

Rivers of the World

Excellence in
art-based learning

2021



Rivers of the World

Rivers of the World is the Thames Festival Trust's flagship art and education project delivered in partnership with the British Council.

The project produces fabulous artworks that are inspired by river themes. These artworks are created through an extended workshop process which is contextualised by trips to the local river and other environmental studies. Under guidance from a professional artist, the students work collegiately, often using media and techniques that will be new to them. The end result is a single work of art made with contributions from the whole student group.

Rivers of the World links participating secondary schools in the UK with partner schools in developing countries around the world. All pupils go through the same creative process and by doing so, they are encouraged to empathise with their partner students. The 2021, partnerships are:

- Greenwich, UK & Accra, Ghana
- Boston, UK & Kathmandu, Nepal
- Liverpool, UK & Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe
- Tees Valley, UK & Beirut, Lebanon
- Coventry, UK & Dar es Salaam and Bagamoyo, Tanzania
- Hounslow, UK & Kerala, India

In addition, schools from Northumberland & Ethiopia and North West England & Afghanistan took part in a new teacher-led initiative and produced collaborative artworks following a newly commissioned resource.

Because of international lockdowns, the work has been generated both at home and in school, showing artist's and young people's strength of spirit and imagination in the face of Covid-19.

thamesfestivaltrust.org
riversoftheworld.org

Cover artwork by Govt. Higher Secondary School, Aryanad, Kerala, India, with Leeza John
Artwork (left) by Tarun Madhyamik Vidhyalaya School, Kathmandu, Nepal, with Kailash K Shrestha

Rivers of the World 2021

● UK

● Lebanon

● Afghanistan

● Nepal

● India

● Ghana

● Ethiopia

● Tanzania

● Zimbabwe

Every year Rivers of the World partners children and young people in the UK with their counterparts around the world. The project has so far worked in 42 countries enabling international collaboration and dialogue through environmental messages and culture.



Shona Watt

Lead Artist, London, UK

London based artist Shona Watt has been the lead artist for Rivers of the World since its inception.

She studied at The Metropolitan University and Ravensbourne College of Art in London. She has become known specifically for her work over the last 20 years with the WOMAD Festival founded by Peter Gabriel.

She has worked internationally in schools, prisons, children's hospitals and museums combining a unique method of young people's artwork and digital technology to produce panels/banners for public exhibition.

Her site-specific work resonates with themes of architecture, landscape, people and climate change.



Bright Ackwerh

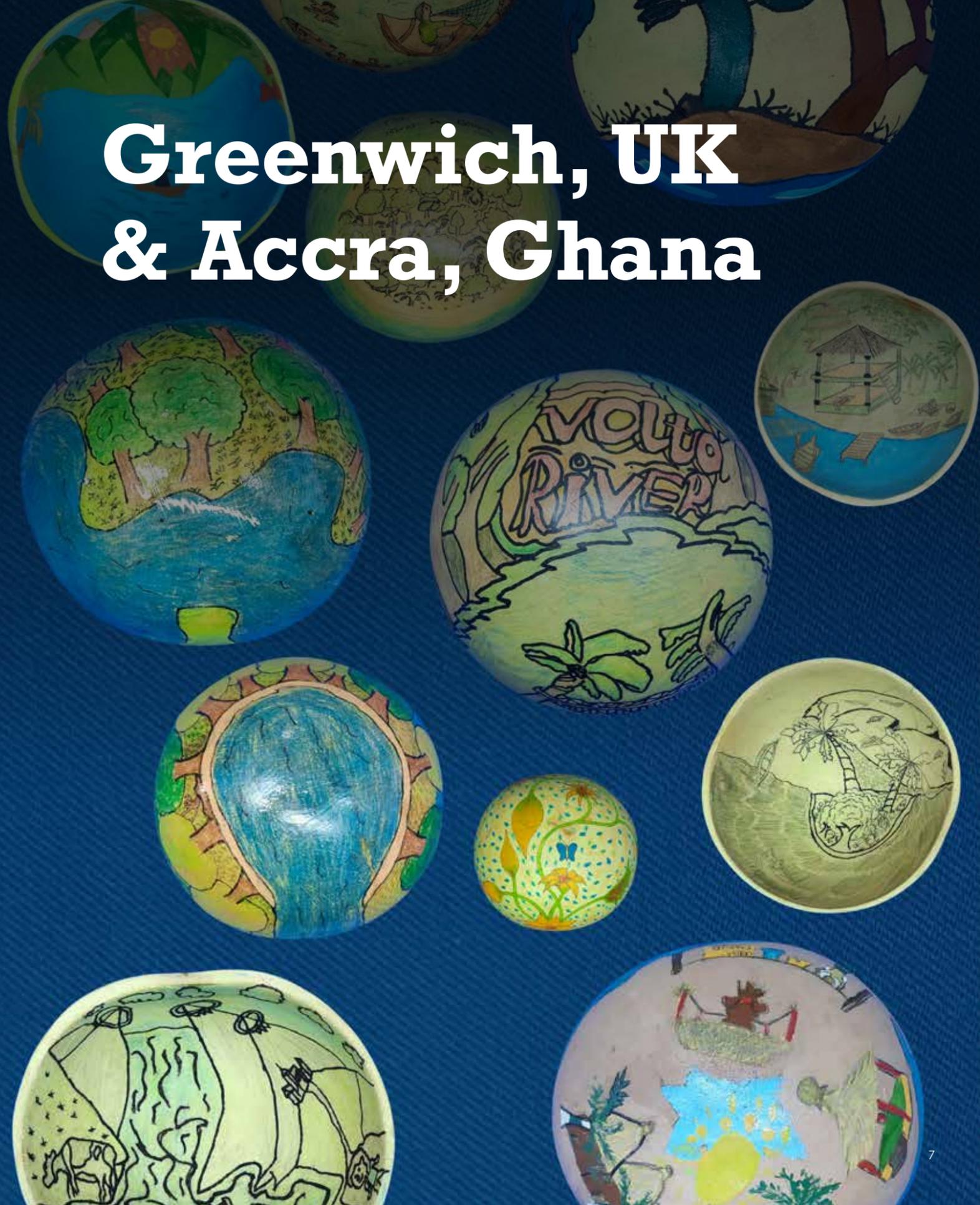
Artist, Accra, Ghana

Bright Ackwerh, born 1989 is an artist from Ghana. He studied at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology where he earned a BFA and MFA in painting and sculpture. His practice is situated in the fields of painting, illustration and street art.

“As part of our efforts to incorporate climate change conversations in all our work we dedicated full sessions to discussing it and it inspired our choice of materials and processes. The students were encouraged to continue making work that could speak to pertinent issues in their various communities. In the end we also learned a lot from the students and we hope we can all apply some of this knowledge moving forward.”

Artwork by Dawhenya Basic School, Accra, Ghana, with Bright Ackwerh

Greenwich, UK & Accra, Ghana

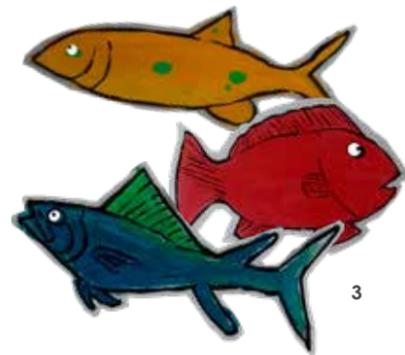
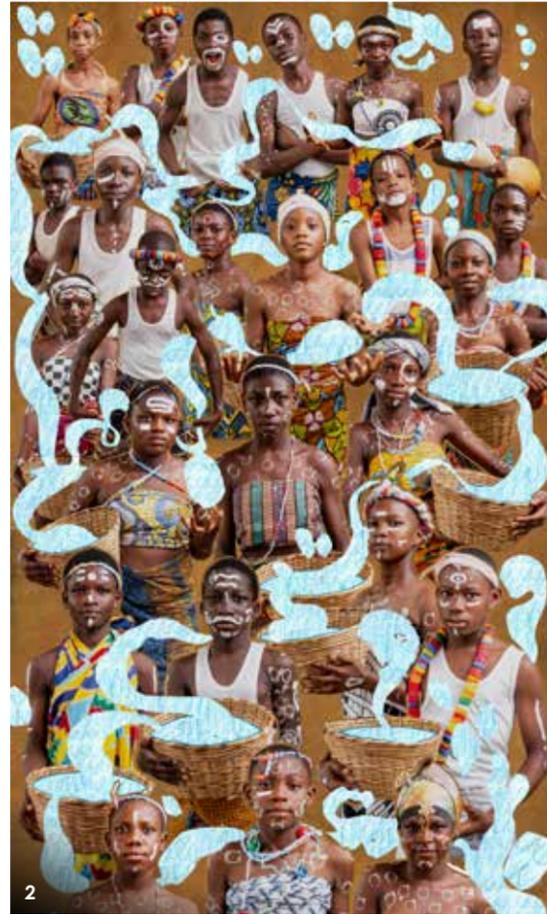


Accra, Ghana

The workshops in Accra were based around the history, traditions and environment of the Volta River. Students worked with sculpture, painting and costume to create their work.

“On behalf of us all we want to thank you. It’s been insightful, it’s been exciting and educative. We hope to see you again soon for more programmes like this.”

Mrs. Deborah Tettey, teacher,
Mataheko D A Basic A School

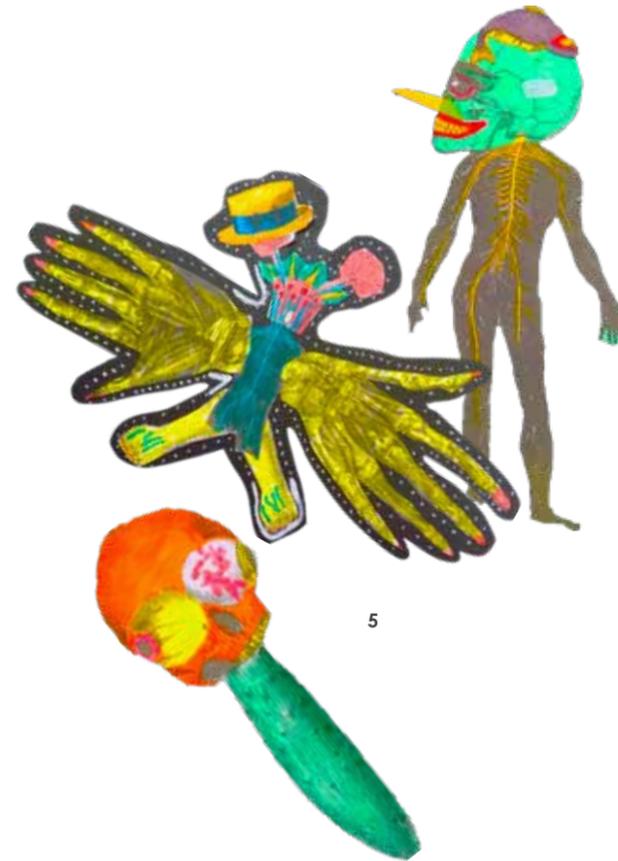
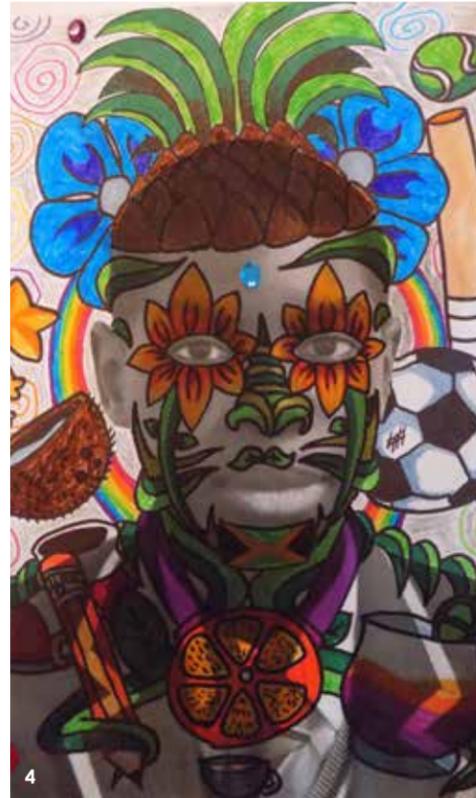


“Thank you for introducing this programme to us. These skills can go a long way to help us make a living one day in the future.”

