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TSJC STUDENT SHOW 2015

Dusting off the gold – with passion, enthusiasm, goodwill

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The Chronicle-News

The Art Department at Trinidad State Junior College has always been a quality program. In recent years, like bread dough rising in a closed container, new faculty, new programs and increasing attendance have begun to strain the walls of the two large rooms on campus in which all art classes are taught.

Additional students generate a larger body of artwork. Satisfying a desire to publicly display the abundance of artistic excellence produced this year, TSJC's administration accepted an invitation to bring student work down from the hill on Pine Street into town. From March 13-26, one hundred and eighteen of these student-created beauties are brightening the walls of the Trinidad Area Arts Council (TAAC) Gallery at 130

Main Street for the whole of downtown to enjoy. The reception and awards ceremony at the gallery will be at 6 p.m. on March 13. Everyone is invited.

Our college has blended with our community through art.

The mixing agent is one man's passion. But he will tell you that it is the generous contributions of people in our town that has made the whole thing possible.

From the time the whirling energy vortex named Vilas Tonape arrived in Trinidad to teach art at the college a couple years ago, he felt at home. Not that Trinidad is much like Vilas' birthplace in Bombay, India. It couldn't be more different. But people are people, and Trinidad people felt like home folks to Vilas because they resonated with generosity and goodwill.

Tonape soon found that anything he need-

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Courtesy TSJC Art Department

Only one of the many interesting art pieces, above, that will be included in the 2015 TSJC Student Art Show that will be held at TAAC's Gallery Main beginning March 13.

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ed was willingly supplied.

When he wanted to put on a college student show for the first time, last year, TAAC generously waived the fee to host it at Gallery Main.

Trinidad residents Ida and Sherry generously donated frames and Dave Frank contributed needed mat board. Professor Tonape taught the students to frame the work themselves, and the first student show was a success.

Sponsors and supporters for this year's show are honored and thanked by being featured on a poster near the entrance and listed on all the invitations and flyers. They are: The Trinidad Area Arts Council, Frank Images, Ida and Sherry Used Furniture. The Trinidad State Educational Foundation, Cedar Street Printing, Judy and Edward Fuentes, Lucky Murphy's L&L Fine Art Gallery and generous donations from the entire community.

As before, under Vilas' supervision students framed all the work entered in the 2015 show—all 118 pieces—with donated frames and materials. Undergraduate students, community students and college staff contributed the fruits of their artistic studies, including several high school students enrolled in a concurrent program which gives them credits for college courses.

The resulting effect of so many entries is that the paintings and drawings are forced to hang uncomfortably close to each other. Next year, says the professor, the number of accepted entries will have to be smaller.

Judging the show will be well-respected local and national artist Paula Little.

1st prize is full in-state tuition for one art class, donated by The Trinidad State Educational Foundation, valued at \$300.

2nd prize is a \$ 150 gift certificate for art materials from the college bookstore, donated by Ed and Judy Fuentes.



"This is a Community Show," comments Art Professor Vilas Tonape. Everyone is encouraged to attend and see what the students are doing in the world of art. The show runs from March 13-26. The reception and awards ceremony at Gallery Main will be at 6 p.m. on March 13.

3rd prize is four college art course handbooks, a value of over \$50, contributed by Cedar Street Printing.

4th prize is a \$25 gift certificate for art materials from the college bookstore contributed by the Artfyer Student Art Club.

In addition, there will be five certificates of honorable mention awarded.

As professor Tonape walked around the gallery to observe the photographing of some of the artworks, he commented about things that surprised and enlightened him.

One of the things that surprised him at TSJC was that so many athletes enrolling in his classes produced very remarkable art, as demonstrated by their work hanging on the Gallery Main walls. He was also pleased to compliment the very young students taking college art courses for additional high school credits.

The professor shared a couple of anecdotes from his own teachers that illuminated his personal career. One was about the professor in India who told him that everyone is born with a piece of gold inside them and the job of a teacher is to find just

the right ways to dust it off in each student. Another anecdote was about his "American Guru," the graduate professor Ron Watson, who told him, "You can find everything you are teaching in books. Don't think you are a genius. Students will remember what you say for a week, or a month, or a year, but they will forget. The one thing they will never forget is if they witness the passion in you."

The results of that passionate teaching adorn Gallery Main's walls.

Thus it is with passion, enthusiasm and goodwill that this student art exhibit is presented, in and with the community of Trinidad, as a glowing example of what people working together can accomplish as they dust off the gold.