



Place Based Plant Study

Presentation by Oona Martin

Ethnobotany: Learning About
Plants for Well-Being

Alaska Forum on the Environment
February 4, 2025



Projects

Dryas

Beach Grass

Cordage

Himmeli

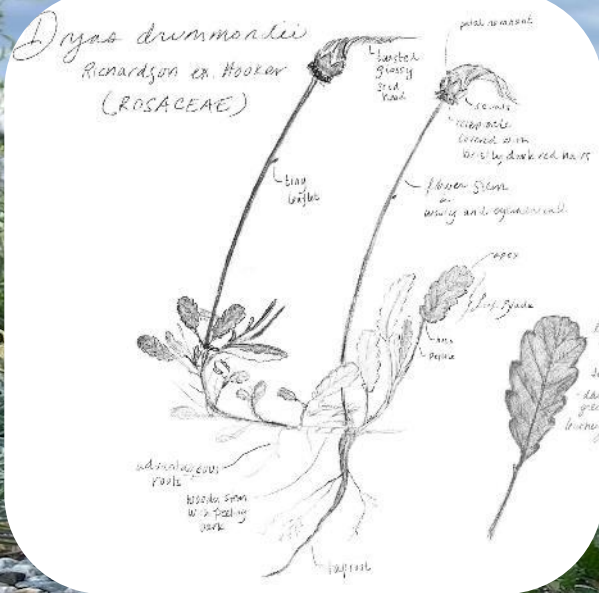
Inks & Dye

Planning ahead

“Being naturalized to place means to live as if this is the land that feeds you, as if these are the streams from which you drink, that build your body and fill your spirit.”

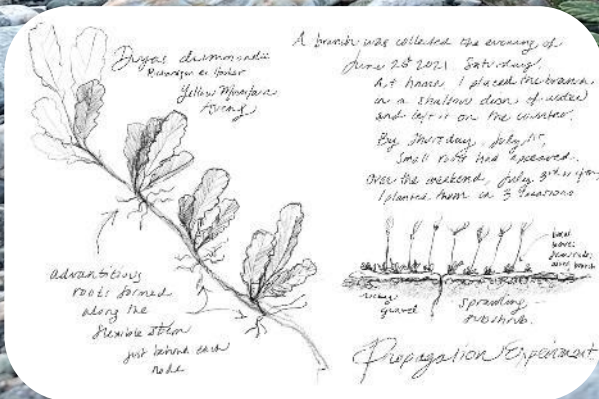
“Here you will give your gifts and meet your responsibilities.”

~Robin Wall Kimmerer, 2013, “Braiding Sweetgrass” p. 214-215



**Connecting plants to place,
time, and global change.**

Dryas drummondii Richardson ex. Hooker



Learning to work with coarse seashore grass

Leymus mollis (Trin.) Pilg. (Poaceae)



Dandelion
Flower
stems



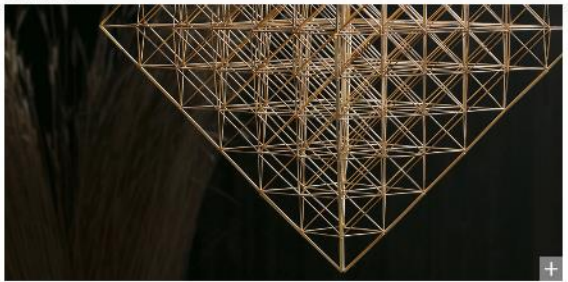
Daylily Leaves



Cordage :

A shared global original technology and skill: making string from fibers by hand.





