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Atkinson Art Gallery to display student work in spring showcase



Courtesy of Sarah Cunningham, Atkinson Gallery Director

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Santa Barbara City College’s Art Department will be hosting an their annual exhibition of student artwork at the Atkinson Gallery, beginning April 12 and running until May 3.

The Art Department holds the exhibition after spring break so the artists have time to create their work without feeling rushed.

According to Sarah Cunningham, director of the Atkinson Gallery, this year’s exhibit will be showcasing the work of 30-35 students. The art program at City College offers classes in painting, drawing, 2-dimensional design, 3-dimensional design, sculpture, ceramics, and printmaking.

“You see the different art work from all of those areas,” said Cunningham.

Cunningham mentioned the popularity this exhibit attracts in comparison to past exhibitions. “It’s a great source of pride at the end of the year just seeing what all of our students have done,” said Cunningham. “You really feel our shared sense of accomplishment.”

This exhibition means the most to the artists due to the gratifying feeling of their art being hung up for their families, peers, and most importantly themselves.

Asia Bellew, an artist at City College, will be showing a piece at the exhibit for the first time. Although she didn't choose the piece, Bellew mentioned that she is happy that piece was what her drawing instructor, Daniela Campins, wanted to showcase.

Bellew's piece is called "Touch", a data collage that is created with watercolor.

"It's meant to show different values and to bring an image to life," said Bellew.

"They can almost feel it just by looking at it, that's my goal."

She chose two dichotomies to compare; sharp and soft. Bellew explained that she created two characters to exemplify those qualities, she wanted the textural elements to bring viewers into the work of art.

"It's meant to be a first step in their resume, as they enter their careers, we treat them the way we treat any other artist we work with," said Sarah Cunningham.

Cunningham, along with the other art directors, take on the "behind-the-scenes" responsibilities. The artists' drop off their final work and the directors hang it up and perfect the lighting.

Opening night focuses on the celebration of the student exhibit and will feature a scholarship announcement during the reception.

"It's a big day here, this is probably equivalent to graduation," said Cunningham.

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