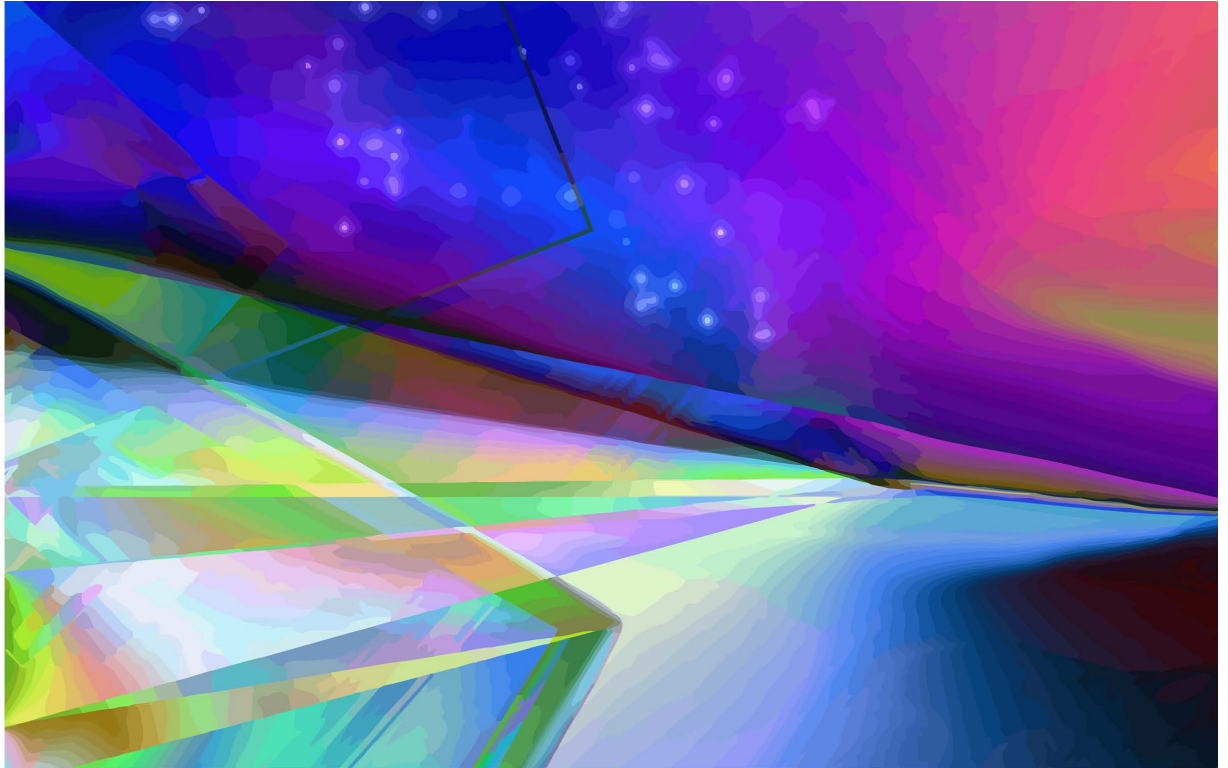


# Modernity

*and the Arts:*

## Reflections on the Anthropocene



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*A compelling presentation of visual art, poetry and sculpture reflected through the lens of the Anthropocene, an era of sweeping change.*

*Inspires a greater awareness and appreciation of our natural environment, getting in tune with Nature, and taking more care in making the world a better place.*

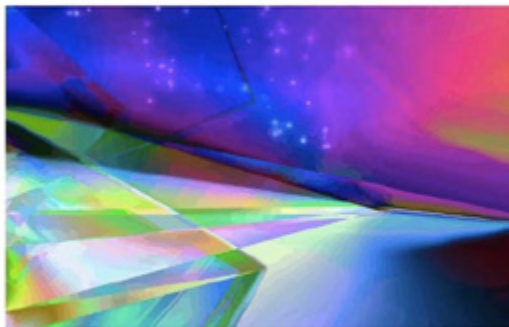
## November 1 - March 15, 2020

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*University of Victoria,  
Victoria, British Columbia*

