

# On exhibit: visions of youth

Lowell gallery lets high school artists show off inspiration

By Brendan Lewis, Sun Correspondent

UPDATED: 01/07/2019 07:13:49 AM EST

LOWELL -- You can only have so many decapitated clay heads before you realize it's time to make a body.

Or at least that's the conclusion that Innovation Academy student Abbie Lyna came to before finally creating a white clay sculpture meant to be her self-portrait that was featured this past weekend in a new regional art show at the Loading Dock Gallery at Western Avenue Studios

"Over the summer I got my hands on a bunch of clay. So I was making clay heads a lot. I was figuring at one point I should try to do something that didn't look like just a bunch of decapitated heads," Lyna said while laughing. "It's the first time I did a full body with proper proportions.

" Lyna, 17, is one of 24 exceptional young artists from six area schools to take part in the first annual Greater Lowell



Rori Clare, left, and her friend Adhiti Ambati, both 16 and sophomores at Tyngsboro High, react to being photographed while looking at an ink drawing, "Mirror," by Lowell High junior Kevin Truong on Saturday at the Loading Dock Gallery at Western Avenue Studios in Lowell. Ambati also has work on exhibit. (SUN / JULIA MALAKIE)

Student Art Show, started this year by Innovation Academy Charter School art teacher Zachary Pelham. The students' artwork will be on display through Jan. 27.

Lyna's piece will also be featured in the Massachusetts Amazing Emerging Art Show, which is taking place at the Massachusetts Transportation Building in Boston from Feb. 11 to March 27.

Each growing artist gained the experience of being able to stand with their art as gallery guests strolled through to admire each piece, and being able to answer questions or discover a variety of interpretations.

Tyngsboro High student Adhiti Ambati, 16, stood by her drawing at the Loading Dark Gallery to explain the process she took to create her piece, a drawing of the Taj Mahal. She used pencil to outline and then a black Sharpie marker to add dimension.

Ambati said she sees much more art in her future, and hopes to use her talent to establish a legacy at Tyngsboro High.

"Our school has a lot of different murals made by students over the years and I really wanted to make one that I can put up there so, when I leave, I've left my mark on the school," said Ambati.

Greater Lowell Technical High student Tanayah Ford, 15, was showcasing her abstract photo of a person that she created through a process called blind contour, which meant she couldn't look at the drawing as she was drawing it, just the



"Creatures of the Night," at left, a watercolor-and-acrylic painting by Kathalina Neo of Greater Lowell Tech, is among works on exhibit by 24 young artists from six area schools. (SUN / JULIA MALAKIE)

subject.

By using this method, Ford created a figure that people seem to interpret in so many different ways, which is something the sophomore loves about her piece.

"Anyone can see anything. That (the subject of the abstract) is one of my closest friends but people look at it and say, 'Oh, I see Trump!' and I'm like, OK, whatever you want.' Because nothing can be wrong," said Tanayah. "The background (light blues) can give off a cooler, calmer vibe while the warm colors (on the subject) make everything come together and really make it pop and make it different, instead of having everything being the same color and blending into each other."

Organizer Zachary Pelham said he has done similar art shows with just Innovation Academy students in the past but said that this was a way to bring more young artists in the region together.

In addition to Innovation Academy students, young artists submitted work from Chelmsford High, Greater Lowell Tech, Lowell Catholic High and Tyngsboro High; each school choosing four student artists.

Pelham said that he'd like to encourage faculty at other schools to sponsor the art show in future years and host it at a different gallery.

Regardless, he said that he'll certainly make sure that the show goes on every year. He spoke of how the wide breadth of galleries and artist-friendly businesses and organizations has had a huge impact on young art students who are hungry for any opportunity to dig deeper into their craft.

"There is a very thriving opportunity for artist spaces in Lowell now. Business and organizations have tried to encourage more expositions. I think that has accelerated," said Pelham. "I think this environment has allowed more students to show their work in a gallery setting than ever before and encourages the school community to learn more about the culture in the area."

The Loading Dock Gallery currently features the works of roughly 30 different area artists, all of which are for sale. Gallery manager Nan Hockenbury said the Loading Dock in particular strives to educate new artists and give them a professional experience.

"We have a mission to educate. We are kind of a teaching gallery because artists will come in and not know how a gallery works," said Hockenbury. "Like, how do you frame your work, hang your work, sell your work, price your work, etc.? We kind of help each other and dispense knowledge about being a working/showing artist."

\*\*\*\*

The Greater Lowell Regional Student Art Show is at the Loading Dock Gallery at Western Avenue Studios, 122 Western Ave., Lowell.

The show runs from Jan. 3 to Jan. 27. For more information, go to [theloadingdockgallery.com](http://theloadingdockgallery.com) or call 978-596-1576.



"Girl in a Chair," a sculpture of clay, wire, wood and foam, by Abbie Lyna of Innovation Academy Charter School. (SUN / JULIA MALAKIE)



Cate Quince, 15, a freshman at Tyngsboro High, with her graphite drawing, "Diamonds Eye." (SUN / JULIA MALAKIE)



Lowell High junior Kevin Truong, 16, with his ink drawing, "Mirror," among works by 24 young artists from six area schools on exhibit in The Greater Lowell Regional Student Art Show at the Loading Dock Gallery at Western Avenue Studios in Lowell. The show runs through Jan.