

## Student Messages Prove as Beautiful as Their Award-Winning Art

Out of the 230,000 submissions to this year's Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, only one percent received national recognition for their works. The elite group of honorees comprises University School students Peri S. (grade 8), Gabi L. (grade 12), Sydney F. (grade 10) and Maia C. (grade 7). All four winning works beautifully apply various techniques and styles, but equally striking is the young artists' commentary on the power of art and the all-too-human tendencies that inspired each piece. As is true with people themselves, there is more to their art than meets the eye.



*Peri - American Vision Award*



*Digital Art: "Light Will Guide You"*

The first image that came to mind when Peri's photography teacher assigned the word "fragile" was a girl on a balcony contemplating a decision and "kind of floating and drifting in the wind." Peri's process of bringing the concept to life and then altering the captured moment to produce a rainbow, starry effect reflects the sense of empowerment that art offers.

"The whole idea of art and being able to do anything with it inspires me," Peri said. "No matter what you feel inside, you can have your voice be heard in ways other than words."

For Gabi, the appeal of art is the ability to juxtapose depth and simplicity. "From far away, you may not notice that my sculpture is anything more than a series of skinny, tall, dirty cylindrical vessels," Gabi explained. "But when you look more closely, you realize that 'they' have something to say."

"I made my sculptures lifelike in the sense that they are different heights and have thoughts, but at the same time I made them lacking personality which is what one usually thinks regarding people struggling through poverty," Gabi said. "Through my work I wanted to show that people are similar even with the simplest of things. They have a name, a past; they have a family, hopes, and anger. I titled my piece 'Bark' because the thoughts are barking out at the people walking by."

Sydney's painting similarly tackled poverty in direct response to the disregard she witnessed for a homeless woman asking for spare change on the subway.

"I noticed how many hid behind their newspapers so they did not have to acknowledge her," Sydney said. "The purpose of this piece is to show how people hide from an unpleasant reality. I would like for people to stop ignoring the issue right in front of their eyes."

Art for Maia offers a unique opportunity "to show people what you are thinking on a page." In the case of her painting "Bones," Maia chose to render a deer skeleton because of its graceful horns and her desire to show "how complex every part of a living thing is." "I love to paint," Maia added, "because I feel that you can really get beautiful, vibrant colors and move the brush into the shape you want it to be."

All four students and their art teachers – Mrs. Cohen, Ms. Lambert and Ms. Jackowitz -- have been invited to the National Scholastic Art Awards ceremony to be held at New York City's Carnegie Hall on May 31, 2013.



*Gabi - Gold Medal*



*Sculpture: "Bark"*



*Sydney - Gold Medal*



*Painting: "You Can't Escape the Truth"*



*Maia - Silver Medal*



*Painting: "Bones"*