

REPORT ON OUTREACH

Interactions

8 June 2024, Bhoomi Habba, Visthar, Bangalore

Bringing limelight to invertebrates using an intricate form of art like chalk carving was a bizarre experience, especially in a community Earth festival in Bangalore interacting with approximately 100-150 people with a footfall of over 1,000 in the space. Insects are a highly misunderstood and lesser known group of beings which are threatened due to the climate crisis. Native butterfly species of the Western Ghats in Karnataka were carved as a part of this festival along with an abstract art of Southern Birdwing Butterfly (State Butterfly of Karnataka) with the spirits of Earth.

The idea was to use sculptures and 2 m of cloth mural to interact with lots of school kids, educators and other existing audiences in this festival through a live exhibition. Various intricacies of conservation through art and craft were discussed in this space. Curiosity of kids made the interactions even more insightful and engaging. The chalk carvings of insects were also made using natural paints and eco-friendly materials, which was yet another strong foundation to build more conversations around pigments extracted from insects and their immediate cause of endangerment and extinction. Furthermore, in a remote location of Sharavati during a small summer camp, I collaborated with the local team to do paint works with kids of a nearby village regarding nature centric stories.





The purpose was also to evoke a fascination towards the world of insects using a delicate material like chalk piece, to further ignite the thought of fragility and sensitivity in a fast paced industrial world. In a large gathering of Bhoomi habba - Earth festival at Visthar in Bangalore, I chose to depict insects using animistic beliefs as a way of life.

The project outreach was emphasized on talking about animism as a concept of understanding our nature and surroundings in a much more close knit way, while drawing attention to incorporation of art in the process.

The art works depicted in the exhibition and stall space were made using natural paints such as turmeric, indigo and other berries, signifying the richness of texture and colors. Invertebrates such as butterflies, moths and dragonflies played a major role in the conversation with all the kids and the audience.

The spirits of the forest were woken along with the depicted art works through storytelling.

Being an insect can mean restoring, healing, changing the Earth, the water, and maybe even our "self".

The essence and learnings of the 'Art for Conservation' (A4C) workshop held by Zoo Outreach Organisation for artists was communicated with the local public in small gatherings through discussions and safe circle spaces during the exhibition. The whole exhibition including my outreach activity was covered by The Hindu newspaper on 8 June 2024.



Anjali Pujari, Interdisciplinary artist, Sharavathi, Karnataka.