

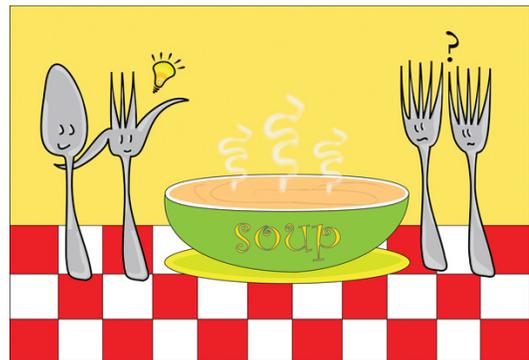
'Embracing Our Differences' exhibit comes to Bradenton

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By MARTY CLEAR — mclear@bradenton.com

For 10 years, "Embracing Our Differences" has been one of the most visible art exhibits in Sarasota. This year, for the first time, the images will also be in Bradenton.

Thirty-nine billboard-sized banners, each one depicting a message about diversity and acceptance, will be on display at the Riverwalk in downtown Bradenton from March 31 to April 29.



"It serves as a cultural event and it serves as an educational opportunity," said Gisele Pintchuck, the associate executive director for Embracing Our Differences.

"We coordinate with the schools and bus children from Sarasota and Manatee to see the exhibit. They learn before they go about what they're going to see, and then later they discuss their reaction to both the art and the message."

Bradenton art lovers will see the same images that are in Sarasota. The images will be reproduced and displayed in groups of three, set up in a triangle design.

"You won't be able to miss it, Pintchuck said. "It will be there 24 hours a day, seven days a week and it will turn your head."

The exhibit in Sarasota will be on display for about two months, from March 31 through June 2. The Bradenton exhibit will coincide with the first of those two months. Then it will move to North Port, also for the first time, for the second month.

"It's really amazing that we're able to bring the exhibit to Bradenton," Pintchuck said. "It costs us about \$50,000 to bring it to Bradenton. We got a major grant from the Selby Foundation that allowed us to do it."

Submissions for the exhibit come from all over the world, Pintchuck said. They come from everyone from kindergarten classes to professional artists.

People who aren't artistically inclined send in quotations about diversity and tolerance, and jurors select some of those and pair them with the artwork.

This year, Pintchuck said, about 4,000 people submitted either artwork or quotations.

"It's a very difficult selection process," she said. "You have the work of a established artist and you have to judge that against the work of a 10-year-old who's showing his feelings about bullying, for example. It's the message that matters."

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Read more here: <http://www.bradenton.com/2013/02/21/4402399/embracing-our-differences-exhibit.html#storylink=cpy>