

Collection 2024



Corcoran School of the Arts & Design
at the George Washington University

(FRONT COVER)
"Tied Together," work by
Shawn Shafner during the
NEXT Festival 2024
Extravaganza event

Guest gather in the
main atrium at the
NEXT Festival
2024 extravaganza.

Photo Credits: Marie Luz
Bravo (New Media
Photojournalism '18)





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DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Welcome to NEXT Festival 2024, the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design's end-of-year celebration showcasing the exceptional art, performances, and scholarship of our graduating students. The NEXT Festival brings together students, faculty, and the larger DC arts community to commemorate our students' accomplishments. NEXT Festival 2024 showcases exhibitions, performances, symposia and interdisciplinary collaboration across campus from all of Corcoran's dynamic programs: Art History, Design, Interior Architecture, Music, Museum Studies, Studio Arts, and Theatre & Dance.

The projects on display at NEXT Festival represent the culmination of years' worth of work, growth, and discovery. And behind each student's work is a desire to contribute to the pressing issues of a larger community. We recognize the care and commitment of our faculty and staff in supporting, teaching, and mentoring our students' work. Together, we celebrate our students' learning, making, and experimenting—past, present, and future.

Congratulations to this year's graduates.

Lauren Onkey, Director

*Corcoran School of the Arts and Design
Columbian College of Arts and Sciences*



(PREVIOUS) *View of Graphic Design thesis posters, NEXT Extravaganza 2024*

(L) *Visitors at the NEXT Extravaganza, 2024*

Photo Credit: Maria Luz Bravo (New Media Photo-journalism '18)

(R) *Kevin Darmadi (BA '24) Performing at the NEXT Extravaganza, 2024*

Photo Credit: William Atkins



The Corcoran
School of the
Arts & Design
functions as
an incubator
for artists,
designers, and
scholars,

who learn from
internationally
renowned
faculty at the
intersection of
creativity and
social innovation.

Front of Corcoran Flagg Building showing NEXT Festival 2024 signage.

Photo credit: Denny Henry (Photojournalism '07)



ABOUT CORCORAN

The Corcoran School of the Arts and Design at GW is dedicated to educating the next generation of cultural leaders. Offering 22 undergraduate and graduate degrees, with 500 students, the Corcoran comprises creative arts, humanities, professional art and museum-world curricula within the liberal arts environment of the Columbian College at GW.

Students at the Corcoran have exhibited their thesis work for more than 30 years. In 2011, the exhibition came to be known as NEXT in a nod to the public seeing “what’s next” in contemporary art and scholarship. Last year’s NEXT evolved into a festival format to encompass the diversity of all the school’s programs and provide public facing programming for the DC community.

2023-24

THE EVOLUTION OF NEXT

Students at the Corcoran have exhibited their thesis work for more than 30 years. In 2011, the exhibition came to be known as NEXT in a nod to the public seeing “what’s next” in contemporary art and scholarship. This year’s NEXT continues a festival format to encompass the diversity of all the school’s programs and provide much public facing programming for the DC community. The festival offers an opportunity to highlight the school’s dynamic programs and cultivates more interdisciplinary partnerships among the students and faculty.

Attendees will be able to view and critique the vast displays of the end-of-year projects and appreciate the fine arts, dance performances, musical pieces and more that the students have to offer. NEXT projects may take many forms in the fields of theater, dance, music, studio arts, design, art history, interior architecture, museum studies and more. They all represent a culmination of a student’s learning experiences at the Corcoran and a glimpse of future promise. Students exhibit their theses and presentations to an audience of their peers, faculty and the George Washington University and D.C. arts community.

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Visitors to the NEXT Festival 2024 extravaganza.

Photo: Maria Luz Bravo (New Media Photojournalism '18)

Art History

BA, MA





The Art History program at the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design is situated in the heart of the culturally rich city of Washington, DC, providing students with unique opportunities to study the arts. Our students learn to apply visual and historical analyses to artworks, as well as incorporate relevant and current theoretical and methodological approaches to research. Our rigorous and supportive scholarly program places special emphasis on developing individual students' research and writing skills.

(PREVIOUS PAGE)
Students install sculpture
for "Art After Duchamp" in
Gallery 102 in Smith Hall
of Art.

(1) Zhuolun Mi in "Art After
Duchamp" exhibition.

Photographer: Maria Luz
Bravo (MA, New Media
Photojournalism 2018)



(L) Deirdre Lafferty and Ana Echemendia, "Art After Duchamp," Gallery 102.

Photographer: Maria Luz Bravo (New Media Photojournalism '18)



(TOP) Art History class exhibition "A Corcoran Homecoming: The Art of Carroll Sockwell," in the Luther Brady Art Gallery faculty lead Lisa Lipinski.

Photo credit: Lily Speredelozzi

(R) Art History student, Jason Rosenburg presenting at the Art History symposium, April 2024

Photographer: Maria Luz Bravo (New Media Photojournalism '18)



Symposium Presenters

Serena Martin, BA

"A Kingly Queen: Virginitly, Gender, and the Monarchy Under Elizabeth I"

By analyzing primary sources such as paintings and literature, I am researching how Queen Elizabeth I's political power and identity is displayed through her portraiture. Queen Elizabeth I assumed the throne in 1558 and restored Protestantism in order to restore English unity. During her reign, Elizabeth undertook masculine duties and did not present her sexuality in a traditionally female manner. Her portraits utilized compelling symbolism common to portraits of male monarchs, such as, but not limited to, the use of columns, globes, and astrological motifs. She used art as visual propaganda to reveal herself as a successful and powerful monarch to assuage any doubt about her effectiveness as a female ruler of a vast and powerful empire. Artists continually portrayed Elizabeth in the guise of significant mythological goddesses or biblical women, and her requisition of the title of "Virgin Queen" was initially controversial, due to a reluctance to equate her with the Catholic Madonna. However, as artists continued to compare Elizabeth with famed and powerful deities of antiquity, the Renaissance queen attained a certain level of divine authority before the populace and embodied both feminine and masculine ideals of leadership.

Serena is a double major in International Affairs and Art History, originally from Seattle, WA. She specializes in medieval and Renaissance political art and has a keen interest in gender relations throughout art history. She also is a part of the dance department and participates in 2-3 choreographed works per semester in the Corcoran Dance Concerts. With Professor Rachel Pollack, Serena co-curated a micro-exhibition at the GW Textile Museum in February on 17th century English embroidered clothing items. After graduation, Serena hopes to go into public service.

Abby Osborne, BA

"The Time Warp: How Collier Schorr and New Queer Cinema Reconstruct Queer History and Memory"

This year Abby wrote a senior art history thesis that she presented at NEXT. Taking inspiration from a paper she wrote in her 1990s art history seminar, she decided to focus on the photographer Collier Schorr. Her thesis analyzed Schorr's photography series South of No North, using New Queer Cinema as an interpretive lens to analyze a new visual language that formed during the AIDS crisis in the 90s. This visual language blended documentary reality and fantasy as a way to get close to the subject while also exploring the idea of reconstructing history and memory for queer photographers and filmmakers.

Abby Osborne is graduating with degrees in art history and political communication. She had two internships during her time at GW. She acted as a media relations intern for the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden and a communications and marketing intern for two semesters at The Phillips Collection.

Abby wrote her senior honors thesis about Collier Schorr and New Queer Cinema and presented it at NEXT Festival. Her thesis examined Schorr's photography series South of No North, using New Queer Cinema as an interpretive lens to analyze a new visual language that formed during the AIDS crisis in the 90s.

Abby hopes to work in publicity or communications for art galleries and museums after graduation. She has a particular interest in photography and film but also loves late 19th and early 20th century painting styles including impressionism, post-impressionism, and expressionism.

Jason Rosenberg, MA

"A Necessary Evil: The Paradoxical Role of Warhol v. Goldsmith in Propelling Appropriation Art Forward"

As part of my larger interests in art law, my primary research has centered around exploring the implications of the recent Supreme Court decision found in Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. v. Goldsmith (2023) with relation to the contemporary art world and the finer realm of copyright law. In 2023, the Court ruled 7-2 that Andy Warhol's Prince Series – based on a photograph of the musician Prince taken by Lynn Goldsmith – was insufficiently transformative to fall under fair use copyright protection, in turn prompting questions surrounding the legality of appropriation art. Since the nineteenth century, artists like Marcel Duchamp and Georges Braque have readily engaged in the practice of appropriation with little to no legal commotion. However, since gaining special traction in the 1980s, this method of artistic production has become increasingly at odds with established legal definitions of originality and authorship. In an attempt to contextualize how the Warhol v. Goldsmith case falls in line with prior suits surrounding appropriation in fine art, my project adopts a period eye to assess and analyze how legal and artistic attitudes toward this formative practice have changed over the last few decades. Looking at artists like Sherrie Levine, Richard Prince, and Jeff Koons, my research seeks to carefully track how we've arrived at this strange new place in art law, and – more importantly – theorize as to why.

Jason Rosenberg is a second-year master's student in the Art History department originally from South Florida. Jason first came to GW as an undergraduate majoring in Art History & Political Communication; however, after four years of study, his passion for the arts inspired him to continue pursuing his educational journey as a combined BA/MA student. In addition to his work as a Graduate Teaching Assistant, Jason has enjoyed spending his time in D.C. working as a Curatorial Intern at the Phillips Collection and learning more about the contemporary art market

through his hands-on work with the local art appraisal firm Artemis. Following graduation, Jason will be attending law school in preparation for a future career as an arts lawyer. Special thanks to all the Art History faculty for their incredible support and guidance.



Lauren Mahany, Art History, Gallery 102 Artist Talk, April 2024

Photographer: Maria Luz Bravo (New Media Photojournalism '18)

Graduates

Caroline Crutsinger-Perry, BA

Caroline Crutsinger-Perry is graduating from George Washington University with the aspirations of attending graduate school to further study the intersection between social justice movements and art history. Some of her favorite movements and artists to study include art of the AIDS epidemic and Felix Gonzalez-Torres and contemporary artist Philip Guston's critical view of white complacency of institutionalized racism. With a graduate degree, and eventually a PhD, Caroline hopes to work in a university setting or museum institution studying the larger legacy of the interactions between art and race, and how scholars can work to achieve more equitable exposure and representations.

Yongsha Jin, BA

Influenced by her family, Yongsha grew up with a love of visiting museums and has built a deep interest in the fields of art history, archaeology, and museum studies. During her time at GW, Yongsha was exposed to a broader and deeper education in art history, gained solid professional knowledge, and clarified her vision for further in-depth studies in ancient art history and museum studies. Drawing on the rich art history and museum resources at GW and in Washington, D.C., and with the guidance of distinguished professors, Yongsha has also developed a deep knowledge of the art and museum industry and how she should work to become an outstanding practitioner. Yongsha is striving for her more ambitious career in cultural transmission and communication, and her experience at GW is a very important step.

Mae McMillin, BA

Mae McMillin is from Austin, Texas. She has greatly enjoyed her time at GW, finding support for her academic pursuits in the classroom and also enjoying valuable social connections through her sorority membership to Kappa Alpha Theta. She is honored to be a member of the 2024 graduating class!

Thea Polsky, BA

Thea Polsky's introduction to art was through the work of her parents and their artist friends. Freely able to express herself from a young age, she soon found her stride through poetry and has been committed to the written word ever since. At GW, joining the Art History Program was a natural progression, and it is both Modern and Islamic Art that Thea feels the most connected to. In her Junior year, Thea sought to unite her commitment to poetry and her passion for the history of art through an Independent Study, allowing her to explore Ekphrastic work. Through visual analysis and a keen interest in the pieces and artists she selected, she created a chapbook inspired by Richard Serra that focuses on unearthing the artistic sanctity of process and result. Heading into her master's in art history at GW, Thea is eager to continue her studies, exploring the ceaseless journey that is the world of art.

MG Vallacchi, MA

Before attending George Washington University, MG graduated from Connecticut College with a BA in Art History and Museum Studies in 2021. There, her capstone research focused on examining museum history through a sociological lens in order to better understand contemporary cultural spaces. During her time at GW, MG served as the President of the Visiting Artists and Scholars committee bringing more arts-related programming to campus. She also worked as a Teaching Assistant for GW and as a Museum Assistant at the Dumbarton House in Georgetown. Upon graduation, MG hopes to pursue a career in museums, teaching, or doing research.

Lauren Mahany, MA

Lauren, from Pittsburgh, PA, graduated from Allegheny College in 2022 where she majored in Spanish and minored in Art History and Middle Eastern Studies. She wrote her undergraduate thesis on how architecture reflects the condition of society and acts as a narrator, specifically the Alhambra Palace in Granada, Spain. Her thesis, with a focus on orientalism, suggests the Alhambra Palace recorded the history of the surrounding cultural society and is

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a representation of national narrative and identity. At George Washington University, Lauren wrote her Masters dissertation about the inherent orientalism of the 19th century Spanish artist Mariano Fortuny Marsal. She has worked in many sectors of the field, including galleries, studios and academia.

Maggie McKinney, MA

Maggie is from South Carolina and got her Bachelor's degree from Winthrop University in 2022 where she majored in Art History and minored in Arts Management and International and Global Studies. While at Winthrop, Maggie tutored in Art History and United States history, and she studied abroad in London, England. At George Washington University she has served as a Graduate Assistant in the Art History department and has worked at the National Gallery of Art. She hopes to go into the museum field and eventually get her doctorate in Art History to be a curator. Maggie loves traveling especially to the different Disney Parks around the world.

Zhuolun Mi, MA

Zhuolun is an international student from China who has been studying art history for years. After finishing his undergraduate study in Los Angeles, he entered GWU for more in-depth learning. Here, he shifted his focus to modern/contemporary American art, taking the advantage of the myriad of galleries in DC to enrich his knowledge. Much effort has been exerted in other courses that all contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of various types of arts and cultures.

For the next step, he is willing to share what he has acquired in the U.S to his fellows and friends in China and his graduation. He is applying for PHD degrees and finding potential occupations simultaneously. The preference for American art will continually be a driven force promoting his future research.

Courtney Middleton, MA

Courtney Middleton is a proud D.C. native who, before starting her master's degree in Art History at George Washington University, earned a bachelor's degree in

English at Howard University, another prominent D.C. institution. Courtney's interest in art history began when she had the opportunity to take AP Art History her senior year of high school, this inspired her to take it up as a minor in undergrad, and then to pursue her master's in the subject. During her introductory studies into art history, Courtney realized there was a bias in art history that resembled the bias in American—and Eurocentric heteropatriarchal—histories, which marginalized or excluded Black artists, their stories, and contributions to the field. As a Black woman and graduate of an HBCU, this discrimination fueled Courtney's research towards eliciting and analyzing these biases in 20th-century to contemporary visual culture while embracing intersectionality as an intellectual framework.

Grace Rodriguez, MA

Grace Rodriguez is an art historian with a focus in fashion and costume studies. Originally from Wichita, Kansas, she gained her BFA in Art History from the Savannah College of Art and Design in 2022. Museums and film have always been sources of joy and interest for her. Upon graduation, she plans to pursue a career in the museum world furthering her study of fashion history.

