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There's an art to it

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Erin McCottry wanted her face mask to be different.

"Can we make it an animal?" the 7-year-old asked as instructor Malaika Favorite passed out canvases with glued-on masks.

After Erin received her canvas, she immediately began painting the mask and canvas to create a image of a Bengal tiger.

"I love animals, and the Bengal tiger is my favorite," she said. "That's why I wanted my mask to be a Bengal tiger. I really concentrated on it. It was fun."

Developing children's creativity was one of the goals of the annual Children's Academy Holiday Camp, held Dec. 22-23 at the Lucy Craft Laney Museum of Black History.

"You never know what they are going to come up with," said Ms. Favorite, the camp's guest instructor and a local artist. "Children see things differently than adults. They tend to think outside of the box.

"I wanted them to develop that sense of creativity in the form of art and learn that art is an expression, so there's no wrong way to create it."

Ms. Favorite used her art background and experiences to create activities for the children, she said.

During the camp, the children made ornaments from foam kits, decorated glass ornaments, created wood magnets and painted on Plexiglas and masks.

Painting was Kiera Capers' favorite activity.

"It's just a lot of fun, and it's different because we don't get to do that every day," said the 8-year-old. "I liked that you could paint things the way you wanted to paint them."

The other children also seemed to enjoy painting the most, Ms. Favorite said.

"They just lit up when they found out that they would be painting," she said. "It's something I've enjoyed all my life, so it feels good to share my interest in art with them."

The museum's Children's Academy holds camps annually on art, history and the preservation of both. The camps, for area children ages 6 to 16, are held during the winter holiday break, Masters Week and the summer.

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