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***Two Area Students Receive National Art Awards;
To Be Celebrated at Carnegie Hall in New York City***

The 2012 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Honor the Nation's Most Talented Teen Artists and Writers

ASHEVILLE, NC (May 4, 2012) —Two students from the Asheville area have received prestigious national awards for their exceptional artwork through The [Scholastic Art & Writing Awards](#), the 89-year-old national program that recognizes outstanding creative teenagers and offers scholarship opportunities for graduating high school seniors. The nonprofit [Alliance for Young Artists & Writers](#), which administers the annual Awards, will honor national winners during a special ceremony at the world-famous Carnegie Hall in New York City on June 1, 2012.

Select Award-winning art and writing will be exhibited at Parsons, The New School for Design in Manhattan from June 1 through June 16, 2012. To kick off the week of celebrations, the Empire State Building will be lit gold in honor of the students' achievements the night of May 31. This year's local award recipients from Western North Carolina include:

Stella Kimsey-White
Asheville High School
10th Grade
Gold Medal Award
Colorado, (digital photograph)

Stuart Mason

Christ School

12th Grade

American Visions Medal

Inspire, (sculpture and working electric guitar)

“Stella and Stuart are to be congratulated for their achievements in art recognition. These are the students who set the bar for artistic talent higher and higher each year in our regional competition,” says Erin Shope, School & Family Programs Manager, Asheville Art Museum.

The first level of recognition for these students’ outstanding work took place through the **Western North Carolina (WNC) Regional Scholastic Art Awards**. The regional affiliates for the Western North Carolina Region are the Asheville Art Museum and the Asheville Area Section of the American Institute of Architects. This ongoing community partnership has supported and recognized the creative talents of Western North Carolina’s youth for 32 years.

The Regional Scholastic Art Awards are open to all 7th-12th grade students in public, private, charter and home schools from the following counties: Ashe, Avery, Buncombe and Asheville City, Burke, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, McDowell, Macon, Madison, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Swain, Transylvania, Watauga and Yancey.

The **2012 WNC Regional Scholastic Art Awards** received over 630 entries from students. From those entries, 81 works were recognized by the judges as regional award recipients. The top award, the Gold Key, was presented to 30 students.

The artworks receiving top honors locally were then submitted for national adjudication by a panel of jurors comprised of artists, authors, educators, and other industry professionals. This year, more than 200,000 submissions were entered by students in grades 7 through 12. Of the submissions, 1,600 received national recognition. The works of art and writing were evaluated on originality, technical skill, and the emergence of a personal vision or voice.

Notable past and current national jurors include Robert Frost, Chuck Palahniuk, Gary Panter, Frank McCourt, Judy Blume, Billy Collins, Peggy Noonan, William Saroyan, Kiki Smith, Lesley Stahl, David Sedaris, Mary Ellen Mark, Edwidge Danticat, and Roz Chast.

“The 2012 Scholastic Art & Writing Award winners have once again proven the broad and brilliant capacity of our nation’s teens to produce exquisite works of art and writing,” said Virginia McEnerney, Executive Director of the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers. “The Awards continues to be the largest source of scholarships and recognition

for our nation's student artists and writers, and our program's reach only grows as we recruit new partners each year to join us in honoring creative teens and providing the necessary support for them to explore their potential. After meeting these students and viewing their work, you can't help but feel optimistic and excited about the future of America's creative leadership."

The 2012 Scholastic Art & Writing Award winners join the ranks of some of the country's most revered artists and writers who once received the same award as high school students, including *New Yorker* illustrator Edward Sorel, who will join the winners at Carnegie Hall this year, plus Robert Redford, Andy Warhol, Truman Capote, John Lithgow, Joyce Carol Oates, John Baldessari, Philip Pearlstein, Zac Posen, Sylvia Plath, Richard Avedon, Robert Indiana and Abdi Farah (first-season winner of the Bravo reality show *Work of Art: The Next Great Artist*).

Founded in 1923, the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards program is the longest-running and most prestigious of its kind, having fostered the creativity and talent of millions of students through recognition, exhibitions and publications. Over the past five years, students have submitted nearly 700,000 pieces of work, and over \$25 million has been made available in scholarships and awards to top winning participants. As the program prepares for its 90th anniversary in 2013, the Alliance is calling all Award alumni to reconnect and join in the celebration.

The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards is generously supported by Scholastic Inc., the Maurice R. Robinson Fund, the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, AMD Foundation, Command Web Offset Co., Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP, The New York Times, Blick Art Materials, Ovation, New York Life, Amazon.com, Bloomberg L.P., the Jacques and Natasha Gelman Trust, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, Worldcolor, and additional contributions from numerous other individual, foundation, and corporate funders.

Image credits (left to right): Stella Kimsey-White, *Colorado*, original digital photograph; Stuart Mason, *Inspire*, original sculpture and working electric guitar.

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The Asheville Art Museum is the only nonprofit visual arts museum serving the 24 counties of Western North Carolina. Incorporated by artists in 1948, the Museum collects, preserves and interprets American art of the 20th and 21st centuries with a focus on work of significance to the Southeast.

Centrally located in downtown Asheville on Pack Square, the Museum is open 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. Special docent-guided tour packages are available for groups and students.

Admission to the Museum is \$8.00 for adults and \$7.00 for seniors, students with ID and for children 4-15 (children age three and younger are admitted free). Members are admitted free to the Museum.

The Asheville Art Museum is accredited by the American Association of Museums and receives general operating support from businesses, foundations and individuals, as well as from the North Carolina Arts Council, an agency funded by the State of North Carolina, and the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art. Additional support is provided by the City of Asheville and Buncombe County.

The Asheville Art Museum asks when reprinting images, please keep all artwork at their original proportions; please do not crop them or alter them disproportionately. Provided image credit information is mandatory and images are not for resale.