

Summer 2019

## **PRESS RELEASE : Art Show at Geneva Day School Invites Time Travel**

On Friday, May 17, Geneva Day School hosted its 39th Art Show by transforming into a gallery of masterpieces generated by students over the course of the year both in classes and through specialized art programs. "This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase the innate artistic talents of children at all ages and give them an opportunity for expression," stated Director Suzanne Funk.

For decades, Geneva's innovative, spiraling curriculum has provided Elements of Art to 3 and 4 year olds, Works of Wonder to PreKindergarten, and Art Through the Ages to Kindergarten. Each program creates enthusiasm for art by asking students to tap their senses, think critically, and imagine. Concepts such as lines, shapes, colors, textures, and spatial relationships are introduced in Elements of Art and then revisited the following years through a deepening exploration of what is visual and tactile.

By the time students are enrolled in PreKindergarten, they know to recognize repeating patterns in Nature and apply such knowledge through replication of Native American Indian art. Spangled by spirit beads and dream catchers, the Art Show also displayed drums, necklaces, masks, clay pots, rainsticks, sand creations and totem poles in a room devoted entirely to this aesthetic. A nearby wall offered student "legend" illustrations.

Kindergartners ecstatically explore Art through the Ages by donning their "time travel caps." In September, they participate in a "dinosaur dig" to retrieve "prehistoric bones" and create rubbings. They soon visit the "era of the caveman" by examining primitive drawings. Through simple strokes of charcoal, they render their own stories on "cave walls." A visit to early civilization in Ancient Egypt spurs a study of the pyramids; students recreate funeral traditions by volunteering to be wrapped as mummies and then come to life again to tell their stories through friezes and hieroglyphics.

Ancient Greek and Roman Art yield a discovery of vase, fresco, and tile-making processes just as Medieval and Renaissance Art provide a more intimate study of the Masters. Students paint the "Sistine Chapel ceiling" beneath tables lined with paper so as to replicate Michelangelo's experience. They are then encouraged to create according to other techniques: illuminated letters, tile mosaics, a version of stained-glass windows, and portraits of both individuals and families.

In an embrace of Modernity, students discover Impressionism, Pointillism, and Mondrian patterns, among other movements. They create landscapes, cityscapes, and seascapes, as well as abstract pieces that crescendo with Alexander Calder-esque mobiles and Jackson Pollock "paint splattered canvases."

One such gorgeous canvas the Kindergarten Class created collaboratively and offered for auction at the School's Annual Fundraiser. Another was "stained" according to Morris Louis technique. Such masterpieces are known to go for hundreds of dollars. One year a couple purchased an entire folding screen created by the Kindergarten class in the style of Piet Mondrian; they describe it as a treasured possession within their home.

Earlier in the month, Kindergartners took a celebratory field trip to the National Gallery of Art where they revelled in seeing firsthand the works they had studied. Docents remarked how knowledgeable the students, as they knew many "secrets of the paintings" (one such secret is Jackson Pollock's "Lavender Mist" is permanently embedded with an insect) and moreover, were just as well behaved as high schoolers.

Likewise, current Geneva Day School students provided "tours" to hundreds of parents, extended family and friends during May 17's event. They spoke with confidence about how the School's every classroom and corridor had converted into a gallery; mobiles were suspended with care, statues and models arranged beguilingly on tables, paintings, collages and 3-D inventions blossomed from the walls. It was as if the School were a symphony of color.

Heightening this impression were student-musicians (some currently enrolled at Geneva and others graduated) who serenaded with their piano and violin-playing. Chloe Brokt, a 10 year-old violinist from Stone Ridge, traced love of her instrument to her earliest exposure to music at Geneva; a professional had played for her class and she was forever inspired. At intervals, guests of all generations broke into dance and song.

"Geneva's Art Show is a wonderful way to show our respect of and admiration for the children's imaginative, creative, and unique masterpieces," said Mrs. Barbara Korb, the School's Art Specialist. "The Show brings the Geneva Day School's community together to delight in their children's talents."

Truly, a lifelong love of learning is ignited by the School's commitment to teaching art in this extraordinary formula; a spiraling curriculum achieves its apogee through Art through the Ages, while every child's artistic output is celebrated within the context of chronological discovery. Geneva Day School travels the corridors of time through an Art Show that makes this tradition a true Event Horizon.

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