

Because it's Write - Transcription

Marguerite: Hi!

Lisa: Hi, how are you?

Marguerite: I'm good how are you?

Lisa: Good! Welcome, thanks for coming to Because It's Write.

Larissa: I'm in the Playwrights Theatre Centre studio in Vancouver BC today with Lisa Baran and Maria Zarrillo. They have organised an event intended to hold some of the world's largest corporations responsible for their excessive contribution to the growing climate crisis.

Larissa: First I spoke with one of the co-creators of the event Maria Zarrillo.

Maria: The event itself is a letter writing event targetting big business industries in Canada. Part of the motivation for this event was a list that came out of the top 100 industries in the world that are affecting climate change. It was a list of them as well as a map, and so Lisa actually found inspiration from this list, and looked on the map at which ones were Canadian. And then to choose the ones we chose we tried to pick a variety in terms of those who affect climate change through oil, plastics, gas emissions, etc, so we could hit a variety of areas.

Maria: One of the biggest inspirations for me for this which I feel like is important is the idea of community. Because climate grief especially can feel so overwhelming, and so big, and the responsibility is on these corporations, so what can we as individuals do? So I think it's important to remember how important is it to come together and be a movement as opposed to sitting at home feeling sad about it.

Larissa: I spoke with one of the participants at the event, Pedro Chamale.

Pedro: For a long time I have been looking to up my activism alongside my artistic practice, so when this opportunity arose, it struck the right chord, and I came. I hope to accomplish change, I hope the awareness in these companies is raised on the issue, and that we can all move towards progressing towards a better future. I'm slowly becoming more and more involved in activism, and not being able to disassociate my art-making from activism. I think the art I make is becoming, it is a form of activism simply by the people we put on stage, or the stories we choose to tell. And so now it's about focussing that and then adding more of my, outside of my artistic practices to the actual causes that are happening.

Larissa: Another participant at the event, Marguerite Hanna, attended because their friends were hosting it.

Marguerite: I mean, I'm trying to go zero waste in my own life, but I think the real culprits are the big businesses, and it doesn't matter how much individuals work hard, nothing's really going to change unless larger corporations who have more of a say on a global scale get involved as well. It feels like even with all of these voices, there's so many of us, we're still so small, so I hope to accomplish being a small, another small voice that eventually turns into a sea, and that people will listen to us.

Larissa: Finally, I spoke with the woman whose initial idea sparked this event, Lisa Baran.

Lisa: For myself with climate change I often feel so alone in it, and so this is a way to build community and find out who else is passionate about it, who else I can go to when I'm dealing with my climate grief, and who else other people can go to when they're dealing with their climate grief, so community is a big thing. And then I also think just as a form of activism, challenging anybody is always a step forward.

Lisa: We're both from Winnipeg, and we were going to the University of Winnipeg, and she was in my intro to performance class.

Maria: We've been friends for seven, ten years now.

Lisa: And then we were just catching up one night, and I was telling her about how I'm feeling inspired.

Maria: The idea for the event started the way that any great idea starts, we were two bottles of wine in, sitting on my balcony, talking about climate change, and she talked about this idea. And It started out as she was like 'we should get a group together and go sit in my basement and write letters.'

Lisa: We had created a list of what we can do and how we can do this, and then the next week she got this space, and then we just kept meeting and it happened. This is hopefully the first of many writing letter events. If anybody has any causes that they're interested in like reaching out and maybe we can team up with people.

Larissa: It's clear that organisers Lisa Baran and Maria Zarrillo are two young women on the rise. The clarity of their message and their ability to organise locally is part of a growing global trend of young people taking the lead on climate action. Top climate scientists say that what happens in the next two years will determine whether we can maintain a liveable climate, or whether we will continue to see an increase in floods, earthquakes, fires, severe storms, and health issues related to climate.

Larissa: What's your favourite thing about nature?

Lisa: Oh, that's a fun question! Hmmm. I guess how reliable it is. How if I go on a hike, I know that I'm going to be blown away. The smartness of it. I was reading a book called "The Hidden Life of Trees," I don't know if you've read it, but it's a really

amazing book and it talks about how trees communicate, and how they actually help each other in nature, and how if one's dying, the others will actually move their roots and connect with it, and I think that's really amazing, and I think in a lot of ways nature's ahead of our civilisation, I mean they're, it's been around, especially trees, they've been around longer than we have. Yeah, and just that it makes me happy.

Larissa: What's your favourite thing about nature?

Margeurite: About nature? Favourite thing about nature. That it's everywhere. I don't know, it's like, I think it's so funny that people are like 'I'm going hiking in nature,' and it's literally the tree across the street, or the little plant in your house that you're killing slowly. If we don't start doing good things for the planet, the planet's going to heat up and kill off all the people, but it'll re-grow itself, 'cause it's the planet. That's my favourite thing about nature.

Larissa: Very good.

Larissa: What's your favourite thing about nature?

Pedro: Oooh! That it's just there. And through millions of years of evolution it has coalesced into this perfectly working system, that through our machinations is being disrupted, but my favourite thing is just how it regulates itself because it knows what it needs to do, and when I immerse myself in that it's magical almost.

Larissa: What's your favourite thing about nature?

Maria: The green. Definitely, ever since I was younger green was my favourite colour, and so that feeling of looking out at the vibrant green is probably one of the most striking things about nature to me, when you're up after a long hike, looking out and you see all the trees and the deep blue of the ocean, and the vibrant green of the trees and everything, that to me is what makes being here a little bit more worth it, and the thought that that could go away, and is starting to go away in other places around the world is horrifying, and I think that that needs to change.

Larissa: From the PTC studio, I'm Larissa Blokhuis, encouraging you to get involved locally, and join the growing climate protection movement. Our strength is in our communities, and our time to act is limited. Thank you.