Sorgorjoh Emmanuel, pupil,
St Joseph's Anglican 1 Basic School

1. Pupils from Dawhenya Basic School
 2. Artwork by Mataheko D A Basic A School, with Bright Ackwerh
 3. Details from artwork by Dawa Presby Basic School
 4. Pupils from Dawa Presby School
 5. Pupils from Afietya Basic School
 6. Pupils from St Joseph Anglican School
 7. Pupils from Mataheko Basic School
- All photos by Bright Ackwerh

Using pollution, trade and their local area as inspiration, the students made wonderful work with metal embossing, collage and embroidery.



“I really enjoyed creating my pillow. I imagine my ‘sweetheart’ pillow was made by a sailor on the Cutty Sark on his voyage to China using treasures he found there. I chose my fabric as it had a blue and white scene from China with details that look oriental and vintage.”

Scarlotte Pinder, pupil,
Eltham Hill School

“Thank you so much for today, the students enjoyed it so much and it was great to hear parents saying this on our virtual parents evening as well. It was a breath of fresh air, in what has been a very hectic time.”

Lisa Courtley, teacher,
The Halley Academy



“The workshops were extremely beneficial for our students, who feel valued and included after a tough academic year. The sheer scale of the project combined with the excellent delivery from Shona has engaged students well beyond the workshops.”

Samuel Jones, teacher,
Newhaven School



1. Pupil from St Mary Magdalene School
2. Pupil from Plumstead Manor
3. Skull made at Newhaven School
4. Portrait made at St Mary Magdalene School
5. Details from artwork by Woolwich Polytechnic School for Boys
6. Pupil from Woolwich Polytechnic School for Boys
7. Pupil from Eltham Hill School

All photos by Shona Watt





1. St Mary Magdalene C of E School

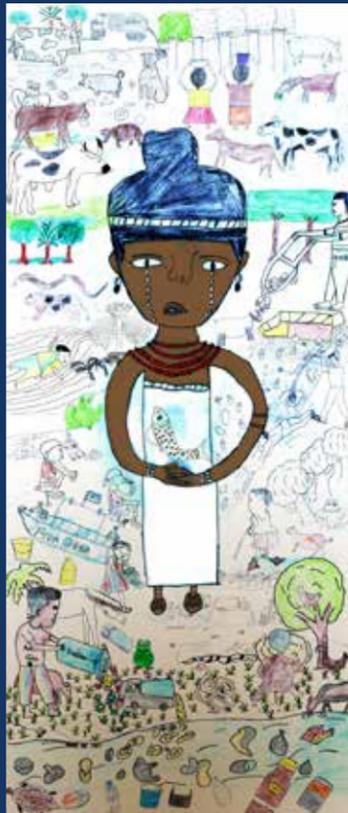
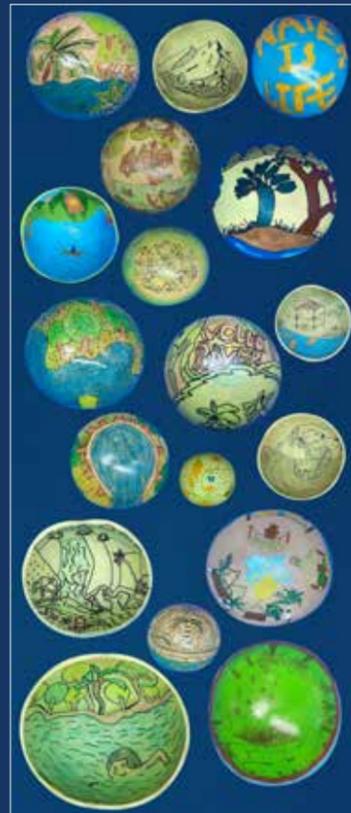
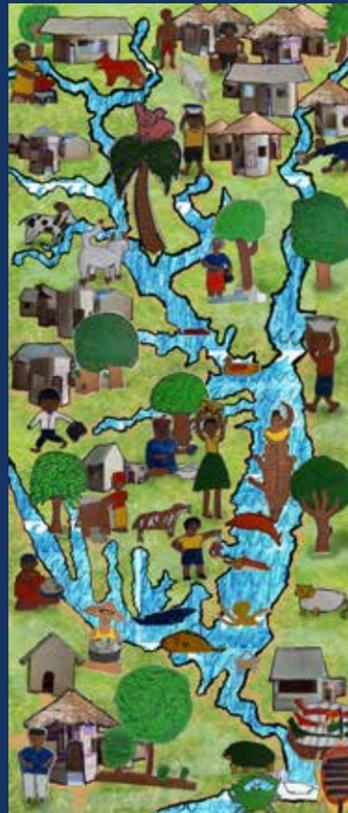
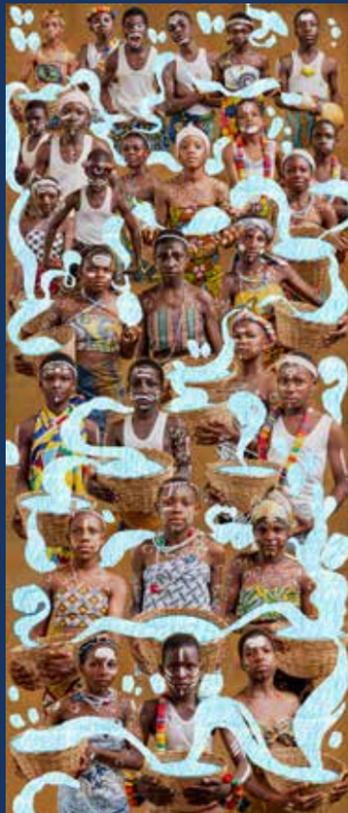
2. Eltham Hill School

3. The Halley Academy

4. Newhaven School

5. Woolwich Polytechnic School for Boys

6. Plumstead Manor School



7. Mataheko D A Basic A School

8. St Joseph's Anglican 1 Basic School

9. Dawhenya D A Basic School

10. Affenya D A Basic School C

11. Old Ningo D A Basic A School

12. Dawa Presby Basic School

Greenwich, UK

1. St Mary Magdalene C of E School

Students explored and celebrated the multicultural and hugely diverse community of Greenwich and London as a city. Referencing the work of Huw Locke and Ebony Patterson, they worked up self-portraits with mixed media and text creating visual references to identity, their lives in Greenwich, and their interests.

2. Eltham Hill School

The practice of sailor's sweetheart valentine pin cushions were a craze by 1820 that would last through the Victorian Era. They were made by sailors onboard ships to send back home to their loved ones. Students made cushions based on Greenwich, exploring local landmarks, WW1, astronomy and navigation, then added messages embracing contemporary themes.

3. The Halley Academy

Students learnt about one of the largest pollutants in the Thames, plastic. Its cumulative effect on rivers, marine life and the planet has resulted in a third of fish caught in the UK containing plastic of some form. Students collected plastic waste and created river and sea creatures that had undergone a metamorphosis, transforming into something rich and strange.

4. Newhaven School

Students explored Glamorous Greenwich, Dirty Deptford and the Pirates of Pizazz. They used the skull and crossbones on the gateposts of St. Nicolas' Church in Deptford as inspiration. Students combined the seedy elements of the privateers with the glamorous Tudor history of Greenwich to create Pirates of Pizazz.

5. Woolwich Polytechnic School for Boys

A less familiar source of pollution, fat, became common knowledge in 2019 when a 40 tonne 'fatberg' was discovered blocking the sewers in Greenwich. It prompted the '3Ps' slogan: pee, poo & paper down the loo only! Students used collage to explore the fatberg, fast food and the effects of non-biodegradable materials on our sewers.

6. Plumstead Manor School

Students explored the history of the Cutty Sark, the celebrated ship designed to bring tea from China to England as fast as possible. Phoenix, Rain Flower, Green Snail and Dragon Tea are all names of the Chinese teas the students based their artwork on. Using an embossing technique, they created medals illustrating images of their chosen tea names.

Accra, Ghana

7. Mataheko D A Basic A School

This artwork celebrates an other-worldly power that is characterised in many indigenous festivals observed by communities situated along the Volta River. Students used photography as a medium to create a series of portraits depicting them as traditional voodoo priests and priestesses carrying water in hand woven baskets.

8. St Joseph's Anglican 1 Basic School

Through conversations about the importance of rivers in the development of town settlements, students reimagined their ideal city around a river. Map making skills and the use of town planning principles played a role in their inspiration, they designed and developed their own little river city.

9. Dawhenya D A Basic School

The calabash is synonymous with water in many indigenous Ghanaian cultures. It is used as a harvester for storage purposes as well as serving bowls. To reflect on the resourcefulness of rivers, students used the calabash as a canvas to visualize and portray the importance of local rivers in their various communities.

10. Affenya D A Basic School C

Students repurposed old cardboard boxes to create an installation depicting a dystopian vision of how the Volta River is being taken over by businesses and resorts which are displacing local communities and restricting their access to fishing, therefore, affecting their livelihoods.

11. Old Ningo D A Basic A School

Students highlighted several activities that contribute to the pollution of their river. They focused on causes such as improper waste disposal and they shared a story about their local river, the Djange River, which is believed to be the home of a local deity who they have depicted looking unhappy about the irresponsible activities of the local community.

12. Dawa Presby Basic School

Inspired by the theme *River of Life*, students centred their work on the importance of rivers as the ultimate source for living organisms. They created a tableau depicting the different types of wildlife that live harmoniously in and around the river and the contribution they make to local biodiversity.



Emily Cartwright

Artist, Boston, UK

Emily Cartwright is an artist and arts educator based in Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire. She graduated from the University of Lincoln in 2007 with BA (Hons) Illustration and now divides her time between freelancing and working at a local high school. Emily's main art practice is based around drawing in all its forms and she specialises in portraiture and pattern design. From this traditional starting point Emily's work has branched out into areas such as paper-cutting, quilling, printmaking and even pyrotechnics! Her ideas are influenced by folk art, music and stories, and she enjoys researching and referencing local history in her projects.

“Rivers of the World has been a fantastic vehicle to explore some of the rich culture of Boston and The Fens, an area closely linked with water throughout its history. It's been so exciting to work with such creative young people and I can't wait to see how the project evolves in collaboration with the partner schools in Nepal.”

Artwork by Jagat Mandir Secondary School, Kathmandu, Nepal, with Kailash K Shrestha



Kailash K Shrestha

Artist, Kathmandu, Nepal

Kailash K Shrestha is a multifaceted contemporary artist based in Kathmandu, born in the village of Gairimudi, Dolakha. He received his BFA from Kathmandu University and MFA from Tribhuvan University. He is the founder of Artudio, a centre for visual arts in Kathmandu. He is the first recipient of the prestigious Young Artist Award from the Australian Himalayan Foundation in 2009. He has participated in several national and international workshops, residencies and exhibitions.

“It was motivating to see the students come up with creative and eco-friendly approaches to solving problems of river degradation through artistic engagement. They have considered changing their habits and following the reduce-reuse-recycle mantra and have now committed to the reduction of plastic consumption, disposing of waste into rivers and working with the community to maintain a clean river. Their brainstorming of ideas focussed on their individual responsibility as well as on the SDG goals.”

The engagement with the educators and more importantly with the students has been rewarding in that we are able to contribute, through Rivers of the World, to not only help young people understand rivers better, but to make a sustained impact.”

