



Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Inspiring Ocean Conservation Through Art Announcing the winners of the 2023 Science Without Borders® Challenge

ANNAPOLIS, MD — The Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation is thrilled to announce the winners of the annual *Science Without Borders® Challenge*, an international student art contest that promotes ocean conservation. This year's competition, centered around the theme "The Sixth Extinction," encouraged young artists to raise awareness about endangered marine species and the urgent need to protect our oceans. The contest engaged students and teachers globally, inspiring them to create amazing artwork showcasing the beauty and wonder of endangered species in our ocean.

Open to primary and secondary school students 11-19 years old, the *Science Without Borders® Challenge* attracted remarkable talent from around the world. This year more students entered than ever before. Over 1,200 students from 67 countries submitted artwork to the 2023 *Science Without Borders® Challenge*, sending in beautiful artwork illustrating marine species, some teetering on the brink of extinction. Artwork in the competition was judged in two categories based on age. The winning entries in each category are not only beautiful pieces of artwork, but they also encourage viewers to think deeply about the impact people are having on the environment.

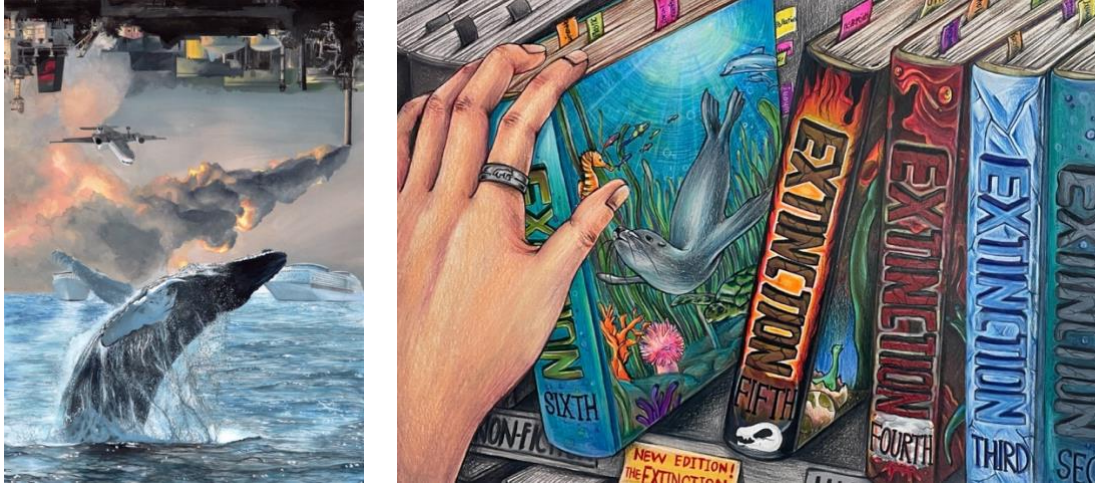


In the 15-19 age group, the first-place winner in the 2023 *Science Without Borders® Challenge* is Boram Shim with her stunning artwork, *We Are Next*. A 16-year old student in Norwood, New Jersey, Boram's captivating piece depicts a number of endangered marine species, including a Kemp's ridley sea turtle and the critically endangered vaquita porpoise. With a thought-provoking approach, the artwork depicts the history of animal extinction, emphasizing that if we continue to harm the environment, we ourselves may face extinction, much like the mammoths, ammonites, and dinosaurs. The artwork powerfully reminds us that we must act urgently to prevent this dire fate.

Boram said that through her participation in this contest, she has come to realize that humans pose a greater danger than she had thought, and that many human activities, beyond just ocean pollution, have contributed to the endangerment and extinction of numerous animal species. When she heard that vaquitas and turtles often perish as a result of becoming entangled in gill nets, she incorporated this into her artwork. "Learning that there are only around 10 vaquitas left, and that they're on the verge of extinction, truly devastated me. I wanted to channel this passion for their survival through my artwork," she said.

