

Fading Footsteps

Suzanne Grace | Wild Art

Liverpool has a rich history where exotic animals have been central to many aspects of our lives including entertainment, scientific enquiry, and not least our city's rich maritime heritage. But in recent decades there has been a growing sense of disconnectedness with these animals.

Habitat destruction, human encroachment, the climate crisis and globalisation have accelerated primate species loss, and most of Africa's great ape species are decreasing in number. In Uganda over 60% of primates are classed as 'at risk'. Conservation of species is a key concern, and careful management and eco-tourism is essential to ensure the ecological system does not deteriorate further.

Visual art can be a powerful activist tool to combat biodiversity loss and can foster greater emotional regard for non-human animals. Exposure to animal portraits can grab people's attention and their perceptions of animals can be changed. If non-human animals are viewed as more 'kin like' by humans it encourages greater empathy.

This exhibition presents an auto-ethnographical account of a visit to Uganda. Personal meaning maps, paintings and films aim to stimulate awareness of endangered and vulnerable primate species and evoke increased empathy towards supporting conservation.