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## Two Lafayette Students Are Showcase Winners

By Diane Claytor



"Heal the World" by Rachel Zhang Photos provided

If you were asked to complete this sentence: "The World Would Be a Better Place if...", how would you respond? What if you were asked to illustrate your answer with a drawing, photo, dance or music composition? That's exactly what thousands of kindergartners through 12th graders nationwide focused on recently when they participated in the National PTA's annual Reflections program. This arts recognition and achievement program, which began in 1969, is designed to encourage students to explore, participate in and be excited about the arts.

More than 100 Lafayette Elementary School (LES) student entries were submitted in the six categories named by the PTA: visual arts, photography, literature, dance choreography, film production and music composition. Ann Huchingson and Karen Moe, co-chairs of the program for LES, were very happy to see such an enthusiastic

response this year. "What's really great is seeing the kids expressing themselves on their own terms and in their own way," Huchingson said.

Entries are judged by local residents who do not have children at LES. This year, 30 entries were selected to move to the next level, which is the Las Trampas Creek Council (LTCC) Showcase, consisting of entries from eight local elementary schools. Two of these LES artists were the winners in their respective categories, moving them up to present at the District Showcase from 1 to 3 p.m. Jan. 31 at Alhambra High School in Martinez.

Rachel Zhang, a fifth grader at LES, won the LTCC's Visual Arts, Intermediate Category with her painting, "Heal the World." As she explained it, "The world is quite wonderful already, but we can make it better by protecting our animals, donating to people in need, keeping world peace, using more green energy, recycling, and planting more trees to replace the ones we've cut down."

Eight-year old Arthur Tkachenko, an LES second grader, won the Music Composition, Primary Category, with his original opus, "A Change of Life." Arthur, who has only been playing the piano for about a year, said, "In my piece, one person treats another person how he would like to be treated himself, like a mirror."

And now it's time for Lamorinda students to start planning for next year's theme: "Let Your Imagination Fly."



Rachel Zhang



Arthur Tkachenko playing his winning composition, "A Change of Life"

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[back](#)

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