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VIDEO: Huge project features small artwork



Denise M. Champagne
Artist Jamie Columbus helps little artists Daniel Farry, 5, and Allie Baumhauer, 4, work on their "masterpieces" for the 6x6x2009 exhibit at Rochester Contemporary Art Center. The children are students at Trinity Montessori School in East Rochester.

By Denise M. Champagne, staff writer
Fairport-ER Post
Posted Apr 28, 2009 @ 11:50 AM

East Rochester, N.Y. — Little pieces of art are being created by little people in East Rochester to be part of a big exhibit downtown.

Elementary students at Trinity Montessori School, working with local artist and parent Jamie Columbus, have been using a variety of media for their 6-inch-square "masterpieces" that will be displayed with thousands of others from around the world June 6 through July 12 at the Rochester Contemporary Art Center, 137 East Ave.

The pieces will be included in RoCo's 6x6x2009 exhibit. All artwork is 6 inches by 6 inches and will be sold for \$20 each to benefit RoCo. Artists' names will not be revealed until pieces are sold.

"We are making paintings," said Wilson Brauer, 6. "I painted a tree from Africa."

Columbus said the artwork pays tribute to Rochester's 175th anniversary, being celebrated this year. Each class selected a topic related to the "greening of Rochester" and highlighting its area outdoor treasures such as green spaces, gardens, playgrounds, parks, zoos, sailing, fishing, birdhouses, backyards and area wildlife.

Columbus said the school will contribute 150 to 200 pieces from 10 different classes using 10 different styles, ranging from cut paper collage to watercolors and acrylics to

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markers and pastels.

"This artwork may be next to a famous artist, and they'll all be \$20," she said.

"This is a tree and this is a tree that fell down," said 6-year-old William DiSalle, holding up two pieces.

"I was drawing a kite and a rainbow," said 5-year-old Julia Smith. "I saw it when I was on vacation in Seattle. I saw flowers and a kite and two rainbows while I was on a boat."

They're students of Andrea Coventry, one of many teachers whose classes, pre-school through fifth grade, are participating.

"Jamie, did you see this?" Principal Lorraine Scarafite called, pointing to one of the pictures. "Isn't that gorgeous?" Jamie answered. "They're all gorgeous. Thank you, everybody, for participating."

Jamie, who has two children attending Trinity Montessori School, learned about RoCo and the 6x6x2009 project when her "Earth Tones Woman" photo exhibit was displayed there in March. She thought it would be a nice project

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for the students and would help the art center.

Scarafie agreed.

"We have a very strong academic program, but when you educate the whole child, you don't want to miss giving them the opportunity to show their creative side as well," she said. "I think it is so inspiring to see their work next to people who are already accomplished artists. I think that will give them an insight into their own talent and limitless capabilities. We're delighted to have Jamie Columbus orchestrate this for us."

RoCo Executive Director Bleu Cease said Trinity Montessori is one of many area schools, including colleges, that are making artwork for the exhibit, which is open to anyone.

"This is a nice example of how schools can use this as sort of an assignment and engage students in the history and future of Rochester, tied in with the anniversary," he said. "It's a good example of how this exhibition can be used by all different people to engage the whole community in creative production in all kinds and all styles. It's wonderful."

Cease said many area politicians are also participating, including Rochester Mayor Robert Duffy. One of the most well-known artists is film and video artist Bill Viola — who, as a student at Syracuse University, exhibited artwork in the 1980s at the Pyramid Art Center, which evolved into the Rochester Contemporary Art Center.

More than 5,000 people viewed more than 3,500 original artworks from five countries and 22 states at the inaugural 6x6 exhibit last year, prompting RoCo to offer the exhibit a second and final time. Cease said something new will be presented next year to keep the fundraisers fresh.

"We are really happy to have the Trinity students involved and hope they all attend the exhibition to see their artworks on display along with works by artists and non-artists from all around the world," said Scarafie. "So far, works have arrived from Japan, India, Italy, U.K. and Canada."

Information on how to participate is on RoCo's Web site at www.rochestercontemporary.org. Artwork must be submitted by 5 p.m. May 10.



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