Boston, UK & Kathmandu, Nepal



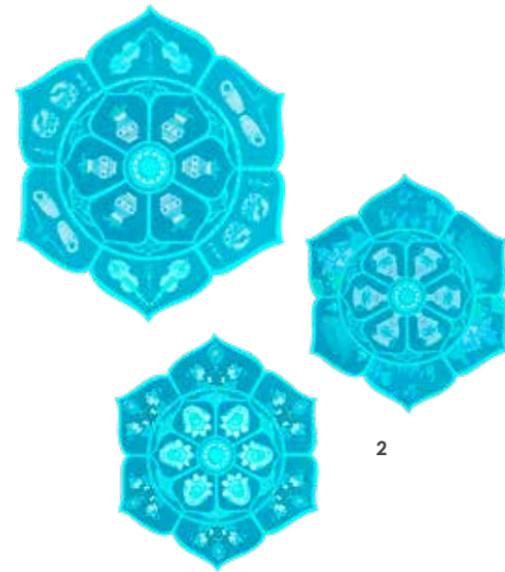
Kathmandu, Nepal

The students in Kathmandu based their beautiful artwork on folklore, pollution and the importance of the river for the economy of their city. They used a range of new art techniques including painting, drawing and sculpture to create their designs.



“I have realized that we should put more effort into developing the perspectives and understanding of our students. Through art, we can bring issues for critical discourse and express our feelings, emotions and observations meaningfully. That is how RoTW has made me feel.”

Shilu Bhetwal, teacher,
John Dewey H S School



“Before participating in this project, rivers were just water and fish for me. However, now I have begun to understand our responsibility to protect them as I learned about climate change and its harmful impact on living beings.”

Dalton Khatri, pupil,
Arunima Secondary School

1. Pupils from Jagat Mandir Secondary School
 2. Details from artwork by Little Flowers Public School
 3. Pupil from Jagat Mandir Secondary School
 4. Pupils from Arunima Secondary School
 5. Pupil from Jagat Mandir Secondary School
 6. Pupils from Arunima Secondary School
- All photos by Kailash K Shrestha



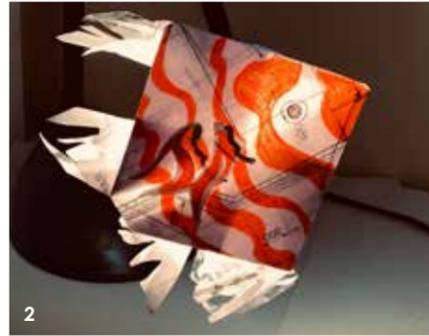
“This project has made me realize how important our local rivers are, and how local water bodies are affected by climate change and global warming.”

Prakriti Pariyar, pupil,
Jagat Mandir Secondary School

Students researched trade, folk tales, music and literature connected with their river and local area and made lovely artwork using printing, painting and paper-cut out techniques.

“The strengths of the programme are the opportunity to work with a true artist as well as bringing inspiration to the teachers. It is refreshing to have a form of CPD which is practical and specifically relevant to art teaching. The workshops have been fantastic and very enjoyable. Thank you.”

Lynsay Volley, teacher,
Boston High School

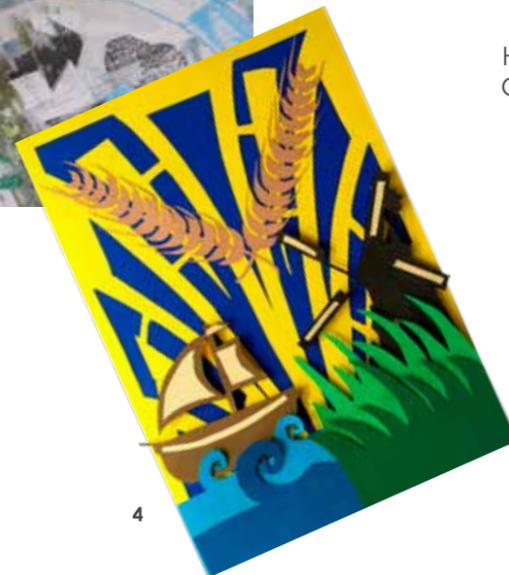


“I am very pleased with the final artwork. I loved using new materials. It was an amazing opportunity.”

Hannah, pupil,
Giles Academy

“I loved doing this as it gave me a chance to share my ideas. By doing something different it gave me a whole new perspective on art. I feel 100% more in touch with my area and I feel ever so proud for this opportunity.”

Lily-May, pupil,
Thomas Cowley High School



1. Pupils from Giles Academy
 2. Fish made at Haven High School
 3. Pupil from Giles Academy
 4. Artwork made at Boston Grammar School
 5. Pupil from Boston Grammar School
 6. Pupil from William Lovell School
 7. Pupils from Boston High School
 8. Artwork made at Boston Grammar School
- All photos by Emily Cartwright



1. Boston High School

2. Haven High Academy

3. William Lovell C of E Academy

4. Thomas Cowley High School

5. Boston Grammar School

6. Giles Academy



7. Tarun Madhyamik Vidhyalaya School

8. Arunima Secondary School

9. Little Flowers Public School

10. Kathmandu Euro School

11. Jagat Mandir Secondary School

12. John Dewey H.S. School

Boston, UK

1. Boston High School

A local legend says that during medieval times, on the day of a fayre a band of marauders fired the town, and such was the wealth of Boston that the streets ran with gold and silver. Students used papercutting to create a town scene, which was then decorated and photographed with gold and silver objects to represent the 'streets running with gold and silver'.

2. Haven High Academy

The students made their artwork using 100% reclaimed materials and rubbish as a way of highlighting the issues around river pollution. They created origami fish, boats or birds using reclaimed paper. They then created an environment for their creature to live in using cardboard boxes and lighting.

3. William Lovell C of E Academy

Using the theme *River Culture* the students listened to river inspired music and looked at stained glass windows, referencing their school. They responded to the music by creating abstract marks and patterns using lots of different media. They used tissue paper on acetate to create a stained-glass effect and used Celtic and medieval patterns you would find in a church.

4. Thomas Cowley High School

The workshop focused on the life of Lincolnshire people and old folk tales from The Fens. The students created papercut illustrations based on an old story called *The Dead Moon*. Each papercut illustration has four different layers, so every student took part in designing the illustration and were able to cut their own individual piece in the artwork.

5. Boston Grammar School

Using the theme *Resourceful River*, students chose to focus primarily on the important trade history of Boston. They also researched Eastern European paper artforms such as *wycinanki* and *karpiniai*, in order to reference these important communities in the town. They designed a graphic image based around symmetrical patterns, using cut paper, collage and quilling techniques.

6. Giles Academy

The students focused on maps, looking at the whole length of the River Witham. They were shown lots of different types of maps from history and literature, showing both real and imagined places. The students made their own maps using collagraph printmaking, collage techniques and drawing and painting.

Kathmandu, Nepal

7. Tarun Madhyamik Vidhyalaya School

Students came from diverse ethnic backgrounds so they chose to use the metaphor of a tree to show how nourishing rivers can be in terms of livelihoods. In their tree, each leaf illustrates a different yet sustainable economic activity that is possible because of rivers in the parts of Nepal they represent as a group.

8. Arunima Secondary School

Students wanted to express how life in Nepal is now intertwined with the use of plastic. To represent the connection between pollution, identity and the river, students used their own image covered with a mask created from plastic consumer waste.

9. Little Flowers Public School

Mandalas are an integral part of Nepal's visual culture and are important to Newar's ritualistic practices. As the majority of the students belong to the Newar community of Patan city, they decided to apply the motif of the mandala to represent water eco-systems as universal blueprints, a base for civilisation.

10. Kathmandu Euro School

As part of the workshops, students were requested to interview their family members about the rivers they grew up around. This exposed the changes that have gripped some rivers which are no longer able to support life. To draw a comparison, students researched rivers both abundant with life and ones that flow through the urban centre of the country.

11. Jagat Mandir Secondary School

Every drop of water counts. Students represented their own rivers and the resources they provide to support economic activities, not just for local communities but for the entire nation. The artwork highlights the rivers that have never been acknowledged by educational institutions in their curriculum as they are not seen as major bodies of water.

12. John Dewey H.S. School

Students decided to explore the idea of legacy when depicting their city, Kathmandu. Two rivers, the Bagmati River and the Bishnumati River, surround the city. Linking the continuity of the city from ancient structures to modern edifices, the artwork aims to illustrate folklores recounted to the students by their grandparents about the rivers and the city that lives by them.



Adam Sadiq

Artist, Liverpool, UK

Adam Sadiq is a multidisciplinary artist and creative technologist whose work focuses on the field of social-ecological futures. This explores how - by accepting that society and nature are deeply connected and interdependent - we can dream, create and invent our own futures that explore, celebrate and nurture this connection. By working with different communities to explore issues like the climate crisis, Adam hopes to help them express their own visions of a future where growing the social-ecological awareness of all participants in society is front and centre.



Hector Dyer

Artist, Liverpool, UK

Hector Dyer is a self-taught artist who started out making street performances in Bristol with DIY costumes and props to create interventions in public spaces. These developed into larger outdoor processions with audience interaction and support. He now works across performance, stitch, weaving and writing to explore our relationship to the natural world and sites of energy. He uses ideas around time and memory to try and make sense of how much change we are living through and how much change we are creating for the future.



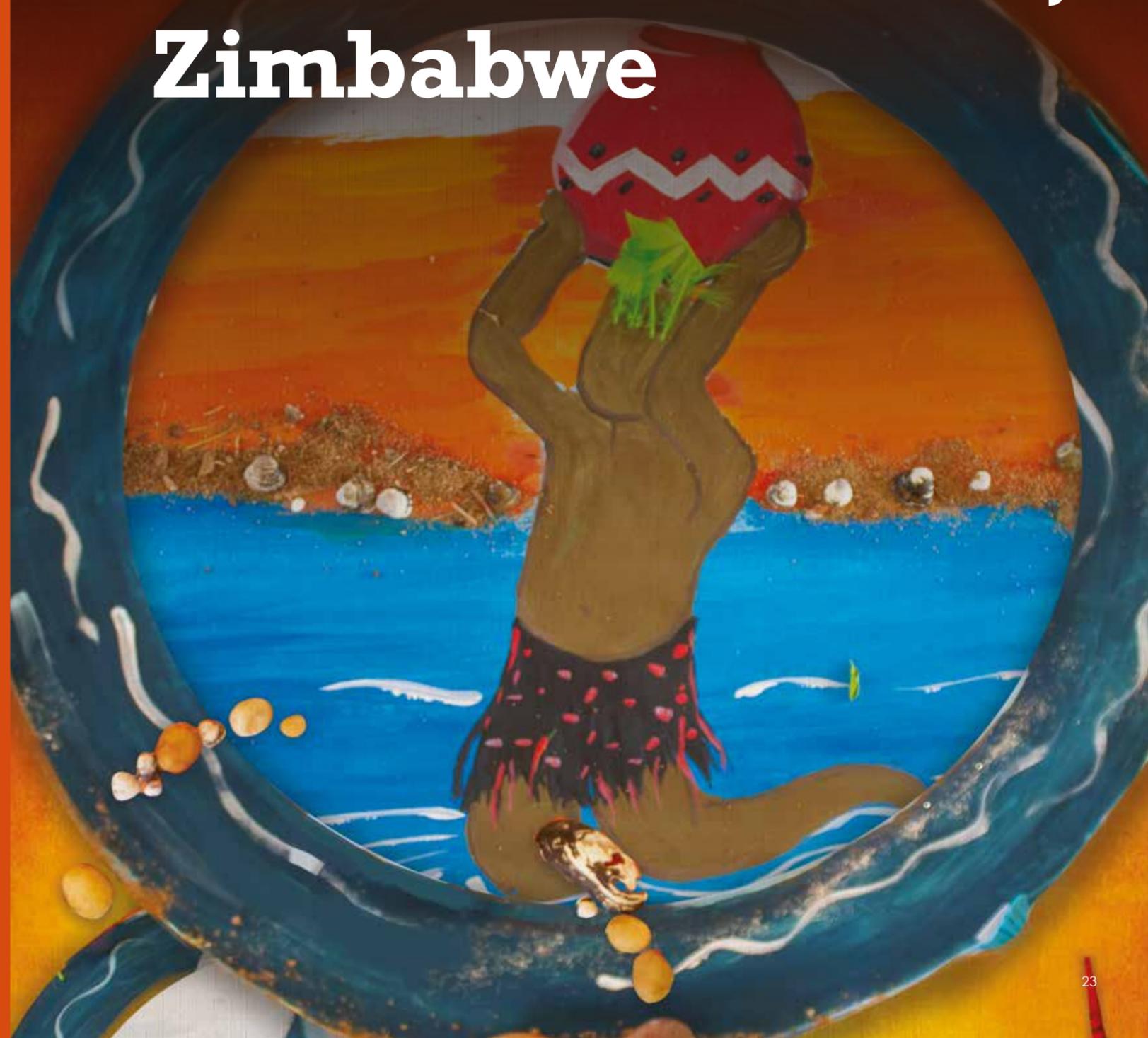
Eugene Mapondera

Artist, Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe

Eugene Mapondera is the Creative Director at Kay Media Africa as well as Co-Founder of Comexposed, a creative hub for digital artists in Zimbabwe. He is an accomplished animator, illustrator, and multimedia designer with over 12 years of experience.

