

ARTS

Masters degree candidates put final projects on display

By Ming Rodrigues
Emerald Entertainment Reporter

An exhibition of student art work covering computer graphics, sculpture, ceramics, painting and photography, is on view at the University Museum through June 30.

"The exhibition includes some of the work done by each of the students for their master of fine arts terminal creative projects," said Ken O'Connell, head of the Department of Fine and Applied Arts. "This is a unique show each year because we have the largest MFA program in the state.

"Each year, the creative results are unexpected as the students develop their individual ideas about certain issues, either in their personal lives or on a broader, more social scale."

Some of the more unique creations include paintings by student Sheila Simpson. Breaking out of the rectangular format, her paintings combine wood and wall paper in an unusual style.

Tracy MacEwan's photographs draw the viewer to ponder the land.

"Instead of pointing out what we're doing wrong with our environment, I'm drawing attention to what is special about the earth and its places," MacEwan said.

For his subject, MacEwan chose the desolate areas of Eastern Oregon, Utah, Nevada and New Mexico. "People think that a desert is a place devoid of life and value, but that's not true," MacEwan said. "It's far more revealing of the earth elements than people realize."

John Booth is another student who uses technology to capture life. His forte is computer graphics and his exhibit is an electronic collage on various topics.

"Signed, Sealed & Delivered," is a commentary on the media image of the recent gulf war. "I try to capture the cultural image of the war — the patriotism, the apprehension, the protests — scenes that bring back memories," Booth said.

Another design, "Endangered Species," is a look at elephants and the artist's attempt at playing up the majesty of the animals, rather than seeing them as a source of ivory.

A more personal work is Booth's second series of a self-portrait on his Texas family farm. The graphics depict the house and barn with portraits of his aunts and uncles in World War II as a backdrop.

Something different is Susan Lowdermilk's artist book. Her work delves into the character of old houses and the traces of human presence that linger in them from their many inhabitants.

Displayed like an accordion folder, her creation feels almost like taking a tour through the old houses themselves. Close-ups of passages and corners shift dramatically to focus on a teapot or a hat — all varying perspectives that give away yet another clue to the personality of the house.

The University Museum, 1430 Johnson Lane, is open free to the public from noon to 5 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday except state and University holidays. For more information, call the Museum at 346-3027.

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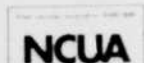


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