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Art

Changing the World: One Painting at a Time
Yaniv Daniel Janson
Ecosynergy Creative
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Following a painting career of less than two years, Yaniv Daniel Janson's art was featured in nineteen exhibitions, six as a solo artist who sold seventy paintings around the world—all before his eighteenth birthday. Such a fast-rising star, and one so young, is rare in the art world.

Janson says he paints to raise awareness about the environment. *Changing the World – One Painting at a Time* is a visual story that uses his paintings as a backdrop for his message. Each page is a feast of color, reminiscent of Matisse. Janson calls his images "visualizing climate change." The original media represented in the book are watercolor on canvas, acrylic on canvas, and pastel on paper. One page features a black-and-white linocut print. All artwork is titled and many include Janson's descriptions and social messages.

Some art is comparative. For example, *Fertile Lands* is next to *Bare Lands. Happy Flowers* is on the opposite page from *Sad Flowers*. Janson writes, "These flowers start off small and colorful—they get whiter when…they get closer and closer to dying. I would prefer to paint happy flowers than sad ones, so let's stop climate change now." In his painting "Atlantis Rising,' about climate change, he implores, "All children of the world—unite and make sure your parents know you care!!!" His passion for the environment is unequivocal.

Initially Janson's family was concerned that their young artist's success in the art world was perhaps out of sympathy because he has Aspergers' Syndrome (high functioning autism); however, it soon became clear that his success is due to his artistic talent. Janson, who lives in New Zealand, has a condition that impairs his ability to express emotions through words. But his art has given him a new language, a new mode of expression. In the book's introduction, by his mother, she says his ability to communicate verbally has improved as he has matured as an artist.

Janson's talent is recognized not only in the world of art but with others, such as architects and urban planners, fashion designers, and environmentalists. He has already won numerous awards for his art. He works with educators, architects, researchers, designers, and

artists to spread his ideas about why we need to change our behavior now to ensure that the legacy we leave future generations can sustain human life.

A Teacher Resource Appendix compiled by Dr. Annick Janson, an educational psychologist and researcher who is also the artist's mother, should be helpful to all teachers of art for all types of students.

Penny Hastings