ART & DESIGN, CRAFTS
Heavenly Harmony: The Universal Language of Finnish *Himmeli*
July 12, 2021 | Joella Jackson | Comments
Finnish artist Eija Koski sees inspiration all around her. A maker of *himmeli*—traditional Finnish geometric mobiles made of straw—she finds not only her materials but her muse in

Figure 1: Screenshot of 2021 Jackson

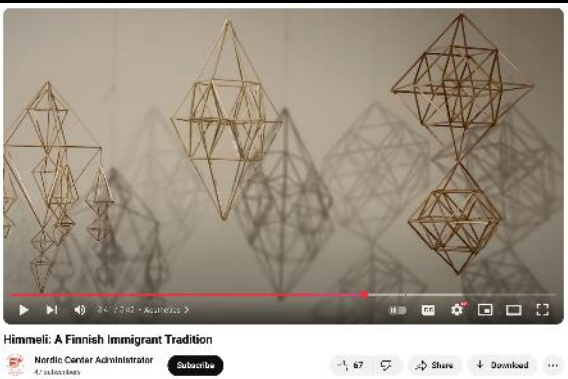
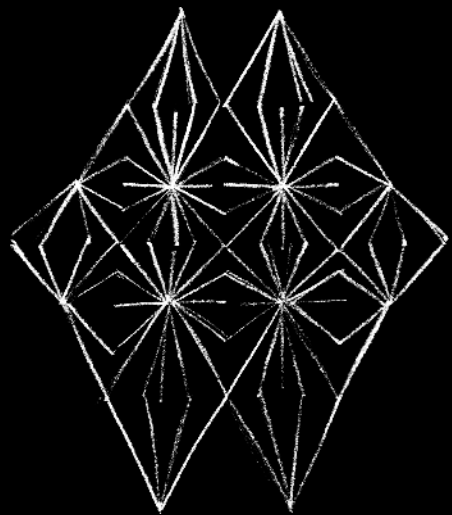


Figure 2: Screenshot of 2021 Erickson

INSPIRATION



“When I learn these old crafts it gives me a connection to them....

It helps me give me an idea of who I am.”

(Mary Erickson, 2021, 4:50...5:00)



