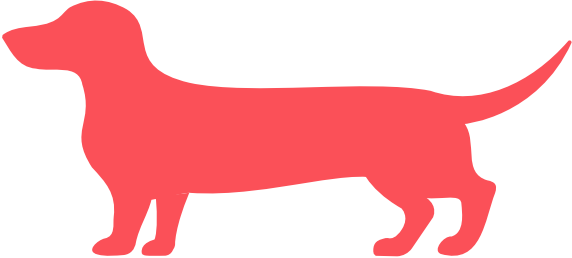
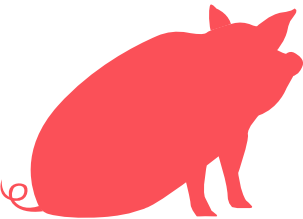
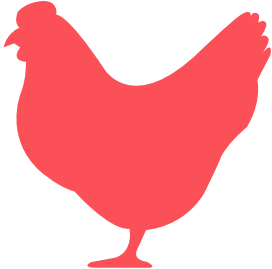


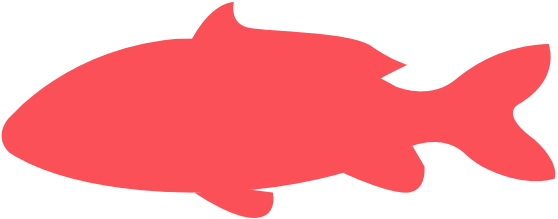
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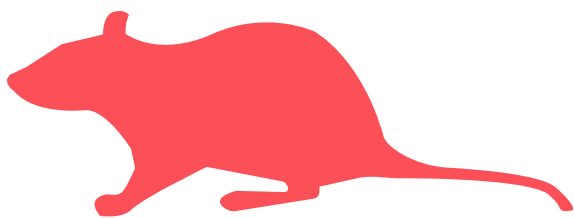
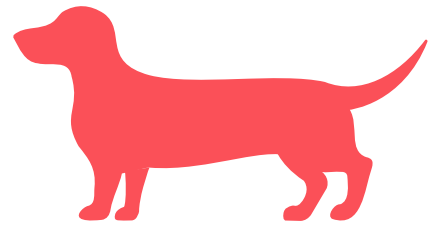
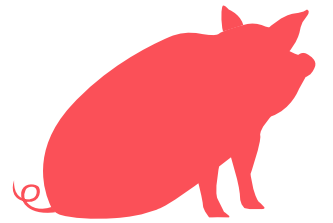
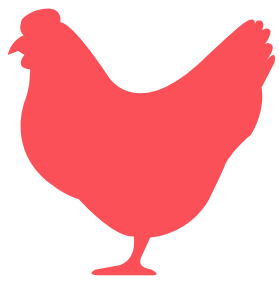
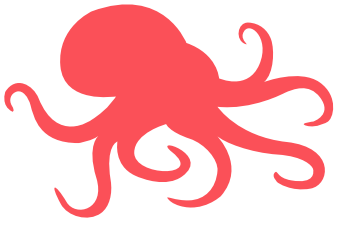
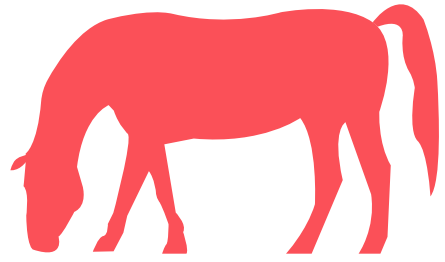
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MENSCH TIER Workshops und Impulse zum gesellschaftlichen Mensch-Tier-Verhältnis Bildung e.V.

 Institut für Didaktik der Demokratie

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An online version of the graphic novel is available free of charge on the ALICE project website. The graphic novel is complemented by a didactic guide for teachers, also available for download. The website also offers additional learning content such as podcasts and learning videos.

Prologue

It is a warm summer evening. Two people, Caron and Shanti, are walking along the river not far from their home. They smell the summer scent of the grasses and hear the lapping of the river and the rustling of the wind in the trees. Suddenly, voices pierce the quiet of the summer evening. They don't seem far away at all, just a few steps. Curious, Caron and Shanti walk in the direction from which the sounds are coming. When they step out from behind a bush, they can hardly believe what they are seeing. At a small bay, right next to the river, many animals are sitting together in the dusk. Alongside bovines, pigs and chickens, dogs and horses have also gathered. Fishes and octopuses peek out of the water. Bumblebees fly around and a few rats and pigeons peer out of the bushes along the path. The animals have gathered here to remember their ancestors.

In this place, utopia is already being lived. The rights of humans and animals are equally respected and the needs of all are upheld.

The future is a reality and apart from isolated ruins of slaughterhouses, zoos and animal testing laboratories, only stories remind us of the past.

Caron and Shanti join the animals and listen with fascination as a bovine begins to tell of their ancestor Harry.

Bovine

Harry was born on a farm. However, when he was only a few weeks old, he was to be sent away from the farm for slaughter. Out of fear of what was to come, but also out of curiosity about the world outside, he gathered up his courage and at exactly the right moment, just as he was about to get into the slaughter truck, he made a dash for it and broke free. As fast as he could, Harry fled into a nearby forest. There he hid from the humans and explored the world that was so new to him.

For three weeks he lived together with wild deer and the other animals of the forest and could not be caught by the humans. Even with his favourite treats he could not be lured. The humans could only spot him from time to time from far away. He was like a legendary wild animal. At one point, the humans decided to get Harry's mother Alexandra to help. The humans took her into the forest. And lo and behold, after she had called him a few times, little Harry came running out of the thicket. After weeks of separation, mother and son greeted each other warmly and lovingly. Together with Alexandra, Harry willingly and trustingly came back to the people on the farm.

A few weeks later, another transport was due. This time, however, it was not to go to a slaughterhouse. Instead, Harry and his mother were taken to an animal sanctuary. A few months later, Alexandra gave birth to another calf in their new home. The two brothers and their mother were never separated and had a close relationship throughout their lives.

The animals are happy about the good outcome of the story. Finally, a small, brightly spotted pig steps forward to talk about his ancestors. They too were lucky and were able to live a life in an exciting place which was very unusual for pigs at the time.

Bovines can form very close social bonds. Friendships can last a lifetime. The mother-child relationship is particularly deep. This bond exists not only after the birth of the child, but also when the child is an adult.

By nature, almost all bovines have horns, both male and female. The horns are important for communicating with each other and are also used for grooming.

In nature, bovines spend half their day eating. To do this, they walk up to 40 kilometres a day in the herd, grazing and taking breaks to ruminate.

Like all other mammals, cows must first have a child in order to be able to produce milk. On farms, calves are usually separated from their mothers on the first day of their lives. Mother and child then often call for each other for days. From this point on, the cow's milk is used for human consumption.

In Germany, cows kept for dairy production on average live through two to three pregnancies. They are then slaughtered at around 4.5 years of age. Calves are killed for veal when they are four to seven months old. Bulls are slaughtered to produce beef at the age of one to two years. The natural life span of bovines is around 25 years.

In 2020 in Germany, almost 90 per cent of cows kept for dairy production were kept inside in so called freestalls. As a rule, their horns are burnt off in the first six weeks of life so that they do not injure each other in the cramped living conditions. De-horning is very painful and is usually done without anaesthetics. This practice is also permitted in organic farming.



Pig

Black Beauty, Rosalie and Zora, together with their 37 children, lived outdoors all year round in a spacious compound. They roamed on a green pasture full of grass and clover. A forest with huts provided a shady retreat and a mud hut guaranteed cooling on hot summer days. Under these conditions, the pigs had all their needs met. They played with branches in the forest, dug up the soil with their trunks and took care of each other in their large family group.

The herd of pigs did not live in a cramped barn like most other pigs did at the time. Instead, they were at the heart of a research project called the Clever Pig Lab. Behavioural scientists observed their social interactions, learning behaviour and social intelligence on a daily basis because they wanted to learn more about pigs. In contrast to stables or other research facilities, the pigs had plenty of space here and could determine their own daily routine. In daily life, it was particularly striking how different the characters of the individual pigs were. Each individual had their own position in the group and took on certain tasks.

Zampano, the leader of the herd, was the social tactician and a good observer. He often smelled conflicts before they arose. He was immediately on the spot and calmed everyone down. He was particularly good at keeping the herd together peacefully.

Zora was the herd leader among the ladies. As queen of her kingdom, she always had everything in view and did not think of following the rules of the people. Instead, she loved the challenge of teaching her humans rules that she had made up herself. Her curly tail always indicated her mood. If it was stretched upwards, she was excited. She expressed her joy with a wag. If the tail hung down, she was relaxed or concentrated.

Pigs are very social animals. They have different roles in the group according to their personality and live in a fixed hierarchy. They maintain very close relationships, but also like to avoid each other from time to time.

In nature, pigs are busy most of the day looking for food and digging in the soil with their trunks in search of food such as roots and tubers, but also worms and insect larvae. They have a very good sense of smell, are very clean and always keep their sleeping place and defecation site separate if they can. They cannot sweat and therefore wallow in the mud to regulate their body temperature.

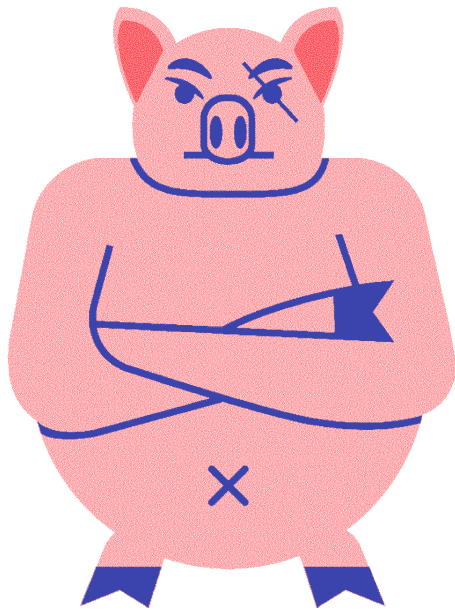
Pigs are very curious and capable of learning. They have a very good spatial memory and are able to work together in a coordinated way. They can also interpret emotions in the human voice and are considered at least as intelligent as dogs.

