

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 03/31/2017

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SUU Student Artists Display Academic Excellence at SUMA
Written by Lola Taylor

Southern Utah University, Cedar City, Utah: Student Abstracts is a special exhibit featuring new artwork from SUU's Department of Art & Design ART-4500 student studio artists. This exhibit is on display in the Southern Utah Museum of Art (SUMA) from now through April 29, 2017. Admission to SUMA is free and is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday from 12:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Andrew Marvick's ART-4500 Special Projects course encourages students to explore special areas of art and design studio practices. This semester's course was designed to follow a chronological path from western painting's first abstract experiments to the art world's current trends through a style called "process painting." Moving through the years from 1900 to 2010, each section of the special projects course moved the students through different artistic styles such as fauvism, nonobjective expressionism, cubism, orphism, minimalism, and abstract expressionism, to explore their own artistic voice. This approach to art led students to realize that a display of skill would not be particularly beneficial for them in this course and allowed them to explore their own artistic voice.

Elizabeth Edwards, senior ceramics and sculpture major, said, "This is a way for students to show their studies, new ideas that were explored and the impact it has in bettering our culture and community. We have studied and applied our knowledge in a tangible way that makes what we have learned very evident. These ideas are relatively new to the art department at SUU and show how pushing the boundaries can reach students who may have felt they had no place in painting before."

Lori Ransom, a fourth-year student double majoring in Illustration and Psychology, believes in the importance of sharing her work in a public space like SUMA and the impact it has on a community. She said, "I think that art is valuable for its' own sake and should be seen and experienced as an important part of our culture. I believe that it encourages creative thinking, which enriches all disciplines. For those that visit our exhibit, whether they like the art or not, what I hope for most is that viewers will have the desire to explore abstract art for themselves and that they have the opportunity to have the kinds of experiences I was able to have this semester."

Marvick said, "The experience has not been without its challenges, but it's fair to say that, through this semester-long reenactment of modern painting's history, many of the students have gained surprisingly clear and energizing insights into their own artistic personalities, suggesting multiple new avenues for their future artistic development."

For more information about SUU's Department of Art & Design, visit www.suu.edu/pva/art.

