



ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### WINNERS ANNOUNCED IN ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART ESSAY CONTEST

#### Eight High School and College Essayists Recognized in Art-Inspired Writing Contest

**[For Release Oct 21, 2022 – Albany, GA]** — Eight high school and college students were recognized for their winning essays in the 8<sup>th</sup> annual *A Picture Is Worth a Thousand Words* competition at the Albany Museum of Art.

Clara Lee, a Georgia Southwestern State University student, won the \$250 first-place award in the College Division for her essay *Changing for the Better*. Taking top honor in the High School Division was Westover High School student Jaria Ware for her essay *Ethiopia: A Second Utopia*.

“We were pleased with the quality of the writing by our winners,” Annie Vanoteghem, director of education and public programming for the AMA, said. “They were truly inspired by the artworks they saw. It is always fascinating to see how art can drive the creative process in students.”

To participate in the contest, a high school or college student visits the AMA to view six artworks that have been designated for that year’s competition. After selecting one of the designated artworks for inspiration, the student writes an essay of up to 1,000 words that relates in some way to the artwork. The essay may be written in the form of prose or poetry, and may be factual or fictional.

From the Haley Gallery exhibition *Fighters for Freedom: William H. Johnson Picturing Justice*, four paintings were designated: *Let My People Free*, *Historical Scene*, *Marian Anderson*, and *Paul Robeson’s Relations*. *Fighters for Freedom* is organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Art Bridges has provided generous support for the exhibition.

From the East Gallery exhibition *Wayna: Her Dreams of Ethiopia, Works by Tracy Murrell*, designated artworks were *Wayna Dreams of Ethiopia* and *The Coffee Ceremony*.

The essayists and their friends and families were invited to the Thursday evening awards reception at the AMA. The event was also free and open to the public. Essayists competed in two divisions—high

school and college. In addition to the \$250 first-place awards, \$150 was awarded for second place, and \$100 for third place.

Lee's winning *Changing for the Better* in the College Division was inspired by Johnson's painting *Historical Scene*. Second place went to Maggie Cox, also a GSW student, for her entry *A Moment to Remember*, which was based on Murrell's *Wayna Dreams of Ethiopia*. Honorable mentions were won by Albany State University student Jamara Hall Shipp for her essay *Free*, and by ASU student Jeauince Tribue Burnette for hers titled *The North Star*.

In the High School Division, Ware's winning work was based on *Wayna Dreams of Ethiopia*. In second place was Deerfield-Windsor School student Alyia Nurbhai for her essay *A Pour of Coffee*, inspired by Murrell's *The Coffee Company*. Dougherty High School student Dontrell Marton won third place for his submission *Let My People Free*, inspired by Johnson's painting of the same name. Deerfield-Windsor student Christianna Ford was awarded an honorable mention for her untitled entry inspired by Murrell's *Wayna Dreams of Ethiopia*.

Vanoteghem said she hopes students in the region will take advantage of the opportunity to see the exhibitions. Viewing artwork online is not the same as experiencing it in person, she said.

"Experiencing and spending time with art in person is an unparalleled opportunity for students," Vanoteghem said. "It positively impacts physical and mental health and well-being. Studies show that visiting an art museum lowers anxiety and depression and boosts critical thinking skills as well as tolerance and empathy.

"We have so much to learn from these works of art; beauty, symbolism, and history are all a given, but even literature, ethics, science, mathematics, and so much more are all present on these walls. I hope that students and schools will continue to visit the AMA this semester to view these works of art and use them to learn more about the world around them."

*Fighters for Freedom* is on view through Dec 10. *Wayna: Her Dreams of Ethiopia* is on view through Jan 7. Also on exhibition at the AMA are *Forsaking All Comfort and Prosperity*, works by Persian-American artist Maryam Safajoo, through Jan 28, and the *Georgia Artists Guild of Albany 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Juried Exhibition* through Jan 7. Admission to the AMA is free for everyone.

Vanoteghem said the 9<sup>th</sup> essay contest is tentatively scheduled to start in January 2024.

## AMA EXHIBITIONS

- *Fighters for Freedom: William H. Johnson Picturing Justice* is in The Haley Gallery, Sept 1-Dec 10, 2022. Organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Generous support is provided by Art Bridges.
- *Wayna: Her Dreams of Ethiopia, Works by Tracy Murrell* is in the East Gallery, Sept 1, 2022- Jan 7, 2023.
- *Georgia Artists Guild of Albany, 29th Juried Exhibition* is in the McCormack Gallery, Sept 1, 2022- Jan 7, 2023.
- *Forsaking All Comfort and Prosperity, Works by Maryam Safajoo* is in the Hodges Gallery, Oct 6, 2022-Jan 28, 2023.
- *Escape Plan, Installation by Elinor Saragoussi* is in the West Gallery.

## AMA EVENTS

- *AMA ChalkFest*, Nov 19, 2022, 10 am-5 pm, Front Street and Veterans Park Amphitheater. Admission is free. [www.amachalkfest.com](http://www.amachalkfest.com).

## **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](http://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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