“Through the programme, the students benefitted from the opportunity to explore and develop artistic skills thereby improving their creativity and imagination. Through the collaborative nature of the work there was exchange of ideas and knowledge which enriched the learning experience as well as reinforcing the theoretical concepts in a fun way.”

Liverpool, UK & Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe



Artwork by Munyati ZESA High School, Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe, with Eugene Mapondera

Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe

The workshops focused on the wildlife, environment and economy of the Munyati River. Students used sculpture, model-making and painting to create their artwork.



“Through participating in the Rivers of the World programme I learnt various research techniques that helped us gather information for our project. I learnt about how our ecosystem is being negatively affected and how we can play a role in protecting it.”

Ashley Kuwezha, pupil,
Sayanti Baptist High school



“The RoTW project helped the students to practice experiential and participatory learning as enshrined in Zimbabwe’s updated curriculum. Learners developed critical thinking and creativity and imagination skills as they explored the river themes. The learners had a deeper appreciation of the subject matter as theoretical aspects were taking a more practical dimension.”

Memory Nyarota, teacher,
Kwekwe High School

“This programme was a great opportunity as we managed to explore and gain valuable knowledge about the Munyati River. It was refreshing taking a trip down to the river as we managed to learn more about the river life, a welcome break from the normal school routine.”

Olly Chitiza, pupil,
Sayanti Baptist High School



- 1. Pupils from Sanyathi High School
 - 2. Pupils from Sanyathi High School
 - 3. Pupils from Rimuka 1 High School
 - 4. Pupils from Rimuka 2 High School
 - 5. Pupils from Munyati Zesa High School
 - 6. Artwork made at Rimuka 1 High School
- All photos by Eugene Mapondera

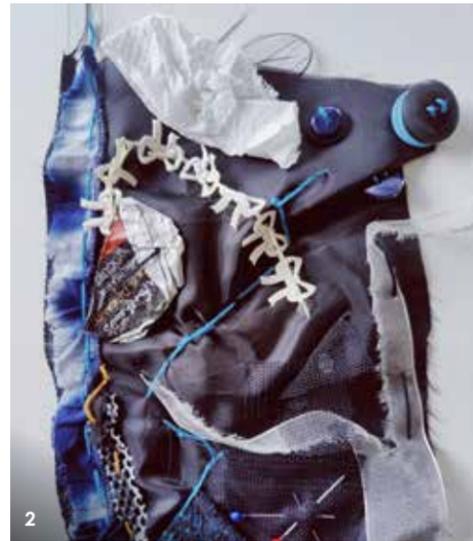
Students from Liverpool researched the River Mersey and made artworks as a response to the economy, tourism and the environment using fabric, photography and text.

“I have learnt a lot about salt marshes and I look at them differently now, they are very important. I had a really good time showing our art skills and developing creative ideas. I had a lot of fun doing this.”

Maya, pupil,
Bellerive FCJ Catholic College



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“I really enjoyed being able to have the opportunity to work on an international project. I didn't know I could do such good computer work and I learned how to do some good effects in Photoshop.”

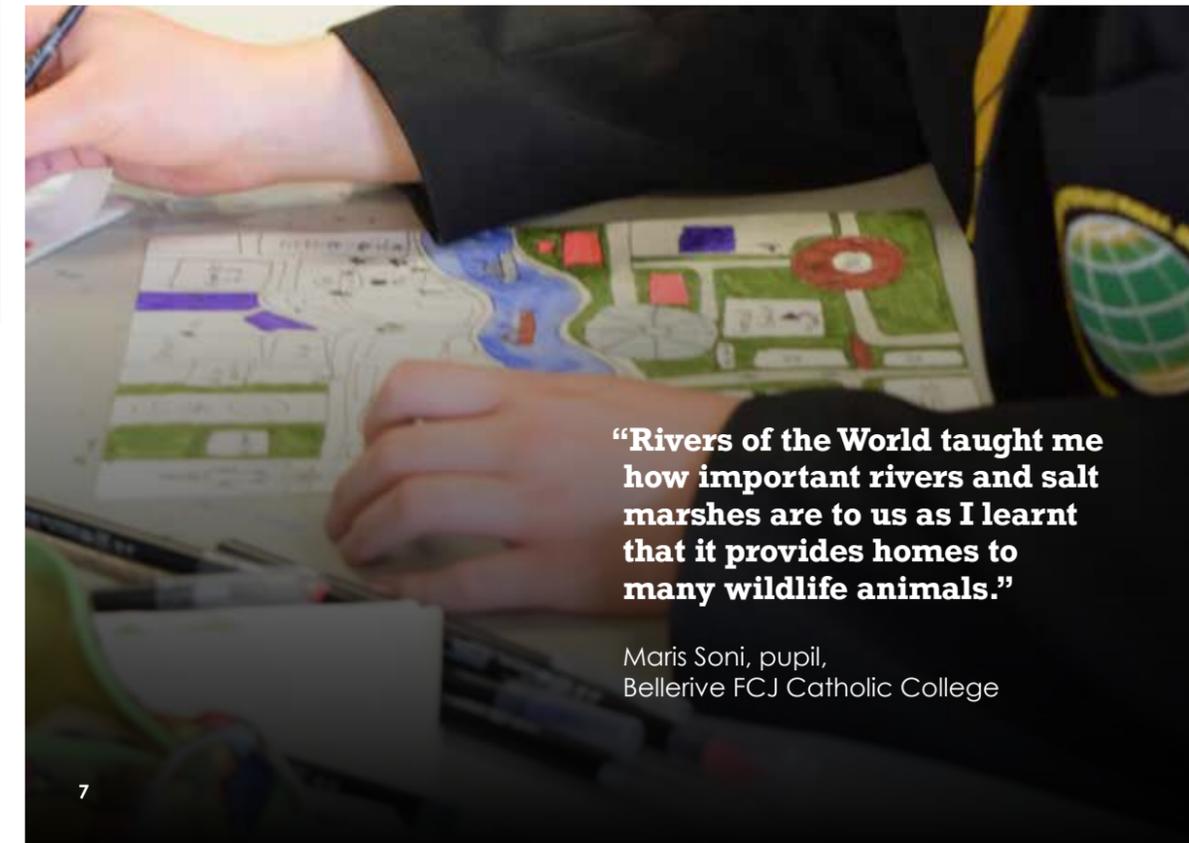
Chad Anduyan, pupil,
Cardinal Heenan School



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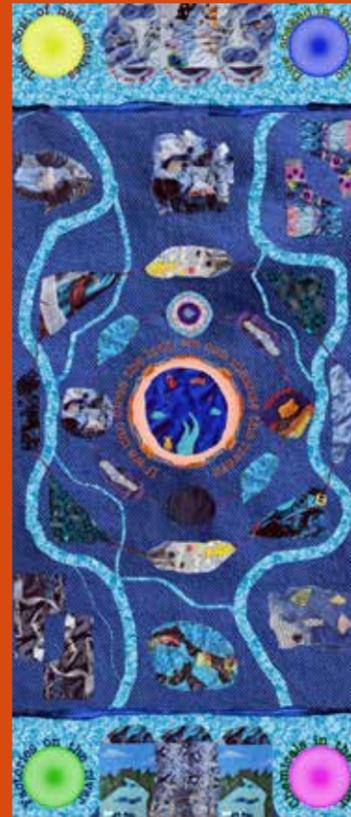
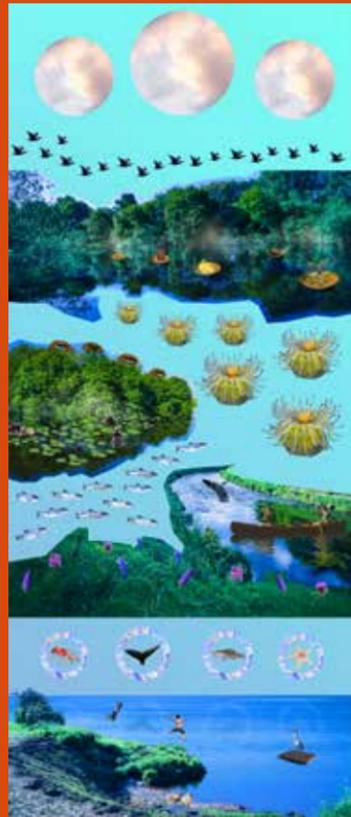


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“Rivers of the World taught me how important rivers and salt marshes are to us as I learnt that it provides homes to many wildlife animals.”

Maris Soni, pupil,
Bellerive FCJ Catholic College

1. Bird made at Bellerive College
 2. Textile made at The Belvedere Academy
 3. Pupil from Bellerive College
 4. Textile made at The Belvedere Academy
 5. Pupil from Broadgreen School
 6. Details from artwork by Broughton Hall Catholic High School
 7. Pupil from Broadgreen School
- All photos by Hector Dyer



1. Woodchurch High School

2. Broughton Hall Catholic High School

3. Bellerive FCJ Catholic College

4. The Belvedere Academy

5. Cardinal Heenan High School

6. Broadgreen International School

Liverpool, UK

1. Woodchurch High School

Students explored the notion of reconciliation to both the past and future by responding to a poem by Langston Hughes: *The Negro speaks of Rivers*. Students explored Liverpool's past connection with slavery and also how the future of the city must reconcile its impact on the world's changing climate.

2. Broughton Hall Catholic High School

Using *The Power of Water* as their theme, students learnt about the journey of the River Mersey. They created postcards using landscape images taken from points along the river and one of its tributaries, the River Goyt. The artworks evoke themes of nature, the water cycle and ecology and were inspired by a 1928 ceremony in which Liverpool 'married' the River Mersey.

3. Bellerive FCJ Catholic College

Students researched the adaptive qualities of salt marsh, which grows around the River Mersey. They looked at how salt marsh provides life for a range of different species and creates a habitat which can thrive in the changing tides. They thought about how the characteristics of salt marsh are present in their own lives and made their own inner worlds.

4. The Belvedere Academy

Students traced the history of industry on the River Mersey alongside the global fashion industry today. They learnt about the role of water in making new clothes and how the environment and society cannot be separated. Students used embroidery, hand-sewing and appliqué to create works from old clothes and fabrics. The final artwork responds to the idea of *pollution and solution*.

5. Cardinal Heenan High School

Using the theme *River Economy*, the students explored the contemporary identity of Liverpool as a port city. They created postcards that were inspired by the modern Freeport of Liverpool, container traffic, the plight of up to 300,000 sea workers stranded on board cargo ships during the COVID pandemic and the effect of the port on the natural world.

