

ART WITH PURPOSE

A waste stories art exhibition showcasing the wonderful work of new college lanarkshire's Art Club students



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Art Club



Art With Purpose

This exhibition brings together artists who believe that sustainability is not only a practice, but a relationship, between people, materials, and the futures we imagine together. Each artwork in this collection carries a quiet message: that care is not abstract, but lived; that resilience grows through connection; and that creativity can be a form of responsibility.

Many of the artists in this exhibition invite us to rethink what we call waste. Through reclaimed materials, discarded objects, and overlooked remnants, they show how transformation is possible when we look again, with curiosity instead of dismissal. These works remind us that value is not fixed, and that renewal often begins in the places we least expect.

Across these pages, you'll find pieces that speak in gestures, textures, colours, and symbols. Some whisper, some challenge, some comfort. All of them invite you to pause, to feel, and to consider how art can help us hold the world, and each other, with greater tenderness.

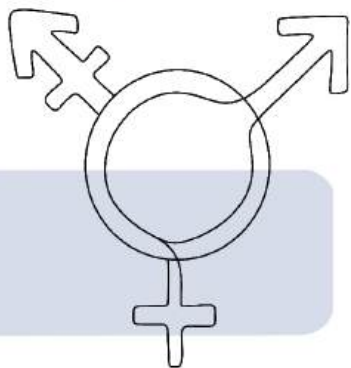


Please See Me

Artist Name: Calvin Martin

Dimensions: 30cm - 40cm

Materials: Digital Illustration



Artist Statement:

I'm Calvin. For this exhibition, I've created seven pieces across three collections, with each collection exploring one of the pillars of sustainability. One of these works is Please See Me, a piece that reflects the social pillar through a more personal lens. Please See Me emerged from the experience of being misunderstood and spoken over. The fragmented figure and surrounding text express the emotional strain of being told who you are instead of being recognised for your own truth. The piece captures the tension between vulnerability and the quiet strength required to keep reaching outward.

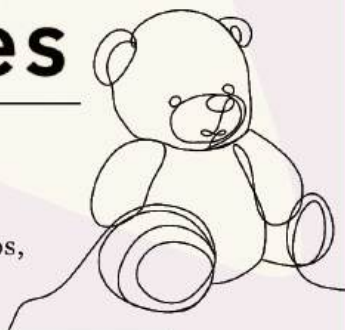
This work represents the social pillar of sustainability, the idea that a sustainable future depends on communities where people are acknowledged, supported, and allowed to exist without erasure. Social sustainability is about dignity, inclusion, and the emotional environments we create for one another. Please See Me challenges viewers to consider how we sustain people, not just systems. I hope the piece encourages people to pause and look beyond the surface, to notice the weight of unspoken experiences and the importance of truly seeing others. If it prompts even a moment of empathy or recognition, then it has fulfilled its purpose.

Chris Crinkles

Artist Name: Lorna Benjamin

Dimensions: 52cm - 36cm

Materials: Discarded polystyrene, plastic tubs, packaging, materials, plastic bags.



Artist Statement:

Chris Crinkle is an installation made entirely from discarded materials polystyrene, plastic tubs, packaging and plastic bags many of which are difficult to recycle and often end up in landfill. The work highlights key Global Sustainability Goals, including Responsible Consumption and Production and Climate Action.

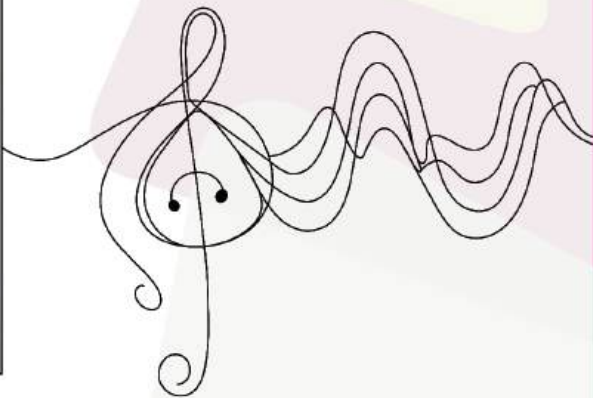
I was inspired by the teddy bear collection I loved as a child, and by the growing issue of litter and fly-tipping in woods and other natural spaces. By recreating these familiar, comforting forms from waste, I hope to draw attention to the impact of our habits on the places we value.