# Finding Balance in An Unpredictable Anthropocene World

## Modernity and the Arts: Reflections on the Anthropocene



### Introduction

The artwork and descriptions in this presentation are associated with the Anthropocene, a period of sweeping change in human history. Action figures are depicted in a variety of compositions related to balance defined as equilibrium, steadiness, and stability. Striving for balance in a world filled with dramatic changes and upheavals is worth pursuing for the well being of the planet and ourselves.

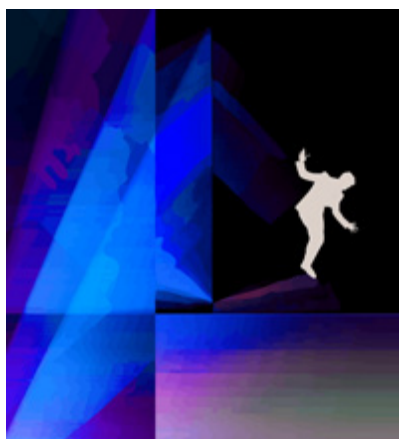


Figure 1 Tipping Point

Dramatic events of climate change and global warming suggest we are encountering a global crisis and a 'tipping point' in terms of sustaining human activity on this planet. Is the tipping point an indicator of death, doom and destruction or is it an indicator of changes necessary for survival and well being? Does the tipping point suggest a point of no return? Should we ignore the suggestion of a 'tipping point' shown by the action figure balancing on the tilting springboard in Figure 1?

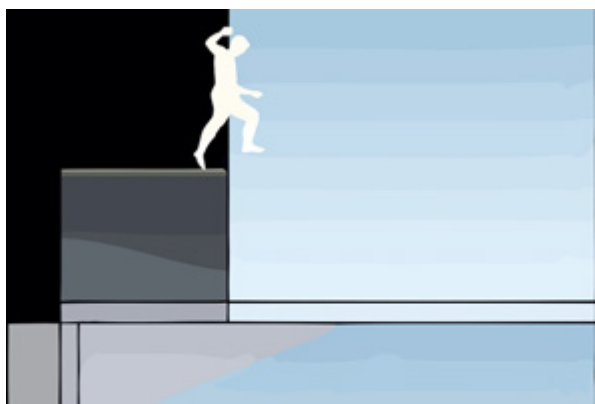


Figure 2 Leaping into the Unknown

There are numerous factors involved in climate change and global warming. Some events leave us apprehensive and even fearful because we don't fully understand why they are occurring. For instance, weather events are difficult to predict; floods, hurricanes and wildfires are often sudden and take us by shock and surprise, creating heightened anxiety and tension. 'Leaping into the Unknown' is a metaphor for the risk and uncertainty, engaging with things beyond our control but it also suggests there is 'danger in a leap'.

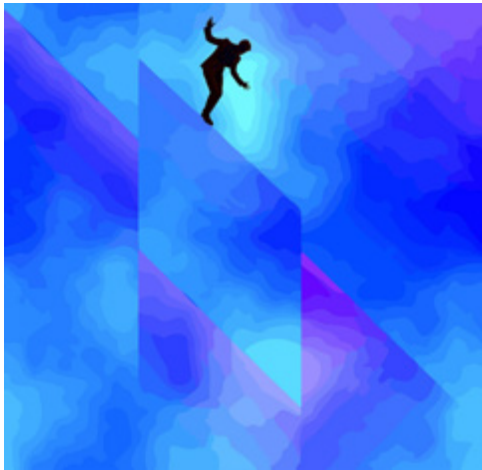


Figure 3 Delicate Balance

We live in a chaotic world with climate change and global warming, creating a feeling of instability. Ice is melting at an unprecedented rate in the circumpolar world leading to unusual sea level rises and flooding in areas around the world. Glaciers are melting and disappearing. Millions of us relying on these precious sources of freshwater are deeply affected. Are there solutions to these events? Are we walking a fine line between chaos and stability as 'Delicate Balance' might suggest?