6. Broadgreen International School

Students approached *River Culture* through tourism. They looked back in history to the wet dock and the Williamson tunnels and thought about the myths and secrets entwined with the River Mersey. Students imagined themselves as tour guides and created maps of Liverpool in the future.

Mashonaland West, Zimbabwe

7. Kwekwe High School

Students created miniature landscapes to represent the infrastructure built around the river such as bridges, schools, the power station and roads. The image shows the town to be above the river and the life within the river such as fish to be underground. This is a metaphor for how human needs come first.

8. Rimuka 1 High School

Students made miniature landscapes showing the various economic and social benefits derived from the Munyati River. Alluvial gold can be seen on the banks of the river, fishing and power generation are also featured. The infinity symbol encapsulates all the sculptures as a metaphor for how the energy, wealth and transportation provided by the river can sustain human activity.

9. Sanyathi Baptist High School

Students depicted various forms of aquatic life which can be found in and around the Munyati River. The composition merges the various elements, which were made using clay and paint, to represent a harmonious co-existence within the ecosystem. The rapids from the river at the centre of work hint at how it's the source of life.

10. Jameson High School

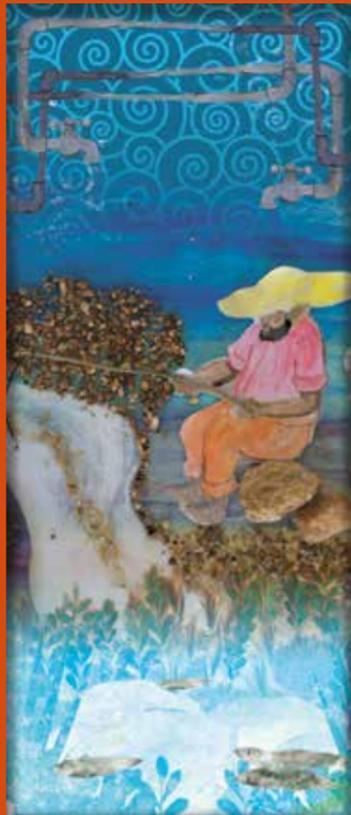
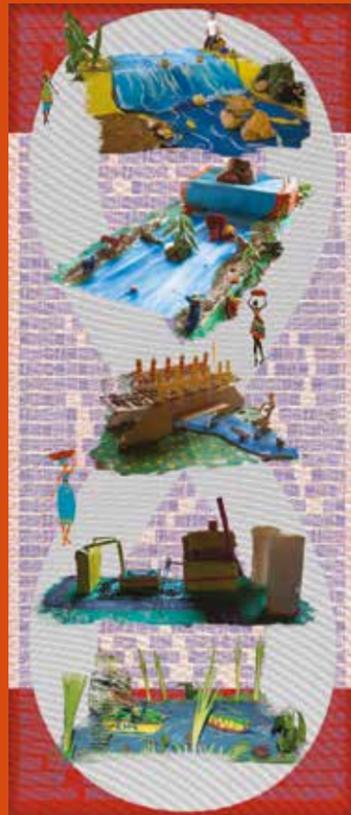
This work depicts the impact that the coal powered hydroelectric power station, situated near the Munyati River, has on the environment. The banks of the river are flanked by piles of refuse which are discarded by the surrounding communities. It serves as a reminder that pollution is everyone's fault and communities have to pull together to find solutions.

11. Rimuka 2 High School

Through the depiction of a fisherman and the inclusion of Kapents, a type of fish found in the Munyati River, the students are highlighting one of the principal activities that takes place along the banks of the river. The illustrated pipe and tap are representative of the irrigation systems which draw water from the river to sustain surrounding agriculture.

12. Munyati ZESA High School

The large blue circles in this artwork represent the flowing river, within them are depicted traditional beliefs such as a person practicing a ritual by the river and the threat of mermaids and water spirits.



7. Kwekwe High School

8. Rimuka 1 High School

9. Sanyathi Baptist High School

10. Jameson High School

11. Rimuka 2 High School

12. Munyati ZESA High School



BloomInArt

Artists, Tees Valley, UK

BloomInArt are a community arts organisation based in the North East of England. They deliver creative arts projects within the community, engaging and inspiring people to use their imagination, learn new skills, and create a passion for the arts. They support the development of ideas through a range of specialist processes and materials including glass, ceramics, textiles, printmaking and sculpture.

“Rivers of the World has connected us globally with artists and places with a shared focus that will be a standing legacy. We have loved connecting with all of the schools and the international artists. The collective resilience, determination, passion and excitement to succeed has been inspirational.

Art is a powerful tool, pupils and teachers have embraced this experience, learnt new techniques and found confidence and love for a new process that will inspire future work and create lasting memories.

We are honoured to have played our part and can't wait to see the students artwork showcased over the summer.”



Joe Khachan

Artist, Beirut, Lebanon

Joe Khachan is a multidisciplinary artist, a creative arts instructor and social entrepreneur. His main ongoing project, Our Human Ties, consists of a social, cultural, and conscious economic initiative, based on fostering self-expression through arts education, social justice awareness, and economic development.



Noel Keserwany

Artist, Beirut, Lebanon

Noel Keserwany is a multidisciplinary artist based in Lebanon who holds a master's degree in advertising. Growing up in Lebanon in the midst of socio-political turmoil, she developed her vocal criticism of the situation by using storytelling methods.

Tees Valley, UK & Beirut, Lebanon

Artwork by Northfield School & Sports College, Tees Valley, UK, with BloomInArt

Beirut, Lebanon

The students from Beirut researched the River Tees and created stories and illustrations. Their animated characters represent villains and heroes fighting to combat the effects of pollution.



1

“This project was a refreshing experience and took one’s mind off things. I felt like I did my best when it comes to exhibiting my talents and practicing my hobbies of writing and character design. This open-minded no-pressure medium where you are free to showcase your efforts while also feeling the overwhelming sense of achievement after completing the endeavor was just downright cool.”

Lara Ammash, pupil,
Zahya Kaddoura High School

“Despite the bad circumstances in Lebanon, the British Council gave the opportunity to our students to express themselves through artistic drawings and creative stories, and they learned about new rivers and pollution. It was a very nice experience for me and my students.”

Rana Omar Osta, teacher,
Zahya Kaddoura High School



2



3



4

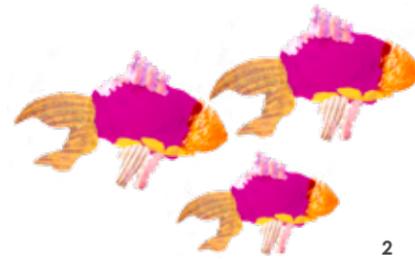
“Participating in Rivers of the World was one of the best experiences I’ve ever been through. It was pretty enjoyable learning more about the River Tees and it also helped us refresh our imagination by creating a short story and our own new characters!”

Rayan Kanjo, pupil,
Omar Farroukh High School

- 1. Details from artwork by Ras Beirut Mixed Public High School
 - 2. Teachers from Omar Farroukh High School
 - 3. Pupils from Zahya Kaddoura High School
 - 4. Details from artwork by Riad El Solh High Mixed Public School
- All photos by Joe Khachan

Tees Valley, UK

The schools across the Tees Valley focused on their partner country of Lebanon. They made work referencing cultural heritage, festivals and pollution using textiles, lino-cuts and collage.



2



4



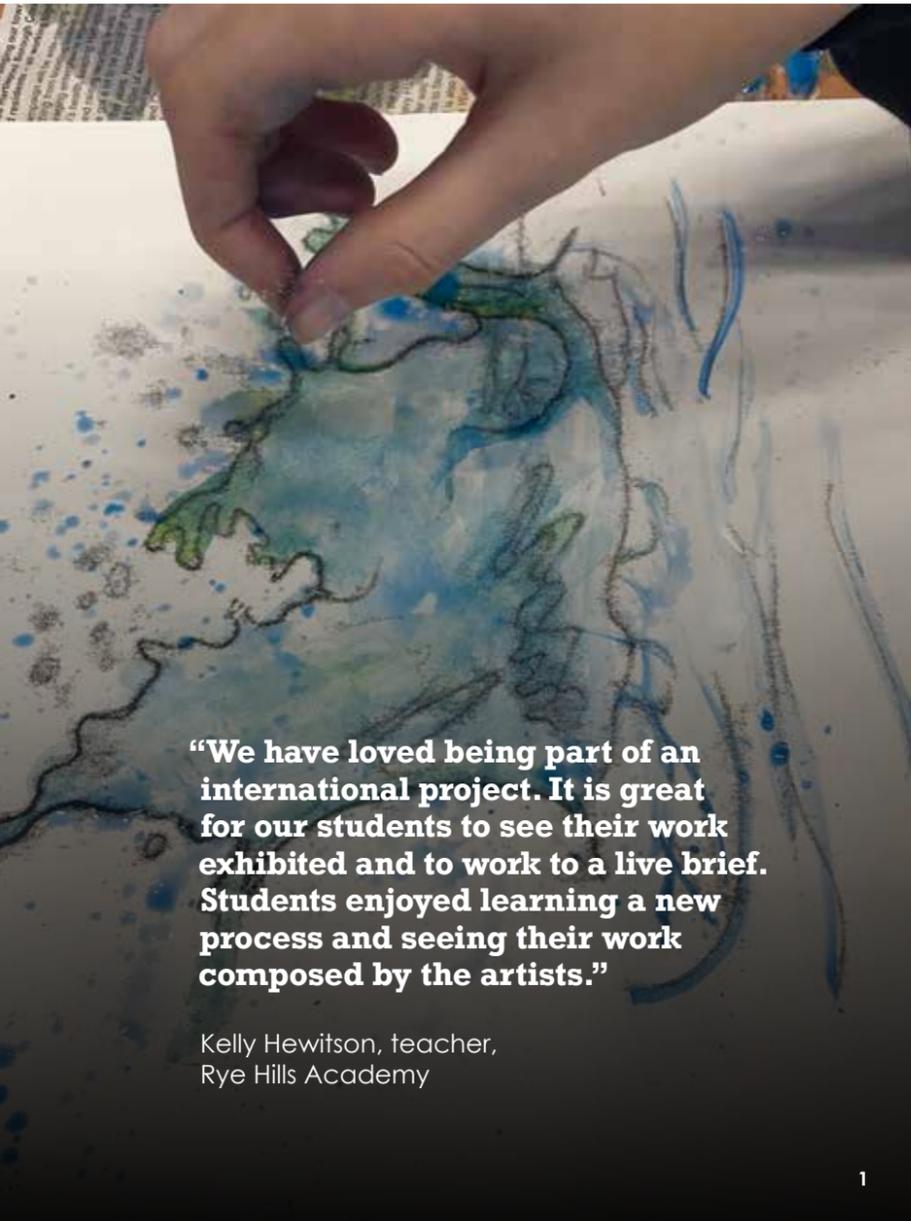
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6



7



“We have loved being part of an international project. It is great for our students to see their work exhibited and to work to a live brief. Students enjoyed learning a new process and seeing their work composed by the artists.”

Kelly Hewitson, teacher,
Rye Hills Academy



3

“An inspirational and cultural day for all students involved. Students developed their ideas in response to work by artists from Lebanon and investigated cityscapes along the river. They combined printing, felt making and hand embroidery to create vibrant and unique work. It was parents evening later that week and all parents said their children had come home “totally buzzing” and couldn’t stop talking about what a brilliant day they’d had. It was so lovely to see how inspired they were to see the draft of their design too. Big smiles and pride all round.”

