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Oakland University student artists' work on display

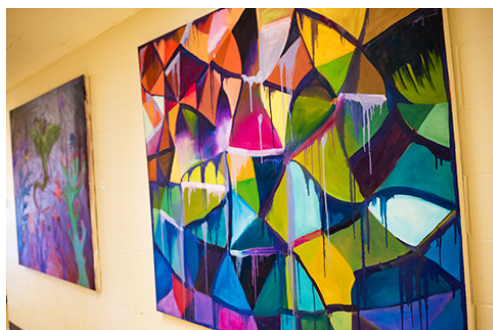
Ten Oakland University student artists were recently selected to have their work displayed in the Department of **Modern Languages and Literatures'** Active Learning Classrooms in South Foundation Hall on OU's campus.

According to **Jennifer Law-Sullivan**, an associate professor of French and MLL department chair, the displays were created by students in the **Department of Art and Art History** as part of a collaborative project between the two departments.

"We're the happy recipients of some amazing works of art," she said.

For OU student Daija Ginyard, having her work exhibited at OU has been a "surreal" experience.

"This is the second time this month my work has been on exhibition, so I'm very excited about that," she said. "It feels very good to have my work displayed here. I never thought a work of art like this, depicting what it depicts, would be on display here. I'm very happy that it is."



Her work, entitled "Welcome to Black Planet," depicts three figures — a black female and two black males — with a crowd of people behind them.

"I thought it was reminiscent of 'The Trinity' with the woman as the peacemaker," she said.

Ginyard said she modeled the figures in the painting after people in photographs and wanted them to depict "the various looks that black people have."

"I wanted them to look different because people look different," she said. "So the figure on the right has dreadlocks like myself, while the one on the left has a beard and curly hair that's shaved on the sides."

Student artwork on display

Another OU student, Ashley Fowler, found inspiration for her work — "106 Children" — in flowers.

"It's about the inspiration to grow," she said.

The painting depicts different types of flowers — poppies, lavender, etc. — that have special meaning for Fowler.

"The poppies are inspired by opioid addiction because I've lost so many friends to the opioid crisis," she said. "I started with red poppies, but then I decided it shouldn't just be about sadness and I started adding more colorful flowers. Each one has a different story."

Like her art, Fowler's own story is filled with a mix of emotions, from happiness to sadness and everything in between.

"I have a learning disability, so school is really hard for me sometimes," she said. "Painting lets me get away from the real world. It's hard to explain, but it puts my mind at ease."

For OU student Elise Schicker, her painting — entitled "On Fire" — helped her learn to let go and rely on her own intuition. instead of a plan.



Oakland University student Ashley Fowler's "106 Children" is one of 10 works of art by OU students currently on display in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures' Active Learning Classrooms in South Foundation Hall.



Angelina Longo



Elise Schicker

“It’s really about female empowerment,” she said. “I picked a more docile pose for the figure, in terms of the way she’s sitting, and I war to use a really strong color to create a juxtaposition between vulnerability and strength.”

Schicker said the opportunity to work on a larger canvas and having her work displayed at Oakland University was “a great experience.”

“It’s really cool to see it on display here at OU,” she said. “I’ve never really worked on a canvas this big before. It’s bigger than me, but it really fun to work on a canvas this size.”

Other OU students who will have their work displayed in the MLL’s Active Learning Classrooms in South Foundation Hall include: Valbor Dedvukaj, Angela Farrah, Melissa Filar, Megan Henke, Angelina Longo, Timothy Van Maele, and Marisa Zandi.

