

For Immediate Release
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New exhibit: "The Space Between," September 5–October 20, 2024

Hartford, CT — Connecticut artist Jill Vaughn will open the Clare Gallery's fall season with *The Space Between*, a mixed media exhibition focused on visualizing the environmental impact of human activity. The Gallery will be hosting an **artist reception on Sunday, September 29, 3–4:30 p.m.** The public is welcome to attend.

We may all feel daily anxiety and wrestle with our complicity when thinking about climate change, or when witnessing immense natural disasters that seem to be happening more frequently. To expand the conversation, and in conjunction with this exhibition, the Clare Gallery will host a **virtual panel discussion on Tuesday, October 8, 7–8 p.m.** Panelists will include: artist Jill Vaughn and practicing clinician and co-president of the [Climate Psychology Alliance of North America](#) Rebecca Weston, LCSW and JD. The panel will be moderated by Nancy Wynn, Chair of Clare Gallery. The conversation will examine various climate-related themes: witnessing trauma and its processes, redefining activism, giving voice, construction and deconstruction, and creating spaciousness for love and healing. Registration is required for the virtual panel discussion.

Vaughn works with varied materials, collaging them together in exquisite, active compositions. She always knew she wanted to be an artist, and her life's journey viewing nature has translated her "seeing" into colorful, textured, contrasting visual metaphors constructed from diverse materials. Vaughn states: "Metaphor and symbolism connected me spiritually to the environment, and collage pasted it all together." In this exhibition, viewers are drawn to her work for its engaging beauty. Once there, the works reveal sensitivity, destruction, frustration, and questions.

Layering is primary to Vaughn's work. It is the conduit for making connections to our complex culture and the human existence. Lines are thin and delicate, or jagged and torn. Textures are created with netting, charcoal, paper mache (created from investment statements), and maps. Contrasting shapes are produced using gloves, dripped paint, torn tissue paper, or magazines. Revelations are hidden within each composition. The material chaos blends with repetition, striking color palettes, and targeted emphasis points. Vaughn's work weaves together our culture's desire for growth and innovation, but juxtaposes it with the question: At what expense?

Vaughn wishes us to view the everyday beauty in Nature, witness it, hold it, and work to save it from ourselves. She states: "I weave personal and environmental concerns together to draw attention to our actions and our planet. I am inspired by the sand wave patterns on the beaches of Old Saybrook; the vulnerable horseshoe crabs that inhabit this same area; the rich moss and lichen in our forests and the vulnerable trees in our neighborhoods."

[Jill Vaughn](#) has exhibited her work throughout Connecticut and Rhode Island, as well as in Wyoming. She worked as a curator and an educator, has been past president of the Essex Art Association, and was the project manager for the design and construction of the Eagle Sculpture (at the head of Main Street in Essex, CT) for the CT Audubon Society. Vaughn received her BFA from The Rhode Island School of Design and a Master in Arts Education from University of Saint Joseph. Her work is in the collections of Quinnipiac University, Middlesex Hospital, Pfizer Pharmaceuticals and the U.S. Trust Corporation.

[Rebecca Weston](#), LCSW and JD, lives in the metro-New York area. In her capacity as co-president of the Climate Psychology Alliance of North America, Weston organizes and provides support for climate-aware mental health clinicians who seek to address climate-related emotions and expand emotional capacity for climate action. She speaks frequently about the mental health impacts of the climate crisis, the politics of professionalism in the Anthropocene, trauma-informed climate journalism, the ways in which climate mental-health issues are interwoven with structures of inequity and the psychological underpinnings of climate denial. In these conversations, she emphasizes the need to open compassionate space for people to engage their emotions and step forward into action.

The Clare Gallery primarily features exhibitions that emphasize world religions or interfaith themes, as well as social justice themes, on either a global or local level. The Gallery is housed in the Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry at 285 Church Street, Hartford, CT. The Center is part of St. Patrick – St. Anthony Church, a vibrant and active downtown faith community.

The Clare Gallery's hours are from 9 a.m.– 4 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays, and Sundays from 9 –11:30 a.m. The Gallery is open to the public. Free parking is available directly across from the church, and the facility is accessible to all. Masks are optional.