Sharon Pinchen, teacher,
High Tunstall College of Science



9

1. Pupil from Northfield School
 2. Details from artwork by Rye Hills Academy
 3. Pupils from Rye Hills Academy
 4. Pupil from High Tunstall College
 5. Pupil from High Tunstall College
 6. Pupil from Rye Hills Academy
 7. Pupil from High Tunstall College
 8. Detail from artwork by Rye Hills Academy
 9. Pupil from Acklam Grange School
- All photos by BloomInArt



8



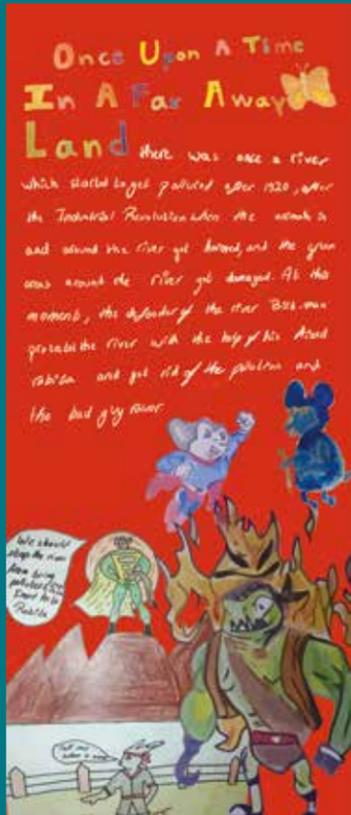
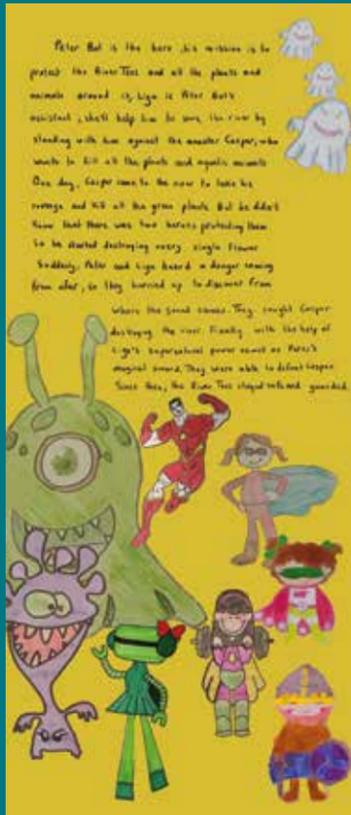
1. Rye Hills Academy

2. Teesside High School

3. Northfield School & Sports College

4. High Tunstall College of Science

5. Acklam Grange School



6. Riad El Solh High Mixed Public School

7. Jamil Al Rawass High School

8. Omar Farroukh High School

9. Zahya Kaddoura High School

10. Ras Beirut Mixed Public High School

Tees Valley, UK

1. Rye Hills Academy

After its canalization, the Beirut River became a no-man's-land and a dumping ground. By passing through the urban neighbourhoods all the river pollution flows straight into the Mediterranean Sea, making it a local problem with a major global impact. Students wanted to raise awareness of the pollution that directly impacts the ecology of the river and highlight our responsibility to reduce single use plastic.

2. Teesside High School

The Beirut River is a vital resource that needs to be preserved. Forgotten rivers become a source of pollution and disease, fragmenting communities and degrading biodiversity with urban encroachment. Students studied plans for the revival of the Beirut River. Whilst experimenting and exploring maps and river flow, students identified the shape of a face which influenced much of their work and final design.

3. Northfield School & Sports College

Students were inspired by the passion and celebration of Beirut's Vardavar Festival. Vardavar's history dates back to pagan times. The ancient festival is traditionally associated with the deity Astghik, who was the goddess of water, beauty, love, and fertility. Students explored various printing processes to capture the essence, celebration, expressive forms and movement associated with the event.

4. High Tunstall College of Science

Artisanry is an essential part of Lebanese history, however, despite the role it played in the country's economic and social development, its gradual disappearance places Lebanon's cultural heritage at risk. Students experimented with textile processes, exploring traditional skills which were often passed down through generations. Inspiration was taken from Lebanese artist Huguette Caland.

5. Acklam Grange School

Students took inspiration from Lebanese artist Lamia Loreige whose work uncovers the different facets of Beirut's River with its recent and rapid transformations. Using the native flora, students experimented with mark making, using foliage and flowers as inspiration for painting and printing. As a contrast to this free-flowing process, students also created lino-cut flowers with defined detail, form and hard edges.

Beirut, Lebanon

6. Riad El Solh High Mixed Public School

Students learned about the River Tees and wrote story ideas with fantasy characters. These ideas were combined into a finished story which was illustrated with their characters.

7. Jamil Al Rawass High School

The students developed their storytelling skills which they then used to create fantastical tales based on the River Tees and the villains, ie. pollutants, that are trying to destroy it. Luckily there is a hero who saves the day!

8. Omar Farroukh High School

The students took part in a storytelling and character design workshop, where they had to read a presentation about the River Tees. From this information, students developed stories which were then illustrated.

9. Zahya Kaddoura High School

This artwork is based on the River Tees. Students researched the causes of pollution and made stories with characters. The hero defends the river from the harm of pollution.

10. Ras Beirut Mixed Public High School

The students researched their partner river, the River Tees in the UK. From their findings they created stories which contained many characters. The illustration of these characters along with a chosen story are shown in the final design.



**Colin
Yates**

Artist, Coventry, UK

Over the past 20 years, Colin Yates has combined his passion for art, sport and education within his artistic practice. During this period, his artwork has been displayed in a series of prestigious solo exhibitions throughout the UK. He works across a range of fine-art media including; painting, drawing, printmaking, and electronic graphics.



**Ernest
Mtaya**

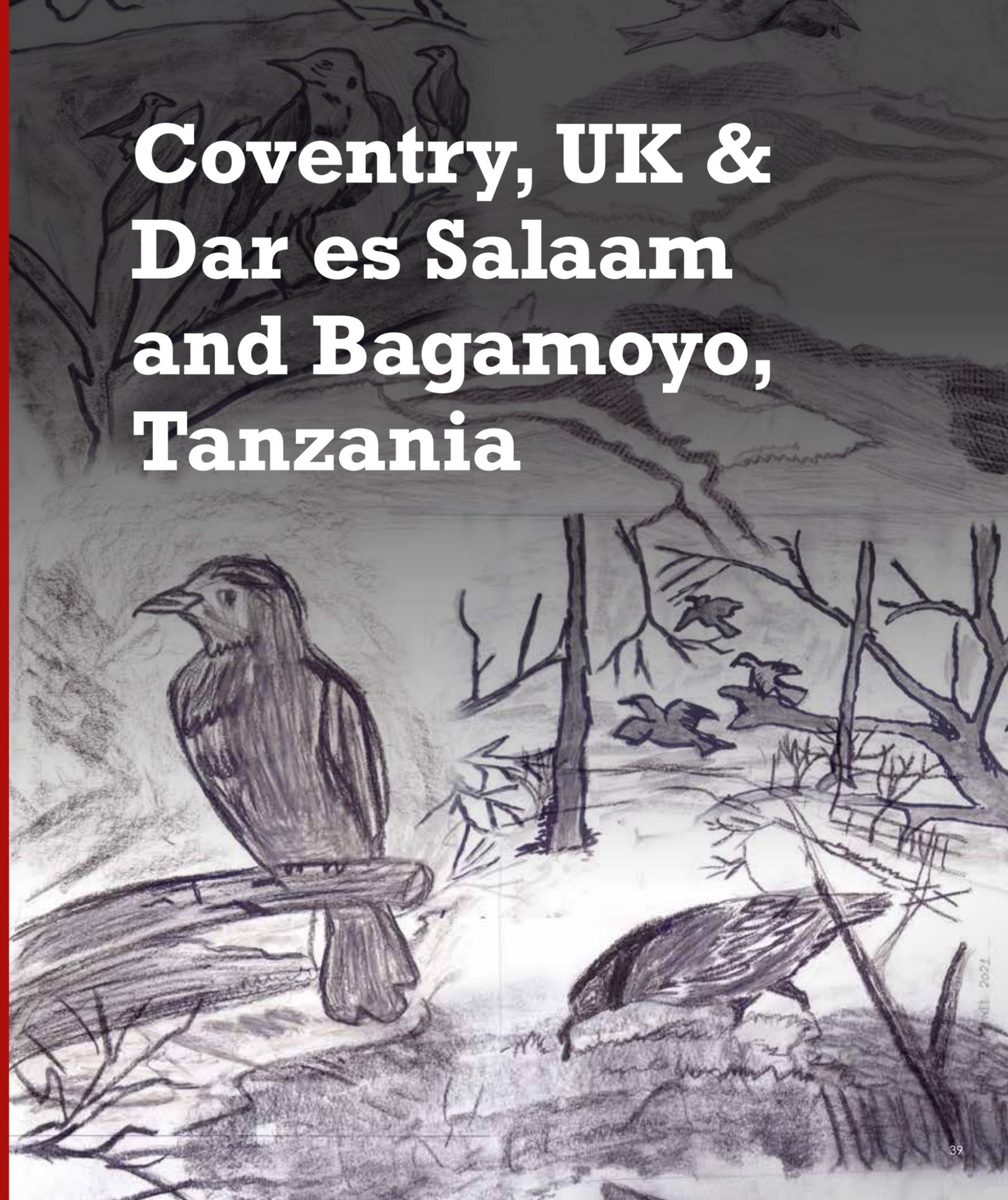
Artist, Bagamoyo,
Tanzania

Ernest Mtaya is an experienced artist who has organised many art competitions and exhibitions for young people and is registered by the Arts Council in Tanzania. Currently employed by the Academic International Primary School, he also teaches art via TV programmes and is the chairman of the art group known as Dar Art Youths (DAY).

“This Art and Education project for me means a lot as it gives students two things at the same time Art and Environmental education on rivers. May it be a permanent project.”

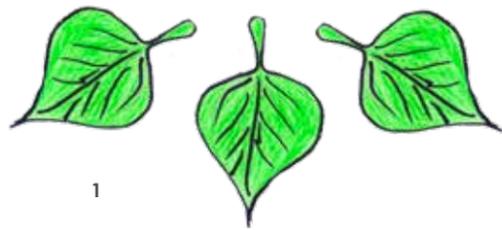
Artwork by Pugu
Secondary School,
Tanzania, with
Ernest Mtaya

Coventry, UK & Dar es Salaam and Bagamoyo, Tanzania



Dar es Salaam and Bagamoyo, Tanzania

The students in Tanzania researched the River Sherbourne. They used charcoal, drawing and painting to convey stories and represent their findings.



1

“It was the most wonderful workshop I have ever attended, I learned new skills and discovered more about the power of art and creativity.”

Neema Derick Mfuru, pupil,
Jangwani Girls Secondary School



3



4



2

“Students have learned various painting techniques and about the Sherbourne River. They have learned that the river is in Coventry city centre and that it is completely different from our river, the River Ruvu. Our river is in the wild and we have dangerous animals like Crocodiles and Hippos. It has been an opportunity for us teachers to learn about this river and we are very grateful.”

Fita Lutonja, teacher,
Zinga Secondary School

“I experienced how to take care of things and to motivate others on issues concerning the conservation of the rivers in the world. I now know that pollution is not only a problem in Africa.”

