Senior Kristen Phipps works on an art sculpture for Art 21. The sculpture was inspired by some of El Anusui's work. "To me, this sculpture represents hard work," Phipps said. "Each student helped out. No one person did it alone."

MAIZE SELECTED TO HOST A PBS ART21 PREVIEW PARTY

ART IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

By Mary McDermott

(DESIGN BY MARY MCDERMOTT+PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATTHEW HONAS)

Maize was selected to be one of three local high schools to host a PBS Art in the Twenty-First Century preview party, which takes place every two years.

Maize hosted its preview party April 3. The art show was open to anyone in the community who wanted to come.

This is the first time Art21 has been spread out to high schools, instead of being at Wichita State University's Ulrich Museum of Art.

Art21 is a nonprofit organization that uses contemporary art to teach millions about the creative process by providing free materials and programs.

Art21 is also a way to introduce content-driven art to students.

"We can show the previous videos from the Art 21 site to our students and talk about how art can be a way to convey ideas, not just about drawing something pretty," art teacher Beth Janssen said.

Art teachers began asking for entries from students inspired by past Art21 artists or by themes discussed in previous seasons of the series in March.

To prepare for their show, the art students constructed a sculpture of flattened pop cans.

Students had to bring empty cans from home, cut them, fold them and string them together using duct tape and brass brads.

This artwork and students' individual artwork are inspired by Art21 published artists.

One of these artists is Trenton Doyle Hancock. The Ulrich Museum received a large grant from the Kansas Health Foundation to bring him in for presentations.

Hancock went to the Tyler School of Art and has since created a mythic world of Mounds. Mounds are half-animal, half-plant peaceful creatures that are in danger of the Vegans. The Vegans are an evil tofu-worshipping ape-man species.

He is giving presentations about this modern art Thursday at Wichita State University and Friday at Northeast Magnet.■