

Reflection

By Margaux Armfield

The title of my piece, *Submersion*, refers to how the sea turtle is immersed in a sea of blue plastic, which I constructed by gluing strips of Dasani water-bottle wrappers onto my pastel drawing of a sea turtle. The title also evokes a sense of uneasiness by its phonetic similarities to the word 'subversion'. Subversion is the act of overthrowing the established system in a discreet manner, which I believe is an accurate description of the way that plastic pollution insidiously damages oceanic ecosystems, with near complete ignorance from the public. My goal in creating this piece was to depict the often unseen threat plastics and other man-made materials pose to creatures such as sea turtles and other marine lifeforms, as well as to testify to the beauty of aquatic life. I have witnessed this splendor firsthand while snorkeling and scuba diving. However, prior to researching the subject for this contest, I was unaware of the magnitude of plastic present in our oceans today. Not only was I astounded by frightening statistics, such as the fact that approximately 8 million tons of plastic enter the ocean each year, but I was also surprised that I had never once heard this issue discussed on the news or in my classrooms at school. I hope that by viewing *Submersion*, people are reminded of the beauty that sea life possesses while realizing that the growing issue of pollution in the oceans cannot be allowed to fade into the background.