In Germany, pigs reared for meat are separated from their mothers after less than 30 days, and in organic farming after about 40 days. They are then transported in large trucks to a fattening farm where they are kept in groups. The composition of the groups changes frequently during the fattening period. In the wild, sows suckle their piglets for three to four months.

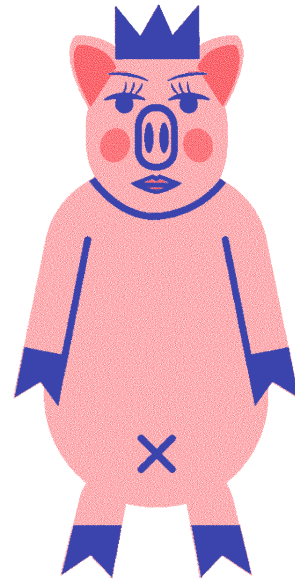
Most pigs live in cramped pens where they suffer from boredom. To prevent them from hurting each other, piglets usually have their teeth and tails shortened in the first two weeks of life. As diseases spread quickly within the sheds, animals are often given large amounts of antibiotics, which also poses a risk to human health.

In Germany, pigs farmed for meat are slaughtered after about six months, even in organic farming. Sows farmed to produce piglets are killed after about three years, having been pregnant an average of six times. Pigs can actually live for 15 to 20 years.

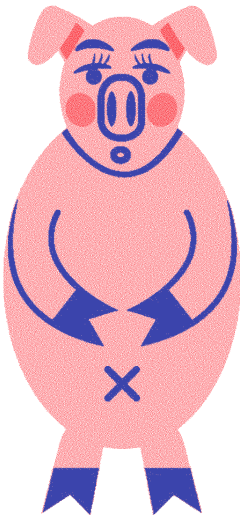
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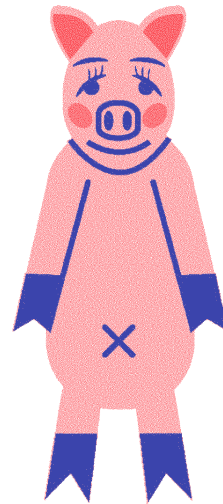
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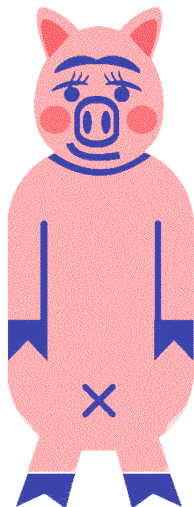
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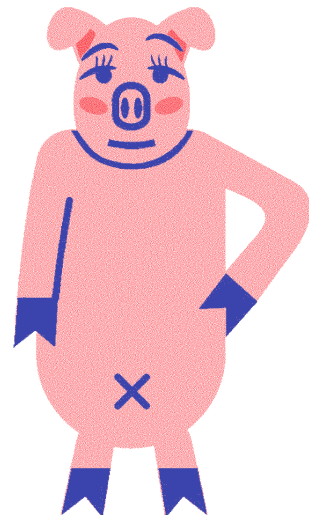
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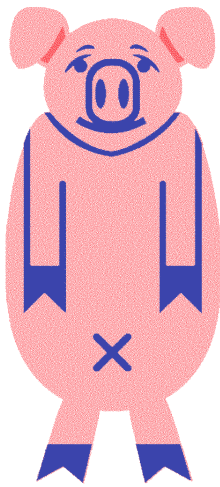
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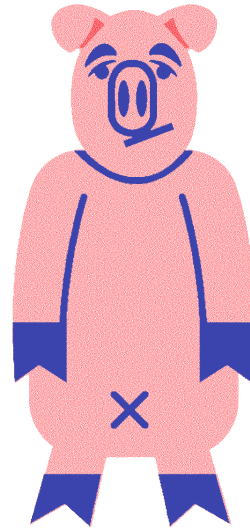
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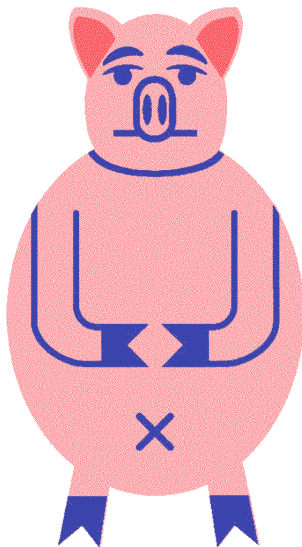
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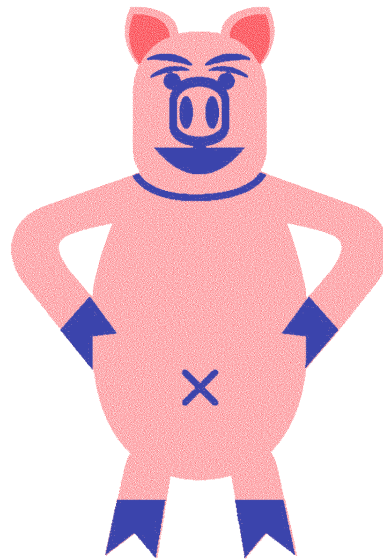
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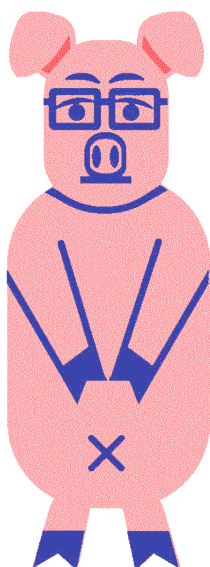
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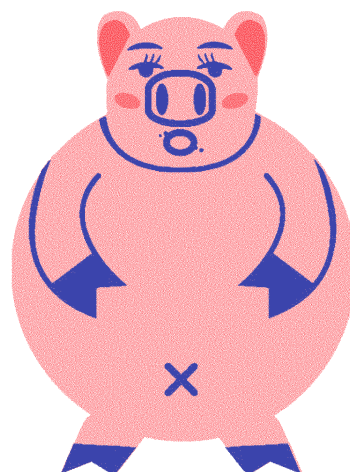
BENJAMIN



ZAZOU



ZAFIRA



Zora was always accompanied by her best friend Black Beauty. Others, too, were often out and about as a group and hardly ever found alone, such as the sisters Bessy, Bella and Bijou. Cerberus and Radieschen, on the other hand, were absolute loners and preferred to enjoy their peace and quiet.

The pigs were given tasks on a computer, which they could solve using touch screens. Zazou was the best of the class and could never get enough of the tasks. Zafira's performance, on the other hand, was completely dependent on the quality of the reward. She was a gourmet. Top performance was only to be expected for grapes. Carrots, on the other hand, could not motivate her to cooperate in the slightest.

Romeo was a cheerful soul. He always tried to do everything right but was always unlucky. He often put his foot in it and was always unintentionally tripping over the legs of others. Yet he always kept his sunny disposition, which made him the favourite of many humans.

Benjamin and Baldur, on the other hand, were bullies who constantly picked fights with the other boars and never avoided conflict. In most scuffles between boars, at least one of the two was involved or was even the cause of the scuffle. But Zampano with his watchful eye was never far away.

The pig has not yet finished his tale when an octopus started to wave his arms excitedly. He could not wait to tell the others the story of his famous ancestor Otto.

Octopus

Otto, an octopus who lived in Coburg Zoo, was known for many amazing abilities. Many octopuses had already caused a sensation among humans, but Otto had gained special fame, through, among other things, an appearance on a TV show. The highly intelligent octopus had shown his manual dexterity on German television by effortlessly opening a sealed jar to reach the contents. To do this, he skilfully held the screw cap with the suction cups of his eight arms and twisted it open.

During a winter break of the zoo's aquarium, a number of electrical circuits shorted which led to defects in pumps and the heat supply. The staff puzzled over the cause and looked for solutions. Just when they thought they had eliminated the cause, the fuses blew again.

One day, as a staff member walked past Otto's aquarium, she noticed out of the corner of her eye that the octopus was shooting a metre-high jet of water at a 2000-watt spotlight nearby. He had swung himself onto the edge of his tank in order to do something about the spotlight, which was obviously annoying him a lot.

The staff member placed a glass pane over Otto's tank to protect the spotlight. But the octopus did not put up with this. He now shot at the glass until it was on the verge of breaking.

The zoo staff knew Otto, as a tactile and intellectually demanding animal, had a great need for activity. Otto sought attention with his water games. If no one was busy with him, he would sometimes move his entire tank or push little hermit crabs off the top of his stone pyramid.

Otto's escapades caused quite a stir among people all over the world even back then. Even the British newspaper Daily Telegraph and a US radio station were interested in him. The zoo staff eventually had to hang the spotlight higher to get it out of Otto's reach.

Caron and Shanti join the animals in marvelling at Otto's use of human-made things. A rat also has a story on this topic about some of her ancestors.

Octopuses belong to the squid family. They are playful and adaptive, can act with foresight and have a very good memory.

Octopuses are among the most intelligent invertebrates. Their brain to body mass ratio is similar to that of many vertebrates. They are extremely curious and react very sensitively to boredom.

Octopuses have three hearts and unusual brain structures. Most of their brain is distributed across their eight arms, which are also called tentacles.

The animals are traded as a delicacy and catching octopuses in the wild and, increasingly, fattening them in aquacultures, is considered a promising business. Due to their brain structures, there is no reliable method to anaesthetise them before slaughter.

In captivity, i.e. in aquacultures, but also in zoos and similar facilities, such as Sea Life aquariums, octopuses are often kept in low-stimulus environments. This affects their behaviour, as the animals quickly become bored if they are not stimulated and challenged.

Animals on display in zoos and similar facilities have either been bred in captivity or captured in nature. They are unable to live out many of their natural needs and therefore often exhibit behavioural disorders.



Rat

Rosa the rat lived with her family in a big city. Rosa often came across different objects there, which she checked for hidden food. One day she found a tube that smelled like something delicious. Cautiously, Rosa dared to go inside it. But suddenly she heard a loud bang, which frightened her terribly. She turned around and tried to escape from the tube. But a door had fallen shut and blocked her way. Luckily, one of her older siblings, Fredi, was nearby and had seen that she was in distress. Fredi already knew this tube and knew that the door could be pushed open with a little force from the outside. So, he rushed over and freed Rosa from her predicament. Immediately after her release, Rosa began to examine the tube. She memorised exactly how she could open the door – in case someone else would get trapped in such a tube.

