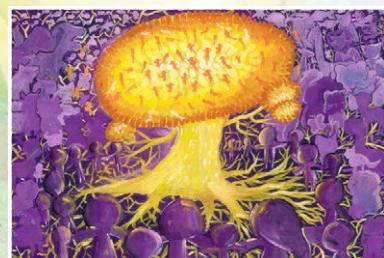
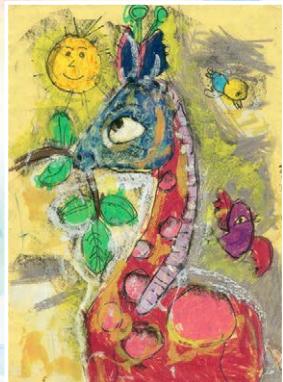




花王 国際こども環境絵画コンテスト

KAO International Environment Painting Contest for Children



KAO

Kirei—Making Life Beautiful

16th
Contest(2025)
Winning
Works



花王国際こども環境絵画コンテスト

KAO International Environment Painting Contest for Children

The Kao Group has held this contest annually since 2010 for inviting children around the world to create works expressing their thoughts on the environment and the future. We also hold exhibitions with hoping that the paintings expressed by children with their thoughts will inspire people around the world to take actions for sustainable lifestyles.

For this sixteenth contest, we received 25,159 entries from all over the world. We will introduce selected 31 winning works with the children's message through their paintings.



Jury Chairperson

Mr. Fumikazu Masuda

Design consultant,
President of
open house inc.

This year, we judges commented on how the works differed from those of previous years. When this contest first began, most of the entries focused on actions related to environmental issues, such as picking up trash. However, the themes have broadened significantly with various changes in society. This year's entries showed depth and diversity, with each child discovering and expressing their own insights. From a technical perspective as well, the individuality of each child was more apparent. A lot of paintings reflected the times in which we live.



Ms. Sumiko Okubo

Artist

This year's works revealed expressions that captured things from perspectives different from previous years, as well as glimpses of the children's expanding dreams. Not only in the themes but also in their approaches to painting, which ranged from abstract to semi-figurative to figurative, the works became increasingly diverse. Their high technical skills show how seriously the children tackled the creation of their works. Rather than childlike free-flowing brushstrokes, overall, they were highly sophisticated. This demonstrated the growth of the children.



Mr. Kei Matsushita

Professor,
Tokyo University of
the Arts

Seeing children's paintings stimulates me and provides fresh insights for adults. What is required in the future is to go back to individual emotions and reexamine how we see things. A lot of works expressed the children's own sensitivities and thoughts, saying "this is how I feel," rather than asserting "this is how the environment should be" or "this is how it should not be." This straightforward perspective resonates with the challenges we face. This year's screening was rich in new discoveries.



Mr. Leonhard Bartolomeus

Curator,
Yamaguchi Center for
Arts and Media

Through the screening, the overall levels had risen, both in technique and artistically. Many paintings had a story, conveying the children's rich imagination to us. We tend to view the work through the eyes of an adult. However, we need to be aware of what perspectives the children have and how they think when painting these works. This screening prompted me to reflect on the importance of respecting the perspectives and sensibilities of children, instead of just looking through an adult lens.



Ms. Ayami

Recycled materials
Artist

The works were noticeably different from those of last year. Last year, many of the works were sad and sorrowful, whereas this year, works expressed straightforward and positive feelings, such as "I feel this way" and "I wish this would happen to me." The sensitivity of these children and their works makes me feel at peace. Overall, the children were attracted to the themes of "greenery" and "nature." The children's love of greenery could be seen.



Mr. Atsushi Tanaka

Director,
Kao Eco-Lab Museum,
Kao Corporation

The winning works showed various techniques, including diverse perspectives, expressions, and the effective use of color. The wide variety of works reflects that works genuinely expressing diversity were highly regarded, making this year's screening truly meaningful. What I felt again through the screening this year was the importance of truly accepting "children's thoughts and feelings" from the paintings, rather than looking for common sense or correct answers that we adults have. I would like to remember to stand from the children's point of view and continue to learn not only from their paintings, but also from their perspectives in all aspects of life.

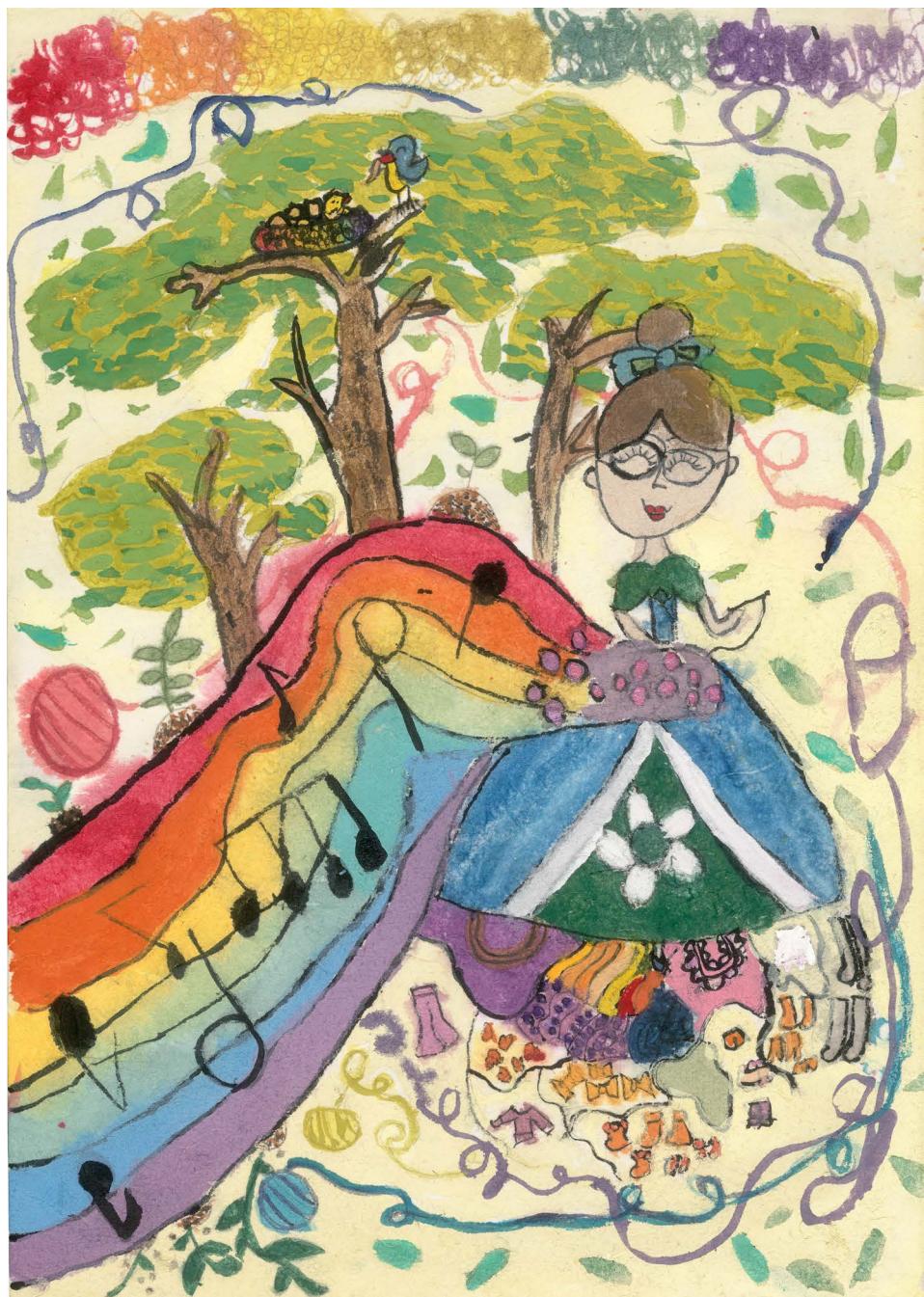


Mr. Naoto Katahira

Vice President,
Creative,
Kao Corporation

In recent years, we have seen a lot of paintings on the greatness of nature and long-standing traditions, along with paintings that clearly depict environmental issues. This year, the winning works featured themes rarely addressed before or introduced entirely new modes of expression. Throughout the whole set of works, we felt the children's diverse ways of thinking and perspectives. The purpose of holding this contest on a global scale is to create opportunities to widely share the children's richly diverse perspectives while thinking about the future of our planet.

