Kraft’s images reflect self

by Cary Veehoff

While politicians have speeches and clergymen sermons, artist Frances Kraft makes statements with her paintings and drawings. Undoubtedly, she has chosen the right channel of communication.

Upon entering the University Gallery, where Kraft’s art is currently on display, the viewer is aware of a world which the artist has created. It’s one of sensuousness, abarted humanness, mystery and even eroticism.

The wight paintings from the “Reflections After the Explosion from Eden” series are probably first noticed—most are huge and vibrantly colored. Each of the works portrays voluptuous women with vague faces who seem rather demented; some are withdrawn as if sickened by themselves, others are garter-clad and stare and laugh at the viewers like some kind of naughty victors who can’t be touched.

Slits revealing

One of the most noticeable things about the women of the “Eden” series is that most have slits between their breasts and down their stomachs, revealing dark, empty interiors. Though it’s an intriguing idea which alludes to cold inhumaness, Kraft has overworked the technique by using it on seven of the eight in the series and in several other works as well. And unfortunately, the slits are much too bold and integrated to be just a trademark.

One of the best pieces in the “Eden” series is number two: a close up of a twisted female torso. The painting takes on a somewhat abstracted nature and the familiar slit is present but not as recognizable as in the other works in the series.

Another world

Another world Kraft often takes the viewer into is that of the microscopic. In pieces such as “Gourdform Split” and “Boneform Inscapes,” we can wander through a walnut or a human hip structure.

One of the most exciting of these enlargements is “Pornopepper,” which depicts just what its name suggests. Here a pepper has been torn apart and its interior indelicately displayed. The drawing raises the question of whether such a subject can actually be pornographic.