

## **Kristy O' Leary – Newseason.ca**

The collective result of environmental havoc wreaked at every level, from massive scale corporate emissions to the recycling habits of the suburbs has tipped Global Warming into the forefront of political agendas. Unlike its broader, and seemingly more politically correct umbrella term climate change; global warming implies a level of human culpability. Because global warming refers to the rise in temperature to the lower atmosphere, largely attributed to excessive amounts of greenhouse gas, the blame it seems, justly, falls directly on us.

The political is personal in *newseason.ca*, an interactive, web-based project by Lunenburg-based Media artist, Kristy O'Leary. The project juxtaposes topographical maps of Lunenburg County, with the personal recollections and observations from elders of the community. The participants of *newseason.ca* live in coastal and peninsular Nova Scotia, in Lunenburg's surrounding communities along the province's south shore. A lifetime spent working, living and reaping from the Atlantic Ocean makes for invaluable first-person accounts from the front lines of climate change.

The observations are recorded and mounted on the website as audio wave files, ranging from 30 seconds to 10 minutes in length. The murky mix of an ambiguous black and white topographical map with the audio waveform files, paint an overall impression of our impending doom. For the viewer, the voices are removed from specificity, and removed from their respective identities. Overall, viewed as a whole, the voices blend together creating a sense of community, rather than taken on their own accord, as you would, for example, view the various contributors in a documentary film.

The lack of specificity with the detached voices is mimicked in the use of a topographical map as opposed to geographical, nautical or more place-identifying charts. The use of such a map narrows the focus placing issues and discussion points into a very specific geographical context. The use of a topographical map negates this narrowing of focus. We are viewing any coastal community; this is both Lunenburg or Japan. This point opens up the work to a globally minded discussion by using a community minded framework. In this way the discussion becomes such that we all may participate.

**Kristin Ivey** is a writer, sculptor and installation artist currently based in Halifax, Nova Scotia. She is currently planning an exodus to Cape Breton to discover the meaning of life, adopt a retired greyhound and get some serious sculpture made.