

46th Annual Utah All-State High School Show Juror Responses (February-March 2018)

Drawing Jury Group:

Strengths:

- Technical draftsmanship, imagination and experimentation with mixing media (string and drawing, etc.)
- Overall the technical skills were well executed or an honest attempt was made by each student. I was pleased with the amount of creativity and playfulness; however, there could have been more of that.
- The technical ability for such young artists was excellent! The strongest works had a balance of both confidence and sensitivity with the medium, which all the more strongly expressed the message/artist's personality in the work.
- The range/diversity of style - many of my favorite works were nothing like my style as an artist, but they evoked such personality, passion, sensitivity and emotion. Many of the works represented in the show portray a tremendous maturity for such young artists - I am eager to see where the future takes them!

Recommendations:

- Push students to create narrative, there were many works with a single face or figure
- Presentation is always a weak area but this year was much better than years past. Always think about the final product/presentation. Also, teachers could push ideas that help the students go beyond straight forward imagery or subject, make abstraction, etc.
- I wish there had been more abstraction or pure drawing as well as bigger more bold attempts in creativity. I noticed a lot of portraiture and deconstructed faces.
- For me, the works that made it into the show as opposed to those that did not came down to: (1) The confidence and pride put into the artwork as a whole (2) I wanted to see the artist's personality and interests in the work.
 - For example: Many still lives were technically very good, but the objects drawn told me nothing about the artist and who they were. Also, students need to learn to cut mats and framework by themselves -it's a great learning process and assists in the pride and confidence put into the work.

Painting Jury Group:

Strengths:

- The thoughtful creativity of the approach by students as they execute their stories through painting. Some very original approaches, fearless in the mediums selected.
- I was impressed with the strength of expression in basic classical art elements such as value, shading, form, depth, and a sense of atmosphere among elements within the 2D works. And yet there was also a good variety of approaches among the various genres. Some very traditional and others really inventive. The overall skill level is pleasantly impressive.
- The high quality of the student work. The handling of the watercolor, oil, and acrylic paint is mostly excellent, especially in the award winners.
- The impressive skill and creative thought skills were delightful to see. These young artists are going to be very good for the art world as they work and mature as artists.
- I noticed an emphasis on design as well as the figure. There were some very thoughtful concepts that were executed well.
- There were some incredibly thought provoking paintings. There is definitely an awareness of social issues and a willingness to address them.

Recommendations:

- Presentation of finished pieces; you always want to present your finished work in the best possible light. Use appropriate lighting. That said, some work could use a few more finishing touches. Bring corners together, fill space, and don't leave unpainted gaps between objects.
- There were a few works which did not jury into the show simply due to disappointing presentation. The frame and matting are important as well.
- Framing and presentation is always a point of interest. It's unfortunate that the presentation of several pieces detracted from the final piece. Helping students understand that a message within a painting/piece of art can be lost if the framing is distracting.

3D/Mixed Media Jury Group:

Strengths:

- I was immediately impressed with the high quality of the stonework as well as the raku ceramics and some of the wood pieces. The best of these pieces are easily competitive with work being done by University students. I learned from my fellow jurors that the art teachers of these students are known for turning out students who have honed their craft.
- I was happy to see an awareness of contemporary art in some of the pieces today, though I would like to see more high school artists in conversation with contemporary art.
- I was completely impressed and proud of all the young artists who submitted to this exhibition, the work was fantastic!
- There are so many strong works of art in this show. Much of this work shows a professional level of craft and presentation. Overall, I felt the work from these young students showed a lot of heart. I got a sense of what these young people's lives are like and it was evident that they are deeply engaged with the world around them.
- Many works were very well crafted. Several works were conceptually strong. Overall very strong work for this level.
- So much of the work was well thought out and executed. It was hard to narrow the work down for the show. Overall very impressed by the students work - sorry the show couldn't contain more pieces.
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Recommendations:

- Many works we wanted to admit had to be turned away because of presentation materials
- Presentation is always important. Some of the mixed media pieces were made from materials that didn't hold up very well. Foam core or cardboard where another material choice would have carried the concept better. Also, frames that look shoddy or are falling apart. With 3-D pieces, many needed to be considered from all angles, rather than just the front.
- Presentation: frames etc. Taped edges coming apart. Students need to find something they are passionate about and conceptually work through the possibility in connection to the work. It just takes time for artists to develop. Be patient with students but encourage conceptual thinking.

Photography/Digital/Video Jury Group:

Strengths:

- There were some great departures from straight photography that included altering, re-arranging, and taking additive and subtractive measures to the work. There was a diverse range of approaches in media.
- The approach and skill to classic subject matter like portraits and landscape was strong, confident and fresh.
- Composition, use of color relationships, a wide range of techniques. Subject matter was pretty diverse.
- I was pleasantly surprised by the wide range of techniques. A lot of creativity in approach.
- There was a nice range of techniques and a variety of approaches to the art. A good mix of collage, digital manipulation, video and straight photography methods were present.

Recommendations:

- I felt like conceptual work was really lacking in the media category. Be careful of cultural appropriation and tokenism. It would have been nice to see more diversity in scale where appropriate.
- Presentation: doesn't have to be expensive, just clean, professional and adds to the overall visual in a positive way. Avoid clichés and being too derivative.
- Stronger methods of presentation would be good to see. Some of the framing and display finishing was a little sloppy. Clean the glass, make sure the frames aren't scratched or broken, etc.
- The strong visual diversity was great to see. On the other hand, students and teachers should discuss the implications of cultural appropriation (we saw a few photos that could be culturally offensive to specific groups of people).