Echoes in Motion



Artist Name: Karen Lyttle

Materials: Shaving Foam, Ink & Paper



Artist Statement:

My work brings together a series of colourful, marbled prints created using shaving foam and ink. I was inspired by the energy of clapping hands during my badminton medal celebrations, as well as the expressive colours found in Van Gogh's paintings. I wanted to capture that same sense of movement, rhythm and emotion through colour and flow.

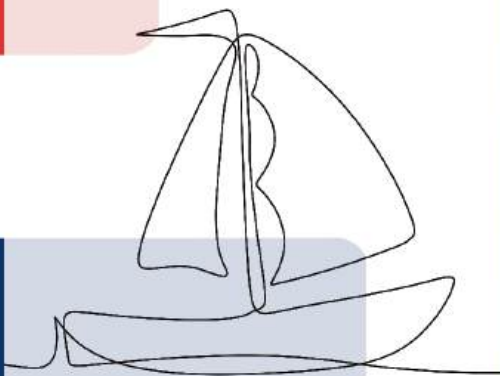
Although I chose the colours and placed the ink myself, the process has a life of its own. Once the foam begins to shift and swirl, I have very little control over how each pattern forms. That unpredictability is part of the joy, every piece develops differently, making each one completely unique. Sustainability also plays an important role in this project. By using simple, everyday materials like shaving foam, I wanted to show how creative expression doesn't need to rely on expensive or wasteful supplies. This technique demonstrates how much can be achieved with minimal resources, and how accessible materials can still produce vibrant, meaningful results.

Through this work, I hope to encourage others to embrace playful experimentation and to enjoy the surprises that come from letting go of full control. Creativity can grow from the simplest materials, and sometimes the most unexpected outcomes are the most rewarding .

Waves of the Hebrides

Artist Name: Bill Clark

Materials: Watercolours & Mixed recyclable materials.



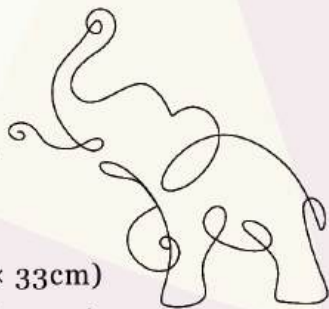
Artist Statement:

My work is inspired by my love of the sea and by the remarkable dedication of the RNLI (Royal National Lifeboat Institute), a charity run entirely by volunteers who risk their lives to save others. Their courage encouraged me to create a piece that honours both the coastline they protect and the vital tools they rely on, such as the Tide Timetable, which plays a crucial role in safety at sea for lifeboat crews, fishermen and water-sports users.

I chose the Hebrides as the focus for my final piece, using the view from Arisaig looking out toward Rum and Muck as my main inspiration. To bring depth and movement into the work, I used a canvas board and a deep picture frame to create a subtle 3D effect, supported by handmade elements such as balsa wood, coffee sticks and fine-line pen details. I also incorporated references to the shipping forecast, reflecting the information that guides those who work on the water.

Most of the materials I used can be recycled, which was important to me. By combining sustainable materials with a strong personal connection to the coast, I hope this piece raises awareness of the RNLI and celebrates the beauty and power of Scotland's shorelines.

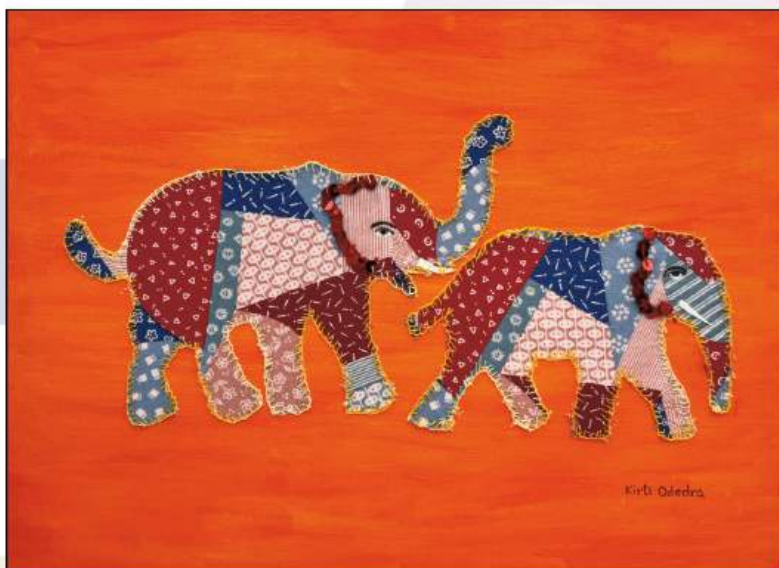
A Keepsake



Artist Name: Kirti Odedra

Dimensions: Framed A3 canvas (45cm × 33cm)

