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spring issue 2019

COVER ART: DANNY MEZA, PLATO ACADEMY
SHIRLEY TALLEY, INSTRUCTOR
THE FLY FLY
MIXED MEDIA
SECOND PLACE, GROUP 6: CATEGORY 5, YISD STUDENT ART AWARDS

YISD FINE ARTS OFFICES
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(915) 434-9700

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8455 ALAMEDA AVE., EL PASO, TX 79907
(915) 434-9700

THE ART OF FINE ARTS

STUDENT art awards

Cover art: Danny Meza, Plato Academy
Shirley Talley, Instructor
The Fly Fly
Mixed Media
Second place, Group 6: Category 5, YISD Student Art Awards
Reflect & Relax

It is again that time of year as we wrap everything up, reflecting on all that has transpired this year and planning for next year. It is important to celebrate our victories, reflect on our losses and most importantly to take stock of what is truly important in both our professional and personal lives.

I would like to take a moment to share one of those moments for me. Unfortunately, the Fine Arts family lost a very hard working, inspirational and dedicated educator this year to cancer. Through the course of her tenure in YISD, specifically at Vista Hills Elementary School, Barbara Cardon was able to not only teach minds but, more importantly, touch the hearts of all those that had the pleasure of dealing with her. I am, in no way, implying she was always the smiles and sunshine. In fact, there were many times she was staunch and stern in applying her craft but ALL of her students and parents loved their experience with her.

I had the honor of meeting with her several times, many years ago, as we documented the process she’d undertaken as she had developed her unique, famous and highly sought after Research Based Integration of Fine Arts Curriculum. Before it was “the right thing to do,” she had developed, with her administration’s support, a collaborative process between the fine arts and core teachers to base performing arts productions on what was being taught in the core classes. This became a trademark approach at Vista Hills for many, many years.

Through our meetings then, and the times our paths crossed in subsequent years, I was continually impressed by both her love for children and her craft, as well as her ability to not take herself or any other situation too seriously. She taught me that life is meant to be enjoyed and each moment to be valued. She also taught me that to be most effective I needed to plan and be prepared and not to just “wing it.” No matter what request I made of her for a particular performance I needed her to present, Barbara had the costume, music and students to accomplish it. She was always prepared.

As I reflect on my times with her and on her passing, I am reminded that much of what we worry about is trivial in light of the more important things in our lives. I realize I need to learn and apply what I learned from Barbara and spend some time to stop and smell the roses. I acknowledge and commend each of you on all that you accomplished this year. I am sure that, as you do every year, will lead The District to even higher accomplishments and accolades next year but I want you now to enjoy your summer break. Take time to rest and recharge and to spend time on those things that you may have had to put on the back burner throughout the year. Enjoy your friends, families and loved ones and look forward to leading you again next year in this wondrous world of fine arts education.

SCOTT THORESON
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(916) 434-9714

YSLETA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
FINE ARTS GALLERY PTA

Scholarship Winners

Frank Coronado, Bel Air High School
Binary, Chalk Pastels
R. Ordonez, Instructor

Matthew Dean, Parkland High School
In Over My Head, Color Pencil
K. Gelinas, Instructor

Ramiro Ordonez & Frank Coronado

Matthew Dean & Katie Gelinas

Each year, the Ysleta Independent School District Fine Arts Department Gallery PTA, awards two graduating seniors with a $1,000.00 scholarship. Hundreds of entries pour into the department and are separated initially by overall visual aesthetic and basic presentation. Everything from theme and medium, to matting and display are considered in this initial review process.

Student artists are asked to provide a detailed entry packet, which consists of basic information, transcripts, and two short essays. The first is a personal essay discussing why they believe a college education is important and what they plan to do in the future, once they receive the college experience. The second is a summary of their entry, a composition explaining their process, inspiration and the final product.

Gallery PTA Chairperson Rocio Villalobos explains “The Gallery PTA began over 10 years ago. We have slowly been able to accumulate enough to award scholarships through donations, entry fees and member dues. We are so excited to see new student work and to be a part of the process that allows students to further their education.”

This year Fine Arts administration and staff assisted in the final decision and were so incredibly proud of their two choices. Each piece is beautifully crafted while creating a dialogue about two very important issues that young people are faced with everyday.