Bailey Short, MA

Bailey was born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri and graduated high school from Mary Institute and St. Louis Country Day School before starting her undergraduate studies at University of Northern Colorado in Greeley. Following her freshman year, Bailey transferred to Boston University, graduating in 2021 with a bachelor's degree in art history. While at George Washington University, she specialized in 19th and 20th century European painting, but has completed a number of papers and presentations on a variety of art historical subjects and disciplines. She has enjoyed building upon her art historical knowledge and following her graduation, looks forward to pursuing a career in a museum or gallery. She is thankful to her friends, family, and the GWU faculty for their support as she earned her graduate degree.

Caitlin Amanda Wright, MA

Caitlin is an art historian and emerging museum professional with an interest in the art and fashion of eighteenth century France, as well as the effect it has had on future artistic movements. Her research has taken her to museums, libraries, and archives in Washington, D.C., Dublin, and Paris. Her professional experience includes photography and design, collections management, and research at institutions in the United States and abroad. She hopes to continue working with French art and fashion-based collections, whether through exhibition development and design or through curatorial work. Caitlin's qualifying paper, "Garden Nymphs and Gilded Bronze: Edward McCartan and the Recreation of the Ancient Régime in 1920s New York," takes a critical look at one sculptor's emulation of French Baroque and Rococo sculptural aesthetic and how it served the tastes of his Gilded Age clientele.



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(WHOLE SPREAD)
Students and artists presenting at the Art History Symposium & Gallery 102 talk, April 2024.
Photographer: Maria Luz Bravo (New Media Photojournalism '18)



Programs / Art History

“My research interests are in costume and textiles especially considering identity politics.

My experience in this program has been amazing as it has given me the freedom to focus on projects that interest me while getting support from my cohort and professors.”

Grace Rodriguez
Art History, MA

Collection

Graphic Design

BFA



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2023-24

Programs / Graphic Design



Students in the Graphic Design BFA program apply critical thinking, design processes, and user-centered approaches to solve problems through visual form and communication. Equipped with essential skills for designing across print, screen, and space, this year's seniors engage topics ranging from issues surrounding culture and technology, to personal investigations that explore the power of emotions and identity. Through wide-ranging creative inquiry, Graphic Design students at the Corcoran respond to the ever-shifting landscape of contemporary graphic design practice and its application.

(PREVIOUS PAGE) *"Invisible Scroll,"* by Xitong Yuan, NEXT Extravaganza 2024

Photo Credit: Denny Henry, BFA Photojournalism 2007

(L) Marc Choi's Graphic Design thesis cohort looks over their work during a critique

Photo credit: Sarah Hochstein (Photojournalism '26)

(BELOW) "Being Gay is the End of the World" by Blaise Nettles, NEXT Extravaganza 2024

Photo Credit: Denny Henry (BFA Photojournalism, '07)



(R) "Sensed," by Madeleine Brown, NEXT Extravaganza 2024

Photo Credit: Maria Luz Bravo (New Media Photojournalism '18)

(L) "In This Warmth: Reimagining Intimacy Through Design" by Jennifer Dopkins, NEXT Extravaganza 2024

Photo Credit: Denny Henry (Corcoran BFA Photojournalism '07)



Thesis Projects

Paulina Barrios, BFA

The Silent Language

The Silent Language delves into the challenges that emerging designers encounter as they strive to integrate their emotional experiences into their creative output. This capstone project is dedicated to breaking down the stigma associated with embracing feelings, encouraging transparency, and expressing true emotions. It provides practical guidance for cultivating self-assurance in design.

I invite you to reflect on how embracing emotions can revolutionize the creative process, fostering authentic expression in graphic design. Let's collaborate to transform the conversation surrounding emotional experiences in design and empower emerging designers to establish profound connections with their craft and inner selves. Together, we can redefine the relationship between emotion and creativity in the design world.

Madeleine Brown, BFA

Sensed: A Nostalgic Experience

"That's exactly what I told her! Madeleine? Ooo what's for dinner?"

"I made salmon (coconut milk sauce) and rice: our favorite! Can you grab some juice for the table please?"

Sure.

I entered the basement door. I was drenched in sweat. I took the stairs two at a time, my friends traveled closely behind. Once we reached the top of the first floor, we were huffing and puffing. "Let's have some juice," my best friend shouted! Okay! "You grab the jug and I'll get the cups." I opened the fridge. I'm pretty tall, so I can see all. I scanned the shelves until a bright green bottle caught my eye: limeade. I poured a full amount for everyone. At first, I drank like there was no tomorrow. It was so sour and sweet. I loved how the pulp pieces felt like fleshy gushers on my tongue. One bite brought a burst of limey goodness. Once I reached the last sip, I swallowed it slowly. I savored the taste and smiled from ear to ear. "Maddy? Can you pass the juice please?" What does it feel like? What does it look like? What do you

taste? What do you smell? Can you hear anything? These are questions that I ask myself when moments in time are paused by a glimmer. In a reverie, I can emotionally and physically relive a moment again. I can sense it. I use bold colors, poetic language and typography to tell the stories that decorated my childhood.

Jennifer Dopkins, BFA

In This Warmth: Reimagining Intimacy Through Design

At the heart of my thesis project is the desire to normalize a more expansive definition of intimacy, one where intimacy encompasses not only our relations between people but our relations between ourselves, our physical bodies, our inspirations, our community, our earth, and even intangible things. This kind of intimacy could also be described as a practice, a habit of looking at the world around you with softness and an eagerness for connection.

In This Warmth advocates for intimacy as this practice. The installation consists of a large-scale textile containing a collage of images produced through a solvent transfer process; surrounding the center is a sheer fabric that puddles onto the floor of the gallery. This textile represents this merging or connection to the world around you, a habit that can bleed into the subtleties and complexities of daily life. Beyond the main textile, I invite viewers to engage with my process through a recreation of my workspace and an assortment of prints, tests, and other explorations.

Jesse McAdams, BFA

Jumbled View

Jumbled View illuminates the experience of dyslexia and ADHD comorbidity for non-dyslexic and ADHD individuals. Motivated by a desire to enhance dyslexia awareness, the project vividly portrays these conditions through exaggerated typefaces and unconventional design elements. Through extensive experimentation, the project captures the essence of dyslexia and ADHD, highlighting the challenges faced by those with these conditions when interacting with bodies of text.

Class of 2024

By magnifying the visual experience of dyslexia, it serves as a public resource for fostering empathy, understanding, and awareness. With dyslexia being a heavily under-diagnosed learning disability, this project contributes to addressing this issue by providing a compelling visual representation, thereby facilitating better recognition and support for affected individuals. *Jumbled View* serves as a testament to the power of graphic design in advocating for social awareness and inclusivity.

Blaise Nettles, BFA

Being Gay Is the End of the World: Creating Perspective Through Graphic Storytelling

Graphic design is a fundamental building block of our chaotic and inherently irrational world. The collection of these designs seen in objects and artificial environments tells the story of humanity in the past, present, and future. This project is an examination of the absurdities and paradoxes of modern life, as well as the power of design to articulate a story through the manipulation of perception. Graphic design not only works as a tool to create authentic culture and history, but it also allows me to rewrite the truth through satire and exaggeration to paint a grander, sillier, and more pointed perspective of the world.

Brooklyn Ramos, BFA

Debut

While navigating a creative block, I embarked on a journey to uncover the most effective method to break free from my comfort zone and overcome these feelings. Throughout this ongoing exploration, I've realized that embracing experimentation with various mediums and unfamiliar materials helps me to ignite my creative spark. *Debut* serves as a creative experiment and exploration as I have never used fashion forms as a vehicle for graphic design. It also acts as my entrance into the professional world as I look to combine my interests in graphic and fashion design.

Displayed are dresses that represent the three phases of the journey that I have gone through this year. From left to right, the first dress represents the concept of experimentation. The second represents my take away from this experience: a wireframe, or the basics of this method that I can come back to whenever I end up in a creative block again. The third dress represents the up-and-down journey that this process has taken me through.



London Skye Roberson, BFA

Her Hair Is Done: The Joyous Relationship Between Black Women and Their Hair

For Black women, the design of our hair is integral to our identity and self-confidence. In childhood we were told to “look presentable” which translated to having our hair “done.” This concept of “doneness” can take on different manifestations but usually means detangling our kinks and taming them into a hairstyle. Often in the Black community when a woman with a dense hair texture wears her afro she’s asked, “When are you gonna do something to your hair?” We, who were once little Black girls, internalized this to mean that our hair in its most natural state is not appealing.

Presented are illustrations featuring some of the women in my life. I designed some of the portraits with physical hair to break traditional gallery rules. The accompanying video provides insight into the women’s experiences with their hair. The self portraits show my evolution in which I decided to embrace my natural hair. My best friend Kennedy once said, “The difference that we have, we should embrace it. Why would we want to be the white status quo?” My goal is for Black women to realize their hair is beautiful and presentable no matter what state it is in.

Xitong Yuan, BFA

Invisible Scroll 墨隐若现: Living Spatial Shanshui Through Generative Computational Design

Shanshui refers to a traditional Chinese art style that uses brush and ink to create paintings of natural landscapes featuring mountains and water.

Created with computational GPU particles, this artwork explores the collaboration between the artist and Artificial Intelligence (AI). Through cognitive electroencephalogram (EEG) and AI algorithm control, this artwork transforms static landscapes into a self-generated spatial experience that captures ephemeral landscape moments that can never be replicated.

This collaboration between the artist and AI aims to explore how an artwork can reach its own subconscious while offering new cartographic aesthetics to Shanshui and its relationship with people.



(PREVIOUS SPREAD) “Debut” by Brooklyn Ramos, NEXT Extravaganza 2024

Photo Credit: Brooklyn Ramos

(ABOVE) “Her Hair Is Done” by London Skye, NEXT Extravaganza 2024

Photo Credit: William Atkins



(L) Graphic Design thesis projects, NEXT 2024.

Photo Credit: Denny Henry (Corcoran BFA Photojournalism '07)

“Graphic design is a fundamental building block of our chaotic and inherently irrational world.

My project is an examination of the absurdities and paradoxes of modern life, as well as the power of design to articulate a story through the manipulation of perception.”

Interior Architecture

BFA, MA, MFA





The Interior Architecture program fosters a community that encourages creativity and pushes the boundaries of design with an emphasis on conceptual thinking and the design process. Through our studio-based curriculum, the core of our program, students learn to design three-dimensional environments through the use of dynamic concepts, cutting-edge materials, and innovative methods and techniques. Our mission is to educate future designers on all aspects of the discipline so that they contribute to and advance the field of interior design through professional projects and creative research.

(PREVIOUS PAGE)
*Graduate Capstone Studio
for Interior Architecture*
Photo Credit: Sarah
Hochstein
(Photojournalims '26)

(1) *Michael Laphorn
leads a tour for the
undergraduate Interior
Architecture class at the
National Gallery of Art
Sculpture Garden*
Photo Credit: National
Gallery of Art

Graduates

Joe Beal, MFA

Joe Beal is an emerging designer passionate about bringing people together and inclusive placemaking. He grew up outside Nashville and received his Bachelor of Science in Journalism and French from the University of Tennessee. He is currently a MFA student in interior architecture at George Washington University. He placed third in the IDEC student video competition and was selected as one of four to shadow at Skidmore, Owings, Merrill in 2024.

Kathleen Campanella, MFA

Kathleen's background includes a degree in Communication Design from Parsons School of Design, a degree in Art History, and a career in interactive and print design. Her goal is to explore three dimensional design, focusing on conceptual story telling through architectural forms, textures, and light.

Xichen Cao, MA

Xichen Cao hails from China and obtained her Bachelors degree in Environmental Art Design in 2017. After working as an interior designer in China for five years, her passion for the interior design industry ignited her determination to continue her studies. Consequently, in 2023, she came to the United States to pursue a graduate degree in Interior Architecture at George Washington University. Xichen Cao firmly believes that interior design has the power to enhance people's quality of life, and through innovative design concepts and techniques, it can improve both the functionality and aesthetic value of spaces. Her goal is to merge academic research with practical experience, delving deep into the art of creating comfortable, practical, and visually appealing interior environments that cater to the needs of people from diverse cultures and social backgrounds.

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Caroline DeJoy, BFA

Caroline DeJoy was raised in Rochester, New York and is currently studying Interior Architecture at The George Washington University. Growing up she had a passion for painting, drawing, and playing the violin, all of which eventually led her to her passion for design. She is interested in pursuing a career in commercial architecture and enjoys designing spaces based on behavioral research. Currently, she is working on her capstone project: an augmented reality experience center aimed at fulfilling the psychological needs of the young adult and elderly populations of DC.

Veronica Donaton, MFA

Veronica Donaton is originally from Saugerties, New York and is a graduate student in the Master of Fine Arts in Interior Architecture program at The George Washington University. She retired from the U.S. Air Force after 20 years active duty where she also graduated summa cum laude from Norwich University with a Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies. Veronica's passion in interiors is designing spaces in which we live, work, learn, and grow with a purpose for enhancing productivity and bringing balance to our lives. She pursues her love for research and design through furniture restoration and custom furniture builds.

Alexandra Forman, MFA

Raised in Virginia, Alexandra Forman is a graduate student of GWU's Interior Architecture program. She graduated with a bachelors degree in Sociology and Criminology at the University of Miami. She seeks to explore conceptual storytelling and spatial form and its impact on people's lived experiences.

Catharina Giacian, BFA

Born and raised in Miami Beach, Florida, Catharina Giacian is a senior studying Interior Architecture at the George Washington University. Since traveling from a young age, her exposure to different cultures and styles of architecture inspired her to study design. Catharina's projects

explore blending ideas of old and new architectural design to achieve contrasting elements while creating visually stimulating environments. Her love for photography and film is used as a source of inspiration, allowing her to capture the essence of beauty hidden in the world around us.