Together, Rosa and Fredi went in search of food again. Soon they found another one of the tubes. Rosa was surprised because the door was locked, but the tube was empty. As there was no rat in distress in it, they both decided to move on.

The next day, Rosa passed another tube while on her walk. The door was closed and behind it her little sister Ruby was calling for help. Simultaneously, Rosa noticed an intoxicatingly delicious smell of apples. She looked around and noticed a few pieces of apple only a few metres away from her. She would have liked to devour the apples immediately. But despite her appetite, she pulled herself together and only took a small bite before releasing Ruby because Rosa knew how bad it was to be trapped. She pressed firmly on the door so that it opened a little and Ruby made a quick escape through the crack in the door.

Now it was time to eat the pieces of apple. Rosa and Ruby ate the rest of the apples together and left happily.

The search for food is also an important issue for the pigeons in the circle. In the past, it was often difficult to find their way through the crowds of people to get hold of something tasty. The pigeons have heard many stories about this from their ancestors and one of them now begins to tell a story about their ancestor Erwin.

Rats are very social animals. They live in large family groups, recognise each other by smell, groom each other and play together. If they perceive danger, they pass the information on to each other.

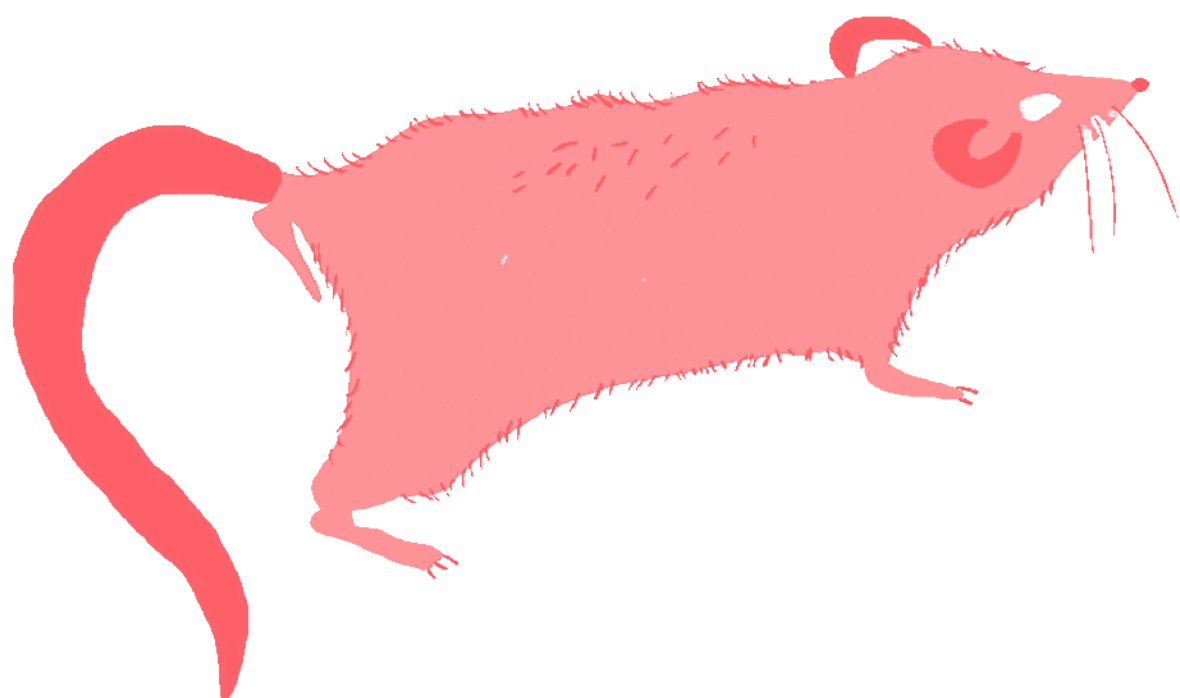
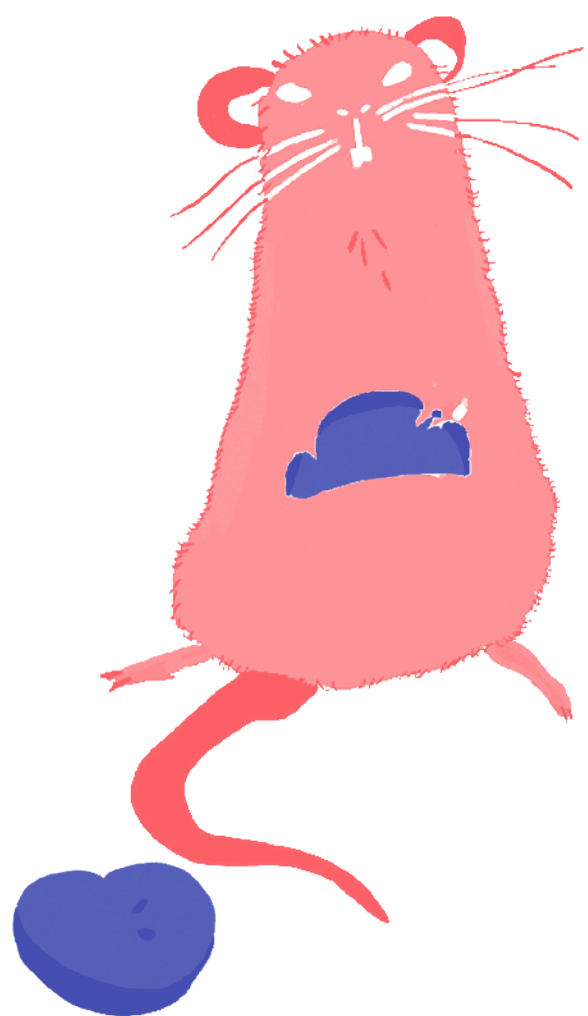
Young animals learn quickly in their group how to get food and what is edible. Rats have a very good memory and are good at recognising poison bait by smell. They can solve problems just as quickly as dogs.

When rats are tickled on their bellies, they make sounds similar to human laughter. They communicate via smells and via ultrasonic sounds that are not perceptible to humans.

Rats are wrongly considered unclean and are often stigmatised as carriers of disease and “pests”. In many places, rats living in the wild are actively controlled, for example with poison and killing traps.

Rats kept as “pets” are often fancy rats, a sub species of the wild brown rat, bred for domestication. In private households and zoos, rats are also fed to other animals, for example to reptiles. In addition, they are often used for animal experiments and in this context are also called “laboratory rats”.

After mice, rats are the second most frequently used animal in experiments in Germany. In 2020, almost 200,000 rats (and more than 1,800,000 mice) were used in animal experiments and killed during or after the experiments.



Pigeon

Erwin was the offspring of escaped and abandoned domestic pigeons. He lived in a large European city, where he endured bleak and dangerous living conditions. Hardly a day went by without him being attacked and frightened by people while searching for food on the street.

He preferred to spend his time in the company of other pigeons because the conversations in the trees and on the rooftops were always very exciting. Erwin learned, for example, about talented pigeons that became really famous among people. In one experiment, the animals learned to reliably distinguish a painting by Marc Chagall from a painting by Vincent van Gogh. Erwin liked these stories, but he was not as surprised by them as the humans because he knew about the talents of his species. Pigeons have amazing visual abilities. For example, they can memorise up to 725 different patterns. In a chat with pigeon friends, Erwin also learned about pigeons that helped people rescue other people at sea.

However, Erwin did not understand why so many people treated pigeons so badly and scared them away when they came too close. However, not all of the pigeons had such bad experiences. One of Erwin's friends, Willy, lived in a large pigeon loft with many other pigeons. Nice humans came regularly to clean this pigeon dwelling and to provide fresh water and grains for the pigeons so that they didn't have to wander the cities hungrily. Willy was particularly fond of one of these humans, who often stayed with the pigeons for a long time and offered them special treats.

These tales of nice humans elicit a joyful sigh from a chubby bumblebee. Immediately all eyes are on her and the animals ask her to share a story of her ancestors.

Pigeons have a field of vision of nearly 360 degrees because of the sideways position of their eyes. They can recognise people who have once provided them with food from a distance.

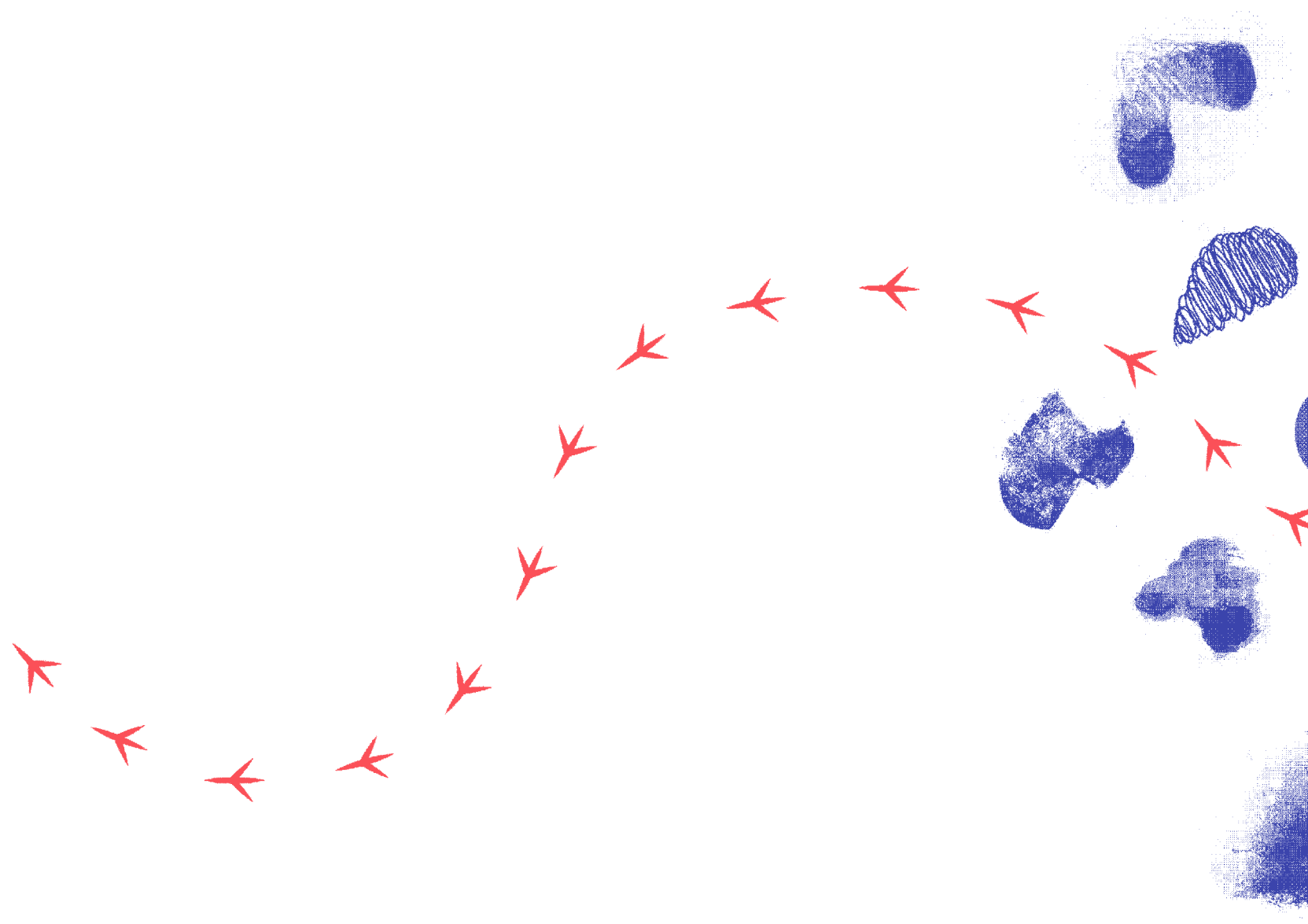
Pigeons can fly up to 120 kilometres per hour and up to 1,000 kilometres per day. They have a very good memory, can memorise hundreds of different patterns and recognise objects in rooms faster than humans.