Congratulations to our winners! We are #SoProud of you!
Continuing the 2019 Celebrate the Arts Series, this year’s Elementary and Middle School Honor Dance Program highlighted the best dance programs our district has to offer. The almost two hour program is delighted an audience of parents, family and friends as the youngest of Ysleta’s dancers took the stage to strut their stuff. Over 400 people filled the Ysleta ISD Central Office Theater to watch the incredible performances. Dance programs from across the district showed off their talents in a variety of dance styles. This year, the Elementary and Middle School Dance program had over 300 dance students participating. First time coordinator, Ms. Susane Salazar of Bel Air High School worked diligently to make sure each program was included, informed and given the best opportunity to shine. “This program was difficult, but it was also the most fun. The little ones always bring a smile to everyone’s face. I am so honored to be able to help facilitate this experience for my district.”

Bel Air High School Seniors Arielle Soto and Victoria Padilla greeted the crowd warmly and introduced each group as they went on. The program featured over 30 dance routines from almost every Ysleta ISD Elementary and Middle School Campus. Salazar explained “It is so important for Elementary and Middle Schools to have dance programs. It allows students the opportunity to have the foundations of dance introduced at a young age. It really allows our high school programs to flourish.”

In one of the final musical performances of the 2019 Celebrate the Arts Series, the Ysleta ISD Fine Arts Department called upon students in both Middle and High School Jazz bands to create the Honor Jazz Band groups. The students selected came together for an evening of smooth jazz and musical improvisation. Daniel Colunga, Assistant Band Director at Ysleta High School, coordinated this year’s event. He gathered and organized over 100 students in both the Middle and High School groups. These groups performed a total 9 contemporary jazz pieces for a packed audience of friends, family and peers.

Guest conductors selected this year were Doug Brown, Hanks High School assistant director; and Jose Mireles, Ysleta Middle School director. Each guest conductor met with their respective groups in only three rehearsals. Together they created an evening of incredible talent and great music. “The students worked really hard and were able to get into the mindset of professional jazz musicians. They had to master these pieces in a very short amount of time. I was really impressed by their dedication and hard work” explains Colunga.

Each group performed separately but helped create an overall sense of the true essence of jazz. Each song featured a solo from one student musician, highlighting the best of the best. One parent couldn’t help but say “I am so proud of my son and his peers. They did a great job and we had a really wonderful time. I am so thankful that the district highlights these groups.”

Although the Honor Jazz concert happens every other year, this group proved to be one of the most successful to date.
The final musical installment of the 2019 Celebrate the Arts Series occurred on April 23 at the Ysleta ISD Central Office. This concert, although an annual occurrence, proved to be quite special. For the first time ever, the 2019 Honor Guitar Program included our middle school guitar programs. We have seen such a tremendous growth in our guitar programs over the past few years, it made perfect sense that these students should be a part of the honor program.

When asked how it felt to include the middle school programs, Middle School Coordinator Luis Hernandez explained “This is an excellent way of making the guitar programs grow, not only for the middle schools but for the high schools as well. It simply sets up the middle school performers to the high school. Above all, the experience, knowledge and success they get out of this is impressive. Middle school students take ownership and pride of being a guitar player and participating in such a great event.”

Luis Hernandez, Guitar Director at Parkland Middle School, had his group perform EIGHT pieces total under the direction of Eastwood High School Guitar director Daniel Contreras. Although this was the first time performing for many of these students, they did an incredible job! The high school program was coordinated by Luis Aguilera, Guitar Director at Parkland High School. His group performed five pieces under the direction of Guest conductor Armin Harrison.

Over 100 students total participated in this year’s Honor Guitar Program, proving that our districts guitar programs are growing exponentially. This speaks volumes to the hard work and dedication of all of our guitar teachers.

Hernandez goes on to say “I think the importance of the Honor Programs is that you get to reward those hard working students whom have always practiced and just simply always put all the effort. Also, they get to meet with the best of the best from each school and just have a wonderful experience with each other doing what they love, playing music.”

This year four YISD students won the highest honor at the State VASE competition, the Gold Seal. From the 2,300 entries that advanced to state, only 150 entries receive this coveted prize. These students, and their work, can be seen below.