Luke Gilpin, BFA

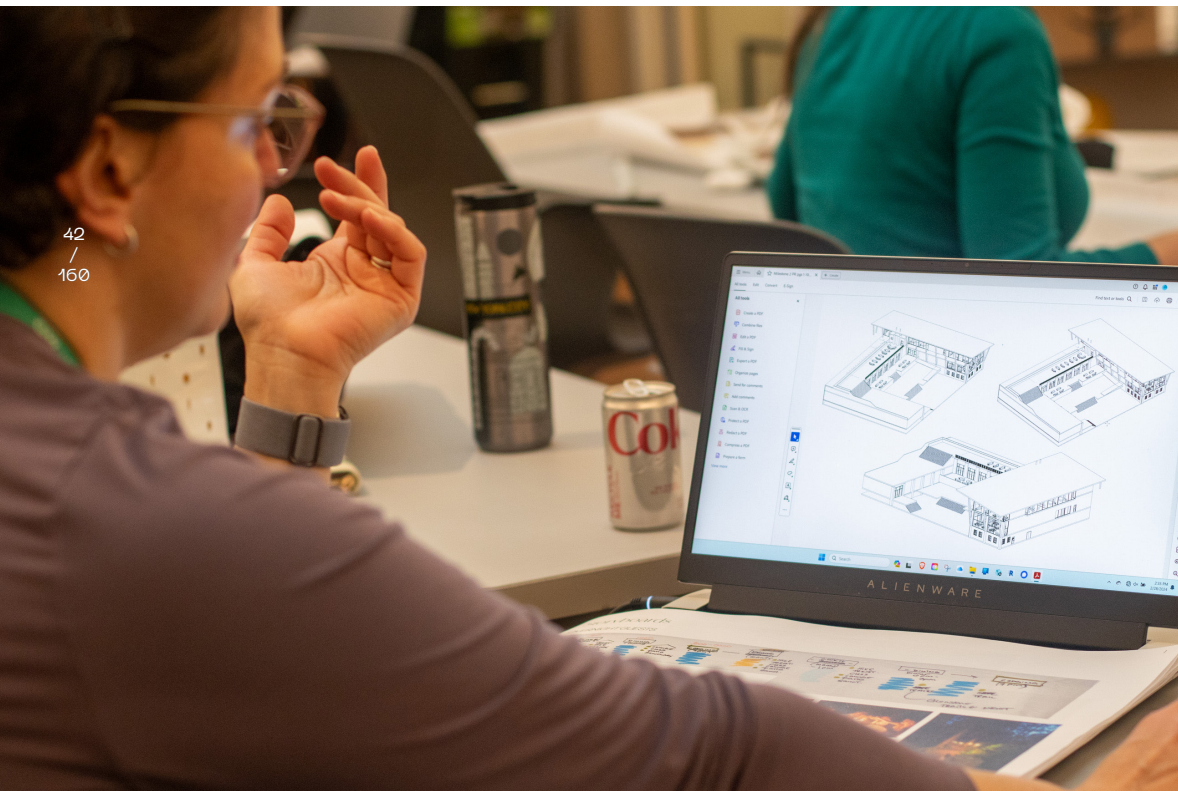
Luke Gilpin (he/him) is a rising artist and Interior Architecture student from George Washington University's class of 2024. Being a leading member in the Interior Architecture Student Group, collaboration, creativity, and problem solving are of utmost importance to Luke's practice. Luke has particular interests in architecture including the interaction between art, architecture, and culture, the systemization of architecture, and the effect of our built environment on our lifestyle. He hopes to continue to use his knowledge of interior architecture and art in his own practice.

Vy Huynh, MFA

Ngoc Thuy Vy Huynh, or Vy Huynh, is an international student from Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Her major is the Master of Arts in Interior Architecture (MA) program at George Washington University. Her passion for exploration and wanting to learn about the differences between Eastern and Western design cultures is what inspired her to pursue her major. Interior design, for her, is an industry that can balance creativity and technicality, and its power can touch people through its spaces and functions. Vy sets a goal in the future to be able to design spaces that combine East and West and use it to help people better understand the culture and the meaning of space and be able to touch everyone.

Mariel Joven, BFA

Mariel Joven is a Filipino-American student based in Washington, D.C. currently pursuing a BFA in Interior Architecture in her last semester at The George Washington University. Originally from the Philippines, Mariel's interest in hospitality and design is deeply rooted from her



Filipino heritage. She is passionate about implementing cross-cultural and natural design themes while seamlessly integrating these ideas with sustainability, inclusivity, and functionality to explore a forward-thinking design approach. Through her use of mixed-media techniques such as hand sketches and graphic design, she embraces the iteration process to design spaces that transform the built environment. Her journey focuses on resonating with users on a profound level to create spaces that not only delight the senses, but also enhance the quality of life within.

Ella Kuehnert, BFA

Born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia, Ella Kuehnert is visual storyteller, majoring in Interior Architecture and minoring in Psychological and Brain Sciences at the George Washington University. Ella is interested in taking a human-centered approach to her designs, seeking projects that have a positive impact on the end-users.

Kyle Layman, BFA

Kyle Layman, born and raised in Wrentham, Massachusetts, is studying for his BFA in Interior Architecture at the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design at the George Washington University. Kyle has a particular interest in hospitality, with a focus on finding a balance between functionality, accessibility, beauty, and “moments” in the user-experience. He has a passion for the boundless realm of sustainability and enjoys finding avenues to improve human wellbeing in interiors. He also explores the intersection between identity and design, and the personal nature of interior spaces. For his Capstone project, Kyle is designing a retreat that focuses on slow-living, cultivating connection, and “taking a deep breath”. He looks forward to beginning his design career in New York City following graduation this May.

Delaney Lindberg, MA

Delaney Lindberg is a graduate student in the Master of Arts in Interior Architecture program at George Washington University. She is originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania where she graduated summa cum laude from Chatham University with a Bachelor of Interior Architecture. Delaney's passion in interiors is designing intentional spaces that create thoughtfully designed

experiences and positively impact the users. She extends this love for design in various other creative areas, including graphics, branding, and events. Delaney desires to feel inspired in her career through everyday things. Her obsession with details prompts extensive research in all aspects of her work. She's eager to begin her professional endeavors in the field she's always loved.

Jingchen Lu, MFA

Originally from China, Jingchen Lu is a graduate student studying MFA Interior Architecture at the George Washington University. Her academic journey began with a Bachelor of Arts in fashion design, complemented by a minor in jewelry, metals, and enameling, which she successfully pursued at Kent State University in 2019. Drawing inspiration from history, the joy of life, and the beauty of nature, Jingchen is on a creative journey to construct spaces that positively influence users. Jingchen aspires to create environments that harmonize aesthetic allure with functional brilliance. Her academic background in fashion design, coupled with a passion for interior architecture, equips her with a unique perspective, and she endeavors to weave a narrative of spaces that not only reflect her artistic prowess but also leave a lasting impact on those who inhabit them.

Iila Mazie, BFA

Iila Mazie is a senior at The George Washington University, studying Interior Architecture. Born and raised in northern New Jersey, Iila has a passion for creating spaces that inspire and improve well being. Focusing on sustainability, materiality, research, lighting, and more, Iila merges important details to create dynamic and beautiful spaces that can help solve a problem and improve the built environment. Beyond interior architecture, Iila likes to merge her interests of wellness and sustainability. She also enjoys fiber arts, painting, drawing, yoga, skiing, exploring new places and learning about different cultures.

Abbie McGrann, MA

Abbie McGrann is a graduate student at the George Washington University, pursuing an MA Degree in Interior Architecture, as part of a combined graduate and undergraduate program. Abbie is from Minneapolis, MN, and is interested in the intersectionality between modern art and ancient architecture. Since studying art and design at GW over the last five years, her passion and design urge has continued to grow and is particularly inspired by travel, history, and the people that surround her. Abbie aspires to specialize in hospitality design, creating spaces that combine aesthetics with a core foundation based on sustainability, community engagement, and accessibility for all.

Graham Mosher, MFA

Raised in Connecticut, Graham Mosher is an art collector and entrepreneur who received his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Suffolk University in 2015. He is currently studying for his Master of Fine Arts in Interior Architecture at George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

Chryssoula Pentheroudakis, MFA

Originally from Athens, Greece, Chryssoula is in her final semester of the Interior Architecture MFA program at The George Washington University. Blending her European heritage and international career as an Intellectual Property lawyer and policy consultant, she taps into a cross-disciplinary, cross-cultural body of knowledge to inform

her design research and process. Chryssoula believes in designing sophisticated spaces of poetry and beauty with respect to the local history and culture. A proponent of human-centered design, she seeks balance between the old and the new, the function and the form to create impactful, and sustainable interiors.

Maya Rao, MFA

Maya Rao is an MFA Interior Architecture student from Southern California. She graduated from USC in 2018 with a degree in Communication, and began her career in the advertising industry. She moved to Washington DC in 2021 to pursue her career in design at GW. As a designer, Maya is inspired by nature and seeks to make spaces for community and wellness.

Milton Reyes, BFA

Milton Reyes was born and raised in the District of Columbia, an experience that has deeply shaped and influenced his perspectives. Milton aspires to be a multi-disciplinary creative, blurring the line between artists and designers. He is interested in founding his own firm that focuses on unorthodox approaches to the world of design. His understanding of the intricate connections between music, fashion, graphic art, and psychology serves as a foundation to his artistry. He is currently a BFA candidate at the Corcoran School of Arts and Design at the George Washington University in Washington, D.C.



(PREVIOUS) *Graduate Capstone Studio for Interior Architecture*

(L) *Interior Architecture Studio Taught by Melina Misri*

Photo Credit: Sarah Hochstein (Photojournalism '26)



Taylor Sallis, MFA

Taylor Sallis, who is currently in her final semester of the GWU MFA Interior Architecture program, brings a unique blend of backgrounds to her design approach. Originally from Northern California, her upbringing fuels her passion for sustainability and integrating natural elements into built environments.

With a profound appreciation for the power of research, Taylor, equipped with an undergraduate degree in Kinesiology, effortlessly weaves proven principles into her designs. Her appreciation for all the details in a project adds depth to her creations, offering an extra layer to her work. With an eye for technical details and a passion for art, travel, and design, Taylor aspires to enter hospitality design after graduation. Her love for design and a diverse academic background inspires her to bring a fresh perspective to the field.

Serena Scalcione, BFA

Serena Scalcione is a soon-to-be graduate of the Corcoran School's interior architecture program. Serena was raised in Palm Coast, Florida and her nostalgic childhood memories inspire much of her work. The bright, tropical environment of coastal Florida is home to Serena, and is reflected in her bold color palettes, stylistic choices, and playful use of form. As a child, Serena had a highly imaginative mind. This imagination and wonder turned into creativity and a love for many forms of art and design in future years. Combined

with her passion for her home and for travel, Serena one day hopes to work on international projects in which she can integrate unique architectural approaches into global humanitarian projects.

Sara Scully, BFA

Originally from Ithaca, New York, Sara Scully is a senior studying Interior Architecture at the George Washington University. Her exposure to Japanese architecture and inspiration from her father who is a woodworker inspired her to pursue a creative field. She hopes to work further in creating indoor/outdoor spaces that focus on engagement between humans and their environment.

Tirajeh Tahvildar Akbari, MFA

Tirajeh T Akbari is a current student of MFA in interior architecture at The George Washington University. She holds a BA and MA in Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Virginia. Her humanities background, love of poetry, storytelling, and creative writing influence a lot of her design work. She strongly believes as we design holistically for humans, we should go beyond the aesthetic and function, and pay attention to the spatial experiences and the feeling evoked by design decisions. If we encounter human experiences and multi-sensory feelings, then our design becomes more memorable for the users.

(1) Interior Architecture
Capstone Projects, NEXT
Extravaganza 2024.

Photo Credit:
William Atkins

(BOTTOM) Interior
Architecture Capstone
Projects, NEXT
Extravaganza 2024.

Photo Credit: Maria Luz
Bravo (New Media
Photojournalism '18)



“My interest in hospitality and design is deeply rooted in my Filipino heritage. I am passionate about implementing cross-cultural and natural design themes

while seamlessly integrating these ideas with sustainability, inclusivity, and functionality to employ a forward-thinking design approach.”

Theatre

BA





Our Bachelor of Arts in Theatre encourages a broad-based liberal arts education. The program is structured to allow partnering with an almost limitless range of other majors and minors. Our program of study provides an education that explores all aspects of the field. From acting to design and management, the coursework will help understand and perform each part of a successful production. Building on this base, students are encouraged to focus on their primary interest in theatre. Theatre students also partner with other programs across the university, providing an expansive creative foundation paired with in-depth studio training. This year's NEXT projects reflect the program's commitment to embodied learning, where practical learning is supported by deep intellectual exploration.

(PREVIOUS) November 2023,
Silent Sky.

(L) Charlotte Kim as L
in "*Peerless*," March 2024,
directed by Professor Jodi
Kanter.

Photo credit: Joseph Decilos
(Photojournalism '24)



(ALL) CTAD Crew from "Peerless," working backstage on striking a set on March 3, 2024.
Photo Credit: Sarah Hochstein



Graduates

Nathan Burke, BA

Nathan Burke (He/Him) is graduating with a BA in Theatre and Political Science. During his time with the Corcoran, he participated in nine different productions, performing in five including Smart People and Cabaret. To close out his time at GW, Nathan spent two months of his final semester doing field work, interning as a Production Management Apprentice on the DC leg of the Shakespeare Theatre Company's production of Macbeth. Outside of his majors, he was a seasoned member of WRGW, hosting his radio show, Garden FM, for over two years. A passionate actor and artist, Nathan will be moving back to Los Angeles post-grad to pursue a career in screen acting. Nathan extends his deepest gratitude to every professor and director he had the privilege of working under during his time at GW. He would also like to thank his family for being fiercely in his corner, not only in his artistic endeavors, but in life.

Avery Dell, BA

Avery Dell (She/Her) is graduating with a BA in Theatre and Organizational Sciences with a minor in Sustainability. She is a recipient of the Corcoran Scholarship for Theatre and member of the Elizabeth J. Somers Women's Leadership Program. During her time at GW she worked on numerous CTAD and Student Theatre productions working as an Actor, Stage Manager and Assistant Director. She served on the executive board of the 14th Grade Players for three years, most recently as Artistic Director. Originally from Denver, CO Avery brings her passion for environmentalism and sustainability to her artistic endeavors. In the future Avery hopes to create artistic productions which are visually stunning, thematically dynamic and environmentally protective.

Mason Dennis, BA

Born and raised in Richmond Virginia, Mason Dennis has spent their life in pursuit of the arts, finding a deep love for creating both on the page and on the stage. As a writer pursuing a Major in Creative Writing in the Columbian College of Art and Science, they focus on horror, romance and queer identity. As a Theater Minor in

the Corcoran School of Theater and Dance, they have found their calling in properties construction and supervision, in addition to a love of all things backstage. They hope to one day have a career in theater props, and a few published works under their belt.

Ella Derke, BA

Ella Derke is a senior from New York City double majoring in theater and international affairs with a concentration in Environmental Studies. Throughout her time at GW, she has participated in 10 CTAD productions, including Oregon Trail [Jane], A Chorus Line [Lori], and The Wolves [#14]. When not participating in CTAD productions, Ella can be found interning in the White House Climate Policy office and serving as an Executive Producer of Forbidden Planet Productions, a student theater group. She is grateful to all who have helped her on her journey and to GW CTAD for incredible interdisciplinary training.

Anna Phillips BA

Anna Phillips (she/her) is a Corcoran Scholar graduating with a BA in Theatre and English with a concentration in Dramatic Writing. She is an artist, writer, and actor from Fair Haven, New Jersey. During her time at GW she worked on several CTAD productions both on and off the stage. Most recently she was seen on the stage in CTAD's A Chorus Line and worked off the stage as Sound Designer for the Fall Dance Concert. She was a member of the sketch comedy and improv group receSs for 3 years and served as President and Head Writer for her final year. She aims to continue her writing career after her studies in the areas of both children's education and media and late night television comedy.

