

Presenting the 2025 Art Student Exhibit



The white walls of Archer Gallery came alive with drawings, photography, paintings, and more at the opening reception of the 2025 Art Student Annual Exhibit on May 27. Three-dimensional pieces, such as ceramics and metals, stood on pedestals, while a digital media piece played on a TV, complete with headphones that allowed attendees to fully immerse themselves in its artistry. Families, friends, and staff explored the gallery, speaking with the artists about their pieces, each one curated over the past year by their art professors.



Olive Popp, who won the Most Ambitious award, with her piece entitled *Nightfall*.

Every piece was unique, drawing the eye to color, shape, shadow, texture, and detail. One painting, bright with shades of blue and featuring a young woman with birds perched on her shoulders, was hard to miss. *Nightfall* by Olive Popp – who won the “Most Ambitious” award – stood out not only for its visual impact, but for the story behind it.

“I wanted the piece to feel dreamy, with a modern feel to it,” Olive said of her self-portrait. In the painting, she looks to the past, with ancient Greece in the background. But as an artist, Olive is looking forward, with plans to challenge her creativity in new ways as a makeup artist.



Meilani Schille with her piece entitled *Personal Battles*.

For Meilani Schille, inspiration came from the screen. Her watercolor piece, *Personal Battles*, blends elements from her favorite movies and TV shows into an eye-catching collage of pop culture. The layers of emotion and nostalgia reflect her approach to painting: letting layers of watercolor build into deeper, more vivid compositions.

Olivia K Smith, whose piece *Virus* won her “Best in Show”, also found her spark in visual storytelling. She credits watching cartoons at ten years old as the beginning of her artistic journey.

“The things I’m creating today – childhood me wouldn’t believe it,” Olivia shared with a smile.

With such a wide range of voices and visions on display, selecting winners was no easy task. That responsibility fell to Artist-in-Residence Bruce Conkle, who was tasked with making difficult decisions in a room full of deserving work.

“As a faculty member, I have had the joy of watching these

artists work and discover their unique creative voices,” said Kendra Larson, Archer Gallery Director. “Time and again I am surprised by their ingenuity and tenacity. When things don’t go as planned, they are not deterred – instead employing a healthy sense of humor.”

The exhibit offers viewers the opportunity to glimpse into the artists’ creative journeys and celebrate their growth, dedication, and hard work.

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Xavier Aguirre won 1st place in both the Drawing and Painting categories.

- Best in Show: Olivia Smith, *Virus*
- Most Ambitious: Olive Popp, *Nightfall*
- 1st Place in Ceramics: Katie Wilson, *Burger Coasters*
- 2nd Place in Ceramics: Angel Shetley, *Cult of the Black Lamb*
- 1st Place in Drawing: Xavier Aguirre, *Drowning in Joy*
- 2nd Place in Drawing: Brittany Grable, *Pots and Cups*
- 3rd Place in Drawing: Ariana Liseckas, *Modern*
- 1st Place in Painting: Xavier Aguirre, *Savor Me*
- 2nd Place in Painting: Thaily Garibay, *Untitled*

- 3rd Place in Painting: Brady Creswell, *It's You Again*
- 1st Place in Photography: Coleman Merle, *Reflections from the Past*
- 2nd Place in Photography: Olivia Porton, *Follow Through*
- 3rd Place in Photography: Sam Keil, *The L*
- Best Print: India Tillson, *Kool Aid*
- Best Watercolor: Mary Clark, *Lily Pads on Dreams*
- Best Graphic Design: Yuliia Umanets, *Typographic Mutation*
- Best in Comics: Seb Golding, *Maggie Hall*
- Best Metals: Katie Swaim, *Moon and Stars*
- Best Silver Gelatin Print: Anselmo Esquivel-Soto, *Untitled*











Plan Your Visit to the Exhibit

The Art Student Annual Exhibit is open for viewing May 27-June 16, Monday-Saturday 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. For more details on the Archer Gallery, visit www.archergallery.com.

Photos: Clark College/Malena Goerl