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### UTSC student artwork wins in chancellor's exhibition

May 13, 2010

#### *Top two prizes won by UTSC students*

by Kelly Rankin

Two U of T Scarborough students have been awarded top prizes in the U of T Chancellor's Student Art Exhibition on at the St. George campus.

U of T Chancellor David Peterson and his wife, Shelley, welcomed an enthusiastic crowd to their fourth annual student art exhibition recently. The artists involved told the Petersons what an honour it was to have their work recognized and expressed their gratitude for the experience and exposure. This year's exhibition includes 48 works by 47 artists. The works vary in medium and explore themes such as cultural identity, gender, everyday experience and the meaning of space.

The first prize of \$500 went to **Tessah Heckbert** of U of T Scarborough for her photograph, *Self-Portrait*. Second prize of \$300 also went to a U of T Scarborough student, **Sangina Rashid**, for her photographic work, *Portraits of an Inner Critique*. Third prize (\$200) went to U of T Mississauga-Sheridan student **Sebastian Koeber** for his video, titled *Pool Balls*. An honourable mention went to **Breann Ritchie** of the joint UTM-Sheridan program for her textile installation *Stream of Conscious*.

"Having all this talent assembled here today makes this my favourite day of the year," said Peterson. "We're



**SELF-PORTRAIT:** This photograph by UTSC student Tessah Heckbert won first prize in the U of T Chancellor's Student Art Exhibition organized this spring.

thrilled at all the effort put into this event. We're showing off the best and the brightest of our creative people and I'm thrilled to have you here," he told the crowd at the April 15 reception.

**Shirley Mpagi**, a U of T Mississauga-Sheridan student, said, "It shows me that I can strive and do anything. If I have the opportunity to show in the chancellor's office, then I can show anywhere."

U of T Scarborough students Tessah Heckbert and **Dianna Hosseini** used their exhibit to challenge viewer's notions of the everyday by exploring hair as an artistic material and by rendering everyday tools like a hairbrush less functional through their exhibit, the Duchamp-inspired Brush #4.

Koever's video, *Pool Balls*, explores the reaction of people when something out of the ordinary is imposed on their space. In the video Koever appears in places such as a student cafeteria, pulling a suitcase full of pool balls. He stops, opens the suitcase and allows the contents spill out on to the floor, disrupting the passerby's everyday experience of the space, forcing him or her to see it in a different way. (View this video at [www.youtube.com/user/FaszaLegeny#p/u/11/GsD0GOsLgII](http://www.youtube.com/user/FaszaLegeny#p/u/11/GsD0GOsLgII)).

For **Rebecca Noone**, a master of museum studies student and curator for this year's exhibition, putting the show together was a lot of fun. "I loved meeting with the artists and seeing all the great work being produced on all three campuses," Noone noted.

For the second year in a row the top talent in the show received prizes from the Petersons themselves. The show was judged by U of T alumna **Emelie Chhangur**, assistant director and curator at the Art Gallery of York University.

The recipients were selected because "their work is sophisticated enough to stand alone, outside the context of class assignments and formal exercises," said Chhangur. She also commented on how important an opportunity this was for art and curatorial students alike.

While the crowd milled around the Simcoe Hall lobby and the chancellor's office taking in the art, a quartet of jazz musicians and U of T alumni -- Joseph Shabason, Harley Card, Colin Kingsmore and Dan Fortin -- provided the musical backdrop for the evening. The current exhibition will remain in the U of T chancellor's office for one year.

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