

GREAT ART IDEAS

BEAUTIFUL PLANET: INSPIRED BY ALEXANDRA KEHAYOGLOU'S SANTA CRUZ RIVER

LEVELS 3–6

OVERVIEW

In this activity students will explore environmental issues by examining *Santa Cruz River*, 2017, by Argentinian artist Alexandra Kehayoglou. Taking inspiration from Kehayoglou's work, they will work collaboratively to research, discuss, design and create a landscape of an environment that is under threat using found and waste materials.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Identify and describe how ideas about the environment are expressed in Alexandra Kehayoglou's *Santa Cruz River*.
- Research and discuss environments that are potentially under threat and collaborate as a class to choose one to create an artwork about.
- Design and create an artwork using the elements and principles of art and design and found materials collected from home, school and the community.
- Reflect on how effectively the artwork expresses their thoughts and ideas about their chosen environment.

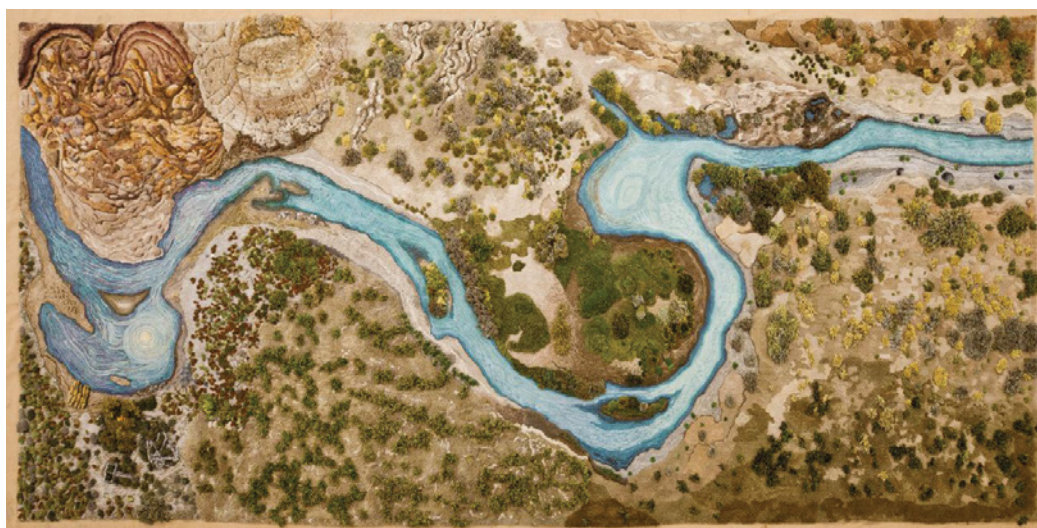
STUDENT EXAMPLE



A student example of a beautiful planet landscape

RELATED ARTWORK

ALEXANDRA
KEHAYOGLOU'S SANTA
CRUZ RIVER, 2017



Alexandra Kehayoglou
Santa Cruz River 2017
wool
300.0 x 478.0 x 714.0 cm (installed)
National Gallery of Victoria,
Melbourne
Purchased NGV Foundation
with the assistance of Michael
and Andrew Buxton from MAB
Corporation Pty Ltd, and the
Andrew and Geraldine Buxton
Foundation, 2018
© Alexandra Kehayoglou

DISCUSS

Alexandra Kehayoglou (b. 1981) is an Argentinian artist and designer based in Buenos Aires. Kehayoglou makes hand-tufted wool rugs using industrial leftovers to draw attention to environmental issues and landscapes under threat.

Santa Cruz River, 2017, is a wool carpet, almost five meters long that maps the landscape of the Santa Cruz River in Argentina. When Kehayoglou created the artwork, it was the country's last remaining free-flowing river. Kehayoglou kayaked the length of the river and made detailed studies of the environment, as part of a group of biologists, engineers, artists and activists who were all concerned about the environment's future. Despite their efforts to protect the river, construction to build two mega-hydroelectric dams has begun.

Look at *Santa Cruz River* and use the following discussion prompts to explore the artwork with your class:

- What colours has Kehayoglou used to create the land and river? Create a list.
- How has Kehayoglou's use of colour created movement in the artwork?
- What words might you use to describe *Santa Cruz River*. Create another list.
- Imagine you could walk across the artwork or lie down on it. How might you feel doing this? Justify your thoughts with a good explanation.
- How does *Santa Cruz River* draw attention to environmental issues? Do you think Kehayoglou has been successful in communicating her message? Explain your reasoning.

You may also like to watch this short video: [Alexandra Kehayoglou | NGV](#)

RESOURCES & MATERIALS

- A4 Paper and pencil to list and sketch your ideas
- Large sheet of paper or cardboard to use as a base
- Clear glue

Found materials from home, school or your community to create your landscape. We have made a few suggestions below, but the possibilities are endless. Make sure your found materials are clean and dry.

- Cardboard
- Scrap paper
- Food packaging
- Knitting wool
- Bottle top lids
- Plastic or paper bags
- Magazines and newspapers
- Recycled artwork
- Old wrapping paper, birthday cards and ribbon
- Plastic bottles and take away coffee cups
- Old textbooks, school workbooks or colouring in books
- Stickers, playing cards or toys that have two dimensional parts
- Old clothes (make sure they are clean and someone at home is happy for you to cut them up)

CREATE

Design and create a group artwork which raises an awareness of an environment under threat through the following steps:

1. Working in small groups, research and discuss environments that are potentially under threat and create a list.
2. Present your findings to the class and discuss. Make sure you discuss the issues affecting each of your chosen environments.
3. Now it's time to vote! Choose the environment you would most like to create a landscape of. You can work in small groups or as a whole class.
4. Find a colour image of your environment to use as a guide. *Perhaps an aerial view like Kehayoglou or a combination of images to create your own unique interpretation.*
5. Sketch an outline of the principal areas, shapes and lines of your landscape on a large sheet of paper or cardboard. *Keep the sketch simple, you don't need any detail.*
6. Identify which colours you need and allocate a separate storage container for each colour.
7. Find your materials. *While doing this consider the impact of all this collected material on your environment. The recycling bin might offer a few surprises so don't forget to take a closer look.*
8. Tear or cut your material into smaller manageable pieces and store in your containers until you are ready to arrange and glue into place. *Tearing materials will help create some interesting organic lines that better reflect the natural world. Make sure each piece of material is of varying size. This will create depth and interest.*
9. When you have enough found material, carefully arrange it on your large sheet of paper or cardboard. Layer your materials on top of one another to create texture. *Make sure your landscape works as a whole and that each area complements the other.*
10. When you're happy with the result you can start gluing each piece down. Do this slowly and carefully. *Ideally, the material you have used will not be immediately recognisable. You want your audience to approach the work admiring its beauty, only to realise on closer inspection that you have used found materials to create it. It will be fun for your viewer to try and figure out what materials you have used to create your artwork.*
11. Display your artwork in an area where the whole school can view it. If appropriate you might like to consider partially displaying your artwork on the floor and inviting your audience to walk over it.

PRESENT AND REFLECT

Invite your school community, family and friends to view your artwork.

- How does your audience respond?
- Can they recognise the land you have recreated?
- Are they able to recognise the materials you have used to create the work?
- How well do your materials, their application and your technique communicate your message and the issue/s affecting your landscape? Why do you think this?
- Do you think that your artwork could affect change? How so?

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