

For Art's Sake

THE 46TH ANNUAL STUDENT ART EXHIBITION
POINTS UP THE TALENT, THEORY, HARD WORK
THAT GO INTO THE TRAINING OF AN ARTIST

By Carolyn G. Hart, '58journ

THE end product of a year's education at the University can only be measured in intangibles for students in many areas. The senior student in physics can discourse more learnedly on the advances in his field. The organist can display a greater degree of competency. The advertising major can easily and knowingly discuss the latest device on Madison Avenue.

In none of these fields is there a concrete expression of the student's progression after another year of study. There is nothing one can hold in his hand.

At year's end in the University's School of Art, a different picture prevails. The year's accomplishments are displayed before the University and the public in the Annual Art Students Exhibition. Youthful flights of imagination and creativity are captured forever on canvas and paper and in steel, wood and clay.

This year the 46th Annual Art Students Exhibition ran from May 15 through June 5. Every available nook and cranny in the Museum of Art and Carpenter Hall were utilized to display the 420 pieces created by 150 students.

Bright swaths of color leapt at viewers from abstract paintings. A special exhibit featured slickly detailed models of commercial products. Sleek modern furniture drew the eye. Sculptures in wood, stone and steel dominated the corners. Delicately wrought jewelry lined display cases. Etchings, graphics and space-oriented advertisements captured attention.

A highlight of the annual exhibition is the presentation of awards to students selected on the basis of all-around performance and capability as demonstrated in four years of work and to students whose works win recognition as the best in the show.

Gold, silver and bronze Letzeiser winners this year were Olivette Burt, Oklahoma City painting major; Gerald L.

Wood, Seminole design major, and Henry B. Emilson, Clinton painting major.

The Elmer Capshaw medal for the best watercolor in the show went to Kenneth Null, Oklahoma City design major specializing in advertising art. Robert Miracle, Okemah design major, received the \$50 Roger Dougherty purchase prize for his design of a modern adding machine. This award goes to the best work in the show regardless of medium. An oil called "Blue Painting," by Robert L. Scott, Perry painting major, won the \$50 Mark Everett Purchase Award.

This year's award winners and their works are typical of the high caliber artists annually graduated by the School of Art. The winners and their classmates are familiar exhibitors in art shows not only on the campus and in the state but in the Southwest and throughout the nation.

An example would be Bronze Medalist Emilson who in 1959 exhibited his works in the Oklahoma Artists 19th Annual Exhibition at the Philbrook Art Center in Tulsa, the 31st Swedish American Art Exhibition in Chicago and the 29th Annual Exhibition of the Springfield Art Museum.

As these young artists are graduated from the University, they take their place beside such recognized University art graduates as Lowell Hess, '42bfa, a designer and commercial artist living in Grant's Corners, Ossining, N. Y.; Julius Struppeck, '36bfa, sculptor, educator and writer at the Newcomb Art School, New Orleans, La.; Duayne Hatchett, '50bfa, '52mfa, associate professor of art at the University of Tulsa, and John Freed, '52bfa, '57mfa, director of the Museum of Science and Art in Oklahoma City.

Hess has illustrated four Garden City science publications. The first in the series, "Exploring the Moon," was chosen from 650 entries by the American Institute of

Graphic Arts to be included in its annual "50 Best Books of the Year" in 1955. "Exploring the Universe" of the same series won the Thomas Alva Edison mass media award for artwork in the best children's science book of 1956. Hess has contributed to *American Magazine*, *Collier's*, *Woman's Home Companion*, *Boy's Life* and *Argosy*.

Struppeck, winner of the New Orleans Art Association prize in 1953, is a professor of sculpture at Sophie Newcomb College, Tulane University. His works are included in collections at Lowe Art Galleries, Miami, Fla.; Bertha Shaefer Gallery, N. Y.; Marine Hospital, New Orleans; Court House, Iberia, La.; U. S. Post Office, Many, La., and O.U. He is the author of "The Creation of Sculpture" and a contributor to *Design Magazine*.

