

DePauw University senior artists say goodbye to Peeler Art Center

By **Madison Dudley** - April 20, 2015

A years worth of work and a room full of praise is best used to describe the opening of the senior art exhibition on Friday night in Peeler.

Seven senior art majors presented their final projects. Mediums ranged from photography, mixed media painting, sculpture and performance art. Each of these seniors had to research in depth ideas about their medium of choice, and then focus on one central idea to model their senior projects around.

"This is the most important day for the art department," said studio art professor Lori Miles, studio art professor and seminar instructor for the graduating seniors final semester. This exhibition was treated by the department as a "coming out" of sorts into the art community for these young, aspiring creators. "It's a magical world," said Miles. Peeler is welcoming these future graduates to the world of high art.

These seven graduating art majors are Hannah Budding, Taryn Hampton, Pui Yee Yiu (Yupee), Lauren Arnold, Anh Thuy Nguyen, Lauren Keeley and Arlene Beltran. These artists had the shared goal to "create a cohesive body of work" with similar and central themes for their final project, according to Miles.

Art majors have two senior seminars, one in the fall and one in the spring. The one in the fall is for exploration and research, coming up with a few key ideas to work off of as themes to build their art around. Second semester they must decide on one idea and then develop it into a body of work.



Senior Anh Thuy Nguyen uses laser ink jet printed on rocks in her piece "Burden."
MADISON DUDLEY / THE DEPAUW

"Two advisors, two semesters," said studio art major, Taryn Hampton. "Blood, sweat and tears in a literal way."

The themes of the seven artists vary from ideas tackling family relationships and the electronic age, to family memories and repetition. Each work shows the artist's individual style and way of thinking.

The senior exhibition will be on display in Peeler until graduation day, then the seven graduates will come back to Peeler one last time to move out their work, either to take home or throw away.

"I'm probably going to take mine home," said studio art major, Lauren Arnold. "It has been a reflective process for me. It is a memory I want to keep but also move forward from."

These seven seniors said that out of everything DePauw and Peeler has given them; they will miss the community the most. "I didn't know any of these people before this year," said Hampton. "Getting to know everyone has been a real treat."

"I'll miss having a studio; having someone tell me what I've done wrong," said studio art major, Anh Thuy Nguyen. "We want to grow and this is the best environment for that."

Art majors at DePauw have "an amazing set of resources," according to Professor Miles. Studio art majors are given their own state of the art studios and work spaces, instruction and criticism from both DePauw and visiting professors, and the ability to use Peeler's assets however they please. Most importantly, these students value their support system above all else. "The emotional investment that we have had in each other," said Hampton. "We saw each others highs and lows."

"We are small but mighty," said studio art major, Arlene Beltran.

Past graduation, they all have different dreams and future paths. Some wish to stay for Peeler's fifth year internship; others are going to New York to try their luck in a bigger art scene.

Regardless of their paths, there is no doubt that they will go from DePauw to create great things. Keep an eye out for these artists, because there will be more to come.