



Hi-Desert Star

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By Courtney Vaughn Hi-Desert Star



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Student art show debuts at Hi-Desert Nature Museum

Kelsea Whichello's collage piece is one of more than 100 student art pieces on display at Hi-Desert Nature Museum until May 24.

YUCCA VALLEY— The latest exhibit at Hi-Desert Nature Museum is proof that arts education isn't dead yet.

Works from Yucca Valley High School art students are on display now through May 24 at the museum. The student art show showcases multi-media works from students in all grade levels.

For some students, their high school art classes have introduced them to talents they never knew they had.

Christina Gabbard browsed the paintings and collages of her fellow students, pointing to the left corner of a wall where her own beach scene painting hung.

"This is my first year ever painting," Gabbard shared. "Before, I used to draw all the time." Gabbard is a junior in Krista Wargo's class.

More than 140 pieces of student art are on display.

Freshman Morgan Larson entered her pen ink self-portrait in the show. The drawing was part of an assignment in Wargo's class where each student was photographed with a shadow on one side of his or her face.

The shading in the drawing is made up of song lyrics.

"I encouraged everyone who wanted to put something in to submit something," Wargo said. She and fellow YVHS art teacher Roger Herlacher encouraged their students to submit their artwork.

Before the end of a reception hosted by the museum Friday evening, at least one student's painting already had a bid on it.

Crystal Mason, a museum educator, said a visitor asked to buy a time-lapse painting of silhouetted trees by Brianna Johnson. The museum isn't a gallery and doesn't handle transactions, but Mason said occasionally people do ask to purchase the art.

"We usually just notify the teachers and the students decide if they want to sell or not," Mason said. She noted many students are reluctant to let go of their artwork.

Johnson had several pieces in the show, including one in her newest medium.

"I just started using chalk," she said. "I love chalk. Working with my hands a lot more, it's just a much more enjoyable feeling."

Johnson is a senior in Wargo's class.

The Yucca Valley High School student art show is free at the museum.