Materials: Fabric remnants, acrylic paint, sequins



Artist Statement:

This piece explores sustainability through the repurposing of fabric remnants to create a meaningful keepsake. I used leftover fabric from an outfit I had made, applying the motifs to a primed canvas using an appliqué technique. I chose elephants, one of my favourite animals, as the central motif.

The work is inspired by my awareness of the environmental impact of textile waste. Through this piece, I hope to highlight how we can reduce fabric waste, lower carbon emissions, and help preserve life on land.

Colourful Stories



Artist Name: Lynn McGaw

Materials: Wooden dolls house kit, puppet-making kit, mixed media.



Artist Statement:

Colourful Stories brings together a brightly painted wooden dolls house and a set of handmade puppets created from children's craft kits. I was inspired by my love of vibrant colours and the joy that comes from playful, hands-on creativity. Working with simple kits allowed me to transform everyday materials into something expressive, cheerful and full of character.

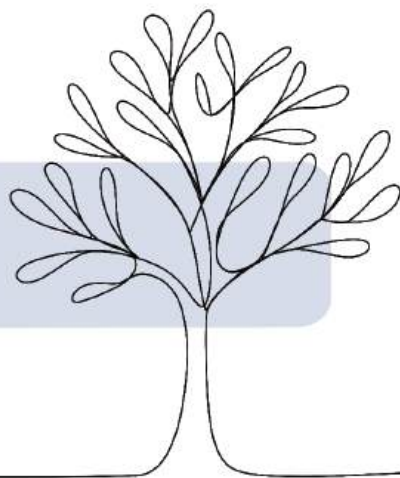
Sustainability is at the heart of this project. By using craft kits instead of new, resource-heavy materials, I wanted to show how imaginative making can happen anywhere and how creativity doesn't need to rely on wasteful or expensive supplies. The dolls house and puppets celebrate the idea that small, accessible materials can spark big ideas.

Through this piece, I hope to encourage others to rediscover the fun of making things by hand, and to see the creative potential in the materials we often overlook.

Tree's of Cumbernauld

Artist Name: Valerie Rooney

Materials: Card stock, wire, acrylic paint, and watercolour paint.



Artist Statement:

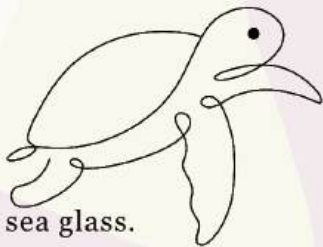
I chose this subject because I've always loved the amount of greenery around Cumbernauld. As one of Scotland's former "New Towns," it was created to meet the post-war need for housing outside Glasgow. What has always stood out to me is how forward-thinking the planning was surprisingly radical for the 1950s.

Green space wasn't an afterthought; it was central to the design. The landscaping and planting were shaped to follow the natural topography, offer shelter, and create a sense of calm throughout the town. That connection to nature is something I've always appreciated. Trees, especially, feel essential to me. They're fundamental to our future survival in so many ways, and Scotland is working hard to "reforest." It feels like a race against time, which is part of why this subject matters so much to me.

Billy Ocean

Artist Name: Melissa Mortimer

Materials: Air dry clay, watercolour and sea glass.



Artist Statement:

My work is inspired by the importance of the sea and by Sir David Attenborough's words: "If we save the sea, we save our world." I wanted to highlight how essential the ocean is to life on Earth, it generates oxygen, regulates our climate and supports countless species. It is one of our greatest allies in the fight against climate change, yet it is constantly threatened by bottom trawling, waste and pollution.

In my piece, Billy Ocean the sea turtle represents the many endangered species at risk as our oceans continue to suffer. I also chose to use sea glass, which shows how something once discarded can be transformed into something beautiful by the sea itself. It felt like a fitting reminder of both the fragility and resilience of our oceans.

