

Student Art Society replaces physical art exhibition with Instagram exhibition

[Alana Sabol](#), News Writer | April 28, 2020

The Student Art Society, one of Allegheny's student-run organizations, held an online art exhibition called "Boxxed In" on their Instagram [allegheny_sas](#) from April 2 to April 10, to support artists who submitted their work, despite not being able to share them with others in a physical space.

The club was debunked in the spring of 2019, but has since been reinstated, and members were excited to begin planning future events.

"We were set to actually have a counter-exhibition to the Annual Student Art Show in a new exhibition space that we were granted on the second floor of (Doane Hall of Art)," President of SAS, Claire Klima, '21, said.

"We were in the process of cleaning up that (space) and getting ready for the show when (Allegheny closed)."

Despite this, the club soon moved their counter-exhibition online after discovering that the Annual Student Art Show was still taking art submissions through Google Forms and posting the winners online.

"I wanted to do something similar on (the SAS) Instagram page," Klima said. "(The Director of the Allegheny Art Galleries and Faculty Advisor

for SAS) Paula Burleigh emailed us and said that she would be happy to provide images of student submissions for us to use.”

Klima said that Burleigh has been helpful to SAS throughout the exhibition process and to the club as a whole.

“(Burleigh) shared all of the images with us, and all of the artists’ names, titles and mediums,” Klima said. “But she’s also left it entirely up to us.”

Klima explained that the premise of the exhibition was to emulate a Salon de Refusés. A Salon de Refusés, or an “Exhibition of Rejects,” is a historical art tradition that began in France in the late 19th century as an exhibition made up of works that were rejected by the annual Paris Salon.

Burleigh explained the importance of displaying a variety of student works, regardless if they won awards or not.

“It’s not that they’re showing the rejected artworks, it’s just to acknowledge that when we have a juror coming in, it’s just one person’s taste (being reflected),” Burleigh said. “All of the students have something important to say and (SAS) is giving them kind of a democratic platform to show their work.”

SAS posted three artists every day at 9 p.m., one post for each artist.

“We post later at night because that’s when a lot of (people are online),” Klima said. “We wanted to direct this (primarily) towards the student population for students to keep their mind off of (the pandemic).”

Treasurer of SAS Silas Morrow, '21, said the majority of the club was involved with posting for the exhibition.

“It was a group effort,” Morrow said. “Each day someone different would upload the (artworks). I made the poster (for the exhibition).”

Klima noted there are some differences between viewing art online versus viewing it in person.

“Digital representations of artworks that are meant to be more tangible like paintings or sculptures can definitely take away a layer of familiarity with the work,” Klima said. “Viewers might feel less attached to it, like it’s something to scroll through.”

However, she explained, it is imperative during this time to continue to share artworks regardless, especially when people can no longer view it physically.

“(An online exhibition) isn’t an idea that we just came up with,” Klima said. “This is something that art departments across the country have turned to, to try to adapt to the current situation and to encourage interacting with art and creating art, despite the fact that you might not be getting the viewership you were hoping to get.”

Morrow said he hopes that online viewership will expose more people across the world to Allegheny artists and their work.

“When we have our (physical art exhibitions), it’s just students from Allegheny and people from Meadville that come,” Morrow said. “There’s

definitely more of a potential for different people from all over the world (to see the artwork), so it's cool in that way."

Burleigh and the club members believe that sharing art in exhibitions like "Boxxed In" during the COVID-19 pandemic is beneficial for artists and viewers of art alike.

"All of us are kind of hungry for cultural and enriching diversion right now," Burleigh said. "A lot of student and faculty lives have changed in traumatic ways and I think it's really ameliorative to have art to engage with."

Morrow believes that posting artwork from the show breaks up people's feeds on Instagram in a beneficial way.

"It's kind of interrupting the normal flow (of social media), which is good, because everything is kind of monotonous when we're all stuck inside and doing the same thing every day," Morrow said. "It's exciting to get something different out for people to see."