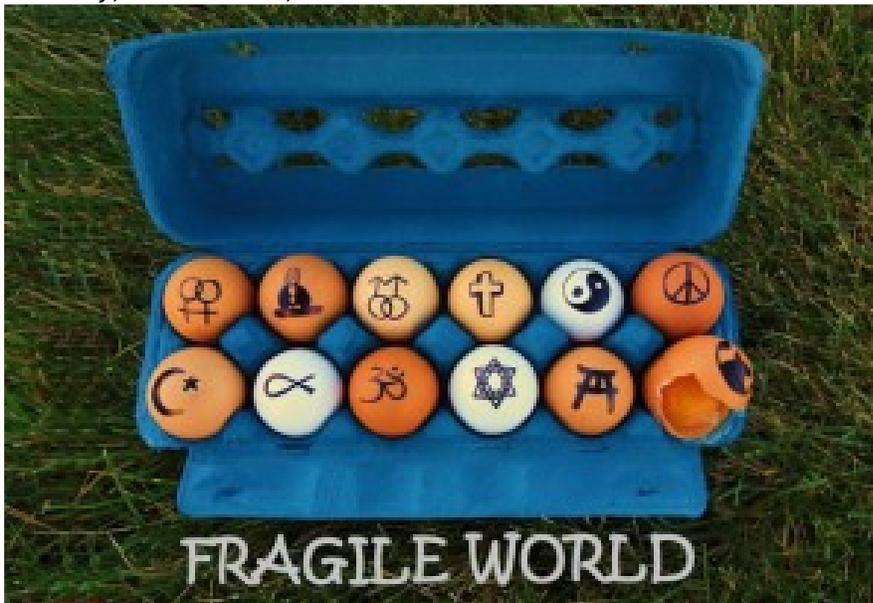


## “Embracing Our Differences” exhibition seeks submissions

By [Marty Fugate](#), Herald-Tribune  
Thursday, December 15, 2011



"Fragile World" -- from the 2011 exhibit. COURTESY PHOTO.

“What’s so funny about peace, love and understanding?” Well, to answer Elvis Costello’s eternal question, nothing. Sarasota takes it seriously — and [Embracing Our Differences](#) is proof. That’s the title of our annual, outdoor, juried art exhibit celebrating diversity. Every year, Island Park blossoms with art and words to bring a smile to Elvis Costello’s face.

The images? The art on display is created by local, national and international artists, including student artists from area public and private schools.

The words? They’re *your* words — selected from quotations promoting tolerance sent in by the public. (There’s a 20 word limit. It’s about quotations, not sermons.) Some idea starters ...

*What does embracing our differences mean to you?*

*What does diversity mean to you?*

*Have you ever been bullied? What did it feel like?*

*Have you ever witnessed someone else being bullied?*

*What did it feel like?*

*What are you looking for in a best friend?*

*What would a perfect world look like to you?*

*If you could change the world, what would you do to make it better?*

It gives you something to think about, but don't think too long. Grace Carlson, the publicity and marketing representative, points out the time limit.

"Between now and January 9, we're asking the community to submit any potential artwork or quotations they want us to consider for this year's exhibit," she says. "Dig deep in your heart and creativity and speak to the subject of tolerance."

Carlson adds that, "Above all, what we want is honesty and sincerity. We're looking for *your* statements — it doesn't have to be rainbows and butterflies. Feel free to be dark. I met a young artist at the Atomic Holiday Bazaar whose work had a Tim Burton quality. He assumed that's not what we're looking for. I told him to go for it!"