Cammie Hussey, BA

Cammie Hussey is an Actress and Director from Sharon, Connecticut. Cammie aims to bring Shakespeare to modern audiences through humor and interactive performances. Her Senior Project, Beaufort and Finch Presents The Tempest, combines all of her interests, from devising to marketing. This past summer, Cammie

Class of 2024

created an online theater company named Shakespeare in the Swamp, where DC-based artists perform short Shakespearean scenes around the district. Cammie is finishing her degree in Political Science and Theater this May and hopes to continue creating theater around DC.

Lydie Melka BA

Lydia Melka is a senior studying Business and Theatre at George Washington University. She is Ethiopian-American, born and raised in a wonderful family of 5 in the Atlanta, Georgia area. She has a deep interest in arts innovation and entrepreneurship, winning awards in George Washington University's Pitch George competition for her theatre sustainability concept, RePurpose Arts, and winning the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival ASPIRE pitch competition for her theatre financing concept, StageStocks. She also was an

artistic programming intern at The John F. Kennedy Center during Fall 2022. Lydia enjoys every aspect of theatre. She has experience with acting, singing, playwriting, stage managing, and directing. Lydia hopes that all her endeavors point to God's kindness to her, as her ultimate aim in life is to share the joy she has found in Jesus Christ.

Katrina Heil as M (left) and Abigail Linderman as dirty girl (right) March 2024, "Peerless," directed by Professor Jodi Kanter.

Photo credit: Joseph Decilos (Photojournalism '24)



Dance

BA





60
/
160

In the Dance Bachelor of Arts program at the Corcoran School, we train students to tell their own stories through movement. Our program prepares scholars/artists for a professional career in the multifaceted field of dance as an artist, entrepreneur, manager, or dance specialist. The strength of the program is the intimate relationship and mentorship by the dance faculty. This year's NEXT projects embody the results of student exploration and synergies resulting from the encouraged double major.

(PREVIOUS) *Dancers in "Wind Rose" by guest choreographer Jody Sperling*

Photo credit: Florence Shen (Photojournalism '26)

(1) *Dancers in "Is this mine" by student choreographer Leia Jekel*

Photo credit: Florence Shen (Photojournalism '26)



(L) *Movement
Improvisation class
taught by Professor
Hayley Cutler.*

*Photo credit:
Joseph Decilos
(Photojournalism '24)*

(PREVIOUS PAGE) *Dancers in "a letter to our
former selves" by student
choreographer Sadie
Tucker*

(BOTTOM) *Dancers in
"b o d y" by student
choreographer Alexia
Papatsa*

*Photo credit:
Denny Henry
(Corcoran BFA '07)*



Graduates

Elyse Butts, BA

Elyse Butts (she/her) is a senior majoring in English and minoring in dance at the George Washington University. She is from Homer, New York and is passionate about all things dance and literature. She has been involved in the dance concert since freshman year, and created her first original work last semester, titled "Joy." She is producing her second work in the Spring Dance Concert this semester, which focuses on our relationship to the unknown.

Olivia Ferguson, BA

Olivia Ferguson is a senior from San Francisco, CA double majoring in dance and American studies with a minor in graphic design. This is her second semester choreographing for the dance concert and has previously participated as a dancer. Olivia's work in the Spring Dance Concert is a continuation of her dance film from the Fall 2023 semester, focusing on themes about nightlife, human interaction, and how social dance movements can translate into a modern dance and stage setting.

Leia Jekel, BA

Leia Jekel is a senior cognitive neuroscience major and dance minor passionate about the intersection of neuroscience and dance. This is her second time choreographing for the GW dance concert and her 5th time participating.

Alexia Papatsa, BA

Alexia Papatsa is an Athenian choreographer with roots in Thessaloniki, Greece and is a senior majoring in Dance and International Affairs at George Washington University. She grew up dancing ballet but resumed her training in modern dance through her major. Captivated by the subtle nuances of human life, her work revolves around the exploration of self through memory and trauma. Her research explores the ways in which our perception of self changes through grief and focuses on the physical tension that can be expressed through our bodies. As she channels her dancers' interpretations to the theme and variant experiences, she aims to curate large-scale choreographies that capture feelings of

exhaustion and solitude. Papatsa hopes to one day utilize her dual degree to build a stronger bridge between visual arts, dance, and therapy in her surrounding community and encourage the voice of young artists to be acknowledged in the performance world.

Violet Radmacher-Willis, BA

Violet Radmacher-Willis, born and raised in Portland Oregon, is a passionate researcher, anthropologist, and performance artist. She received her BA in anthropology and Africana studies while also minoring in Dance and Sociocultural Anthropology. In the future she plans to teach abroad in Turkey and then pursue her MA and PHD in Cultural Anthropology with an emphasis on secular governments, gender, and colonial influences specifically in the regions of North Africa and the 'Middle East'.

Cara Isabelle Tamesis Poblete, BA

Cara Isabelle Tamesis Poblete is a graduating senior earning a Bachelor of Science in Public Health, with double minors in Dance and Human Services and Social Justice (HSSJ). Originally from Akron, Ohio, Cara fostered her love for dance during her 10-year commitment to a pre-professional ballet company. Her journey into Global/Public health was inspired by frequent visits to her family in the Philippines. With aspirations to contribute positively to healthcare systems globally, Cara remains dedicated to her initial passion for dance.

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(WHOLE SPREAD)
Dancers in "333" by
student choreographer
Alexia Papatsa in the
NEXT Extravaganza
2024

Photo credit: Maria
Luz Bravo



2023-24



Programs / Dance

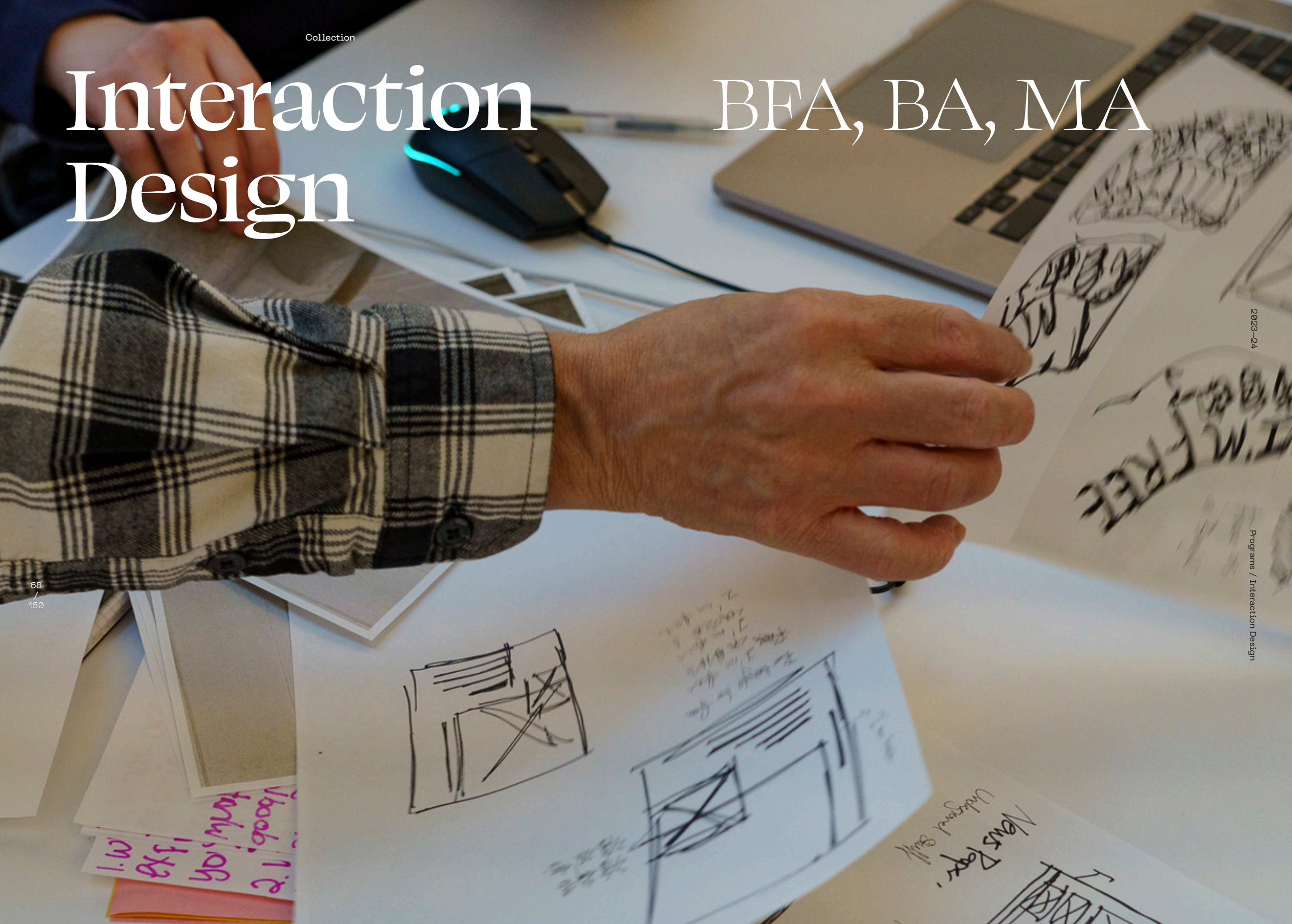
“I am captivated by the subtle nuances of human life; my work revolves around the exploration of self through memory and trauma.

My research explores the ways in which our perception of self changes through grief and focuses on the physical tension that can be expressed through our bodies.”

Alexia Papatsa
Dance, BA

Interaction Design

BFA, BA, MA





Our degree programs in Interaction Design engage students in critical thinking and problem-solving to reimagine how individuals and communities use and engage with technology, access information, and experience designed services. We believe that the future of interaction design relies on also considering its social and environmental impact, and our curriculum reflects this forward-thinking conviction.

(PREVIOUS) *Hongyan (Yan) Cao thesis work in progress.*
Photo credit: Florence Shen
(BA Photojournalism '26)

(1) *Raymond Mbam thesis work in progress.*
Photo credit: Florence Shen
(BA Photojournalism '26)



(L) Yara Nassif and Prof. Kevin Patton with "RoadSafe Companion."

Photo credit: Florence Shen (BA Photojournalism '26)

(BOTTOM) Elaine (Yixiao) Li presents "Ski Vision".

Photo credit: Florence Shen (BA Photojournalism '26)



Thesis Projects

Yara Nassif, MA

RoadSafe Companion

RoadSafe Companion is a pedestrian safety system that integrates a wearable sensor with civic infrastructure and mapping applications. Recognizing that drivers can be distracted by various factors such as phone calls, push notifications, eating/drinking, passengers, and other vehicles, the *RoadSafe Companion* effectively interrupts and mitigates these distractions by implementing flashing beacons. Additionally, depending on the vehicle's speed and distance from the crosswalk, drivers will receive a push notification via Google Maps/Waze, signaling the pedestrian's crossing and facilitating a smooth stop, thereby averting potential collisions with pedestrians. Activated by motion sensors positioned on each side of the crosswalk, *RoadSafe Companion* triggers flashing beacons to alert drivers to the presence of a pedestrian crossing the crosswalk. These beacons are monitored and adjusted by transportation authorities who have access to the control panel application. *RoadSafe Companion* is a pedestrian safety solution aimed at

ensuring all pedestrians feel safe and secure while crossing a crosswalk by increasing drivers' awareness of their presence.

Hongyan Cao, MA

More Than Words

Typeface, as a ubiquitous presence, shapes our perception as a courier of meaning. Typefaces are not neutral; rather, they carry semantic information that subtly influences our perception. The way in which characteristics of typefaces are presented, including their contexts, plays an essential role in understanding culture. *More Than Words* examines this relationship — specifically the 'oriental' CJK typefaces that are intensively used in cyberpunk.

Cyberpunk street scenes draw heavily on 'oriental' cityscapes, which evoke familiarity and the uncanny simultaneously. The neon signs, the cobbled streets, the cars, the characters, and their fashion all create an alien out-of-body experience. Yet, it is the CJK letters that operate subtle containers of cultural attitudes and problematic constructions of orientalism.

Class of 2024

Doowuese Deborah Igbazua, MA

GradeUp

GradeUp is a cutting-edge mobile application for students that transforms the grade receiving and feedback experience into a fun and engaging experience. Children are not the sum total of the grades they receive—when a child gets a poor grade, they are quickly equated to failing. Yet children excel greatly in many other areas of their educational experiences, like after-school programs, and they deserve all-round feedback on their performance, motivating them to want to engage more in other areas of learning. Unfortunately, current grading systems do not make provision for such encouragement, leaving teachers to use verbal or paper praises, easily forgotten and discarded. *GradeUp* leverages features like an after-school program report tracker, Trending Recap Report, and AI-generated feedback, in order to help teachers present student feedback differently and to create a space for students to revisit successes as motivation when needed. This in turn can spark enthusiasm for learning and foster a passion for academic and non-academic excellence, making motivation evergreen, and learning ever sweet.

Raymond Uchenna Mbam, MA

Finch Finance

Finch Finance is a fintech mobile app featuring a conversational interface. The adoption of a Conversational Experience Design (CxD) approach strategically leverages all available interfaces—screen, voice, sound, and haptics—to streamline the traditional user-flows found in typical mobile banking applications. The integration of a conversational interface not only minimizes the need for frequent interactions with bank call centers, especially for simple, low-value inquiries, but also reduces inconsistencies in responses. The prototype, developed using ReactJS with ChatGPT and Voiceflow integrations, represents a significant step toward elevating the financial technology user experience.

Swaathi Raghunandhan, MA

Make Waves

In an effort to raise awareness regarding marine sustainability and oversight, the *Make Waves* platform engages issues regarding current marine issues and oversight by focusing on the intersection of marine sustainability, collective action, and public policy. Its key feature is a call to action including donating, signing petitions, sending letters to legislators, and disseminating scholarly publications. This app seeks to empathize with ocean enthusiasts and anyone interested in marine stewardship with the goal of converting diverse voices into collective-action based changes surrounding sustainability. Through the trifecta of education, impact, and illustration *Make Waves* is a user experience driven approach to marine conservation.

Shiyuan Song, MA

CookFriend

CookFriend is a group cooking app designed to enhance group dining experiences at home. By assisting users in decision-making and fostering collaboration in meal preparation, *CookFriend* transforms the kitchen into a hub of creativity and reimagines cooking as a community event. *CookFriend* is a culinary adventure, where every meal becomes an opportunity for connection, discovery, and gastronomic delight.

Elaine (Yixiao) Li, MA

Ski Vision

The number of fatal accidents and serious injuries associated with skiing and snowboarding are on the rise globally. Recreational snow sports players are often preoccupied with numerous tasks and precautions in mind while riding down the

(1) Interaction Design artworks, NEXT Extravaganza, April 2024.

Photo credit: Maria Luz Bravo



slopes, sparing discounted attention to focus on the goals: improving riding skills and enjoying the sport.

