



*A Child's Perception* by Iris N Gonzalez

## SURFACE TREATMENT

What: *U.A.-Artists Unanimous Annual Juried Exhibit*  
Where: UVAL, Kika de la Garza Art Center, 921 E. 12th Street, Mission.  
When: Through May 7: Hours are Tues, Wed and Thurs from 10am to 6pm; Fri 10am-2pm; Saturday, 2-6pm.  
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## Their Own Aesthetic

This year's *Artist Unanimous Juried Exhibit*, currently on display at the Kika de la Garza Art Center in Mission, has an air of categorical restraint about it. Attractively displayed, all works are easily recognizable within traditional boundaries such as painting, drawing, ceramics, and so on. This is a safe show. No distracting boundary breaking here. Judged by Mark Clark, Brownsville artist and owner of Galeria 409, awards were given in three categories: Best 2-D Work, Best 3-D Work, and Best of Show. UTRGV art department faculty members, Jerry Lyles and M.C. Farris are advisors to this extracurricular university student group.

The Best of Show award went to Iliana Salazar Rodriguez for her graphite drawing, "My Funny Bunny." With impressive technical skill and a sense of dramatic human scale, Rodriguez successfully communicates an intimate moment of literary sharing. "It has a nice humanity and a sense of humor to it that I found really appealing," said Clark about the drawing, "a real friendliness."

The Best 2-D award was won by Iris N. Gonzalez for her imaginative color pencil drawing, "A Child's Perception," and the Best 3-D award went to the colorful ceramic piece, "Luchando en La Vida," by Ana Isabel Lopez. "I was impressed by the diversity," Clark mused, sharing his general experience in judging the art show. "There doesn't seem to be any party line that they're pushing down all the students throats and the

level of drawing seems to be moving up; the technical abilities are there. It was difficult to decide what I liked best, and since I don't pretend to be objective in any way, what would I want on my wall?"

Over forty students are participating in this exhibit; they made their own choices regarding what work they wanted shown. "They are encouraged to show their own aesthetic," explained AU President, Maritza Muñoz. "A lot of students show work that is not class work, but there is also a lot of class work. We wanted both." Casting a critical eye over an exhibit of student art is tricky; where does the classroom art instructor leave off and the student artist begin? By commenting on a given work, am I referencing the instructor or the student? Even at the adult level of college and university students, which ones have the personal artistic strength to go beyond the academic framework? On display at this *Artist Unanimous Juried Exhibit* there is strong evidence of advanced drawing skills that develop the student artist's ability for more efficient out-of-self observation. Strong visual development increases the ability to see the details of reality, and raises an artist's standards when working with a chosen medium. But while this ability was observable in the 2-D work that dominated the exhibit, the 3-D section of the show was just not up to the same level.

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