



News Release

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Dynamic Graduate show unleashes wave of creative talent

Evocative and inventive artworks from more than 400 graduating Edinburgh College of Art students are being shared with a global audience via a virtual graduate show and a smaller on campus exhibition.

The online experience is a celebration of the fresh creative talent of this year's ECA graduates, showing their ingenuity and imagination while overcoming the challenge of the restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The on-campus exhibition provides an opportunity for some of the graduates' work also to be on display in the ECA Main Building from June 18-June 25, with tickets for the week-long exhibition available on ECA's website.

The student portfolios showcased on the digital platform from June 18 draw on a range of influences and themes, including climate change, the digital world, identity and belonging.

Pandemic restrictions saw many of the students seeking inspiration and value from everyday objects and their homes and adapting their practice by experimenting with different materials and ideas.

The platform builds on the success of last year's online show which attracted more than 100,000 views from more than 100 countries.

The Graduate Show website showcases more than 4,000 pieces of media from 35 degree programmes from 28 subjects, including paintings and drawings, architectural plans and models, animations and digital visualisations, musical compositions and performances, film, photography, textiles, jewellery and interior design.

Alongside the viewing the captivating array of exhibits by ECA artists, film-makers, designers and architects, ECA is promoting a series of supporting events and workshops, such as a virtual jewellery try-on event, a filmed performance costume show and architecture studios showcasing their work.

Previous Degree Shows have acted as the bridge to students entering professions as artists and creatives, and have helped launch the careers of future Turner Prize and Bafta winners.

The arresting display of student creativity on the Graduate Show website includes Ellen Blair's photography portfolio *Spectrum*, which explores the theme of chosen families within the LGBTQ+ community.

Spectrum examines societal ideas of family and kinship through the reappropriation of the family photo album. Colourful creations are presented with folds, rips, drawings and letters.

Jewellery and Silversmithing student Scarlett Bunce's work focuses on beading. The intricacy of the artform is expressed using coloured clear glass beads mapped with stitches

The collection is inspired by archival imagery of decorative lace from museum collections and features a silk scarf created with bead weaving on a loom.

Harvey Everson's product design project has created *Memento Mori*, a futuristic exhibit exploring the collection of people's digital memories.

The work is based on the concept of people preserving their lives as digital assets through mass data collection. The designs explore the concept of personal data becoming a new a digital trading commodity.

Master of Landscape Architecture student Benjamin Jones is showcasing an app which allows the public to visualise how a proposed public saltmarsh park at Glasgow Airport might transform the adjacent landscape over the next 200 years.

The app uses techniques such as animation, time-lapse features and flora and fauna recognition to provide a fun and empowering tool for communities to monitor, manage and care for the land.

Muriel McIntyre's Fine Art project uses vacant spaces in her parents' home town in France to display her work and involve the local community.

The project creates an ephemeral installation that fills spaces with elements such as vertical blinds, waiting room chairs, fake furs, small statues and a trench coat.

Illustration student Eilidh Nicoll takes on society's preoccupation with growing old and changing bodies in her graduation film.

The animation - created frame by frame using 2D animation - follows a woman's spiral into panic after discovering a grey hair. The film, which takes place entirely in a bathroom, sees ritualistic self-care devolve into self-scrutiny.

Jamie O'Donnell's stop motion animation explores the topics of mental health and the trans experience.

The magical film was created during the pandemic when the artist returned to a childhood passion for animated videomaking. The work is inspired by personal experiences and explores the concepts of alignment, the inner voice and the inner child.

Painter Sarah Ogilvie's portfolio combines the aesthetic of seventeenth century still life paintings by Dutch artists with contemporary imagery to produce work that explores social inequalities during the pandemic.

The painting *Free school meal parcels* combines traditional techniques such as candlelight and oil paints with a modern twist to present the theme of financial hardship for families in lockdown.

Nikki Petrova's Landscape Architecture project celebrates the potential of neighbourhood parks with vibrant ideas on how they can become valued and noticed in the community.

Nikki's portfolio places three parks in different socio-environmental contexts to show how elements such as a use-specific pavilion, a mini library and a bird hide or café can help bring spaces to life.

Fashion graduate Nikita Vora describes her collection as a tool to educate people and celebrate the beauty of South-Asian people through illustrated prints and silhouettes.

The dazzling collection of prints and structured garments in vibrant colours takes its inspiration from the designer's Indian culture and heritage.

The online show will be home to other exciting initiatives involving ECA students, which include the annual Degree Show Purchase Prize. The selected works will be acquired for the University of Edinburgh's permanent collection.

The virtual show is the result of a fruitful collaboration between students and staff, with the graduates taking the lead in designing how they present their online portfolios.

Supporting the graduates' professional development is a key element of the web platform. The portal provides easy access for recruiters to see the graduates' portfolio. Information is also accessible for students on the themes of freelancing, funding for the arts and how to develop a creative network. Also available is a series of professional development events many of which are open to alumni and the public.

ECA Principal Professor Juan Cruz said: "The class of 2021 has shown remarkable tenacity and ingenuity to navigate the extreme challenges and difficulties of the past year. It is really extraordinary to see what

they have achieved and how they have responded to these circumstances, and I know the shows will enable us all to reflect on our own experiences of these times. The virtual show builds on the success of last year's online event opening up new possibilities for our graduates and future degree shows, with the smaller on campus show providing us with a welcome opportunity to start carefully to inhabit our buildings again."

Visitors are invited to join Edinburgh College of Art for the launch of the Graduate Shows and the following livestreamed after-party from the Wee Red Bar featuring student and alumni DJs and a newly commissioned film collage featuring archival ECA Revel footage and current graduate moving image work. Booking is via Eventbrite.

For booking links and access to the Graduate Show 2021 please go to: www.eca.ed.ac.uk/graduateshow

The online show runs from 18 June until 27 August.

For further information, please contact: Joanne Morrison, Press and PR Office, 0131 651 4266, joanne.morrison@ed.ac.uk