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Columbia artists put creative twist on book covers Traveling exhibit showcases book transformations

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Stand and Deliver showcases creative transformations of books and paper. The exhibit features 50 handmade books as art objects. The travelling exhibit is showing at Columbia's Center for Book and Paper Arts through Oct. 28.

Crafty Columbia students may be able to turn the ugliest of Chemistry books into a swan.

Through Oct. 28, Columbia's Center for Book & Paper Arts, 1104 S. Wabash Ave., is showcasing 50 covers ripped from books and shaped into objects, from a lunch pail to a bed, in the exhibition "Stand and Deliver."

William Drendel, coordinator for the exhibit, wants people to realize that books are more than just pages between two covers.

Drendel commented on the variety of books available.

"There are 50 books and not one is a regular book. Some are pop-up books, tunnel books, fun books. They make you smile."

The exhibit is set in an open space with soft lighting, creating a relaxing environment. Visitors can flow through the exhibit, viewing each piece without worrying about bumping elbows.

"There were several Columbia students represented in the show," said Anita Leverage, director of community programming for the center. "At the time the show was being curated, there was a call for work, which we, in turn, passed along to our students. Our students are well represented in many book art shows, such as "Stand and Deliver," that travel across the country."

Some of the artists representing Columbia are Jennifer Thomas, Joel Beaman and Kerri Cushman, who all received master's degrees in interdisciplinary arts.

"Columbia's student work is highly regarded across the U.S., as these people were chosen by a jury to exhibit in the show," Leverage said. "Percentage-wise, they make up 10 percent of the show."

Joe Freedman and Ilisha Helfman's "Friend or Faux" brings out his inner liberal, poking fun at President George W. Bush. This is the only piece that can be touched. A handle is turned clockwise and the phrase "The whole world will be your friend" appears. Then Bush's face comes into view with the word "faux" above it.

"Out: Victims of Anti-Gay Murder," by C.J. Grossman, has two purple doors and P.R.I.D.E. flag colors. It tells of individuals murdered for being homosexual. It also defines a hate crime, giving people a powerful view of the abuse some gays and lesbians face.

"Brown Boys" is a three-dimensional chronicle of Everet Brown's family gathered in front of their home. Across from the Brown piece, Dorothy A. Yule pays homage to her deceased nephew in "A Book for Ian," an accordion-shaped picture frame of Ian growing up.

Columbia junior Marsena Holsopple, a cultural studies major, said the exhibit was intriguing.

"It's vibrant," Holsopple said. "It's so interactive though it is behind glass."

Her favorite piece is "Frida Kahlo: A Body of Work," in which each of eight cutout body shapes represent a different painting of Kahlo's.

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