MILWAUKEE INSTITUTE OF ART & DESIGN

Gallery night's largest exhibition celebrates creative talent; engages viewers with new conceptual themes

PRESS RELEASE

Summary: MIAD 2009 Senior Exhibition, April 17 – May 9, 2009; Opening Reception, April 17, 5 – 9 p.m.; 273 E. Erie St.; Tues. – Sat. 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Free. 414.847.3200. miad.edu

MILWAUKEE… From Hmong folktales reinterpreted, to an ergonomic sailing seat for the disabled and an interactive piano installation that integrates visual and auditory art forms, the state's largest and most eagerly awaited annual show – MIAD's 2009 Senior Exhibition – opens Gallery Night, Friday, April 17, 5 – 9 p.m., at the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design, Wisconsin's only independent, four-year college of art and design.

The exhibition celebrates the innovative works of 135 artists and designers representing the college's 11 Bachelor of Fine Arts majors. It continues through May 9 at MIAD's Third Ward Campus, 273 E. Erie Street. The gallery is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tues. - Sat.

Milwaukee's best-attended rite of spring presents the seniors' extensive senior thesis projects in Communication Design (web and graphic), Drawing, Illustration, Industrial Design, Integrated Studio Arts, Interior Architecture + Design, Painting, Photography, Printmaking, Sculpture and Time-Based Media (animation and video).

New this year is the organization of works into conceptual groupings determined from an extensive list of themes compiled by the seniors. "The groupings," said Director of Galleries Mark Lawson, "will help deepen connections forged between exhibitors and viewers, and between art and design disciplines." They are Branding & Marketing, Medical & Science, Environment, Abstraction, Identity, Installation, Narrative, Cross-Cultural Issues, Psychology, Religion, Entertainment & Recreation, Instruction & Education, and Soundscapes.

Among this year's works:

- A reinterpretation of Hmong folk tales for youth and young professionals through books, story quilts and oral recordings by two Hmong students majoring in Communication Design. The women received support from the Hmong Association of Sheboygan and friends and young professionals in the Hmong community.
- A seat designed for individuals with disabilities for the Milwaukee Sailing Center to help make sailing more comfortable and enjoyable by an Industrial Design student who interned at Kimberly Clark.
- "22 Years of Inventory" – A performance-based installation of handcrafted museum crates that allows viewers to interact with the space as the crated masterpieces are opened to unveil three-dimensional works. This Sculpture major interned at the Betty Brinn Children's Museum, and has shown and curated work throughout Milwaukee.
- An interactive piano installation displaying relief woodcuts and mixed-media drawings that integrates visual and auditory art forms by a student majoring in Integrated Studio Arts who plans to pursue graduate studies in Art Therapy.
- "Rise and Fall" – photographic works that harness today's uncertainty by creating a world that dances between fact and fiction by a student who interned for well-known fashion photographer Greg Kadel in New York and has shown his work there as part of the exclusive New York Studio Program.

Many of the works at the MIAD 2009 Senior Exhibition are for sale, and the seniors are on hand to talk about their work on Gallery Night. Graduating seniors will receive their B.F.A. degrees in commencement exercises on May 9.

MIAD is Wisconsin's only college devoted exclusively to the education of professional artists and designers. Founded in 1974, it is accredited to award the bachelor of fine arts degree in 11 majors. With 80 percent of its 2,700 graduates living and working in Wisconsin, the college contributes a vital "brain gain" to the state that shapes its creative and economic future.