

Washington Academy's First Annual ARTS FEST a Huge Success

Despite the winter snow that cancelled the first day back to school after the holiday break, Washington Academy's first annual Arts Festival brought artists from as far as Toronto for the three-day event. After an initial shuffling of workshops to make up for the snow day, WA's more than 350 students made paper, tied flies, baked cookies, studied music theory, played jazz saxophone and steel drums, learned how-tos of digital photography, created pen and ink drawings of wildlife, and molded clay to form a mosaic of tiles that represented the group's collective imagination.

More than 30 workshops were offered to the Academy's students in the mornings of the three days, with the afternoons being dedicated to performance. Combining two afternoon performances on Thursday, Fusion and Planet Pan shared the spotlight. Fusion, a trio of jugglers and physical comedy performers from Buckfield, Maine, put on a show no one is likely to forget any time soon.



Juggling rings, and balls and knives, they wowed the crowd. Planet Pan, the pan-playing students from George Stevens Academy, held a great workshop in the morning and then had the whole school up and dancing in the afternoon. The interest in playing pans, or steel drums, was keen on the part of WA students, as WA will be adding this to their music department offerings in the near future. Currently, the 2008-09 annual campaign is raising funds to have a full set of drums crafted for this purpose.



for 2008.

The Island Institute, which is providing technical assistance to WA for its CREST initiative (placed-based technology) led four workshop leaders to conduct GIS mapping and techniques in creating digital video with iMovie. The highlight of Friday afternoon's performance was the showing of a slide show created by the students of Steve Schaefer of Maineline Studios in Calais and the iMovie, both of which documented the Arts Fest and all of its color and flair. A special performance by Steve Peer, drummer and former WA teacher, now the Director of Special Education Services in Ellsworth, and his student drummers and a hip-hop dance led by WA's own Quinton Dill, Matt Smith and Noah Von Rotz closed the Arts Fest

Washington Academy thanks everyone who participated, especially the local and not-so-local artists who volunteered their time and expertise.