Through this work, I hope to encourage others to recognise the sea as a vital life-support system and to understand why protecting it is essential for our future. Even small changes in how we treat the ocean can help safeguard the world we all depend on.

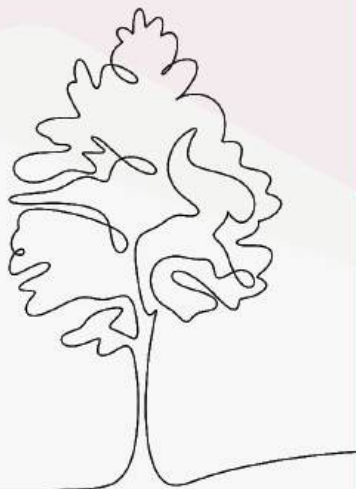
The Tree of Life



Artist Name: Katie Webster

Dimensions: 9.5 - 4 inches

Materials: DAS air-dry clay with mixed media elements.



Artist Statement:

The Tree of Life is a 3D clay sculpture inspired by my deep love for the natural world. Creating both the tree and the surrounding landscape allowed me to express the serenity, joy and sense of peace I feel when I'm in nature. These places have always been a source of comfort for me, and I wanted my final piece to reflect that connection.

Although DAS clay is a manufactured material, shaping it into a tree felt meaningful. It allowed me to explore how we represent and honour the natural world through the things we create. This piece is also influenced by sustainability, encouraging viewers to value the landscapes around them and to think about how our actions affect the environments we depend on.

Through this work, I hope to share the calm and satisfaction I experience in these natural spaces, and to highlight the beauty and importance of the world around us.

Day at the Beach



Artist Name: Avril Peace

Materials: Mixed Media



Artist Statement:

My piece is inspired by the calm I feel whenever I visit the coast, especially Tentsmuir Beach in Fife, which has always been a place of peace and clarity for me. I wanted to capture that sense of stillness through texture and natural materials, using cardboard, resin-crete, fabric, shells, driftwood and plaster of Paris to recreate the colours and shapes that make the shoreline so grounding. Each material adds a different layer, echoing the way a beach holds memories, movement and quiet moments of reflection.

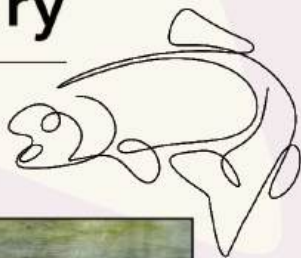
Sustainability is an important part of this work. Many of the materials I used are recycled or naturally sourced, reflecting the need to protect the coastal environments that inspire us. Beaches like Tentsmuir remind me how closely our wellbeing is connected to the health of the natural world, and how important it is to care for these places.

I hope viewers feel a sense of calm when they look at this piece, a gentle reminder to pause, breathe and stay present in the moment. More than anything, I hope it brings a small moment of stillness into their day.

The Edge of Memory

Artist Name: Peter Hastings

Materials: Watercolour



Artist Statement:

My work is shaped by my lifelong connection to rural Dumfriesshire and by the traditions that surrounded me growing up. One of the most significant is haaf net fishing, a practice brought to the Solway Firth by Scandinavian settlers over a thousand years ago. It has always fascinated me, not just as a technique, but as a way of life that once defined our coastline.

For this piece, I wanted to capture the quiet resilience of that tradition. Haaf netting was once a familiar sight, but today only a small number of fishers continue the work. Declining stocks, commercial pressures and conservation rules mean any salmon caught must now be released, with only trout and similar fish kept and sold.

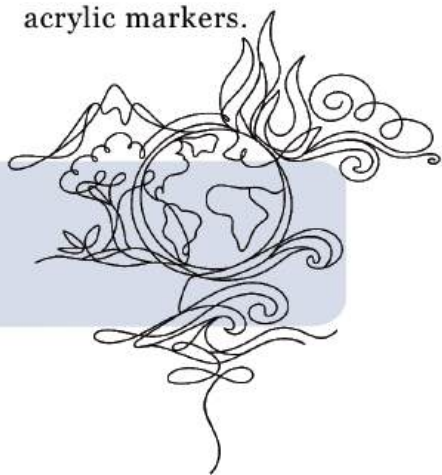
Sustainability is central to this piece. Haaf netting is environmentally gentle, yet vulnerable to wider pressures on our marine ecosystems. I hope this work highlights how closely cultural heritage depends on the health of our coastal environment.

