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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, contact:

Jessica Campbell, Education Coordinator

(814) 472-3920

Travis Mearns, Public Relations Coordinator

(724) 238-6015

SAMA MUSEUMS TO DISPLAY STUDENT ARTWORK

Loretto – The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art will continue its tradition of celebrating the area’s talented young artists with the return of *Artists of the 21st Century*, the Museum’s twentieth annual student art exhibition. More than 240 student-created works will be featured in the dual exhibition. *Artists of the 21st Century* will be on view at SAMA-Loretto from February 2 through April 7 and at SAMA-Ligonier Valley from February 16 through April 22.

Held in conjunction with National Youth Art Month and the State Arts-in-Education Month, the exhibition is open to schools that participate in SAMA’s Arts-in-Education or Artist-in-Residence program. Through the programs, SAMA educators and professional artists travel to public and parochial schools to provide lessons designed to enhance students’ understanding of art creation, technique, history, criticism and aesthetics. SAMA’s award-winning education initiative is the largest of its kind in the Commonwealth.

Twelve districts and 31 schools are participating in the exhibition, offering a total of 243 works. Each district is permitted to submit up to 20 individual projects and two group projects. Schools in Westmoreland and Fayette counties will be exhibited at SAMA-Ligonier Valley, while schools in Bedford, Blair, Cambria and Somerset counties will be featured in the Loretto exhibition.

Each Museum will hold an opening reception to celebrate the exhibition and the region’s student artists. The SAMA-Loretto reception will be held from 1 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, February 24. SAMA-Ligonier Valley’s reception is scheduled for 1 to 4 p.m. on Sunday, March 4. Please note that parking for the Ligonier Valley reception is available at Fort Ligonier only, with free shuttles running to and from the Museum. The receptions are open to the public, but the Museum suggests a donation of \$1 per person in support of the exhibition.

“It’s SAMA’s honor and privilege to host an exhibition of this magnitude,” said Education Coordinator Jessica Campbell. “We value our partnerships with our local school districts and we could not host an exhibition without their support. Congratulations to the artists and the teachers that help their students shine.”

Schools represented in the Loretto exhibition include: Altoona Area High School and Junior High; Bishop Guilfoyle High School; Blacklick Valley Junior-Senior High School; Cambria Elementary School; Cambria Heights Elementary and High schools; Forest Hills Elementary, Junior and Senior High schools; Greater Johnstown Elementary School; Jackson Elementary; Penn Cambria Primary, Middle and High schools; Portage Area Elementary School; and Saint Michael School.

Schools participating in the SAMA-Ligonier Valley exhibition include: Baggaley Elementary School; Fort Allen Elementary; Greater Latrobe Junior and Senior High schools; Harrold Middle School; Hempfield Area Senior High School; Latrobe Elementary School; Ligonier Valley High School; Maxwell Elementary School; Mountain View Elementary School; Stanwood Elementary School; Wendover Middle School; West Hempfield Elementary School; and West Point Elementary School.

Each of the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art's four locations – Altoona, Johnstown, Ligonier Valley and Loretto – is open to the public free of charge. Hours of operation at SAMA-Ligonier Valley are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 1 to 5 p.m. weekends. SAMA-Loretto's operating hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 1 to 5 p.m. Saturdays. For more information, visit www.sama-art.org or call Jessica Campbell, Education Coordinator, at (814) 472-3920.

This project was made possible through the AIE Partnership of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency. State government funding for the arts depends upon an annual appropriation by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and support from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. The PCA Arts-in-Education Partner in this region is the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art.