



# CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH CITY ARTS COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

March 12, 2026  
Agenda Item No. 6

**TO:** CITY ARTS COMMISSION

**FROM:** Library Services Department  
Melissa Hartson, Library Services Director  
(949) 717-3801, [mhartson@newportbeachca.gov](mailto:mhartson@newportbeachca.gov)

**PREPARED BY:** Rebecca Lightfoot, Library Services Manager

**TITLE:** Cultural Arts Activities – February 2026

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## CENTRAL LIBRARY GALLERY EXHIBITS

Soung-won Park: *Photography*  
February 9, 2026 - April 3, 2026, Central Library



"What are we mourning? Beneath the blossoms of civilization, we walk carrying a dark truth."  
"우리는 무엇을 애도하고 있는가? 문명의 꽃 아래, 검은 진실을 들고 걷는다."

as its main subject, this photograph symbolically looks back at the oil age, raising questions about modern civilization, energy, and collective memory. While this work is presented as a key piece representing the exhibition, it does not define the overall theme of the exhibition. Artist Park Seung-won says, "This exhibition goes beyond simply showcasing images; it aims to raise fundamental questions such as why we take photographs, and when a photograph transcends mere documentation to become a work of art." Having pursued photography for over 50 years, Park began with documentary photography focusing on people, and has expanded his work to include cities, architecture, urban abstraction, and conceptual fine art photography.

His works are praised for quietly but profoundly revealing the passage of time and the delicate relationship between humans and cities. Park Seung-won is a member of the Korea Photographers Association, and has received numerous awards and exhibited his work both domestically and internationally, including the Grand Prize at the Kameoka City Tourism Photography Contest in Kyoto Prefecture, Japan, an

invitation to exhibit at the Korea Asia Forum, an award in the photography category at the Made in California exhibition in Brea City, an award for his black and white work "Tango" at the London International Creative Competition (LICC), and an award in the portrait category at the 7th Fine Art Photography Awards (FAPA).

### Upcoming Installations

#### **2026**

- April 6 - May 29: Dennis Carrie (Historical Figures/Portrait Painting)

#### **CULTURAL ARTS CALENDER OF EVENTS:**

City Arts Commission (CAC) meetings are held at 5 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month.

- **2025-26 CAC Regular Monthly Meetings:**

- March 12, 2026
- April 9, 2026
- May 14, 2026
- June 11, 2026

#### **STUDENT ART EXHIBITION:**

At the February 12, 2026, regular City Arts Commission meeting, prizes were handed out to the winners of the Student Art Exhibition. The Student Art was on display at the Central Library from January 6, 2026, through February 23, 2026.



#### **MAYOR'S EGG RACE:**

City Arts Commissioners are invited to attend the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Mayor's Egg Race on Saturday, March 28, 2026, at the Civic Center Green. The Arts Commission is hosting a Spin Art Booth.

#### **59TH ANNUAL NEWPORT BEACH ART EXHIBITION**

The call for entries for the 59th Annual Newport Beach Art Exhibition will open on Monday, April 6, 2026, and close on Monday, June 15, 2026. Artists can apply by making a free account on [CallforEntry.org](http://CallforEntry.org).

**NOTICING:**

This agenda item has been noticed according to the Brown Act (72 hours in advance of the meeting at which the City Arts Commission considers the item).



NEWS

## Newport Beach Student Art Exhibition enchants Central Library visitors



Ava Rubiano's "Hummingbird Kiss" won the Courage of Creativity, Henri Matisse award and a \$100 gift card in the Newport Beach Cultural Arts Commission's Student Art Exhibition. (Susan Hoffman)

**By Susan Hoffman**

Feb. 13, 2026 5:28 PM PT

Visitors to the Newport Beach Central Library have been admiring works created by local students during the [2025 Student Art Exhibition](#), which will remain on display through Feb. 23.

By its late November deadline, the city’s Cultural Arts Commission had received 103 entries for the exhibition created by students in pre-K through 12th grade, according to Library Services Director Melissa Hartson.

“Entries were comprised of two-dimensional works in painting, drawing and collage,” Hartson said. “Students had the option to include an artist bio to describe their inspiration. During a first-grade class visit to the library, one artist proudly showed classmates her piece hanging in the exhibit.”

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Student artists hold their awards at a meeting of the Newport Beach Cultural Arts Commission Thursday. (Courtesy of the Newport Beach Cultural Arts Commission)

There was plenty of pride to go around, with winners of this year’s competition receiving awards Thursday evening during a meeting of the Newport Beach Cultural Arts Commission.

“I’m so excited I won first place,” squealed 6-year-old Ava Rubiano after receiving her \$100 gift card for her painting titled “Hummingbird’s Kiss.”

“I have some birds and they are cute and that’s how I got the idea,” Ava said. “When it’s drinking the flower it looks like it’s kissing it.”

Her mom, Kristina Rubiano, herself an artist, prepares the acrylic paint for Ava and her identical twin sister, Ella, who also paints. “Ava and Ella have been doing their art since they were 2 years old,” Rubiano said about the family affair. “We have an art-wall at home with all of their paintings on display.”

After Ava won her award, she offered reassuring words to her twin: “Don’t worry, Ella, I’m gonna share this with you, because we’re a team.”

Kyla Chen, a 10-year-old fifth-grader won third place for her piece, “Harmony in Patterns.” In her bio, she wrote: “Hi! I’m Kyla and I love making art and drawing animals. My art has been made into stickers for my school’s Lunar New Year celebration, and my design was picked for our fifth grade Science Camp sweatshirts. I love sharing my art because it makes people smile.”



“Harmony in Patterns” by Kyla Chen captured third place in Newport Beach’s 2025 Student Art Exhibition. It’s on display at the Central Library this month. (Susan Hoffman)

“My Zentangle [Method] deer is a pattern that repeats black and white,” Kyla explained of the intricate style of pattern drawing she employed. “I wanted it to stand out more with black and white bold patterns using black pens.”

“I felt accomplished and excited about doing art work and entering this competition,” said Kyla, who was thinking of purchasing acrylic paints with her new gift card.

Her mother, Carol Chen, said of the library exhibition, “It was fun to see other people’s work of art, very impressive.”

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### Susan Hoffman

Susan Hoffman is a contributor to Times Community News.