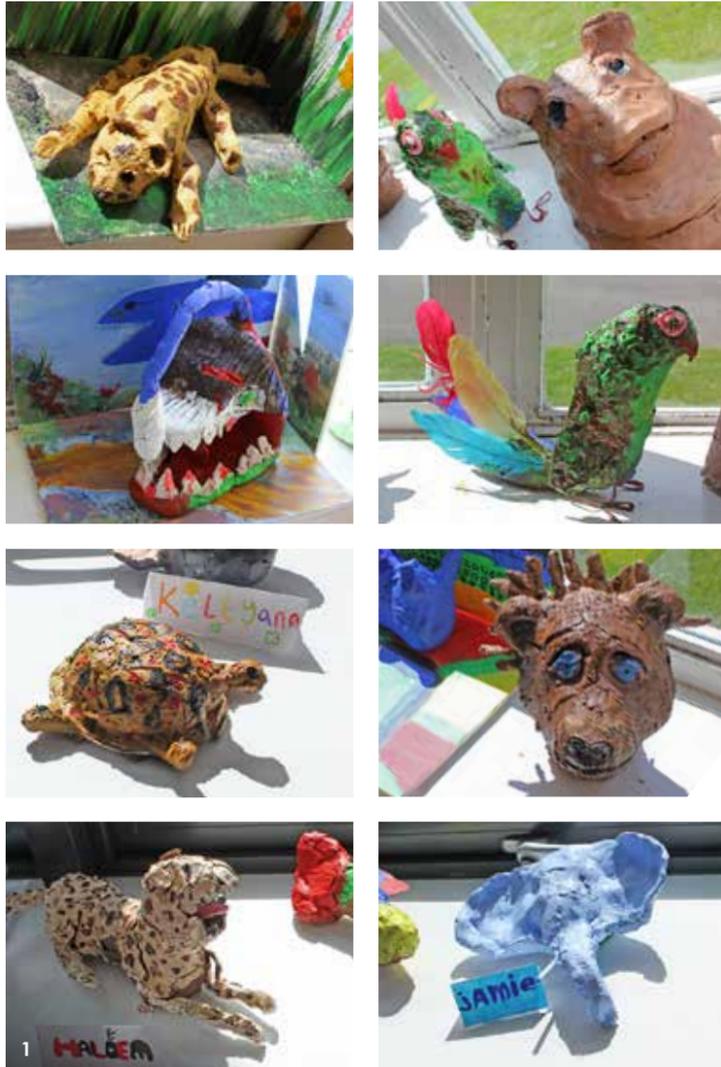
Henrique Emmanuel, pupil,
Dunda Secondary School

1. Detail from artwork by Dunda Secondary School
 2. Pupil from Pugu Secondary School
 3. Pupils from Jangwani Secondary School
 4. Pupil from Jangwani Secondary School
 5. Detail from artwork by Dunda Secondary School
- All photos by Ernest Mtaya



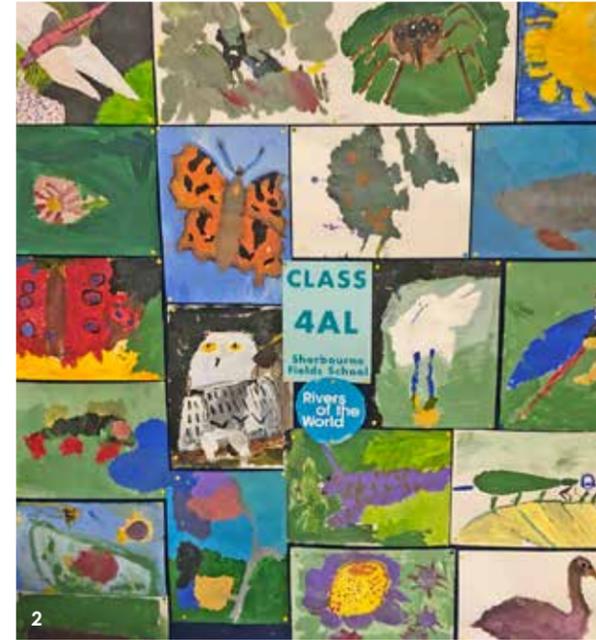
5

For the first time the programme worked with all SEN schools in Coventry. Students researched the wildlife of the River Ruvu and made colourful clay sculptures of the animals that inhabit it.



“We totally enjoyed our workshop days and Colin’s work ethic and how to handle our students was brilliant. The KS4 students all achieved an outcome that can be used in their personal GCSE ‘Portfolio of Work’ to enhance the content.”

Sue Ladbury, teacher,
Woodfield School



“Wow the artwork looks great! Thanks so much, the pupils will love it when they get to see them exhibited.”

Sharon Davies, teacher,
Baginton Fields School

1. Sculptures made at Woodfield School
 2. Display at Sherbourne School
 3. Cards made at Baginton Fields School
- All photos by Colin Yates



“This has been GREAT!!! The clay work looks amazing!”

Lilly Riach, teacher,
Riverbank Academy



1. Corley Centre

2. Sherbourne Fields School

3. Woodfield School

4. Riverbank Academy

5. Baginton Fields School

Coventry, UK

1. Corley Centre

Students created a selection of wonderful clay sculptures reflecting the animals that live in and around the River Ruvu in Tanzania.

2. Sherbourne Fields School

Students represented the marvelous wildlife of the River Ruvu through clay sculptures that were then painted using acrylic paints.

3. Woodfield School

Students looked at the wildlife of the River Ruvu and created sculptures using wire, aluminium foil and air-drying clay.

4. Riverbank Academy

Students made colourful clay sculptures of the animals that live around the River Ruvu and then created individual environments for them to live in using foam-board.

5. Baginton Fields School

Using air drying clay and vibrant colours found in Tanzania, the students made fabulous clay sculptures of the wildlife that can be found around the river.

Dar es Salaam and Bagamoyo, Tanzania

6. Dunda Secondary School

The students joined hands with the residents of Coventry and used logos and slogans to show the importance of protecting the River Sherbourne.

7. Zinga Secondary School

Students were inspired by the invertebrates found in the River Sherbourne. They are seen flying or crawling and include insects whose survival depends on water or mud along the river.

8. Jangwani Secondary School

Students explored the different structures, such as bridges and roads, that can be found around the River Sherbourne. They made colourful drawings from their findings.

9. Kikaro Secondary School

Students focused their research on the historical use of the River Sherbourne and made drawings to reflect the activities that once took place.

10. Pugu Secondary School

Students researched and then created charcoal drawings of the different bird species that can be seen around the River Sherbourne.



6. Dunda Secondary School

7. Zinga Secondary School

8. Jangwani Secondary School

9. Kikaro Secondary School

10. Pugu Secondary School



Leeza John

Artist, Kerala, India

Leeza John is a Kerala-based Indian illustrator and architect, who rediscovered her love for illustration while working on ways to develop and represent her designs. She finds simple ideas extremely powerful and explores the possibility of creating joyous pieces of art with whatever she finds. Hence her work is varied and constantly evolving.

She believes that art should be accessible to all and nurtured at a young age, and aims to conduct more workshops to introduce young children to be more observant of their surroundings and create art with whatever they may have. Currently her work explores the intricate textures and graphic patterns of the natural world.



Shona Watt

Lead Artist, London, UK

“The RoTW global links continue to grow and art remains a source of inspiration, nourishing young people’s creativity. Art in this context is a medium for deeper understanding and respect for the rich history of the world and its diverse cultures.

It allows not just the students but the many people who see the final exhibitions, to travel to countries in their imagination with children as guides, to places which they might not be able visit in person.”

Artwork by Brentford School for Girls, Hounslow, UK, with Shona Watt

Hounslow, UK & Kerala, India



Kerala, India

Students from Kerala researched the River Thames and made imaginative artworks as a response to history, wildlife and city life using collage, mixed-media and found materials.

“These Corona days were very boring for me, however, that’s when the Rivers of the World group began. I joined the group because I love craft very much and I know the value of water. I am so happy now. Thank you all.”

Keerthana, pupil,
GHSS Aryanad

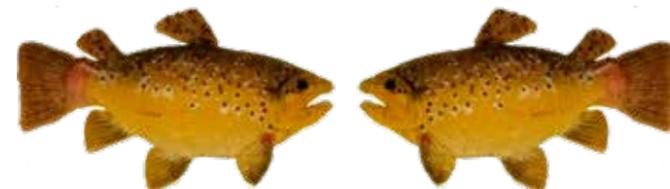


“We were unable to step out due to the spreading of coronavirus and the lockdowns and we were all getting very bored and anxious. It was at this time that the workshop came to us. This workshop made us very relaxed and very happy... a big thank you”

Abhinav, pupil,
GHSS Aruvikkara

“This project helped me and the children escape from the mental stress and boredom brought on by the pandemic. Through this project children developed their creativity and it provided a great platform to express ourselves. We are very proud that our work will be shown on the banks of the River Thames.”

Shyla, teacher,
GHSS Aruvikkara



2

1. Pupils from GHSS Aruvikkara
2. Detail from artwork by GHSS Ayilam
3. Pupil from GHSS Aruvikkara
4. Pupil from GHSS Aruvikkara
5. Pupil from GHSS Aruvikkara
6. Detail from artwork by GHSS Neyyardam



5



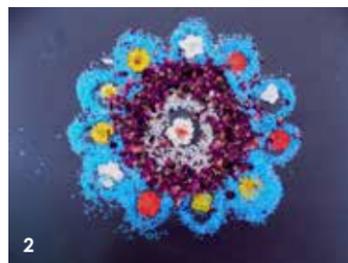
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The schools from Hounslow are in their second year of the programme and so based their artwork on their partner region, Kerala. Students made masks, collage and sculpture to convey their vibrant designs.



“I really enjoyed this work! It was amazing to understand the relationship between humans and cows. I hope to do it again soon.”

Akhil, pupil,
The Heathland School



“I enjoyed learning about another culture and incorporating it into our artwork. It was an enlightening experience, completely different from our own art lessons.”

Hafsa, pupil,
Brentford School for Girls

1. Pupils from Heathland School
 2. Artwork from The Green School
 3. Mask made at Gunnersbury School
 4. Detail from artwork by The Green School
 5. Pupil from Brentford School
 6. Pupils from Gunnersbury School
- All photos by Shona Watt



“The workshop was completed by Yr 8’s who have chosen art for GCSE. They are now really excited about their subject choice.”

Caroline Vincent, teacher,
Brentford School for Girls

“I enjoyed designing what I was going to do the most. I have done the model differently and better than the drawing. It was really creative and I am really proud of what I have done and can’t wait to show my friends and family.”

Miah, pupil,
Brentford School for Girls



1. Brentford School for Girls

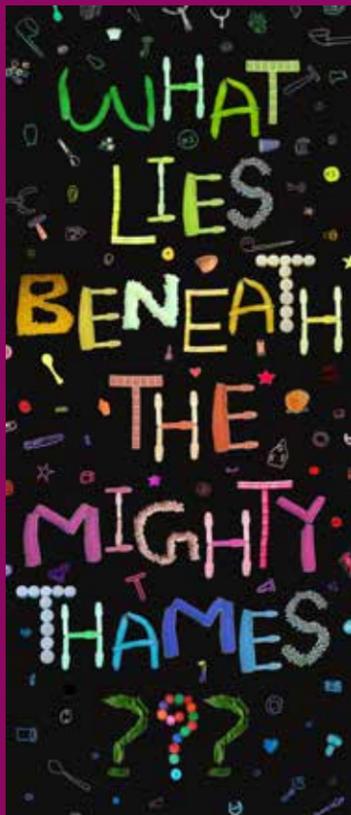
2. Gunnersbury Catholic School

3. Bolder Academy

4. Woodbridge Park Education Service

5. The Heathland School

6. The Green School for Girls



7. Govt. Higher Secondary School, Karamana Girls

8. Govt. Higher Secondary School, Karamana Boys

9. Govt. Higher Secondary School, Neyyadam

10. Govt. Higher Secondary School, Aryanad

11. Govt. Higher Secondary School, Aruvikkara

12. Govt. Higher Secondary School, Ayilam

Hounslow, UK

1. Breniford School for Girls

The Onam Harvest Festival concludes with an astonishing pageant. Gods and Goddess's, elephants, farmers, tiger men and enormous floats celebrating the river make up this electrifying parade. The elephants are decorated with gold head pieces and are accompanied by dancers dressed as devotional sculptures. Students collaborated to design and make three-dimensional devotional head pieces from recycled metal, gold foil and mixed media.

2. Gunnersbury Catholic School

Students explored the theme *River Culture*. They investigated the parade of the Onam Harvest Festival in Kerala and researched traditional theatre, dance and performance. They each made a mask based on the theatrical performance of: The Pukkali, folk art, Kathkali, and other traditional ritual dance styles of the region.

