



ARTS, SCHOOLS, VOLUNTEERS IN THE NEWS

Venice Arts Aims to Expand Youth Creativity

As we turn the corner into spring, parents of low-income families have the unprecedented opportunity to get their children involved in the arts.

By **Matt Branham** January 24, 2011

This week, [Venice Arts Gallery](http://venice.patch.com/listings/venice-arts-gallery) (<http://venice.patch.com/listings/venice-arts-gallery>) begins registration to their spring workshops for low-income children.

The organization is aimed at local children as young as six years old. The gallery works with them in an experience of art discovery, a multi-disciplinary view of how art comes together through different processes and stages, beginning with simple drawing and painting. As the students progress, they enter a more in-depth, high-tech production, which can lead all the way up to the age of 18.

"By empowering teens with participant-produced projects, they can tell their own story," gallery manager Elysa Voshell said.

The program focuses on developing knowledge of three aspects of mass media development, photography, film and digital animation.

"It gives them the skills to create a story about the issues that they see with their own eyes, as opposed to an outsider's view," Voshell said.

Established in 1993 as a not-for-profit volunteer program with a mission to "ignite youths' imagination and mentor creativity", the gallery now employs seven full-time staff members and hosts professional exhibits as well as documentary projects, including "Got Caught Up Out There", a collection of photography by homeless women.

The workshop has a one-to-one mentor to student ratio, which gives students the opportunity to have a tofull understanding of the tools and processes of their work, from black and white dark room labs to portfolio development. An experienced lead artist spearheads most of the workshops along with additional mentors to lend a helpful hand.

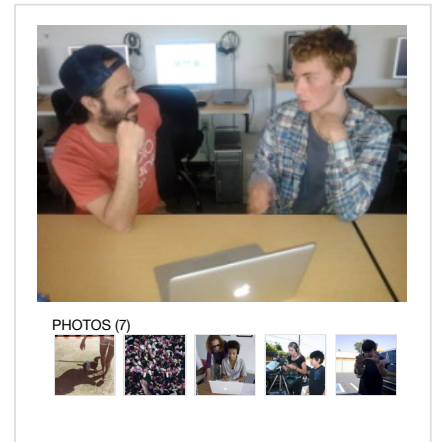
Registration for the workshops began Jan. 22 for returning students. Prospective students are encouraged to sign up this Saturday, Jan. 29 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m at the Vera Davis Center, 610 California Ave.

Since the program prefers such a close ratio of students to mentors, there is limited space of close a dozen students per workshop. There is, however, a waitlist.

To get a better idea of the Venice Arts' energy and environment, visit any of their upcoming shows, including their current exhibit "Off Grid", a collection of collages and sculptures by Peter Louis Bonfitto, which is on display through Feb. 2, 2011.

Visit [Venice Arts](http://venice.patch.com/listings/venice-arts-gallery) (<http://venice.patch.com/listings/venice-arts-gallery>) to get more information or to get involved as a volunteer.

Have you or your children been involved in Venice Arts? [Tell us in the comments.](#)



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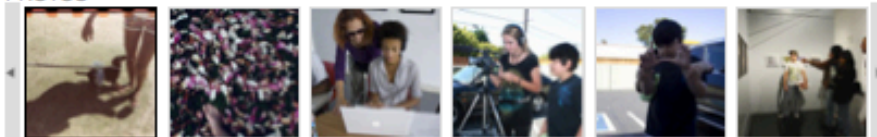
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Genevieve Ward, Age 16, "Tiny Dancer" Credit **Matt Branham**

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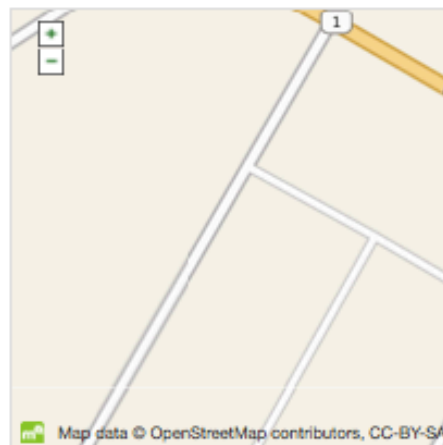