What if smart ski goggles can have AR-enabled software embedded in the lens? *Ski Vision* reimagines the traditional snow goggles as a goggle-like device that features a heads-up display dashboard that serves as a one-stop shop for the typical needs of skiers and snowboarders when in motion. By simulating the goggle wearer's point of view, the prototype of her concept will demonstrate various user scenarios of practical features such as blind-spot detectors, buddy locators, 3D terrain maps, visualized trail information, and more.

Yanan Sui, MA

TaskTogether

In a world where productivity is paramount yet procrastination is prevalent, the *TaskTogether* app introduces a dynamic solution to task management challenges. *TaskTogether* seeks to elevate enthusiasm and interest in completing tasks by employing a unique system of rewards and motivations, coupled with task points and group tasks, that are tailored to engage its users deeply. This project focuses on transforming the solitary struggle against procrastination into a communal journey toward achievement. By enabling users to participate in group tasks, the app creates a supportive and interactive environment where the progress and presence of others act as a catalyst for individual motivation.

TaskTogether is more than a task management app, it aims to be a platform that brings people together, transforming the way we approach our daily and project oriented tasks. By blending the elements of fun, teamwork, and personal growth, *TaskTogether* is poised to become an indispensable tool for those looking to enhance their productivity and overcome the challenges of procrastination collectively.

Yi Ting (Shavonne) Ho, MA

Taiwan Odyssey

Taiwan Odyssey is an explorable 3D environment embedded in a Taiwanese night market to create an immersive experience to get in touch with traditional Taiwanese local street culture. Players enjoy unrestricted movement, freely navigating

the immersive environment to delve into Taiwan's rich culture, with a particular focus on its culinary delights. Additionally, concealed buttons provide access to diverse chambers, adding layers of intrigue and exploration to the experience.

At the heart of this project lies the ambition to heighten international awareness and appreciation for Taiwan. Beyond a mere glimpse, Yi-Ting aspires to vividly capture the cultural vibrancy and richness of Taiwan, inviting users to explore and embrace the hidden gems of this captivating nation. *Taiwan Odyssey* transforms conventional open-world exploration into a cultural exploration, turning every interaction into an opportunity for connection, discovery, and delight, and every moment into a celebration of cultural diversity and shared experiences.

Diego de Sola, BFA

Cacique Curioso

Cacique Curioso is a design process that integrates Salvadoran culture into contemporary design approaches. Informed by traditional problem-solving methodologies, rituals, and artistic expressions, *Cacique Curioso* seeks to formulate a distinct 'design criteria' reflective of Salvadoran life. The core values of cultural sensitivity, community integration, and environmental sustainability, coupled with ethnography, historical document survey, and documentation of Salvadoran cultural experience help build comprehensive 'design criteria' for creating a Salvadoran design process. *Cacique Curioso* aspires to bridge Salvadoran culture with contemporary design practices, celebrating the nation's heritage while fostering innovation, cultural pride, and community well-being.

Yisheng Huang, BFA

Foundation

Foundation is a sci-fi-themed, colony development simulation VR game. While most VR games today are first-person role-playing games, *Foundation* introduces another popular game type from PC to VR. This will allow simulation game enthusiasts to enjoy new experiences in VR, and offer VR users who are sensitive to intense motion games a fresh way to utilize their devices.



If you search on Google for the biggest challenges of making a good VR game, it will list creating a comfortable experience, navigating limited player mobility, and crafting engaging interactions. The first two problems are particularly difficult for game developers to solve, as they are largely limited by the hardware of VR headsets. The lower resolution and frame rate of VR headsets, compared with PCs, can significantly impact the player's experience. Furthermore, when players turn their bodies in the game, their actual bodies don't move. This lack of coordination can trigger vertigo in many people. The third challenge is building a connection between the player and the controlled game character. For instance, many VR games choose to create a virtual hand in the game to mimic the player's hand actions, which provides a more immersive experience.

In a role-playing game, making different game items interact with the virtual hand remains a challenging task.

Here's the most exciting part: most of the challenges listed above don't exist in *Foundation*. A colony development simulation game is a very popular genre, somewhat akin to 'Monopoly' or chess. Players typically act as the governor of a city or colony, make strategic decisions, and enjoy the sense of achievement that comes with city or colony development. Like playing a chess game, players usually don't need to move their view or body, so issues like low frame rates and vertigo are much less likely to be triggered. While most VR developers focus on maximizing the immersive advantages of VR devices, *Foundation* concentrates on avoiding the limitations of VR devices that create

uncomfortable experiences for users. Compared with PC simulation games, *Foundation* will offer more immersive experiences, new ways of interaction, and shorter game cycles of around 40-60 minutes, so players don't need to wear the headset for too long.

Alyssa Hughes, BFA

Escape

Escape is a two player tabletop game that explores the importance of collaborating and reframing deeply held perspectives. In the game, two players work individually and together to progress through puzzles which build an overarching narrative. *Escape* challenges each player to engage with the complexity of stripping away our personal biases and reaching harmony. This project requires players to put themselves in the shoes of narrow-minded characters and help them progressively let go of their attachment to either the past or the future. It aims to inspire people to seek middle ground and escape the cages we've built for ourselves.

Alex Horowitz, BA (IXD & CS)

iCan

iCan is design thinking in a box. *iCan* aims to democratize user experience innovation by reimagining design methods in a flexible and user-friendly format, making it more accessible to smaller companies without specialized UX design resources. With an innovative twist to the mainstream design thinking process, *iCan* addresses many challenges currently faced in the practice, allowing the user to better understand their problem and how to solve it creatively and effectively. Highlighting accessibility and sustainability, *iCan* is a practical toolbox built to inspire anyone to put on their design thinker cap and get to work making their products or ideas more user friendly.

Ralph Paul, BA (IXD & CS)

Alignment

Despite increased connectivity, young, Black, DC artists face challenges in building a creative community. *Alignment* creates a digital space that fosters meaningful connections among artists as a transformative platform dedicated to supporting DC's young Black creatives.

It is a hub where Black artists are prioritized, gaining access to opportunities, resources, and visibility. This initiative is a commitment to uplifting Black creatives by providing a curated environment for them to thrive.

At its core, *Alignment* is a community builder, a collaborative enabler, and artistic growth engine. Artists can personalize their profiles, showcasing portfolios and connecting with peers, similar to LinkedIn. Tailored groups and forums facilitate discussions and lay the foundation for collaborations based on shared interests. The platform introduces a collaboration board for project postings, nurturing a culture of working with one another. *Alignment* also features a critique system, empowering artists to seek feedback and grow creatively. With a commitment to artists' content ownership, *Alignment* emerges not just as a digital space but as a transformative movement shaping DC's creative community.



(PREVIOUS) *Swaathi Raghunandhan* presents "Make Waves"

Photo credit: Florence Shen
(BA Photojournalism '26)

(TOP) *Hongyan (Yan) Cao* presents "More Than Words"

Photo credit: Maria Luz Bravo.

(BOTTOM) Attendees at the NEXT Extravaganza explore "iCan" by Alex Horowitz.

Photo credit: Maria Luz Bravo.

“With a passion for design, I attempt to build a bridge between products and users,

a bridge that carries experiences and stories that people can connect with and interact with.”

Yanan Sui
Interaction Design, MA

Fine Arts

MFA, BFA, BA



The Fine Arts program challenges our senior thesis students to imagine, articulate, and manifest their artistic voices on a level only possible by having an extended amount of time to pursue their work within a supportive community of peers, faculty, and visiting artists. Every art practice being developed while pursuing the BA and BFA in Fine Arts has the potential to span a variety of media and material, as is evident in the variety of work in NEXT. During their senior year, each student discovers and amplifies their own creative vocabulary to produce unique, compelling, and realized visions. This year's cohort explores a range of material, personal, and urgent social issues of today through sustained material transformation and research. These students present projects that confront the rise in anti-Semitism, offer a feminist perspective on identity, translate the overwhelming anxiety of crisis culture, and explore how objects hold meaning over time through material and repetition

(PREVIOUS PAGE)

Senior, Caroline Roche, working on a piece for the NEXT 2024 Festival.

Photo credit: William Atkins

(1) Shots of "Everything is Fine: An MFA Show featuring Kyla Allen, Daysia Barr, and Dylan Reynolds," in December 2023

Photo credit: Sarah Hochstein (Photojournalism '26)



(L) Fine Arts thesis projects, NEXT Festival 2024.

Photo Credit: Denny Henry (Corcoran BFA '07)

(R) Work by Elisa Durán-Ballén, for the NEXT Festival, April 2024.

Photo Credit: Maria Luz Bravo (Photojournalism '18)

(BOTTOM) Work by Jack Pecau, for the NEXT Festival, April 2024.

Photo Credit: Maria Luz Bravo (Photojournalism '18)



Thesis Projects

Jack Pecau, BFA

Golems Throughout History

Golem is a multi-media sculpture primarily constructed from foam and cardboard and with a coating of terra cotta slip. It represents the creature from Jewish folklore known as the Golem. In times of great crisis, cultures construct heroes and legends to give themselves hope and to strengthen their resolve and communal bonds. Golems are giant, man-made humanoid figures sculpted from clay created for the purpose of acting as guardians over the Jewish people to protect them from those who sought to harm them. Upon its forehead is always written the Hebrew word Emet meaning “Truth,” for its cracks and texture are the result of thousands of years of fighting for survival against bigotry. With today’s alarming spike in antisemitism and hate crimes against those of the Jewish faith, a protector is needed now more than ever. The work shows both the suffering the Jewish people have been subjected to, while also showing how they have been able to survive such great hardship by relying on their will and community to support themselves even through the darkest of times. As the Golem’s incredible strength emblemizes, the Jewish people will not be broken, and their truth will stand through time.

Elisa Durán-Ballén, BA

lost and found

The process of finding one’s own voice as an artist is much like looking in the mirror. Peeling away the rules and layers that don’t resonate, keeping what feels true. In many ways, moving away from home would have seemed to help me do just that. Instead, I kept finding in everything I made a deep longing for familiarity, for the textures and colors I grew up with, and for the traditions I carry in my blood.

Looking at ourselves we are inevitably drawn to the parts that remind us of where we came from, and as a reflection of my practice this piece has felt like doing just that. It came together as an assemblage of memories and ways of making borrowed, found, and passed down over time.

Caroline Roche, BA

L: Silence and Tension

How tangible is the human experience in a digital yet disconnected world— how are we ever supposed to feel and process all that’s going on? We are growing and expanding and producing yet wasting and destroying. I look around and see that we’re living in a lot of late-stage realities, casually hurtling towards “doomsday” with the advanced state of climate change and capitalism. Processing stress and large-scale world anxiety happens through my fingers and the aches in my hands. I’m building something from nothing, using wire to form organic structures that expand and spill over. My process is generative and spontaneous, tying and twisting and wrapping. Covering the wire in synthetic hair emulates the idea of humanity, yet is an abject waste product of it. I want to capture the overstimulation and anxiety that I experience when thinking about the direction that my generation is careening toward. How much longer can we keep going like this? It’s beautiful, but it’s going to congeal into a mess eventually.

Katherine Petrillo, BFA

Nuclear Family, Splat!, A Light Snack, f(x), Creature Feature

My process revolves around repetition as a way of weaving a narrative beneath the surface of my monochrome drawings. While the works may exude simplicity at first



Class of 2024

glance, they harbor profound and intense labor and meditative commitment. Each mark, painstakingly deliberated, demands the viewer’s close attention, inviting them to delve into the unseen layers of pain, exhaustion, and intentionality. Through the exploration of repetitive actions and the selection of specific materials, I uncover a sense of solace within the tension and passion of creation. I meticulously manipulate mulberry paper, shredding its delicate fibers into minuscule pieces and arranging them with care upon the canvas. Additionally, I use a syringe to drop diluted paint onto the surface, each bead of paint engaging in a delicate dance before melding into the fabric of the canvas, creating a moment of stillness. Through the intricate layering and manipulation of materials, my work motions to viewers to immerse themselves in the rhythm of labor and repetition.

Gilam Zhang, BA

Undefined (0)

“How Do I Look?” I am so pretty that nebulas seem to grow all over my body. But have you noticed that this beauty actually consists of my bruises?

The ultimate exploration of my sculpture is self-identity. Through the process of creating this sculpture, I sought my own self-identity. And realized in this invisible patriarchal society, the beautified harm weaponized towards women by societal expectations. This sculpture also mirrors the experiences of countless other women in societal reality. It is retelling the collective tale of all women.

To convey this experience, by incorporating shards of mirrors meticulously carving the sculpture surfaces, I invite the sculpture to become a mirror not only to myself but to the audience as well. So it could prompt us to question:

“How do I look? Are the looks my authentic self-expression or merely projections of social constructs? Can we comprehend the look’s evolution and implications? Are these looks even real?”



2023-24

Programs / Fine Arts

(TOP) Work by Gilam Zhang, NEXT Festival 2024

(L) Work by Katherine Petrillo, NEXT Festival 2024

Photo credit: Denny Henry, Corcoran BFA Photojournalism 2007

“In the Fine Arts program, our students are critical thinkers who reflexively contend with their interesting histories, perspectives, and experiences through material and conceptual inquiry.

They are literally making new imaginaries and refiguring our complex world with each mark, cut, and creative gesture.”

Photojournalism BFA





Woman, Alabama, Country Woman
of Susan Steinhilber
...era people have inspired
with Collier, to remember that time
and the power of Lange's photograph
man into a focus, an image cut into
d then pressed on paper, which
original.
94
/
160
Elizabeth Cabell, Summer
Gift to the National
Gallery of Art, Purchased
by the Gift of the Mrs.
Elizabeth Cabell in
Honour of Mary Lee Carter

Child of Impoverished
Black Tenant Family
Working on Farm, Alaba
July 1936
gelatin silver print
Gift of Daniel Greenberg and Susan

Alabama Plow Girl,
near Eutaw, Alabama
1936
gelatin silver print
Lent by The Metropolitan Museum
Purchase, Alfred Stieglitz Society

Lange traveled to the American South
by the Resettlement Administration
she photographed Black tenant farmers
plowing a field in the mountains of
Lange witnessed the oppression
by Black tenants, who lacked land
by white owners and often struggled
resources. Southern Black farmers
during the Depression as economic
the oppression and poverty of the
agricultural system.

The Bachelor of Fine Arts in Photojournalism and Bachelor of Arts in Fine Art with a concentration in Photojournalism degrees foster a unique, multidisciplinary training ground for the next generation of visual reporters and documentarians. Based in the Studio Arts program, Photojournalism majors are immersed in both the traditions of photojournalism and studio arts practices, resulting in critically engaged visual storytelling with an emphasis on producing well-crafted objects that contribute to contemporary social and cultural discourse. This year's senior thesis cohort explores topics including addiction and recovery, DIY culture, the preservation of small-scale agriculture, queer Hispanic safe spaces, and a historic planned community navigating change.

