



THE GROUND BENEATH OUR HEARTS

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The Ground Beneath Our Hearts to Launch on May 22

***Global Celebration of the Creativity, Dignity and Strength
of People Living In Mining And Drilling Communities***

WORLDWIDE—THE GROUND BENEATH OUR HEARTS, a global spectacle to honor the creativity, dignity and resilience of people living in communities affected by mining and oil and gas development, will launch on May 22nd, at 9:00 a.m. Eastern Time, with the release of a video describing the scope of the event, the people involved and the special places they love. The video will be released on the website of the event's primary sponsor, Radical Joy for Hard Times (www.RadicalJoyForHardTimes.org), a U.S.-based 501c3 non-profit organization devoted to finding and making beauty in the earth's wounded places.

Radical Joy for Hard Times, headquartered in Thompson, Pennsylvania, USA, was founded in 2008 by author Trebbe Johnson. It is composed of a global network of people devoted to finding and making beauty in the earth's damaged places.

"People in communities affected by industrial-scale mineral extraction face many of the same challenges, no matter where in the world they live," says Johnson. "We want to spread the message that the real treasure in these communities is not the natural resources buried deep in the earth, it's the people who live there and the love they continue to feel for their home place, 'the ground beneath their hearts.'"

Following its May 22nd launch, THE GROUND BENEATH OUR HEARTS will spend the summer collaborating with partner communities around the world to plan a global day of art and action scheduled for September 12th, 2015.

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On September 12th, people in places like New South Wales, Australia; Johannesburg, South Africa; the Front Range of Colorado; Alberta, Canada; and Appalachia, USA will gather together to celebrate the human spirit and love of place by creating a unique work of art. Each work will incorporate the circle, a symbol of wholeness.

Each community will also sing the original song, “The Ground Beneath Our Hearts,” composed especially for the September 12th event by award-winning American composer John Kusiak, who has scored music for live performance, commercials, museum installations, television, and film; and his son, musician Jackson Kusiak.

“We are fighting the coal seam gas industry in Gloucester, New South Wales Australia, says Dom Jacobs, who together with the Gloucester loop of the Knitting Nannas Against Greed (KNAG), is collaborating with THE GROUND BENEATH OUR HEARTS to organize an action on September 12th.

“We are women in the prime of life who don’t really care about what others think of us,” adds Jacobs. “We get around in yellow and black clothing and all manner of accessories, and we vehemently oppose the destruction of our environment. We support each other, and have heaps of fun along the way.”

The Knitting Nannas’ art installation on September 12th will include many sunflowers, according to Jacobs. “We chose sunflowers because they are of the earth. They are the same color as us; they are bright and full of promise,” she says. “Their center is like a great big solar panel; a reminder of how we should be powering our planet.”

THE GROUND BENEATH OUR HEARTS is also sponsored by the renowned Australian environmental philosopher Glenn Albrecht, who in 2003 coined the term ‘solastalgia’ to describe the sense of homesickness people feel when their homeland is negatively impacted while they are directly connected to it. People residing in places affected by intense resource extraction often experience solastalgia, the lived experience of negative environmental change.

“A shared experience of earth pain is a foundation for a shared experience of earth joy,” says Albrecht. “The aim of THE GROUND BENEATH OUR HEARTS is to create joy in places where desolation and destruction can no longer be tolerated or hidden from view. The opposite of solastalgia for the land and place is a love of life and

its creations. Such love comes from the heart and this project invites artists and creative people of all varieties to counter the negative with an outpouring of the positive.”

THE GROUND BENEATH OUR HEARTS invites communities around the world to participate in the global day of art and action on September 12th, 2015. Partner communities will meet others who know the difficulties they face; share stories, support and ideas; and show the world that the real treasure in a place is its people!

For more information about THE GROUND BENEATH OUR HEARTS contact Trebbe Johnson, Executive Director, Radical Joy for Hard Times, at trebbejohnson@gmail.com or (001)-570-396-0293.

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PHOTO:

Author Trebbe Johnson, Founder of Radical Joy for Hard Times, and renowned Australian environmental philosopher Dr. Glenn Albrecht are collaborating on THE GROUND BENEATH OUR HEARTS, which will launch on May 22nd and culminate in a global day of art and action on September 12th.



The Ground Beneath Our Hearts is a program underwritten and sponsored by:

Radical Joy for Hard Times

Radical Joy for Hard Times is a 501(c)3 not for profit organization. All contributions are fully tax deductible.