Bel Air High School: Frank Coronado, Paola Nava, Danielle Waters
Eastwood High School: Camila D. Marquez, Amber Martinez, Carlos A. Rodriguez, Cassandra Sapien
Hanks High School: Paola Del Valle
Parkland High School: Belinda Rios, Anthony Williams
Riverside High School: Danne Nunez
Valle Verde Early College High School: Samuel Jurado, Manuel Ontiveros
Ysleta High School: Fatima Elias, Andrea Hernandez

State VASE 2019
This year the Ysleta ISD Fine Arts Department sent twenty seven students to San Marcos, Texas to compete in the State Visual Arts Scholastic Event; more than any other district. Beginning in 1990, this contest is seen as the gold standard for visual arts contests across the state of Texas. The Regional contest, held at Hanks High School in February had over 1,500 entries. From these finalists, ten percent were chosen and sent to the state contest in April.

From over 30,000 entries statewide, approximately 2,300 pieces make it to the state level. Visual Arts Instructor Sam Garcia travels ahead of the group to help set up the finalist show. According to the VASE website, the state contest is held annually in April. State qualifying artworks are assessed by jurors from across the United States on Friday. On Saturday, students may participate in hands-on workshops, sketching opportunities, and compete for scholarship money. Students are also eligible for memorial scholarships. Teachers may participate in educator workshops. The event is intended to provide a forum for art teachers and students to meet and to grow artistically and personally.

This year four YISD students won the highest honor at the State VASE competition, the Gold Seal. From the 2,300 entries that advanced to state, only 150 entries receive this coveted prize. These students, and their work, can be seen below.

Of the twenty three remaining students, fifteen received an “Excellent (4) Rating” which is comparable to second place in the various categories/divisions. These students are:

Bel Air High School: Frank Coronado, Paola Nava, Danielle Waters
Eastwood High School: Camila D. Marquez, Amber Martinez, Carlos A. Rodriguez, Cassandra Sapien
Hanks High School: Paola Del Valle
Parkland High School: Belinda Rios, Anthony Williams
Riverside High School: Danne Nunez
Valle Verde Early College High School: Samuel Jurado, Manuel Ontiveros
Ysleta High School: Fatima Elias, Andrea Hernandez

Gold Seal Recipients
a) Ricardo Martinez (10) Bel Air High School, b) Xochil Zarate (11) Eastwood High School, c) Kayla Gonzalez (12) Parkland High School, d) Axel Ortega (12) Ysleta High School
Each year, every middle and high school music program prepares students for UIL competition. These contests have become a staple in the academic calendar of each and every music teacher in the district. UIL, or the University Interscholastic League, is the governing body in Texas for all educational, athletic and academic contests. Their music contests, according to the state website, are designed to support and enrich the teaching of music as an integral component of the public school curriculum in the state of Texas. Each year approximately one half million middle school, junior high and high school students reap the benefits of participation in the ten UIL music events.

Ysleta ISD schools participate in High School and Middle School Choir, Band and Orchestra contests. Each program spends countless hours rehearsing, preparing and learning prescribed selections of music for contest. Teachers choose accompanists and clinicians to help bring their programs to the highest levels of competition. Students must remain focused and sharp for both rehearsal and contest. Each contest consists of both a prepared performance, and what is referred to as sight reading. The sight reading portion, which remains one of the most difficult aspects of the contest, challenges students to perform a selection of music they have never seen before without any rehearsal time. This allows judges a better understanding of the students knowledge in both music performance and preparedness.

As in year’s past, the Ysleta ISD Fine Arts programs continue to dominate the competition. As evident in the results, the Ysleta programs remain the most successful in the region. Our district receives more First Division ratings than any other district in El Paso, based on the number of participating programs. We would like to congratulate all of our music programs, students and teachers, for their hard work and dedication. You all have made Ysleta ISD proud, and continue to keep our district at the forefront of music education. We are definitely #SoProud of all of you!

2019 Award Summary

Middle School Band, Total Number of First Divisions (Final): 20
High School Band, Total Number of First Divisions (Final): 23
High School Band, Total Number of First Divisions given out by all judges: 63
High School Orchestra, Winds & Percussion, Total Number of First Divisions: 11
High School Orchestra, Total Number of First Divisions (Final): 13
High School Orchestra, Total Number of First Divisions given out by all judges: 64
High School Choir, Total Number of First Divisions (Final): 19
High School Choir, Total Number of First Divisions (Final): 10
Middle School Choir, Total Number of First Divisions (Final): 10

YISD was awarded more First Division Ratings than any other district!
Second Annual Student Photography Exhibition

2019 marks the second year of the Ysleta ISD Fine Arts Department Annual Photography Exhibition. Visual Arts Instructional Specialist Sam Garcia struggled with a theme that would not only engage our students, but would also allow them to explore creative aspects of themselves in the process. After exploring a few options, Mr. Garcia decided to capitalize on one of the most influential aspects of modern society - the selfie.

