

A collection of posters lie stacked on top of each other at Grande Parade, Halifax.

PHOTO: Nicole Toth



# There is No Planet B: PROTEST SIGNS AND ART IN THE CLIMATE STRIKE MOVEMENT

by **NICOLE TOTH** /// EAC Volunteer

The photos that emerged from the civil rights movement in the United States, the posters that protested apartheid in South Africa or the street art used to spread anti-regime messages during the Arab Springs are some of the most iconic examples of art's connection to political movements. Art is often found alongside societal progress because of its unparalleled ability to raise awareness and unite people around a common goal. Today, we can see this at work in relation to the climate crisis and the large youth-led school strikes known as Fridays for Future. Each September the streets of downtown Halifax become flooded with posters, photographers and the beat of marching drums. The use of art at Halifax's School Strike for Climate provides citizens with multiple ways to speak up about climate justice and inspire others to do the same.

Eye-catching posters are a great way to attract attention, and their very creation is often one of the first points of engagement many people have with the climate strikes. Community poster making workshops, for example, are great opportunities for people to reflect, learn and come together before the strike. Above all, artistic expression offers each strike goer, especially youth, a unique platform to directly advocate for what's most important to them. In essence,

**Nicole** (she/her) is a Dalhousie graduate in law and philosophy. Her interests revolve around reading, writing and spending time outdoors.

## TAKE ACTION

Follow [@schoolstrike4climatehfx](https://www.instagram.com/schoolstrike4climatehfx) on Instagram and stay tuned for opportunities to join in the movement.

the accessible and engaging nature of art makes it the perfect tool for raising public awareness and urging policy-makers to act.

Moreover, the ability of art to bring communities together and inspire collective action makes it one of our most important allies when advocating for climate justice. Even from their front steps, someone who may have doubts about climate change could be moved by the passion and care evident in the artwork passing them by. Likewise, poems recited by high school students demanding a brighter future might prompt one to consider their role in ensuring a livable planet for their own family. Meaningful art has this power, often evoking strong emotions, introspection and connection between people. Through these qualities and more, art unites people, regardless of age, race, class or political affiliation, in ways that little else can.

The creativity demonstrated at the Halifax climate strikes creates a joyous and inspirational atmosphere that leaves a lasting impression on those involved and in the minds of policy-makers. This annual event showcases just a few of the ways that art inspires people to take action, to hope and to find joy amidst an environmental crisis. On any scale, artistic endeavors support inclusive activism and the pursuit of an equitable future as we face the climate crisis together.