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Last Updated: 11:55 am | Monday, August 6, 2007

Classes develop creativity

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If your kids just can't get enough of art, music and drama in their schools, there are plenty of opportunities in the community to satisfy their appetites.

Young Rembrandts is just one of a variety of programs that focuses on the visual arts. The drawing program for children is held in eight-week sessions, usually after school at schools, community centers, YMCAs and park districts.

The program helps fill in the gap at a time when schools are reducing the amount of time for art.

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Carolyn Sendelbach of West Chester, a director of Young Rembrandts, said many schools are laying off art teachers or reducing them to part-time. "I'm hiring those teachers as fast as I can," she said.

The program, part of a Chicago franchise, is aimed at preschoolers through age 13.

Young Rembrandts held themed summer camps in several Greater Cincinnati locations, including an Egyptian drawing camp for ages 6-12. Students created drawings of artifacts and Egyptian imagery using markers, colored pencils and pastel chalk.

Katie Hehn, a 7-year-old second-grader from Anderson Township,

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attended the camp at the Anderson Park District site. It was her fifth Young Rembrandts class or camp.

"I like to learn that you can make shadows," Katie said of Young Rembrandts. "It's all kinds of animals and creatures and all kinds of fun stuff."

Katie's mom, Kris Hehn, said the Young Rembrandts classes allow her daughter to explore her passion and develop her skills.

"Unfortunately, in school, they only have art once a week. She loves art. She draws every day. Young Rembrandts is great because it develops some basic skills, and I notice how Katie builds off of those ... You can just see the growth after each class."

Meanwhile, the Art Academy of Cincinnati also sponsors art classes for children, teens and adults.

Bobbi Vallery, coordinator of the Art for Kids program for children ages 5-12, has already planned her fall lineup of classes that run six Saturdays for two hours.

Among the classes is a drawing and painting skills class for kids ages 5-12 and ABCs of mosaic for 10-12-year-olds. A 10-week class also is held at the Cincinnati Art Museum, where an academy instructor takes students to a different gallery every week. They talk about what's there, how it was made and then sketch.

It's a good class, Vallery said, for younger kids who want to get into the School for Creative and Performing Arts. "It's objective drawing, which a lot of schools look at." That allows students to draw something that's real, rather than from their imagination.

And that's just visual art.

The Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music Preparatory Department both provide classes to hone acting skills during the school year and summer. CCM also has a lengthy list of offerings for students who want to learn or improve their ballet, vocal music and instrumental music skills.



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Students in Karen Tindall's Young Rembrandts class draw Egyptian sarcophagi with pastels at the Beech Acres Arts & RecPlex in Anderson Township.

Local programs

These are just a few local organizations that offer classes or opportunities in visual or performing arts:

Young Rembrandts - www.youngrembrandts.com

Art Academy of Cincinnati - www.artacademy.edu

Taft Museum of Art - www.taftmuseum.org

Cincinnati Art Museum - www.cincinnatiartmuseum.org

Contemporary Art Museum - www.contemporaryartscenter.org

ArtWorks - www.artworkscincinnati.org

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www.ccm.uc.edu/prep

Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park - www.cincyplay.com

The Children's Theatre of Cincinnati - www.thechildrenstheatre.com