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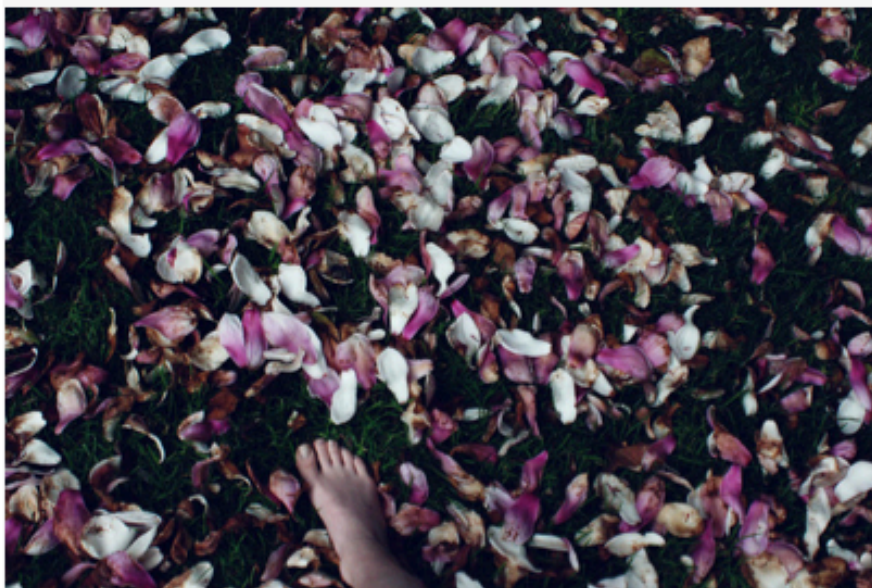
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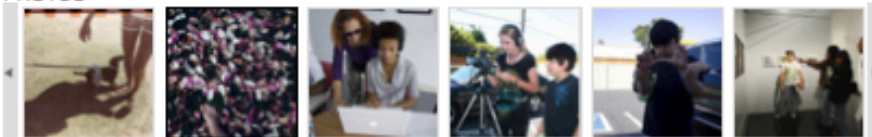
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Kate Squires, age 16, Rose Petals Self Portrait Credit: Matt Branham

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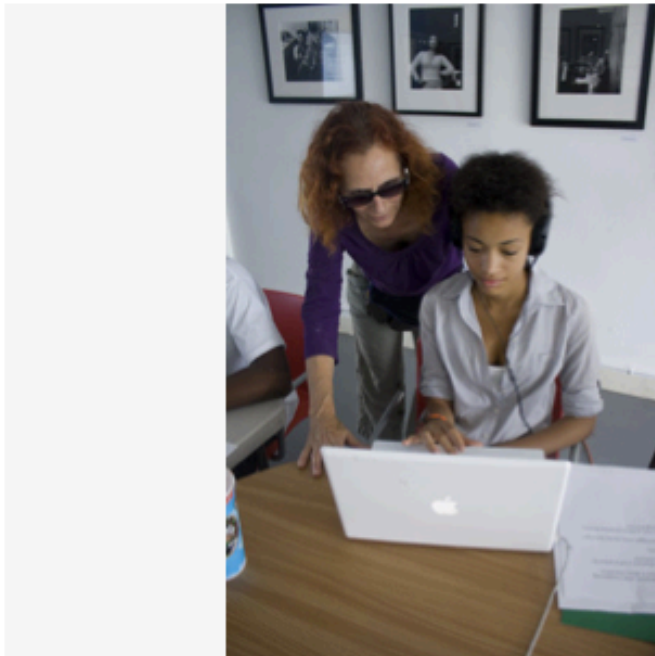
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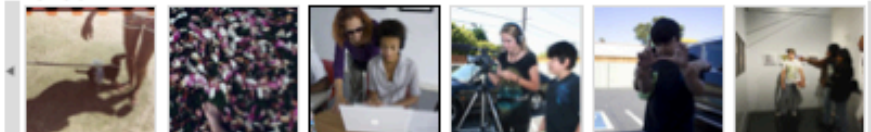
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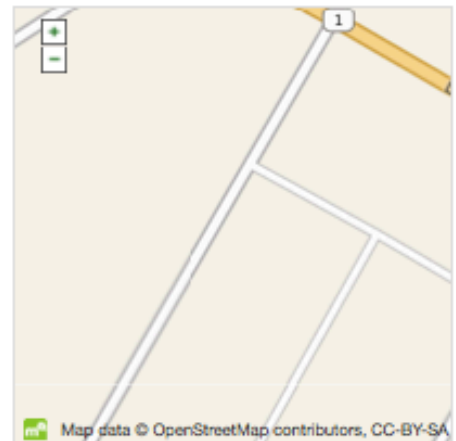


