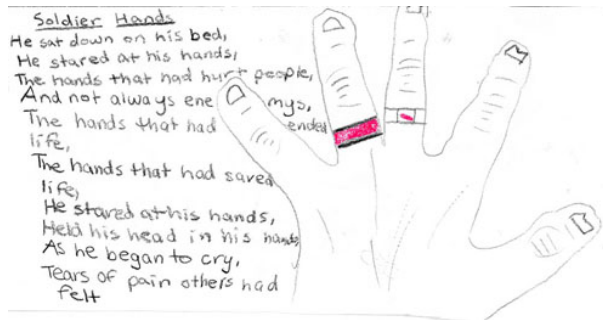


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## Springhill Students Artwork Displayed in SF

By Cathy Tyson



Springhill Elementary School student Sam Swan's poem and artwork will be part of the "Befriending the Imagination" exhibition through June 27. Photo provided

building on examples of things like water or faces, sometimes seeing old things in a new way. The student's thoughts are expressed visually and with language creating truly unique and authentic personal imagery.

"Adults who have seen the show so far have been charmed by the children's art but surprised and moved by the sophistication of the writing. As I like to say the children's writing is often casually profound and profoundly hopeful," said Gendler, who has published three books, and is a poet and artist herself. Stanley Middle School student Sarah Zelman, whose work will be on display explains that "it's a great way to express feeling." Fellow artist and Stanley student Sam Swan enjoys the creative process and suggests, "don't be afraid to write down the words that are in your head" as a method of finding subject matter.

The Commonwealth Club is located at 595 Market Street, second floor, in San Francisco. The exhibit can be viewed Mondays through Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Fridays from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. For more information, call (415) 597-6700.

My words are paint  
 Making an image to last the ages  
 To create a picture in your mind  
 To touch the delicate fabric of thoughts  
 To create a web of ideas  
 To make a story for young people to enjoy  
 To paint on the canvas of reality for all to see.  
 - Sam Swan, written in fifth grade, 2013

My face holds the past  
 Sorrow, loss, joy, bravery and same  
 of ancestors long gone by  
 With many tales  
 of heroism and pain.

A celebration of kid wisdom and creativity can be found in San Francisco through June 27 in an exhibit at the Commonwealth Club called "Befriending the Imagination," which examines human imagination as an essential natural resource - not rare, but precious.

The exhibit features 35 picture poems made by children, along with 10 of Lafayette resident J. Ruth Gendler's monotypes - a kind of printmaking produced by drawing or painting on a smooth, non-absorbent surface. Gendler has been a Poet in the Schools for over two decades, and has been at Springhill Elementary School in Lafayette since 1994.

Gendler feels that now more than ever, there is a need for the arts for children due to their increasingly digitized and constantly interrupted world. "Creativity is contagious" she explains. "It's very easy to lose it." Her lessons to third, fourth and fifth graders at Springhill have more of a human rhythm, with poems, questions, and

Lost in the pages of time.  
Leading up to the present  
Me  
My eyes shadow other faces  
Thousands of years old  
My ears have packed away stories forgotten  
Longing to be told once more  
My nose a crease of endless time  
My features old, cruel and kind.  
- Sarah Zelman, sixth grade

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