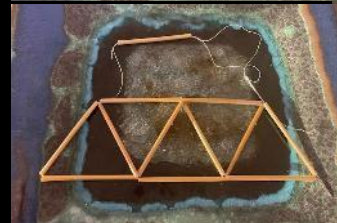
Leymus mollis, beach ryegrass



Calamagrostis canadensis, bluejoint

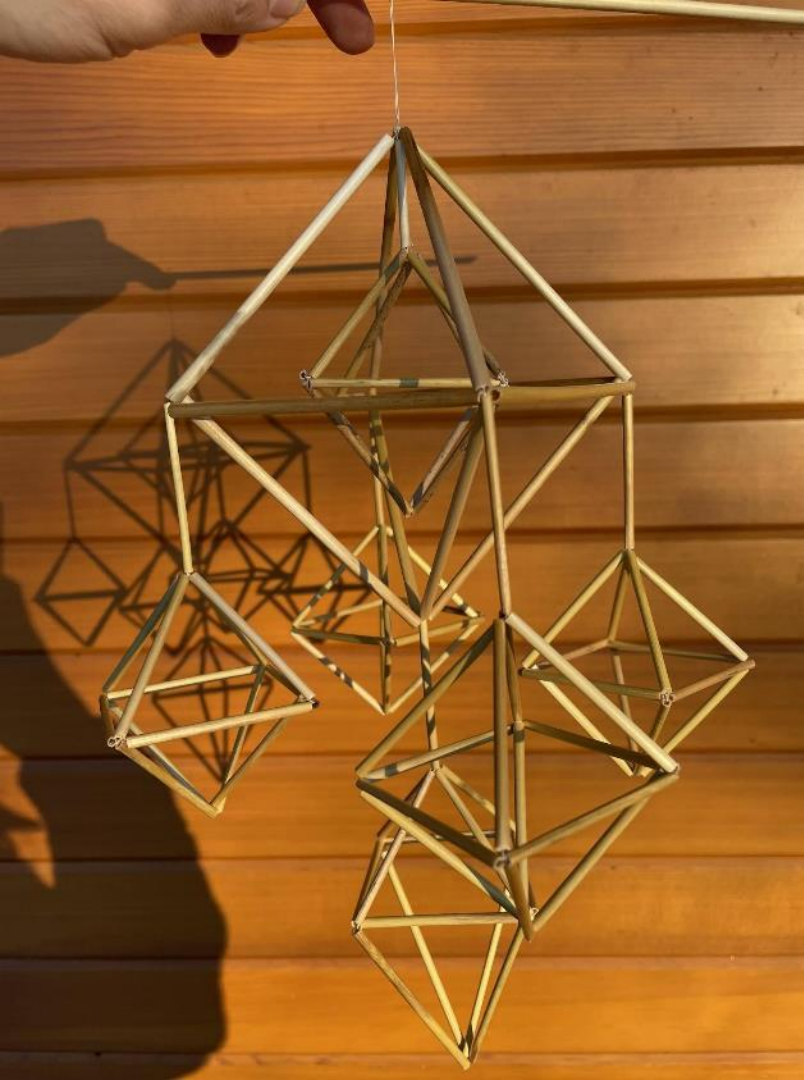


Preparation



Practice



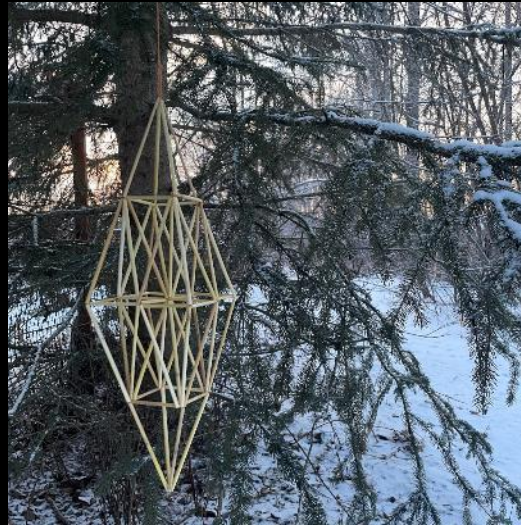


Instructors

Youtube Lessons by
:Emma La
:Katin DIY



Experimentation Variation





Inks from Plants in the Fall

Experiments and notes on capturing colour

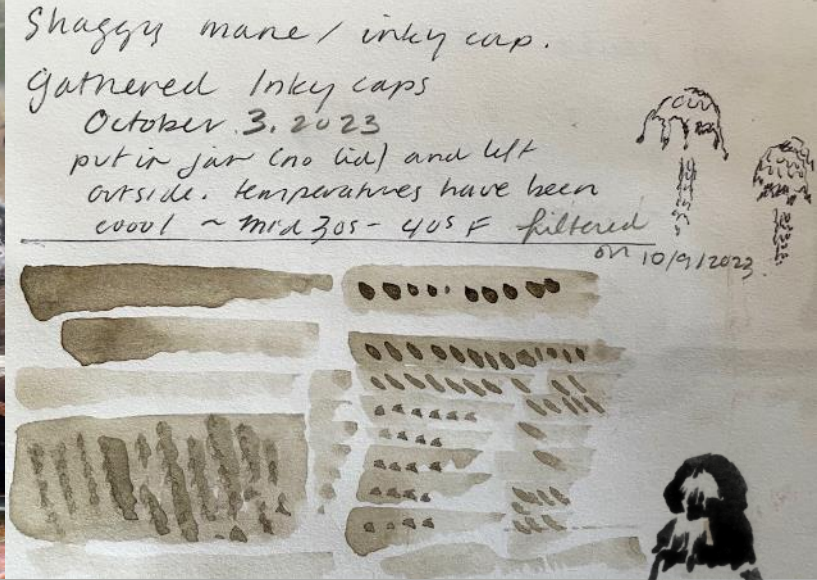
Populus trichocarpa/balsamifera
 Yellow fallen leaves
 gathered October 13.
 Covered in hot boiling water
 and allowed to steep until
 11.1.2023 > placed in 5.5.
 pot and divided
 (it was quite yellow.
 Having darkened in colour.)
 1st part was simmered
 retained 20 min / removed and filtered
 2nd part was
 simmered another
 10 min in 1 tsp vinegar
 1 tsp salt.