Hatchett, winner of numerous awards in sculpture and painting at regional and national shows, has twice been included in the New Talent issue of the *Arts in America* periodical, high recognition for a young artist.

Freed, who studied in Paris on a Fulbright from 1955 to 1957, has since been named director of the new Museum of Science and Art. He recently took a first prize in the Oklahoma Artists exhibitions in Tulsa and Oklahoma City.

Why quality graduates flow from the University into the main currents of art in America today is more clearly understood when a close view is taken of the school, its philosophy and faculty.

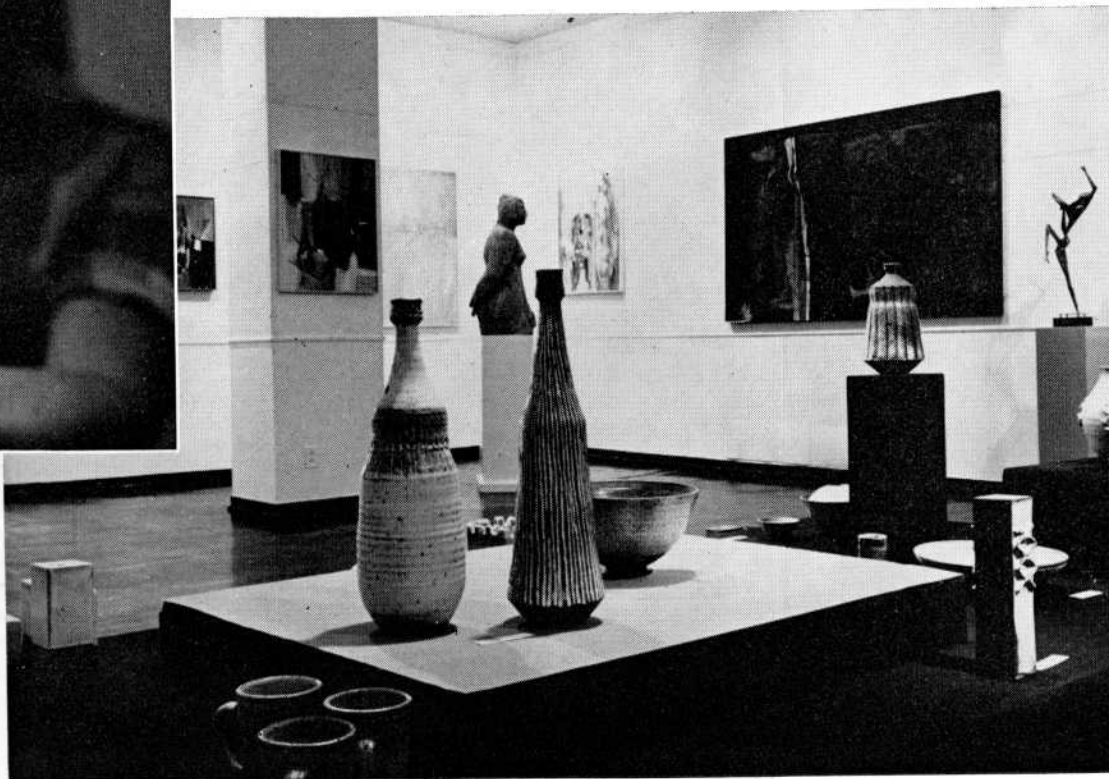
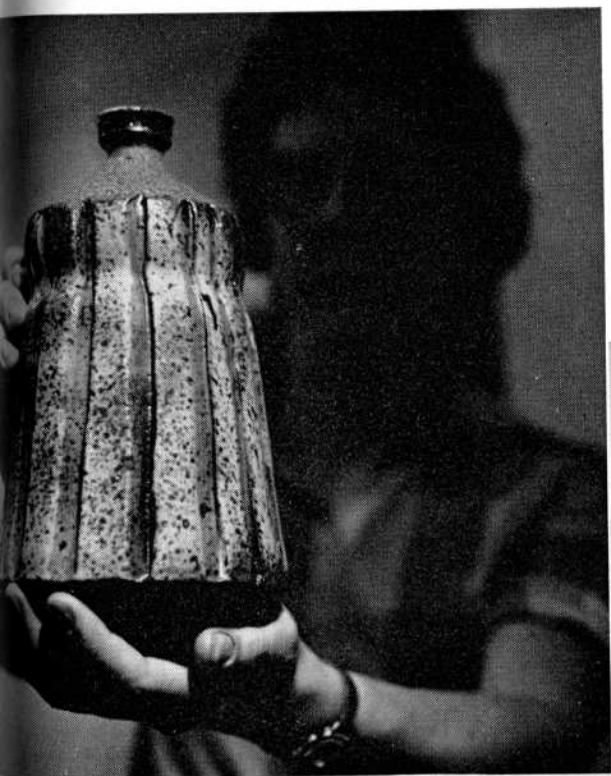
Progressive growth is the keystone of study. The school offers work in five major fields—painting, sculpture, design, art education and art history. Art history is a brand new addition.

