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**Green Cambridge and Cambridge Local First Announce Winners of the 2021-2022
Cambridge City Nature Art Challenge**

CAMBRIDGE, MA (May 18, 2022)

Agustina V.'s Canada Goose is followed by a single gosling, capturing a less than stereotypical image of this common species in Cambridge. Agustina, a Vassal Lane Upper School 7th-grader, and another VLUS classmate were this year's middle school winners of the three-year-old Cambridge City Nature Art Challenge (CCNAC). Artist/illustrator and Lesley University graduate Rocky Cotard chose the upper school winners.. Sponsors Green Cambridge and Cambridge Local First have announced the winners of the contest today. Zhongge (Elena) Li judged the the entries from students in Grades 1–5.

The winners and those receiving honorable mentions (HM) are

First Grade

Iris L. winner Morse
Zyler S. winner Cambridgeport
Naqeeb U. HM Tobin Montessori
Diangeli S. HM Amigos

Second Grade

William B. winner Haggerty
Mila C. winner Haggerty
Samuel W. HM Haggerty
Dyenne O. HM Haggerty
Samuel A. HM Haggerty

Third Grade

Evan W. winner Graham & Parks
Ah-In K. winner Haggerty
Myra P. HM MLK Jr.
Ava N. HM Haggerty
Anthony M. HM Haggerty
Mi-Yun M. HM Haggerty

Fifth Grade

Olivia D. winner King Open
William R. winner Haggerty
Zachary D. HM Amigos
Matilda Lucy W. HM Haggerty
Nora R. HM Amigos

Fourth Grade

Isla N. winner Baldwin
Ofelia B. winner Tobin Montessori
Syed L. HM Baldwin
Damian B. HM Baldwin
Anais D. HM Fletcher Maynard

Upper School

Agustina winner Vassal Lane
Juanita winner Vassal Lane

Rocky Cotard, born in Mirebalais, Haiti and raised in Boston, makes art to dig into his identity and lineage to collect his history, reclaim his narrative, and build cultural pride. He returns to Haiti on a yearly basis. His body of illustrations depicts the perspective of the Haitian Diaspora, in defiance to the narrow representation of it through media. His artwork fights unbalanced power by raising the people who have been generalized, making them into icons whose palpable power stares back at the viewer.

Cotard's winter solo exhibition of portraits at Concord's Ishibashi Gallery, "Know Your History," he describes as "a family project that at one point was too painful to complete." Cotard's work can be viewed at his website, rockycotard.com and his illustrations of Haitian historical events at <https://thenib.com/haitis-long-road-to-freedom>.

Zhonghe (Elena) Li, born in mainland China, is a multimedia artist who lives and works in Cambridge. She is deeply influenced by the Taoist philosophy of "being one with nature" and seeks to promote the principle of living together with balance through art. She was an Artist-in-Residence at Mount Auburn Cemetery in 2021, and her current project on species

extinction and biodiversity is supported in part by the Cambridge Arts Council and Massachusetts Cultural Council. Li's work in watercolor painting, papercutting based in Chinese tradition, and multimedia can be viewed on her YouTube channel, Wildcrane Art. View her New Year's video here: <https://youtu.be/bo1kn6tNyjA>. Her blog is at <http://www.wildcraneblog.wordpress.com>.

The CCNAC engages children and youth in art-making that documents the natural wonders within the city of Cambridge. The partnership between Green Cambridge and Cambridge Local First (CLF) recognizes the winners with gift certificates of \$50 from businesses that are members of CLF. Students who win also gain the opportunity to see their art displayed as posters in local business windows.

The art challenge, now in its third year, aims to connect Cambridge Public School students with the urban wild around them. This challenge is inspired by the Boston Area City Nature Challenge, a citizen science project that collects research-quality data on organisms living in and around the city of Boston.

The CCNAC is part of Cambridge Wildlife Arts, the arts-based environmental education program of Green Cambridge. The program strives to connect people of all ages, especially children and young people, to the urban habitats and local species of Cambridge. Cambridge Wildlife Arts has connected residents to their local environment since 2012. Through the CWA's place-based, outdoor learning, Green Cambridge responds to local needs for participatory arts experiences and joyful, authentic connections to the city.

The mission of Cambridge Local First is to support, promote, and celebrate a “Local Economy Community” by educating the public and government about the significant environmental, economic, and cultural benefits of a robust local economy. Theodora Skeadas, executive director of CLF, says, “We are thrilled to participate in this year’s City Nature Art Challenge with Green Cambridge, as this effort fosters awareness of the critical connection between local and independent businesses, environmental sustainability, and the importance of our preservation efforts. Growing a thriving locally-sourced economy is required for our just transition to a fair, green, and sustainable economy.” For CCNAC entry guidelines, visit <https://greencambridge.org/artchallenge>.

About Green Cambridge: greencambridge.org

About Cambridge Local First: cambridgelocalfirst.org

Cambridge species represented by City Nature Art Challenge winners and honorable

mentions:

American Bullfrog, American Goldfinch, Big Brown Bat, Black-and-white Warbler, Black-capped Chickadee, Blackburnian Warbler, Cabbage White, Canada Goose, Common Raccoon, Eastern Cottontail, Eastern Gray Squirrel, Eastern Phoebe, Field Sparrow, Fly Agaric, Great Blue Heron,

Mourning Dove, Northern Cardinal, Northern Flicker, Peregrine Falcon, Rosa spp., Smallmouth Bass, Spotted Turtle, Tufted Titmouse, Western Honey Bee, and White-crowned Sparrow.



American Bullfrog by Olivia D., Grade 5, King Open School