



*Father* by Maximilian Cervantes

#### SURFACE TREATMENT

What: UTRGV School of Art juried Exhibition  
Where: UVAL, Kika de la Garza Fine Arts Center, 921 E 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Mission  
When: Through May 5, 2018  
Hours: 10am to 6pm Tuesday to Friday, 2-5pm Saturday  
Info: (956) 583-2787 or [www.uppervalleyartleague.org](http://www.uppervalleyartleague.org)

#### **Organization Art**

Art students from UTRGV present works that speak of art preparation and more.

BY NANCY MOYER

SPECIAL TO THE MONITOR

The “UTRGV School of Art juried Exhibition” currently on display at the Kika de la Garza Art Center, is a continuation of the Artists Unanimous student art organization. In an open-call to the School of Art, thirty students responded with works to be shown. Of these, only a few were juried out by Jurors, David Freeman and Chris Leonard, STC Art faculty members, who selected works and chose the award winners. The Best of Show award went to Ricardo Partida for his oil painting, “Death of a Fertile Male”. First Place went to Jonathon Hernandez’ print, “McWhata”, with Second Place going to “Respiration”, an oil painting by Cristobal Rodriguez. Third Place went to “Eternal Summer”, a mixed media work by Jessica Garza, and an Honorable Mention was given to the acrylic painting, “Puerto Rico Se Levanta”, by Tatiana Diaz.

Overall, this is a good exhibition. Jonathon Hernandez, AU President, pointed out the strength of the human figure in this exhibition, and figurative art is certainly the dominate direction

here. A pair of photographs by Maximilian Cervantes, "Mother" and "Father", are outstanding, rising above the rest of the show through the imagination and sensitive visualization needed to produce powerful images. Cervantes gives us works with a multi-level emotional presence, as opposed to the single-observation image. While the initial impression of the exhibition seems meager - only a few large paintings and no viable 3-D works, smaller works offer plenty of ideas to spark interest, particularly in the printmaking section. The aesthetic maturity observed in these works ranges from a little to a lot, since the open-call concept allowed a range that encompasses freshman to graduate level students. Students in this exhibition have conquered the skill and technique necessary for a polished product and produced a good show. The screen-print, "Patch Me Up, Baby", by Erica Briones makes a jump beyond traditional printmaking into a broader concept. Organizational or Institutional exhibitions, such as this one, tell us more about the group than the individual artists. Solo exhibitions let the individual artist speak; group exhibitions tell us about the common thread that brings the artists together. There is always an aesthetic pivot to consider. The lack of more advanced 2-D works, sculpture, jewelry, and upper-level ceramic art in this year's show is reportedly due to a conflicting exhibit planned by the School administration. When asked if he thought the student participation for this show was successful, M.C. Farris, AU Faculty Advisor, replied, "Yes and no. Another student art show currently in the Clark Gallery on the main campus awarded prizes, so much of the work that would have been in this show ended up in that show. It was just timing." Farris suggested that the student turnout during the last few years for AU exhibits has been low due to administrative adjustments at the new university and student art group internal politics. "So, the participation was good compared to last year," he concluded, "and I believe this exhibit fairly reflects the aesthetics of the School of Art.

These Artist Unanimous exhibitions have become regular art fare, and fortunately, Hernandez has stepped up to run the organization along with five students to keep these shows going, at least for another three years. Farris and Jerry Lyles both serve as AU Faculty Advisors.

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