

The Junior Senior School, Cyprus

Spirited Arts 2024

Theme: Why animals matter

Class prize for 13-year-old entrants who all submitted fantastic pieces of work!



Zoe

Age 13

The Junior and Senior School

The thing we all share

I chose to incorporate a lotus flower and eyes of all kinds of sentient beings to represent how even a religious and a non-religious worldview have their similarities. I used the lotus flower for Buddhism, as it is widely known to be their religious symbol. I incorporated eyes from many different people and animals, because they believe that all beings deserve equal rights, as all sentient beings flourish and suffer. I decided to compare Buddhism and Sentientism, as they share very similar beliefs. Some of these beliefs are, that all beings deserve equal rights and deserve to be treated equally so that they are able to flourish and live their lives to their fullest without being hurt or being tortured. Just like humans deserve to live a fulfilled life that is full of joy and freedom, a slug, a dog, a cat, a pig and even the tiniest of ants deserve the same treatment. Something that brings me inspiration, is to know that one of the most well-known and world-renowned mathematicians, Pythagoras, was a vegan and had a sentient worldview and believed that all beings deserve to be treated with equal respect and moral consideration. I've named this piece, "The thing we all share" as I hope that people see the eyes I have placed around the lotus flower to represent the thing all sentient beings share. We all see the destruction and suffering that is happening all over the world, and yet no one is reaching out and making amends. So, I believe that we should all come together and share the one thing we have in common and see what is happening around us.



Alexis, Daryna, Roma, Veronica

Age 13

The Junior and Senior School

The religion that inspired our work was Buddhism, specifically because compassion towards all beings is integral to their religion. We convey the importance of equality through a “scale” hanging on both antlers of the deer. Our initial vision was to convey the story of “the ugly duckling” by showing the complete opposite. Sitting on both equally level sides are two ducklings, one considered “ugly” for its unusual color, and the other considered, by most, “normal.” By using a lotus flower (sitting in the middle of the deer’s head), we begin to dig deeper into the importance and symbolism of compassion and purity towards animals of all sorts in the Buddhist religion. As a key element of our work, we have discovered the significance of the colour purple. Our artwork is spiritual because in Christianity, purple is often associated to a divine power. In RS it is good to explore other people’s perspectives on things and their opinions. This is an element of consideration in the spiritual aspect of Christianity. In spiritual practice, it is often taught for those to have compassion and empathy towards others, as well as a deep moral consideration. This is what is shown in our image. A deep moral consideration of equality to those with difference, putting them on an even level scale. I hope people will notice the importance of the deer in the image. In Judaism, deer represent gentleness and care. In our image, this is significant in employing the thinking to understand how both ducklings should be cared for equally, despite their differences. This type of thinking can be implemented in our everyday lives. Sentientism teaches us that animals whom we consider “sentient” have more moral value than those who are not. In our image, we convey our beliefs based on the topic of “how animals are important;” however, we show a picture without sentient values, an image of equality for how we view animals.

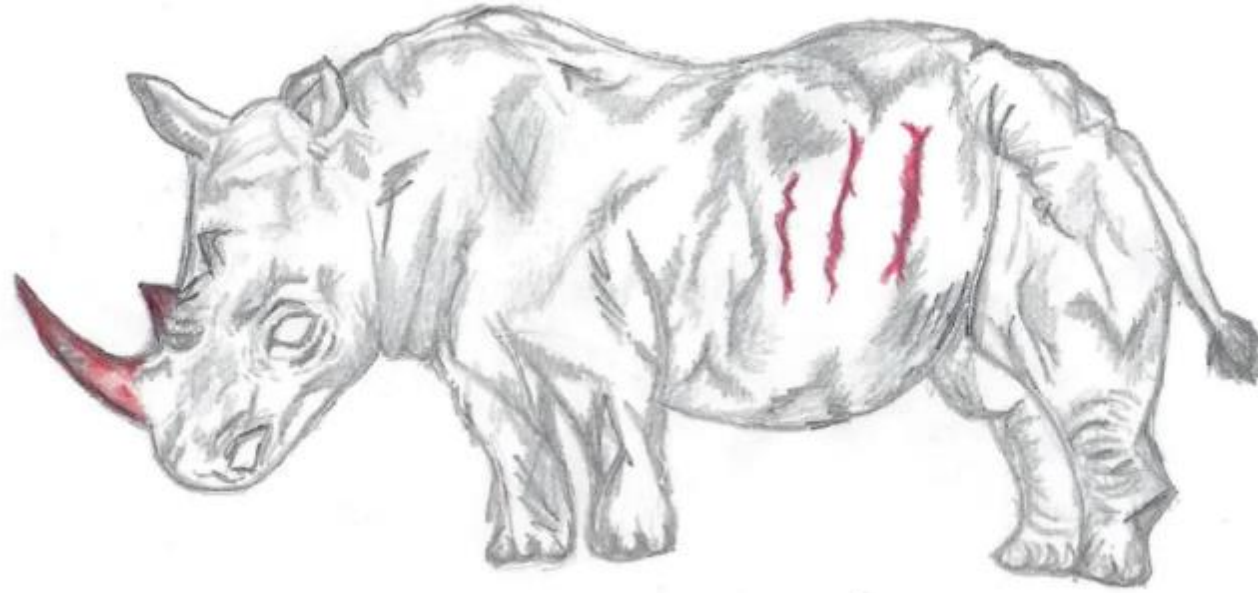


Alina

Age 13

The Junior and Senior School

The religion that inspired my work is Christianity. For most of history Christians ignored animal suffering. They believed that humans were superior to animals and they believed that they could treat animals however they wanted to because they didn't have any moral obligations towards them. In this day and age the Roman Catholic Ethic of Life lead Christians to avoid anything that brings unnecessary suffering or death to animals. Looking at the Key Thinkers surrounding sentientism I was inspired by the image of St. Francis of Assisi holding a dove. My artwork symbolizes a healthy dove sulking over his shot friend. I chose to sculpt a shot dove out of clay since people in Cyprus are still shooting doves for 'pleasure'. I highly disagree with the way we are treating innocent animals, and having moral consideration for all animals and sentient beings makes me want to reach out to other people inspiring them to think like this too.



