

# METRO

The Sacramento Bee

SUNDAY  
January 1, 2006  
CITY OF SACRAMENTO  
COURTESY B2  
CHANGES B4  
WEATHER B8



Bryan Casati, a junior at Christian Brothers High, paints a self-portrait in an advanced drawing class.

## Gallery show hopes to teach students the art of the deal

Turning high school painters, sculptors into professionals is what 5th annual event is about.

By Debra Ranganathan  
DEBRA@SACBEE.COM

More artists have to bustle to sell what they make. But Jamie Ferry, co-owner of the 20th Street Gallery in Sacramento, recalls one young artist who burst into tears when someone offered to buy his work.

"He was just broken-hearted," she said. "He said, 'I don't want to sell.' But they're in a gallery. Everything is for sale here."

It was a cruel lesson, in essence. Even worse, the artist, a high school student, was painting with his self-portrait.

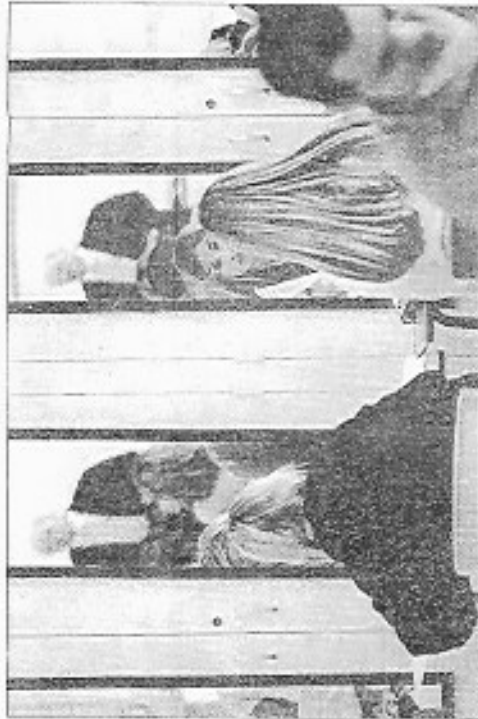
A slew of students will find themselves in a similar situation in February, when the gallery showcases the work of about 50 students in its fifth annual High School Self-Portrait Show.

Art students from four area high schools - Christian Brothers, Lovens and Nazareth Charter in Sacramento and San Juan High in Citrus Heights - are prepping their drawings, paintings and sculptures for display.

And this isn't an amateur hour: To be considered, the artists have to frame the pieces professionally and type signatures to accompany their work.

The goal, according to one art teacher, is to show young artists how to turn their passion into a career.

► ART, Page B7



Riley Demich, left, and Stephanie Rosecraft seek self-portraits Thursday at Christian Brothers High School. Rosecraft is the manager of their teacher, Ardrey Mcintosh. Some of Phillips' students will be chosen to showcase their works at the 20th Street Art Gallery's High School Self-Portrait Show in February.

## Art: Hardest assignment, teens say

► FROM PAGE B1

IF YOU GO

What: High School Self-Portrait Show  
When: Feb. 1-4  
Where: 20th Street Art Gallery, 911 20th St., Sacramento  
For more information: (916) 930-0500

"The whole notion of the missing artist is usually someone without any business sense," said Keith Haag, who directs the arts program at Christian Brothers. "We want them to learn to present themselves in a professional manner. Those kids are now realizing there is a market, and if they pursue it and concentrate on it, they can make a name for themselves."

With the help of the gallery, students put out-market prices on their work. About half end up selling their portraits - most to parents and friends - and they get to keep 50 percent of the proceeds.

The rest of the money goes to Women Empowering A Violent Environment, or WEAVE, a local nonprofit group that works with domestic violence victims.

The gallery, as part of its community service mission, gets nothing. It isn't easy to create a self-portrait. It's even harder to create something intended for appreciating eyes.

"My students asked, 'Why would anybody buy my artwork when a picture of me?'" said Robin Blakey, an art teacher at Lovens High.

"They had to have something more than a picture their parents or grandparents would want. They had to put more of their soul into it."

Students at Christian Brothers, working on their portraits in class last month, said it was their toughest assignment.

Although more than 100 students at Christian Brothers submit work, only about 30 from the school will make the cut. Each of the seven art teachers participating can submit 10 student pieces.

The gallery also accepts walk-in submissions from students, regardless of which high school they attend.

A professional artist - yet to be chosen - will judge the students' work during the four-day show, and the best pieces will be entered into a competition for cash prizes.

And if a stranger walks into the gallery with an open wallet? "They have to sell," said Lindsay McIntosh, a teacher at Christian Brothers and the show's organizer.

"You've got to give up that part of yourself," he said. "You have to let it go."

Some students at Christian Brothers said they wouldn't be so frustrated if someone paid for their art.

"It'd be nice to know somebody would want it in their house," Cuomo said. Others said they wouldn't think of it. Their families were planning to watch their portraits.

As for the boy who wept when he had to sell his portrait last year, the gallery says they on him and made him a color copy of his work.

He also went home with \$100 in his pocket.

The Bee's Debra Ranganathan can be reached at (916) 321-7662 or dranganathan@sacbee.com.