

## 2010 Tolerance and Holocaust Visual Arts Competition

One of the primary goals of the Joint Holocaust Education Committee of the **Virginia Holocaust Museum** and the **Jewish Community Federation of Richmond** is to encourage young people to apply the lessons of history to the moral decisions they make today. Through studying the Holocaust, students explore the issues of moral courage as well as the dangers of prejudice, peer pressure and indifference. This competition provides students an opportunity to express themselves creatively about what they have learned.

**This competition is limited to middle school and high school students from Virginia.**

**Artwork will be evaluated in two divisions: Junior (middle school entries) and Senior (high school entries)**

**Prizes will be awarded to winners in both divisions as follows:**

First Place:	\$150
Second Place:	\$100
Third Place:	\$ 50

### Guidelines:

1. All entries should be 2-dimensional and roughly 24" x 24" in size, though reasonable exceptions shall be accepted.
2. Entry must be matted and mounted on a firm support such as foam core, wood, or frame, making sure that the piece is rigid. A hanging method must be a consideration for all entries, as pieces will hang from the left and right sides near the top. Charcoal, pencil or pastels that are submitted need to be sprayed with a fixative to prevent transfer and smudges.
3. The entry must be original and created solely for this competition.
4. Include a cover sheet attached to the back with the following information:
  - a. The division you are entering (Junior Division or Senior Division) and which topic(s) chosen.
  - b. Your name, home phone number, home address, and an email address.
  - c. Your grade, your teacher's name, and your school.
  - d. The materials used (i.e. pastels, oils, pencils, etc.).
  - e. A title for your work.
  - f. A brief artist's statement about the piece, describing how you have incorporated the theme and the topic(s) you chose to address in your work.

To ensure impartial judging, **do not put your name or any other identifying information on the front of your artwork.**

Judging will be based on creativity, craftsmanship, presentation, composition, originality, and how well your image communicates the idea you select.

Before the advent of television and the internet, governments had few means at their disposal to disseminate unified messages quickly. But as the twentieth century began, more and more governments turned to propaganda posters to influence the behavior of their citizens. The ease with which a message could be conveyed with provocative visuals and memorable slogans allowed governments to unify the citizenry around particular national goals.

While some governments have used propaganda to help citizens, propaganda also has a long and unfortunate history of manipulation and oppression. Adolf Hitler's Minister of Propaganda, Joseph Goebbels, used propaganda to great success to foster anti-Semitic feelings among the German people. Using the "Big Lie" technique, whereby he believed that a big enough lie, no matter how outrageous, would be believed eventually if you repeated it enough, Goebbels was able to sway public opinion against the Jews and pave the way for the Holocaust to occur.

Throughout the twentieth century, dictatorships and oppressive regimes have used propaganda to foster hate and bend unwitting publics to their will, and propaganda often plays an important role in genocide. We can see this in Rwanda, we can see this in the Balkans, and we can see this in Cambodia. And we could certainly see this in Hitler's Germany.

But while propaganda has acted as an important agent of persuasion, each of us has our own power of persuasion: our voice. Each of us has the power to condemn injustice, to stand up to intolerance and hatred, and to sow the seeds of peace. Imagine if the world had spoken up during the 1930's about the treatment of Jews in Germany: the evils of the Holocaust may have been prevented and countless lives could have been spared.

With this in mind, and remembering the important role propaganda has played in the promotion of intolerance, this year's Visual Arts Competition will focus on the theme of Voice - The Power of Persuasion.

## **Topics:**

- Your voice can be a powerful force for change in the face of injustice. But sometimes people must be convinced to listen to you. Think of some injustice that you have encountered in your own life, whether at school, in your community, or something you have read or heard about in the news, and create a piece of art that will persuade others that something must be done to stop this injustice.
- Hitler and the Nazis used propaganda for evil. But what if it was used for good? How would you try to persuade someone through art that peace and tolerance are better than war and hatred?
- Think about the people who were targeted by Nazi propaganda. What would it have felt like to have the government try to convince everyone around you that you were something you're not? Put yourself into the shoes of the victims of hurtful propaganda and try to convey through art what it must have felt like.
- Look at some of the examples of propaganda below. Notice how they use striking images and slogans to send their message. Use the iconography and techniques of 20th century propaganda to persuade people about something you believe, while always keeping in mind the Virginia Holocaust Museum's mission to "teach tolerance through education."

## **Assignment:**

Using any of the topics above, create a 2-dimensional original artwork of roughly 24" by 24" using the medium of your choice. Your work should demonstrate an understanding of the theme and reveal something of value to the viewer.

Visual artists must be able to convey some social and/or emotional content using images that communicate with the viewer about the content represented in this visual arts competition.

