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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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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 annual student art exhibition. More than 300 student-created works will be featured in the dual exhibition. *Artists of the 21st Century* will be on view at SAMA-Loretto from February 5 through April 9 and at SAMA-Ligonier Valley from February 19 through April 17.

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 program. Through the program, SAMA educators travel to public and parochial schools to provide lessons designed to enhance students’ understanding of art creation, technique, history, criticism and aesthetics. The award-winning program is the largest of its kind in the Commonwealth.

Fourteen districts and 43 schools are participating in the exhibition, offering a total of 319 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 13. SAMA-Ligonier Valley’s reception is scheduled for 1 to 3 p.m. on Sunday, February 21. 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.

SAMA Education Coordinator Jessica Campbell said the student art show, now in its eighteenth year, is a special program for young artists. “This exhibition has become a favorite of mine,” she said. “Unpacking, arranging and hanging the art is like going on an adventure. It’s exciting to see what each school is creating and to see the pride and accomplishment in the faces of the students. It’s so encouraging to attend the

opening receptions, which are always crowded and filled with joy as each student looks to find their masterpiece. I welcome everyone to come out and see the priceless works of art created by the talented youth in our area.”

Schools represented in the Loretto exhibition include: Altoona Area Junior and High schools; Bishop Guilfoyle Catholic High School; Blacklick Valley Elementary Center and Jr.-Sr. High School; Cambria Heights Elementary and High schools; East Side Elementary; Forest Hills Elementary, Middle and High schools; Greater Johnstown High School; Holy Name School; Northern Cambria High School; Penn Cambria Primary, Intermediate, Middle and High schools; Penn-Mont Academy; Portage Area Elementary and High schools; St. Michael School and Windber Area High 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 High School; Jeannette McKee Elementary School; Latrobe Elementary School; Laurel Valley Elementary; Ligonier Valley Middle and High schools; Maxwell Elementary; Mountain View Elementary School; R.K. Mellon Elementary; Stanwood Elementary; Valley School of Ligonier; Wendover Middle School; West Hempfield Elementary and Middle schools; and West Point Elementary.

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.