∞ Kao Kirei Grand Prize ∞



Magic Weaver of Environmental Protection

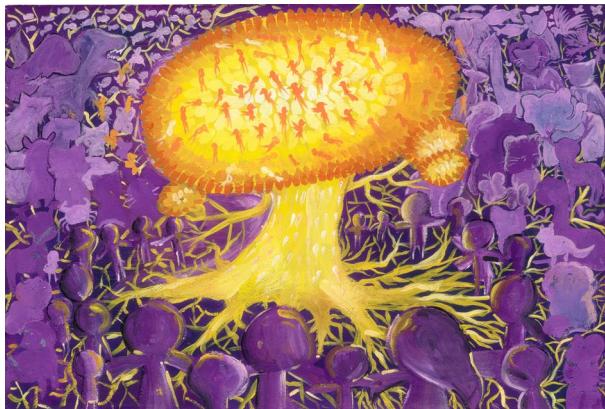
Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting

My mother always told me, "Donate your old clothes to people in need," because when unsold clothes pile up, they harm the environment. I want to say, "Let's donate old clothes and protect the Earth's future." The "Earth Girl" in this painting stands for the many types of used clothing. She is weaving a rainbow cloth to keep the forests and birds beautiful.

Comment by the juries

This painting conveys the message of "donating clothes you no longer wear to people who need them" from the unique perspective of a child. The composition, which tells the story of old clothes being reborn, the excellent use of color, and the powerful painting skills in this work are all highly appreciated.

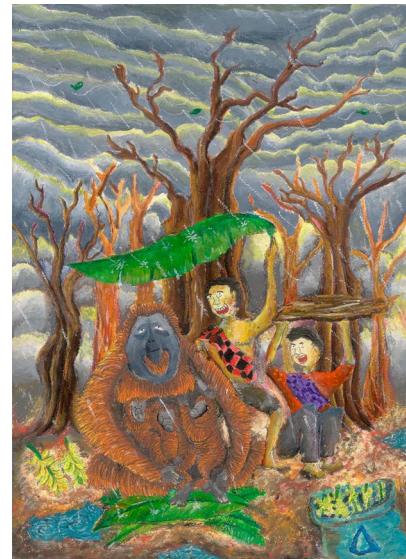
Kao Special Prize



Bonds of Care

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : In society, everyone, from local residents, children, adults, and various organizations, has a role to play in protecting forests. Everyone comes together to protect nature. The bonds of caring firmly connect us with the forests. The surrounding flowers, animals, and nature show that nature is teeming with life, even though it seems quiet.

Comment by the juries : This work stands out for its originality in using colors that differ from reality, while many children depict the world exactly as they see it. Expressing invisible life forms in the tree is unique. It is a work that leaves a powerful impression and message.



IT'S FINALLY RAINING

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : Drought and forest destruction in Kalimantan have caused orangutans to lose their home in the jungle. Now only rain and caring humans can save their habitat.

Comment by the juries : This painting expresses a strong sense of crisis with a wish for coexistence between nature and humans. In Indonesia, orangutans are in danger of extinction due to deforestation. This painting makes us think deeply about the relationship between nature and humans.



Life From The Water

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : A fisherman casts his net into the calm water. The painting reminds us to keep our rivers and seas clean for those who live by them.

Comment by the juries : The person gently cradling the caught fish will eat it afterward. Such a scene would never occur with a domesticated animal, yet humans survive by taking the lives of wild creatures. This is such a moving work that quietly expresses the essence of our fundamental coexistence with nature.



So That Everyone Can Live

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : I painted this thinking about living creatures, nature and human living together. I want to protect the environment by planting trees to bring back the nature that humans have destroyed.

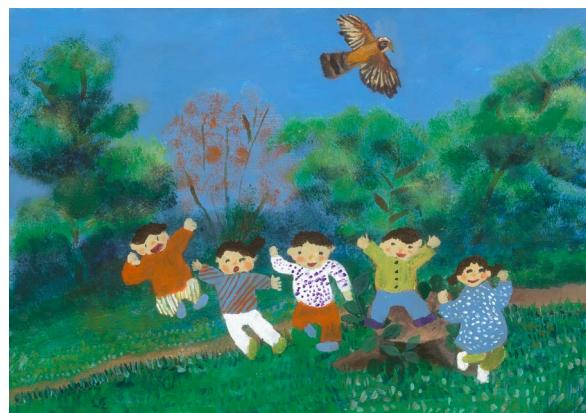
Comment by the juries : This painting stands out for its color gradations and its distinctive sense of a future in which diverse species coexist, while deliberately avoiding the specification of any living creatures. The placement of each living creature is also skillful, conveying an intent to create new relationships in the world.



