

Young artists discover whimsical sides during 'Tools in Motion' activity day

Center for the Arts sponsors free Family Day Activities as part of the 'Tools in Motion: Works from the Hechinger Collection' exhibit

By [JEAN AMODEA](#)

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PHOTO BY JEAN AMODEA

The Center for the Arts of Bonita Springs is holding free Family Day Activities for children and adults as part of the "Tools in Motion: Works from the Hechinger Collection" exhibit. Families get a guided tour of the whimsical exhibition and then will complete art projects that introduce the idea of tools as art. Activities are held from 1 to 3 p.m. Saturdays through April 30. Call 495-8989 or go to artcenterbonita.org for more information. Photo by Jean Amodia

BONITA SPRINGS — Music legend Jimi Hendrix once said that “You have to use fantasy to show different sides of reality.” The “Tools in Motion: Works from the

Hechinger Collection” exhibit, on display at the Center for the Arts of Bonita Springs, does just that.

Leave your perception of all things commonplace at the door as you take a glimpse into the artists’ unique perspective that pays homage to simple tools, hardware and household necessities.

With vibrant color and whimsical form, the 50-piece exhibit is a visual delight to the young and the young at heart.

From a pair of scissors spinning in dance to a crystal clear glass faucet - drip, drip, dripping - to Bradford McDougal’s “Dread Lock Box” sculpture that depicts a black mailbox draped with yellow electrical wiring “hair” representing dreadlocks, this show stretches the mundane into the sublime.

“Taking an ordinary object and making something extraordinary” is how Jordan Smith, youth education director describes the exhibition. Smith conducts tours of the show and also assists children in related art projects.

“The kids especially are enthralled with the show. They can see the pieces, some of which move, and imagine the sounds the tools would make. The pieces in this show make it so easy to talk to kids about art and easily engages their imagination,” he said.

Using mediums such as plywood, acrylic, cardboard and even asphalt siding, the works, part of an original 400-piece collection was the brainchild of John Hechinger.

In 1911, his father, the senior Hechinger, a hardware store giant, started collecting art made from or that depicted tools and hardware. He displayed the pieces at his Washington, D.C. headquarters as a means of inspiration for his employees.

The curious collection eventually took its place as relevant modern art and has been on public exhibition as part of the International Arts & Artists, Washington, D.C., an arts service organization.

The traveling exhibit will be on display until April 30. Family Activity Days are held each Saturday from 1 to 3 p.m. Call 495-8989 or visit artcenterbonita.org for more information.