



A LIFE IN ART

Sue Coe shares the stories behind her extraordinary images

Best known for her real life drawings of animals in slaughterhouses and factory farms, Sue Coe's artwork draws attention to the death and exploitation that happens around us daily, in an attempt to awaken compassion. As a prize-winning artist she bears witness to unspeakable crimes, and has long advocated that human beings take more responsibility for ourselves, our fellow species and our planet.

In her newest work, a book titled *The Animals' Vegan Manifesto*; (O.R. Books) Sue Coe unleashes an outraged cry for action that, with extraordinary images and few words, takes its place alongside the other great manifestoes of history.

Has art always been a passion of yours, even as a child?

Art is the only thing I have ever been able to do. It's been my biggest passion since the

age of three. I've never considered a different career path. It's always been art.

Growing up, you lived next door to a slaughter house. Was it then you realised the horrors within were something that needed to be shared?

Back then it was all normalised. It was many decades ago after World War 2, food was rationed, and animals were considered food. I remember one day a pig escaped the slaughterhouse, and made herself visible, and from that day on I wanted to get into that slaughterhouse. We lived directly next to where the pigs were held and we could hear the sounds of them being loaded into trucks to head next door to the slaughterhouse. It would start off at about 4am, and all we would hear was screaming and screaming. As an inquisitive child I asked my parents about it and they told me to grow up and realise that this was normal, this is food. I knew then

it wasn't food, this murdering other beings wasn't about food. So I started to go into the slaughterhouse as a child (my neighbour knew who I was and they allowed it) and I started to draw what I saw. And that continued for decades after. It's not easy to get into a slaughterhouse now, but there is always someone who has a cousin or an uncle who works in a slaughterhouse, and they are able to help me gain access.

Was it at this stage in your life you made the decision to go vegan? Or was veganism something that happened later?

The first animal activism I did in the UK was anti-vivisection. At this point I was still eating cheese and eggs, I was yet to make the connection. It was quite a long time before I went vegan and then it was easy. This was about 38 years ago.