

Liberty Champion

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ART GALLERY PREMIERES FIRST EUROPEAN EXHIBIT

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If a picture is worth a thousand words, the current display in the art gallery speaks volumes about peace, love and family.

The Liberty University Art Gallery opened for the fall semester Thursday, Aug. 21 with a solo exhibit featuring the works of a renowned Spanish artist.

Alvar Suñol Munoz-Ramos was born near Barcelona in 1935. He began painting oils at the age of 12 and was accepted into Barcelona's prestigious art school, the Escuela Superior de Bellas Artes de San Jorge at age 17. Since then, his work has been displayed in many international exhibits and galleries.

Suñol's artwork can be grouped into six distinct categories: paintings, oil on canvas, oil on board, graphite drawings and watercolors, lithographs and sculptures. His works typically portray peace, family, love, nature, art, beauty, music and humanity. Women are prominent figures, which represent life, family and connections to the past, according to the Alvar Suñol website.

Chelsea Bevins, a gallery assistant, said there are six oil on canvas paintings, four lithographs, two graphic-on-paper drawings, two watercolors and one oil-and-drawing on display in Liberty's gallery.

According to Professor Todd Smith, chairman of the Studio and Digital Arts (SADA) department, this is the first exclusively religious-themed show the gallery has offered.

"One thing we want the students to see is that Christians are doing this type of work," SADA Instructor Christopher Phillips said.

Dr. Norman Mintle, dean of the School of Communication and Creative Arts, hopes that Liberty will make religiously-themed works a part of the new permanent gallery, both from American and European artists.

"By means of bequeaths, donations or purchases, we hope this permanent collection will add to the aesthetic beauty of our campus, create a powerful learning and experiential environment for students, and a place where we will all find inspiration to worship God with our artistic expressions," Mintle said.

Along with the religious component, the art exhibit provides a place for students to see excellent artwork first hand.



"This is essential for art and design students, since they can see how specific art techniques, media and style come together to create a work of art," Smith said. "SADA professors regularly have classes in the gallery and discuss these topics."

Phillips agreed that design students can learn a lot by observing Suñol's artwork.

"The exhibit displays some of the elements of design quite nicely," Phillips said. "There's a good play of light which is giving us a good understanding of the form and the color and also some intriguing details on the shadow as well."

"As for the basic design, there's a lot of variety here with the interior scenes and some more biblically-based themes," Phillips said. "This art show offers the students a good look at how an artist works technically as well as the conceptual approach to their art just by looking at the message of it. That and the paintings are very large so you can get up close and personal and really study it, and that's really the best way to observe it and to see it."

The color in some of the art was a selling point for senior Jordan Combs.

"(The exhibit) featured colors and styles not normally seen in modern art," Combs said. "I felt a slightly darker tone to (the paintings), which I found really intriguing."

The artwork is on loan from the Museum of Biblical Art based in Dallas, Texas, and will be displayed through Sept. 12, according to the art gallery page on Liberty's website.

For more information on upcoming exhibits, call 434-592-7629.

