

ART FROM NEA KAVALA (A REFUGEE CAMP IN NORTHERN GREECE)

THE EXHIBITION

This exhibit consists entirely of artwork created by immigrants detained in Greece. The paintings were produced by children residing at the Nea Kavala refugee camp as well as by some immigrant adults, during art classes held by Kayra Martinez in her nearby home. The children are among the many people “trapped” in such camps after fleeing the violence raging in Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, and then finding most of Europe’s borders closed to them.

This exhibition stands as a powerful testament to the transformative power of art. Using limited materials, the works on display here communicate the childrens’ experiences, inner lives – perhaps a longing for or remembrance of childhood normalcy – and wishes for a better future. Ms. Martinez has described the benefits to immigrant children through the process of painting. “The children are at their happiest when they can draw and paint. It helps them work through their trauma while having some fun painting.” It also effectively gives us a window into the immigrants’ lives – their sufferings and hopes – while caught up in what seems to be an endless crisis.

The exhibition has been shown in several cities throughout the United States and across Europe. The Talsky Center is honored to be part of the journey. It is hoped that the vicarious experience gained from viewing these paintings may inspire each of us to help the immigrants in our own way.

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