Guardians of Hope

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : This painting is about my hope to protect the Earth and hand down a clean environment to the next generation. The "guard" stands for the environmental damage, and the cracks in the wall show its impact. The big turtle expresses our effort to protect the future – when the Earth heals, its sad face turns into a smile, showing the next generation a beautiful world.

Comment by the juries : We wonder if the large turtle's face shows concern for today's environment, and the smaller turtles resting on its back look like hope for the future. With a rich artistic sense, this work conveys the message that we must leave a better society for future generations.



Come Visit the Satoyama, Shishitsuka

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : This painting depicts summer in Satoyama, and the tree in the center has withered due to oak wilt. I participated in activities to prevent oak wilt, but it was difficult, even now, the trees in Satoyama are still withering. I painted this to encourage everyone to visit the woodlands and learn about it.

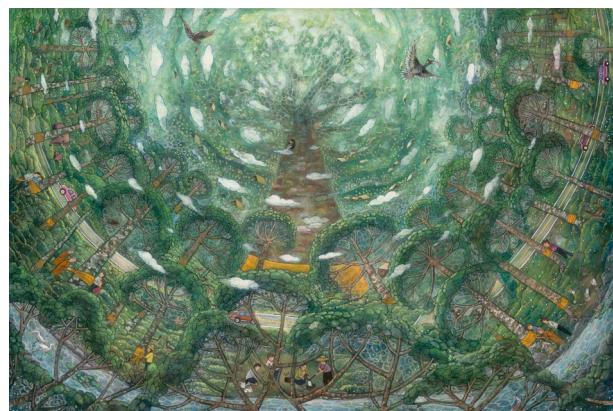
Comment by the juries : This work looks like a set design for a theater. As time passes, the children and the bird can play around while the greenery remains. This contrast is impressive. It is difficult to describe this kind of movement, yet it is well expressed.



Step Towards Abundant

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : The Earth has become barren and lost its abundance by human activities. This leads to various effects, including the loss of animal life and global warming. We need to unite as one to cooperate and take steps toward restoring the abundance of the Earth.

Comment by the juries : This work delivers a powerful message, depicting humankind's steps toward nature conservation in a high-angle composition. Global warming is expressed in red tones, while white doves fly, symbolizing peace. The use of color in this painting is excellent.



Nature is Life

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : If we work together to protect nature, and teach younger generations to cherish the environment, the Earth will become beautiful and free from harmful pollution. A good environment will be maintained in the future, with fresh and clean air.

Comment by the juries : This painting is filled with a sense of transparency and dynamic flow. A large tree grows straight upward at the center. Around this tree, shimmering light and circular trees make us feel a connection to nature. The meticulous depiction of humans and living creatures is also outstanding.

∞ Jury's Special Prize ∞



Selected by Fumikazu Masuda, Chair of Jury

Night Sky, Beautiful Nature

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : The sky at night is very quiet and free. Both human and animals can roam freely in nature.

Comment by the juries : We rarely see works that express a refreshing atmosphere of nighttime in this contest, and I was surprised by the keen perspective in this work. In fact, many animals are active at night when humans are asleep. I empathized with the sense that such a night makes us feel comfortable.



Selected by Sumiko Okubo

Our Tree is the Home of the Streaked Weave

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : The streaked weaver lives in flocks and builds nests in large trees. They gather in big trees, using them as a strong shield to protect them from predators. We need to work together to protect the trees and bring forests back to life so that streaked weavers can continue living in their large houses in peace.

Comment by the juries : The message, "Let's protect bird habitats," is expressed in this work simply, using the contrast of black tree branches and yellow birds. Perhaps the moon painted in the center is meant to be a symbol of hope. This work is open to various interpretations.

