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An exhibition on the destruction of the earth

In this exhibition I intend to show the impact we as humans have on the natural world. This exhibition contains 5 pieces of work each displaying an element – water, fire, earth and air – showing how each element has affected the world due to global warming made worse by humanity.

I feel that it is important that we talk about this topic now because the world temperature has increase by 1 degree. It may not seem like a lot but from just this 1 degree the world has seen more extreme weather ranging from bushfires to floods. We know the earth is coming out of an ice age so it was going to get warmer anyway but due to air pollution from things like cars and factories, it has caused the earth's temperature to increase more rapidly than it would of naturally.

This exhibition will cover topics such as the ice caps, rising temperatures, the effects on wildlife and air pollution levels and look at the work of award-winning photographers like Matthew Abbott and Rodrigo Baleia.

I've decided to use the double walled garden at the national botanical garden of wales to host this exhibition because I feel that the exhibition about nature would be best appreciated outside surrounded by nature.

Global Warming. 'One of the widest-reaching challenges modern society has faced'(Mastrandrea). Two words that are heard a lot lately whether it's from the news or from social media. But despite climate change only being prominent in the news for the past few years, the subject has been warned about since the late 19th century. 'The climate crisis has already been solved, we already know all the facts and solutions, all we have to do is wake up and change'(Thunberg). We need to start making more of an effort to save the earth before it becomes unsalvageable.

'Widespread pollution, radioactive fallout, plastic accumulation, the course of rivers altered, mass extinction of species, human transport and the introduction of species around the world. These are just some of the many different human-induced global environmental changes which will most likely leave a lasting record in rock' (Ellis).

Due to the earth's rising temperature the ice caps are melting more rapidly than ever before. Many species of animals are losing their home at a dangerous speed which means that they will soon become extinct. The extinction of animals is not the only issue with the melting ice caps. The melting ice caps are also causing sea levels around the world to rise which raises fears that coastal towns and cities could be submerged under water in the years to come. Adam Trexler stats in his book that 'global climate change

is likely to be our time's lasting legacy on Earth. Future impacts are predictions, not facts. Actual outcomes will be affected by future emissions, human efforts of adaption and, to some extent, geophysical forces beyond human control'.



Figure 1

The exhibition will start with this photograph by Wilfred Weesel Berthelsen which is titled 'The Endless Search'. The photograph displays a polar bear trying to navigating its way through the melting ice to hunt for food. The photo will be placed on the right side of the entrance. I chose to show this photograph in the exhibition because I felt that it provides an insight into the real struggle that arctic animals such as polar bears face due to the rising temperature.

Due to global warming there has been an increase in forest fires in places such as Australia and the Amazon rainforest. The Australian bush fire of late 2019 and early 2020 were fueled by months of draught and record-breaking temperatures. It was estimated that in New South Wales over 3 million hectares was burnt and over 480 million mammals, birds and reptiles were affected by the fires.

On April 15th 2019 Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris caught fire. Within around 3 minutes of the fire starting the event was broadcast around the world. In just 2 days, over a billion was donated by billionaires, celebrities and others to help rebuild the cathedral. In early August 2019 the Amazon Rainforest began to burn. It took the media 3 weeks before the event was broadcast around the world. A fire so prominent that it could be seen from space got less acknowledgement then a 13th century building. The delay in which it took the media to cover the Amazon Rainforest fires is very alarming as '20% all oxygen in the earth's atmosphere is produced by the Amazon Rainforest'(Brown).



Figure 2

The next photograph on display will be from Matthew Abbott. This photo was taken during the Australian Bushfires (2019) and displays a kangaroo which is probably the most well-known animal in Australia passing a burning house. I chose to use this photo in the exhibition I feel it expresses how no one, animal or human, benefits from climate change. Will the earth's temperature continuing to rise, sight like this will only become more common and the loss associated with these fires will only grow larger. In the end, we will all lose our home.

Since the 1970s, deforestation which has been a major problem. Since 1970 an estimated 20% of the Amazon Rainforest has been lost to deforestation which is a total loss of 800,000 square kilometers and often occurs because farmers do not have enough land to keep up with the ever-growing demand of products such as Aloe Vera and Palm Oil and 'an estimated 70% of deforestation in the amazon is due to cattle farming'.



Figure 3

This photograph, taken by Rodrigo Baleia, displays a clearing where trees have been cut down to make room for agricultural uses such as cattle farming or land for crops. I chose to use this photograph in the exhibition because I feel that it shows a true representation of how many trees are being cut down in places like the amazon rainforest to free up land to help keep up with ever-growing consumer demand for products like palm oil. By cutting down these trees we are not only harming the planet, but we are harming ourselves too as we need oxygen to survive and the only way to produce oxygen is through trees.

The continuation of deforestation with the increase in forest fires means it is likely that we could see the rainforests disappear at a faster rate than we have ever seen before which could lead to mass extinction of many species as the Amazon is home to 2.5 million species of insects alone. Animals are not the only ones at danger as the Amazon is also home to between '400 and 500 indigenous tribes.'

