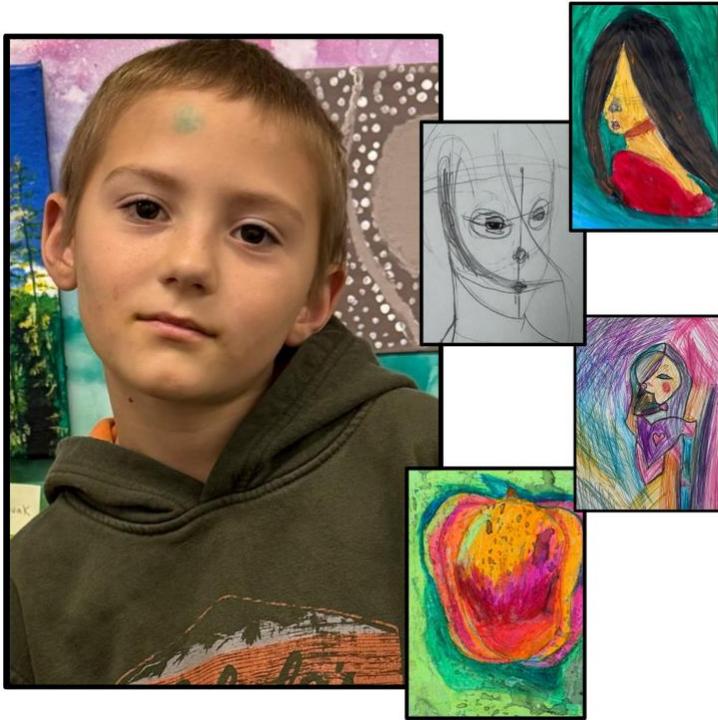


The Paradise Center Presents

Ezra Hartman Noxon Elementary School Spotlight on the Arts



“Spotlight on the Arts” by The Paradise Center honors and encourages students in the arts by highlighting their talent and acknowledging the support they receive through their schools and teachers.

Ezra Hartman, a second-grade student at Noxon Elementary School, met us in the hallway and escorted us to his art classroom. There, one at a time, he began pulling out drawing and paintings like valued items from a treasure chest. His young age belied the maturity of his work. His observation skills are reflected in his attention to details in his work, from carefully drawn facial shapes to

creating a series of textures with lines of varying colors to represent hair.

Ezra appears to favor portraits, such as one he showed us of his Sunday school teacher. Her face was well-proportioned and the coloring vivid. Many youths Ezra’s age — and some adults - - would be choosing simpler subject matter with simple artistic results. But Ezra is far beyond that. Another of Ezra’s works in progress showed he had started with basic geometric shapes, including an oval divided into proper facial dimensions, perfectly shaped eyes, with pupils partly obscured by eyelids . A third piece was an abstract with vivid colors.

While Ezra is being exposed to many new things in school, art certainly is emerging as his favorite. He is showing great talent in many mediums including watercolors and acrylics, but colored pencils are his current favorite. With a new set of pencils and erasers he received on his recent birthday, he is experimenting with blending colors. He is open to other artistic experiences, “I want to try things that are totally different.” One interesting experiment was created with oil pastels and then covered with a watercolor wash which left a totally new texture.

Ezra credits his art teacher, Jessica Novak, who has taught at the school for eight years, for introducing and encouraging him in art. He has also been inspired by his older brother, Asher who is also artistic.

Ezra often studies photographs for reference and inspiration. "You have to start somewhere, and you have to practice," he counseled.

Some of Ezra's art was on display at the recent Wide-Open Art Show at the University of Montana, sponsored by the Montana Federation of Public Employees.

With what Ezra has already mastered at only eight years of age, he is certain to develop into a true professional artist, if that is his hope.