

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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IMAGINE ART EXHIBIT COMING TO THE FRANKLIN COUNTY COURTHOUSE

IMAGINE is an exhibition, coordinated by Franklin County Commissioner Marilyn Brown and the Ohio Alliance for Arts Education (OAAE)'s Community Arts Education program (formerly administered by the Greater Columbus Arts Council), of artists ages 5-21, who will use recycled, upcycled, or repurposed materials in a display of three-dimensional and kinetic sculptures and installations that invite viewers to let the mind wander and the soul wonder.

The young artists showcased in this exhibit are participants in OAAE's initiative, Art in the House. Through this program, OAAE and partners TRANSIT ARTS and the Columbus Federation of Settlements connect local artists, arts and cultural organizations and independent arts education programs into a comprehensive network of accessible opportunities for students in grades K-12. Special focus is placed on the needs of children during out-of-school hours, such as afternoons, evenings, weekends, and during the summer.

For 15 years, Franklin County helped support the Greater Columbus Arts Council's community arts education programs including Art in the House and TRANSIT ARTS and in 2008,

Franklin County received the National Association of Counties (NACo) National Award for County Arts Leadership.

"I am proud of the Transit Arts and Arts in the House programs both of which take the gifts of our children and youth and turn them into skills for potential employment," said Commission President Paula Brooks. "The arts in our community are a critical spoke in the wheel of our \$7.8 Billion tourism industry in Ohio! Showing off our future artists for all to see is a personal pleasure for me, as my daughter's middle school art once hung there and made us proud."

Franklin County's vibrant and thriving arts community, including public art exhibitions like *IMAGINE*, makes it an appealing destination with visitors spending \$7.8 billion in Central Ohio annually while supporting 61,000 jobs in the tourism industry.

"Arts and cultural assets in central Ohio are a source of strength, competitive advantage and broad community benefit for Franklin County residents," said Commissioner Marilyn Brown, whose office is coordinating the exhibit. "Supporting our local arts community and arts education is priority for Franklin County."

“Offering our youth the opportunity to be engaged in and learn about the arts not only nourishes their soul, it also nurtures the development of creative ideas in our future leaders and strengthens our entire community,” said Commissioner John O’Grady.

“The IMAGINE exhibition allows us to shine a spotlight on the talents of so many young people in Central Ohio,” said Donna Collins, executive director of the Ohio Alliance for Arts Education.

“The Community Arts Education program benefits young people throughout Franklin County and we owe a great deal of gratitude to the Franklin County Commissioners for their loyal support for the arts and arts education.”

Opening Wednesday, October 24 and running through Friday, November 16, *IMAGINE* will be on display in the Franklin County Government Complex pavilion, on the southwest corner of High and Mound Streets. The exhibition is free and open to the public.

This exhibit is made possible through the generosity and donations of money, resources, materials, and time, by the Franklin County Commissioners, the Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio, Rumpke Recycling, American Electric Power Foundation, United Way of Central Ohio, the Ohio Alliance for Arts Education, the Ohio Arts Council, TRANSIT ARTS, the Columbus Federation of Settlements, the Greater Columbus Arts Council, Freedom a la Cart by doma, and the Franklin County Municipal Court / CATCH program.

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