

“Homo Sapiens have not yet failed. Yes, we are failing, but there is still time to turn everything around.

We can still fix this. We still have everything in our own hands.”

My inspiration for this project is taken from the current climate crisis and the worldwide response through various platforms of activism. The global strike on Friday September 20, 2019 was the largest demonstration for climate action in history. In total it has been written that over 6 million people have taken to the streets uniting across timezones, cultures and generations to demand urgent action on the escalating ecological emergency.

The movement that started with Swedish teenager Greta Thunberg in August 2018 has now inspired millions, whilst Extinction Rebellion and other protest groups have escalated their campaigns on streets around the world. From the efforts of all these activists in different countries, radical “*New Green Deals*” are emerging as a bold, political response to the climate crisis.

Ninety-seven percent of climate scientists agree that human activity is driving a climate crisis all across the Earth. We all know it’s happening, and we know why: carbon pollution from fossil fuels is warming our planet and throwing natural systems out of balance. The best example of this to date is the recent floods in Venice, where 70% of the lagoon city was engulfed as the high-water level reached 1.54 metres, which is its worst flooding since 1966. This was to happen exactly when Veneto councillors were debating the climate emergency, Politicians from the regional council’s majority right-wing parties rejected amendments to fight the climate crisis in the 2020 budget that were proposed by the centre-left Democratic party.

Unfortunately, this is a poignant reality of our current situation where scientific facts are being disregarded, even though the environmental effects are indisputable. Despite the growing efforts of climate activists everywhere we are still surrounded by a crowd of comfort; where we are constant consumers, single plastic users and increasingly harmful waste generators. This is our reality that we are faced with, where to protest against that and for climate justice is seen as a crime. Regardless of age, nationality, gender, social status and denial we all have a responsibility that this crisis requires you to grow up to.

Having taken part in the last three major protests in London and Cardiff, I have witnessed and actively helped the nonviolent resistance and civil disobedience within Extinction Rebellion and what I want to capture in my poster is the silent enforcement of awareness that activists have captured. I want to give their actions a platform to be seen and heard. Because despite the efforts of few, many are hesitant and negligent to actually hearing and seeing the severity of our reality. What my aim is, is to help spread the awareness of taking responsibility for your own actions because right now, they are critical.

Research:

Greta Thunberg, No One Is Too Small to Make a Difference

https://www.ted.com/talks/greta_thunberg_the_disarming_case_to_act_right_now_on_climate

Luisa Neubauer

https://www.ted.com/talks/luisa_neubauer_why_you_should_be_a_climate_activist

Sarah Corbett

https://www.ted.com/talks/sarah_corbett_activism_needs_introverts

Extinction Rebellion

<https://rebellion.earth/the-truth/the-emergency>

Gideon Mendel

<http://gideonmendel.com/submerged-portraits/>

"Drowning World is an exploration of flooding using photography and video. My aim in this long-term project is to portray the human condition within the context of overwhelming climate events around the world. This endeavour has taken me on a creative and life-changing journey. The subject matter has fundamentally challenged my practice: over the years there has been a shift from a traditional documentary approach to one that incorporates more conceptual and metaphorical elements alongside a deepening activism."

[-]

In 2007 I photographed two floods that occurred within weeks of each other, one in the UK and the other in India. I was struck by the contrasting impacts of these floods, and the shared vulnerability that seemed to unite the people I encountered in this landscape."

[-]

Since then, I have endeavored to visit flood zones around the world, witnessing a shared human experience of catastrophe that transcends geographical, cultural and economic divides. -

The project now incorporates the UK (2007, 2014 and 2016), India (2007 and 2014), Haiti (2008), Pakistan (2010), Australia (2011), Thailand (2011), Nigeria (2012), Germany (2013), The Philippines (2013), Brazil (2015), Bangladesh (2015), the USA (2015, 2017 and 2018), and France (2016 and 2018)."

[-]

Drowning World includes some of the poorest and wealthiest communities on the planet, all exposed to the floodwater that envelops them. In this moment the floods are a levelling factor, and people are brought together in visual solidarity."

Evaluation

For this project I used my own images taken at the Extinction Rebellion protests. Initially I had made three posters in total, to which then I tried to combine using photomontage in hope that I could portray all messages clearly and directly. By doing this I felt that I lost context and took away its eloquence and sincerity.



After seeking out opinion and confirmation I chose only one image, this is because I feel it is the most capturing and contextual. I initially began my project as completely black and white Photography but then went on to edit in slight colour. This was to symbolize 'The Red Brigade' which is a group activist performance that act in mime and complete silence, they symbolise the common blood that we share with all species. I wanted to convey their point, but also create a point of responsibility to it, which is why I added in further colour on to the police officers and by standers in the background.



