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## Westminster artists curate Senior Art Exhibit



By [Vanessa Eveleth](#) on April 13, 2022



Mariah Trujillo, a junior environmental studies major, and Dylan Richmond, a senior English major, pursue senior fine arts major, Lucy Wilks' illustration journal at the Senior Art Exhibit in Tanner Atrium in Jewett Center for the Performing Arts March 28. Wilks was one of the nine senior art students featured in the Student Art Exhibit. "My work is reflective of my experiences as an autistic person," Wilks said. Image courtesy of QW. Image description: A student with long, wavy black hair and a student with straight blonde hair take a detailed look at an art journal at the Senior Art Exhibit in Tanner Atrium in Jewett Center for the Performing Arts on March 28. The art journal is pinned onto a temporary white wall. Glimpses of more artwork are visible in the background.

The air crackles with energy that can only be produced by the culmination of four years of creative work. Family, professors and peers amble between the temporary walls presenting an array of charcoal and pastel drawings, sculpted ceramics and printed imagery. Some wanderers hold a plate of cheeses and chocolate from the elegant charcuterie boards nestled on the corner table.

Every year, the students in Studio Seminar prepare, curate and host the Senior Art Exhibit. The opening night exhibit went underway March 28 in Tanner Atrium, Jewett Center for Performing Arts.

“The [exhibit] is for graduating seniors to show off the work that they’ve done through their whole college career,” said Laton Hansen, a senior fine arts major with an emphasis in painting and drawing. “A culmination to show who you are as an artist, what you’ve done and what you’re proud of.”

### **Preparing for the Senior Art Exhibit**

Hansen said planning the exhibit was a collaborative effort from the nine seniors in Studio Seminar, with budgeting and idea support from art professors Matt Kruback and David Baddley.

“[The exhibit] showed me that it takes a lot of work, like prior to even putting the stuff up on the walls and on the podiums,” said Karelis Ruiz, a senior fine arts major with an emphasis in ceramics.

Hansen said the preparations for the art exhibit went extremely fast.

“Most of it happened a week or two before the show,” Hansen said. “And then a lot of the actual setup was the day [of].”

The art seniors spent six to seven hours hanging and labeling their artworks on white walls in Tanner Atrium two days before opening night, according to Ruiz.

Hansen said they worked with Pamela Shields, director of events, to organize tables and to have an open bar for the exhibit’s opening night.

The senior art students prepared everything else, according to Hansen.

“A lot of the students have connections,” Hansen said. “That’s a pretty common thing [at] Westminster [College].”

For example, fine arts major Taylor Smith was able to provide charcuterie boards, according to Hansen.

“We picked out a dessert one, one that would be the nice, fancy cheeses and then also options that were gluten free or vegan free,” Hansen said.

Senior communication major Cat Taylor used her graphic design skills to create the advertisement poster, according to Ruiz.

“We decided to do a tattoo-flash theme where on our posters and social media, we took some of our artwork and then sketched over it as if it were like a little tattoo preview,” Ruiz said.

Overall, students all had to face the challenge of decision making, according to Hansen.

“I think something a lot of artists face is ‘Is this good enough to show?’” Hansen said. “Curating your own work can be a little bit of a challenge and also putting lots of stuff in a small space.”



Senior fine arts major, Meau Brinley poses in front of two of his art pieces in the Senior Art Exhibit in Tanner Atrium in Jewett Center for the Performing Arts on March 28. Brinley specializes in painting and drawing and was one of nine senior art students to showcase their art in the Senior Art Exhibit. “This show is all the work that we’ve done here at Westminster, but we could have put anything we wanted to in it,” said Karelis Ruiz, a senior fine arts major with a ceramics emphasis. “But everyone felt that their most recent work reflected who they were the best.” Photo courtesy of QW. Image description: A white individual with long light brown hair stands in between two art pieces in the Senior Art Exhibit in Tanner Atrium in Jewett Center for the Performing Arts on March 28. The art piece on the left has strong pink undertones with varies illustrations and graphics. The right hand side art piece appears more orange with an assortment of illustrations and graphics. The art is hung against a white wall.

### Alternative Mediums to Access the Senior Art Exhibit

“So I can’t say before COVID-19, if there was a website,” said Karelis Ruiz, a senior fine arts major with an emphasis in ceramics. “But since then, it’s important because it gives people who aren’t comfortable to come into a public space [...] the chance to look at our art and still be able to participate in some way.”

Ruiz said the website also acts as a way for people to “preview what the work will be,” in case someone is hesitant if they will relate to the art or are into the style.

The website also supplements the in-person exhibit for people who prefer to take a brief look, and then want to examine it further afterwards, Ruiz said.

“Each of us has chosen an image as kind of the very first one that you see, and then once you click on that there will be all the artist’s work with the titles, mediums and years,” Ruiz said.

Another medium of the Senior Art Exhibit is the zine by senior fine arts major Meau Brinley. A zine is a small, self-published magazine.

“[The zine] is something for people to take home,” Brinley said. “It’s just here, you know, something physical that you can have with yourself after leaving the exhibit.”



He was not sure if it had been done before, but Brinley said he is personally interested in zines.

“The reason that zines are really cool is that they are super cheap to make – they’re really accessible,” Brinley said. “It’s also a good way to disseminate information to local groups of people.”

Brinley said the zines were also used as advertisements and set out in a few places locally.

*The Senior Art Exhibit is available for in-person viewing at Tanner Atrium within the Jewett Center for Performing Arts until April 27.*

“I think it’s so important that we have this experience,” Ruiz said. “And that this was all led by us, makes it feel a little bit more personal like, ‘I did this and it was a success.’”



The Senior Art Exhibit zines are displayed on the piano in Tanner Atrium in Jewett Center for the Performing Arts on March 28. Meau Brinley, a senior fine arts major, said he created the zines for exhibit as advertisements and as something for people to take home with them. “It’s a good way to disseminate information to local groups of people [...] it’s just quick and dirty,” Brinley said. Photo courtesy of Q W. Image description: Small white and black zines are propped up, inside an orange bowl, and splayed across a piano’s back in Tanner Atrium in Jewett Center for the Performing Arts on March 28. A few legible words on the zines are SAE, Jewett Atrium and See you there.

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