Message from the Juror, Michelle Palatnik
How Artwork Was Evaluated

One of the most exciting things about this show was the range of ideas, materials, and artistic approaches represented. Many works demonstrated thoughtful observation, creativity, and dedication.

Selecting award recipients is always challenging because strong qualities appear in many different pieces. To make the process fair and transparent, the artwork was evaluated based on how effectively an artwork communicates visually, technically, and conceptually.

Judging Criteria

1. Technical Skill
Control and understanding of materials such as paint, pencil, or sculptural media. This includes awareness of form, edges, tone, value, and surface. Technical skill reflects careful observation and intentional craftsmanship.

2. Composition
How visual elements are organized within the artwork. Strong composition guides the viewer's eye, creates balance or tension, and helps unify the image.

3. Meaningful Content
Artwork that communicates an idea, theme, story, or message. This may include personal experiences, symbolism, cultural themes, or conceptual exploration.

4. Emotional Impact
Some works stand out because they create a powerful mood or emotional response through atmosphere, humor, or visual/psychological intensity.

5. Inventive Use of Materials
Creativity in how materials are used. This may include experimenting with unexpected materials or combining materials in new ways.

6. Unique Visual Thinking
Originality in how ideas are expressed visually. This can appear through imaginative imagery, personal style, or distinctive artistic choices.

7. Narrative or Engagement
Some artworks invite viewers to look longer by including storytelling, interaction between elements, or layers of visual detail.

8. Ambition
The level of challenge an artist takes on - such as complex subjects, detailed work, or bold experimentation.

A Final Thought

Art competitions recognize certain works at a particular moment, but artistic growth is a long and evolving process. Many works in this exhibition showed strong ideas, technical ability, and creative risk-taking. The most important thing for any artist is to continue: observing closely, experimenting with materials, developing personal ideas, and taking creative risks.
Great artists are not defined by a single competition. They are defined by curiosity, persistence, and the courage to keep exploring new possibilities.
The work shown in this exhibition is a strong reflection of the talent, imagination, and potential of the students here. Keep making, keep questioning, and keep pushing your ideas further.