Earth, Air, Fire and Water

Artist Name: Alison Russell

Dimensions: 297 x 420mm

Materials: Acrylic paint, gelli print, digital composition, acrylic markers.



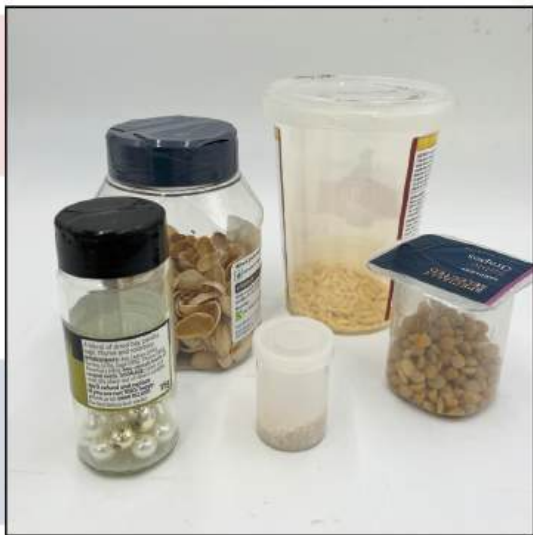
Artist Statement:

In this series, I explore climate change through the four classical elements: earth, air, fire and water. Each element is expressed through a pair of artworks: an abstract acrylic painting and a corresponding graphic piece accompanied by my poem *They Told Us* and an installation of repurposed hand fans that reflects a sustainable response to global warming.

I use colour and abstract mark-making to express my emotional response to the changing climate, while the graphic pieces draw on gelli print, digital composition and acrylic markers. Together, they form a visual and poetic reflection on a world on the brink.

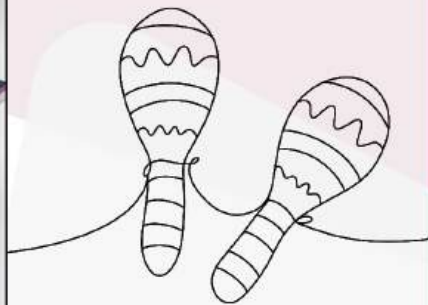
Having lived many years on this planet, I've watched decades of scientific warnings go unheeded. My poem *They Told Us* conveys my sadness, frustration and quiet anger at the damage done to the Earth, despite more than sixty years of clear, research-backed predictions.

Shake, Rattle & Roll



Artist Name: James Hoy

Materials: Containers,
Lentils, Rice & Shells



Artist Statement:

My name is James Hoy. I was born in Glasgow and spent most of my working life as an engineer in the oil, gas, petrochemical, and power plant industries. Now retired, I've been attending the Art Club for the past two years under the guidance of award-winning artist Mia McGregor.

Although my main interest is abstract acrylic painting, this exhibition Art With Purpose encouraged me to think differently about materials, waste, and the role creativity can play in sustainability. With my engineering background, I've always been aware of how resources are used, but this project invited me to explore that awareness in a more hands-on, artistic way.

For this exhibition, I created a series of percussion "instruments" made from discarded food containers filled with lentils, shells, rice, and other reused materials. Turning everyday waste into sound-making objects has been an enjoyable challenge and a reminder that sustainability often begins with small, practical choices. By giving these materials a second life, I hope to show how simple objects can carry rhythm, purpose, and new meaning when we look at them differently.

Goal's Through Banners

Artist Name: Heather Kane

Materials: Textile base, paint, fabric, haberdashery elements.



Artist Statement:

This artwork explores themes of sustainable living and the search for better ways to survive and thrive as a global community. I used a textile base to form the structure of the banners, adding painted details, fabric elements and haberdashery to create layered designs and messages. These materials connect directly to the tradition of craftivism, reclaiming the word craft within the female art scene and celebrating the power of handmade work as a tool for social change.

The inspiration for this piece came from the Sustainable Development Goals and from a workshop I led with the art club, where everyone created their own protest banners. That collective experience shaped the direction of my work and reminded me how creativity can bring people together around shared values.

