



ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TEEN-CREATED ART PROGRAM AT AMA OFFERS TEENS A CREATIVE OUTLET

Student Art Studio Saturdays Are Free for Teenagers at the Albany Museum of Art

[For Release Jan 26, 2022 – Albany, GA] — On **Saturday, Feb 12**, The Albany Museum of Art will launch *Student Art Studio Saturdays*, a free monthly art program that will encourage teens to express themselves through their art in a safe, welcoming space while they interact with peers who have similar life experiences.

Created by AMA Teen Art Board President Anna Plowden in response to ideas that members of the Teen Art Board (TAB) explored, *Student Art Studio Saturdays (SASS)* will take place **10 am-2 pm** on the **second Saturday** of each month.

Teenagers will be able to come to the AMA and create art with other teens. There is no cost for teens to participate in *SASS*, which is funded with a generous sponsorship by the Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta. All art materials will be provided by the museum.

"*Student Art Studio Saturdays* is a time when students can come to the museum to create with various media provided by the museum," Plowden said. "I hope to give students an outlet where they can explore their artistic abilities. This can also give students a place to utilize their creative abilities in a calm, creative environment. My overall goal is to lay the foundation for a happier, more creative generation."

In addition to Feb 12, upcoming dates for *Student Art Studio Saturday* are **March 12, April 9** and **May 14**. The AMA is located at 311 Meadowlark Drive.

"We at the AMA are proud of this brainchild of Teen Art Board. They created this program based on the needs and challenges teenagers face today," AMA Executive Director Andrew J. Wulf, Ph.D., said. "Life is bewildering enough at this developmental stage in life, so we are inspired to offer this safe, creative community art studio for young people to feel at home with themselves and each other, while experimenting with art-making."

Annie Vanoteghem, AMA director of education and public programming, said the new program developed after Teen Art Board members were challenged in 2020 to identify an issue in the community that they could have direct impact upon and improve.

“They had a number of ideas, but they kept coming back to the mental health of teenagers,” Vanoteghem said.

Adults may underestimate the effects that quarantine and missing social interaction with fellow students because schools are closed have on teens, Vanoteghem said. The TAB members were especially concerned because they had witnessed a marked increase in unnoticed or unaddressed anxiety, stress and pressure in teens, especially those from marginalized groups such as teens of color, LGBTQ+ teens, and teens from lower-income households.

The idea the group settled upon was encouraging teens to express their feelings through art.

“We want to keep them away from negative reactions and toward a positive way to deal with what they are experiencing in these unprecedented times,” Vanoteghem said. “The idea is for teen to express what they’re feeling through their art. It involves creating a free, well-stocked studio for students to come to where they can hang out with like-minded teens and develop their own support group.” SASS sessions also will include snacks and background music, she said.

TAB members have created works representing their feelings toward the rising pressures they see. Those artworks are currently on display in the AMAzing Space activity center at the AMA.

AMA EXHIBITIONS

- *The Way of Life, Works by Ray Pierotti* is in the Haley Gallery Jan 20 -April 23, 2022.
- *Prismatic, Works by Melissa Huang* is in the East Gallery Jan 20 -April 23, 2022.
- *Ordo naturalis, Works by Eric Mack* is in the McCormack Gallery Jan 20 -April 23, 2022.
- *African Artifacts of Spirituality and Identity* is in the Hodges Gallery Jan 20 -April 23, 2022.
- *Escape Plan*, installation by Elinor Saragoussi, is in the West Gallery.

ABOUT THE ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

The Albany Museum of Art is located at 311 Meadowlark Drive in Albany, Ga., adjacent to Albany State University West Campus just off Gillionville Road. The museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. The Albany Museum of Art is open to the public 10 am-5 pm Tuesdays through Saturdays. Admission is free.

For more information about the AMA please visit our website, www.albanymuseum.com or call 229.439.8400. Be sure to follow the @AlbanyArtMuseum on Twitter, AlbanyMuseum on Instagram and AlbanyMuseumOfArt on Facebook.

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