

My name is Liza Torrence and I am a senior attending Beaver Area High School. I have taken art classes from Carol Begley for 7 years, and will soon be graduating. I would like to take this moment to share with you a few of my thoughts and experiences from my vessel of knowledge.

First of all, the theme of our art show this year, which you all know, is vessels. While unsure what could possibly outdo our “food for thought” theme from last year, Carol of course brilliantly stumbled upon “vessels.” I was at first uncertain about having this as a theme, but I eventually warmed up to the idea, realizing it is extremely open to interpretation. By definition, a vessel is a hollow or concave utensil, as a cup, bowl, pitcher, or vase, used for holding liquids or other contents. Many vessels are drawn, pasteled, and painted in the art studio, being that bottles are a primary step to becoming a great artist. Other vessels that you have probably seen are the bowls that hold the fruit we draw, paint tubes, glasses, or even shoes. As I pondered this simple but indistinctly complex object I came to the conclusion that a vessel serves for multiple purposes. First and foremost is it a storage device. A vessel can be a container that preserves something, a piece of furniture used for organizing, or even a box to fill with cherished findings. Overall a vessel serves as a support structure and is symbolic for safety. Support structures are existent in every one’s life. This town that we all live in has served as a support structure for us as we’ve grown securely. Each of our families has been a support structure to us in that they have supplied everything and more needed to live and succeed while maturing. As I have been exposed to obstacles in my life thus far, I have undoubtedly overcome and learned from them. This would not have been possible without all of the support in which I have had. However, as we have matured into young adults our vessel of support has been breaking. Soon enough

we will be released into a life of independence where we must live on our own as adults. As scary as it sounds to be living with little support, our shattered vessels will only lead us to new encounters and enlightening experiences. We each will learn to adapt in these new worlds, no matter how far or vastly populated they may be. We will use the tools we've been given throughout our lives to accomplish this scary transition. Along with our lack of support we will sadly be lacking the artistic safety net that we flock to each and every Tuesday night.

Carol has been a strong vessel towards me and the others throughout our years of taking classes. Her quaint studio placed in the heavens of Beaver has been an enjoyable environment beginning with my first sketch and useful instruction regarding the planes of light. Each week acted as a new canvas to learn and express my interest in color, texture, composition, design and creativity. Each conversation was valued, each of Carol's daily insights were thought provoking, and each painting is a memory of the studio and a product of growth. Slowly, however, she has also broken her tightly wound support towards us as artists. Our recent time at the studio was incredibly independent compared to when we first began. Before, Carol would always be near by for corrections and suggestions, when now, we have learned to make our own choices from the knowledge we have been given. However, Carol will always keep an eye on her students whether they realize it or not. Because she has gradually broken this vessel of support she provided, we can now independently paint without feeling anxiety or uncertainty. Remember, start with your tent, add shapes, mix hues, local color etc etc. (this is what constantly goes through my head now). And remember Becca, the dark side is on the LEFT. It's always a comfort to

know that we are welcome in the studio any time. We WILL take our art wherever we go, whether it will be used as a hobby, an outlet, a side job, or a career path, it will be utilized.

So take the time today, if you haven't already, to explore the masterpieces that were created by those who love to express their artistic interest. And keep in mind that each handcrafted two-dimensional piece of art began as an idea-- an image in a child's vessel of knowledge that progressed into a picture representing a three-dimensional figment of life. Lastly, I would like to personally thank Carol for touching my life in an absolutely positive light, and for putting up with me (as well as the rest of the seniors) over the span of our classes at the studio. THANK YOU