



Media Stories

Adam Gayer

Artist



Young Fort Wayne Artist Debuts at Art Fair

June 28, 2006

Adam Gayer shows one of his paintings at the Covington Art Fair Sunday. Adam Gayer shows one of his paintings at the Covington Art Fair Sunday.

(Ft. Wayne - WANE) One new artist at the 11th annual Covington Art Fair was drawing attention, and it wasn't just because of his paintings. Adam Gayer is just 12 years old, but one would never be able to tell it just by looking at his work.

"You'd be surprised when you see his art; you'd think he'd been doing this for years," Hilary Goodman, the art show coordinator said.

Around 150 local artists applied to be in the art show, but only 75 actually get to set-up tents to show and sell their art pieces. And the selection of art was vast; it included pottery, clothes, metals, jewelry, photography, leather, and oil, acrylic and watercolor paintings. A three-person jury decided who would be selected to come to the fair and was immediately impressed with Adam's work.

"When they saw his art they thought, 'Wow, this is great,' but when they found out he was 12, that was even more of a reason to bring him out," Goodman said.

This is the first art show Adam has ever entered.

"I said let's just enter your stuff and we'll see what happens," Kelly Gayer, Adam's father said.

Adam started drawing when he was around four and began painting when he was seven. But, Kelly said they've known Adam would be talented for a long time.

"He used to line candles up by color in his crib, so we knew early on that he had something there," Kelly said. "When he was five he drew a picture of our kitchen and I looked at it and said to my wife, 'Oh my gosh! He understands perspective.'"

At 12, Adam is the youngest person to ever be in the Covington Art Fair.

"It feels good to be the only kid," Adam said. "A lot of people have said wow when they saw my paintings."

Adam also goes to a private art school to help hone his natural abilities.

"Right now he's trying to develop his own style and his own brushstroke and his own look," Kelly said. "If art becomes his career who knows. Right now it's just fun."

Kelly graduated from art school and works in advertising, and as father and fellow artist, he's definitely proud of Adam.

"This is a great Father's Day present. I've got my 'Greatest Dad' Father's Day hat on and it's been a lot of fun. I'm very proud," Kelly said.

Adam's not sure what his future holds, but he knows he's not putting down the paintbrush anytime soon.

"If I'm not painting forever I'll do something with art, but I have a gift for painting," Adam.

And it's a gift that's paying off. Adam sold almost all of the around 30 original paintings that he brought to the show, and sold around 10 of the 51 prints he made. Most of the money Adam made at the art show is going to his college fund.

"He had a good business lesson about how to save for college and how to pay for supplies and that there's preparation for a show and it's not just showing up and selling it," Kelly said.

But, Adam had a lot of fun along the way and hopes to be back in the Covington Art Fair next year.





A picture-perfect business

June 25, 2006, Fort Wayne, IN

Adam Gayer, 12, sold about 30 paintings at the Covington Art Fair June 17 and 18. Twelve-year-old painter Adam Gayer learned a tough lesson after his first art show: The government always takes its share.

“What is this tax?” he said to his father after reviewing a receipt for frames, shrink wrap and other supplies that required reimbursement. The charges included Indiana’s 6-percent sales tax.

Adam sold more than 30 pieces, including prints and original paintings, during the Covington Art Show earlier this month. That equated to nearly \$3,000 - not bad for a 12-year-old.

A hobby that was confined to weekly art classes and his room became more like a real job as Adam prepared to exhibit and sell his work. He and his father, Kelly Gayer, spent more than 30 hours in the weeks leading up to the art fair making, matting, wrapping, framing and pricing prints and original paintings.

“Before the show, it felt like work. I don’t normally do that,” Adam said. “It wasn’t like hard work. It was fun.”

The Covington Art Fair was Adam’s first art show. It also was his father’s first show. Although Kelly had attended art school and now works as an art director and graphic designer, he had never before sold paintings.

After last year’s Covington Art Fair, Kelly asked organizers if an 11-year-old could exhibit there. Adam, like all 200 applicants who wanted to sell at the show, had to submit his work to a selection jury. His application was one of 75 approved.

“I didn’t think they’d let me (sell at the show) because I was a kid,” Adam said.

Once he was accepted, Adam had to build a body of work that

was available for sale. He spent a month or two completing more paintings to be sold at the show and attended art classes twice a week instead of once. At peak production, he was turning out a painting a week.

Most of Adam’s work is architectural, depicting European sites and other interesting buildings and landscapes. He usually takes a photo and creates a painting based on it.

After settling on eight paintings they thought would sell, Adam and his father set to making prints. They went to a professional photographer who took high-resolution images of each painting. Those photographs were enlarged and printed on heavy paper, then wrapped in plastic.

But the toughest part, both agreed, was pricing each of the pieces. Neither had ever priced a painting or print before. Kelly and Adam said they used their own production and supply costs to set a price and then added some value for original works and signed prints. They decided to sell the signed 16-by-20-inch prints for \$125 each. Original works went for \$300 to \$350 each.

Adam admitted he was nervous when he arrived at the show and potential buyers began asking him questions.

“But then all the people started buying things and then I was happy,” he said.

Some patrons initially did not recognize Adam as the artist.

“I noticed I had to get out of the booth because they would think it was me,” Kelly said.

About \$600 of the \$3,000 Adam earned paid for supplies and sales taxes. A big portion of the remainder will go to his college fund, and some will go to charity.

Adam also paid his 14-year-old brother, Noah, \$100 for helping set up and tear down the booth and doing other odd jobs throughout the weekend.

“Some was ‘mad money’ we used for a new easel,” Kelly said. “(The show) was a really nice surprise. We went into it not expecting anything.”