(PREVIOUS PAGE)
*Photojournalism Thesis
Group Book Sequencing*

*Photo credit:
Florence Shen
(Photojournalism '26)*

(1) March 2, 2024,
*Danielle Towers presents
at the National Gallery
of Art's "Dorothea Lange:
Seeing People exhibition."*



Photojournalism Thesis Group Book Sequencing
Photo credit:
Florence Shen
(Photojournalism '26)

(BELOW) *Work by Kacey Chapman for the NEXT Festival, April 2024.*
Photo credit: Maria Luz Bravo (New Media Photojournalism '18)

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(L) *March 2, 2024, Kacey Chapman presents at the National Gallery of Art's "Dorothea Lange: Seeing People" exhibition.*

(NEXT SPREAD L) *Work by Joseph Decilos for the NEXT Festival, April 2024.*

(NEXT SPREAD R) *Work by Danielle Towers for the NEXT Festival, April 2024.*

Photo credit: Maria Luz Bravo (New Media Photojournalism '18)

Programs / Photojournalism

Thesis Projects

Kacey Chapman, BFA

With the Land

50 miles north of Boston, I grew up in a town that used to be home to a working dairy farm. In 2001, the farm was bought by the town to preserve New England's agricultural past and to provide a space for locals to learn about the basics of farming. This farm was one of a few from my childhood that fostered my awareness and fascination about where our food comes from. With the ongoing corporatization of farming, the kind of independence these places encourage has been reduced to merely a hobby and even a luxury. Those who can live self-sufficiently are a rarity now that access to resources, knowledge, and land has become inaccessible for most people. In the last year, I have spent time with a handful of those in small-scale agriculture who are preserving the practice of cultivating food by sharing knowledge as opposed to just selling a product. This way, food security can be generated in a way that re-democratizes everything we once had to thrive. This series is a look into the lives of those who still see farming as a life skill, and who nurtured my appreciation for living with the land.

Joseph Decilos, BA

Espacio Seguro

"Queer and Hispanic" sit heavily on the bilateral tongue. Twisting in a mezcla of history, expression, and familial ties. For the individuals in the intersection of both—spaces of comfort for their language, ancestry, and queerness get lost in the mix.

Espacio Seguro is my diary, working to etch a place for queer Hispanics in the epitaph of our history that has long been erased. Allowing exploration of the most intimate of spaces in which individuals feel free to be themselves.

Long ignored due to colonialistic and religious pretenses, this work is dedicated to exploring the sacred spaces of comfort for Hispanic queers. Spaces sanctified through those who inhabit them and the notion of safety purveyed through their walls. In its essence, Espacio Seguro is a dive into the relationships and rituals of this populace, the friends made through shared commonalities, and spaces where queer Hispanics are allowed to simply be.

Lydia Embry, BFA

Dedicated to DIY

Growing up, I never felt small the way I often do in big, shiny, white-wall spaces. I grew up in a happy little yellow house in North Carolina. My parents, the two hardest workers I've ever known, have given my brother and I everything we've ever needed, and their greatest gifts to us came from their own hands.

My mom taught me that generosity has nothing to do with money, it has to do with love and care. It doesn't matter what you get in return.

My dad taught me that we have all the tools we need to fix the world around us, we just have to get creative. He always fixed what was broken in our house. He and my grandpa built the dresser that held my clothes. He built my mom an old-timey school desk and carved their names into it. He has taken care of so many landscapes, continuously doing for others with his personal talents and resources. It has never been about money, but pure enjoyment for

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what he does and taking care of our family.

Both of my grandmothers are makers, my Maw Maw a talented quilter who has provided warmth to so many people both with her quilts and her compassion. My Nana is a basket weaver. There's something so special about making things with the purpose to hold.

It took me moving to D.C. and being surrounded by a wealthier, money driven system, to realize how my upbringing is profoundly in line with Do-It-Yourself culture, a scene that I had to seek out to feel at home. What I have found within the DMV DIY scene is the closest thing to the warmth I experienced growing up. Outside of these spaces it's easy to feel outcasted by a capitalist system that puts people who lack funds at a disadvantage. We are told we have to spend this amount of money to make our dreams come true. That you can't be good enough if you don't have the right tools.

That is a cold world to live in.

Isaac Green, BA

In Any Event

In Any Event is a deeply personal journey through addiction and recovery. Driven by my own experiences and those of others who have grappled with similar challenges, this project delves into the complexities of addiction, recovery, and the societal perceptions that surround them. It chronicles the evolution of vices from seemingly innocuous beginnings to all-consuming cravings.

Starting from a place of youthful ignorance, the project captures the gradual descent into addiction, mirroring the inexorable pull of gravity that we cannot resist or escape. It emphasizes the multifaceted nature of addiction and underscores the significance of compassion in navigating its challenges. It serves as a reminder that while the descent into addiction may not be solitary, neither is the ascent towards recovery.



2023-24

Danielle Towers, BFA

Invisible City

At first glance, Greenbelt, Maryland, may not appear all that different from any other suburban community. But then you realize that time seems to have stopped.

Founded in 1937, in the midst of the Great Depression, the federally funded community of Greenbelt is one of three "Green Towns," created under President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. In a country scarred by economic ruin, these towns represent more than a well-considered design; they were a dream for America's future.

But the dream was short-lived; in 1952 Congress voted to sell the homes to private developers. Greenbelt stands alone among the towns for having banded together to purchase nearly 1,500 original homes and form their own housing co-op which continues to operate today. They saved their roots.

There exists, in every home, resident, and crack in the pavement, traces of the old Greenbelt merging with the new, forming the next.

This work oscillates in the space between change and permanence, the ideal and the real, exploring Greenbelt's historical legacy as it moves through the veins of its community, ultimately asking, how deep do the roots go? What would a city suited for our contemporary ideals look like? How long would it last?



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Programs / Photojournalism

“I see photography
as a personal
journey,
recognizing the
value in each piece.

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/
160

It is not merely a
profession but also
a profound love.”

Music

BA





The Bachelor of Arts in Music degree fosters musicianship, creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking. A major in Music prepares students for a wide variety of career choices, both in music-centered professions and beyond. Students customize their academic path by selecting from courses in performance, theory, ensembles, composition, history, ethnomusicology, and electronic and computer music. Many of our Music majors find the flexibility to double major in another academic area, due to the ability to tailor the music curriculum to their individual interests. Graduates from our program possess the knowledge, practical skills, and wisdom needed to investigate, advocate for, and create music and to analyze how music intersects with critical issues in both historical and contemporary contexts.

(PREVIOUS) Members of University Singers perform as part of a music capstone project during NEXT Festival 2024.

Photographer: Maria Luz Bravo (New Media Photojournalism '18)

(L) Kevin Darmadi (Music B.A. 2024) performs on fiddle during his NEXT capstone recital

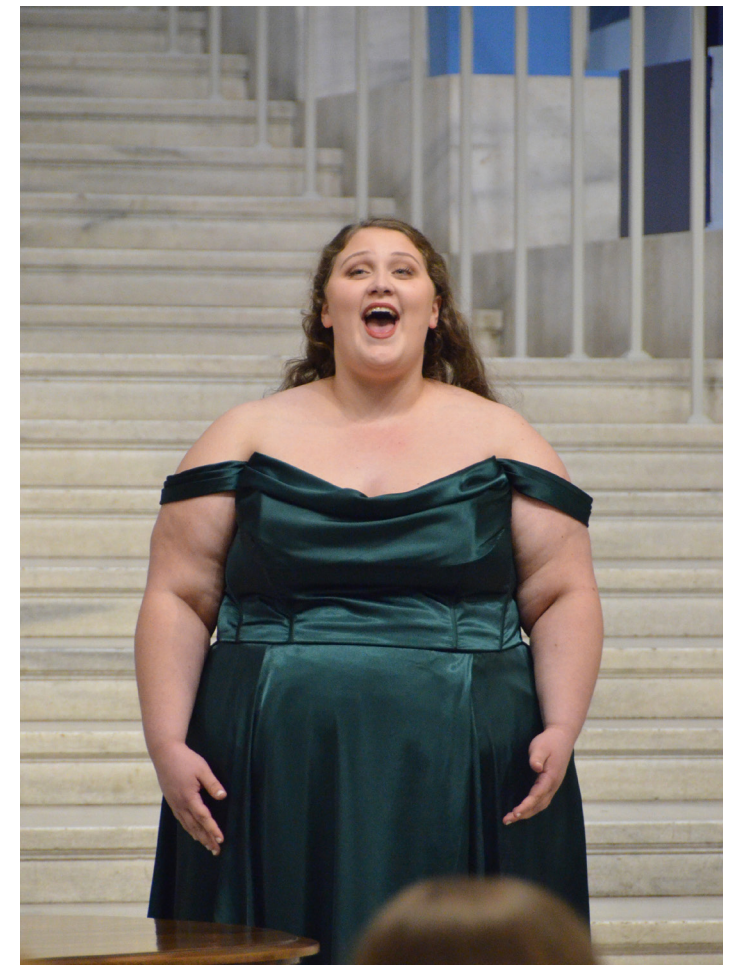
Photo credit: Maria Luz Bravo (New Media Photojournalism '18)



(TOP) Music capstone performances and portraiture of the music students during NEXT Festival 2024. April 27-28, 2024.

Photographer: Maria Luz Bravo (MA, New Media Photojournalism 2018)

(BOTTOM) Nadia Lischke (Music B.A. 2024) performs her NEXT capstone recital in the Flagg atrium.



Thesis Projects

Melanie Campbell, BA

Melanie Campbell is a senior at the George Washington University studying music and political science, and is originally from Pittsburgh, PA. She is a mezzo-soprano, performing works spanning from the golden age to contemporary musical theatre.

Melanie studies voice at the George Washington University's Corcoran School of Arts and Design under Millicent Scarlett, with an anticipated B.A. in Spring of 2024. Her recent performance credits include: A Chorus Line (Maggie), Pippin (Ensemble), Godspell (All Good Gifts soloist), All Shook Up (Matilda), and Theory of Relativity (Ensemble).

In addition to performing, Melanie also currently serves as the Artistic Director of GW's student musical theatre company Forbidden Planet Productions, working to create entirely student-run productions on the university's campus. This semester, she is working on *Seussical*, *Heathers*, and the company's 17th Annual Musical Cabaret.

Kevin Darmadi, BA

Born and raised in Houston, Texas, Kevin Darmadi is one of the United States' rising competitive bagpipers. Kevin currently competes in the Professional grade and has extensive experience playing at premier competitions in the United States, Canada, and Scotland as a soloist and pipe band member. Kevin first picked up the bagpipes when he was 9 years old at St. Thomas Episcopal School in Houston, Texas and started competing when he was 10 years old. He has had the privilege of learning under the tutelage of four prominent instructors: Mike Cusack, Lyric Todkill, Nick Hudson, and Ian K. MacDonald. Kevin currently receives tuition from Andrew Donlon in Washington, DC.

Nick Mandato, BA

Nicholas Mandato's passion for music and the arts has been a lifelong journey, reaching new heights during his time at George Washington University. As a dedicated and burgeoning musician,

Nicholas has immersed himself in various musical genres, becoming an integral part of the university's Latin, jazz, and hip-hop ensembles. His role as a percussionist has flourished through hands-on experience and the guidance of diverse music instructors. Nicholas's approach to music is multifaceted, encompassing not only performance but also academics and production. This breadth of interest has contributed to his growth as a musician, making him an enthusiastic and versatile addition to the GW stage. Despite being relatively new to the scene, his eagerness and commitment have marked him as a notable presence in the university's vibrant music community. Nicholas is also majoring in Psychological and Brain Sciences and is committed to using music to foster a nurturing and dynamic environment.

Nadia Lischke, BA

Nadia Lischke, born in Kernersville, NC, fostered her love for music as a dedicated chorister and soloist. In the Fall of 2021, Lischke began studying voice with Millicent Scarlett at George Washington University. She will complete a Bachelor of Arts in Music and Biological Sciences in May 2024, and is the recipient of The George Steiner and The Myers Family music scholarships to support her education. In the summer of 2023, she was honored to participate with the Taos Opera Institute, studying with Susanne Mentzer, the NYU Classical Voice Intensive, studying with Harolyn Blackwell, and Bel Canto in Tuscany, studying with Timothy LeFebvre. She is featured as a National Anthem Singer as The Senate Project's Debate Series (2023) and as a weekly cantor at Epiphany Catholic Church in Georgetown. She participates in numerous ensembles and performance opportunities, including University Singers, Black and Gold and the music program's monthly recital series Fridays at Five. She plans to earn a masters degree in vocal performance and intends to pursue a career in classical singing.

Class of 2024

Grace Rafferty, MA

Grace Rafferty is a dual-degree student getting her BA in Music and Human Services & Social Justice and her Master's in Public Administration. Her background in the arts began through dance as a classically trained Cambodian dancer and then finding an additional love in music, specifically the choral arts. Her passions overlap in her capstone, combining her interests in the choral arts and in creating community through impactful leadership. Grace hopes to continue to combine her passion in supporting artists to impact their communities through the arts.

Maureen Rafter, BA

Maureen Rafter is a Maryland-born singer and scholar. A double major in Music and American Studies at George Washington University, Maureen is primarily interested in studying 20th- and 21st-century popular music and American electoral politics. Her capstone project, *Born to Run (For President): The Creation of Barack Obama's Presidential Identity Through Bruce Springsteen's Musical Catalog*, studies the role of Bruce Springsteen's music in President Obama's 2008 campaign and is supported by a Luther Rice Fellowship. Maureen's research interests include the inherently political messages of popular music as well as the cultural influences that have contributed to American contemporary sound. Additionally, she is passionate about interrogating musical practices, hierarchies, and the canon we have centered in our studies of sound. In addition to her scholarly work, she has a background in vocal and piano performance which she has continued through her time at GW. There, she has studied theatre, jazz, and classical music as both a soloist and a member of numerous ensembles in the Corcoran Music Department.

Jaida Rogers, BA

Jaida Rogers (she/her), is a vocalist and composer skilled in clarinet and piano from Manassas Park, Virginia. She is a senior pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in International Affairs and Music with a concentration in Contemporary Cultures and Societies at The George Washington University.

Music has always been central to Jaida's life, from her early beginnings in church choirs to her current professional pursuits as a musician and scholar. She is interested in exploring cultural diplomacy to advance equity with the use of culture and the arts as a powerful tool to build community and inform equitable policy. Through her capstone project, *The Neighborhood: Community Storytelling through Film and Music*, Jaida seeks to embark on her journey of fostering meaningful connections through the shared experience of stories told through movies with scores as the catalyst for these connections.

(BELOW) Grace Rafferty (Music B.A. 2024) conducts her senior capstone program in the Flagg atrium.

Photo credit: Maria Luz Bravo (New Media Photojournalism '18)



Ruby Sigmund, BS

Ruby Sigmund is a senior Public Health major from Maplewood, New Jersey. She is minoring in Art History and Music, and loves playing field hockey and hosting her radio show, Strange(r) Artists. Ruby is going to Northwestern University next year to continue audio studies at the graduate level. Many thanks to Babette Pendleton, Heather Stebbins and Andrew Toy for helping this installation come to life.