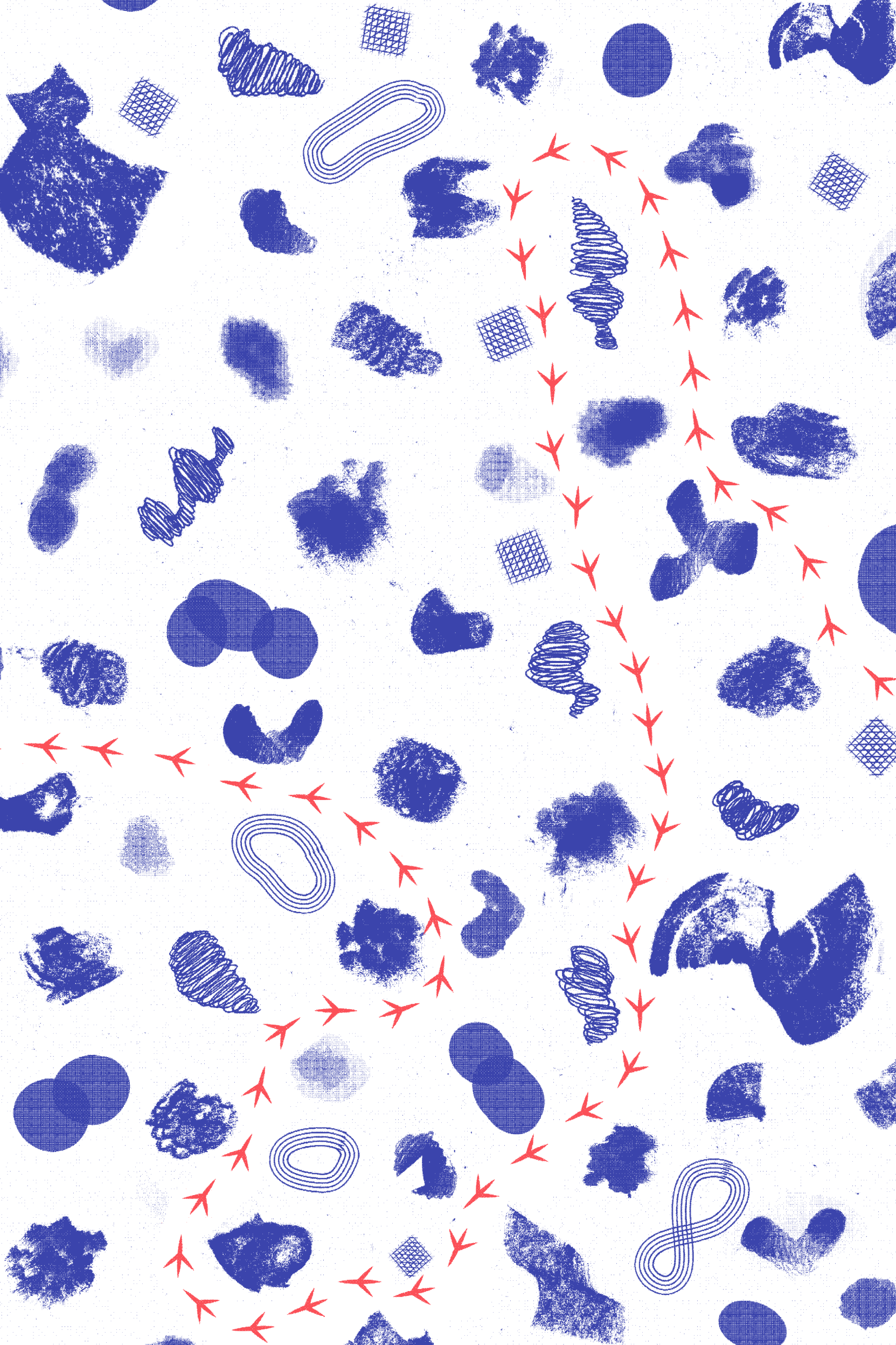
Pigeons are very social animals. They live monogamously, so a pair of pigeons stays together for life. Parents look after their offspring together. Pigeons are also loyal to a particular location. They always return to a place they have chosen.

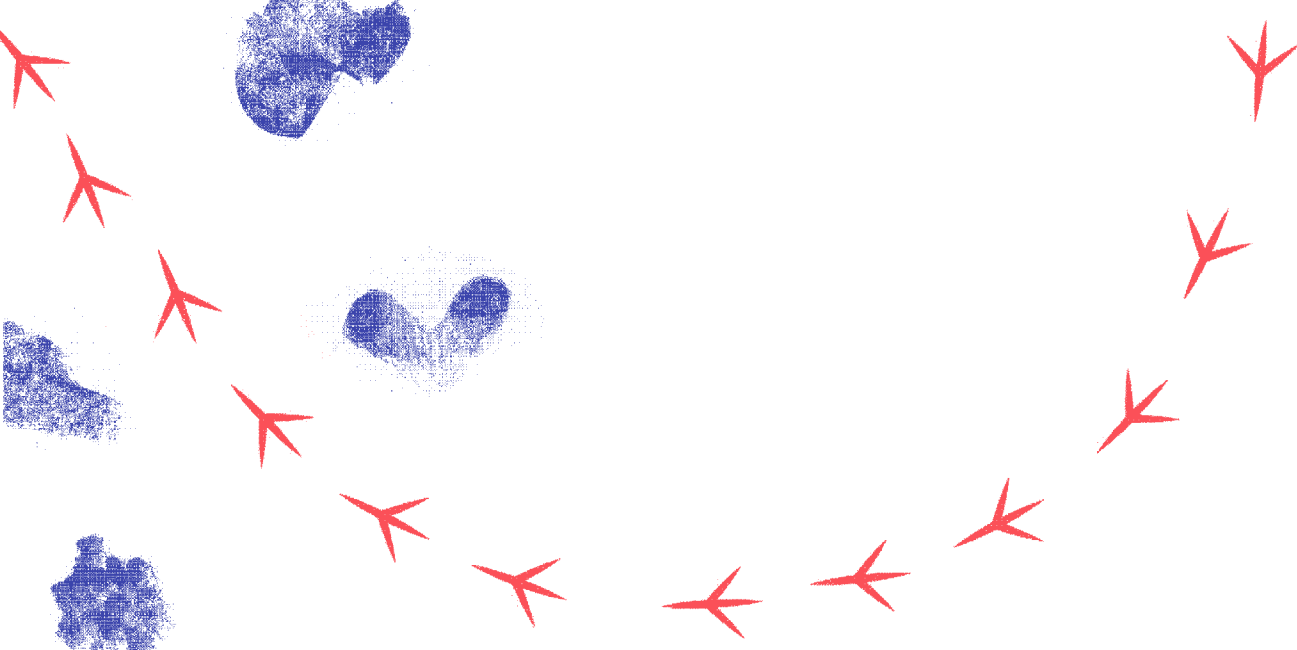
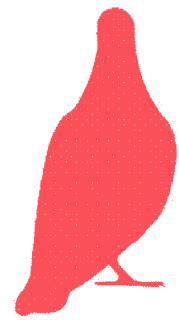
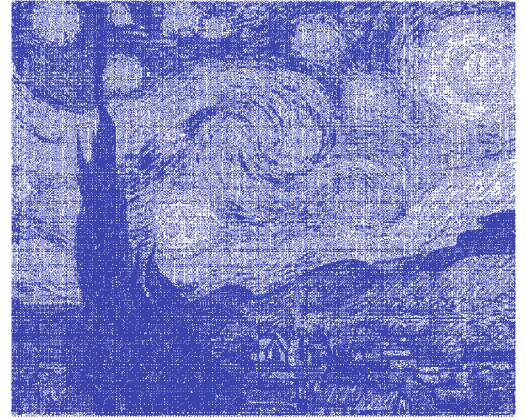
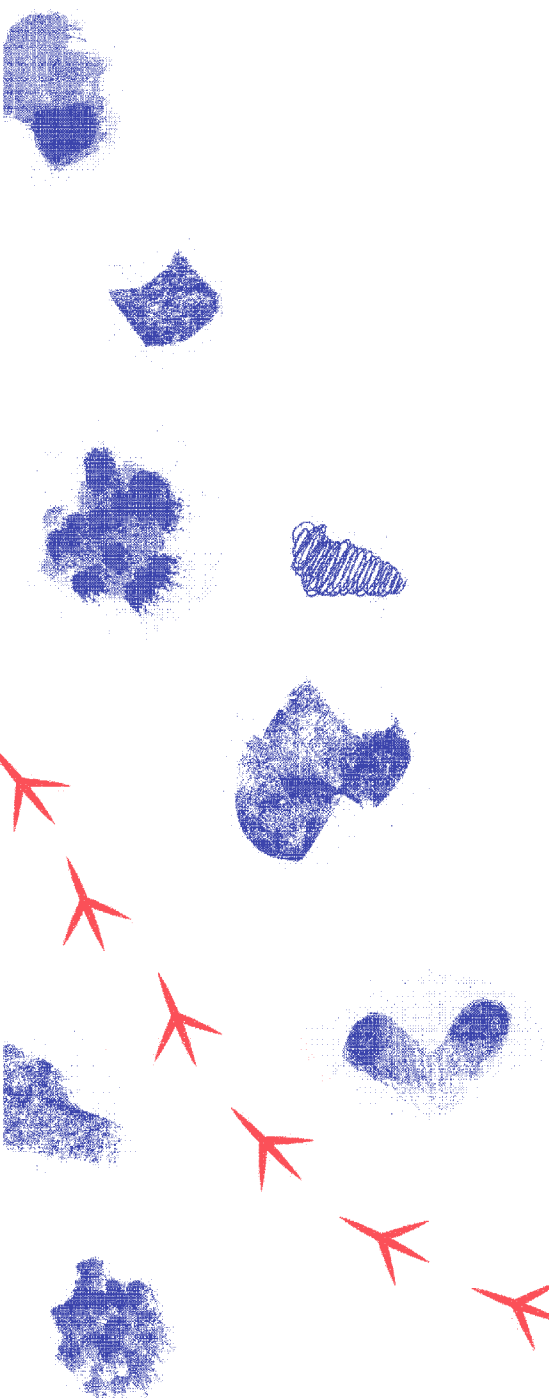
Pigeons can actually live for more than ten years. In the city, however, most pigeons die much earlier due to starvation, disease or defensive measures such as pointed metal rods (spikes). Up to 90 percent of young pigeons do not survive the first year of their life.