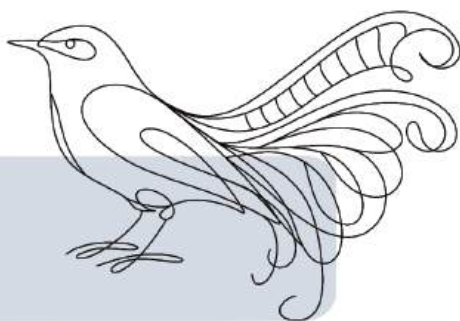
Through this piece, I wanted to communicate that hope is not lost. Positive change is still possible, and when we work together, through art, activism and community, we can help shape a more sustainable and compassionate world.

The Last Straw

Artist Name: Janey McDonald

Dimensions: 52cm x 47cm

Materials: A2 drawing paper,
2B Sketching Pencil



Artist Statement:

Since childhood, I have been inspired by the natural world, especially through the wildlife programmes narrated by Sir David Attenborough. His work has shaped my understanding that nature is not simply something to observe or use, it is essential for all life on Earth.

The lyrebird became the focus of my piece because of its extraordinary ability to mimic the sounds around it: other birds, car alarms, telephones and, most strikingly, chainsaws. The irony is devastating, the bird imitates the very machines that destroy its habitat, turning its gift for mimicry into an echo of its own potential extinction. This raises an urgent question: do we allow this destruction to continue, or do we choose to make positive changes? The responsibility lies with us.

Biodiversity across the planet is in decline. Billions of organisms and millions of species form delicate, interconnected systems that humanity is steadily damaging. Yet there is still time to act. The natural world is fading, and the evidence is all around us, as Attenborough has witnessed throughout his lifetime. Our greatest mistake can still be corrected but only if we choose to act now.

Message From Mia

New College Lanarkshire — Lecturer



Teaching Art Club this year through our Collections project has been a genuinely rewarding experience. Watching the group develop their ideas, take risks, and commit to their work has been something I'm really proud of. Each student has brought their own voice, interests, and energy into the project, and you can see that clearly in the outcomes. It's not just about the final pieces - it's the process, the conversations, the problem solving, and the way they've supported each other along the way.

This project has allowed us to explore what "collections" can mean on a deeper level - personally, socially, and environmentally. I'm always drawn to teaching projects like this, especially those that connect to sustainability.

It encourages students to think beyond just making artwork and instead consider impact, context, and responsibility. These are the kinds of conversations that feel important right now, and it's been great to see the students engage with that in thoughtful and creative ways.

A big thank you to Anna for her continued collaboration and support. Working together has really strengthened what we can offer the students, and it's been great to build on that partnership again this year.

ART CLUB should be really proud of what they've achieved. The work speaks for itself, but more importantly, so does the journey they've been on to get there.



Special Thanks

New College Lanarkshire — Art Club

Art with Purpose was made possible through the collaboration and support of many individuals.

Anna Wilson and the Waste Stories team

for commissioning this work and for creating the opportunity to contribute to an inspiring sustainability-focused initiative. Anna's commitment to meaningful, community-centred storytelling has shaped the project in thoughtful and impactful ways.

Heather Kane

for delivering the textiles workshop and enriching the project with her expertise in sustainable practices and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Heather's generosity, knowledge, and enthusiasm helped students see the wider purpose behind their creative decisions.

The New College Lanarkshire Art Club students

for their creativity, dedication, and commitment to transforming discarded materials into meaningful artistic expression. Their willingness to experiment, collaborate, and push their ideas further has been at the heart of this exhibition.

Extra Special Thanks

Mia McGregor

for her guidance, leadership, and continued support throughout the project. Mia's students and colleagues recognise her as an inspirational teacher. Anna knows her also as an inspirational student — the kind who makes teachers think and work differently — and indeed an inspirational human.

Calvin Martin

for their eye for the visual, design skills, originality, organisation, and seemingly unending ability to make things happen. Calvin's contribution has shaped not only the look of this exhibition, but the experience of everyone involved.

We extend our appreciation to everyone who contributed time, materials, and expertise. Your generosity, creativity, and willingness to support this project in so many different ways have shaped the heart of this exhibition. Together, you have helped bring Art with Purpose to life and demonstrated how collective effort can spark meaningful conversations about sustainability, community, and the role of creativity in environmental awareness.