



Exhibit features Littleton students

'First Impressions' on display Feb. 19-March 23

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"First Impressions" will take on two meanings at Littleton's Depot Art Gallery.

In the office and back room of the gallery, four new members of the Littleton Fine Arts Guild - which operates the Depot - will exhibit their art. They are acrylic painter Christa MacFarlane, oil specialist Nancy Whitenight, woodcrafter Leonard Hilgartner and watercolor artist Dee Chalkey.

The front room, meanwhile, will hold work by Studio Art students from Littleton High School, many of them International Baccalaureate students, for whom an exhibit is part of their course requirement.

Prospective college art majors need the same curriculum as IB students according to their teacher, Jennifer Jeannelle, although the IB exam is not required. So Jeannelle's Studio Art class is a mix of bright, accomplished young artists who are creating a variety of independent projects.

"We work thematically," Jeannelle said, with three projects (one assigned) due each six weeks, plus field trips. The IB students (there are six) prepare for an exam in their second year, when they submit a portfolio consisting of a sketchbook, artist's statement, interview (at the gallery) and a video of the artist in front of their piece.

"The depot offered the space ... a chance for a real world experience," said Jeannelle, whose background is in ceramics and involves numerous installations. "I want them to understand the real world."

Students who are testing for IB credit will get to include three to seven pieces (depending on size), while others will have one piece. The students will install the show and publicize it, with help from the IB coordinator and some parents.

We were able to visit briefly with a number of the students involved to gain some insight into planned projects - with a fairly tight deadline.

Students will present everything from comic books to silkscreens and self-portraits. Selena Ashbaugh has been busy working with edible gum tape, forming bright, edible decorative

flowers for a cake that at its base will be made of Styrofoam. No stranger to the kitchen, Ashbaugh will attend Johnson and Wales University for an associate's degree in baking and pastry. "Baking helps me relax," she said.

Thinh Dinh Su will show a complex drawing of Buddha seated on a lotus, inside a Star of David and is working on cutting a large stencil from flowing computer images. He said that he plans to attend art school, "perhaps after a gap year."

Other students such as senior Sara Fee and junior IB student Natalie Sandstrom have been busy collaborating. The two are working on a project inspired by Shel Silverstein's popular book "The Giving Tree" and have been building a small model of a tree, which they will next enlarge (in segments) to six or seven feet tall, using PVC pipe, chicken wire and a spray finish. "It's about relationships with people and their paths and will include casts of hands," they said.

If you go:

"First Impressions" will run from Feb. 19 to March 23 at the Depot Art Gallery, 2069 W. Powers Ave., Littleton. A student reception will be from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. March 1, perhaps with some musicians present. Gallery hours: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesdays through Sundays. 303-795-0781. Admission is free.