City pigeons are not wild animals but abandoned "pets" and their offspring. Bred "carrier pigeons" or "racing pigeons" are abandoned in faraway places. Often they fly until they are completely exhausted in order to return to their family as soon as possible. However, many do not make it and then join the city pigeons.

Contrary to popular belief, pigeons are not dangerous vectors of disease and their droppings cannot cause serious damage to buildings. They also do not reproduce less when they do not get food, as they are under "breeding compulsion". This means that the urge to procreate frequently has been bred into them and is independent of the food supply.







Bumblebee

The bumblebee Harriet lived with her siblings and her queen in a small colony. Like other wild bees, they collected nectar from flowers to nourish themselves. At the same time, they pollinated the blossoms so that they could later grow into apples, cherries or strawberries. In this way, bumblebees, together with other insects such as wasps and butterflies, make an enormous contribution to providing food for other animals, including humans.

In the past, everything had been full of meadows with different kinds of flowers and full of forests with the finest strawberry and raspberry blossoms. But over time, nature had increasingly given way to asphalt and fields. Harriet and her siblings suffered from hunger because there were no longer enough flowers and their habitat was becoming smaller and smaller. It was therefore important for the bumblebees to communicate to each other where exactly they could still find tasty and nutritious flowers. The bumblebees benefited from the fact that they have an understanding for 0, i.e. for “nothing”, and can also signal this to each other. In this way, Harriet could warn her nectar- and pollen-collecting sisters in good time of now barren areas where bumblebee generations before them had still been able to find meadows full of flowers.

Harriet and her family learned a lot from one another by observing each other. As a result, Harriet knew exactly how to scout out her surroundings. One day, one of her sisters told her about a meadow that was far away from her home. She had an excellent sense of direction and flew straight to the meadow, reaching it after a few kilometres. But much of the pollen had already been collected and so she continued to search in the surrounding area. Finally, Harriet found a beautiful wild garden with lovely flowers which belonged to a human family. She collected as much pollen as she could carry and flew back. On the way to this garden, she had memorised several special landscape features, so she could easily find her way back to her hive. There she told her sisters where to find the wonderful flowers. They immediately flew off to collect more nectar for themselves and their community.

Many animals prefer to live together with others, including the ponies present. They remember a story about a particularly shy ancestor who did not want to be alone, and they begin to tell it.

Bumblebees belong to the wild bee families. They can pollinate and collect nectar much more efficiently than “honey bees”, which are kept by humans to produce honey and other bee products and are considered the “smallest farmed animals in the world”. About 75 per cent of all crops need to be pollinated by insects.

Bumblebees can interpret the behaviour of other members of their species and draw conclusions about their own behaviour. They roll balls around for fun, making them the first insect species in which such playful behaviour has been observed. Like other bees, they have numerical skills and understand the concept of “nothing”, that is they know that 0 is less than 1 or larger quantities.

Bumblebees form so-called summer colonies, which consist of about 50 to 600 bees and a queen, depending on the bumblebee species. These colonies only exist for a few months at a time, as most bumblebees do not find enough nectar in midsummer and starve to death.

Reasons for the lack of nectar and thus the summer bumblebee mortality include ever more sparse gardens and parks, the increasing development of the landscape, air pollution and the use of pesticides.

Bumblebee populations continue to decline. This is also due to the fact that bumblebees suffer even more from climate change than other insect species. They find fewer and fewer retreats and flowering plants that are suitable as food.

“Honey bees” compete with wild bees for food and often displace them from the flowers. This can have a negative impact on the reproductive behaviour of wild bees. The increase in private bee keeping in cities makes life and survival more difficult for wild bees in many places.







Horse

In a circus there lived a pony called Bubbi. Together with other ponies, he had to perform tricks every day. Day after day, the little horses ran through the circus tent to loud music, glaring spotlights and clapping spectators. After a few days in one place, the circus always packed up its tents and the ponies, like the other animals, were led onto a trailer and taken to a new place. All this was very exciting and exhausting for little Bubbi, because he was one of the smallest and most insecure ponies in the herd. It took him a while each time to find his way around a new and unknown place. Only then could he relax. He closely followed Brummbär, his best friend, who had taken on the role of leader in the herd and enjoyed the respect and trust of all the ponies.

When the ponies had to enter the ring, most of the human visitors at the circus did not notice their signals of discomfort, as ponies communicate silently mainly through their body language, sometimes through very small gestures and glances. In addition, the wide eyes and raised head of Bubbi and the other ponies were misunderstood as a sign of pride and joy rather than stress.

Horses smaller than 148 cm are called ponies in Germany. Horses do not miss anything because they can see almost completely around them with their large, laterally positioned eyes and can turn their ears independently by up to 180 degrees.

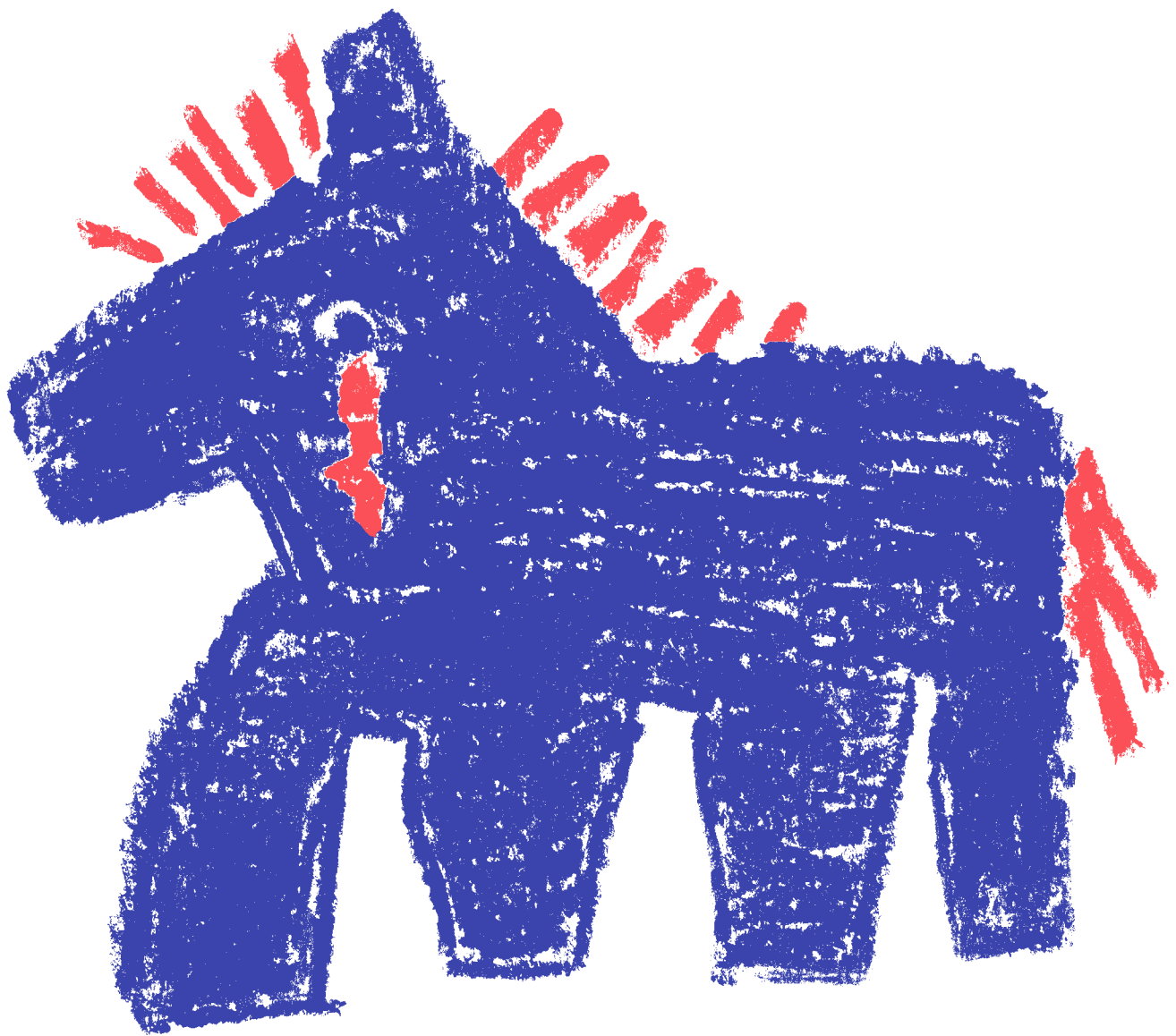
Horses are flight animals and can reach speeds of up to 70 kilometres per hour. In nature, they cover an average of 40 to 60 kilometres a day at a leisurely pace. They snooze in between, but rarely sleep for more than 20 minutes at a time.