Me, Myself and I is intended to allow students to completely immerse themselves in the entire creative process in a very familiar way. According to Google statistics, about 93 million selfies were taken per day as far back as 2014, and on Android devices alone. One poll found that every third photo taken by those aged 18 to 24 is a selfie. You take selfies, I take selfies, we all take selfies. It is said that millennials will take over 25,000 selfies in a lifetime.

“We received an incredible amount of entries. Students really enjoyed the theme and wanted to create pieces that were special - not just your usual selfie, but a way to identify themselves in a new way. We are all very excited with all the photos we have received. ” explained Garcia. “The amount of talent we have here in the Ysleta district is almost immeasurable.”

Due to an unforeseen incident at the Ysleta ISD Fine Arts Offices, the Photography exhibition could not be held at the Galeria. Instead, pieces were displayed at the Ysleta ISD Central Offices, which in turn, allowed more people to enjoy these incredible pieces. “I couldn’t believe the quality and creativity of some of these images. I am really proud of our students and Fine Arts programs” explained Patsy Gurrola, Secretary for the Academic Languages Programs at Central Office.

Winners were selected by independent artists and photographers from our community in three divisions; Elementary, Middle and High School. Awards were presented on April 18 in the Ysleta Room. When asked how he enjoyed the experience, Jacob Villanueva, local photographer remarked ‘All of your students should be really proud of themselves, they’ve all done a great job!’

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**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DIVISION**

- **Best of Show**
  - Through My Eyes by Miriam Palchinsky
  - Michelle Gamboa, Edgemere ES

- **First Place**
  - Untitled by Karen Lopez
  - Dolores Genera, REL Washington ES

- **Second Place**
  - Rosaura by Santiago Aguilar
  - Amanda Narvaez, Capistrano ES

- **Third Place**
  - Pine Cone Life by Saskia Vazquez
  - Guillermo Rojas, Pasodale ES

**MIDDLE SCHOOL DIVISION**

- **Best of Show**
  - The Guitar by Vivian Garza
  - Gail Slater, Parkland MS

- **First Place**
  - Self by Joselyn Alba
  - Jessica Aguilar, Bel Air MS

- **Second Place**
  - Absorbed in Thought by Alexa Velarde
  - Ferrie Alaniz, Eastwood MS

- **Third Place**
  - King Cosmo by Cassandra Kato
  - Micaela M. Agness, Young Women’s Leadership Academy

**HIGH SCHOOL DIVISION**

- **Best of Show**
  - Me is what makes me, me by Frank Coronado
  - Ramiro Orodnez, Bel Air HS

- **First Place**
  - Is it Safe for Me! by Brianna Barlow
  - Alex Carrillo, Bel Air HS

- **Second Place**
  - Blue by Nicole Marin
  - Micaela M. Agness, Young Women’s Leadership Academy

- **Third Place**
  - Mirror Image by Briana Teran
  - Angelica Quillin, Eastwood HS
As the academic year comes to a close, the Ysleta ISD Fine Arts Department proudly hosts its annual Student Art Awards competition. For the past nineteen years, the YISD Student Art Awards has been the best overall summary of creative and visual arts for the preceding academic year. It is a culmination of all the technique, theory and practice learned over the year. The department receives HUNDREDS of entries that are separated into groups based on grade level and artistic education and within seven distinct categories based on material and medium. These categories are:

- Category One: Painting
- Category Two: Drawing
- Category Three: Design & Mixed Media
- Category Four: Printmaking
- Category Five: Sculpture & Ceramics
- Category Six: Textiles, Fibers & Jewelry
- Category Seven: Computer Graphics & Photography

After all pieces have been separated, the department will bring in professional artists, college professors and community members to select winners in each group and category - a total of 176 awards. Judges make their decisions based on effective use of elements and basic principals of art, design and composition, technical skill and use of the selected medium, originality and creativity, and finally, overall execution and success of the piece. "Judging has become a very difficult task. Our students do an incredible job and are so talented. These teachers should really be proud of themselves and the work their students produce," explains contest coordinator and Visual Arts Instructional Specialist Sam Garcia. Awards were handed out May 2 at the YISD Central Offices, Ysleta Room.

