

The many faces of art

Pop, environmentally-concerned pieces represented at MSC

BY JULIA RECINDUS
The Battalion

One can see the varying facets of modern art by taking a trip to the MSC, where two very different types of art by contemporary artists are on exhibit at the MSC Visual Arts Gallery and the J. Wayne Stark Galleries.

"Soup to Nuts: Pop Art and Its Legacy" features the work from the Pop Art movement, of which Andy Warhol is perhaps its most recognizable member; in juxtaposition to this art, the Visual Arts Gallery has on display "Dion Laurent: All Over Our Planet," which features art concerned with environmental issues.

"Soup to Nuts," is traveling throughout

the United States, and is sponsored by the Eastern Washington University Foundation and touring under the authority of Exhibit Touring Services. The exhibit displays works of art by fundamental American artists who were pioneers in the development of the Pop Art movement.

It includes works by American, British and Canadian artists. Among the artist represented in the exhibit are Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Chuck Close, David Hockney, Allen Jones and Joyce Wieland.

According to the Webmuseum network, www.metalab.unc.edu, Pop Art arose from a rebellion against the accepted styles of the Cubists, Post-Impressionists and Abstract Expressionists.

"Pop Art brought art back to the material realities of everyday life," the Website says, "to popular culture (hence 'pop'), in which ordinary people derived most of their visual pleasure from television, magazines or comics."

According to the site, the term "Pop Art" was first used by the English critic Lawrence Alloway in a 1958 issue of Architectural Digest to describe those paintings that celebrate post-war consumerism, defy the psychology of Abstract Expressionism and worship the god of materialism.

Environmentally-concerned art has very different origins. According to "Artists and the Environment: A Report from the 81st College Art Association Conference in Seattle," by Greta de Groat, artists began making "earthworks," environmentally concerned art, in the '60s as a reaction to the political and social climate both within and outside the art world.

"Artists felt alienated from the art market and museums, which were seen as unresponsive to artists' social concerns. One way to protest this situation was to remove art from areas controlled by the art establishment and locate them

in public spaces, or even in remote wilderness areas," de Groat said.

Eric Andraos, a member of the MSC Visual Arts Committee and a sophomore computer science major, said Laurent's "All Over Our Planet" exhibit is unlike any exhibit the gallery has hosted in the past.

"It [the exhibit] is less traditional than most of the shows," Andraos said.

Laurent, a former student of Texas A&M who was a member of the Corps of Cadets, will also speak to students as a part of the "Face to Face" program the Visual Arts Committee is hosting. At the discussion Laurent will discuss his work and answer questions from the audience.

Anne Turner, a member of the Visual Arts Committee and a senior English major, said Laurent backpacks around the globe in search of inspiration for his pieces.

"His pieces have to do with how commerce and industry have destroyed natural habitat," Turner said. "He combines industrial imagery with a globe or pics of a rain forest. His strongest statements are against oil companies."

"His work is a diary of his travels," said Lauri Kidd, a member of the Visual Arts Committee and a sophomore biomedical engineering major. "He gathers items like trash to make art out of them. He believes things we get rid of can be used to make something beautiful. His artwork is not saying industry is bad, but look at what we are doing to the environment. He doesn't want to be labeled as an environmentalist, though."

Andraos said Laurent's art represents more than what people may think when they hear the word "environmental" used to describe Laurent's art or even take a first glance at the exhibit.

"What springs to people's mind is the word 'tree hugger' because they see the gasoline barrels... What I hope people take from the show is that it makes them



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aware of the world around them," Andraos said.

Turner said Laurent's exhibit was chosen for reasons besides Laurent's connection with the University.

"Last year we identified 'nature' as a specific theme for an exhibit this year," Turner said. "Dion was selected because his work was a variety of over 100 two-dimensional and three-dimensional pieces."

The Face to Face discussion will begin at 7:30 p.m. and is free of charge. It will take place in the Visual Arts Gallery on the second floor of the MSC. "All Over Our Planet" is on display at the Visual Arts Gallery and "Soup to Nuts" is on display at the J. Wayne Stark Galleries.

The J. Wayne Stark Galleries, located in the Memorial Student Center, is open Tuesday through Friday 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday at 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. Admission is free of charge. "Soup to Nuts" will be exhibited March 23 through May 21.

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