

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MARYLAND TEENS ANNOUNCED AS 2020 REGIONAL SCHOLASTIC
ART & WRITING AWARD RECIPIENTS**

*579 Young Artists and Writers from the Maryland Region Recognized for their Original Works of
Visual and Literary Art*

Baltimore, MD –Talented teens across the state of Maryland have received recognition for their works of visual art and writing from the [2020 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards](#). Presented by the **Alliance for Young Artists & Writers** and the **Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts (BOPA)**, the regional affiliate for Maryland, the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards is the country's longest-running and most prestigious creative teen recognition program for students in grades 7–12. In the competition's almost 100 year history, this is the first time that Maryland has had a regional affiliate. The Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts is proud to take on this effort of supporting the next generation of artists.

The Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts received nearly 4000 visual art and writing submissions from teens throughout the state in seventeen counties and Baltimore City. A ceremony will be held for **Gold and Silver Key award recipients** in their honor on **Sunday, March 1, 2020 at 2pm**, at **Baltimore Center Stage**, located at **700 N Calvert St, Baltimore, MD 21202**. This year's ceremony will include readings from professional actors and keynote addresses from Donna Drew Sawyer, novelist and CEO of the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts, and Kirk Shannon-Butts, Curator for City Hall, City of Baltimore.

Five hundred and seventy-nine teens received recognition this year. Award recipients receive Gold Key, Silver Key, or Honorable Mention. Gold Key pieces are submitted to the national level of competition. The top five submissions in the region for Visual Art were named American Visions nominees, and the top five for writing were named American Voices nominees. These nominees will go on to compete to be awarded a National Medal.

American Visions Nominees include: Amira Balala, 12th grade, from **Germantown, MD**; Asher Burrows, 12th grade, from **Frederick, MD**; Hazel Gao, 12th grade, from **Towson, MD**; Madeline Menkes, 12th grade, from **Baltimore, MD**; and Aaron Tian, 10th grade, from **Boyd's, MD**

American Voices Nominees include: Brooke Johnston, 8th grade from **Reisterstown, MD**; Judah Lyles, 12th grade, from **Gwynn Oak, MD**; Joshua Torrence, 12th grade, from **Parkville, MD**; Olivia Yates, 12th grade, from **Baltimore, MD**; and Avery Yoder-Wells, 8th grade, from **Towson, MD**.

Seven Baltimore City school students also received recognition for their works. The **Emerging Talent Scholarships** listed below, sponsored by board members of the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts, are for students who attend a Baltimore City school and who show promise in the areas of visual art and literary arts. The following students received local scholarships in addition to their award recognition:

(\$100) Inspire Scholarship

- Ethan Christou, "The Senses Dividing," Short Story - Silver Key; **The Community School**
- Sam Rivera, "Self-Portrait in Motion," Photography - Honorable Mention; **Baltimore Poly Tech Institution**

\$150- Promising Portfolio Scholarship

- Alyssa Markov, "Photoshop in Darkroom," Photography - Honorable Mention; **The Park School**

\$100-Emerging Middle School Visions and Voices Scholarship

- Jeremiah Jackson, "The Villain," Comic Art - Honorable Mention; **Homeschool Baltimore**
- Daniela Kirby, "A Choice of Friends," Short Story - Honorable Mention; **Hampstead Hill Academy**

\$100 - Young Women in Fiction Scholarship

- Taniyah Kutcherman, "Death By Design," Short Story - Silver Key; **Western High School**
- Aaliyah Cole, "LBTQ: Works of a Queer Nature," Portfolio - Silver Key; **Mergenthaler Vocational Tech**

"BOPA is thrilled to be the affiliate for the state of Maryland and to help recognize the next generation of artists and writers. These works are so powerful and capture the true teen spirit of our youth today. I can't wait for the ceremony to meet them in person!" says **Jocquelyn Downs, Director of the Arts Council for the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts and Maryland Administrator for the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards.**

All works are blindly judged by local visual artists, novelists, poets, playwrights, critics, and editors. Each piece is judged based on originality, technical skill, and the emergence of a personal voice. Students who receive Scholastic Art & Writing Awards walk in the footsteps of notable Awards alumni who have gone on to become leaders in their fields including Andy Warhol, Truman Capote, Tschabalala Self, Hughie Lee Smith, Stephen King, Raymond Saunders, Lena Dunham, Paul Chan, Richard Linklater, and Sylvia Plath. National winners are honored during a special awards ceremony at the world-famous Carnegie Hall in New York City and are eligible for many additional opportunities.

A full list of award winning work can be found on the BOPA [website](#).

For more information about the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers and the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, visit: <https://www.artandwriting.org/>

For information on the **Scholastic Art & Writing Awards**, visit www.promotionandarts.org or contact **Sarah Docolo, Arts Education Coordinator**, at 410-752-8632.

The Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts (BOPA) is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization which serves as Baltimore City's arts council, events center and film office. By providing funding and support to artists, arts programs and organizations across the city, and producing large-scale events such as Artscape, Baltimore Book Festival and Light City BOPA's goal is to make Baltimore a more vibrant and creative city.

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