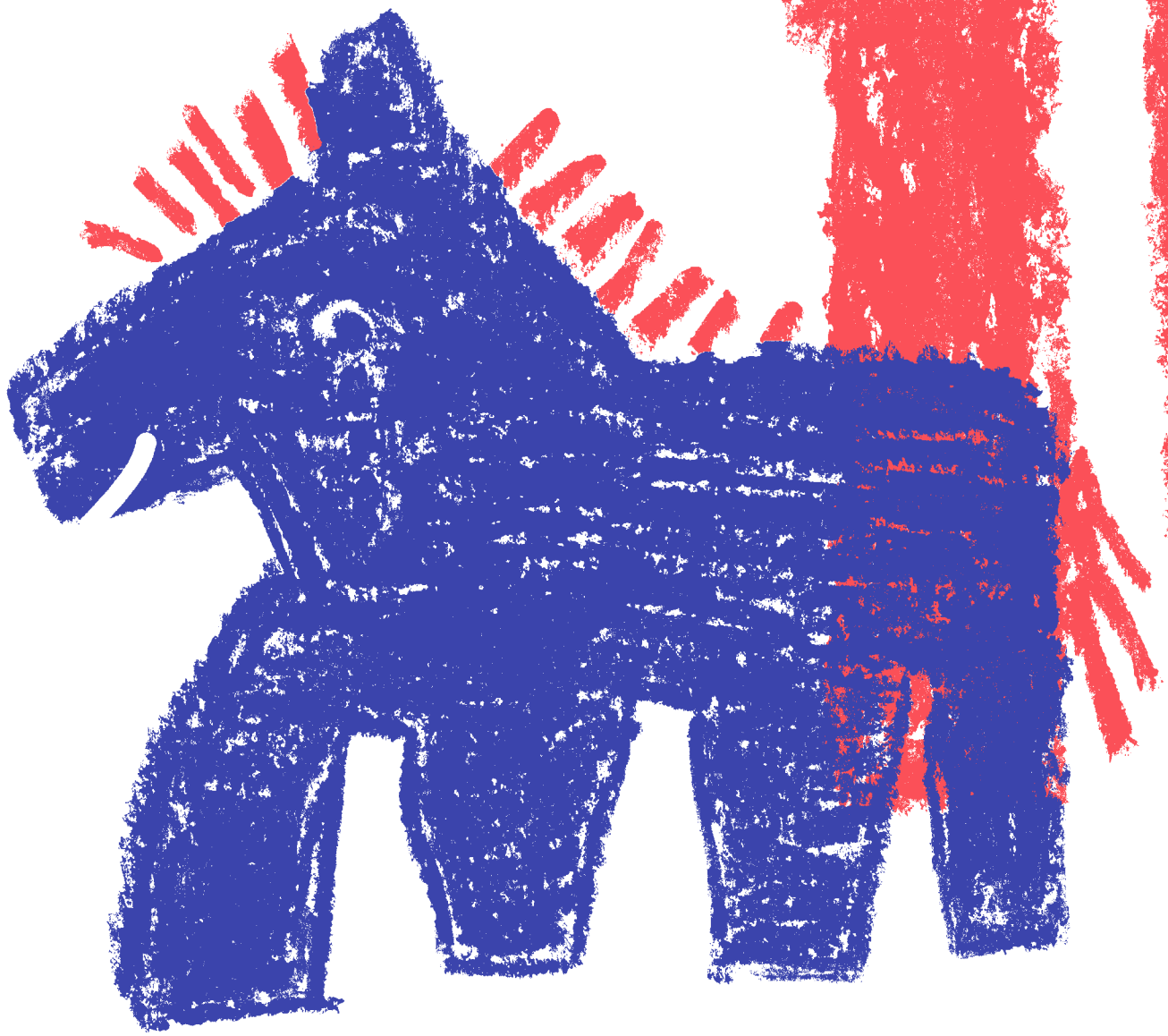
Horses recognise themselves in the mirror and can not only tell people apart, but also read their emotions. As herd animals, they develop very close friendships and relationships with each other, just like humans. They can live to be around 30 years old.

Horses are used for sport and entertainment purposes, for example as "riding horses" in riding schools, as "race horses" or for "pony carousels" at fairs. However, it is questionable whether the horses themselves are interested in carrying people on their backs.

Horses are often "broken in" at the age of three. As they grow until the age of six, their joints and bones are put under a lot of stress in the process. When their performance declines, they are often slaughtered.

In circuses, horses and other animals have to perform tricks they are trained for in ever-changing places. In the confines of the ring, they are exposed to noise and other stimuli, and even away from the ring they cannot move around and rest sufficiently.





After a while it became clear that the pony act was not well received by the audience. The visitors preferred the polished big horses with their spectacular movements. The small, shaggy, brightly coloured ponies were not interesting enough. The circus decided to cancel the pony act and sell Bubbi and the other ponies. It had to be done quickly. All seven ponies were for sale, but no place could be found where the group could stay together. It would have been very difficult for Bubbi to find his way in a new environment without his closest friends and especially without Brummbär, who made him feel safe. But Bubbi's needs were given as little consideration as those of the other ponies. The circus eventually had to move on and a quick solution was needed. The circus management even considered selling the ponies to a slaughterhouse. But one of the trainers who had worked with the animals wanted to prevent this at all costs. At the last minute, she found a place for them in an animal sanctuary.

Once again, Bubbi had to get into a van and go on an unusually long journey. He was very scared, but Brummbär was with him and stayed calm and that eventually calmed Bubbi down too. When the animals arrived at the sanctuary, a new life began for them. Bubbi could live with the other ponies without having to perform tricks and he got to know many other animals on the farm.

But living together with other animals did not always mean that all animals could experience adventures together. One of the dogs present has a story to tell about this.

Dog

The mixed-breed dog Acono lived on a large farm together with his beloved humans. There he loyally and reliably accompanied the routines of daily life. He loved being with his humans and doing chores together with them.

One day, Acono was introduced to a new dog by his humans: Lucy. Acono's humans had taken her from a shelter and adopted her. Her previous humans had bought her from a breeder, but they soon became overwhelmed by looking after the little dog. As a typical pug, Lucy constantly suffered from physical complaints and often had to go to the vet. Lucy's nose was so extremely short that it made her life miserable. She suffered from shortness of breath, which could become very dangerous in certain situations, such as running, high temperatures or extraordinary stress. She sniffled, snored and had sleeping problems. She also suffered from eye and ear problems as well as infections in her thick skin folds.

Her former humans had been very proud of their pure bred Lucy at first, until they realised how physically limited she was. As a result, they gave Lucy away to an animal shelter. Acono and the people at the farm did what they could to make Lucy's life more comfortable.

The dog is descended from the wolf and a long evolutionary process has led to a special relationship between dogs and humans. Due to genetic changes, the ancestors of today's "domestic dogs" increasingly sought human proximity and thus began the domestication ("becoming a pet") of the dog.

Close relationships can develop between dogs and humans, very similar to the bond between parents and children. Dogs are very good at reading and understanding human emotions and gestures.

Dogs can smell and hear much better but see worse than humans. They only have sweat glands on their paws and can only lower their body temperature by panting and breathing. Therefore, great heat can be very dangerous even for healthy dogs.

We speak of torture breeding when domesticated animals are bred with characteristics that are associated with health restrictions and often also pain. Many animal species are affected, not only dogs. Among others, dwarf rabbits, Angora rabbits and Persian cats as well as farmed animals bred for high performance are also considered to be torture breeds.

In fact, extreme breeding is prohibited under the German Animal Welfare Act. In addition, animal welfare has been incorporated as a state objective in the German Constitution since 2002. However, the requirements are not properly implemented and the authorities have difficulties in legally prosecuting torture breeding.

The trade in bred animals is on the rise despite overcrowded animal shelters. For many years now, the slogan "Adopt, don't shop" has been used to draw attention to the problems caused by the trade in animals. Nevertheless, many people prefer to buy from breeders instead of adopting an animal from a shelter or animal rescue organisation.





Every day Lucy felt more at ease in her new environment. She also got to know the other animals and wanted to be friends and play with them. But unfortunately her potential friends were all locked up. Lucy felt that the piglets and calves in particular wanted to play with her and Lucy would love to do so. Acono had to explain to Lucy during a walk around the farm why the piglets and calves could not move as freely as she could and why many of them would soon disappear from the farm. This made Lucy sad because it reminded her of her time in the shelter, when she had longed for the closeness of her dog family and the people she had lived with. She understood that pigs and cows are also social creatures with a need for companionship. Why Acono and she were treated so much better than the other animals on the farm, however, remained a mystery to her.

This narrative also makes the animals in the round sad.

To cheer up the others, a carp tells a story about his ancestor Shujaa.

Carp

The carp Shujaa was one of the biggest fishes in his pond and, at almost 40 years old, also one of the oldest. He swam around at the bottom of the pond all day. Even in winter, when the pond was frozen over, he felt very comfortable there and did his usual rounds. He used his whiskers to dig in the mud for food to determine if he liked what he had found. In addition, he also had a special organ, the lateral line organ, which helped him to orientate himself very well even in water clouded by swirling mud and find food. This helped him to sense movements in the water over a longer distance and thus to move safely.

Sometimes Shujaa heard unusually loud noises coming from the surface of the water and saw large shadows passing by. The shadows turned out to be boats with people in them. They were eager to catch the carp Shujaa to eat him or to use him as a trophy. As one of the bravest of his family, he had often approached interesting objects and bait, while his relatives usually just swam past suspiciously. They had often warned him about the sharp fishing hooks and Shujaa had learned to recognise the baits at an early age. But one day Shujaa bit directly into a fishing hook that he had mistaken for a tasty snack. The humans pulled him out of the water and hoisted him into the boat. Shujaa could no longer breathe and wriggled frantically to get back into the water. He was lucky because the people were only after a picture with him and did not want him for a meal. After taking the photo they threw him back into the water.

