

Pānui pāpāho | Media release

9 November 2023

BAM2023: Bachelor of Arts and Media ākongā exhibition

Twenty-five courses, ninety-six weeks of study, then BAM: the end-of-year exhibition by NMIT Te Pūkenga Bachelor of Arts and Media students.

Level 7 Studio and Critical Studies Coordinator, Mark Baskett, says BAM2023 marks the final footsteps along a pathway to a tertiary degree.

He says all the exhibiting students have completed three years of equivalent full-time study—undertaken at a time when national lockdowns and sudden shifts to online learning played a part in their educational experience.

“It’s been remarkable to see how these challenges have been met within this shifting and uncertain environment; beaming in from bedrooms or kitchens when required, and otherwise attending to course content on campus, venturing forth into the creative unknown,” he says.

“In discussions, in workshops, in research online, and even at the library, these students have looked into, questioned, and otherwise explored what it might mean to develop creative visual work today.”

The BAM show is an important exhibition for the students as it brings together everything they have learned, and it is their opportunity to shine and show off their works.

“Within all their activity there’s also been the challenge to make and do, make and do, and make and do still further, with increasing self-reliance and independence,” Mark says. “It’s been a pleasure to see how this group has responded to this challenge.”

The exhibition works range broadly in both their materials and scope; all the way from questions about earthly life and the eternal, to musings and concerns about what it might mean to spiral headlong into a world of accelerating AI.

Mark’s advice to viewers is to take time to look through what’s on offer in the exhibition and ‘enjoy the richness and variety that’s there’.

Julie Catchpole and Kyla McKenzie from The Suter Art Gallery offer curatorial advice for **BAM2023**.

The BAM2023 awards announced at the exhibition opening include Impressions Distinction Award, Framing Room Distinction Award, Nelson Suter Art Society Award and the Jens Hansen Gold and Silversmith Excellence Award.

Event: BAM2023

Venue: Refinery Artspace

When: Monday 13 November to Friday 2 December

Exhibition opening: Monday 13 November 5.30 – 7pm, The Refinery Artspace.

Exhibition artist statements

Eva Vogt: *Holding Space* is a series of five, wearable contemporary jewellery pieces exploring the intergenerational connections created by trauma and jewellery. It is a response to the research into post-memory and intergenerational trauma and investigates possible ways of healing intergenerational trauma. *Holding Space* loosely suggests a healing sequence. The pieces discuss feelings of entanglement, loss, and burden, leading towards the idea of letting go. They can be worn in a variety of ways, referring to the connective layering of trauma but also to the individuality of

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trauma and healing. The pieces incorporate iron (rust), oxidised copper, brass, freshwater pearls, silk.

Esme Upton: *A Place of Silence, Series 2023*

Art is a collaboration between God and the artist, and the less the artist does, the better—Andre Gide. In the studio, I start with silence. This quiet contemplation is crucial for my creative process, emanating from my faith and embracing an artistic process engaging with a metaphor through abstraction. Moving away from traditional iconology, I've eliminated representation and embraced uncertainty, where each transparent layered colour is a meditative motion that reacts to and engages with the paper. Presence is important. It is being in the moment and not attached to the outcome that has moved my work forward this year. There is something about your soul when you get yourself ready for a devotional offering. I wanted to project the abundant grace of the cross through abstract, painterly expressions.

Tessa Sparrow: *Disenchantments* is a series of black and white pen illustrations on paper. The works explore fairy tales and the familiar characters in a way that disrupts their narratives and archetypes and works to break away from the ideals of a 'happily-ever-after.'

Lihao Song (Frank): My exhibition will lead the audience on a fascinating journey of introspection. Each work consists of two parts: the left side presents people's true appearance in real life, while the right side displays their desired identity in their hearts. These works aim to evoke the audience's thoughts on individual self-identity and explore the subtle relationship between social expectations and individual visions. Through visual comparison, the exhibition conveys a key message: there is often a gap between our true selves and the image we aspire to present to the world.

The audience will experience an inner exploration journey in this exhibition, not only seeing everyone's real selves but also gaining insight into their vision and desires behind them. This is an exhibition that encourages audience reflection, self-awareness, and dreams.

Mikaela Collins: *Spirit: Soul: Body* is a collection of prints and drawings, featuring embossed scripture and Angel wings. It examines the connection between image and text as a personal exploration of spirituality in a contemporary context.

Stella Wilson: *Physical Sketches – Safety Gear for a Flood*

The severity of Cyclone Gabrielle effecting the North Island earlier this year, and the floods that we have encountered in Nelson over the past few years, has inspired me to address certain ways we could be better prepared in the future. I present a series of ideas to protect people, their belongings, and their pets, by using a selection of recycled marine objects.

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Media opportunity

If you wish to preview the works or speak with some students prior to the exhibition opening please contact: Sarah Arnold, Creative Industries Programme Support Coordinator. P:03 539 5982 E: Sarah.Arnold@nmit.ac.nz