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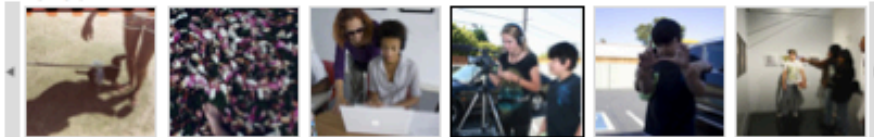
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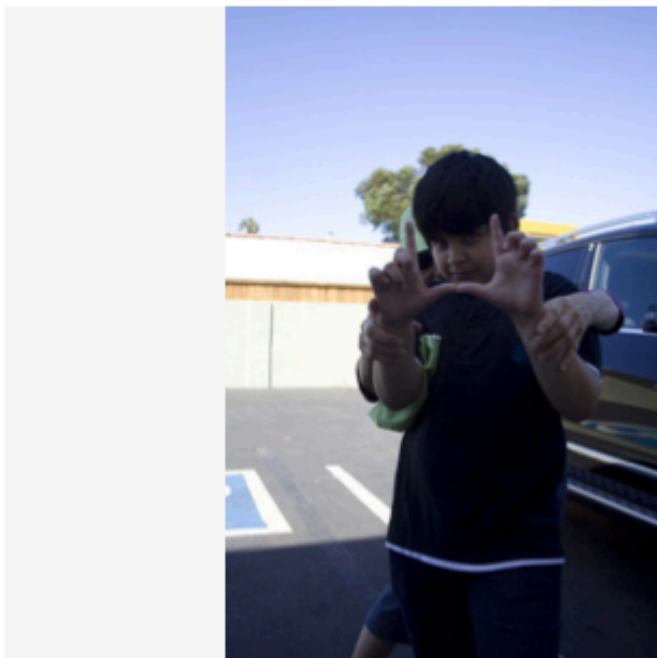
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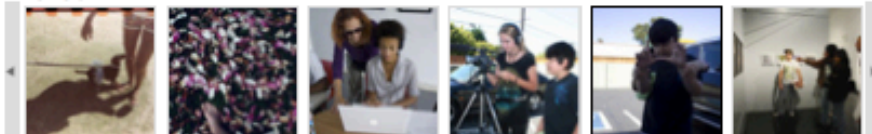
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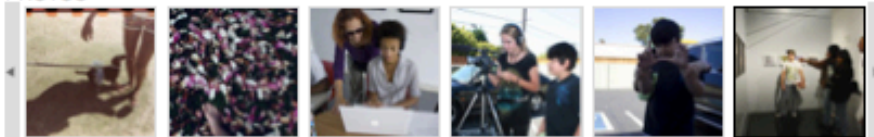
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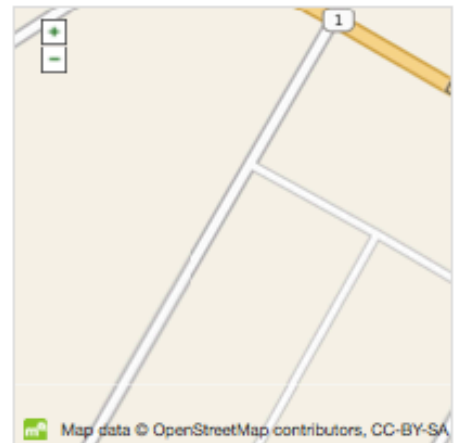


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