

Art abounds in 50

Art students paint the walls

By KEITH KING

If an artist lives each time his work is read, heard, or admired, then quite a few student artists will survive the "death" of graduation. Each time they enter room 501, members of future classes will remember the young artists.

Twenty-two Art II students, two Art I students, and an ambitious independent are in the process of creating an extensive art collection in the Art room.

During this semester, some of the students have been painting on the walls reproductions of works by such well-known artists as Leonardo Da Vinci and Peter Max. Other students have taken art designs by various artists, changed the color or proportions, and created their own designs, and some have created original designs totally from their own creative instincts.

Learning Experience, Motivation

"I believe this is a great learning experience for the students," art teacher Karen Babson says.



"YOU GOTTA HAVE ART": Caroline Kilpatrick and Bunnie Goodsell add the finishing touches to their bubble gum machine. Caroline and Bunnie are Art II students participating in the painting project being conducted by art instructor Karen Babson.



PETER MAX PAINTING: Art I student Kent King touches-up his Peter Max Poster Design. Kent spent a total of 56 hours on his mural.

"Also, I think that color is psychologically motivational, and an art room should be surrounded by controlled art work as a motivational display for its students," she continues.

The students cannot just walk in the art room and start painting on the walls; they must first present an idea for consideration to Ms. Babson.

"I discuss each student's choice of material with him. Some come up with their own material, such as pictures from magazines, album covers, and advertisements. When a student can't decide what to do, I suggest some paintings for him to consider," Ms. Babson says.

"However, I don't assign the students any specific material. Each student makes his own final decision as to what he will do. If I were to assign a student a painting that he wasn't interested in, then I'd get a sloppy job. I don't want that."

Choosing A Spot

Next the student must decide on which wall and what spot he will place his art work. Such things as color, size and adjoining paintings must be considered.

"Before anyone chooses his spot, we talk about what colors the painting will involve. If two paintings clash, then each is weakened in beauty. We also consider what size the painting should be for best appearance," Ms. Babson says.

On the Walls

The paintings completed or in progress and the students involved with them are:

- "Steve Miller Album Cover with Addition of Zodiac Signs"—Jan Pridgen, Chuck Taylor.
- "Castle, Dragon, Unicorn Fantasy Painting," —Jeff Batchelor.
- "Cow Skull: Red, White and Blue"—(Georgia O'Keeffe)—Donna Murray, Lynn Pearse.
- "Four Campbell Soup Cans"—(Andy Warhol) - Nancy Davis, Debby Hartman.
- "All Is Vanity"—(Artist unknown) - Cynthia Lloyd.
- "Chinese Dragon" — Marty Everette, Pam Hypes.
- "Curved Line Illusion"(Ruth Heller) - David Bagley.
- "Orange" — David Bagley, Edward Pickett
- "Early Pepsi Cola Advertisement"—Debbie Glover.
- "Sea Gulls Poster Design" — Teresa Woolard, Kim Burd.
- "I Saw The Figure 5 In Gold"— (Charles Demuth) - Jesse Snow.
- "Egyptian Sculpture" — Deborah Neal.
- "The Thinker" — (Rodin) — Bobby Carroll (sculpture).
- "Mona Lisa" (Da Vinci) — Rodney Rivenbark, James Mills.
- "Peter Max Poster Design" — (Peter Max) — Kent King.
- "You Gotta Have Art Buble Gum Machine" — Caroline Kilpatrick, Bunnie Goodsell; also a variation with complimentary color on a Frank Stella design.
- "Good-Bye With Lion Exit Sign" — Kelley Bullard.
- "Art" — Bruce Hayden.

Time Needed

The students spend varying amounts of time on their works, but each shows dedication through the amount of time he does spend. The artists work during study halls, class time and after school.

One student, Kent King, kept a log of his time. Kent spent 56 hours on his Peter Max design. He worked during study halls, art classes, student and teacher holidays and exams. During teacher workdays, Kent would start about 8:00 a.m. and stop around 4:30 p.m.

"I find that the students are serious about their work," Ms. Babson says. "They work continuously, showing real dedication."

Future Plans

Ms. Babson hopes to continue the project and add all sorts of art work to those already mentioned.

"The project needs about another year to reach completion. I would like to have representations of all types of art work from all time periods, not only painting, but also architecture and sculpture. I hope to see such a reproduction of 'Robie House,' an architectural art work by Frank Lloyd Wright."

Positive Reactions

The present work has won acclaim of its own.

"I think the students have done a beautiful job. I've heard very positive reactions from teachers, art students, and students just walking down the commons looking in," the proud art teacher says.

"Like I said, this is only the beginning. The project needs about another year to reach maturity."

Meanwhile, Rocky Mount Senior High has its own art gallery, maybe not so grand as those in Paris, London, or Venice, but just as impressive.