3. Bolder Academy

Students examined the recurring symbols in Hindu sculpture as seen on the many temples on the banks of the River Karamana in Trivandrum. They worked with various clays, explored making three-dimensional images and bas reliefs of Gods and Goddesses, temple architecture and a collection of flora and fauna from Hindu art.

4. Woodbridge Park Education Service

Kerala is a region rich in wildlife and widely regarded as God's own country in India. The Pozhikkara estuary, where the Karamana River empties into the sea, is an ecologically unique region that has flora and fauna that are adapted to live in both fresh water and salt water. Students made mixed media three-dimensional flora and fauna examining the theme *River of Life*.

5. The Heathland School

The Pongal Festival takes place along the banks of the Karamana River in Kerala. It's a harvest festival celebrating agricultural abundance. On the third day of Pongal, thanks are offered to cattle for ploughing fields and giving milk and a bull taming contest is held. Students created their own 'sacred cow' masks using card and embellished them with mixed media.

6. The Green School for Girls

Pookalam, flower Rangoli, are floral decorative patterns made from petals, powdered limestone or dried rice laid daily outside homes across India. Pookalam are created from fresh flowers for the Onam Festival in Kerala. Girls worked with coloured rice and flowers (pressed and real) to create their own unique designs.

Kerala, India

7. Govt. Higher Secondary School, Karamana Girls

Mudlarks scour the Thames foreshore to find well preserved objects amidst the mud of its riverbed. Each object has a story to tell. Spanning centuries from the Neolithic era, through the Roman rule, across Tudor times, and right up to the 21st century, these found objects provide a good snapshot into the rich history of the city and its people.

8. Govt. Higher Secondary School, Karamana Boys

There are around 30 bridges across the river Thames, each wonderfully different and distinct. This artwork creates a glossary of sorts, documenting the bridges through line drawings and paper cut-outs.

9. Govt. Higher Secondary School, Neyyadam

Who doesn't like greenery? This artwork, made using a variety of leaves, celebrates the Holly Man and his foliage-covered garb, as he arrives each year on the banks of the River Thames to join the annual Twelfth Night Festival.

10. Govt. Higher Secondary School, Aryanad

How does the daily water consumption in rural India compare to urban London? Although it usually depends on the different lifestyles and availability of technology, there were patterns between the two. This artwork reflects the daily water consumption in an average London home, where each water droplet reflects 1% of water used.

11. Govt. Higher Secondary School, Aruvikkara

Reimagined as a filthy old man during the 'Great Stink' of the 1850s, *Dirty Father Thames*, reflected a time when the river Thames was at its most polluted. His scruffy beard and stench-inducing appearance were recreated using items such as coconut husks, dried leaves, rope and jute sacks.

12. Govt. Higher Secondary School, Ayilam

The artwork explores the different species of fish that inhabit the River Thames, highlighting their body types and other physical characteristics. It includes a variety of fish, from the spiny-finned fish to ones with extremely flat flounders, each recreated using homemade dough and decorated with rice, seeds and pulses.

North West England, UK & Afghanistan



Northumberland, UK & Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Artwork (left) by Thornleigh
Salesian College, Bolton, UK
& High School, Afghanistan

Artwork (right) by Eyor
Academy, Addis Ababa,
Ethiopia & Whitley Chapel
First School and Chollerton
First School, Tynedale, UK



North West England, UK & Afghanistan

2021 saw the launch of new teacher resources which encouraged school partnerships to work collaboratively on a single piece of work. Six artworks were created from partnered schools in Ethiopia and Northumberland. Despite Covid-19 and political unrest four artworks were also created in June and July 2021 by school partnerships in Afghanistan and the UK.

“It was a different kind of project. We don’t often do collage! It made it more meaningful seeing what they were doing in Ethiopia!”

Phoebe, pupil,
Whitley Chapel First School

"I loved it. The pupils really enjoyed visiting the river, especially as we have had so few school trips out recently. They also had fun communicating with pupils in Addis. It strengthened our Connecting Classroom partnership which we started in 2019/20. This was the second project we have done together. It helped embed Global Learning into my science SOW and also forged more links within our school Art department."



Meryl Batchelder,
teacher and project co-ordinator,
Corbridge Middle School

1. Upton High School, Chester, UK & High School, Afghanistan

This artwork represents two cultures coming together. Under the guidance of their teachers, students used maps, text and printing to create images showing aspects of their cities and towns. These individual artworks were then brought together to form a joint collage.



2. Queens Park High School, Chester, UK & High School, Afghanistan

Using resource guides and working with their teachers, the students created creatures and wildlife found in and around their rivers. They used natural materials such as leaves and sticks to make their designs. The images were then brought together to form one artwork which reflects the *River of Life* in the two countries.



3. Archbishop Beck Catholic College, Liverpool, UK & High School, Afghanistan

Students from the two schools used found and natural materials such as flowers and leaves and combined these with pen drawings to illustrate the wildlife found in and by their rivers.

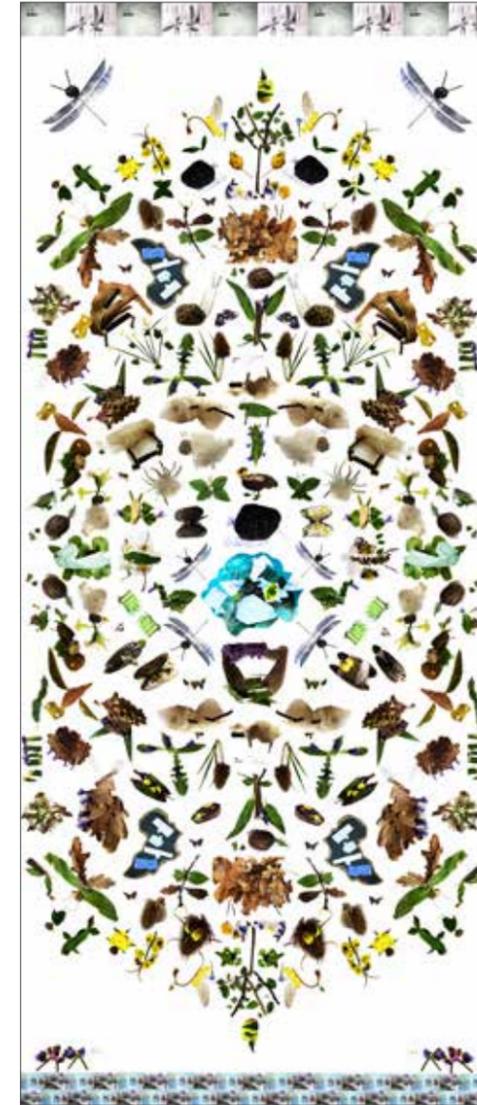
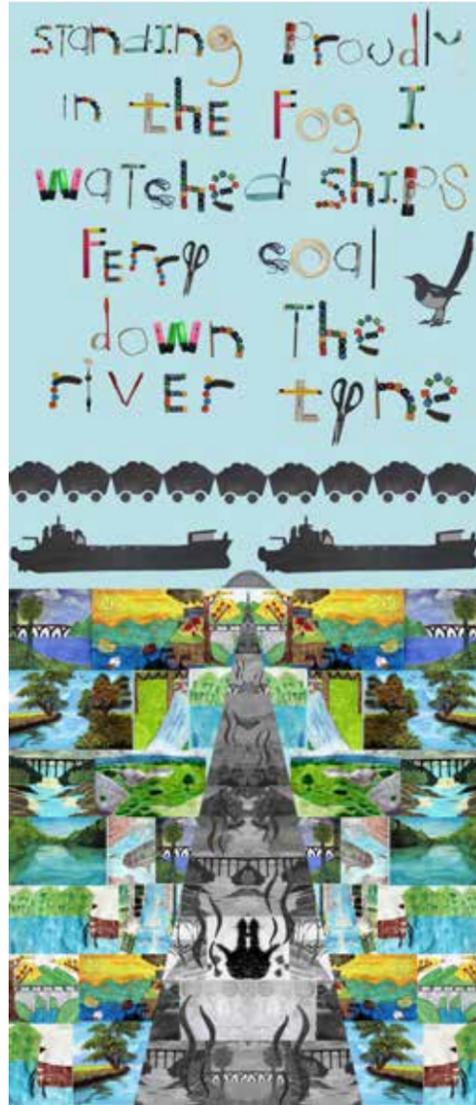


4. Thornleigh Salesian College, Bolton, UK & High School, Afghanistan

The students combined a wide range of traditional mediums and photography, each producing a unique response to pollution. The individual works of art have then been developed into one combined cyanotype print, which has been digitally edited. The students were inspired by the concept of how mother nature is affected by plastic waste and pollution.

Details have been omitted to protect school identities in Afghanistan.

Northumberland, UK & Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



1. Bikolos Nur Academy, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia & St Joseph's Middle School, Tynedale, UK

A Tale of Two Cities: the top half of the panel represents Newcastle's heritage; the coal industry in the North East of England was one of the starting points for the Industrial Revolution. The bottom half represents Addis with beautiful scenery but also the polluted rivers that run through it which are symptoms of industrialisation.

2. Ethio-Wales Academy, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia & Corbridge Middle School, Tynedale, UK

The picture shows words for the different local foods we eat. There are Ethiopian dishes such as doro wat and English foods such as fish and chips. The words are interwoven to represent both the interlinking of our cultures and the beautiful linen scarves that are worn in Ethiopia.

3. Assai Public School, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia & Corbridge Middle School, Tynedale, UK

'The Meet' is an area near Corbridge and Hexham where the North and South Tyne Rivers converge. The picture represents two rivers which are separate and the colours are dull. When bridges appear the colours are more vibrant - represented by meadow flowers, greener grass, clearer water and ducks. The rivers are a metaphor for our schools coming together when life and learning also became more vibrant.

4. Eyor Academy, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia & Whitley Chapel First School and Chollerton First School, Tynedale, UK

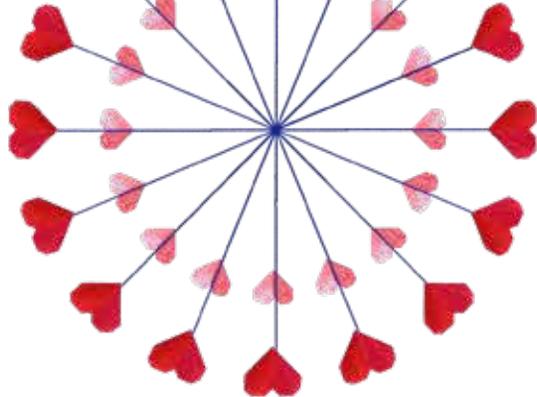
In Addis Ababa water can be sourced from jerry cans, traditional urns and taps. Students wrote in both Amharic and English to describe the water sources. Bottles were turned into fish and photos from visits to the rivers in Addis and Tynedale formed flowing bubbles full of colour and pattern representing the diverse resources provided by rivers.

5. Yenata Academy, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia & Chollerton First School, Tynedale, UK

Students in rural Tynedale and urban Addis Ababa considered their rivers. Students in Tynedale found so much life around their river, they made small creatures and fluffy animals from found natural items. In Addis Ababa students drew their ideas before also making creatures from their rivers using stones, leaves, drawing and other materials. Everyone's artwork was then patterned together creating a colourful explosion of riverside life.

6. My Little Angels Academy, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia & Whitley Chapel First School, Tynedale, UK

In Tynedale students imaged how rivers are ruined by pollution through drawing pictures of rubbish over photos they took of their clean river. They collected river waste transforming it into cheerful faces. Their friends in Addis Ababa were transforming their river waste items too; they became faces, flowers, puppets, salt and pepper pots, rivers, handbags and more! Students in both countries discovered how to keep the rivers free of waste whilst turning the waste into something beautiful.



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