

Inspired By Whiskers and Ruffs Student Exhibition

Call For Entries



CALL FOR ENTRIES

The [Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields](https://discovernewfields.org) invites Kindergarten through 12th grade teachers to share their students' original works of art inspired by Portraiture in the IMA's permanent collection. More information about the exhibition is available at discovernewfields.org. Selected student artwork will be displayed in the Inspired By hallway.

Artwork Caption: George Gower (British, 1530–1596), *Lady Philippa Coningsby*, 1578, oil on panel, 37 x 27-5/8 in. (panel); approximately 47-1/2 x 33 x 3 in. (framed). Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields, James E. Roberts Fund, 56.107.

THEME

Historically, portraiture established identity, power, and legacy – serving as a visual record of history and social status. Modern portraiture allows for more storytelling and the challenging of societal narratives.

From George Gower to Rembrandt van Rijn, Amedeo Modigliani to Andy Warhol, Hugh M. Poe to Roberto Lugo, the IMA's collection of portraits offers a variety of options for inspiration.

By taking historic portraits and replacing the subject with an animal, student artists are given the opportunity to celebrate their identity, preserve a beloved animal's legacy, challenge stereotypes, and give life to unsung narratives.

Curriculum Connections:

Social Emotional Learning:

- Have students select an animal they feel represents their identity or personality.
- Have students select their favorite animal or a beloved pet

Science/Natural History

- Connect this competition to a unit on endangered animals or animals native to Indiana.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Participating teachers must submit work as outlined below. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact Bethany TestaAvila at btestaavila@discovernewfields.org.

Digital Submission Due Date

Friday, October 23rd, 2026

Eligibility

Open to all students in Indiana, Kindergarten-12th grade.

Original Works of Art

Students must create original and individual works of art. No group entries will be accepted.

Required Dimensions

Please use 11x14" Bristol board or similar acid free paper. Works may be either horizontally or vertically oriented. DO NOT frame the artwork. Framing will be handled by Newfields.

Accepted Media

Only 2-D work will be accepted for display in the featured gallery. Please use standard 2-D media such as paint, paper, gouache, ink, charcoal, marker, pencil, collage, photography, or digital media.

Grade Level Categories

Works may be submitted in one of four age/grade level categories

- K-2nd grade
- 3rd-5th grade
- 6th-8th grade
- 9th-12th grade

Submission Limit

Please limit submission to four works **per age group, per school**.

For example, an elementary art teacher, who teaches at two different K-5th grade schools may submit four works from each grade level category for each school.

School 1	School 2
K-2 nd grade: 4 works	K-2 nd grade: 4 works
3 rd -5 th grade: 4 works	3 rd -5 th grade: 4 works

SUBMISSION PROCESS

All entries are to be submitted digitally for jury to review. The original works can be photographed or scanned, and submitted as slides in a PowerPoint file to Bethany TestaAvila at btestaavila@discovernewfields.org.

The first slide of the Submissions PowerPoint should include the following:

- Teacher name
- Teacher email address
- Teacher phone number
- School name
- School address

Each student work should be submitted as a slide. In the notes section for each slide, include the following:

- Student's name
- Student's grade
- Title of the Student artwork
- Title and artist of inspiration portrait
- Student artist statement, describing how the theme inspired their work (not to exceed 35 words)
- Dimensions of artwork

Along with the power point file, teachers should attach a signed Teacher's Consent Form (found at the end of this document) to their submission email.

SELECTION PROCESS

The Jury

A jury of arts educators and museum professionals will select the works for inclusion in the exhibition.

Judging Criteria

Student work will be divided into four age groups: K-2nd grade, 3rd-5th grade, 6th-8th grade, and 9th-12th grade.

Judges will consider the following categories:

- Interpretation and clarity of connection to theme
- Creativity and originality
- Quality of artistic composition
- Quality of artistic technique
- Overall impression of work

A score of 1-4 will be assigned to each work; 1=beginning understanding for age group; 2=expected understanding for age group; 3=advanced understanding for age group; 4=exemplary understanding for age group

NOTIFICATION PROCESS

If Selected

Teachers of the selected winners will be notified by Friday, October 30th, 2026 and will be responsible for bringing or mailing in the original works to the IMA at Newfields along with Student Consent forms (found at the end of this document) no later than Friday, November 20th, 2026.

If a selected original work is not received by that date, the work will be dismissed from the selection process and an alternate will be selected to fill its place.

****If your school will be on break, please provide an email address and phone number where you can be reached during that time.****

Selected artists will receive a complimentary family membership to Newfields.

Selected work will be on view from Tuesday, December 8th, 2026 through Sunday, May 9th, 2027.

Labels for Artwork

Newfields staff will create labels for the selected works. Please ensure you submit artwork titles and student artist statements with each artwork. These play a big role in the jurying process.

Delivering Your Artwork

Instructions for bringing the original works to IMA for installation will be emailed to the teachers of selected winners.

TIMELINE

Submissions Deadline	Friday, October 23, 2026 at 5 pm
Jurying of Work	Monday, October 26, 2026 through Thursday, October 29, 2026
Selection Notification	Friday, October 30, 2026
Selected Works Delivered to Newfields	Received no later than: Friday, November 20, 2026
Claiming Works at Newfields	By appointment or by mail: Tuesday, May 11, 2027-Friday, May 21, 2026

BE INSPIRED!

Click the link below to view a list of works in the IMA collection that represent the many ways artists have made portraits.

https://collections.discovernewfields.org/search?showOnly=on_view&searchTerm=portrait§ion=artworks

If you would like to bring your class on a field trip to Newfields to view portraits in person, please visit <https://discovernewfields.org/education/field-trips>.

QUESTIONS?

Send an email to Bethany TestaAvila at btestaavila@discovernewfields.org.

**Inspired by Whiskers and Ruffs Student Exhibition
TEACHER CONSENT FORM**

Teacher Name:

School Name:

Titles of Student Works:

I _____ on this date: _____
hereby give permission for my students' work(s) to be on display at IMA as well as on the Newfields web page, publications, and newsletters for advocacy purposes. Due to space restraints and other limitations, Newfields may crop or alter the work on its web site or marketing materials. Newfields will provide all reasonable accommodations to prevent damage to the Artwork. If Newfields determines that the Artwork presents an imminent hazard to the public, Newfields' staff, or property, Newfields may authorize the removal of the Artwork. Newfields is not responsible for any loss, theft, or damage to the Artwork during transit or while on the premises of Newfields.

Inspired by Whiskers and Ruffs Student Exhibition
STUDENT CONSENT FORM

Teacher Name:

School Name:

Student Name:

Parent/Guardian Name:

Titles of Student Work:

I _____ on this date: _____ hereby give permission for my artwork to be on display at IMA as well as on the Newfields web page, publications, and newsletters. Due to space restraints and other limitations, Newfields may crop or alter the artwork on its web site or marketing materials. Newfields will provide all reasonable accommodations to prevent damage to the Artwork. If Newfields determines that the Artwork presents an imminent hazard to the public, Newfields' staff, or property, Newfields may authorize the removal of the Artwork. Newfields is not responsible for any loss, theft, or damage to the Artwork during transit or while on the premises of Newfields.

Parent/Guardian Signature (If artist is under 18 years of age):

_____ date: _____

Parent/Guardian Email:
