

Student Artwork In the Chapel Gallery

June 6, 2011

Eight students from the Turtleford Transition School will be displaying their superb artwork at the Chapel Gallery in North Battleford on Monday June 6. The student's works are the result of an extensive co-curricular project that blended visual art, photography, mathematics and English. Teacher Callam Olver and visual artist Jay Kimball from the ArtSmarts program put the project together and assisted the students as they learned how to conceive, plan, photograph and construct their works. In total more than 30 hours of instruction were required.

“There were three main parts to the project,” said artist Jay Kimball. “They learned how to use the tools they needed – the cameras and the software, and they had to decide how to present themselves in their portrait work, and lastly they had to construct, install and make a visual reference of their installation.”

The project required that the students learn photographic techniques, with a focus on portraiture, and then digitally process their photographs. “One of the highlights for me as an instructor,” said Kimball, “came when the students began to think about why they were taking the photos: it became more than just clicking the shutter –there was a context to and for their actions.”

Student Holly Lewis explained what Kimball meant about context as she described how she assembled her own portrait, one half in black and white and one half in colour: a contextual reflection of her Métis heritage.

Lastly they had to learn how to construct, create and record their installations. This was followed up by the creation of small cubes to act as a base for the portraits, installing those cubes into a natural setting, photographing that event and process, and then using these last photographs as a basis for the show.

“It was great to learn things outside of normal school environment,” said student Greg Jimmy. “I learn better by doing and I love the outdoors. The installation that we did at Brightsand Lake was the highlight for me.”

“It has been a really interesting program,” echoed Holly Lewis. “I loved learning about the black and white photography. If I had to pick one highlight it would have to be finding out that you can take the simplest things and make them look absolutely beautiful.”

ArtSmarts is a program of the Sask Arts Board, which provides funding through Sask Culture that enables practising visual artists to be brought into the schools to enhance the curriculum. Jay Kimball is a practicing visual artist from Mervin who specializes in photography and clay.



Composite: a montage that contains the work of (clockwise from top left) Holly Lewis, Amelia McCaffrey, Jared Zurba, and David Jack



Photograph of Amelia's installation taken by Jay Kimball