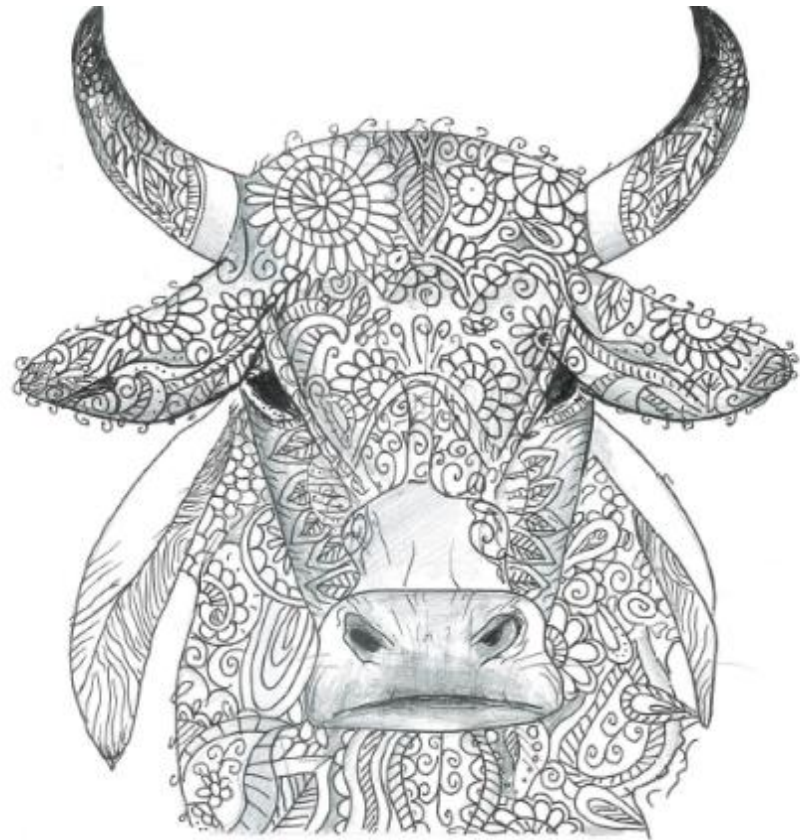
Gabriela and Stephanie

Age 13

The Junior and Senior School

The Last of Us.

The most endangered rhino species is the Northern White Rhino (*Ceratotherium simum cottoni*). As of March 2018, there are only two northern white rhinos left in the world, both of which are female. They reside in the Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya and are under round-the-clock protection by armed guards. Their near extinction is a result of decades of rampant poaching for their valuable horns. Through our artwork we wanted to mirror the urgent need to raise awareness about the devastating impact of human actions on endangered species. The great beast is now functionally extinct, this means that we may have a few individuals still living but will never recover. The Northern white rhino that survived ice ages, earthquakes and meteor strikes could not survive humans. Pythagoras held the belief that not only humans, but also non-human animals possess souls. He advocated for compassion and sympathy toward other animals, and these convictions significantly influenced our artwork. Sikhism and Hinduism both regard animals with reverence. Sikhs believe animals are crucial to God's creation, sharing a divine essence with humans, fostering a sense of interconnectedness. They emphasize equality, and non-violence towards all beings, with a moral duty to protect and care for animals and the environment. Similarly, Hinduism views animals as manifestations of divinity, promoting non-violence and often leading followers to adopt vegetarianism. Animals are considered part of the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, influenced by karma. We have chosen the title "The last of us" because it symbolizes the moral consideration that not all sentient beings get from human beings. The deepest part of our art work are the bright red scars on our white rhino, symbolising not just their physical wounds, but also emotional scars that reflect the pain and suffering caused by human actions. The title 'The Last of Us' speaks to the idea that not all living beings receive the care and respect they deserve from humans.



Elena

Age 13

The Junior and Senior School

The religion that inspired my work is Hinduism. Hindus believe that all living creatures have a soul, and that they are a part of the supreme soul. Therefore, all living creatures are respected.

In Hinduism, Ahimsa (or non-violence) is the idea of not causing harm to other living things. Hindus believe that killing animals causes bad karma, therefore many Hindus follow vegetarian diets. The overall idea is to be kind to all creatures with a soul.

The cow is especially sacred for Hindus because the cow is associated with Aditi, the mother of all gods. Hindus feel that cows are gifts from their gods since they are so beneficial to humans. The cow provides milk, cheese, butter, yogurt, and many other dairy products. The cow is considered a symbol of life and is associated with spirituality, representing generosity and non-violence. Therefore, Hindus don't eat beef. The cow is treated with great care and reverence.

For my inspiration, I looked at images of cows on the internet and chose an image I liked. I then copied the main outline. I decided to use mandala patterns to decorate the cow. The reason is because a mandala is a sacred, circular, geometric design that is a symbol of Hinduism. Mandala means 'circle' in Sanskrit, the classical language of India and usually, mandalas are circles with detailed patterns. Using the mandala design makes my artwork spiritual because a mandala is a spiritual symbol used in prayer and meditation in India.

What I like best about my artwork is that the patterns have to do with the religion of Hinduism and I hope my artwork reflects the meaning behind Hinduism and peace and respect for all animals.