



November 10, 2008

Dear Educator:

Your Art Here (YAH), an Indiana-based community arts organization, would like to announce Billboard Generation VII, our seventh annual youth call for student artwork to be displayed on billboards in Bloomington and Indianapolis in celebration of National Youth Art Month. Since August 2002, Your Art Here has exhibited 38 youth art billboards.

This year, Your Art Here is asking for entries from your students that address the topic: **Sustainability: Living in Balance**. This year's topic is inspired increased attention, both media and civic, given to the spectrum of sustainability topics, from global warming (Al Gore's *Inconvenient Truth*) to the discussion of alternative and renewable energy (2008 presidential candidates crafting and debating new energy plans), from "green development" of our built environments (U.S. Green Building Council) to the protection of natural environments, ecosystems and farmlands (Environmental Protection Agency).

This topic is wide-ranging and therefore suitable for adaptation by students at the various grade levels. K-2 students can explore topics like recycling and pollution as exemplified by Dr. Seuss' classic, *The Lorax*; 3-5 students can explore issues that impact deforestation and water supplies/ecosystems; 6-8 students can explore alternative energies and conservation; and 9-12 can explore topics like urban development and transportation. Through visual expression, kids will be able to explore sustainability issues that affect them at a personal and community level. The topic is meant to encourage reflection on their role and the role of the greater community in achieving a balance with our natural environment. Lastly, we will encourage parents and teachers **to submit collaborative as opposed to individual pieces** to reinforce the notions of dialogue, consensus and problem solving through visual means as a community. Collaborative submissions may also lead to additional explorations of a more sustainable approach to making art.

To ensure that this project is an easy, valuable and fun learning experience for your classes, we have put together a packet of information about Billboard Generation VII. The packet includes a poster, entry forms, artwork guidelines, additional information about the project, and optional teaching guides that give historical and artistic background about the topic. In order to receive one of these packets please email mail@yourartthere.org. You may also download the entire packet from our website at www.yourartthere.org.

All art must be postmarked no later than January 26, 2009 in order to be included in the contest. Because of increasing number of submissions over the years, the accompanying gallery exhibition will be of the winning pieces and honorable mentions. Entries should be mailed to Your Art Here, c/o BBG VII, 1419 S. Washington Street, Bloomington, Indiana 47401. We look forward to receiving your students' billboard artwork. And, don't forget to visit our web site for general updates and upcoming events related to Billboard Generation VII.

Sincerely,

Your Art Here