

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**4 November 2021**

### **BAM2021: a showcase of Bachelor of Arts and Media student work**

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A short film sharing insights into men’s mental health; a series of paintings and graphic etchings inspired by the ‘geomorphologies of rocks and boulders’; and a collection of work exploring the relationship between ‘colour and connection, restraint and indulgence, opinion and doubt’ are just some of the works displayed in BAM2021— the end of year exhibition by NMIT Bachelor of Arts and Media students.

Senior arts tutor and BAM coordinator Catharine Salmon says the BAM show is a culmination of three years of study, so it’s a very important exhibition for the students.

“It’s an opportunity for them to generate and present their best work—it draws from their creative zest for their particular discipline, whether it’s photography, painting, film, screen printing, textiles, fashion or installation art,” says Catharine.

Other works in the exhibition include a series of photographic portraits which present beneficiaries with value and dignity, a fashion collection inspired by native flora and cow girls, and a selection of ‘emanations from the Aesthetic Underverse’.

There is also an immersive textile installation, flip-books aiming to create delight and happiness for the audience, and a photographic essay documenting the art of graffiti.

One exhibit uses embroidery to capture the essence of special companion animals, while a collection of designed garments and a video performance explores gender identity.

BAM2021 holds particular significance this year because the students had to navigate a great deal of uncertainty and disruption due to COVID-19.

“I have been especially impressed with the students this year. Some were totally limited with how much they could do during lockdown, particularly if they were working with other people, or needed resources such as screen printing,” Catharine says.

“They are creative people though, and many of them were stimulated to refresh their projects or reconfigured their work where possible.”

BAM is curated by The Suter Art Gallery staff, Curator and Collection manager, Sarah McClintock and Director Julie Catchpole.

Each year they come up with a layout for the exhibition which creates a good experience for visitors and provides a learning experience for the students.

“We look at their prepared artistic statements which explain the context of what they want to present. Then we look at a model of the space available, and we try to come up with something that brings out the best in the works and displays them well,” says Julie.

“We talk to the students about how the aim is to lead the viewer around the exhibits—making some subliminal logic or connecting thread.”

Julie says while the students have ideas about presenting their work, she hopes they can add value to those ideas.

“It can be a challenge as they have to make the space read differently. We are turning a teaching block in to an exhibition space, but it’s a good real-life experience as in future exhibitions they will not always have a perfect white cube to show their works in.”

The curators also bring another set of eyes to the pieces, which Sarah McClintock feels is important for the artists.

“They have spent so much time with their work a fresh view can often help them work out what the audience might understand or feel when they see their work,” says Sarah.

“When considering the layout, we think about how the audience will engage with the work, what works need a long view, which ones have a sound component and need to be ‘specially placed.’”

“Sometimes a space looks out to the outside world or has a pillar and we can show the students how a certain placement might enhance their work.”

The BAM2021 awards announced at the exhibition opening include: distinction awards, Nelson Suter Art Society award and the Jens Hansen Gold and Silversmith Excellence Award.

**Event:** BAM2021

**Venue:** G-Space Gallery and 2 Floor G-Block, Nile street

**When:** Saturday 20 November to Sunday December 5 – 10am to 3pm daily

**Media opportunity:** If you wish to preview the works or speak with some students prior to the exhibition opening (on 19 November) please contact: Sarah Arnold, Creative Industries Business Support Coordinator. P:03 539 5982 E: Sarah.Arnold@nmit.ac.nz

Photos available on request.

Ends

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