Art student sends message

Unique concerns show through in Kayla Thompson’s artwork as part of her senior capstone

Lauren Miles

Tucked away in a hall of Ophelia Parrish, for the Bachelor of Fine Arts Senior show, there are confrontations with the image of an alterable, black baby boy who can move the words “your worst nightmare.”

Something is not right.

There came five more paintings of small children, all accompanied by the words “warning,” “automatic,” “understanding,” and “scary.”

Something is very wrong.

Junior Kayla Thompson wanted to portray exactly that.

“The painting of the child is the frame, and the result is the underlying idea,” Thompson said. “I think that a lot of people just don’t realize that this stuff really happens. It’s really sad and scary because you know that this stuff really happens,” Smith said. “How the children all look really normal and OK on the outside, but they aren’t at all.”

Whitney Smith

Sophomore Whitney Smith said she thinks Thompson has a dream job. “I really like all the variety,” Smith said. “I really think this is where art majors are going to have their heads.”

Smith said she appreciates seeing her classmates’ work, including stories and specific examples for each of the six children.

Sophomore Whitney Smith said she thinks Thompson’s work is an easy, direct way to draw in the viewer and to make a direct connection to the viewer. Associate professor of art John Bohac, Thompson’scapstone teacher, said that an artist’s work reflects two things: what he or she knows about art and what he or she knows about life.

“I use past and her education coming together,” Bohac said about Thompson’s final piece of work. Thompson said she initially knew she wanted to work with issues of child abuse. Her mother worked with abused children, and Thompson worked at a day camp where she dealt with underprivileged children, although none exactly were neglected.

“I think she has these skills of knowing,” Bohac said. “The children are very well drawn, but she drew a lot of knowledge of child abuse.”

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