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Young Patients Make Their Mark in Art Exhibit

BY LACEY MEYER

About 350 pieces will be displayed in the “Making a Mark” annual art exhibit sponsored by the Texas Children’s Cancer Center and Hematology Service in Houston. The exhibit, part of the cancer center’s Arts in Medicine (AIM) program, features artwork by children touched by cancer and blood disorders.

Funded and presented by nonprofit The Periwinkle Foundation, the art exhibit started as an event to coincide with Childhood Cancer Awareness Month in September. “Now it is much more about celebrating the lives of the patients and their siblings and as a way to honor the artist in each of them,” says AIM program coordinator Carol Herron. “The art show is a positive, fun experience for children while undergoing treatment.”

Each year a featured artist works with the children for the exhibit, and this year marks the first time international artists have worked with the program. French artists Regine Gaud and Gerard Visser visited the cancer center to work with children to create whimsical sculptures with moving parts.

Past featured artists have helped the children create a parade cow covered with colorful “designer” Band-Aids, origami butterflies hung on sheer fabric panels, a “spirit horse” quilt with fabric hand-stamped by the children, and an upholstered bed designed by an artist and painted by the children.

After the opening reception, the exhibit goes on tour to locations such as the International Museum of Arts and Sciences in McAllen, Texas; Children’s Museum of Virginia in Portsmouth; and The Museum of Fine Arts Houston. “As the art tours throughout the year, we hope people can relate to the artwork and sentiments or the artists and families,” Herron says. “I love seeing the kids at the opening exhibit showing people what they created.”

“Making a Mark” has displayed more than 200 entries each year since the first exhibit in 1991. The program encourages all cancer patients and their siblings to participate in sharing their feelings through art or creative writing and has attracted submissions from around the world. At the opening reception in September each year, pieces from the previous year’s show are made available for a donation, and some pieces are put on permanent display in the hospital.

To learn more about the program and exhibit, go to www.txccc.org or call 832-882-1455.