29th Annual Juried High School Exhibition

Juror's Statement

When jurying a body of work there are two things I look for: an understanding of design and intriguing conceptual ideas. These two things will make an art piece successful and connect with the viewer. Art should be well designed. I selected works of art that exhibited an understanding of the elements of art and principals of organization, coupled with an interesting composition. There were many pieces that exhibited an extraordinary use of value, line, texture and space, so it made the jurying process difficult; however, it also made it exciting to see so much good work being made by a young generation.

Conceptual ideas can sometimes be the most difficult part of making art. But when coupled with excellent hand skills you can communicate in a much larger way to your audience. There were many excellent pieces that were submitted based on projects that were used to teach skill. My ideal submission was one where those learned skills were then taken and added to an idea. Lastly, craftsmanship is extremely important, so careful and thoughtful presentation is a must.

Many of the award winners used these elements in an extraordinary way. Jose Lavelle's chair piece that won first place caught my eye immediately. This work showed a beautiful understanding of perspective with bright harmonious color. The small painting of Shannon Talley was wonderfully executed. It reminded me of Wayne Thiebaud's food paintings. She took a common object and manipulated it in a way that gave the viewer an experience of the food from more than an observational standpoint. Destiny Stubbs' drawing had a beautiful and interesting use of symbolism with art historical references; this, combined with careful rendering, made it a wonderful piece.

Gideon Watson's drawing has a beautiful use of color and composition, while at the same time evoking a sense of place and emotion. The mixed media work of Alfredo Ira, Jr. held an incredible use on line and detail. You were given an elaborate visual space to explore along with a sense of tension between the two opposing sides. Brittany Nicole Brisson's compositions were stunning; they exhibited a wonderful use of shape and color. The expressive mark in April Herrea's relief nicely captured the portrait of her subject. I was taken by the ceramics of Kristen McConnell; the bowls were beautifully shaped and used color to enhance the delicacy of the form.

I was extremely impressed by the quality of the work submitted and grateful for the opportunity to jury such a fine exhibition. Making art takes time, dedication and practice, so keep working young artists as your potential is limitless. Thank you for inviting me to be part of the 29th Annual High School Exhibition at the University of North Carolina, Pembroke.

Nicole L. Hand
Associate Professor of Art
Murray State University