But no matter what the field selected by a fledgling artist, all students study the same courses in their first year, for Director John

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The Student Artist Shows His Wares

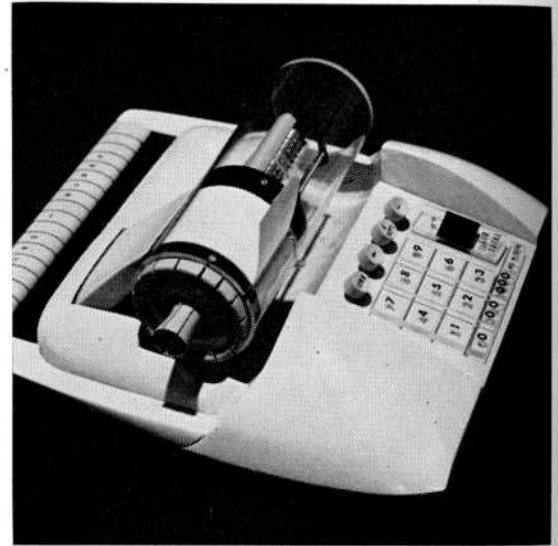
Slowly absorbing the impact of an abstractionist painting (right) by Henry Emilson are art students Marlene Morelock, left, and Sally Schuessler. Viewers of the exhibition didn't find traditional paintings among the student works. Faculty members say the emphasis on the abstract is only natural for young artists who are aware of trends among their contemporaries and influenced by these trends. Another example of abstract art is Bill Epton's painting on the back wall. A more familiar art form is that of ceramics. Charlotte Reith (below at left) displays a bottle of her creation. The best in ceramic design executed during the year was displayed against the background of paintings and sculpture (below at right).





The Student Artist Shows His Wares

Art, too, has its very practical aspects. How to design products so that they will attract the eye of buyers is a prime subject of study. Allan Munkres (above) displays his model of a hand-vise, just as it would appear as a manufactured item. The sleek lines of this modern adding machine (right) won the Roger Dougherty \$50 Purchase Award for top work in the students' exhibition for Robert Miracle. The low-slung table (below) by Dale Robison and the contour chair, again by Munkres, are pieces of furniture typical of art students' craftsmanship and pieces of furniture any homeowner would love to have.



For Art's Sake Continued

O'Neil, '36bfa, '39mfa, emphasizes that training in the fundamentals of art is the basis for the development of individual powers of expression. And so the fundamentals of design, sculpture, drawing and art appreciation are impressed upon the budding art historian as well as the painter-to-be.

There is a strong emphasis on drawing. "I think perhaps we put more emphasis on drawing than most schools do," said O'Neil. "Each student takes some drawing courses during each semester he is in school."

