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It's not just a place where you get to learn Einstein's Theory of Relativity. It's also a place where you can think beyond the classroom. Hence we say, **SCHOOL IS COOL!**

SCHOOL IS°COOL

Apeejay's annual Art Workshop spreads colour and happiness

Pix: Debobrata Shome

A eepay Anand's Children's Library brings thousands of children into Park Street for an Art Workshop on February 26 every year. Hosted in the precincts of Apeejay House annually for 28 years, children from the city and its peripheral areas, both from mainstream institutions and NGOs are invited to a half day emotional rollercoaster and an art extravaganza that sees fertile minds and nimble fingers splash umbrellas with designs that reflect their quaint world of imagination. The Art Workshop was started in 1992, on February 26, by Priti Paul who created the Apeejay Anand Children's Library for the underprivileged children in Apeejay School on Park Street to commemorate her brother Anand Paul's birthday and in accordance with his community service wishes.

This year's theme was "Rango ka Khela, Khushiyon ka Mela" and the lawns and grounds of Apeejay House burst with verve, vim, love, laughter emanating from the eclectic gathering. Some of the participating schools and organizations were Lakshmipat Singhania Academy, Loreto 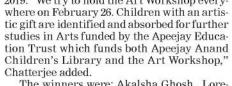Sealdah, South Point School, Sri Sri Academy, Manovikas Kendra, Ideal School for Deaf, Rainbow Project, Children Welfare, CINI Kolkata unit Association, Pratham Padaskhep (Special), and Focus among others.

Children let loose their creative energy exploring their fancy by painting, drawing, splashing and playing with colours on the umbrellas provided to them by Apeejay Anand Children's Library. Bimal Kundu, eminent sculptor was the chief guest. The 11-member panel of judges including contemporary artists of Kolkata were Chandrima Roy, Sujit Ghosh, Samir Sarkar, Shyamal Roy, Ranadeep Das, Debotosh Kar, Partha Dasgupta, Volanath Rudra, Srikanta Paul, Soumen Khanrui and and Devit Malakar.

This year, Apeejay Anand Children's Library has added Certificates of Appreciation, Best Effort, Apeejay Anand Librarian's Choice, Judges' Choice, and Most Promising candidate alongside the top three artwork/winners it always gives. "Credit for this new idea of expanding the Art Workshop awards goes to a little child whose desire to be recognized gave birth to the expanded appreciations. Appreciation acts as a booster and when brought into the fold of merit encourages kids, fills them with enthusiasm and makes them value Imagination – unique and precious to each one of us – and is the value that is at the core of and driven with love every day at Apeejay Anand Children's Libraries. I am happy to see the Art Workshop expand every year with new ideas just like the Apeejay Anand Children's Library's footprint does," Rita Chatterjee, principal and administrator, Apeejay Schools said.

The latest Apeejay Anand Library opened in Salaam Baalak Trust's Uday shelter home in Ghaziabad inaugurated by Shirin Paul, chairperson emeritus, Apeejay Surrendra Group in the presence of Priti Paul in August 2019. "We try to hold the Art Workshop everywhere on February 26. Children with an artistic gift are identified and absorbed for further studies in Arts funded by the Apeejay Education Trust which funds both Apeejay Anand Children's Library and the Art Workshop," Chatterjee added.
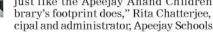
The winners were: Akalsha Ghosh, Loreto Day School (first prize); Chabi Biswas, Bali Chorus (second prize) and Zarin Khatoon, Apeejay Anand Children's Library (third prize). Genia Chatterji, The BSS School (Certificate of Appreciation); Debasmi Bhowmick, DPS Ruby Park (Judges Choice); Pooja Chokraborty of Bali Chorus (Most Promising Prize); Zenia Bhattacharya, Modern High School (Prize for Best Effort) and Rizwana Khatoon of Smt Jahar Nandi Vidyapeeth bagged (Librarian's Choice).

The personnel and teachers associated with Apeejay Anand Children's Library Kolkata, council members, and staff sent off each Art Workshop participant, with their guardians and accompanying teachers, with a gift hamper containing an art book, art worksheets, crayons, puzzle boards, Rubic's Cube, paper mask, ball, camel colours, a tube of toothpaste, a pencil box, a tiffin box with a slice of cake, a Perk bar, a packet of biscuits, a packet of wafer chips, a packet of Kurkure, Cipla chocolates, fruit juice, a packet of noodles and much more along with the self-painted umbrella!