Inks from Plants in the Fall

Painting with modifiers to alter the colours.



Shaggy mane / Inky Cap

Coprinus comatus (O.F.Müll.) Pers.





Apple Bark Dye in the Spring

Malus sp.





Dandelion flower



Plantago sp. stems



Garden *Calendula*



Yard Pineapple Weed



Fallen Cottonwood tree makes buds easier to harvest.



Tansy dye pot



Nettle fibers





Thank you!

For more information about UAFs Ethnobotany program and to see student projects visit

<https://alaskaethnobotany.community.uaf.edu/>

Find more from me at www.oonamartinstudio.com



Hi, I'm Oona.

My love for the North runs deep.

I was lucky to be raised on the rocky lakeshores of Northern Ontario, Canada.

Anchorage, Alaska has been my home since 2002.

I write about life, play with textiles and fibers, learn about plants and ethnobotany, create digital art for fun and fabric, walk and take a lot of pictures with my phone.

This is where I'm trying to string it all together in a way that helps me make sense of the world.

I want to be inspired, affirmed and encouraged to be myself.

I bet you do to.



I'm in the middle of it.

Carving out a space where I can make art, practice design, write about it and explore the incredible landscapes where I live and play.

Thank you for being here.

[MORE ABOUT ME](#)



Himmeli Inspiration and Instructions

2020, November 24. Lokal Presents Finnish Artist Eija Koski.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B4Dd51TwmSq> Accessed
December 1, 2024.

Figure 1: 2021, July 12. Jackson, Joelle. Heavenly Harmony: The
Universal Language of Finnish Himmeli, Smithsonian Folklife
Magazine. Accessed February 2, 2025.
<https://folklife.si.edu/magazine/eija-koski-finnish-himmeli>

Figure 2: 2021, April 8. Erickson, Mary. Himmeli, A Finnish Immigrant
Tradition presented by Nordic Center Duluth. Accessed December
1st, 2024. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=acQllc-U15Q>

2021, December 5. La, Emma Making a traditional Finnish Christmas
ornament | Living alone in Helsinki. Accessed December 1, 2024.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=XKVzyK4nbFg>

2016, December 5, Katin DIY, DIY | Tee se itse | Himmeli pilleistä.
Accessed December 12, 2024.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y8i3E849ZhE>,

References & Resources

Beach Ryegrass

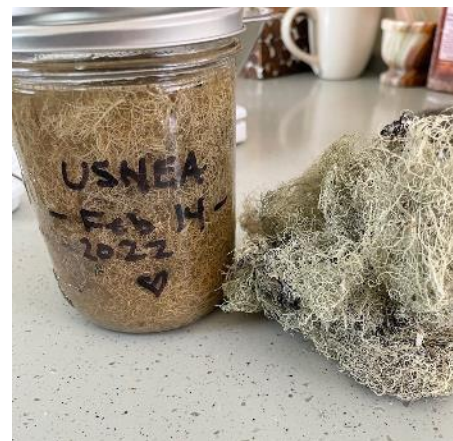
2019, [Weaving a Yup'ik
Issran/Grass Carrying-bag](#)
Smithsonian Arctic Studies Alaska
Channel. 11 video playlist.

Ink Makers

Jason Logan - [@torontoinkcompany](#)
Tanya Val - [@tanya.val](#)

Natural Dye Authors

Jenny Dean, Sasha Duerr,
Joy Boutrop, Catharine Ellis,
Rebecca Burgess,



Usnea (beard lichen): Conscientious windfall harvest.

