

# West Valley View

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## The arts take center stage at EMCC

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staff writer

Visual and performing arts are taking center stage this week at Estrella Mountain Community College.

The college has partnered with the Tolleson Union High School district to host and judge high school students' artwork in the third annual Juried Student Visual Art Show.

The art show also helps kick off the college's fine and performing arts week, which invites the public to celebrate the talents of EMCC art students' through performances, guest artists and exhibits.



View photo by Ray Thomas  
**JIMMY FIKE** of Estrella Mountain Community College's art department places a ribbon on La Joya Community High School ninth-grader Samanta Caguio's piece that won Best of Show and is displayed at the college in Avondale.

### New Japan Cityscape

Previously, the TUHSD art show had been hosted at its district office. This year was the first time student artwork had been displayed at the college.

"I think it's a way to reward the students for their hard work," EMCC art professor Jimmy Fike said. "I imagine that for a lot of them it's the first time they had their work on display in a real exhibition space. It's neat to be able to give them that opportunity."

This year's show also marked the first time student artwork was judged by professors and other art department faculty from the college.

More than 150 individual pieces of art were submitted in the categories of painting, drawing, ceramics, photography and mixed media.

Out of those pieces, La Joya Community High School freshman Samantha Caguioa won best in show for her mixed media piece titled "New Japan Cityscape."

"At first I was really surprised because all of the people in my class were really good. I thought it was just going to get an honorable mention so I was really happy," Samantha said. "It gave me a boost of confidence."

Samantha's piece depicts a melding of both New York and an urban Japanese environment by collaging magazine cut-outs with Japanese advertisements drawn in ink.

One of the characteristics that set the 15-year-old student's work apart from the others was its relevance to contemporary society, Fike said.

"It seemed to show a lot of the hustle and bustle of life, but you also get the sense that the people are kind of alienated from each other," he said. "Even though there's a lot of people compressed in the same space, by being a collage there's also space between them."

### Growing experience

Partnering with EMCC for the art show turned out to be a positive experience for students, according to Gwen Brock, a visual arts teacher at La Joya Community High School.

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"I think it was pretty special for them because it was a college. Some of our kids may be the first people to go to college in their family, so for them to experience something like that in that venue was pretty cool," she said.

Brock added that being able to have their work judged by older art experts and professionals also added to the educational experience.

"I think it really makes them grow as individuals, when they're actually out in the world, seeing the jury process and getting the experience of getting their work acknowledged," she said.

### Continuing the experience

The third annual Juried Student Visual Art Show is on display for the public to view through May 7 on the EMCC campus at Dysart and Thomas roads in Avondale.

The public can also view various other performances, guest artists and exhibits throughout the week as EMCC presents its fine and performing arts week on campus.

From 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. today, in the Plaza Gallery in Komatke Hall, a storytelling concert will feature international speakers from Asia, Africa and the Caribbean sharing their perspectives.

From 6 to 8 p.m. today, in the Community Room in Estrella Hall, blues artist Big Pete Pearson will perform in his "King of Blues" concert.

From 12:30 to 1 p.m. Thursday, in the Community Room in Estrella Hall, the public can participate in a dance performance given by EMCC students and Arizona State University doctorate researcher Julie Cruse. Audience members suggest dance moves to the students that are systematically relayed through a computer program, resulting in a truly unique performance each time.

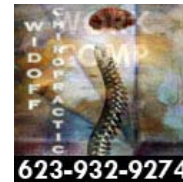
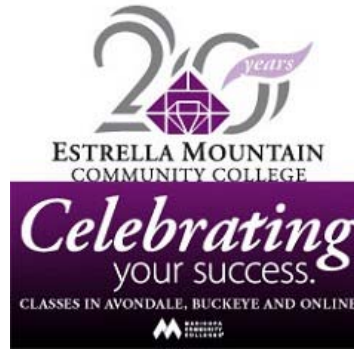
From 6 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, in the Community Room of Estrella Hall, EMCC acting students will present their improv and monologue work from the semester.

From 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Sunday, in the Community Room of Estrella Hall, EMCC's contemporary, social Latin and modern jazz dance students will perform a variety of numbers.

The public can also view the "Pixels and Pens" photography and poetry student collection all week in the library in Estrella Hall.

For information on EMCC's art week or the TUSD art show, visit [www.estrellamountain.edu](http://www.estrellamountain.edu).

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