

Carla Nierman
ArtCenter Manatee
941-746-2862
carla@artcentermanatee.org
www.artcentermanatee.org

“Art is the literacy of the heart.”

- Elliot Eisner

**ArtCenter Manatee Welcomes 3rd Annual Manatee County Schools Exhibit
May 31-June 24, Opening Reception June 7th, 5-7pm**

BRADENTON, Fla. May 18, 2016 – ArtCenter Manatee once again joins with the School District of Manatee County to showcase the work of over 200 K-12 visual arts students.

According to the National Arts in Education Association, learning to paint, create a website or design an energy-efficient home requires mastering skills which are often invisible to the naked eye, but are developed through a strong visual arts education. In Manatee County, we’re fortunate to have a Board of Education that has made a continued commitment to teaching the visual arts in its elementary, middle and high schools. By partnering with ArtCenter Manatee, that commitment is furthered by giving these young artists a ‘voice’ – three museum-quality galleries – where their work can be professionally displayed and where the artists can receive positive recognition by a wider audience.

ArtCenter Manatee offers the gallery space, marketing and as many frames and mattes that can be found to help these budding artists get their due. The ArtCenter will also award scholarships to art classes to students whose work is judged to be among the best in each of three grade ranges.

For many students, it will be their first experience in preparing their work for display. And certainly for pricing their work with an eye to selling it. For most students it will also be the first time they have ever been to an art gallery. The experience will show students the process of preparing artwork for exhibit, and the lessons they learn will stay with them throughout their lives.

With the help of Curator Sawyer Ramsey and her colleagues, and the many students who participate, it is sure to be even better than last year’s exhibit. We thank Bradenton Kiwanis for their donation in support of this exhibit.

The opening reception, with Dr. Diana Greene, Superintendent, will be on Tuesday, June 7th from 5:00-7:00pm. Light, kid-appropriate snacks and beverages will be served. Exhibit and reception are free and open to the public.

We hope you'll join us for this celebration of art by our students. Who knows, the work of the next Picasso may be on display.

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Attached Images of 2014 award winners:

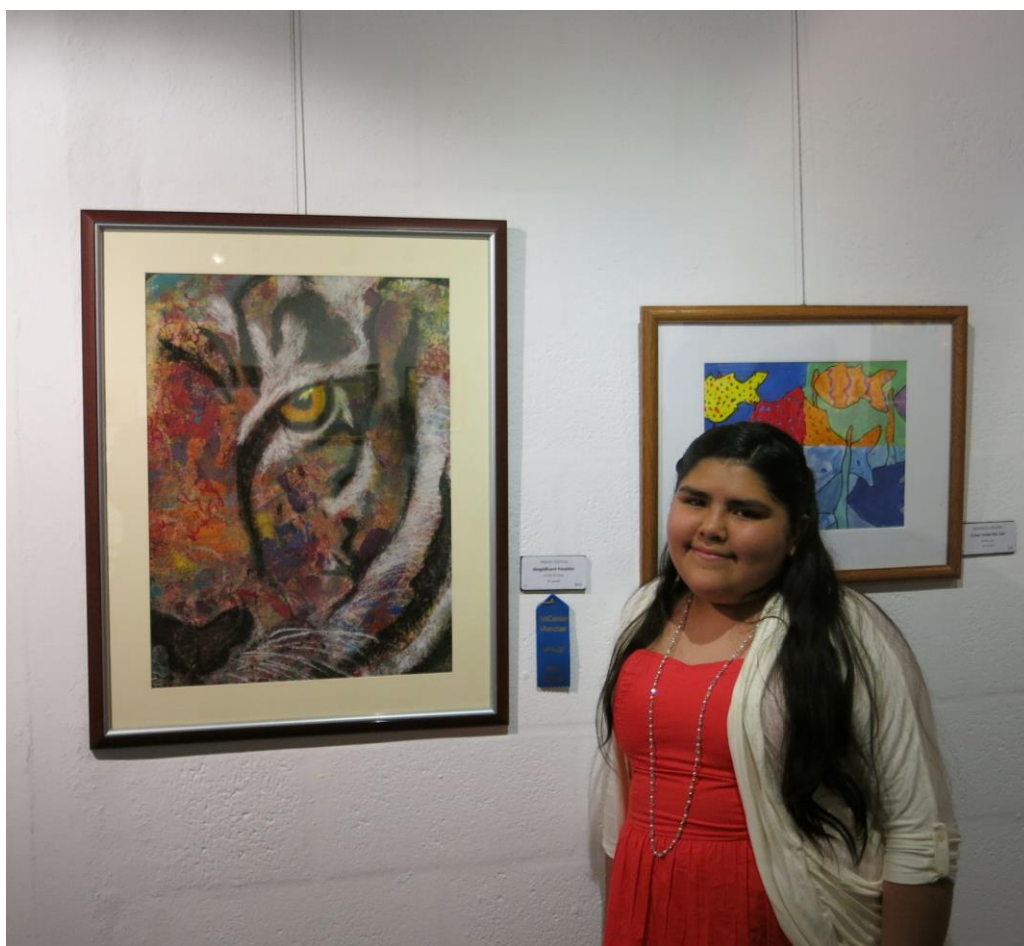
"Magnificent Predator" acrylic and pastel by Ailyah Ochol, 6th grade. First Place Award Winner

"Eyes of the Night" batik by Naomi Rafi, 10th grade

"Leo the Lion" batik by Molly Persson, 9th grade

About ArtCenter Manatee

ArtCenter Manatee is the winner of the 2015-16 Reader's Choice Award for Best Art Gallery from the Herald Tribune and the 2015 People's Choice Award for Best Gallery from The Bradenton Herald. Located at the gateway to arts and culture in downtown Bradenton, ArtCenter Manatee is the premier center for visual arts in Manatee County. The nearly 10,000 sq. ft. building features three galleries, five classrooms, an Artists' Market gift shop and an art library featuring over 3,000 art volumes. For more information please call 941-746-2862 or visit <http://www.artcentermanatee.org>. 209 9th St W, Bradenton FL 34205



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"Eyes of the Night" batik by Naomi Rafi, 10th grade. Second Place Award Winner



"Leo the Lion" batik by Molly Persson, 9th grade