

Mercy students' artwork wins awards, goes on display

Farmington Hills
Mercy High
School students
Egan Franks,
Kathryn Smith,
Jessica Ford, and
standing, Christi-
na Lehman, Tara
Ellis and Kelly
VanDenBerg
recently won
Regional
Scholastic Art
Awards. Their
works will be on
public display
beginning Feb.
14 at the College
for Creative Stud-
ies in Detroit.

Photo by Deb Jacques



BY DAVID WALLACE
C & G Staff Writer

FARMINGTON HILLS — Six Mercy High School students racked up 13 awards in this year's Regional Scholastic Art Awards competition, and their works will be on display at the College for Creative Studies in Detroit Feb. 14-March 6.

Three of those students either have portfolios or an individual piece advancing to a national level of competition in New York City.

The portfolios of seniors Jessica Ford of White Lake and Egan Franks of Northville earned Gold Key awards and will advance to the national competition. Junior Kelly VanDenBerg of Farmington earned a Gold Key award for a digital photograph that will compete in New York.

"I submitted a bunch of portraits, but I also submitted abstract

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pieces and stuff that meant something to me and kind of told my own story through it and expressed my emotions in it," said Franks. "So I was happy to get awards."

She also received a Silver Key award in the painting category and a certificate award in the mixed media category.

Ford likewise paints, and said she prefers it to drawing because painting involves more use of color. She also received certificate awards for painting and mixed media.

VanDenBerg's winning photograph was a portrait of her cousins. She prefers black-and-white portraits to color.

"I just think it captures, like, a whole other essence of the person," said VanDenBerg. She also received a Silver Key award for digital photography.

Kathryn Smith, a junior from Farmington Hills, received two certificates for her digital photography.

"One was daffodils, and one was a flag in black and white," she said.

She likes photographing landscapes and flowers.

"I just like being outside, and the natural light and everything," said Smith.

Junior Tara Ellis of Farmington Hills won two Silver Key awards for mixed media and apparel design. She used old jeans to create her mixed media work.

Junior Christina Lehman of Grosse Pointe won a certificate in the ceramics and glass category for a glass piece.

"It's like a clear bowl with a trail of blue around," she said.

Art is something that both comes easily and takes work for the students.

"Some of it you have, and a lot of it you have to acquire," said Ellis.

"I think you acquire your own style," said Ford.

"I think you can always learn more about art," said Franks.

That could mean learning new media or doing new projects.

"That's what's exciting about it," she said. And she agreed with Ellis that art is therapeutic.

"We really try to take the approach that this is technique that can be learned. Many of our students come to us with no art in their background, or very little in grade school," said Susan Smith, chairperson of the department of art at Mercy. "And we draw from so many communities that we kind of start from scratch in our Art Foundations class. So, it's really exciting to see their progress."

Ford, Franks and VanDenBerg can look forward to exciting possibilities. If they win at the national level,



Photo courtesy of Mercy High School

This portrait of a figure is by senior Egan Franks, one of three students who have a portfolio or individual work advancing to a national competition.

Ford and Franks could be awarded a scholarship. And VanDenBerg could win a national medal and possibly have her art displayed in a show in New York this summer.

The students' works can be seen at the College For Creative Studies from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, and noon to 5 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.