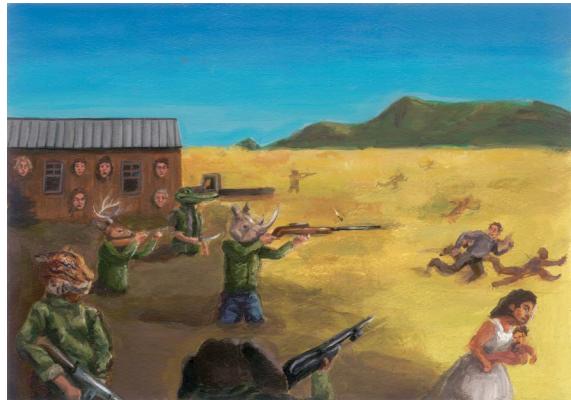


Selected by Kei Matsushita

Let's Create Beautiful Nature

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : The various colors used in this painting represent the diversity of living creatures that share our world. Big houses, little houses, and many rare trees. If we could learn how to help each other, we would be able to live together. Let's create a better environment with our own hands.

Comment by the juries : A notable feature of this painting is that the colors are mixed directly on the canvas, rather than on a palette. Through mixing various colors, the work expresses a society where individuality exists in harmony. This work makes us think about societies in which diversity coexists.

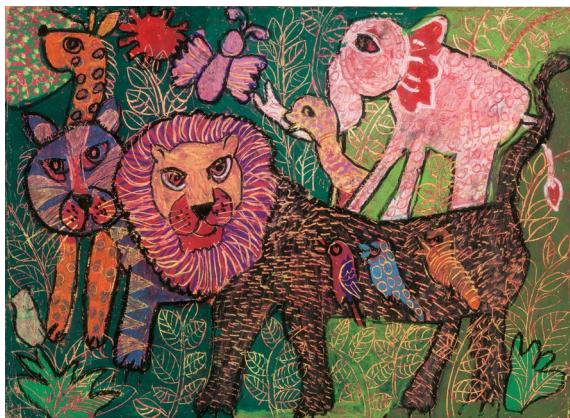


Selected by Leonhard Bartolomeus

Treat others the way you want to be treated

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : I wish to shed light on the problem of poaching with this piece. I implore the audience to stand in the shoes of the animals who are poached to near extinction, reversing the roles of predator and prey. I hope this piece can help people feel empathy and learn respect for wild animals, so we can all co-exist in peace and harmony.

Comment by the juries : An interesting concept shines in this work. We can see that the theme of the work is centered on a sustainable environment. This work reminds us that imagining how you want to be treated by others can make you kinder to them.

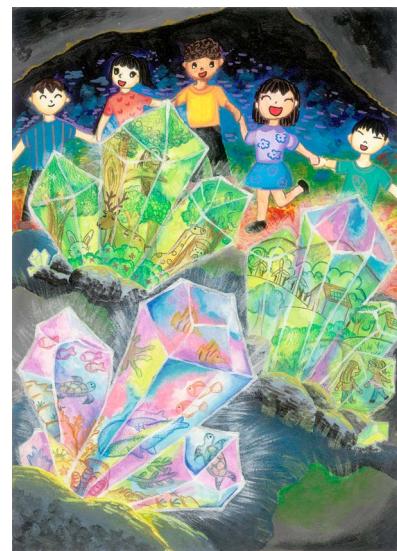


Selected by Ayami

THE KING OF WILDWORLD -THE LION-

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : Any forest is the oxygen center of a country, and its life lies in the various wild animals it harbors. The king of all these animals is our beloved lion, who leads everyone and thinks for the good of all.

Comment by the juries : The lion's dignified expression is impressive. The strong will to protect the forest comes through clearly, and the artist's intention is reflected in its face. The simple idea of a lion loved by everyone protecting the forest is also very appealing.

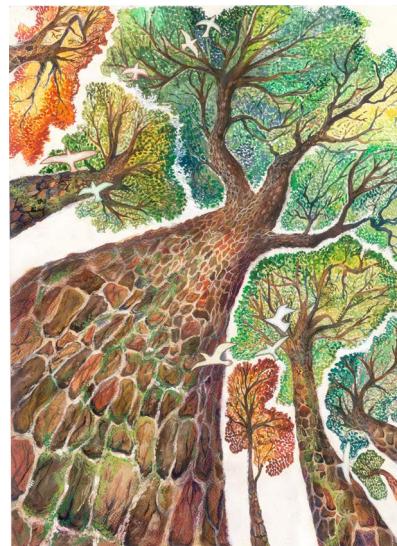


Selected by Atsushi Tanaka

Nature is Like an Irreplaceable Diamond

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : Did you know that nature's blessings are far more precious and valuable than shiny diamonds? All living things are able to grow and thrive because of these blessings. Even diamonds are a creation of nature. Nature is precious. That is why we need to protect it so all living things can continue to survive.