Anusha Tandon, BA

Anusha Tandon is a senior at the George Washington University studying music and international affairs. Hailing from Acton, Massachusetts, she is a multi-hyphenate musician and sound artist. She has studied a variety of musical styles, including Hindustani with Neelima Chaturvedi and European classical with Millicent Scarlett. Throughout her musical career, she has experimented with jazz, rock, and pop music genres. Through exploring many different instruments, both acoustic and electronic, she creates music elements from classical and popular music, and blends them with experimental digital production.

Schuyler Van Tassel, BA

Schuyler Van Tassel (Class of 2024) is a senior double majoring in Music and International Affairs. His studies within the program have ranged from musicological research, jazz performance focused on midcentury traditions, and work within broadcasting on the Voice of America's "Music Time in Africa". His time at the George Washington has been spent in many parts of the music community, including participation in the GWU Hip-Hop Incubator (founding member), the Über Combo (bass and guitar), the Latin Jazz band (bass and guitar), Tiny Dorm (vice president), WRGW, and the Student Music Coalition. He has additionally studied flamenco guitar in Granada, Spain, and is passionate about exploring new musical cultures.



(ABOVE) Music Band Concert in Lisner Auditorium in December 2023

Photo credit: Sarah Hochstein (Photojournalism '26)

(R) Ruby Sigmund (Music Minor 2024) demonstrates her capstone installation to a guest (seated) during the NEXT Festival 2024 Extravaganza

Photo credit: Maria Luz Bravo (New Media Photojournalism '18)



“My research interests include the inherently political messages of popular music as well as the cultural influences

that have contributed to American contemporary sound.”

Maureen Rafter
Music & American Studies, BA

Exhibition Design

MA

OPTIONAL





The Exhibition Design (MA) capstone installation is a territory of experimentation and innovation for both exhibition at-large and the student voice. Students are called to question and assert the relevance of exhibition in an ever-changing world and to ground their production in the forms and language of future-forward design. The work of the 2024 cohort is responsive to the unifying thematic of “the art of sustainability.” Herein, art has many meanings. And, sustainability can be of anything from energy to ideology, to material to community. Each of the Exhibition Design student projects is the realization of a unique positionality, a personal approach to translation, and an individual process for moving from meaning to form.

(PREVIOUS) *"Optional: Realities of Abstraction"* capstone installation, Cammie Hong (MA '24), a three-dimensional interpretation of two-dimensional works by Josef Albers and Chryssa, NEXT Festival 2024

(1) *"Still in the Fight: The DC Statehood Movement,"* a collaborative exhibition produced by three GWU Corcoran classes curation by graduate museum studies students, spatial design and installation by graduate exhibition design students, and graphic design by undergraduate graphic design students

Photo credit: Andrea Dietz



(ABOVE) "Optional: Realities of Abstraction" by Cammie Hong, NEXT Extravaganza 2024

Photo credit: Maria Luz Bravo (New Media Photojournalism '18)

(BELOW) imagery and fabrication transformations of architectural features at The Heurich House Museum, a pop-up exhibition of student work from an interdisciplinary class offered by the exhibition design and interior architecture programs

Photo credit: Andrea Dietz



Thesis Projects

Jojo Chen, MA

Cyclic City: A Future Co-Creation of Nature, Technology, and Time

In an imagined, distant future, a new group of beings appears on Earth. As they explore their new territory, they come across remnants of the Anthropocene and hints of the ecological challenges that ultimately led to mass habitat change. Driven by curiosity, the beings embark on a journey of collaborative learning. Motivated by a desire to avoid the mistakes of the past, they work to conceptualize a utopian society. They draw inspiration from artifacts found in historic urban proposals that promote sustainable practices and harmonious coexistence with the environment.

Cyclic City is a simulation of the post-apocalyptic beings' laboratory in which they utilize corrupt data from the decayed civilization to pre-construct Earth. A reflection on today's climate crisis, the project looks for answers from the past, present, and future. It offers a provocative vision for those concerned about planetary well-being, advocating for a united approach across time.

Cyclic City visualizes a utopian world where human ideas for unbuilt futures merge together. It tells a story of the future, encouraging us to think about ourselves in the present day. This fantastical scenario explores the potential for positive change in the face of environmental crises and calls for collaboration in unconventional ways.

Cameron Hong, MA

Optional: Realities of Abstraction

Optional: Realities of Abstraction is an unfolding of mutable dimensionality, revealing the possibilities that exist in abstract art. *Works* by Josef Albers and Chryssa are presented as examples of 'mutable dimensionality,' a typology of two-dimensional, non-figural art in which forms unfold into a plethora of geometric permutations that straddle two and three dimensions.

Optional is an experiment in distributing the display of art. The two works are 'exploded' in a series of staircase display objects. Josef Albers' *Embossed Linear Construction I-B (ELC I-B)* is a dynamic composition that shifts between the seemingly real and unreal. The exhibition physically replicates four interpretations of the un-reality, giving the viewer an incremental sampling of the work's many readings. Chryssa's *Gates* print evokes a variable sense of dimensionality through color. The Chryssa display draws out the work's shifting depths, delaminating and accentuating its layers in sculptural steps. Visitors may use viewfinders tied to specific points in space to find the highlight moments of mutable dimensionality that define both original works and are made material in *Optional*.

Optional breaks down and builds out Albers' and Chryssa's use of drawing and line, inviting viewers to recognize the many worlds simultaneously present in seeing.

(L & R) "*Cyclic City: A Future Co-Creation of Nature, Time, and Technology*" capstone installation, Jojo Chen (MA '24), a speculative simulation of a utopian design laboratory in a post-human future

(L) Photo credit: Andrea Dietz

(R) Photo credit: Maria Luz Bravo (New Media Photojournalism '18)

Class of 2024



“The MA-EX curriculum is uniquely interdisciplinary and collaborative. It draws on art, design, and social practices;

it incorporates training in analog craft and digital fabrication, studies in history and theory, and exercises in real-world application.”

Andrea Dietz
Exhibition Design Thesis Advisor

Social Practice

MFA





The artists and creative thinkers in the Social Practice MFA program connect art, policy, and collective action through socially engaged practice. These graduate students confront today's complex social landscape and center meaningful community impact in their work using an expansive set of creative tools, from musical intervention to creating spaces for community building and exchange.

(PREVIOUS PAGE) Fall semester
"Acornacopia" by Shawn
Shafner in Gallery 102
Photo credit: Lydia Embry
(Photojournalism '24)

(1) "Tied Together," work by
Shawn Shafner during the
NEXT Festival 2024
Extravaganza event
Photo credit: Maria Luz Bravo
(New Media
Photojournalism '18)



(ABOVE) "Echoes of Tomorrow: Reverberations" work by Tyler Lackey
 Photo credit: Denny Henry, Corcoran BFA Photojournalism 2007)

(RIGHT) "Echoes of Tomorrow: Reverberations" work by Tyler Lackey
 Photo credit: Tyler Lackey



(L) "Echoes of Tomorrow: Sonic Afrofutures," work by Tyler Lackey with guest DC band, Kharnval

(BELOW) Chef Caleb Jang of Magpie and the Tiger presents during "Acornacopia" work by Shawn Shafner.

Photo credit: Lydia Embry (Photojournalism '24)



Thesis Projects

Shawn Shafner, MFA

Tied Together

Tied Together is a series of interventions that aimed to facilitate stronger bonds between Corcoran community members, illuminate our interconnected nature, and invite us to rest in the strength of our interdependence.

The human mind's default is to focus on the self, and it's easy to get caught up in our own lives. That's why faith and wisdom traditions often call us back into a broader view. Mahayana Buddhists represent interdependence as the jewel net of Indra, in which every precious gem reflects all the others. Abrahamic traditions teach that each of us is "made in the Divine image." Yet the Hebrew phrase referencing this idea, b'tzelem elohim, utilizes a plural word for a singular, monotheistic deity; in other words, we are all Divine and the Divine is infinitely divisible. What if we rooted our community in that perspective? What if we cultivated lovingkindness not only for those we know and see, but also those who we seldom encounter and may never meet? How might we move through our time at the Corcoran differently when we remember that we are, as the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King said, "tied in a single garment of destiny?"

Tyler Lackey, MFA

Echoes of Tomorrow: Reverberations

Through a music based non-linear practice of reflection, improvisation, and reclamation, participants are encouraged to face the violent systems and transmute them into sources of joy, materializing as vibrations that bring about a literal and metaphorical transformation of the atmosphere. This spiritual exploration unveils the profound capacity of art to act as a beacon of joy, a portal to a different dimension, even amidst challenging environments.



(R) During the interactive, "Tied Together," work by Shawn Shafner

Photo credit: Lydia Embry
(Photojournalism '24)

(BELOW) "Echoes of Tomorrow: Reverberations," work by Tyler Lackey
Photo credit: Maria Luz
Bravo (New Media
Photojournalism '18)

Class of 2024



“In my unique performance style, I encourage active participation in the music-making process, challenging the conventional perception of performers as entertainers

and fostering a fluid dynamic between creator and audience.”

Museum Studies

MA



134 / 160

The New Columbia
 JOURNAL OF THE 51ST STATE
 3439 HILLCREST DRIVE S.E. WASHINGTON, D.C.
 FALL / WINTER

'NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE'
 D.C. Statehood Activists Escalate Fight for Democracy



SITION TO
STATEHOOD

CHANGING OPINIONS

Many people, including Frederick Douglass (b. 1818 – d. 1895), have believed that proximity to the federal government meant that the needs and concerns of DC residents were readily addressed. However, by the end of his career, Douglass was one of the loudest voices calling for voting rights and representation for the Dis

HARDLY TO BE CALLED
OF THE UNITED STATES
ALLY THEY ARE ALREADY
CITIZENS, BUT SUBJECTS

Established in 1976, Museum Studies at the George Washington University responds to the evolving museum profession by combining hands-on training with future-focused theoretical engagement. Students gain practical skills, foundational knowledge about the state of museum work today, and the ability to critically engage with developments in the field.

(PREVIOUS & I) "Still in the Fight" NEXT 2024

Photo credit: Maria Luz Bravo
(New Media
Photojournalism '18)



(R) "Still in the Fight" NEXT 2024

Photo credit: Maria Luz Bravo

(L & BELOW)
 The Preventative Conservation Concepts course took a trip to the National Gallery of Art, where students learned about the intricacies of caring for art under various conditions

Photo provided by: National Gallery of Art



2023-24

Programs / Museum Studies



Graduates

Marie Althaus, MA

Marie Althaus, originally from the San Francisco Bay Area, is an emerging museum professional who is passionate about curatorial research, exhibition development, and collections management. Before moving to Washington D.C., Marie earned her Bachelor of Arts in History from California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, California. Marie's museum work is inspired by her love of history, and she hopes to spend her career curating exhibits that illuminate stories that have not often been told.

Andrew Bessler, MA

Originally from Indiana, Andrew received a Digital Media and Marketing degree from Miami University before applying for the Museum Studies Program at the George Washington University. Growing up, Andrew always had a fondness for the museums in the Midwest, frequently visiting the Indianapolis Art Museum, the Field Museum, and the Air Force Museum. Moving to DC sent him far from home, but to a city ripe with opportunities for personal and professional growth. When not exploring digital interactives or cataloging collections, he enjoys reading fantasy novels, painting miniatures, and playing board games with friends.

Rachel Berglund, MA

Rachel Berglund is from St. Paul, Minnesota. She has been fascinated with nature, science, and collecting since childhood. She received a Bachelors of Science degree in geoscience and double minors in Archaeology and Classical Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2017. Her favorite jobs to date have all been in museums, connecting people with the objects that record our earth's history. Following graduation, Rachel hopes to continue learning through a fellowship or program dedicated to Object Conservation.

Jamie Carkenord, MA

Jamie is a graduating Museum Studies M.A. student from Farmville, Virginia. She has a concentration in Exhibitions & Visitor Experience and is passionate about making

all visitors feel welcome in museums. Before coming to GW, she completed her Bachelor's degree in American Studies at the College of William & Mary. She is a lover of all things cultural—art, music, theater, and media included. During her time in D.C., Jamie has worked with the National Gallery's Jazz in the Garden programming, served as a Visitor Experience Associate at the Capital Jewish Museum, and interned with the Arlington Historical Society.

Bailey Carruthers, MA

Bailey Carruthers is from Bourbonnais, Illinois, and is a proud first-generation student. She received her Bachelor's of Art in Public History with a double minor in Communications and Political Science from The University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire in 2022. She is currently a Master's candidate at the George Washington University in Washington DC in Museum Studies with a concentration in Collections Management. She has a background in material culture and historic homes, contributing to the National Register for Historic Places, primarily in Wisconsin, with a special interest in children's toys, writing her 2022 thesis on Barbie as a reflection of women and societal standards. She has previously worked as an archivist at the Foster Gallery in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and has published works relating to Wisconsin history and the city of Eau Claire. Bailey is also a lifetime member of Phi Alpha Theta.

Natalie Macurdy, MA

Born and raised in Texas, Natalie received a B.A. in Anthropology with dual minors in Spanish and History from Texas State University in 2022. After completing a Collections internship at the Witte Museum in San Antonio during her senior year, Natalie felt inspired to pursue a graduate degree in Museum Studies. After graduating from Texas State, Natalie moved to D.C. and began her study in the Museum Studies M.A. program at the George Washington University with a Collections Management concentration. Her coursework in the program includes Archival Practice, Collections Management, Digitization, Preventive Conservation, and Provenance Research. During her third semester in the Museum Studies program,

Class of 2024

Natalie completed a Collections and Exhibits internship at the International Spy Museum in Washington, D.C. Natalie assisted with inventory, artifact cleaning, exhibit preparation, and exhibit installation in this position. This internship was a wonderful learning experience for Natalie and allowed her to broaden her experience in material types, collections databases, and exhibitions. She thanks her internship advisor, Laura Hicken (Collections Manager & Registrar), for her mentorship. In her free time, Natalie enjoys playing guitar, listening to music, creating art, and exploring new museums!

Meta Miller, MA

Meta Miller is a Museum Educator who has been working with institutions and communities across the United States. With a bachelor's degree in History, Anthropology, and Museum Studies from Luther College and professional experience in outdoor education, STEM concepts, and art history, Meta has intentionally resisted becoming tied to a specific content area. In the process of earning a master's degree in Museum Studies with a concentration in Public Engagement, Meta has had the opportunity to connect with communities across DC through work with the International Spy Museum, the National Gallery of Art, and the National Children's Museum. After graduating this spring, Meta plans to move westward and continue a practice of life-long learning alongside community members in Colorado

Christopher Mullaney, MA

Christopher Mullaney is a rising museum professional from the Atlanta, Georgia area. After receiving his bachelor's in History and Education he came to the George Washington University to pursue an MA in Museum Studies. Christopher's personal interests in science, art, and history led him to the museum field where he plans to build his career. Outside of school Christopher enjoys reading, crossword puzzles, and supporting small businesses. An avid home chef, Christopher also enjoys shopping at local farmer's markets for fresh ingredients and plans to write his own cookbook in the coming year. After graduation Christopher plans to stay in the Washington, D.C. area he has come to call home.

