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NTU's Earth Observatory of S'pore launches 2 anime episodes to highlight youths hold key to solving environmental issues

If not them, then who?

Ruth Chai | October 20, 2022, 02:02 AM



The Earth Observatory of Singapore (EOS) at Nanyang Technological University launched a new anime series, "Earth Girl Mission", to inspire youth to be part of the climate solution.

The two episodes are educational stories about how the Earth is changing, as seen through the eyes of an 11-year-old girl.

The **first episode** in the series, "Earth Girl Ocean", focuses on the important role the ocean plays in supporting a healthy planet, and the impact of our actions on marine life.

The **second episode**, "Earth Girl Nature" explores how nature, including mangrove forests and waterways, can contribute to climate impacts reduction through interconnected systems.

Each episode is less than 4 minutes long.

By artist in residence

The series was written and directed by Liz Courtney, the artist in residence at EOS, in collaboration with the School of Art, Design and Media (ADM).

While short, the protagonist is portrayed as living the idealistic childhood -- hanging out in the great outdoors, climbing trees, and going for long walks on the beach.

However, the reality she cannot escape from is the overwhelming presence of pollutants.



Photo via "Earth Girl Nature"

In "Earth Girl Ocean", the washed colours and beautiful sunset bring a vibrant sense of hope in its warm glow, but 20 seconds in, plastic can be seen littered throughout the coast.

“This has to change,” the girl said.



Photo via "Earth Girl Ocean"

Youths hold key to solution

At the Oct. 7 event to launch the anime episodes, EOS director Benjamin Horton emphasised the responsibility of the current and future generations to address the issues of climate change.

“And even though you don’t know it now, you guys are going to provide the solutions to climate change,” Horton said.

One of the missions of the EOS is to find low cost and nature-based solutions to try and make urban areas more resilient to flooding now and in the future.

Message of hope

However, amidst the doom and gloom talk and wall-to-wall coverage of environmental issues daily, the anime was to capture the sense of urgency and amplify it -- but with a sense of hopefulness that young people can solve one of the most pressing issues of all time.

The anime's director and writer Courtney said she wanted to convey the message of environmental protection to both youth and adults.

And she relied on a medium close to her own children's hearts.

She explained that her three children love anime, which inspired her to explore the medium: “I wanted to try and tell a story that is very important, but I wanted to tell it in a gentle and poetic way.”



Photo via "Earth Girl Nature"

Another aspect that struck her was the use of sound production to add depth and emotion to the work.

She said she wanted to use music to provide a “hopeful” element to the animation, citing that there is already “too much climate anxiety that young people have”.

Courtney said she hopes to educate the next generation on the pertinence of immediate action, but also convey a sense of hopefulness for the future.

All media via EOS