Comment by the juries : Colorful gems grow like plants, creating a beautiful composition. Seen within the gems are images of nature and living things, suggesting that a genuine desire for people to value what is precious and rare leads to protecting the environment. This work expresses the ideal vision of environmental protection.



Selected by Naoto Katahira

The Green Cathedral

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : It looks like the trees are giants lifting the sky, and you can feel the breeze as white birds glide through the leaves. I hope there will be more forests in the world, with less deforestation and pollution, so that when children look up at the sky, they will always be able to see this green cathedral.

Comment by the juries : This work does not focus on green itself but on the trunk that gives birth to it despite the title. We can even feel the presence of roots that are not shown. It expresses a deep love for nature and a careful observation through the detailed depiction of the tree bark.

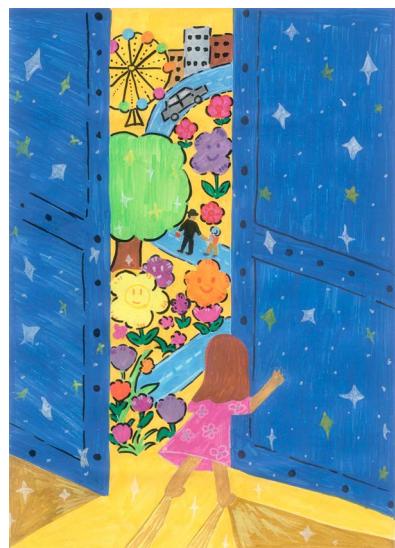
Kao Employee Prize



Painting the World Blue

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : The message of my painting is that even small actions, such as planting green trees, saving energy, or even participating in an art contest about environmental protection, can make our world greener and more beautiful.

❖ Honorable Mention ❖

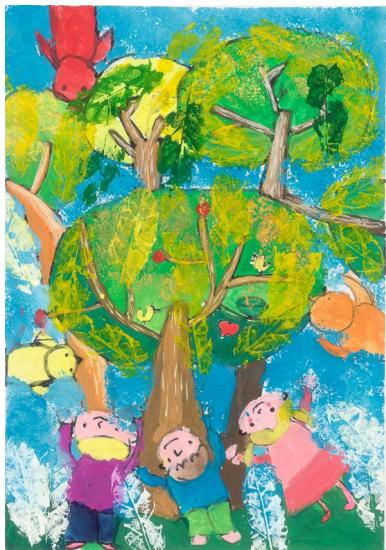


Environmental Guardian Team for the Ocean

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : The beautiful nature of the ocean is gradually fading over time. That is why I want to create an Environmental Guardian Team for the ocean, to restore the ocean to its original, beautiful state.

A Door to a Brighter and Greener Future

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : The painting shows a girl opening a door from a dark world into a bright, sustainable future with trees, flowers, clean rivers and happy people. It reminds us to work together to protect nature, reduce waste and create greener cities in order to build a beautiful environment for everyone.



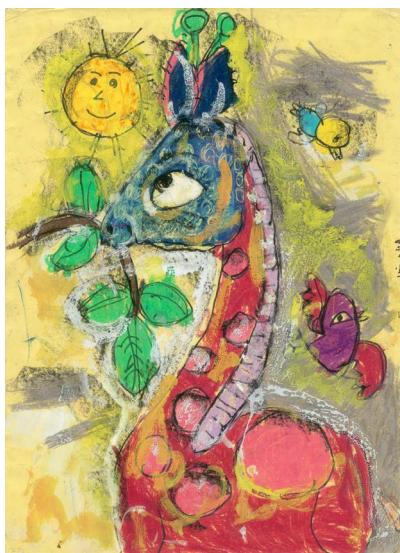
Trees and Life

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : I love the color green in trees. But trees don't just show us their beautiful green — they also protect our lives. Without trees, disasters can happen. Let's cherish them and help more greenery grow. I want to embrace every green tree on Earth.



