

## Last Week of Embracing Our Differences 2018 Outdoor Art Exhibit

15th annual outdoor exhibit celebrating diversity features 45 billboard-sized works of art on display at Sarasota's Island Park until June 1

By [Kelly Fores](#), Patch Mayor | May 24, 2018 10:36 am ET



**Photos:** *Best in Show - Adult, "Choice" by Larisa Okhotna, Ukraine. Best in Show - Student, "The New Rosie the Riveter" by Sarasota Military Academy Prep 8th grader Elisa Uzcategui.*

Since 2004, [Embracing Our Differences](#) has used the power of art and prose to promote diversity. One way it accomplishes this is through its annual, juried international outdoor art exhibition consisting of 45 billboard-sized works of art, each accompanied by an inspirational quote. The 2018 exhibit will be on display at Sarasota's Island Park until June 1.

Awards are given for "Best in Show - Adult," "Best in Show - Student," and "People's Choice" categories, with the last chosen by visitors to the exhibit.

Adult winners each receive \$1,000; students receive \$1,000 to be directed to their school's art program.

## **2018 ART WINNERS**

**The Best in Show - Adult** winner for art is "**Choice**" by **Larisa Okhotna from Svitlovodsk, Ukraine**. Her work shows a tiny flower, struggling to survive in arid earth. On one side, a hand attempts to water it; on the other side, a foot is about to stomp on it. The artist says the work is an attempt to show "how people react differently to situations and to the world. One person is trying to destroy the flower; the other trying to nourish it. Every day, we have a choice to recognize and nurture the beauty of nature or to ignore or destroy it."

**Elisa Uzcategui, an 8th-grade student at Sarasota Military Academy Prep**, received the **Best-in-Show Student** award for her work, "The New Rosie the Riveter." Rosie the Riveter is a cultural icon of World War II symbolizing women who worked in factories and shipyards for the war effort. Uzcategui's Rosie is brown-skinned—a change from the way she is usually represented. "Rosie is a symbol of American feminism," says Uzcategui. "I wanted to show the new Rosie in a different light, so I made Rosie multiracial. My new Rosie represents the strength of many races."

## **2018 QUOTE WINNER**

The award for the **Best in Show inspirational quote** was given to **Hayley Peace, a 6th-grade student at Pine View School** in Osprey. Her quote is: "If your heart opens, doors will too."

Other quotes selected for the 2018 exhibition include:

- "Sometimes being the bystander can be just as bad as being the bully" (Haylie Smith, 7th grade, Sarasota Middle School)
- "Flags show where we come from; actions show who we are" (Seth Morano, 11th grade, Booker High School)
- "Hatred is a cage, kindness is the key" (Dorian Carter, 6th grade, Pine View School)
- "I'd rather go alone than follow a group of people going the wrong way" (Gianna Nicora, 7th grade)
- "I'm proud being me and celebrating you being you" (Nkoyo Uche-Nwosu, Lagos, Nigeria)