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihPfb30YT_c



Figure 4

This video will be projected onto the farthest wall from the entrance. The video displays an Orangutan trying to fight off a bulldozer that is destroying its home. I decided to show this video because, although the video may be hard to watch, it gives the audience a true representation of how distressed these animals are to lose their home. Treat other how you would like to be treated. No one would like it if their home was taken from them, so why are taking the homes on innocent animals with nowhere else to go?

During the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, many countries around the world went into lockdown and many people could not leave their homes. Due to this there was a decline in pollution levels across countries such as China, Italy and India. This decline has provided a positive effect on the planet for example, the canals in Venice, Italy are cleaner within weeks then they have been year causing wildlife such as fish and swan to return to the canals. This really shines a light of the affect we have on the world. With over one third of the world on lockdown and once bustling cities now at a standstill, wildlife such as pumas in Chile and deer in Japan have ventured into the deserted cities due to the decrease in man-made noise.



Figure 5

The final piece that will be displayed in this exhibition will be a photograph that displays the Himalayan mountains taken from Punjab, an area of India over 100 miles away from the mountain range that hasn't been able to see the mountains in around 30 years due to all the smog caused by air pollution. This photo was taken 2 weeks after a 21-day lockdown was issued across India in an attempt to slow down the spread of the coronavirus. Coronavirus may not be a good thing for humans but it has allowed the earth to begin the process of healing itself due to the lockdown measures in place.

Naomi Klein stats in her book that 'We are left with a stark choice: allow climate disruption to change everything about our world or change pretty much everything about our economy to avoid that fate.' I disagree with this because I think that by just changing a few things in our everyday lives we can reduce our greenhouse emissions. It may not stop global warming but it will slow it down.

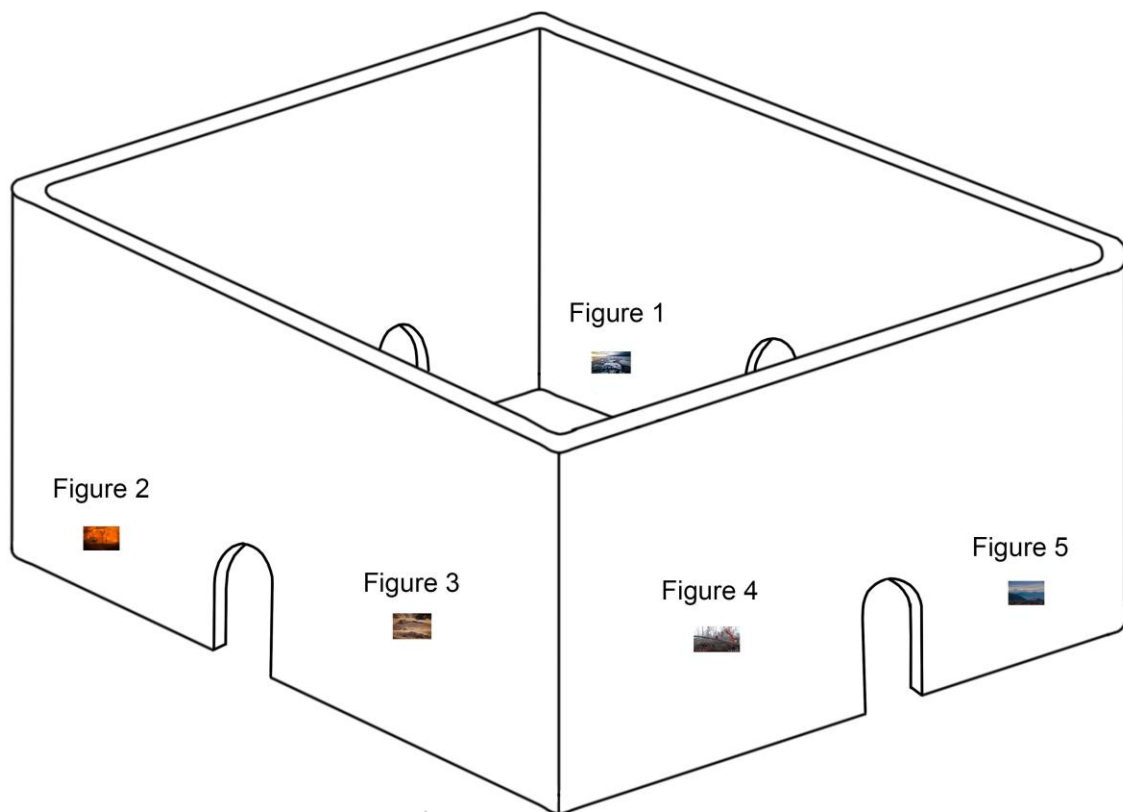


Figure 6



Figure 7

Figures

Fig.1 - Abbott. M (2019) (untitled) Australian Bushfires, Photograph,

Fig.2 - Baleia. R (2015) (untitled) Amazon Rainforest Deforestation, Photograph,

Fig.3 - International Animal Rescue (2018) (untitled) Orangutan and bulldozer, YouTube Video

Fig.4 - Weesel Berthelsen. W 'The Endless Search', Photograph

Fig.5 - Unknown artist (2020) (untitled) Himalayans mountains, Photographs

Fig.6 - Exhibition layout – 3D model

Fig.7 - Exhibition layout – Aerial view

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