Blakey Prize in Fine Art: Contest Guidelines

"What we like determines what we are, and is the sign of what we are; and to teach taste is inevitably to form character." —John Ruskin

2026-2027

Submission Deadline: **Thursday, April 1, 2027.**

Who is eligible: Students in grades 9-12 enrolled full-time in an ACCS member school—and remain such through the end of the competition.

Guidelines

1. High school students (grades 9–12) from **ACCS schools** will compete with their peers from other ACCS member schools in a national visual arts competition. Each school may enter one student's artwork in the **drawing category** and one in the **painting category**. Note: Schools may enter the same student in both categories; however, different artwork is required for each category.

2. Each student must submit one ***original*** composition. Submitted works should best showcase each student's technical proficiency, demonstrate the integration of content and medium, and reflect principles of truth, goodness, and beauty.

   Submitted works must be the student's work. Photography, computer-generated art, printed art, and painted- over prints are prohibited.

   The artwork may not be a copy, in whole or in part, of any other artist's work, even if the copied work is completed in a medium different from that used for the original piece. If photographic references are used as the basis of any artwork, the artist must have either personally taken the photograph(s) or have the explicit permission of the photographer for such derivative use. Working from photos found online or in books or magazines must be avoided because of the potential for violating another's intellectual/creative rights. Students must not use photos found on Pinterest as the source for this work.

   To protect ACCS, students **MUST** have written permission to use someone else's image. The best practice is to have the student take a photo of an item and use it as the source for their work.

   Entries copied from images on Pinterest, etc. where the student does not have written permission will be disqualified.

   All work submitted must be an entirely original conception of the student artist. Although the ACCS recognizes the value of copying masterworks as a vital part of the classical tradition in the visual arts, and we encourage students to do this as part of their training, submissions of masterwork copies are unacceptable for this contest.

   Topics must be appropriate for presentation at the annual conference. ACCS reserves the right to reject any work that is considered inappropriate.

3. Drawing and painting entries will be judged separately by category.

   Drawing is art drawn on a two-dimensional surface with pencil, ink, charcoal, pastel, crayon, etc. (The list of art media is illustrative, not exhaustive.)

   Painting is art created by applying pigment to a two-dimensional surface with oil, acrylic, watercolor, gouache, tempera, ink, encaustic, fresco, spray paint, etc., applied on canvas, canvas board, paper, or any flat surface. (The list of art media is illustrative, not exhaustive.)

   Minimal use of mixed mediums (across categories, such as gouache on inked drawing) is permitted. Excessive use of mixed mediums is subject to review and disqualification.

4. Submissions should be high-resolution files (e.g., a JPEG, PNG, or TIFF format) emailed as an attached file. Students and judges acknowledge that there will be color variations across various computers.

5. Contestants and submissions must meet all of these criteria:
   a) At the time of submitting their materials to ACCS, contestants must be high-school students enrolled full-time in an ACCS member school—and remain such through the end of the competition.
   b) All presentations must be entirely the student's work and appropriate for display at the annual conference.
   c) All presentations must not exceed 36 inches in width or height.

6. Schools must submit entries to ACCS no later than **Thursday, April 1, 2027.** Along with the electronic image, each school must submit the artwork submission form (see following page), which requires the head of school's signature, certifies that the student is in high school, that the image represents the student's work, and that if chosen the school will arrange to have the original artwork shipped to the annual conference for display. Submissions must be received on time to allow time for adjudication, notification, and shipping arrangements.

7. ACCS member schools submitting a contestant must also provide a qualified judge who will judge all other entries except the one from their school.

   ACCS will share the link to view all submissions on **Monday, April 5, 2027**. Judges will have one week to categorize each submission as **excellent, good, or average**. Judges will send their initial rankings to ACCS no later than **April 12, 2027.** ***The ACCS reserves the right to disqualify a student's entry if a judge does not submit their rankings by the deadline.***

8. ACCS will compile the list of initial rankings, compile the results, and use this information to develop a list of finalists for the prize. ACCS will then send the judges a smaller list of entries to be evaluated entirely according to the published standards.

9. The second round of judging will begin on **Tuesday, April 13th, 2027.** Judges will rank each participant and submit their rankings and written comments to the director of member services by **Tuesday**, **April 20th, 2027**. The director of member services will review the judge's rankings and written comments, check for consistent rankings and faithful application of published standards, and select the winner and runner-up. ***The ACCS reserves the right to***

disqualify a student's entry if a judge does not submit their rankings by the deadline.

10. ACCS will notify the winning contestants' designated school official no later than **April 23rd, 2027.**

11. The winning artwork will be displayed at the ACCS annual conference. Students are not required to attend the annual conference.

12. Winning students will be asked to provide a written statement that answers the question: "Describe how this piece of art reflects something you have learned as part of your classical Christian education."

13. Awards
    a. The winner in each category will receive a $300.00 cash prize from ACCS.
    b. The runner-up in each category will receive a $250.00 cash prize from ACCS.

14. Publicity and Agreement: Contest entry constitutes an agreement by the submitting students and schools to grant free licenses of all copyrights of the submitted works to the ACCS in perpetuity. The winning students' artwork image may be utilized at any time by ACCS. The student artist also maintains the right to use the image.

15. Media Release: By submitting artwork, you agree that the ACCS retains printing rights and a free license, in perpetuity, to utilize the design. You guarantee that your design does not contain copyrighted material, including images/copy found online, unless clearly marked as published under a Creative Commons (cc) license.