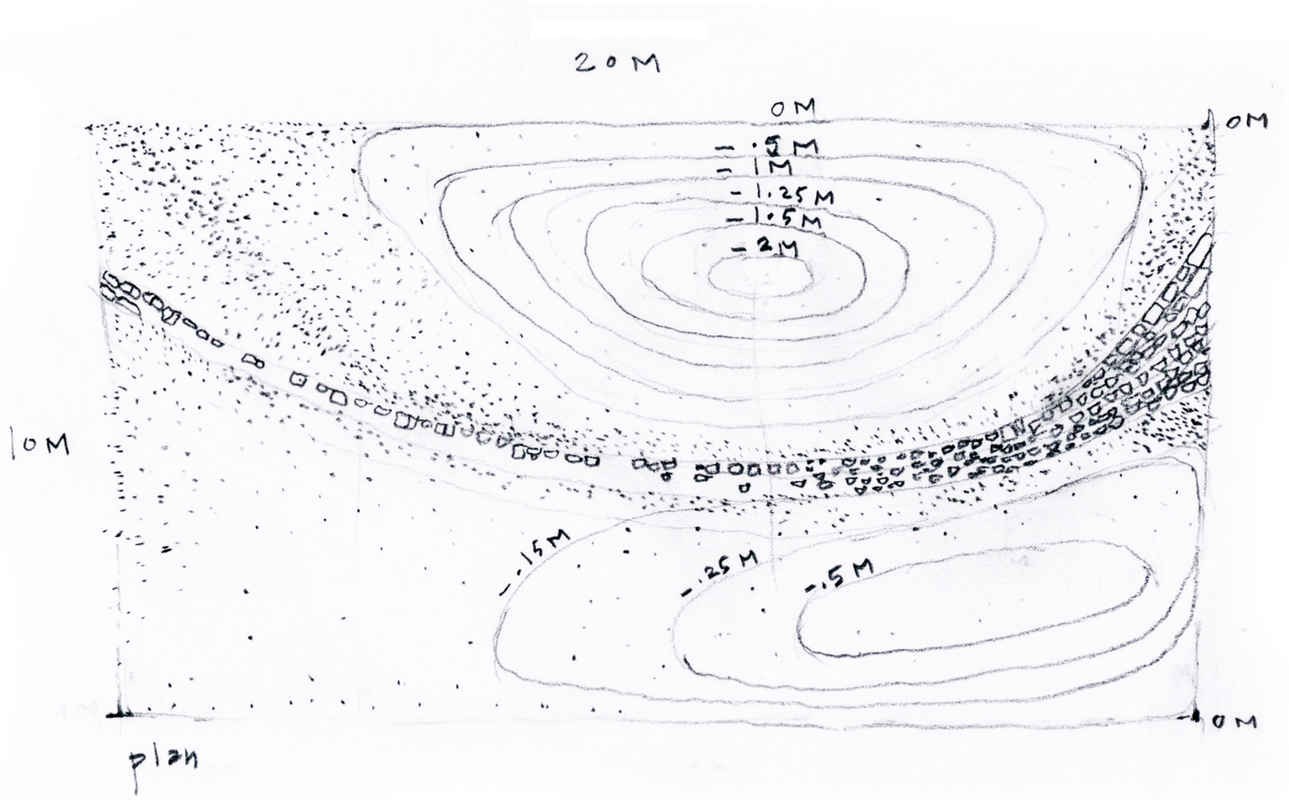
Carbon Tongues

In *The Politics and Aesthetics of Métissage*, Françoise Lionnet suggests that:

> *Retrieving and revaluing those social idiolects that contribute to the development of heteroglossia and the dialogic imagination has been the task of contemporary writers….*

Carbon Tongues uses garden design to retrieve and revalue the many mother tongues of carbon. Carbon Tongues questions the dominant, reductive cultural view of carbon as an enemy to sequester. Carbon is the basis of life on Earth and much more than excess greenhouse gas emissions in the atmosphere. In the 21st century, it is the responsibility of humans who design built environments that require burning excessive amounts of hydrocarbons to look to carbon's mother tongues.

Carbon Tongues builds upon conversations already presented at the Jardins de Métis festivals in the ***Carbone*** garden by Coache Lacaille Paysagistes from 2016, 2017 and ***Afterburn*** by Civilian Projects from 2014, 2015. In Carbon Tongues, a miniature carbon bog holds mixes of Sphagnum moss and peat soil. A thin layer of clay, mineral silicates coat a walking path and speak the ancient language of deep ocean carbon stores. Wood biochar tongues stack vertically in visual veins of coal. Interactive spy holes carved into the tongues contain the words and images of carbon life.



