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Frisco High School finalist,  
Ashlynn Greenwood (left)  
Centennial High School finalist,  
Rheazel Costinano (right)  
photos provided by FISD



## Dreams, Stars and Butterflies

By Cynthia Howe

THERE IS A WINDOW of time, colorfully set within the heart of a child's soul, which art teachers are passionate about and Picasso expressed it well. Before they get old enough to be inhibited by perceptions of the norm or expectations, they are free to express and communicate their soul through drawing, painting, creating, singing, dancing or simply dreaming.

Frisco Independent School District (FISD) has established a reputation of excellence over the last decade and it is reflected in their arts program. They are passionate about the whole child. Their philosophies and programs are geared to meet the many facets of intelligence and giftedness. The arts, whether it be music, movement or artwork, utilizes higher level thinking skills and involves both critical and creative thinking. As Youth Art Month (YAM) approaches, there are

a variety of opportunities for students and Frisconians alike to celebrate the arts in our wonderful city.

### DREAMS

Every artist dreams and many student artists in Frisco dream of their work "going to state," or more specifically to Austin to be displayed at the State Capitol. In the past several students have received recognition and state

Exhibit.

These students represent the excellence Frisco ISD strives for in all of their programs. Their artwork will be displayed at the Capitol on the ground floor rotunda from February 29<sup>th</sup> through March 9<sup>th</sup>. While some will be privileged to have their artwork displayed for visitors from around the world, others have a more local perspective: Frisco itself.

*"All children are artists. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up." – Pablo Picasso*

honors in the visual arts and this year will be no exception. The YAM Finalists for 2008 have heard back from the Texas Art Education Association who judge hundreds of pieces every year for acceptance into the state Capitol

Every year, for more than six years, students have looked forward to the Annual Heritage Association's Art and Essay contest. Albeit many participants wish to wave their wand of writing skills across the fabric of the contest, still



*Curtsinger Elementary School finalist,  
Sharon Kinsella  
photo provided by FISSD*

#### 2008 STATE CAPITOLYAM FINALISTS FROM FRISCO:

Curtsinger Elementary School:  
Sharon Kinsella

Roach Middle School: Ali Khanian

Frisco High School: Ashlynn  
Greenwood, Carlos Calderon,  
Moon Kang, Rebecca Yan

Centennial High School:  
Molly Hicks, Rheazel Castinano

#### 2008 RISING STARS:

Platinum Award: Borchardt Elementary

First Place: Shawnee Trail Elementary

Second Place: Staley Middle School

Third Place: Isabel Pierce Sem  
Elementary

#### 2008 BUTTERFLY T-SHIRT WINNER:

Curtsinger Elementary:  
Lindsey Morrison

#### CALENDAR WINNERS:

Corbell Elementary: Oriana Koot,  
Joanna Ringhofer, & Emilee Tutt

Curtsinger Elementary: Timothy Torres

Griffin Middle School: Josephine Dyer

Frisco High School: Helen Oldham

Wakeland High School: Bekah  
Cunningham

others will use their creative skills within the spectrum of expressing not just their art work but their understanding of their community and the history behind it. Each year the Heritage Association develops a theme. Sometimes it's about the history of the city, but sometimes it focuses on the student's own heritage. The contest is open to students from third through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. As Lyn Chambers, director for the contest, reflected, "Frisco students compare most favorably throughout the state with their art." Ms. Chambers serves on the board of the Heritage Association and is always impressed with how cooperative the teachers and the district are in making this so successful. Last year there were 749 entries. Monetary prizes are awarded along with honorable mentions and, needless to say, the hardest part of the contest is the position of judge.

Some artists dream large, and others small, but all their dreams come true at the FISSD annual Art Exhibit. This event is open to the public and all are encouraged to participate. March is the National Youth Art Month and this year Frisco ISD will once again hold its annual art exhibit in observance of the event. Frisco Art teachers across the district find the months preceding March a flurry of excitement and activity as students prepare for this wonderful opportunity to display their art work locally. This exhibit is open to all students, kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade and holds a special place in many

parents' hearts. This year the exhibit will be held at Liberty High School. It will commence with an open house on February 26<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 to 8 p.m. and continue through March 7<sup>th</sup>.

#### STARS

This past Christmas visitors to Frisco Square were once again enchanted by the large, colorfully painted stars that adorned the plaza. These pieces of art reflect the collaboration between the Visual Arts Guild of Frisco (VAGF), the city, local artists, businesses, school administrators and art teachers. The project is called "The Rising Stars" and it certainly reflects the heart of many art students throughout the district who rise to the proverbial call and shine.

This is the project's second year and to everyone's delight, the number of participating schools and students has doubled. Along with 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners, this year the Guild added a "Platinum" award. This special award recognized a school that demonstrated excellence in creativity and skills as well as a passion for the Frisco community through their project.

The Guild provides each school with metal star sculptures. These blank slates serve as building blocks to a child's imagination. Students gather together, brainstorm as groups, contributing their creativity and time into a star that represents their passion and their school. These stars are then judged by the Guild and displayed through a citywide tour. Everyone involved is thoroughly impressed by the students and their teachers. As the Guild expressed, "We see time and time again how the leadership of our art teachers is so valuable in motivating our students to be the best in whatever they do."

You can tour the stars from January 21<sup>st</sup> to February 22<sup>nd</sup> in front of the Dr Pepper StarCenter, home of the Texas Tornado Hockey team.

#### BUTTERFLIES

Heart meets art for Frisco art students

as they participate, once again, in the annual Butterfly Festival at the EmilyAnn Theatre in Wimberley, Texas, Frisco's "Sister City." This very special event was developed from heartbreak. When EmilyAnn Rolling was tragically killed in an automobile accident, her parents, Ann and Norm Rolling, decided to celebrate her life in a very unique way. EmilyAnn was a Wimberley High School theater student and because of her passion, a vision was established for her parents. In 1999 they built a gorgeous park as an outdoor theater for local thespians to enjoy. It was designed after the Globe Theatre in London and is nationally known as an accredited university venue for theater students.

Every spring students of Frisco compete in the Butterfly Art Contest with their Sister City for the coveted prize: their artwork displayed on the following year's Butterfly Festival shirt. Laverne Forwark, the art teacher at Curtsinger Elementary, is very proud of her winning student for the 2008 t-shirt design: Lindsey Morrison, who is in 4<sup>th</sup> grade this year. In addition to the t-shirt design competition, this year a calendar has been added to the event that will display even more butterfly submissions.

A variety of ribbons and honors were also awarded to students, too many to mention. Talented students submit more than 3,700 art pieces and the excitement for Frisco artists reverberates through the district.

If taking a day trip to experience the festival appeals to you, the festival is held the third Saturday of every April and is promoted in *Texas Highways*, *Hill Country Reporter* and our local *Fox 4 News*. Butterflies that were raised in the classrooms of Wimberley are released Saturday morning in memory of those loved ones lost over the previous year.

Perhaps Picasso's problem isn't all that difficult to solve. If grown ups take the time to explore the heart and mind of the young artist through art exhibits open to them this month, perhaps the inner-child can be reborn and renewed - just like the butterfly. This month would be a great opportunity for the citizens of Frisco, young or old, to find out.

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*Cynthia Howe is a freelance writer living in Little Elm.*