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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 17, 2018



SHELDON ART GALLERIES PRESENT PHOTOGRAPHS BY FORSYTH SCHOOL STUDENTS

ST. LOUIS, MO - The Sheldon Art Galleries celebrates its 20th Anniversary milestone season with *Through the Lens of a Child: Photographs by Students of Forsyth School*, from October 5, 2018 – February 2, 2019 in the AT&T Gallery of Children’s Art, along with several other complementary exhibits focusing on the immigrant experience. **An opening reception is scheduled for Friday, October 5 from 5 – 7 p.m.** and the galleries will be open until 9 p.m. for First Fridays in Grand Center. The Sheldon Art Galleries are open Tuesdays, Noon – 8 p.m.; Wednesdays – Fridays, Noon – 5 p.m.; Saturdays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. and one hour prior to Sheldon performances and during intermission. Admission is free. For more information on exhibitions, visit the galleries’ website at TheSheldon.org.



Through photographs, second grade students of Forsyth School in St. Louis City provide insight into their views of the city’s diverse neighborhoods. In the classroom, students studied and explored the idea of what it means to be a community and what a community needs to thrive and be successful. They examined the migration of immigrants and other cultural groups who moved into these areas and created neighborhoods that provided jobs, healthcare and education. Through videos, music, books and personal narratives, Forsyth students learned about the rich diversity of these populations, neighborhood histories, and heard about

neighborhood inhabitants’ hopes and dreams to create better lives for their families. When they went into the neighborhoods for explorations, students received tours from locals, tried various foods, interacted with those who live and work in the neighborhoods, and took photographs.

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Teachers at Forsyth School encouraged students to explore several of St. Louis's historic neighborhoods through a variety of mediums, so they might truly experience its beauty and diversity. In an effort to create a curriculum that provided their students the ability to immerse themselves in the culture of the neighborhoods, they intentionally designed explorations that draw upon the knowledge of how cultural institutions and other non-traditional learning environments are creating engaging and participatory learning experiences for their visitors.

After working closely with local photographer Nicole Jarrett at the beginning of the year, students were allowed the freedom to take pictures of what they deemed to represent the beauty of the neighborhood. Sometimes these were architectural, sometimes they were signs, plaques or statues, and at times they were of nature. Through these means, both the students and the student chaperones expanded their knowledge and awareness about the neighborhoods, their traditions and the role of immigration in our city and country in the past and in the present, relating these facts to current issues of immigration. The neighborhoods they explored include Downtown St. Louis, Soulard, The Hill, The Ville, University City and Cherokee Street.

From its founding in 1998 to this fall's opening of six new exhibitions, the Sheldon Art Galleries have made their mark on the arts landscape for the past 20 years with some of the most unique, thought-provoking and diverse exhibitions in St. Louis. In this time, the Sheldon Art Galleries has organized or hosted 327 exhibits, and presented countless educational programs for young people and adults, which are offered free to the community.

The not-for-profit Sheldon Art Galleries exhibits works by local, national and international artists in all media. Over 6,000 square feet of the galleries' spaces on the 2nd floor are permanently devoted to rotating exhibits of photography, architecture, music art and history and children's art. A sculpture garden, seen from both the atrium lobby and the connecting glass bridge, features periodic rotations and installations, and the Nancy Spirtas Kranzberg Gallery on the lower level features art of all media. The Sheldon actively supports the work of St. Louis artists in all mediums and features a dedicated gallery with museum-quality exhibits by St. Louis artists, past and present.

Financial Assistance for this project has been provided by the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency. Support is provided by the Regional Arts Commission and the Arts and Education Council.

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Image caption: *The Hill*, December 6, 2017, by Alessandro, 8 x 10 inches, courtesy of the artist and Forsyth School.