

ARTS & VARIETY

Concordia & H. Williams Galleries

BY DAVINA BELLINGER

Through the course since The Concordia Gallery first opened in the late 1980s, it intentionally features different art materials and approaches as an educational service to both design and fine arts majors. It also helps those learning about the arts appreciate it across the campus. Throughout the beginning of the second semester at Concordia University-St. Paul, many exhibitions have been displayed in the Gallery by local artists. The H. Williams gallery is specifically used for CSP senior students, alumni, and other educational exhibits.

Gallery director Stephanie Hunder, who has been teaching at Concordia University St. Paul for 19 years, works with local and sometimes national artists who can in turn work with art majors. The gallery also works with professional curators, art historians, and artists who select a group of artworks for an exhibition to explore a concept. Hunder says that what makes the Concordia Gallery special is, “Our students are able to work so closely with the artists who show here. Most schools have galleries run by several professional staff, but ours is mostly staffed by students, other than myself.”

In the Concordia Gallery, an exhibit that was presented was *Voice to Vision*, which was the gallery’s second show from the first semester. This was a group of artists who collaborated with refugees to make cathartic work about their experiences. David Feinberg led this project. Another exhibit featured was *Caravan*, which also contained a lot of artists and was curated by William Franklin. At the High School Honors show, which is an annual high school show, students from Roseville, Stillwater, Woodbury, and Perpich Arts High School were able to participate. The last exhibition was presented at the beginning of this semester.

Keith J. Williams, chair of the art and design department, has been teaching for the last 23 years. He says that the galleries “Serve multiple

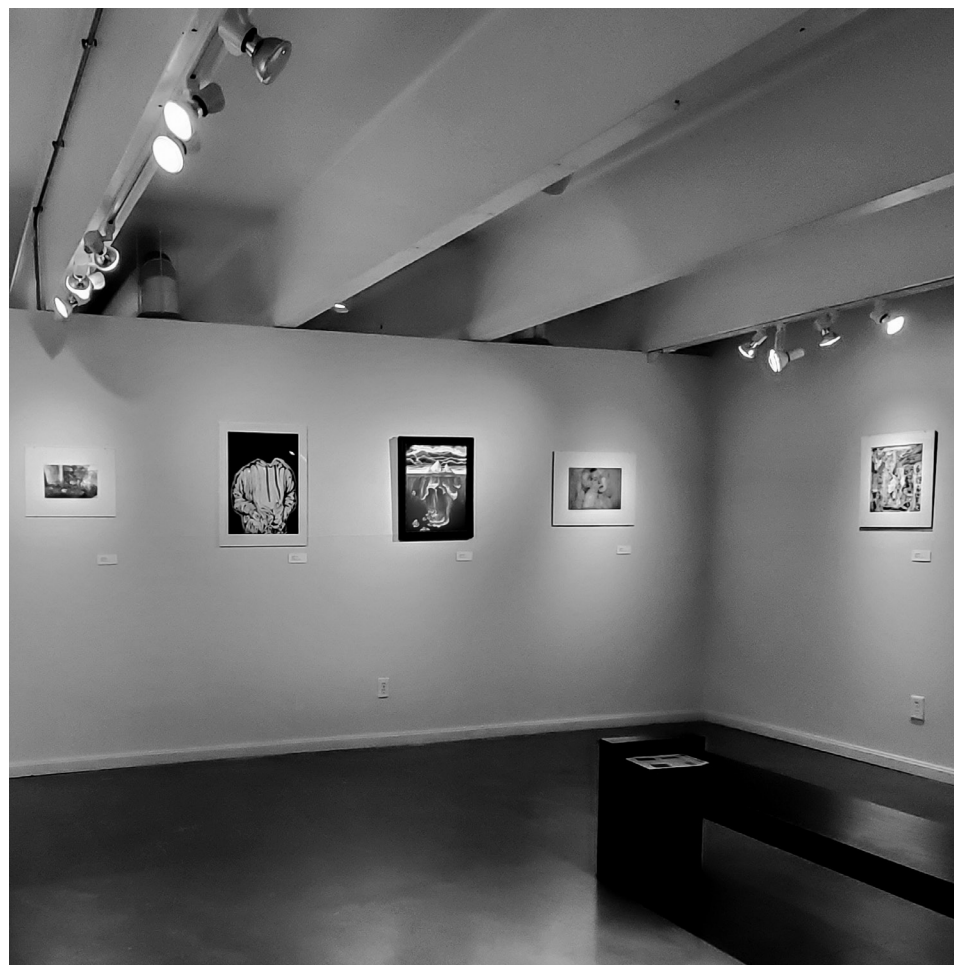
purposes, the most important one being educational. They also give our students experience in preparing work for exhibition, work-study paid opportunities, and to learn about the gallery and museum careers in our field. The prestige of our design exhibitions has drawn people from at least three state areas to see these internationally known designers.”

The most compelling shows presented this far into the year are *Voice of Vision* and *Caravan*, which are some of the exhibitions that Hunder and Williams enjoy viewing along with all the others. Williams stated that *Caravan* was, “A powerful show, and because of the importance of the subject matter in this political climate, it saw hundreds of people coming in from on and off-campus throughout the run of the exhibition.”

First-year Molly Dekarski is a graphic design major, who has a work-study job in the gallery, has seen these exciting exhibitions. Dekarski said that one of her favorite pieces this far was from the high school show, saying, “There was a photography piece called ‘Mountains of Ice.’ It intrigued me because of the illusion that the tiny ice crystals were, in fact, mountains.” Dan Erickson, another first-year and graphic design major, said that he finds it “Interesting how people can use the wall as a surface to paint or build their pieces on. The whole gallery is a blank space that can be used as a template for artists to display their work in creative ways.” Skye Lynn Fuller, who is a senior who is majoring in art education, has learned quite a lot about being a working artist and what inspires working artists as well. “The gallery is a wonderful learning tool for students as they receive the chance to exhibit their works. Whether that is in their solo show (a requirement for art studio majors), or as part of the all-student juried show which takes place every year, which every student has the opportunity to participate in,” Fuller said.



Concordia Gallery reception. CREDIT: Victoria Turcios



Concordia Gallery's 17th Annual High School Honors Show. CREDIT: Davina Bellinger