

Media Release  
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July 9, 2020

## Esquimalt Artists Embrace French Painting Tradition at Saxe Point Park

*A small group of local artists practices plein air painting as a way to stay connected during COVID-19.*

ESQUIMALT – On a foggy Thursday morning, a group of artists can be seen spread out across the grass at Esquimalt’s Saxe Point Park. They’re practicing the method of painting *en plein air*, meaning painting outdoors.

The term *plein air* comes from the 1850s and the French Impressionist painters. These painters believed that painting outside allowed artists to accurately capture details like lighting and colour. Saxe Point Park provides excellent examples of both.

For the Esquimalt artists, *plein air* painting isn’t just technically difficult, but requires a go-with-the-flow attitude towards Mother Nature. In just one morning, the group experiences fog, mist, rain, wind and sun.

This is the first time the Esquimalt painters have met at the park, but hope to continue the *plein air* painting sessions over the summer.

“During COVID, many artists have been isolated. Access to their studios has been restricted and many galleries and museums are closed,” says organizer Laura-Beth Keane. “It’s been a very challenging time for artists and I think right now creative people are looking for socially distant places to gather and come together.”

The artists are a diverse group, with a variety of skill levels. No experience is required to attend, just a willingness to have fun and embrace whatever challenges arise from working in the great outdoors.

To find out about the next outdoor painting session, you can visit the Esquimalt Community Arts Hub website at <https://www.ecah.ca>

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## **Images for Distribution**

Google Drive Download Link:

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Kb9Fsf6mfYyWEdQMc\\_tgKo5-LARODzHQ?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Kb9Fsf6mfYyWEdQMc_tgKo5-LARODzHQ?usp=sharing)

\*Image credits are included in Google Drive folder.

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## **About ECAH – Esquimalt Community Arts Hub**

At ECAH, we believe that the arts are a foundational piece of a thriving community. Art enhances public space, it offers transformative experiences and can serve as a unifier of diverse populations.

We want to contribute to the thriving arts community in the Township of Esquimalt by building a public art gallery and creative arts hub. We are currently in the process of finding a physical location that best meets the needs of our organization and our patrons.