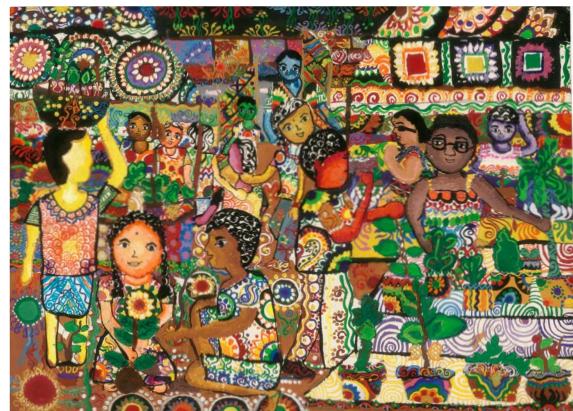
Let's All Make the Ocean Beautiful

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : My friend and I dived into the ocean, and we picked up bottles and trash. I hope the ocean will become clean and allow turtles and fish to live happily.



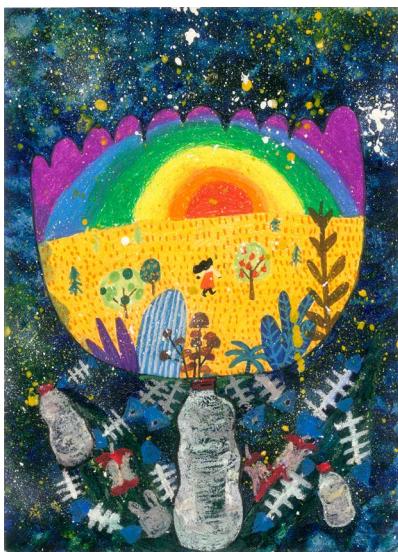
RAINBOW GIRAFFE

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : This giraffe is full of colors. Just like nature's magic! We must protect special animals like this so they can shine bright in the wild.



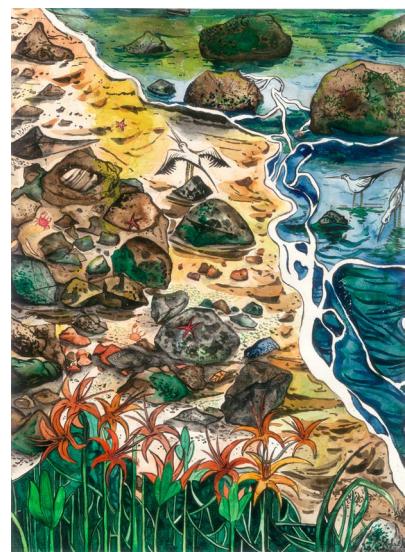
TREE PLANTING

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : Tiny hands pressed into the soft earth, laughter ringing through the fresh morning air. The children faces smudged with dirt and eyes full of curiosity worked together around the little saplings, placing them into the ground.



This Bottle Is Calling Out to Protect Nature

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : This painting contrasts a dried-up Earth with new, green life. A bottle supports beautiful natural scenery, but discarded plastic bottles show the burden we have placed on the environment. A wonderful ecosystem is what humanity dreams of.



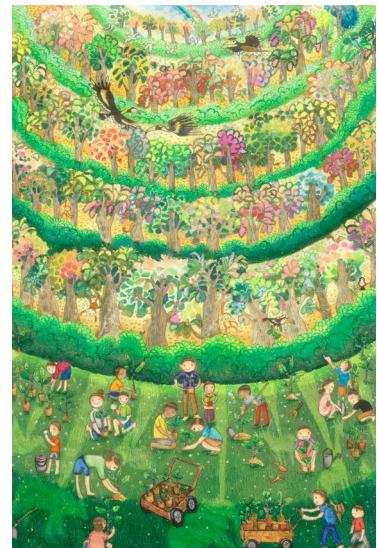
HOPE BY THE SEA

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : I painted this to show how the beach is still alive, even though there is litter around. In the front, I drew flowers to show hope and beauty. At the back, there is rubbish on the sand and in the sea, but animals are still living there. I hope people will stop throw rubbish.



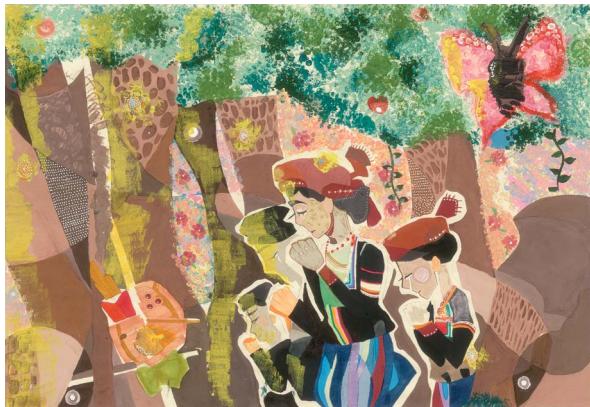
The Gift for Pandas

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : If I could use magic, I would send pandas a giant forest with bamboo and friends so that everyone would happily live every day.



