

# Father's heart operation inspires artist

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Postmedia Network

A student from Queen's University won a regional award in a national art competition with a piece of sculpture inspired by her father's heart operation.

Lindsey Wilson of Ottawa took the prize for Ontario in the 13th annual BMO 1st Art Invitational student art competition.

The piece she submitted represented the human heart and was suggested by her father's open heart surgery last September.

It was a scheduled operation but still took an emotional toll, she said.

"The recovery process was a little bit longer than expected and the whole

experience was pretty jarring. So I ended up with this whole body of work that was really influenced by that experience."

The piece she sent into the contest, called *Murmur 1*, was the first work in a series that represented the heart and other organs. It is made of ceramic, with yarn and silk attached to look like veins and arteries.

"I thought it was one of the strongest and an important work for me."

The BMO contest, held since 2003, celebrates excellence in the visual arts and is open to graduating art students from Canadian post-secondary institutions.

Wilson, 23, graduated with a bachelor of fine art degree from Queen's in the spring.

Deans and instructors from the arts programs of more than 100 colleges and universities were invited to each select their top three graduating students and have them submit their work.

There were 263 entries this year, one of the largest number of submissions in the competition's history.

A panel of judges chose 12 regional winners and an overall national winner.

The national winner, Tamara Himmelspach of the Alberta College of Art and Design, got \$10,000 for her multimedia performance piece on native culture. Regional winners each got \$5,000.

More than \$530,000 has been awarded since the contest began.

All of the winning pieces will be shown at the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery in the University of Toronto from Oct. 22 to Dec. 18. The national winner's work also becomes part of the BMO corporate art collection.

Wilson said winning for Ontario was "fantastic."

"It is really exciting." Her love of art "goes back a long time."

Wilson was still in sixth or seventh grade and was already taking art classes outside of school.

"I have always loved to draw."

She went to a high school in Ottawa that had a special art program.

"I have been involved in the arts all through high school," Wilson said.

She decided to do her BFA at Queen's since she could also take subjects other than visual arts.

Her time at Queen's started out by taking a variety of art subjects, but by fourth year she had concentrated on sculpture and printmaking.

"Sculpture has been my focus for the past little bit," she said.

Wilson plans to attend the University of Ottawa in the fall to begin work on her master of fine art degree.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Lindsey Wilson's sculpture, *Murmur 1*, represents a human heart made of ceramic, with yarn and silk attached to look like veins and arteries.

"From there I don't know. We'll see. I am planning to continue making art, for sure."

"The \$5,000 prize for being a regional winner will come in handy, Wilson said.

"It's going for tuition, for sure."

Another part of the prize is a free trip in October to see her work on display at the University of Toronto gallery.

"That should be really exciting."

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