

Vermont artist needs a little help from Canadian children

KATE POND is actually a very nice woman who lives in Burlington, Vt., with her husband, who flies helicopters and sometimes writes travel stories for me.

But her projects make her sound like jet-age Druid.

She's a sculptor - I think the word "sculptress" has vanished along with "authoress" - with a bit of an obsession with the sun.

And on May 13 she leaves for Norway to complete the second stage of a three-part project that is difficult to explain and that could use some urgent help from Canadian schoolkids.

First the explanation bit. Ms. Pond has already erected - carved isn't quite the right word to describe the things she makes - a sculpture in Stanstead just this side of the American border.

It's called Zigzag, and last September about 100 students gathered around it to celebrate the fall equinox.

The second one - called Solekko - will go up in Oslo next month on the grounds of the Norwegian Museum of Science and Technology.

Like Zigzag, it will be a be conical structure 2 metres tall made of concrete and bronze. It will be aligned so that at noon on the summer solstice it will cast no shadow. (Its noontime shadow on the winter solstice, on the other hand, will be more than 17 metres long.)

The final creation will go up in Honolulu some time next year, and it will



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mark the winter solstice just as Solekko marks the summer solstice and Zigzag marks the fall equinox.

Now the point of all this is to create a series of structures that will record the passing of the seasons. Ms. Pond started out making sundials that marked the passing of the hours, but she has become a lot more ambitious in the last few years.

The sculpture in Stanstead, Ms. Pond says, marks the approximate geographical midpoint between the ones in Hawaii and Norway. It takes the sun pretty much the same time to travel from Oslo to Stanstead as it does to go from Stanstead to Honolulu.

So why does she need the help of Canadian schoolchildren?

Well, there's a cavity in the top of Solekko that will be sealed with a brass

cap. Ms. Pond wants to stuff that hole with prose and poetry written by children from the three participating countries and little fist-sized artifacts made by them.

The problem is she doesn't have a lot of stuff from Canadians, so if you're still a schoolkid, here's what she'd like you to do:

■ First, make postcards measuring 6 inches by 4½ inches out of stiff paper.

■ Then using paints or a collage or prose or poetry, create something that addresses an environmental issue.

■ Write your name, address, the date and country of origin on the back.

■ Finally, put your creation in an envelope and send it off to Solekko, Norwegian Museum of Science and Technology, Kjelsæven 143, 0491, Oslo, Norway.

The postcards will neither be put in the time capsule in Norway or they will be put on display and saved for the final sculpture in Hawaii.

If you have time, she'd also like you to make little fist-sized artifacts out of clay - little shapes and figures. Sign them with your initials and the date

and send them off to the same address. The artifacts, too, will either be popped into Solekko's time capsule or put on display and saved for the Honolulu sculpture.

If you're a teacher and you think you might want to get your class involved, you can give Ms. Pond a phone call at (802) 864-6071. But you'll have to hurry. Ms. Pond leaves for Norway May 10.