For a complete list of winners, please visit the YISD Fine Arts Website!
Each year, the Ysleta ISD Fine Arts Department hosts its annual Elementary and Middle School Solo and Ensemble Contest. This contest, with over 1,500 entries district wide, allows elementary and middle school students to compete in various music events that highlight their experience and skill in either band, orchestra, choir, piano or guitar. For the contest, students can perform either alone, or within a small group. They must perform a short piece in front of an experienced judge for a rating. 2019 proved to be one of the most successful to date with the largest number of student entries and Division 1 Ratings.

Program coordinators Robert and Megan Hayden work countless hours scheduling, organizing and preparing the event. “Solo and Ensemble really allows students to shine. This contest is so important for our programs as music educators. It not only allows students to strive for a tangible goal, it also prepares them for the high school contest,” explains Megan. “Every year the students become more and more talented - the competition gets harder and harder. It really is an incredible event that allows our students the opportunity to really show what they’ve learned over the past year.”

Coordinators and Instructional Specialists work together to select professional musicians, college professors and other community members to help in judging the hundreds of students competing that day. Robert Hayden describes the process as “a complicated mission to find the best judges for the students. It’s really important for me to find judges who can not only judge the students fairly, but who can also offer students ways to improve their performance.”

Over the eight hour day, hundreds of parents and students fill Del Valle’s large rotunda to warm up and wait to compete. This year, the department gave out more than 900 Division 1 medals and approximately 600 Outstanding Solo Awards - the most awarded yet. Congratulations to all who participated!

Program coordinators Robert and Megan Hayden describe the event as “a very challenging day for our students, but it’s one that allows them to show their hard work and technical skill. Although Del Valle did not advance after Area, the Fine Arts Department would like to reiterate how proud we are of all of their accomplishments. Both students and teachers should be commended for their dedication, hard work and overall positive attitude. We know they worked tirelessly in hopes of advancing as far as they could. Their dedication and hard work was evident in every performance. We are incredibly proud of this cast and crew and can’t wait to see what’s in store for next year.”

Congratulations to the cast & crew:
- Cassandra Marcellus, Robert Nevarez, Damien Zuniga, Nicole Delgado, Jorge Figueroa, Gerardo Miranda, Alana Rap, Stephanie Bermudez, Destiny Amaya-Carrillo, Daniella Munoz, Delany Ruiz, Destiny Ortega, Alexis Casillas, Mariana Gallardo, Rebecca Ramirez, Victoria Martinez, Mercedes De La Rosa

The 2019 UIL One Act Play season proved to be one of the most successful for Del Valle High School. Mrs. Marissa Vasquez Thurman and Mrs. Martha Gutierrez lead a cast of 17 student actors and technicians through four levels of competition, traveling as far as Seminole, Texas. During its run, the Del Valle production of Shadow Box earned over 17 awards for outstanding acting and technical skill. Although Del Valle did not advance after Area, the Fine Arts Department would like to reiterate how proud we are of all of their accomplishments. Both students and teachers should be commended for their dedication, hard work and overall positive attitude. We know they worked tirelessly in hopes of advancing as far as they could. Their dedication and hard work was evident in every performance. We are incredibly proud of this cast and crew and can’t wait to see what is in store for next year.

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For the past twelve years, the Ysleta Independent School District has won the coveted Congressional Art Competition. Sponsored by the Congressional Institute, the contest accepts thousands of entries nationwide, with a winner selected in each congressional district. Since its inception in Spring 1982, the competition has had over 650,000 participating students. All winning entries are recognized at an annual awards ceremony in Washington, DC while their pieces are displayed for one year at the U.S. Capitol. In a press release, Bel Air High School Art Teacher Ramiro Ordaz explains “The Congressional Art Competition provides El Paso students a great opportunity on a local and national level.”

This year, Texas Congresswoman Veronica Escobar, along with a panel of artists and community leaders, chose Bel Air High School Senior Sarah Murillo as the winner. Escobar made a surprise visit to Bel Air High School in early May to award Sarah the prize and to congratulate her in person.

In addition to the top prize, Ysleta students held nine of the top ten spots, four of the top five spots, six of the seven honorable mentions and were ultimately awarded first, second and third place overall.

1st Place: Sarah Murillo, Bel Air High School
2nd Place: Matthew Acosta, Parkland High School
3rd Place: Anthony Williams, Parkland High School