There are few one-track artists in the O.U. school since students are encouraged to investigate all mediums. It is not unusual for a painter to take sculpture and advertising design as electives. This wide-open approach has produced some interesting results. Three men who originally planned careers in advertising art tried their hands at serious painting and have won their fame in the latter field. They are Eugene A. Bavinger, '46bfa, O.U. art faculty member; Stanley Hess, '48bfa, '50mfa, associate professor of art at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, and Hatchett.

As the students move into their junior and senior years, there is more time devoted to their major field, but never to the exclusion of all other branches of art.

The major emphasis in the art school is on learning by doing and for this reason a majority of the student's time is spent in studio classes. For example, a painting major will likely have 30 hours in studio painting work alone—not counting studio work in other areas.

The theory at the art school is that talent is a combination of interest, energy and intelligence and that everyone has a certain ability in art, perhaps undiscovered and undeveloped. The aim of the school is to encourage students to have confidence in their own way of seeing things, to provide instruction in the precise tools of art and to offer an atmosphere in which creation is possible.

The O.U. school has often been criticized for its heavily modern approach to art. Abstracts are the rule rather than the exception in both student and faculty shows. O'Neil denies that the faculty has encouraged this trend among the students.

Abstract art is an international phenomena. O.U. students are well aware of the trends and movements in their fields, and they know what their contemporaries are doing. O'Neil feels sure that this influences student thinking, and in his view young people tend instinctively to work in the abstract vein. This is more important, he

believes, in determining their views than the implication that the faculty is abstract-oriented.

O'Neil insists that a good teacher doesn't try to force students into his mold and that the idea that students attempt to emulate their teachers is old hat.

The students couldn't go far wrong if they did attempt to emulate the successes of the faculty members, however, for the O.U. teachers have compiled an impressive list of honors and awards in their fields.

Faculty artists, in addition to Painters O'Neil and Bavinger, are Roger Corsaw, Joseph Taylor, Emilio Amero, James Henkle, William Harold Smith, Samuel Olkinetzky, Cecil Lee and R. W. Tomberlin, '38bfa. 1959-60 was a busy season for these working artists.

O'Neil, who has studied in Italy and Greece, exhibited a group of his recent paintings at the M-59 Galleries in Copenhagen. His work was also shown in the Invitational Southwestern Artists Exhibition in Dallas and at a regional survey show at Kansas State College.

Bavinger, one of the most talented abstractionists in the country, has won the \$500 purchase prize at the Mid-America Exhibition in Kansas City for the second successive year. He was also honored with an invitation to submit work for the Carnegie International Exhibition in Pittsburgh—this is the first time an Oklahoma artist has been so recognized.

Corsaw won an award of merit for a

ceramic piece shown at the 29th Annual Exhibition of the Springfield Art Museum. An honor of unusual significance was his selection as one of the leading American ceramists, being asked to exhibit at the International Cultural Exchange Exhibition in Geneva.

Perhaps one of the best known faculty members is Sculptor Taylor, whose work has been commissioned for many Oklahoma buildings and parks. Taylor designed and built the ornamental grillwork screen which encases the DeGolyer Collection in Bizzell Memorial Library. His task, successfully completed, was to express the development of science and technology in wrought iron. Another recent honor was his inclusion in the Oklahoma Hall of Fame.

Amero is most widely known for his skill as a lithographer and muralist. A native of Mexico, he is generally credited with the revival and development of interest in lithography in this country. He has worked closely with such famed artists as Rivera, Orozco, Merida and Charlot. His lithography shop at O.U. is considered one of the finest and most complete in the Southwest.

Henkle, primarily a three-dimensional artist, has completed and installed an impressive metal mural on the history of computing methods in O.U.'s brand-new Numerical Analysis Laboratory on the North Campus, which will house the University's \$400,000 high-speed electronic computer.



Brooding sculptures and abstractionist paintings are not the exceptions to the rule in the student art exhibitions. This sculpture is the work of Francisco Cruz, modernistic painting by Don Kennedy.