



DANA JENSEN/THE DAY

Brock Richardson, of New London, uses a magnifying glass to take a closer look at a watercolor painting titled “Grandeur In Yosemite” by Rachelle Siegrist, 2013, on display in the Wes and Rachelle Siegrist miniature art exhibit at the Lyman Allyn Art Museum in New London on Saturday.

# Families join for ‘small’ art projects

By GREG SMITH  
Day Staff Writer

**New London** — Using a brush to put the final touches on the palm trees in her beach sunset painting, Gemma Waido of Norwich leaned back to survey the results of her work.

“I love doing art,” said the 8-year-old, who was seated beside her cousins in the multi-purpose room at Lyman Allyn Art Museum and appeared pleased with her completed painting.

Waido, who said her favorite things to draw are people and quickly sketched a figure to display her talent,

joined dozens of other people on Saturday for the museum’s monthly Free First Saturday event. The initiative is toward families but open to all, said Eileen Donovan, the museum’s director of learning and engagement.

Museum entry is free on the first Saturday of each month and the projects offered as part of the two-hour art making event are typically connected to an exhibit. Saturday’s event was no different. Donovan handed out notecard-sized slips of paper to participants in order to

recreate the size of the painting in the Exquisite Miniatures collection on display in the museum’s Glassenberg Gallery.

Exquisite Miniatures is a collection of fine art created by the husband and wife team of Wes and Rachelle Siegrist, known as world ambassadors for miniature art. The collection of the couple’s paintings — there are more than 50 on display at the museum — measure less than nine square inches. Most are much smaller but offer the kind of details found in full-sized paintings. Visitors are

offered magnifying glasses to inspect the details.

Kathryn Ardrey, 7, of Waterford, who was using water colors to create a stunning rainbow scene with floating roses, simply shrugged when asked about the small size of the paper. Likewise, her friend and fellow artist Ava Otero, 7, of New London, said the size of the paper didn’t hinder her efforts to create the multi-colored rainbow, stars and hearts. Few of the children used the available magnifying

**SEE FAMILIES PAGE D4**



Beverly Sambrotto, of Westhampton, N.Y., creates her own miniature painting in the art studio after seeing the Wes and Rachelle Siegrist miniature works of art on exhibit at the Lyman Allyn Art Museum in New London on Saturday. Sambrotto was at the museum creating paintings with her her sister, Cindy Morlock, and niece, Heather Morlock, both of Norwich, not shown.



John Kiernan, of Essex, creates his own miniature drawing while in the Wes and Rachelle Siegrist miniature art exhibit at the Lyman Allyn Art Museum in New London on Saturday.

# Families participate in Lyman Allyn Art Museum's Free First Saturday event

FROM D1

glasses while painting, the method used by Wes and Rachelle Siegrist.

"It's not hard," Otero said. "I paint every day at home. I even have paintings on my walls."

Otero's mother, Barbara Otero, said she is a frequent visitor to the museum's events and her daughter attended an art camp at the museum in April.

"There's always something going on," she said of the museum, recalling a recent event featuring Puerto Rican artist Imna Arroyo, who interacted with museum visitors and talked about what inspired her artwork.

"It was great to be able to hear from the artist," Barbara Otero said.

Christy Stockford of Norwich, the mother of sunset artist Gemma Waido, said it was by as her first visit to the museum's free hands-on event and likely would come back.

"She's just very interested in art and trying to find ways to express herself," Stockford said of her daughter.

Donovan said the museum offers a number of different programs and pop-up events geared towards families and students. Soon, she said, the museum will be dismantling the Basketball Pyramid, a work by David Huffman, which was accompanied by 46 fine art prints by 17 different artists that highlight work of African American artists. The 650 basketballs used to create the 8-foot tall exhibit and part of the Personal to Political: Celebrating the African American Artists of the Paulson Fontaine Press, will be donated to community groups and schools.

Exquisite Miniatures is slated to be on display at the museum until Jan. 26. For information about the museum and upcoming events, visit [www.lymanallyn.org](http://www.lymanallyn.org).



PHOTOS BY DANA JENSEN/THE DAY

Reyna Snell, left, and her husband, Anthony Snell, watch their children, Aubrey Castro, 6, and Brennan Coleman, 11, of Groton create their miniature paintings in the art studio of the Lyman Allyn Art Museum in New London on Saturday. People visiting the museum were able to visit the Wes and Rachelle Siegrist mini works of art on exhibit at the museum on Free First Saturday.