Artists can choose to address any of the topics of this competition with or without expressly including images from the Holocaust. Therefore, participants can include visual representations of Holocaust-related artifacts and events or transfer Holocaust-related ideas and learning to the artist's own life experiences or other world events.

If you choose to employ the motifs of propaganda in your work, you may find some examples of this style below, or you may find examples at various websites, including:

- <http://digital.lib.umn.edu/warposters/> (searchable catalogue)
- [http://library.marshallfoundation.org/posters/library/posters/browse\\_expanded.php?war=wwii&country=germany](http://library.marshallfoundation.org/posters/library/posters/browse_expanded.php?war=wwii&country=germany)
- <http://www.propagandacritic.com/>
- <http://www.teacheroz.com/WWIIpropaganda.htm>
- <http://www.historians.org/projects/GIroundtable/Propaganda/Propaganda3.htm>
- <http://iml.jou.ufl.edu/projects/Fall98/Wolfe/frame.html>

If you need assistance in locating resources or have any other questions about this competition, please contact Leigh Weedon at the Virginia Holocaust Museum, [lweedon@va-holocaust.com](mailto:lweedon@va-holocaust.com), or (804) 257.5400 (ext. 243).

**All competition entries must be received by 4:30 PM, Monday, March 29, 2010.**

**The guidelines for the competition will be also posted on the Virginia Holocaust Museum website at [www.va-holocaust.com](http://www.va-holocaust.com) by November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009.**

Please submit entries to:  
Tolerance and Holocaust Visual Arts Competition  
Virginia Holocaust Museum  
Attention: Leigh Weedon  
2000 East Cary Street  
Richmond, VA 23223

All entries will be displayed at the Virginia Holocaust Museum. The Museum reserves the right not to judge entries which do not meet the criteria. If you do not want your work to be exhibited or reproduced, please notify us in writing at the time you submit your entry.

Visual art entries must be picked up at the VHM office by June 1, 2010. **Please note the Jewish Community Federation of Richmond and the Virginia Holocaust Museum cannot take responsibility for artwork that is lost, misplaced, or damaged.**

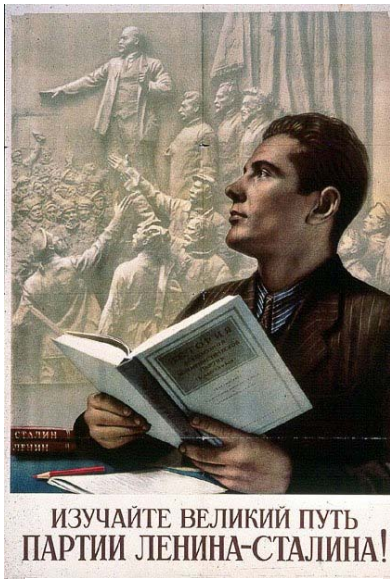
**Also, please indicate if you would like for the Museum to keep your work permanently. The VHM will have it framed and we will add it to our collection.**

# Propaganda

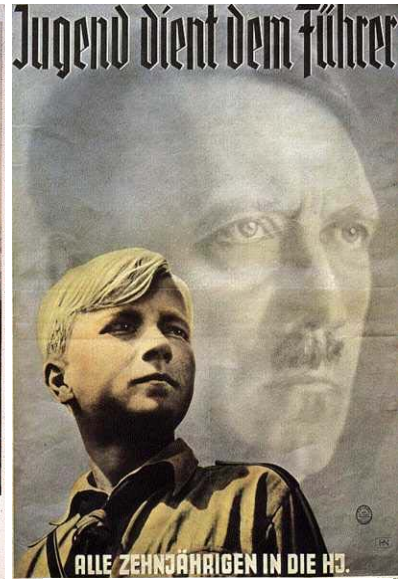
*Examples from History*



Nazi SS recruitment poster used in the occupied Netherlands.



USSR poster urging citizens to follow the teachings of Lenin.



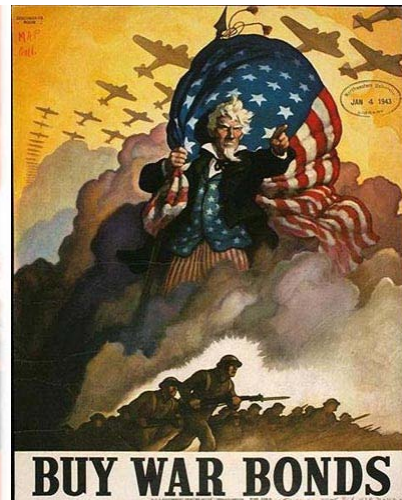
Nazi poster urging all 10 year olds to join the Hitler Youth.



The famous "Rosie the Riveter" poster from the USA, encouraging women to work in factories.



Poster from China promoting Chairman Mao's "Little Red Book" as the path to happiness.



Uncle Sam leads US troops into battle during World War II.