

The Paradise Center Presents

Melodie Cook

Sanders County Home School Co-Op – Plains, MT Spotlight on the Arts – July 2024



Interviewed by
Karen Thorson

“Spotlight on the Arts” by The Paradise Center honors and encourages students in the arts by highlighting their talent and acknowledging the support they receive through their schools and teachers.

Going into the 11th grade of study, at 16 years of age, Melodie Cook is already an accomplished artist. Although the artistic media may technically be called drawing, her technique is to create a base of color with markers and then go over it with

colored pencils to add tone and detail. The resulting artwork is like a painting, rich in color, incredibly detailed, and visually powerful.

Cook has been drawing since she was only four years old, but she has truly focused on her artwork over the last four years. She began drawing, not based on a single inspiration, but on her ability to create imagery that was pleasing to her.

When asked about her artistic preferences, she is most fond of an impressionistic approach. Although she does not like to produce abstract work, her mother says that her favorite artwork by her daughter is an abstract piece done a few years ago.

Producing a piece of art, regardless of the end-product, can be a learning process if the artist is open to that aspect of working. Cook is certainly open and aware of this process. One of the motivating forces for her is seeing how she can improve from what she sees in a previous piece. A notable part of her motivation is that her “favorite” piece of artwork is always the one she just finished, which is a driving force to do another. Advice she would offer others interested in developing an artistic process is to “do it” if it makes you happy and not worry about what others may think.

Cook plans to keep art as a primary part of her life. One aspect of a home school environment is that the daily schedule is flexible. So, Cook can weave her art into the day in many, many ways, sometimes related to academic work and other times as strictly focused on her art.

The varied subject matter, the vibrant colors, and the mystery of the artwork's context immediately draw a viewer into her work. A professional career may await this young lady if she so chooses.