



*Trump Eating his Children* by Celeste de Luna

#### SURFACE TREATMENT

What: "1 Foot of Art" Exhibition  
Where: STC VAM Art Gallery, Bldg. B-103, Pecan Street campus  
When: October 15-27, 2018  
Hours: 8am-3pm Tues., Wed., Thurs.  
Contact: [artgallery@southtexascolleg.edu](mailto:artgallery@southtexascolleg.edu)

#### **When Small is Not Less**

Academic artists from around the state participated in TASA's annual shape-themed exhibition

BY NANCY MOYER

SPECIAL TO THE MONITOR

The Art Department at South Texas College hosted a very interesting art exhibition this past month; unfortunately, it was part of the TASA Conference (Texas Association of Schools of Art ) and wasn't publicized for viewing. This annual event of art works, a decades old tradition for the organization, specified that all works must adhere to a measurement of one square foot. Hence, the title, "1 Foot of Art". The reception for the show was a closing one, where conference attendees viewed the work of their colleagues, taking their work down when they left. Artist and gallerist Mark Clark of Brownsville's Galeria 409 and Mi Vida Loca in Corpus judged the show, and awards were presented by STC's Rachael Brown, conference coordinator. Selene Elizondo accepted a First-Place award for her realistic Prismacolor drawing, "Portrait of

My Grandfather". Second Place went to "Favorite Drink" by Dr. Clearance Talley Sr., whose mixed media work constructed of strands of Mardi Gras beads gave a festive setting to the beverage. Curiously, neither the First nor Second Place works were one square foot.

"Montezuma's Silver Teeth" by Rolando Reyna won Third Place. Inspired by a work that has endured for centuries, the Aztec mosaic mask, Rolando Reyna Ironically eschewed the idea of archival relevance with "Montezuma's Silver Teeth", his exquisite ink drawing on a servilleta. "A couple of years ago," he commented, "I was going into this little coffee shop before I went to work, and I started working on napkins. I made several drawings using those little square napkins." Wanting the teeth to reflect their importance as in the original, he added silver foil.

"1 Foot of Art" was interesting as a statewide academic survey of artistic taste. Participation in the show was restricted to the TASA membership who teach art at the post-secondary level; works from all over Texas filled the STC VAM Art Gallery, giving a hint at what's on aesthetic minds elsewhere in this state. Labels did not give institutional identification, and styles leaned predominantly toward the conservative, with the exception of UTRGV and STC. Well, this pleased and surprised me. Donna Sweigart and Celeste de Luna expressed social commentary; Sweigart's work was also the most technologically forward piece in the show, and De Luna was intensely passionate with a no-holds-barred political view. Elsewhere, surface differences were subtle, but carried deeper meanings. Some works suggested personal problems in today's world, such as "Predicaments" by Eva Solis, and the engaging watercolor, "To the Newlyweds" by Jesmil Maldonado Rodriguez. Although this watercolor may just be a friendly gesture to friends who like Dia de Muertos symbolism, through its title it carries an ominous message. But none were more unsettling than De Luna's "Trump Eating his Children", a woodcut on fabric, which referenced the notion of malevolence and conflict in power from Greek mythology via Francisco Goya. Happier outlooks were offered by Phyllis Leverich and Rachel Brown. "I'm working with medical images and I liked the idea of having something organic, plant like, growing out of the organ," said Leverich. "I made this for my boyfriend. The flower, Campanula, symbolizes love." Brown remembers her grandfather reading this story to her. "Sam the Ant and Mr. Pigeon" illustrates the charming story in ink on a one-foot cube. Carol Fairlie's painting of her husband, "Through the Drinking Glass", could be read either way.

Realistic imagery was pervasive in this show. The majority of the works were wall pieces, but some free-standing sculptures and ceramics sat on low pedestals, and although beautifully executed, were of lesser interest.

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