Norfolk artist short-listed in national art competition

Thursday 17 October, 2019

An artist from Norfolk is celebrating after his acrylic and ink painting of a blue whale made it to the shortlist of a national competition highlighting species extinction.

Sketch for Survival *Introducing* attracted more than 400 entries from around the world. The competition – run by local conservation charity **Explorers Against Extinction** – showcases up and coming talent in which artists submit original work featuring an endangered species.

Submissions were narrowed down by an international judging panel to just 100 finalists. Seven artworks were subsequently shortlisted for the **Sketch for Survival Introducing Artist of the Year Award**, including Martham artist Alan Stanton's acrylic and ink creation.

Stanton, father of three and dental practice manager, aged 38, saw the competition advertised on social media. Having a life-long fascination with science and nature and growing up rescuing an array of wild animals from snakes to birds, he was motivated to support the Sketch for Survival initiative, which successfully raised £60,000 for frontline projects last year.

He said: "I wanted to create something that for me mirrored the silence of extinction in our society. This piece was created with acrylics and ink. I always look to deconstruct the subject I'm painting using contrasting colours. This allows the piece some space from its background without detaching it fully. I also like to leave room for interpretation."

Stanton returned to painting in 2015, after more than a decade's break. He has also been shortlisted for an exhibition in a leading contemporary gallery in Chelsea, London. He volunteers as an Art Ambassador for Flegg High Ormiston Academy in Martham working with the students to develop and inspire alongside the head of department, Mr Dan Coombes.

His blue whale, along with other selected artworks join the invitational Sketch for Survival collection which professional artists have contributed artworks to. Dozens of different species are represented in this year's exhibition from the oceans to the rainforest.

Celebrity contributors, including actresses Dame Judi Dench and Sophie Thompson and British explorers Sir Ranulph Fiennes and Levison Wood who are both patrons of the charity, have also put pencil to paper to make a stand against extinction. They were asked to donate a 26-minute sketch of an endangered species to highlight the fact an elephant is poached for its tusks in the wild every 26 minutes.

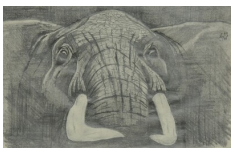
Sir Ranulph Fiennes, who has sketched an Exmoor Pony, said: "I'm pleased to support the Explorers Against Extinction campaign. Species extinction is such an important issue."

Fellow British explorer Levison Wood who has contributed elephant sketches inspired by a visit to Botswana said: "I feel it my duty to ensure that we continue to explore the world in a sustainable way. I am delighted to support Explorers Against Extinction in their efforts to promote

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conservation and protection of rare and endangered species and their environments."

Both collections are touring the UK this autumn and can be viewed at **The Crypt Gallery in Norwich from 31 October – 2 November (free entry).**

Stanton along with the other shortlisted artists will have to wait until November to find out if their artwork has won the top award. The winner will be announced at the charities On the Edge event at the Royal Geographical Society in London.

Visitors to Explorers against Extinction's Sketch for Survival exhibition are invited to have their say and to vote online for their favourite artwork in the collection. Organiser and trustee of Explorers Against Extinction Sara White said: "In the first week we received 2,500 votes for the Leisure Painter's People Choice Award. We can't wait to see which artwork will come out on top over the course of our five-week exhibition tour. There are so many wonderful artworks – picking a favourite is tough."

Artworks from both collections are available for sale throughout the tour with funds raised

going to frontline conservation projects.

Explorers against Extinction presents Sketch for Survival

Thursday 31 October 2019: 11am – 5pm; Friday 1 November 2019: 11am – 5pm; Saturday 2 November: 11am – 4pm. Free Entry.

Private View by invitation on the evening of 31 October 2019

The Crypt Gallery

Norwich School

Cathedral Close

Norwich NR1 4DD

explorersagainstextinction.co.uk

Please contact Sara White for further information, if you would like to attend the Private View in Norwich, or to request further imagery/video. Thank you.





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