

WINNING STRATEGIES

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There's still time to view the art exhibits at the Montclair Art Museum

'STRUGGLES OF MANKIND'

Over the past six months, Jason Towns has worked diligently with the Montclair Art Museum's education staff to curate an exhibition of reproduced images he selected from the Museum's Permanent Collection. The exhibition, titled "Struggles of Mankind," will be on view through Sept. 17, in the museum's LeBrun Library Gallery. Towns, who curated the exhibition, is a member of Opportunity Project Inc., a clubhouse for adults with brain injuries, located in Millburn.

Towns conducted his research in the LeBrun Library, identified the theme "The Struggles of Mankind," and found numerous artworks that illustrated the trials of mankind both universally and personally. The show is divided into four sections, illustrating "Man's Battles with Nature," "Internal Emotions," "Social and Political Struggles," and ending with hope provided by "Mankind's Enduring Spirit."

Towns followed the steps a music curator takes in organizing an exhibition, including research, honing the thematic concept, selecting and editing images, writing labels and descriptive text, working with the Communications Department on publicity efforts, and creating a floor plan for the installation.

Towns has always had a love of fine arts. Before his brain injury, he attended Montclair State University where he majored in fine arts. But he had to leave the university before completing his final 18 credits for his bachelor of arts degree.

Over the past three years, the Montclair Art Museum has not only welcomed Towns as one of their volunteers, but also developed a collaboration with Opportunity Project Inc. and has inspired Towns to believe in himself once again after suffering the traumatic effects of brain injury.

Towns has proven that art has no boundaries and that the art treasures of the Montclair Art Museum are truly accessible to all disability groups thanks to Twig Johnson, the curator of Native American Art, and Gary Schneider, director of education at the museum, who recognized Towns' talents and abilities. As a result of their efforts, Towns

has since returned to Montclair State University and is currently taking courses to finish his degree.

The Montclair Art Museum is located at 3 South Mountain Ave. For more information on the exhibitions, call 973-746-5555.