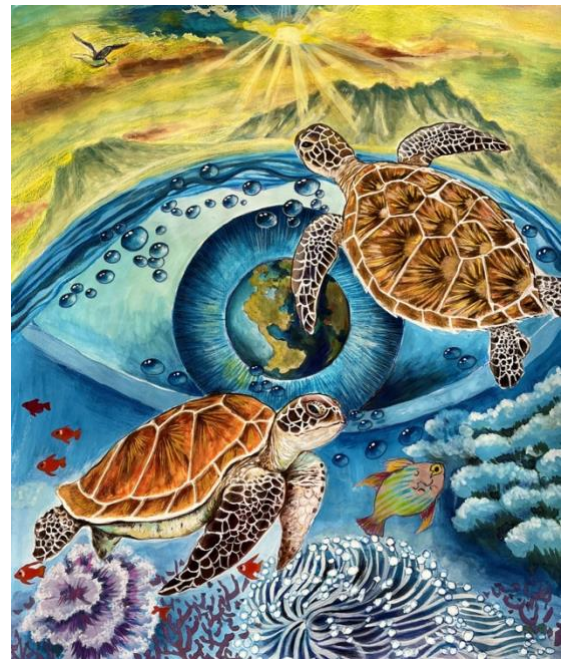
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The sixth extinction poses a grave threat to ocean life, magnifying the urgency of conservation efforts. Unlike the previous five mass extinctions that occurred due to natural environmental factors, the sixth extinction is primarily driven by human activities. Pollution, overfishing, habitat destruction, climate change, and the introduction of invasive species have disrupted delicate marine ecosystems, pushing many species to the brink of extinction. Preserving and protecting these species is not only crucial for their survival, but also for maintaining the health and resilience of our living oceans.



Second place in the category for 15-19 year old students went to Celine Yang from the Republic of Korea with the artwork *The Currents of Pollution*, followed by Annette Kim, also from the Republic of Korea, who claims the third-place spot with *Writing the Next Chapter*.

In the 11-14 age group, Yanjun Mao, a 14-year-old student from China, emerged as the first-place winner for his artwork titled *The Sea Bears Witness to Everything*. Yanjun's artwork captures the hawksbill sea turtle, a species on the verge of extinction, swimming in front of a tearful eye in the ocean. He says this signifies the ocean's witness to the history of the hawksbill sea turtle as well as the heartbreaking killing of hawksbill sea turtles by humans. The artwork conveys the importance of protecting marine life while offering hope for a better future. By participating in the contest, Yanjun says he learned about the ocean's importance to people and their role in caring for nature. Now, he says, "I am willing to work for the protection of the ocean."



Ridham Agarwal from India took home second place in the ages 11-14 category for her piece, *The Dark Journey Ahead*, while Alexander Zhang from China won third place for his artwork, *Mother River Saves Lives*.



Each of the winners will receive scholarships of up to \$500 from the Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation to celebrate their achievements so they can continue to pursue their interests in art and ocean conservation.

Through this competition, the Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation hopes to educate students worldwide about the need to protect our ocean and inspire the next generation of ocean advocates. Amy Heemsoth, Director of Education at the Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation, said, "This contest plays a vital role in raising awareness about endangered species in the ocean. The artworks created by these talented young individuals bring attention to the critical need for ocean conservation and inspire us all to take action."

The Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation extends its warmest congratulations to all the winners and participants of the 2023 *Science Without Borders*[®] Challenge. For more information about the *Science Without Borders*[®] Challenge and the Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation, please visit www.LOF.org.

The Science Without Borders[®] Challenge:

The *Science Without Borders*[®] Challenge is an international student art contest run by the Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation to engage students in marine conservation through art. The annual competition welcomes entries from all primary and secondary school students 11-19 years old. Scholarships of up to \$500 are awarded to the winning entries. Students and teachers interested in next year's competition can learn more and apply at: www.livingoceansfoundation.org/SWBchallenge.

Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation:

The Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation is a US-based nonprofit environmental organization that protects and restores the world's oceans through scientific research, outreach, and education. As part of its commitment to Science Without Borders[®], the Living Oceans Foundation provides data and information to organizations, governments, scientists, and local communities so that they can use knowledge to work toward sustainable ocean protection.

www.livingoceansfoundation.org

Images of Winners and their Artwork: <https://adobe.ly/3OIFpWE>

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