Em Petro, MA

Em Petro is an emerging museum professional pursuing an M.A. in Museum Studies with a concentration in Exhibitions and Visitor Experience at The George Washington University. Originally from Waynesburg, Pennsylvania, Em received their B.A. in Entertainment and Visual Arts Management from Waynesburg University. Thus far in their career, Em has spent most of their time working for the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy at Fallingwater where they have been exploring the intersection of museums, art, and the environment. During their time at GW, Em has been working as an Exhibitions Assistant at the Corcoran School of the Arts & Design where they have been exploring work in art handling, installation, and exhibition development. With their new understanding of installation, Em hopes to combine their professional skills to create balance with their recreational practice.

Rachael Price, MA

Rachael Price is an emerging museum professional from Michigan. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts specializing in Anthropology and International Studies from the University of Michigan. It was her work at The Henry Ford's Greenfield Village and Fort Nisqually Living History Museum that helped her find her passion for working with museum collections. At the George Washington University Rachael has been working towards her Master of Arts in Museum Studies with a concentration in Collections Management. While pursuing her graduate degree Rachael has interned with the National Building Museum, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, and the White House Historical Association working on projects to increase accessibility and further care for collections.

Katie Roxberry, MA

Katie Roxberry is an emerging museum professional with a passion for bringing history to life. As a graduate student in the Museum Studies program at the George Washington University, Katie specialized in Exhibition Development and Visitor Experiences while also taking several museum management-related courses. With a B.A. in history and English, she brings strong research and writing skills to her work.

Katie gained programming and educational experience as a Graduate Historic Research Intern at the National Museum of the United States Army. She greatly expanded her exhibition development skills as an intern with the National Air and Space Museum during the museum's transformation of several exhibitions. Additionally, she continued to develop her managerial and writing skills working with multiple guest student writers as Washingtoniana's Digital Media Editor for the Albert H. Small Center at the George Washington University Museum.

Anissa Santos, MA

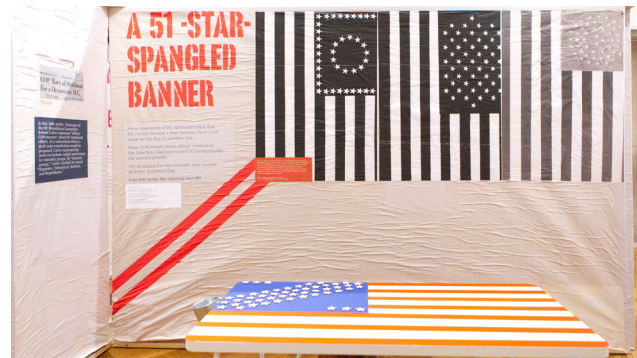
Anissa Santos is a graduating second-year MA student in The George Washington University's Museum Studies program. With a concentration in Exhibitions and Visitor Experiences, she not only has extensive training in research and curatorial writing, but also has experience with museum evaluation, programming, DEAI work, and museum content creation. She has worked as a Curatorial Research Assistant at The George Washington University Museum and The Textile Museum, a DEAI Intern at The Phillips Collection, and as both a Contract Evaluator and intern in The Program in Latino History and Culture at The Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. As a first-generation, Latina graduate student, she believes strongly in the importance of establishing Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion practices in the museum field and establishing relationships and trust with local and cultural communities

(WHOLE SPREAD) "Still in the Fight" NEXT 2024

Photo credit: Maria Luz Bravo (New Media Photo-journalism '18)

Emily Snyder, MA

Emily Snyder is a second-year graduate student in the Museum Studies program at the George Washington University. Coming from Northwest Arkansas, Emily graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of Arkansas with a Bachelor of Arts in History and Latino and Latin American Studies, with minors in Spanish, Anthropology, and Art History. She has a wide range of professional experiences, having worked at a historical society, historic home, library special collections, and natural history, art, and history museums in curatorial, education and outreach, and development positions. She currently works as an Administrative Assistant for the Development Department at The George Washington University Museum and The Textile Museum and as a Collections Research Intern for the Undocumented Collecting Initiative in the Center for Restorative History at the National Museum of American History. In her free time, Emily enjoys spending time outdoors, visiting new places, cooking and baking, and perusing vintage and antique stores.



Elsa Tolman, MA

Elsa Tolman (she/her) is a graduating Museum Studies M.A. student with an emphasis in Collection Management. Growing up in Maryland before moving to Utah to pursue her undergraduate degree, she received her B.A. in Anthropology, focused on Sociocultural and Archaeology, before returning to the DMV to pursue a career in museums. Elsa loves reading, hiking, crocheting, plants, traveling, learning, and spending time in museums. Her favorite museum is the Fries Museum in the Netherlands with its focus on her own Frisian heritage and Dutch citizenship. Though she loves the DMV and hopes to stay nearby, she is excited to experience new areas and travel in her future as an emerging museum professional.

Laura Wilson, MA

With an undergraduate degree in art history and past experience in art museum administration, the museum studies program at GW has been a perfect fit to broaden Laura Wilson's collections management experience. During the program, she supplemented her coursework with four collections internships and gained a much more comprehensive understanding of the unique access requirements, care needs, and varied uses of history, conservation and research, natural history, art, and archival collections in museum settings. Laura is motivated by the power of shared authority in museum spaces and is optimistic about the important contributions museums can make to improving cross-cultural connection. She is looking forward to pursuing work as a collections manager or registrar at a museum that will share her personal values of lifelong learning and environmental stewardship.

Sage Wilson, MA

Sage is from Rogers, AR where she received her Bachelor of Arts at the University of Central Arkansas in Psychology and International Studies. After graduating there she started to volunteer at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art where she as inspired to pursue a Masters in Museum Studies.



Additional Graduates

Madeline Altobelli, MA
James Bleecker, MA
Nia Crawford, MA
Grey Cubbage, MA
Elizabeth Day, MA
Erin Dietrick, MA
Jillian Dillard, MA
Caroline Fowler, MA
Brian Harris, MA
Kellyn Henry, MA
Samuel Huber, MA
Jack Jakubek, MA
Raeana Kiss, MA
Kathleen Lauer, MA
Jay Loy, MA
Ethan Lyon, MA
Alyssa Mehnert, MA
Nichole Nappi, MA
Colleen Niebauer, MA
Nina Pedromo, MA
Meghan Phillips, MA
Nicole Schabot, MA
Megan Sommerfeld, MA
Emma Stewart, MA
Caroline Terlecki, MA
DiDi Wiles, MA
FuXi Worcester, MA

“My work is focused on creating inquiry-based opportunities for community members to discover ways their lives relate to a wide variety of content areas.

My practice insists every learner brings valuable experiences that can cast content in a new light.”

New Media Photojournalism

MA





The Master of Arts in New Media Photojournalism is a two-year program that culminates in a visual reporting capstone project. The capstone comprises photography, video, a long-form reporting essay, a project-centered website, and community engagement events. As with the classes before them, the 2024 cohort has leaned into complex issues at the heart of society, including the expanding epidemic of isolation and loneliness, bonds between humans and animals, the growing impact of Gen Z in defining U.S. culture, experiences of asylees seeking refuge in Washington, DC, and challenges young generations face in balancing their identities and visions of the future with the sacrifices of their immigrant predecessors.

(PREVIOUS) Todd Ford, first-year NMPJ student, talks about a photographic piece from the "Dorothea Lange: Seeing People" exhibition at the National Gallery of Art. Photo credit: National Gallery of Art

(L) Work by Alexandra Rodriguez, NEXT Festival 2024. Photo credit: Maria Luz Bravo (New Media Photojournalism 18)



Work by Chasity Smith for NEXT Festival, April 2024.

Photo Credit: Denny Henry (Gorcoran BFA '07)



(ABOVE) Aashish Kiphayet, first-year NMPJ student, describes and interprets a print of Dorothea Lange from the exhibit "Dorothea Lange: Seeing People" at the National Gallery of Art

Photo credit: NGA Press Office

(L) NMPJ student Alex Rodgers reviews his video in his NEXT 2024 installation

Photo credit: Maria Luz Bravo (New Media Photojournalism '18)



150
/
160

Thesis Projects

Noah Weeks, MA

All, Alone

In 2023, U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy warned that being socially disconnected is as deadly as 15 cigarettes a day. But unlike giving up smoking, you can't fight isolation by cutting something out — you need to incorporate something new.

In 2021 I was new to D.C., fresh out of college, living alone, and struggling. Everything from the dishes in my sink to my daily step count was a reflection of a deteriorated mental state. In all the city I had one friend from college, a handful of acquaintances who stayed acquaintances, and a few work friends who stayed work friends.

I thought it was a chicken and egg situation, being depressed and isolated, that ultimately fell on my shoulders. I felt broken, but I didn't realize what did the breaking. I've since discovered what can do the healing.

All, Alone is a two-sided coin, or perhaps both the chicken and the egg. The photographs allude to the claustrophobic world of isolation. The video *Showing Up* holds the vivacity of Northeast Track Club, a local community that's part of thousands of people's lives — a solution, a hello to new futures.

Alexandra Rodriguezma

Rooted

My family narrative begins with the bravery of my grandparents, who left Cuba after Fidel Castro's regime took power in 1959. For me and my siblings, the hyphen in Cuban-American is a bridge and an homage to those who gave us all we have and the country that made us who we are. Identifying as Cuban-American is more than a label. To claim our Cuban identity is to fight to preserve a culture that in many ways is weakening. In fully living our American lives we must acknowledge that we have all we need to continue writing our grandparents' success stories. The direct and personal connection to Cuba fades with each new generation of our family. Once our living links to Cuba are no longer with us what

Alexander Rodgers, MA

A Home in Exile

A Home in Exile is a multimedia glimpse into the experiences of just a few of the thousands of refugees and asylees who have made the Washington, D.C. region their new home. The film shares the story of Esra Bayraktar, an asylee from Turkey who fled when her safety was threatened by the government of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Her story serves as a testament to the spirit of those who have been forced to abandon their countries, and how these individuals now serve their new homes with commitment and determination. The photographs present individuals and their reflections on the circumstances that forced them to flee their homelands.

Natalia Ventura, MA

Unconditional

The project *Unconditional* explores human-animal interactions and the mental, social, and emotional benefits some gain from them. A universal experience of the COVID-19 pandemic was social isolation and loneliness, which led to an increased demand for acquiring or fostering a pet. According to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), 23 million households (one in five) welcomed a new pet into their homes amid the pandemic. Engaging with animals has been proven to reduce cortisol levels, a hormone associated with stress, and also to decrease blood pressure. "Being around them tends to be soothing because animals tend to regulate their emotions better. So it causes us to need to regulate our emotions better," said Danielle Pientka, a licensed social worker and therapist who specializes in animal-assisted therapy models.

The accompanying film, *Ripple Effect*, narrates the story of Michael Evans and his connection to city wildlife in the Foggy Bottom neighborhood of Washington, D.C. "I've become so bonded to them, the same way you would any animal you have in your house. You build this relationship with them..." —Michael Evans

Class of 2024

Chasity Smith, MA

The Kids Are Alright

Growing up amidst seismic shifts in American society, from the aftermath of September 11th to the digital revolution, Generation Z, born between 1995 and 2012, has come of age facing unprecedented challenges: mass shootings, climate crises, a global pandemic, and escalating political polarization. Despite their profound experiences, they have often been voiceless, lacking agency in shaping their world.

"*The Kids Are Alright*" is an examination of the defining moments that have molded Gen Z and how that has shaped their hopes, dreams, and aspirations for the future. By exploring their narratives, this project seeks insights into the future leaders of America, offering a window into where our collective trajectory might lead.



(TOP) James Schapp, first-year NMPJ student, during his talk at the National Gallery of Art's "Dorothea Lange: Seeing People" exhibit

Photo credit: National Gallery of Art

(BELOW) NMPJ Natalia Ventura standing next to her capstone exhibit, NEXT Festival 2024 Extravaganza event

Photo credit: Maria Luz Bravo (New Media Photojournalism '18)



“My work celebrates
creativity and
perseverance and
responds to modern
evolutions in human
connection,

the commodification
of experience, and
the commonality of
the mundane.”

Alexander Rodgers
New Media Photojournalism, MA





(L) Theatre student performing excerpt from the Laramie Project during the Extravaganza.

Photo credit: William Atkins

(BACK COVER) Photojournalism thesis project, work by Lydia Embry. NEXT Festival 2024.

Photo credit: Maria Luz Bravo

MEET OUR TEAM

So many of our Corcoran members support the festival from an administration, installation, design, organization, and production side of things! We couldn't do it without them!

Lauren Onkey
 Natasha Bailey
 Robert Baker
 Abby Bender
 Isaiah Aladejobi
 James Hucklenphaler
 Emma Hunt
 Kirk Kristlibas
 Olivia Kohler-Maga
 Kaitlin Jenco
 Daniel Jonas
 Miliard Solomon
 Ann Norton
 Babette Pendleton
 Sheila Robinson
 Laura Schiavo
 John Traub
 Noami Rothwell
 Sveta Wilkson
 Jacqueline Emerick
 Sandy Cheng
 Jacob Rangel
 Alessandra Echeverri
 Caroline Casey

Festival Designers

Amanda Bohn
 Lorelei Diflorio
 Emily Greenup
 Emma Marsh
 Ceri Matsuda

Exhibition Install

Cross Museum Services
 Eric Bonilla
 Reed Higgins
 Erik Sharar

Photographers

Maria Luz Bravo
 Denny Henry

AV/Tech

Brian Davis
 Corey Howell

Student Support

Student workers take part in supporting the production of the NEXT Festival through the exhibition, design, or communications side of things.

MC Daubendiek
 Em Petro
 Ava Martin
 Julia Roses

Thesis and Capstone Professors, Program Heads, & PA's

Thesis professors, full and part-time faculty, and program heads work with graduate students all year long as they develop their final projects. Program assistants help make the whole system run. Thank you all!

Robert Baker
 Marc Choi
 Douglas Crawford
 Andrea Dietz
 Alexander Dumbaze
 Matt Eich
 Christina Filipescu
 Bibi Obler
 Mika Natif
 Lisa Lipinski
 Melina Misri
 Eugene Montague
 Andrew Toy
 Melissa Van Ostenbridge
 Kevin Patton
 Anna Kimmel
 Sidney Williams
 Laura Schiavo
 Michele Carlson
 Heather Stebbins
 Susan Sterner
 Siobhan Rigg

Program Heads

Siobhan Rigg
 Stephanie Travis
 Carl Gudenius
 Dean Kessmann
 Loren Kajikawa
 Barbara von Barghahn
 Suse Anderson

Program Administrators

Devin Costa
 Emma Hunt
 Isabella Matousek
 Liz Meitner
 Jacob Rangel
 Sheila Robinson
 Mara Sherman

COLOPHON

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