Artwork Shows City Of Contrast

By Susan Hecker

New Orleans—a city rich in culture and tradition. Many natives take this culture and tradition for granted—but not the art students at St. Mary's Dominican High School, 7701 Walmsley. Dominican's art instructor, Mrs. James S. Chandler, believes students should be made aware of the art and culture in their city, so she took a group of students on a field trip to acquaint them with New Orleans' rich architectural heritage.

"I took the girls to see Gallier Hall to illustrate the characteristics of the classic Greek Revival period," explains Mrs. Chandler, a graduate of the College of Architecture, University of Michigan. "From architect Edward D. Stone's International Trade Mart, the girls observed the clear lines of contemporary architecture. In Jackson Square, we found the delightful result of two influences, French and Spanish."

Throughout their trip, the girls made simple sketches of the buildings they visited. Back in class at Dominican, Mrs. Chandler gave them a project to be completed over a two-week period: make a composite drawing using the periods of architecture they had seen.

"Having lived in the Far East and Europe and after years of extensive travel," says Mrs. Chandler, "I've found each city or community has something very special to contribute to art and architecture. New Orleans has this..."
something special, too, and I was eager to make my students aware of it."

The finished artwork shows strikingly that New Orleans is a city of many architectural influences. The art also shows something about each girl's architectural preferences, and particular drawing style.

Eileen Fayard, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James G. Fayard, 3622 Monroe, drew solely for effect—she liked the striking contrast of black on white. Debbie Owens, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Owens, 141 Caroline ave., captured bare outlines.

The girls sketched in Jackson Square's Old World atmosphere. "To me, the cathedral is New Orleans," said sophomore Robin Kane, daughter of Mrs. Patrick Kane, 5811 Marcia. Not far from Robin, though, classmates were concentrating on the lacy grillwork of surrounding French Quarter buildings. Their finished drawings show this wrought-iron craftsmanship prominently.

The group journeyed also through the scenic Garden District for a glimpse at homes built in a combination of Greek and classic styles. "These homes really have a quiet charm and beauty," said Michele Jarreau, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles L. Jarreau, 127 W. Livingston, Metairie.

But it was the Rivergate's ultramodern lines that stood out in one senior's mind. "I sketched looking at everything through arches, like a real gate, an entrance into something new," she commented.

One sophomore exclaimed. "I still liked our first stop best. Gallier Hall's Greek Revival architecture made me think of what life must have been like thousands of years ago. I sort of got into the mood of it when I did my drawing."

In spite of their particular preferences, the girls were unanimous on agreeing

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Gallier Hall and St. Louis Cathedral dominate sophomore Susan Scrugg's art. Modern architecture of Rivergate and Trade Mart loom on far right.

Two sketches composed nearly alike show how each artist's eye interprets differently. Work at left is Donna Legendre's. Art at right is by Elizabeth Demoureille.
Senior Fran Tormey captured snake-like curves of grillwork on paper, juxtaposing them with the straight lines of ultramodern Trade Mart.

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the trip was worthwhile. Many confessed that although they had lived here all their lives, they had never realized so graphically the rich heritage New Orleans offers.

Senior Deanne Rowan, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Albert G. Rowan, 6525 Wuerpel, expressed student views when she said, "The trip made me realize that New Orleans has so much of everything—that our background is in front of our very eyes."

Budding journalist Susan Marie Hecker authored this Teen Type story on an interesting art class project at her school, St. Mary's Dominican. The pretty, 16-year-old is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Sidney F. Hecker, 3021 Hyman pl. Susan, a sophomore, is on Dominican's yearbook staff and is a member of its library and debate clubs.