

Hospital exhibits inspiring student photos

What do you get when you give a group of local Grade 7 and 8 students one camera to share, a few rolls of film and some basic instruction in composition, lighting and aperture?

An inspirational photo exhibit described by staff and patients as “gallery worthy,” “impressive” and “amazing.” The exhibit, called “In Plain Sight,” is on display inside Patient Registration in the West Wing at the General campus.

The photographers are members of a club at St. Boniface Catholic School near Markham and Kingston Roads.

“When I saw these photos at an exhibit in April I was impressed, but at the end, when I found out they were created by elementary school students, I was blown away! There is a real honesty to their work, and some of the composition is fantastic,” says Anne Marie Males, Executive Director of Community Relations and Public Affairs who arranged for the exhibit at TSH.

Students are encouraged by educational assistants Cristina Da Silva and Kevin Graham to look at things from different perspectives.



Xean Duong, a member of last year's St. Boniface Catholic School photo club, takes inspiration from a collection of toy bears, in a photo he called, "Discrimination." Xean is now in high school but continues to enjoy photography.

“Visual art is a whole different language. Photography is a great way to tell a story, to look at something ordinary and make it extraordinary,” explains Cristina. “I want them to look at places they see all the time, like the park, the school grounds, and find something they’ve never noticed before.”

Student Daniel Di Donato has two photos on display at TSH. One is called, “Yes I Can,” the other “A Day In My Shoes.” Daniel, now in Grade 9, was born without hands and feet and hopes his photography will inspire his peers.

“People were surprised I took the photos. The ‘Yes I Can’ photo is to tell people I can do stuff like everyone else,” says

Daniel. The close up-photo shows Daniel writing, “Yes I can do anything....”

Janine Hidalgo, a Grade 8 student, captured the busy streets of the city in her photograph, “Rush.” Tanieka Murray’s untitled photo of a pine tree is taken from an unusual angle, she says, to try to get people to look at things differently.

The club, now in its third year, operates on an extremely limited budget.

“We bring in our personal cameras and let the kids use them,” explains Kevin. “Many have never used a camera and are excited about the opportunity. I’ve been really impressed with their work.”

Last year, Cristina’s camera quit working.

With 45 eager students in the club, the school desperately needs equipment. Last spring, their work was exhibited at The Scarborough Arts Council’s Bluffs Gallery and there are plans to do that again.

“We sold some of the photos,” says Kevin. “And we’re coming up with some fundraising ideas so we can hopefully buy a digital camera.”

The photographs can be purchased by contacting the school at 416-393-5277.

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