BEAT A PATH – ALL THE TREES

PHOTO BY NIGEL LAING

#6416
Redwood
Sequoia sempervirens
Intersection near the bridge
49 16′ 14″ N, -123 11′ 50″ W

AN ARTIST PROJECT BY HOLLY SCHMIDT | BEATAPATH.CA/ALL-THE-TREES

EMAIL TO TREE #6416

All the trees

standing around, are they
debating or commiserating in
underground frequencies?
They only look alone;
lovers below entwined.

She wonders
if deep rooted and still
you sense the spinning of
the earth?

Knowing the whole cosmic
hoo-hah as nothing
less than the tips of your
branches, the spread
of roots, not other but all

I remember walking with my eldest,
newborn on my chest
toddling and strolling
all around these paths and trees

And she wonders how you relate
to your offspring
so many seeds. . .

Is there room here for all of us
still?

— ANONYMOUS

RESPONSE FROM TREE #6416

"Who can impress the forest,
bid the tree
Unfix his earth-bound root?"
Shakespeare, *Macbeth*

A Sentinel Rebels

Humans study my roots
for new metaphors,
connection and kinship

My limbs fuse their ideas
of geometry and distance.

Turning sunlight and time
to my family's advantage;

I gained mass
at astonishing speeds —

stoically, sedentary, forest sentinel.
To ensure our survival

I taught my children
how to absorb CO2; how to hold it —

will you keep yours close,
or urge them to run?

Outstripping gravity's
a mere game to me now:

The shine's
gone off this job. What if I walked?

Hasn't my hour come —
isn't the season ripe
for this coast redwood to strike,
tear up the forest floor;

ring the alarm of revolt
venerable poets & storytellers
warned you about?

Rahat Kurd for *Sequoia sempervirens*
November 4, 2018

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