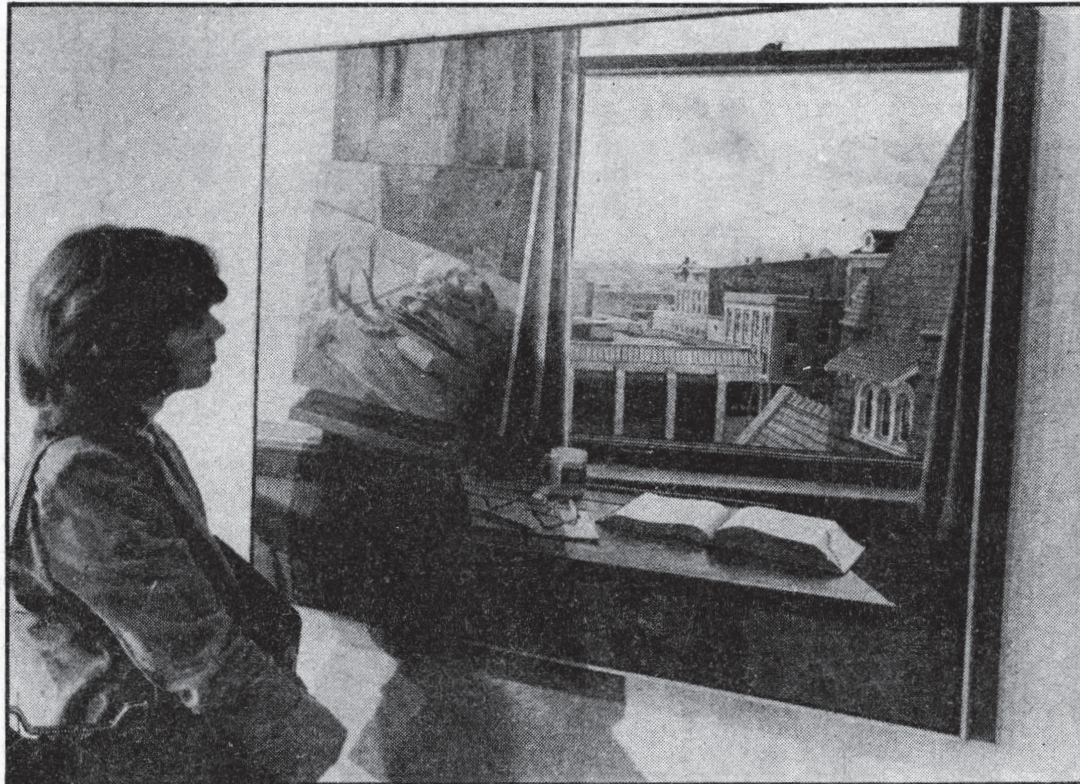


arts

Faculty art exhibition rich and humorous



Vicki Wilson, a senior art student, views "active-contemplative," by Dana Loomis, at the Faculty Exhibition II at Siegfred Gallery. (NEWS photo/Don Wallbaum)

By Katie Foley
Athens News Arts Editor

You need not be an artist to understand the importance of perspective and light to painter Dana Loomis. The open window in "active-contemplative," an oil on canvas, provides both elements for the artist's studio, located above Court Street. Light

from the window illuminates a carefully composed still life. The painting within this painting is a small study of an animal's skeletal remains and artist brushes. A pair of eyeglasses lay nearby the painting and next to a blue-checked coffee mug, which is set aside for Art.

Painted in a "new realism" style, Loomis' work expresses

a seriousness in both content and composition that evokes the Flemish painters of the northern Renaissance. If this is so, the mug for Art seems a quip too much.

Another painting by Loomis in the Faculty Exhibition II at Siegfred Gallery has the same serious tone with a juxtaposition of imagery that makes it difficult to discern the artist's

intentions. For his still life "Sensuality", Loomis drapes a pink nightgown over a small bric-a-brac shelf arranged among a bowl of ripe fruit, a plate of oysters, a string of sausages and a large, juicy, red roast. A reproduction of an old master is pinned to the wall. The delectable roast gleams like a jewel in the foreground. The work succeeds in its conviction that all these beautifully painted elements are, indeed, sensual pleasures.

Loomis provides the viewer, however, with rich ambiguity. For example, does he intend the subtle but humorous play among the images of the nightgown, the meat and the oysters? Not to mention the sausages.

Or does this painting intend to be strictly a narrative on the garden of earthly delights? Viewed either way, the rich colors and use of light and perspective make Loomis' work a tribute to the sensual nature of painting itself.

A series of five intaglio prints, "Left to Right", by Yong Soon Min, avoids such ambiguity by using a minimum of imagery. The series opens with a print of a small bullseye set in the center of a large white expanse of paper. At the right edge of a second print Min put

a tiny image of a hand aiming a gun at the third print which is an explosive solid red field embossed with a bullet hole.

For the fourth print, Min framed a small white card in black that reads, "without a word." Constructed like the fourth, the white space in the fifth print remains empty closing the series with a question mark or a period, dependent upon the viewer's reading. Succinct and powerful, Min's minimalist statement acquires new meaning on each reading. At the same time, the prints maintain an elegant visual integrity of their own.

Certainly humor was intended in Jonas Abner's print "Kim," an affectionate turn-about on student doodles and drawings about the teacher. A note scribbled in childish scrawl, full of requests, questions and signed "Guess Who!" is the dominant image Jonas uses to pull the viewer into his visual report card on life with students.

Discovered in the dark background of the print are sayings lifted from student-teacher bargaining sessions like, "Let's make a dill!" Caricatures of student faces doodled in green and red appear in the corner of the print.

Inviting in both its richness and humor, the show remains open through Friday.