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# NORTHWARD HO

ARE WE AS A SPECIES REALLY HEADED TO NORTHERN REGIONS AS GLOBAL WARMING HOTS UP THE PLANET? YOU DECIDE.

SUNDAY, MAY 31, 2009

## Canadian cartoonist hopes her work will inspire people to love the Earth more



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[INTERVIEW with Danny Bloom in Taiwan]

<http://northwardho.blogspot.com>

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Meet **Mary Susan MacDonald**, cartoonist extraordinaire, with a deep interest in the future of the planet.

Born in Montreal, she now lives in Toronto. A regular reader of Dot Earth, Mary says that her cartooning is a personal way of taking part in caring for the planet.

When asked how she tries to invoke a sense of hope and empowerment in people about issues having to do with climate change and the environment, Mary said: "First off, Danny, thank you for taking an interest in my work and for conducting this email interview... I find that people generally respond best to my cartoons when they feel a connection with their own lives and values. I focus on key issues and try to create an image that people can not only relate to but which they may find motivating."

"For example, in my recent cartoon, '*Jewel EARTH*', the viewer may see planet Earth with its stunning color, clarity and contrast, and this may invoke a sense of personal responsibility."

When asked how she first became interested in social change and in looking for sustainable ways of living, Mary said: "I have been interested in sustainable living since childhood. My family recycled everything. Latterly, my interest has taken on political overtones through my friendship with the former Green Party of Canada leader, Jim Harris, and his work with former US vice president and climate activist Al Gore."

Mary said that her interest in cartooning came naturally to her, since she always had an interest in art and had many artistic friends. "Although I have had a successful career in management, my friends encouraged me to take up cartooning several years ago and I enjoy it too."

When asked about reactions from viewers, and which cartoon so far has been most popular, Mary said: "The simplest cartoons, such as '*Jewel*'

EARTH,' seem to attract the most favorable interest. Comments have come in by email from as far away as New Zealand and Taiwan."

Andrew Revkin's science blog Dot Earth at the New York Times website, helps fuel her own thinking and insights. "Reading and contributing to Dot Earth is motivated by my own interest," she said. "If by doing so, I can spark an interest or invoke a sense of responsibility in others, then so much the better."

When asked if she thinks global warming is real, she replied: "There is no doubt that human life has an impact on the environment. Everything is connected. Awareness is the first step in being responsible. I believe that we should all be mindful of the impact that we have on our environment and act appropriately."

When asked if she believes that cartoons can change public opinion, she said: "Yes, depending on the agenda and ability of the cartoonist."

As for her own favorite cartoonist, Mary said: "Charles Schulz."

Mary's website is

**<http://www.marytoons.com>**

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To view her website please click here:

<http://www.marytoons.com>

*Jewel EARTH* cartoon, above, **copyright (2009) Mary Susan MacDonald**

POSTED BY DAN AT 7:14 PM

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**3 COMMENTS:**

Janet Amare said...

Thank you for caring for the Earth Mary. You are an inspiration to everyone who wants to see the Earth heal.

JUNE 2, 2009 9:56 AM

Sean said...

I've known Mary since she was a young girl. She was always kind and full of life. I'm gratified to learn that her cartoons are making a positive difference in peoples' lives. Regards, Sean

JUNE 3, 2009 6:56 PM

dan said...

Thank you, Janet and Sean, for commenting here. Mary's cartoons are really insightful and caring, yes, and I hope some major newspaper does a story about her cartooning work soon. She is great. -- danny

JUNE 3, 2009 8:09 PM

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