

Star View Artist's Gallery



These clay sculptures were created by residents of Star View Adolescent Center thanks to Free Arts for Abused Children (www.freearts.org) whose staff and volunteers - including professional artists - bring the healing power of art to our youth.

Angel, 16

What is the story your heart has to tell?

The story I am telling is that I have learned to let go of the pain of past relationships and the pain that my family put me through. I don't need them.

What have you learned about yourself while participating in this program?

I'm a big fan of art. I always have been. I've been through a lot in my life, but I learned to stay strong

and keep my head up. And no matter what, don't let no one stop you from doing what you want in life and take away your dreams. You can be whatever you want, and you can be whoever you want to be. Just follow your dreams. And forgive those who did you wrong in the past. And make your dreams come true.

I have learned that I have to try to do things better, that I give up. And I can do what I put my mind to. Thank you, Stephanie.



Cassandra, 16

What is the story your heart has to tell?

The story I am telling through my artwork is about the things I miss in life, such as happiness, flowers and the simple things.



What have you learned about yourself while participating in this program?

I have learned that not only can I paint, but I can paint the things that I wish to have or miss. I also learned that my paintings are my creations, and I will always think they're special and nice, no matter what anyone else thinks.

Cassandra began the program very happy and excited. She came to each session eager to learn a new technique and ready to get her hands on a slab of clay. However, six weeks into the program as the group was beginning the final project, Cassandra stopped coming. After struggling with severe mental health issues, Cassandra was confined to her unit until she was able to rejoin the group a few weeks later. Stephanie was thrilled to have her back in the program... She worked hard to finish her work, complete what she started, and take part in the exhibit. [She exhibited] two pieces, a tile and rattle, which she plans to send to her grandmother, because as Cassandra explains, "She always sends me things and, until now, I had nothing to send back."

*Lisa Flores
Program Manager
Free Arts for Abused Children*

Jennifer, 17

What is the story your heart has to tell?

My artwork is symbolic of my life. For example, the butterfly is one of my pieces, and it is symbolic of freedom and "my happy place." My happy place is my mom. Another example is the eye, and it is watching and all-knowing. "When you watch, you learn." The heart is a symbol that means, in the end, love conquers all.



I want people to know that my butterfly represents freedom, and the eye represents knowing. These things represent me because I think everybody should be free. I am strong and have goals. I am going to college to be a therapist for abused children because I was abused. I know that small children feel like it's their fault, and it's not. I want to help them know that.

What have you learned about yourself while participating in this program? I learned that art is therapeutic. It relaxes and calms. Stephanie is very helpful, patient, nice, giving, and has good taste in music.

Virginia, 15

What is the story your heart has to tell?

Throughout my life I have seen a lot of people breakdown and cry for hours no matter what you do. And sometimes you can't talk to them. My project is all about *smile now, cry later!*



What have you learned about yourself while participating in this program?

I learned that when I think I don't want to do art, it's really fun to think of some ideas and be creative. It really takes your mind off negativity. Working with clay was kind of a coping skill for me. I think if someone really wants to be creative, they will be someone in life. All you have to do is believe!

I want people to know that it doesn't matter what other people think about you! It's really about whether or not you know exactly who you are. And about the people you care about and the people you love deep, deep down in your heart.



Amy, 16
What is the story your heart has to tell?
 I am telling that music is my passion, and it's my way of expressing life ahead of the road. My piece of art is defining my love for music in general.

What have you learned about yourself while participating in this program?

I have learned that there are many other things you can focus on instead of getting yourself in trouble or danger. It has taught me that art can also be a coping skill.



Dorothy, 15
What is the story your heart has to tell?
 My story is that I miss my Aunt Donna. She's too ill to come and visit me, so I made the hummingbirds because my Aunt Donna feeds hummingbirds. She has them come over to her because they can't go far without food. They're just like her pets. She can go outside, and a bird will land in her hand. They adore her. Anytime I see a hummingbird it reminds me of my Aunt Donna.

What have you learned about yourself while participating in this program?

That I'm still not a good painter, but I can sculpt things well.



Elizabeth, 17
What is the story your heart has to tell?
 I did art that reflects my joy. The musical symbol reflects my love of music. Music makes me feel happy, hyper, and joyful.

What have you learned about yourself while participating in this program?

I have learned that I am very artistic, silly, and patient.

Elba, 16
What is the story your heart has to tell?

I want people to know I'm an outgoing person. I've been through a lot in life. I would like to be a dentist when I grow up. I like art. I love sports. So I live in Star View Adolescent Center but by the time you people read or see my art piece I will be home and hopefully I will go see it too, so thanks and see you there!



What have you learned about yourself while participating in this program?

What inspired me to do this project was my past. So I consider myself a butterfly and I was in an environment I didn't want to be in so I was caged up but now my life has changed and I'm free.



Artie, 17
What is the story your heart has to tell?
 The world is very unique, and we will never know what I made. I just made it because I saw it in my head.

What have you learned about yourself while participating in this program?

I learned that girls are goofy, and art is very messy, and I am very impatient.



Jacob, 15
What is the story your heart has to tell?
 I have been through a lot, so I just wanted to express myself through art.

What have you learned about yourself while participating in this program?

I learned that art doesn't have to be perfect. I'm angry for the things I've done in my life but I still keep my head.

On the first day of the program, Elba informed Stephanie that she most likely wouldn't be able to finish as she would be returning to her family soon. Seeking advice from the Star View staff, Stephanie learned that this was often just wishful thinking and that most of the children at Star View remained at the facility for quite some time due to mental health issues and family struggles. One Monday evening, Stephanie arrived and Elba was no longer a resident. She had been reunited with her family in South Los Angeles. Because of her early departure, her sculpture remains unfinished. Not unlike the butterfly, Elba has experienced a new freedom. We feel that it is important to include her work, because like many of the children we work with, transition is one of the constants in her life.

Lisa Flores
 Program Manager
 Free Arts for Abused Children