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Cheshire's best young artists crowned at Mid Cheshire College

Two budding young artists are celebrating after battling it out with more than 300 pupils from schools across Cheshire to be named the area's best young artists.

Brigid Keighran, a Year 9 student from St Nicholas Catholic High School and Milo Forster Year 5 student from Kelsall Primary School, were crowned the overall winners of the dot-art Schools competition at a special prize-giving ceremony at Mid Cheshire College on Wednesday 7th June.

Brigid's winning piece titled Ganesha, an elephant created with plaster and paint; and Milo's pen and ink drawing of a Barn Owl both feature alongside the other shortlisted artworks, in the first Cheshire exhibition in the dot-art Schools competition's history. This free exhibition is at Mid Cheshire College, Creative Arts & Media Building, Hartford campus, is open to the public between 10.30am until 4.30pm from Thursday 8th June to Saturday 17th June (closed on Sunday 11th June).

dot-art Schools is already a well-established fixture in the academic calendar for many Merseyside schools; since its inception almost 4000 students from over 200 schools have taken part. This is the fifth year it will take place in the Liverpool City Region and due to its success and a new partnership with Liverpool John Moores University, a pilot scheme covering Cheshire West & Chester, Cheshire East and Warrington was launched this year. Entrants are asked to produce a piece of artwork that reflects themes they are already exploring at school and best showcases their skills and interests.

Schools initially submitted up to 25 student pieces of art, which were then shortlisted by a judging panel made up of representatives from some of the region's best-known arts and cultural institutions, including Liverpool Biennial, National Museums Liverpool and LJMU Liverpool School of Art & Design, who selected their top three entries from each school for a public vote. The public were then encouraged to vote online for their favourite piece of work from each school to form part of the exhibition.

The overall winners and runners-up for both primary and secondary categories were chosen and announced at a prize-giving ceremony and launch of the exhibition. Each shortlisted student was also presented with a certificate by Joëlle Warren MBE, DL Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Cheshire during the ceremony.



As the winner of the Year 9 category Brigid was also awarded a scholarship to dot-art, giving her a year's membership to dot-art's network, allowing her to showcase and sell her work alongside professional artists, while Kelsall student Milo won the Year 5 category and was presented with prizes donated by Tangle Teezer and Cass Art.

The runners up in the secondary category were Abbie, Holly, Jen, Eve and Maks from the Bishops Bluecoat CofE High School for their group sculpture of a Chinese Dragon; and Hannah Britton of Bridgewater High School for her detailed mixed media Harry Potter artwork. The primary category runners up were Alex Harrison of Green Lane Special School for a mixed media work titled Alex and Louis Cahill of Delamere Primary School for his charcoal drawing of a Leopard. The two runners up in both categories were also presented with prizes including art materials and tickets to Tate Liverpool's summer exhibition.

dot-art Schools project manager Carolyn Murray commented: "The standard of work was outstanding again this year and it's thrilling to see we have many talented young artists in the region. Not very many young people have had the chance to have their artwork displayed in a public exhibition so everyone who was shortlisted should feel very proud. The exhibition is a fantastic opportunity for the public to check out the best work by some of region's rising stars"

Ben Brady, Curriculum Manager of Art & Design at Mid Cheshire College, explains 'Here at Mid Cheshire College we are thrilled to be hosting the dot-art Schools Exhibition. We are passionate about nurturing emerging talents in the arts and this exhibition gives young and budding artists the chance to showcase their creative flair within a purpose built exhibition space. We are keen to support learning of the arts within schools so that young people can see the opportunities available to them as they progress with their education and consider career options for their future'.

Entry for next year's dot-art Schools competition opens in September but schools that register before the end of term will receive a discounted rate. For more information and to enter, visit <http://schools.dot-art.com> or contact Carolyn Murray on schools@dot-art.com.

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For more information or photos please contact Carolyn Murray, dot-art Schools Project Manager schools@dot-art.com or call 0345 0176660.