Shujaa remembered the pain he felt in his jaw for a long time. Nevertheless, he was recovered well from his injuries. He knew he had been lucky because he had heard of other fishes that had suffered severe wounds from fishing hooks and died after being thrown back into the water. Shujaa was thankful that he had fared differently, but since that event he had been more cautious. The same bait swam in his pond a few more times over the next few months, but Shujaa recognised it straight away and stayed away from it.

All animals can tell stories of how they narrowly escaped with their lives. A chicken knows one with a particularly beautiful outcome and at the insistence of the others, she begins to tell it.

Carp and other fishes have different temperaments, some are more reserved, others more daring and courageous. They can feel physical and also psychological pain, so for example, they can be anxious and stressed.

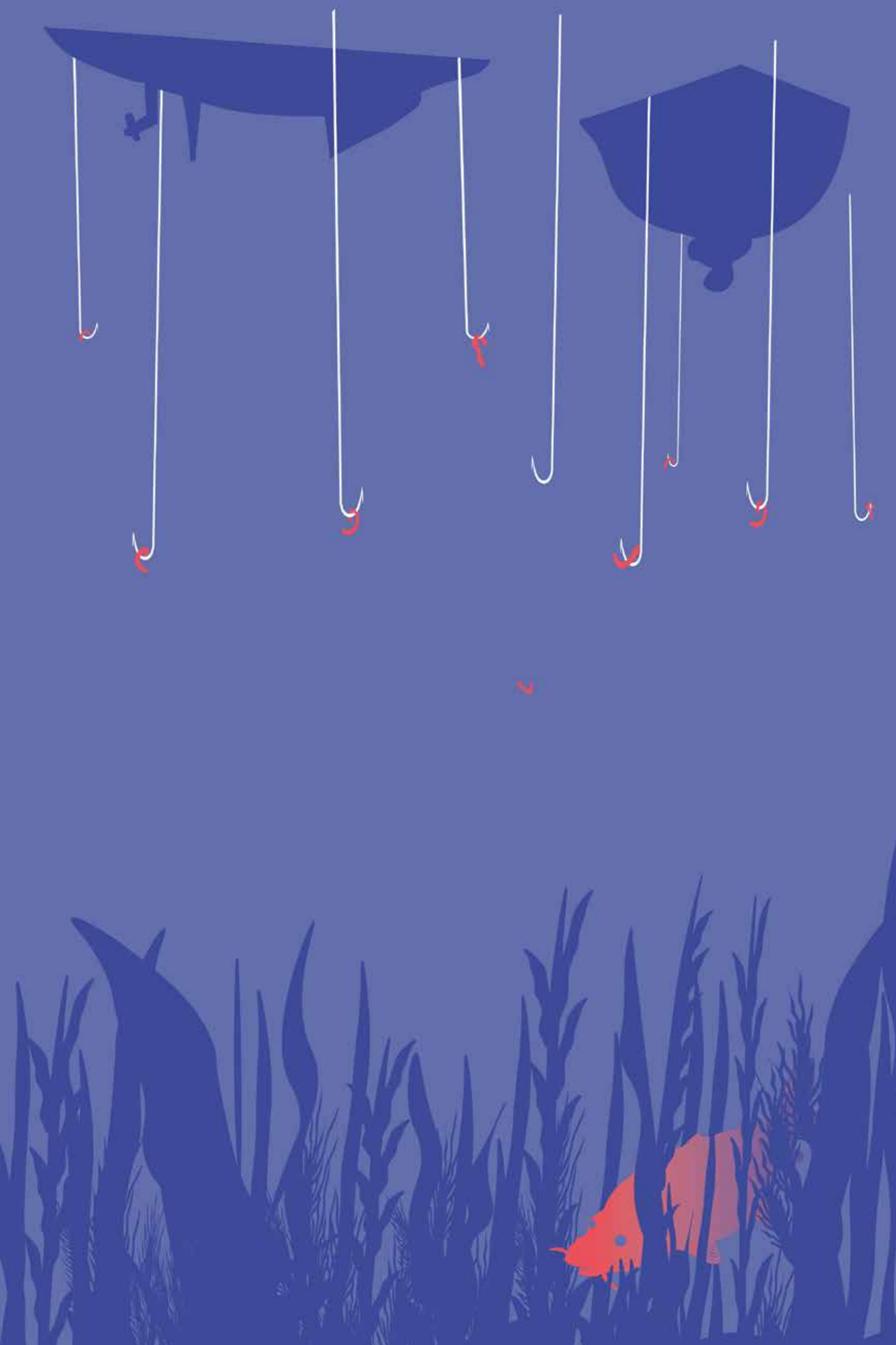
Numerous fish species have a very good memory and are very capable of learning. For example, carps avoid a certain fishing bait for a period of about three years after they have fallen for it once.

Carp have good hearing and a keen sense of smell. Like almost all fishes, they have lateral line organs with which they can detect approaching predators and avoid obstacles in the dark. Depending on the species, they can live for several decades.

“Hobby fishing”, which many people regard as a relaxing recreational sport, means stress, pain and death for fishes. They are also kept in small, private aquariums for human entertainment and displayed in large, public aquariums such as Sea Life.

How many individual fishes are caught per year for human consumption is unclear, as quantities of fishes are given in tonnes. A total weight of over 30 million tonnes of fishes are killed worldwide every year for the sole purpose of feeding farmed animals.

The world of fishes is also suffering as a result of climate change. When the temperature of aquatic habitats rises, they no longer provide suitable living conditions for many fishes. Because of rising water temperatures due to climate change, up to 60 percent of all fish species could be forced to leave their habitats in the future.



Chicken

The chicken Ludmilla lived together with other chickens and a whole herd of pigs in a forest. This was due to a chain of happy coincidences. But first things first.

Ludmilla was very lucky right from the very first day of her life, because she was not supposed to survive it. She was mistaken for a male chick. Since male chicks grow into roosters that do not lay eggs, in those days they were killed immediately after they hatched. Many of these killed chicks were sold to zoos or pet shops as food for other animals.

Ludmilla too was to be used as food, but an animal keeper heard soft chirping sounds coming from the crate in which she and the other day-old chicks had been delivered. He quickly searched the box and noticed that one of the chicks was still alive. The chick was pale and weak, but she was breathing. The keeper rescued her and named her Ludmilla.

The keeper went in search of a good place for her and so little yellow Ludmilla found her new home under the wings of an experienced mother hen who had just had chicks of her own. Ludmilla grew up with siblings and other chicken families in a large group. There she was able to learn from her new mother and siblings how to pluck grass, peck for grains and berries, scratch in the ground and look for worms or insects. From the warning calls of older chickens, she also learned that you have to hide when the buzzard appears in the sky and where to best flee to for safety. She learned what it is like to clean her feathers by bathing in the sand in the sun with her siblings, and to fall asleep safely under her mother's wing when the day's work was done.

Under natural conditions, chickens live in small groups under the leadership of a rooster. Roosters take care of the protection and welfare of the members of the group and are in constant contact with them. Chickens can distinguish between up to 100 members of their own species.

In the wild, chickens spend a lot of time feeding and grooming. They peck, scratch and explore their surroundings. Chickens take sand baths to keep their feathers clean and to protect themselves from insects.

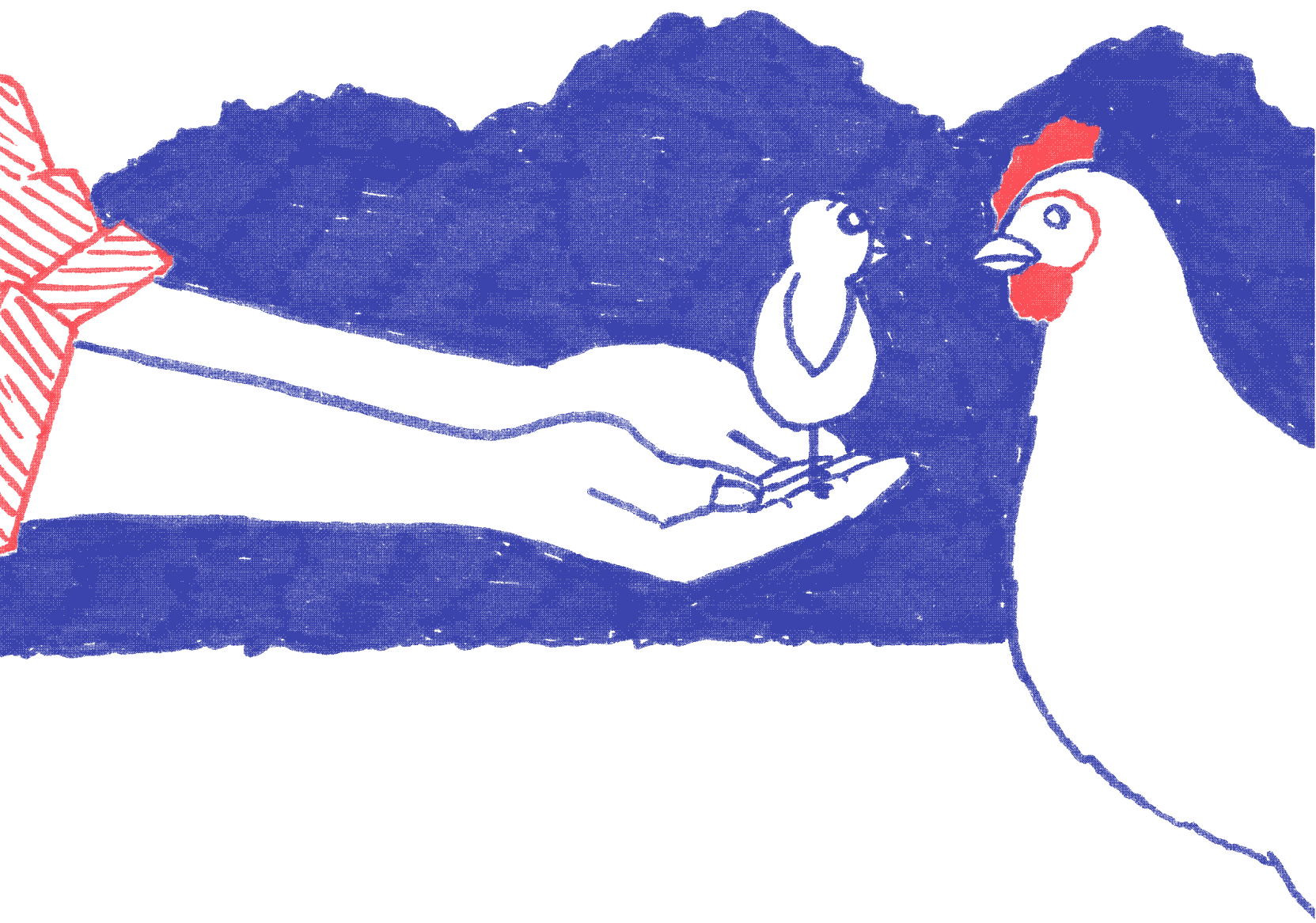
Today's "domestic chickens" are descended from the Asian bankiva chicken, which hatches no more than 40 eggs a year. Up to four times a year they lay five to ten eggs each because that is how many chicks they can raise at once. Hens and chicks already communicate with each other even before the chicks have hatched, i.e. through the egg.

