

'Silent poetry' marks student canvasses

Mercy art emphasizes emotion

By LYNN ORR

After meandering through Mercy High's annual student art exhibit, it's easy to understand why so many Mercy grads are involved in the world of art.

During the four-day exhibit, which ran from Sunday through Wednesday, the entire gymnasium was filled with student art work—from yarn pictures to almost life-size sculptures. The closed bleachers were a backdrop for ninth and 10th grade student work, while juniors and seniors dominated the floor.

For this year's exhibit, Sister Mary Ignatius, head of the Mercy art department, allowed senior one-woman shows in which a multitude of the students' talents were expressed.

"Our four-year art program is very basic," says Sister Ignatius, who with Sisters Mary Kevin and Linda Valli coordinated the exhibit. "We try to work in every medium and work with as wide a variety of subject matter as possible."

"TURBULENCE," an eight-horse sculpture by Carol Summers, 17, is an example of the fine pieces done in moda-clay, a plastic-based clay Sister Ignatius buys from an art studio in Pennsylvania.

"It's liquid plastic, which makes it dry very hard and requires no firing," she says. "The medium allows us to do very large sculptures we otherwise might not be able to do."

Students begin a clay piece by building a wire armature and covering it with strips of cloth. "It sort of mummifies the form," Sister Ignatius explains.

Over the strips of clay a two-inch layer of clay is applied, which allows the expensive clay to be stretched as far as possible.

Senior Joanne Albert did an almost life-size model of her 4-year-old brother playing the violin. And senior Darce Kozel's "Winter fun" expresses the joy of two children sledding.

"Breadbasket Country," a cotton quilt by Mary Ann Dolega, 16, is a fine example of the stitchery pieces in the show. On a field of yellow corn, a house with curtains waving in the wind stands against a wavy blue sky, adjacent to a pin-striped material windmill. Working entirely with cloth, Miss Dolega achieved the technique of a primitive painting with the reality of curtains loosely attached to the "windows" of the house.

MANY OF THE seniors included a lead pencil drawing representing the human emotional assignment given each year by Sister Ignatius.

"The assignment is designed to allow the student to graphically express what she is thinking," Sister Ignatius says. "The drawing must have something to do with their lives, one incident or circumstance that affects the entire life—either from the past or looking forward."

"It's a very difficult assignment, and we try not to express hatred, jealousy or anger, nor situations which would arouse animosity."

She was especially pleased with Ramona Pikunas' rendition of "Natural Affinity," a drawing of an old man's face imposed on a waterfall in which the lines flow.

"You cannot tell where the water ends and the face begins—it expresses the idea of man and nature, how all creatures of God are all related to the universe," Sister Ignatius said.

Senior Diane Roach chose the theme of a young girl eating corn-on-the-cob, and successfully captures the joy of a child eating. Stalks of corn next to the child's face suggest the illusion of crouching in a cornfield with the child's favorite food.

Sister Ignatius also assigns self-portraits, which, she contends, is another very difficult assignment.

"You don't see yourself the way you are," she says, but she was still pleased with the portraits drawn in front of mirrors.

Among the hundreds of art pieces on exhibit, between 25-40 have been singled out for National Scholastic prizes. "The ultimate in high school competition," says Sister Ignatius.

Freshman Mona Parlove, 15, captured first prize in Detroit, Edison's safety poster contest.

"This is the second year we've entered the competition, and each year we've won first prize," Sister Ignatius says. Miss Parlove's entry was one of about 3,800 in the state this year.

Many Mercy students have continued their art careers after graduation, either in the teaching field or graphics, Sister Ignatius says.

"My students are teaching in every state in the union and there are a few abroad," she said proudly. Some former students displayed their work in the lobby as a preview to the student show.



Sister Mary Ignatius admires the moda-clay sculpture of eight horses entitled "Turbulence" by student Carol Summers.



"Age of Innocence" sculptured by Elizabeth Mack.



"Natural Affinity" by Ramona Pikunas.



"Late August" by Diane Roach.



"Wonderment" by Mary Casey.

SUMMERSHINES

Staff
photos
by
Harry
Mauthe

Like summer breezes, Christian Dior begins at dusk with softly tailored sleep parts.

Striped like a man's shirt in pale blue and sand, the pajamas are piped in satin with a proper white collar and cuffs. In polyester/cotton, \$38. The wrap robe in softest, sand-colored terry bordered in white with satin-piped sash and cuff, \$55. Both in sizes P-S-M-L. Sleepwear, at Northland and Oakland only.

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