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## Celebrating Lamorinda's High School Artists

By Cristina Kim



Best in Show and 2D third place winner, Tina Curriel, smiles in front of her winning piece Photo Ohlen Alexander

The Orinda Arts Council's 7th Annual Student Visual Arts Competition announced its winners on March 10th at the Orinda Library Gallery. Packed with student artists, friends, family, and community members the gallery, which exhibited over 200 works of student art, was alive with positive energy and loud cheers for the winners. Miramonte, Campolindo, Bentley, College Prep, Head Royce, Holden High, and the Orinda Academy all had student representatives who competed in the three major categories; 2D, 3D, and Photography. The competition was funded and supported by the Orinda Arts Council; in each category there were first, second and third prizes as well as a number of honorable mentions, all of which garnered monetary rewards. Local artists with expertise in these categories acted as bipartisan judges who ranked and critiqued the students' works.

In addition to the traditional categories, this year marked the first ever "Best in Show" award which, unlike the other categories, was voted on by the public. Using their cell phones, people who entered the gallery were encouraged to text in a vote for their favorite piece of artwork. The voting period opened on March 5, 2010, and closed at 5:00 p.m. on March 10th. Tina Curriel, a Campolindo senior, won the Best in Show Award as well as a shared third place in the 2D category. An avid fan and protector of wildlife, her winning piece, titled "Vulnerable," depicts a rhinoceros painted over collaged dictionary pages.

Curiel explains, "'Vulnerable' was inspired by a trip to the San Francisco Zoo, like most of my oil paintings. It was inspired by the fact that the rhinoceros is a powerful and ancient creature, which has no real predators in the wild yet is nearly extinct." She attributes her love of animals and art to her grandmother and puts a great deal of thought into her artwork. She was very happy with both her third place and "Best in Show" awards. Curiel elaborates, "I am delighted and honored to be the viewer's choice winner. After pouring hours into my art, it is gratifying to see other people enjoying my work." She will continue pursuing her love of art this coming fall at Oakland's California College of the Arts.

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