Today's "laying hens" have been bred to lay an average of around 300 eggs a year. The "production" of this many eggs costs the hens an enormous amount of energy and leads to bone fractures and inflammations. Whether the animals are barn-raised, organic or free-range hardly matters here, because the main purpose of the hens is the "production" of eggs.

In Germany, "laying hens" are usually killed at a maximum age of two years when their "laying performance" decreases. "Broilers" (chickens bred for meat) are slaughtered after six weeks at the latest, in organic farming after about 11.5 weeks. Chickens actually have a life expectancy of ten years.

By the end of 2021, about 45 million male offspring of "laying hens" were killed in Germany every year shortly after hatching because they cannot lay eggs and do not put on enough meat. This has been banned since the beginning of 2022. Male chick embryos are now already killed in the egg or young hens are bought for "egg production" from countries where male chicks may still be killed immediately after birth.





When Ludmilla was already a little bigger, her feathers shining white and her little crest glowing red, she was taken from the big group with two of her friends to a nearby woodland with a huge adjoining meadow. A group of small, colourfully spotted pigs already lived there. Soon the chickens began to run around among the pigs. If the pigs lay down in the forest for a long nap, the chickens searched in their fur for annoying mosquitoes. When the pigs went out to forage and dig up the ground, the chickens followed them and continued to scratch for insects in the loosened soil.

One day they met a young rooster in their patch of woodland. He approached them in a friendly manner. From then on, he took good care of the small group. As is expected of a good rooster, he kept watch over the hens, accompanied them through the branches and across the pasture and immediately called them over when he spotted something tasty. So, Ludmilla could live a wonderful life with her friends and the friendly rooster in the company of the good-natured herd of pigs. This was all thanks to a caring person who had saved her from death at the last moment.

Epilogue: Human

It has gone dark already and also a bit chilly, time has flown by. Caron and Shanti are moved by the stories of the animals and admire their versatile and exciting characteristics and abilities. All humans know by now that each animal is special and has their own sentient personality. Both Caron and Shanti were involved in the creation of the Utopia. They take the floor and talk about their experiences.

They tell of the time when people still put their own habits above the needs, welfare and lives of their sentient animal co-inhabitants on this planet. Many people used to think it was normal, natural and necessary to use animals for human purposes. Many also thought that there was no turning back. Their whole lifestyle was built on using animals without taking their needs seriously.

At the beginning of the 2020s, a rethinking took place at a societal level. Animal ethics were given more and more space in the public discussion. People began to treat animals not according to their usefulness to humans, but according to their needs. This was possible and also appropriate because people understood much more about the special features and characteristics of animals. The value of an individual was recognised regardless of their physical, mental or emotional abilities, as had long been recognised and accepted with regard to humans.

In the process, more and more people became aware of their interconnectedness with the environment. For a long time, a large proportion of people had lived with the notion that they were separate from the rest of nature and could exploit and control it ruthlessly. But the destruction of habitats and the resulting extinction of many animal species, as well as the climate crisis, made people realise the consequences of their actions. They increasingly understood that they are also animals and come from one big family, instead of continuing to see themselves as a superior species.

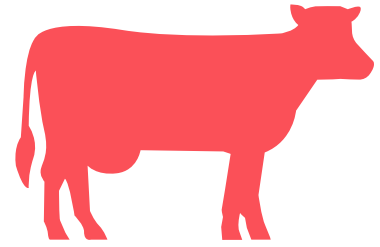
More and more people became aware that all humans make their own decisions about how they behave and thus are responsible for the consequences of their actions every day. A life in harmony with nature and with respect for other sentient animals was strived for. Every little action counted and so people created new structures allowing them and the other animals to live better lives. Just as the animals who shared their stories, Caron and Shanti find it hard to remember that things used to be so different. They are very happy that people have made this change and that they themselves have also contributed to help shape this path.



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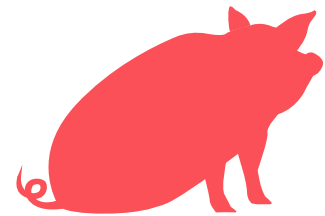
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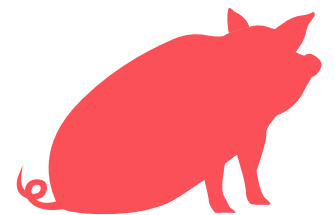


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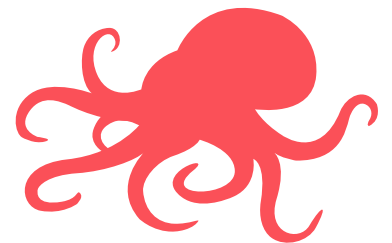


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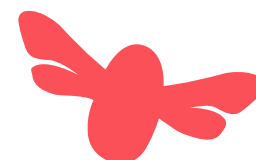
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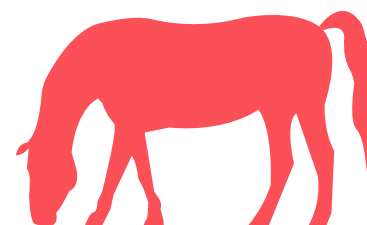
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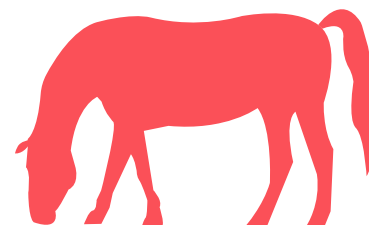


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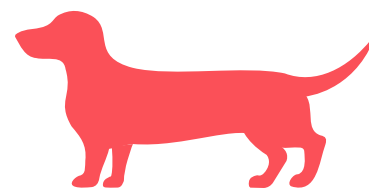


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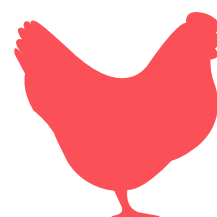


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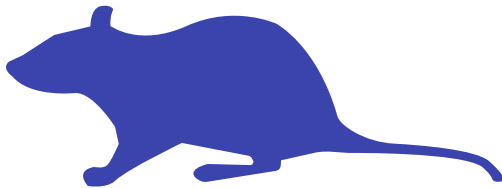
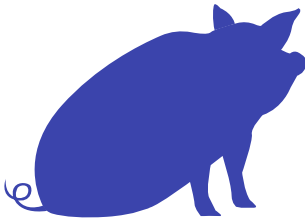
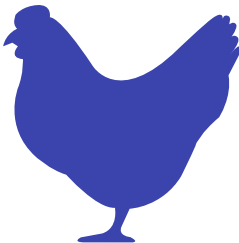
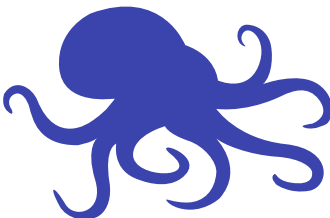
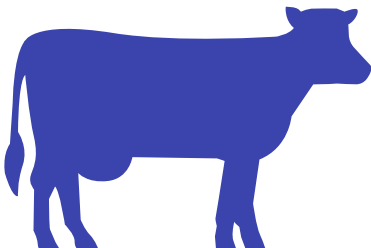
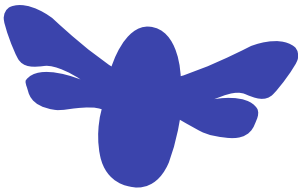
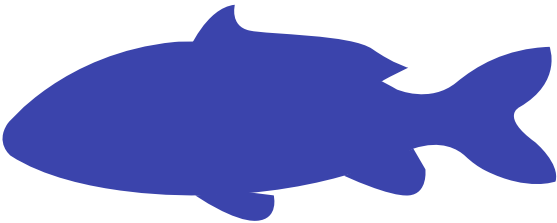
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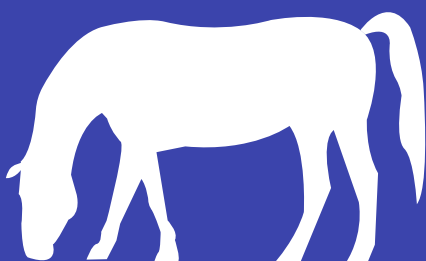
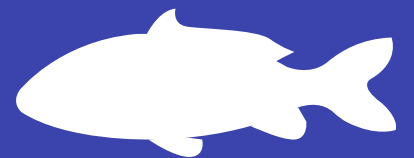
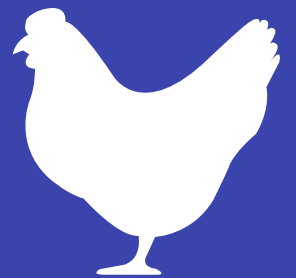
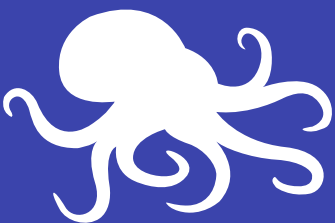
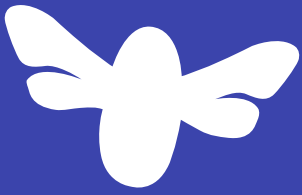
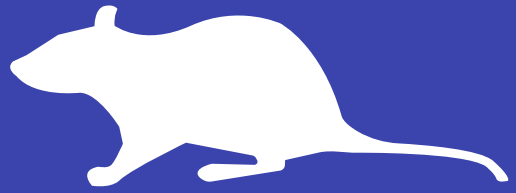
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