Sphagnum capillifolium

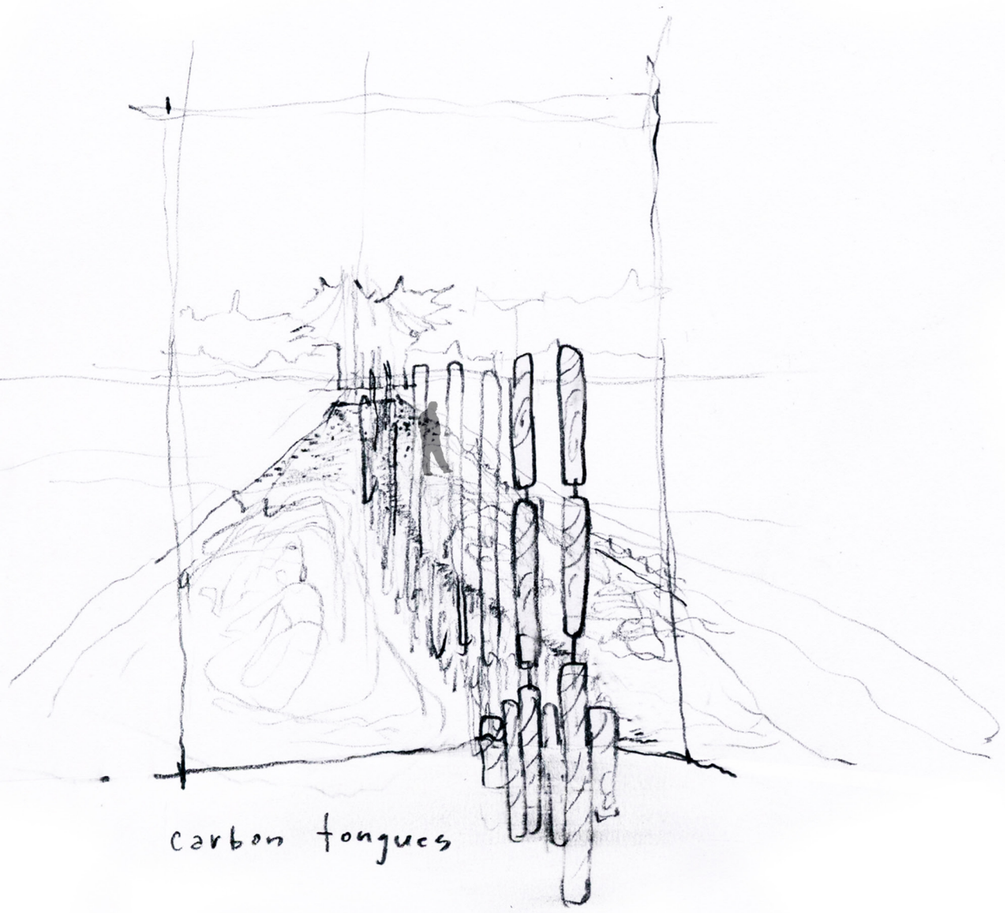
Sphagnum angustifolium

Sphagnum fallax

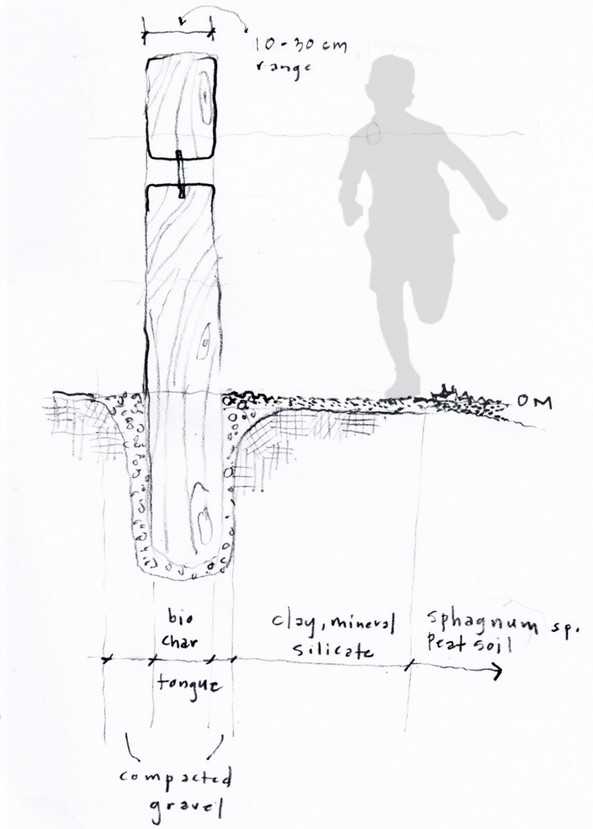
Sphagnum fuscum

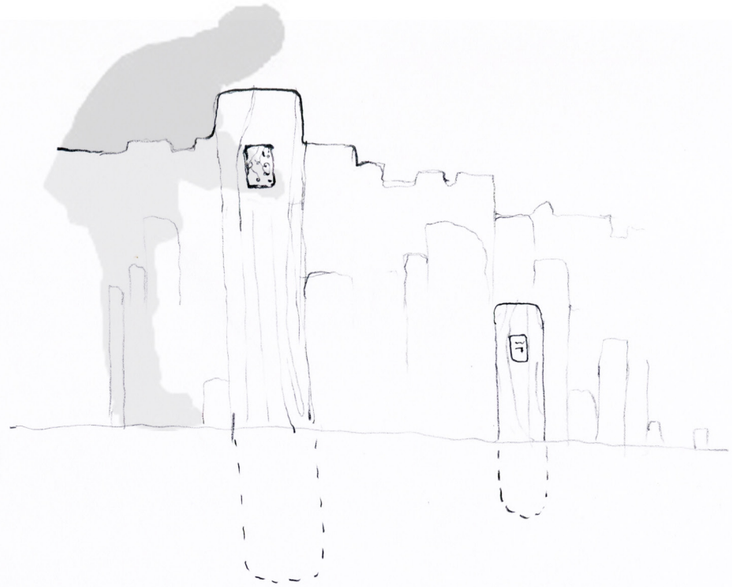
Trees and shrubs: *Picea mariana* (black spruce), *Kalmia angustifolia* (sheep laurel), *K. polifolia* (bog laurel), *Ledum groenlandicum* (Labrador tea), *Andromeda glaucophylla* (glaucous bog rosemary), *Chamaedaphne calyculata*, (leather