame of peace, unclothed rather than armoured – and to facilitate an exchange of these female soldiers from continent to continent.

Subsequently, the Gallery organized workshops inviting participants to create a soldier for the project. I have had the opportunity to observe one of these workshops – intense, deeply peaceful and meditative. Claude is creating a deep peace as she shares her vision and leads people through the creative process.

Everywhere she has taken her idea she has been met with an enthusiastic response – from those who embrace the concept to those who want to participate in some way. There have been numerous "serendipitous" moments that have paved the way to new connections – for workshops, access to kilns, international connections through the World Peace Forum – these are a few examples.

Taking the project to the next level – across North America and around the world – is a major undertaking deserving financial support. It is clear that both in creation and exhibition, this work has a profound and positive effect on participants and contributors. One, indeed many, will experience the transformative power of creative expression through this project. *And* it is clear to me that Claude Desjardins has the capability to lead this project through to its completion.

The Comox Valley Art Gallery is pleased to have played a part in the project to this point and supports Claude in her vision of an international project for peace.

Sincerely,

Evelyn Gillespie  
Gallery Administrator, Comox Valley Art Gallery



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