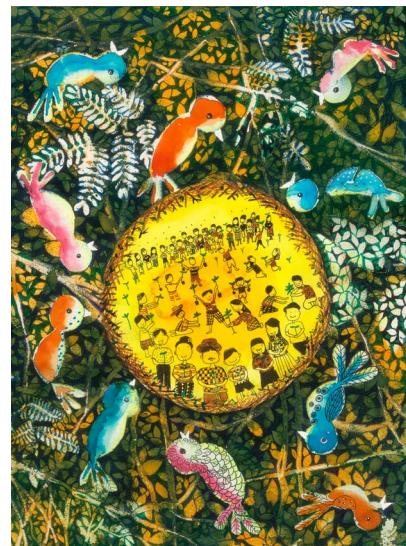
The making of a little green home

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : I painted this after forest planting with my family. I wanted to express how caring for nature is both fun and meaningful. The world becomes a happier place with tree planting and caring of nature. Animal and people as well as the forest can coexist peacefully. The small deeds truly shape the world around us. Let's work together to create a better, greener world.



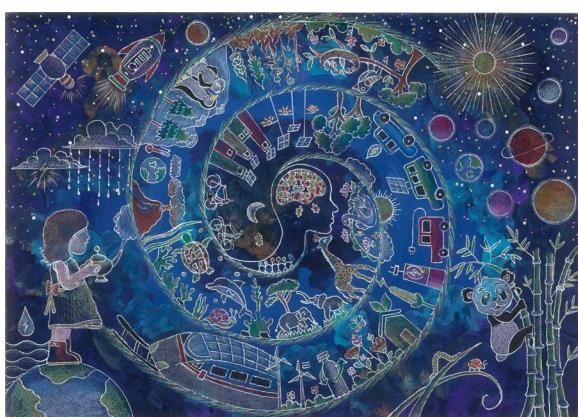
Forest Worship Ceremony of Pu Peo Village

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : I see people wearing colorful clothes like rainbow colors. The trees are the giant guardians of the village. The sky is a forest ghost, but green are everywhere. Forest is alive, they are happy. Animals are watching, it's a forest party! I wish I can spread the green all over the world.



Let's Give Forests Back to Beautiful Little Birds

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : Small forests where people live are often burnt down to make farms. When a forest disappears, small animals like birds travel to other places. A lush forest is a beautiful home for living creatures.



When human mind is solved, Sustainability is solved...

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : Sustainability begins with the harmony of the mind. The child and the mother's soul lies the foundation of the universe, which I will depict in the painting through a girl. In a world that needs care, we must unite for a sustainable future. Embrace renewable energy, 3R, protect biodiversity, and inspire awareness. The small actions, lasting impact make our world truly sustainable.



Let's Protect Our Lovely Wild Animals

Thoughts and wishes regarding the painting : I love animals and hope that they will never extinct. Humans must protect them and their habitats so that they can live as long as they can. Our earth is for everyone, animals and humankind. I hope we can live peacefully together with these beautiful animals.

Your entry will lead to a donation!



Kao Corporation donate 50 Japanese yen to the environment conservation activity that you choose from the three categories on each submission. We hope your paintings who bear the future will lead to a step forward for changing the world.

Wildlife protection



Saving endangered wildlife and conserving nature

WWF Japan



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Green forest conservation



Preventing desertification in the Aral Sea region of Uzbekistan

OISCA International



Reducing marine pollution



Solving marine pollution with research and technology

Pirika



Award-winning works will be exhibited around the world!

We hope that people around the world will feel the messages and be inspired to lead a sustainable lifestyle through children's paintings.



Hachioji City Global Warming Conservation Center
(Tokyo, Japan)

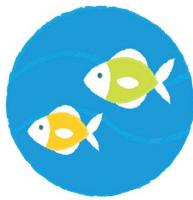


Eco Messe Kasugai
(Aichi, Japan)



Kirei Lifestyle event
(Taiwan)

Exploring environmental issues, together!



Water



Wildlife



Waste



Carbon emissions



Forestry



For more information please visit the "Kao International Environment Painting Contest for Children" Special site
https://www.kao.com/global/en/children_painting/

