

# NEWS

## Asylum seekers exhibit wildlife artworks at zoo

Asylum seekers are exhibiting their prints and paintings of wildlife after taking part in an art therapy project at London Zoo.

Refugia saw 16 participants create artworks after joining workshops based around critically endangered gibbons, urban wildlife, rainforest protection, animal migration, and the illegal wildlife trade.

The project was jointly run by the Regent's Park Zoo and The New Art Studio in Islington, with each conservation topic linked to an artistic technique.

The work is on show free to the public this month at The Huxley Lecture Theatre.

Lucy Brown who works in public engagement at ZSL said the workshops highlighted the Zoo's conservation work as "art and science came together."

"They were developing their creative practice and looking

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at specific conservation topics including wildlife co-existence - how we live alongside animals," she said.

Some participants were just beginning to explore art, while others were more experienced - including a Turkish political cartoonist who led a workshop on foam board printing. Other activities included making life drawings of gibbons, sketches of horns and shells seized at Border Control, and cyanotype prints of urban ecology following a woodland walk in the Zoo grounds.

A watercolour workshop was based around ZSL's coral reef tank and conservation scheme on the state of the Thames - with participants surprised to discover there are seahorses in the river.

One commented: "London is a busy city but there are so many animals living side by side, they co-exist with us. What shocked me is that London's Thames is not as bad as we think, there are species living in there."

Another said: "I saw different fish all moving very sweetly together. I hope humans with each different colour be happy to be next to each other."

Migration was explored with ink, calligraphy and charcoal. "Why animals migrate and move was of great interest as well as translocation, where we move an animal back to repopulate a range where they may be extinct," said Lucy.

Refugia is on show from February 19 at the Huxley Lecture Theatre in the Outer Circle, Regent's Park. [www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/refugia-exhibition-tickets-522362930587](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/refugia-exhibition-tickets-522362930587)



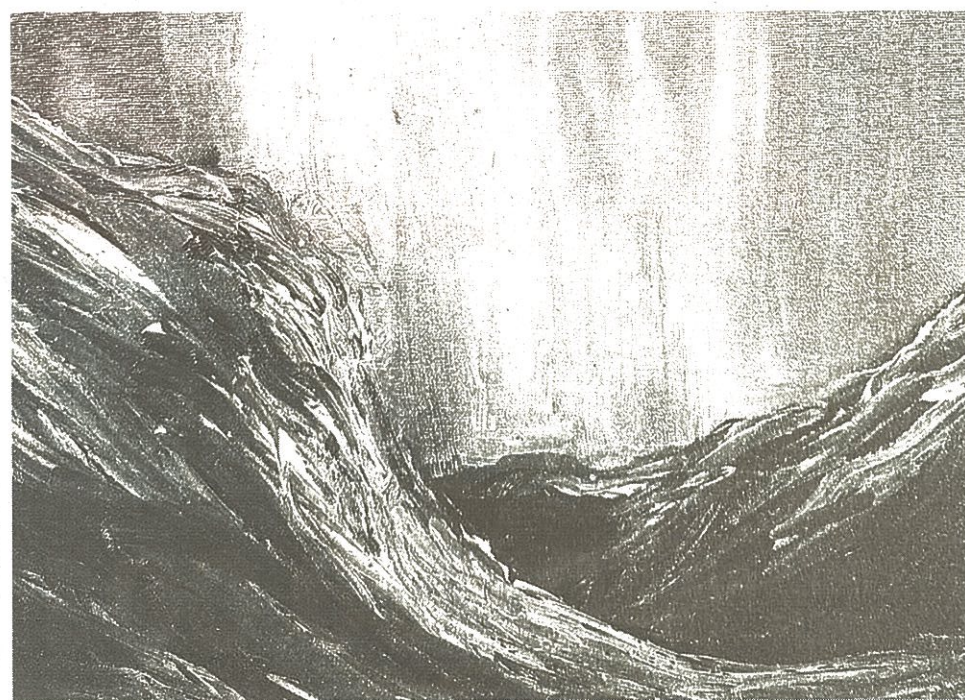
Refugia saw asylum seekers creating artworks after workshops at London Zoo



Each workshop was based around a conservation topic and an artistic technique



16 asylum seekers and refugees took part in workshops at ZSL then developed their artworks at the New Art Studio in Islington



Refugia is on show free to the public in London Zoo's Huxley Lecture Theatre in Regent's Park