

The International Torrance Legacy Creativity Awards

By Joan Franklin Smutny

A prolific author who is widely regarded as “the father of creativity,” E. Paul Torrance developed ground-breaking programs and models that continue to tap the creative potential of children and adults in the United States and abroad. A man who was “comfortable as a minority of one” and who exhibited the courage to question traditional assumptions in education, he touched people’s lives with his gentle spirit and support—and his conviction in the power of creativity as an untapped resource.¹

The International Torrance Legacy Creativity Awards competition honors this legacy. Through my work at the Center for Gifted, I collaborated with John Kauffman at the Scholastic Testing Service to launch this creativity competition in 2009. The competition seeks works from gifted youth between the ages of 8–18 across four major categories: creative writing, visual arts, music composition, and inventions. At the conclusion of the judging process, the Center for Gifted/Midwest Torrance Center for Creativity publishes an online magazine of winning entries for students, families, and sponsoring schools and institutes.

In every category, we hope to reach talented students from across the globe. Each year, creative writing contestants choose a theme from a suggested list and use it as a catalyst for composing original poems and stories. The visual arts category allows students to submit any form of a 2D or 3D composition, including painting, collage, printmaking, photography, and sculpture. In music, applicants compose original pieces in a specific genre. Examples in past years



include piano and voice, guitar and voice, sitar, and orchestra. Our inventors create original products within three areas: arts and leisure, toys and games, and science and engineering. They design a prototype with detailed instructions and a three-dimensional graphic. (In fact, a former first place winner, Tripp Phillips, now age 12, just landed a deal on the popular television show *Shark Tank* for his Le-Glue invention for LEGO® bricks!)

The enthusiasm of gifted youth has grown as more parents, teachers, and schools encourage them to submit their most imaginative work. The magazine of award-winning poems, stories, visual art pieces, musical scores, and inventive

designs has become clear evidence that despite obstacles and hardships, our many gifted young people are able to pursue creative endeavors.

Endnote

¹ Millar, G.W. (1995). *The creativity man: An authorized biography*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.

Author's Note

Joan Franklin Smutny is the director of the Center for Gifted and Midwest Torrance Center for Creativity. She has authored, co-authored, and edited many articles and over 21 books on gifted education for

teachers and parents, including *Parenting Gifted Children: The Authoritative Guide from the National Association for Gifted Children* (2011). In 2009, she co-founded The International Torrance Legacy Creativity Awards for gifted writers, artists, musicians, and inventors around the globe. In 2012, Joan received the E. Paul Torrance Award in Creativity, conferred by NAGC.

To read the online magazine for the 2017 International Torrance Legacy Creativity Awards or to download application forms for the 2019 competition, go to www.centerforgifted.org.

Pelican

► *Soyoung Hur, age 13
Seoul, South Korea
1st place*



◀ **Japanese Wall**

*Maimoona Adel Janahi, age 17
Busaiteen, Bahrain
2nd place*

▼ **Pure and Blue**

*Tabera A. Aziz Heraiz, age 15
Muharraq, Bahrain
1st place*