leaf), *Gaylussacia spp*. (huckleberry), *Empetrum nigrum* (black crowberry), *Vaccinium oxycoccos* (small cranberry).

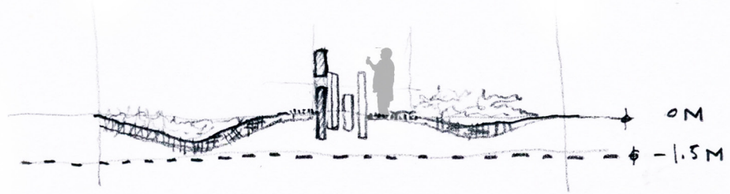
Herbs: *Rubus chamaemorus* (cloudberry), *Carex oligosperma* (sedge), *C. limosa*, *C. paupercula*, *C. trisperma*, *Drosera rotundifolia* (round-leaf sundew)

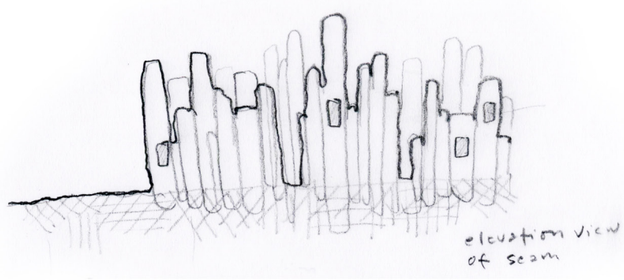


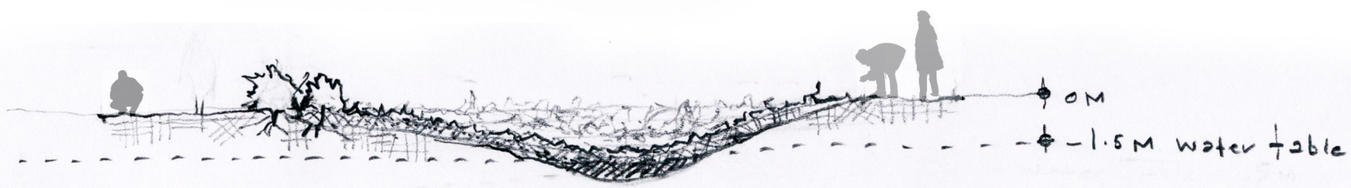
carbon tongues











section through wet bog