

PHOTO BY NIGEL LAING

#6403
Big Leaf Maple
Acer macrophyllum
Path towards the road
49 16' 12" N, -123 11' 38" W

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

EMAIL TO TREE #6403

Dear Tree 6403,

I was amazed by your tremendous height and the vast canopy of colourful leaves that your branches create overhead. The brilliant yellows and greens of your leaves were inspiring. Having done some experiments myself lately with colour theory I can appreciate how much work it might take to create a colour that beautiful and vibrant. Your bark was not rough to the touch like many of the other trees in this area but padded with a thick layer of green moss and lined with tiny plants that felt soft on my feet. This contributed greatly to your friendly and welcoming presence. I am amazed by your ability to be such a considerate and hospitable host to other plants who reside on your bark. I was especially surprised by the patch of baby ferns prospering on your mid-trunk, as they appeared so healthy and nourished by your life-giving presence. I cannot help but wonder what it is like for you to give host to such a variety of other life forms. As a human, I am host to many life forms such as bacteria, but I do not notice or acknowledge their presence. Do you, as a tree take notice to other plants living on your bark, or simply live on without noticing them, as humans do?

In addition to this one, I have a few questions for you that I hope you will be able to answer.

A human being assigned you to participate in this project, they gave you tag and a number. I was wondering if you identify with this numerical name or if it makes you feel like you are merely part of a computerized system (I know I wouldn't like it if my name was just a number). I suppose what I'm really trying to ask is, do you identify with this name, or would you call yourself something else? If trees do have names, what is yours? I give my houseplants names, like Guinevere the peace lily or Fred the aloe vera, but again this is without their input or consent, and I have always wondered what name they would give themselves if given the chance.

It was a pleasure to visit you last Wednesday at Jericho Park and I hope the fall months are going well for you. I will definitely come and visit you again sometime soon, as I excitedly await your reply to my email. Thank you for taking the time to reply to my questions.

Have a wonderful day :)

— ANONYMOUS

RESPONSE FROM TREE #6403

Thank you for all your kind words. It is an amazing experience to grow so high and vast and spread my limbs as far as gravity will allow me to grow!

Yellow and green are colours to connect with you vibrationally. Yellow connects with your personal power and self-will. Green resonates deep into your heart.

Keep playing with colour, wear them and see how they make you feel.

My coat is hidden under the community that lives with me. All the activity fascinates me as I witness lives that team within my direct sphere. A community grows here. We support and acknowledge the uniqueness that all species contribute. You are also welcome to come again and sit close and watch who plays with me.

Those are the liquorice ferns who not only act as medicine for people but decorate my exterior.

It is my pleasure to be in service to all lives and I couldn't do it any other way. We are here to live in a deep relationship and take care of each other.

Numbers are another vibration like colour and when you add the numbers up, $6+4+0+3$, they equal 4. You might think of the 4 directions, or that 4 represents wholeness and stability.

I am grateful to be seen regardless of what systems are created by humans. You took the time to be still and see what is growing with and around you that makes me so happy.

You can call me any name you like. Next time you come, listen to what sounds and feelings come through you. That is my name.

Be well my friend,

Lori Snyder on behalf of 6403 Big Leaf Maple

BEAT A PATH -- ALL THE TREES

PART OF THE ARTIST IN COMMUNITIES PROGRAM WITH THE VANCOUVER PARK BOARD, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WEST POINT GREY COMMUNITY CENTRE AND THE JERICHO STEWARDSHIP GROUP, THE LEGACY POSTER PROJECT AND EXHIBITION ARE SUPPORTED BY THE ROUNDHOUSE COMMUNITY ARTS & RECREATION CENTRE.