Adam plans to exhibit at the show next year if he is allowed. In the meantime, he has several commissioned works he is going to produce. Some came from the show and others are from relatives.

Adam still paints for enjoyment and will continue to add to his studio. Kelly is going to take the carpeting out around his easel and put in wood flooring. He will also likely purchase more books with photos of Italy and other parts of Europe to inspire his son.

“I don’t want to be doing computer stuff,” Adam said of his future. “I want to be doing something with painting and stuff.”



WILX.COM

East Lansing Art Fest Preparations

May 18, 2007

Reporter: Lauren Zakalik

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Transforming downtown East Lansing into an art mecca happens, well, overnight.

“Saturday morning we’ll close the streets at 3 a.m., and the artists can set up anywhere from 5 to 9 a.m.,” says East Lansing Arts Program Coordinator Sharon Radtke.

But with 230 artists, 20 musicians and 12 food vendors scheduled for the East Lansing Art Festival, setting up is no small task. And even though this is the festival’s 44th year, preparing for the event isn’t second nature for everyone.

“We have quite a few new artists,” Radtke says. “One-third of the artists are new.”

Artists like 13-year-old Adam Gayer from Ft. Wayne, Indiana. It’s the young painter’s first time at the festival. He’s also the youngest artist in the 44 year history of the event.

He says the money he makes goes towards his college tuition.

Organizers are expecting about 80,000 to attend throughout the two days.

The festival’s hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. Sunday.

You can find out more about the activities by visiting <http://www.elartfest.com/>

Published May 20, 2007, Lansing State Journal

Painter, 13, dazzles crowd at East Lansing Art Festival

Teen's 'incredible' art seen in 1 of 230 booths at 44th annual event

Derek Wallbank

Adam Gayer made his first appearance at the East Lansing Art Festival Saturday, showing his oil, acrylic and watercolor paintings.

It's quite a feat for any artist who has only been painting for five years, and just one year with oils. Never mind that the Fort Wayne, Ind., native is just 13 years old.

"Some people come by and say 'that's nice,' but then they see my poster with my age and they see me and they freak out," Gayer said.

The teen was one of 238 artists featured at the festival, now in its 44th year.

An estimated 35,000 to 40,000 people attended the festival Saturday, organizers said. Another 30,000 are expected to mill about through booths and byways in downtown East Lansing today.

In addition to paintings, the festival features pottery, sculptures, street performers and food from across the world.

The festival continues today from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"This is much more than an art festival," said Sharon Radtke, Arts Program Coordinator for the city of East Lansing. "This is really a community event."

Prices range from \$5 postcards and \$20 prints to massive works that can run above \$2,000.



"People save up all year just to spend money on things they find here," Radtke said.

Since it's a juried show, artists like Gayer compete to get in. Artists are judged by their peers and organizers said at least as many were turned away as were accepted. Of the 60 painters that applied, 30 got in. Gayer placed 15th. Gayer's tent hosted a constant line at least 10 deep of admirers looking at his paintings, at him, then back at the paintings in disbelief.

"I came to see this and it's absolutely incredible," said Ashley Matelske, 23, of Lansing. "It's so detailed and beautiful - there's not even words to describe it."

Gayer's parents just take the attention in stride. "This has been happening all day," Gayer's father Kelly said. "It's just fun to watch."

Even if you can't tell a Picasso from a pinto bean, there's still a good time in store, organizers said. And best of all, it's free.

The festival features performers on two stages, in genres from rap to Celtic, instrumentalists to country. And if you can't find what you're looking for, you can always head across the street to Michigan State University's north campus, where a nonjuried art show is in progress.

"This has become a tradition that kicks off the summer," Radtke said of the festival.

"I think that's why it's been around for 44 years."



June 12, 2007, WANE TV, Fort Wayne, IN

Young Artist Preps for Chicago Gallery Showing

(Fort Wayne - WANE) Most days you can find Adam Gayer in a corner of his room. Classic rock music will be playing, his door will be closed, and Adam is lost in his imagination, painting another masterpiece.

"I leave my world outside and just come in here to paint," Adam said. "I usually do it for an hour or so at a time."

Adam is only 13-years-old and is already a sought-after artist. He made his debut into the art world last June at the Covington Art Fair. Since then, Adam's been in several art shows and will now be featured in a Chicago gallery for a month.

"It's unbelievable," Adam said. "I am just going and don't really expect anything."

Practically since he could hold a pencil, Adam's been drawing. Drawing then became painting. Adam sells many of his paintings at various shows, but painting is his passion. He started with Tuscany-style pictures, but has expanded his themes to still-life, abstract people and flowers.

"People like everything and it's fun to do more than one thing," Adam said.

The 23 paintings in the Chicago Art Matrix Gallery in the Zhou B Art Center will be priced from \$600-\$1,500. The gallery owner, however, wants to list one painting for \$2,500. That figure leaves Adam speechless.



Adam also just finished an art fair in Michigan where he was the star of the show. He was, as usual, the youngest artist to ever be in the show. His age, and his talent, keep media flocking to him at every show.

"He takes it in stride and he's still just a normal teenager," Adam's mom Lisa Gayer said. "We are so proud of him."

Lisa added that the gallery already wants to book Adam for a showing next year.

All the art fairs helped Adam learn lessons in managing money and running a business, but for Adam, it's really still just about art.

"It's not like this is my professional job," Adam said. "I am just being a kid and having fun."

Most of the money Adam makes goes into a college fund for him. He's not sure what he wants to do yet, but if he's not a professional painter, he said he definitely wants to work in the art field.

