



## The art of child care

Move over Picasso. Step aside Van Gogh.  
These scribbles and splatters are state of the art.

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Staff Reporter

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Instructor Tianna Morris,  
Liam Rowley, Taylor Robinson,  
artist Karen Lorena Parker and  
Lola Squarci put the finishing touches  
on a piece for next Saturday's art  
auction fundraiser for the  
Society of Richmond  
Children's Centres.

A fundraising auction next week will feature artworks from some of the brightest young minds in the city—infants and toddlers.

Alongside artwork from professional local artists like Karen Lorena Parker, Rudi Van Den Akker and Robert Lenton will be masterpieces created by children enrolled in programs at the Society of Richmond Children's Centres.

"We wanted to really have something that the whole society could participate in—the children, the staff, the parents—to make it a part of the life of the society," said society manager Nicky Byres.

Parker, a Burkeville painter, worked with the children and teachers to give them inspiration to produce appealing artwork that would fetch a price at the June 9 auction.

The star of the show is *A Starry Night*, a Van Gogh inspired painting made by a team of junior crafters. It will likely fetch a high price.

"I've had parents write me blank cheques for it," said Byres. "I think it's going to go for hundreds of dollars."

The majority of the art pieces—framed, on canvas and sculptures—were created by children. There are approximately 40 pieces offered in a silent auction and another eight in a live auction.

Byres said in the society's 12 years, it has never embarked on a major fundraising project. But it's found an increasing need to fundraise for some items to offer the children. So a group of parents stepped up and planned the auction.

Children of all ages at the society's three child

care centres (a fourth location is breaking ground in Hamilton), which serve 150 families, got involved. Tiny infants mostly worked on the backgrounds while Kindergartners filled in the details.

"We've just been so amazed at what young children have produced for the art auction, it's just been wonderful. And the kids are very excited about it, and for me that's really key, is that they have some validation of their own work."

Parker, whose one-year-old son Kai attends Bowling Green child care centre, donated a painting called *Tuscany Valley*.

She's impressed with the children's work and the fact they're developing new skills along the way.

Said Parker: "Art is just as valuable and as reading and writing, it's another skill."

### A Starry Night

- Art auction fundraiser for the Society of Richmond Children's Centres
- 7 to 10 p.m. Saturday, June 9 at the Best Western Richmond Inn, 7551 Westminster Hwy.
- Wine-tasting, entertainment from the Starry Night Trio and door prizes
- Tickets, \$10, available at 604-214-3490 and at the door
- Proceeds go directly to enhancing the visual and creative arts programs at society's three child care centres
- Donations of artwork welcome

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