Figure 4 Precarious

With upheavals created by climate change and global warming, we are often caught 'off balance', reeling from storm damage, flood devastation or ruination caused by wildfires. What can we do in the face of these calamities? Is there a way to prepare for these events? 'Precarious' is a warning of helplessness as we lose balance and fall backward.

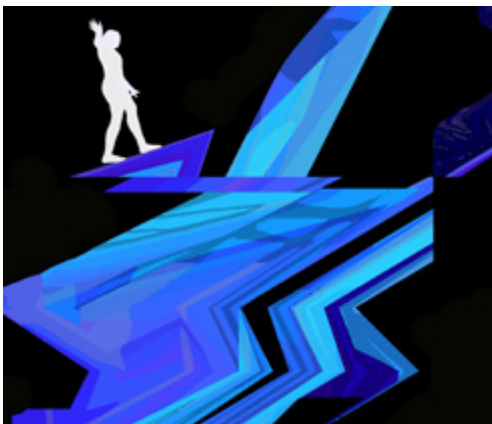


Figure 5 Uphill

We may feel frustrated, struggling to adapt to the many consequences of climate change, and other challenges of the Anthropocene. Divesting investments in fossil fuels, turning to wind and solar powered energy, and adapting in other ways may be burdensome, challenging, and even painful. The depiction of a human figure in 'Uphill' suggests the challenges of balance and adaptation. A silhouette figure negotiates a moderate incline while other steeper inclines are evident.



Figure 6 Overwhelming

With a daily barrage of information about climate change and global warming from news media outlets, we feel overwhelmed by alarming and increasing reports about the extinction of animal species, the plunder of forests in the wood industry, and pollution of oceans from oil spills. With unrelenting reports from television news, newspapers, and other sources, we become saturated and even jaded. The portrayal of the action figure in 'Overwhelming' suggests how one might feel when overcome by obstacles and roadblocks depicted in a tumble of angular blocks that hinder progress.

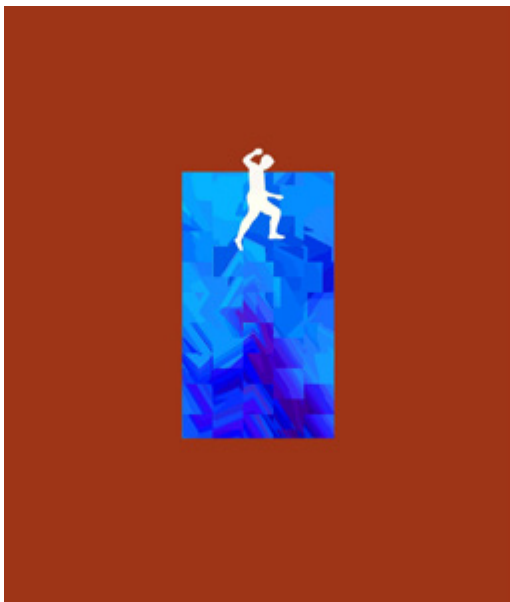


Figure 7 Jump Over

The rhetoric arising from climate change and global warming is often intense and sometimes creates an 'avoidance factor' that includes turning off the news, 'fleeing from reality.' Avoiding the problems and challenges might involve escaping or jumping over them as the action figure 'Jump Over' suggests.

## Conclusion

While the realism of the silhouette action figures play a fundamental role in graphically expressing an emotional point of view about balance and beauty, this must not lead to defeatism but instead to determination and co-operation. The emphasis of the presentation is to empower and encourage instrumentalism and its aim is to embrace ideas dealing with a whole range of social, political, and environmental issues.