

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE [27/08/26]

Press Release

DesigningWith: Planet

An exhibition by Kingston School of Art's MA Sustainable Design, MA Product & Furniture Design and MA Interior Design



Image Credit: Shawayne Sangster [@sarisans](#)

As part of this year's London Design Festival, Kingston School of Art presents DesigningWith: Planet, an exhibition of new perspectives on designing in response to a rapidly changing world. The work will be on display at House of ICON, Shoreditch Town Hall, part of Shoreditch Design Week, from 15–17 September.

DesigningWith: Planet is an exhibition of selected work from postgraduate Interior Design, Product & Furniture Design and Sustainable Design courses at Kingston School of Art, Kingston University, that demonstrate DesigningWith: principles – ecological responsibility, social justice, ethical technology and economic literacy. The

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projects propose new and imaginative possibilities for the designer as maker, innovator, persuader, curator, transmitter, educator and activist. They expand and redefine the designer's role in environmental, social and economic systems; challenging us to consider who benefits from design, what value is created and who gets to participate.

In the exhibition, emerging designers, makers and thinkers present a more sustainable, inclusive and ethical view of the future and the actions we'll need to take as a society to get there. Together, they reflect a shared approach to designing with human and non-human stakeholders, moving from the intimate scale of the object to the wider scale of the space and the service.

Exhibited work includes:

- An urban resource processing model designed to systematically strengthen local making in London through the collection, experimentation, and use of invasive and otherwise unwanted plants at scale.
- A sensory cultural market that reimagines Deptford's fragmented industrial landscape as a place for people to trade, make, gather, taste, listen and exchange.
- A living moss device that transforms the computer interface into a sensory encounter with nature, amplifying its subtle breath and inviting people to pause within the intensity of digital life.
- A toolkit designed to support inclusive co-design with minority communities, particularly older adults, in developing solutions to the challenges associated with an ageing population.

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- A project reimagining the coexistence of urban wildlife and communities through an artist residency that explores the barriers within human infrastructure that separate us from the more-than-human world.

Exhibitor Quotes:

“For me, ‘designing with’ means thinking beyond our human existence to a world that is unknown. My practice situates itself in the realm of sustainability and systems thinking, considering how micro and macro factors play a role in decision making. I have always had a strong focus on nature and how as humans we can collaborate with it rather than control it. I view “Designing with” as an opportunity to come together and coexist to transform relationships, policy, design and our environment.

– Sofia Collins Redrado, MA Sustainable Design

“‘Designing with’ means listening before designing. It is about understanding the people, stories, materials and everyday activities that already give a place its identity and allowing them to influence what comes next. I want my architecture to create opportunities for people to participate, adapt and leave their own mark, rather than giving them a finished space to simply consume.”

– Gayatri Gunjal, MA Interior Design

“For me, “designing with” is about designing with people, rather than designing for them. My design practice is rooted in collaboration and in creating solutions that make people’s lives easier and more meaningful. I see “designing with” as fundamentally about people, the value of their voices, experiences, and expertise and about creating the space, opportunities, and tools for them to actively shape and develop solutions that reflect what they genuinely want and need.”

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– Aderyn Lane, MA Product & Furniture Design

We are living through a period of compressed, overlapping crises. Climate breakdown is accelerating, social inequality is widening and artificial intelligence is rewriting how people work. Everything not made by nature has been made, and designed, by someone. That gives designers significant power over how the world is shaped, and a responsibility to be part of the antidote to the extractive system they have so far played a part in.

DesigningWith: is The Design School at Kingston School of Art's response to this moment. It is a statement of intent, a way of working, and a unifying position for how design education is understood and practised. 'With' signals a fundamental repositioning of design. Design is not something done to people or for them, but with them; with people, systems, ecologies, technologies, and contexts. It treats designers as relational and inherently 'entangled' with the conditions we operate within. This approach represents a shift in mindset away from the heroic fix and 'problem-solver' to one of noticing and responding. This is a deliberate move beyond disciplinary boundaries and towards post-disciplinary practice, in which design acts as connective tissue across fields of knowledge rather than a fenced-off territory of its own. The colon that follows is placed deliberately to keep the position open. DesigningWith: is not a closed definition but a framework built to adapt, extend, and respond to whatever comes next.

'DesigningWith: is about giving students the skills, confidence and sense of responsibility to engage with the complexity ahead, transforming anxiety into agency, and enabling the next generation of designers not simply to inherit the future, but to participate in shaping it.' - Helen Job. Helen is a Senior Lecturer in Design at Kingston

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University who has been heavily involved in developing the DesigningWith: positioning. Founder of New Future and formerly Head of Research at SPACE10, Helen is a reputable voice on responsible design within and beyond the creative industries.

DesigningWith: took shape alongside the Design Council's Skills for Planet, a national initiative to upskill one million designers with critical green skills by 2030. Kingston University is one of the Design Council's eleven Skills for Planet Regional Champions nationally.

- Ends -

NOTES TO EDITORS

For press tours, high resolution images or interview requests, please contact:

Cristina Wolter Smyth – ksaevents@kingston.ac.uk

Contact: +442084175215

Exhibition Title:

DesigningWith: Planet – Kingston School of Art

Exhibition Dates

Late-night Opening: Wednesday 16 September

Tuesday 15 September: 10:00–18:00

Wednesday 16 September: 10:00–21:00

Thursday 17 September: 10:00–17:00

Location:



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House of ICON, Shoreditch Town Hall, 380 Old Street, London EC1V 9LT

RSVP:

All visitors must register in advance through Shoreditch Design Week:

[REGISTER TO ATTEND](#)

London Design Festival listing:

<https://londondesignfestival.com/activities/designing-with>

ABOUT THE DESIGN SCHOOL, KINGSTON UNIVERSITY

This exhibition presents projects from MA Sustainable Design, MA Product & Furniture Design and MA Interior Design, that sit within the Design School at Kingston School of Art, Kingston University. The Design School emphasises the importance of critical thinking and practical design skills to prepare students for a rapidly evolving industry. Students and faculty are part of a vibrant design community, with opportunities to explore and shape design's ethical, social and environmental impact. The school's interdisciplinary approach supports a broad range of design studies, including 3D, Fashion, Graphic Design, and Illustration Animation.

ABOUT PRODUCT & FURNITURE DESIGN MA

The Product and Furniture Design MA course at Kingston School of Art, Kingston University, seeks to challenge, expand, and progress definitions of design. The course welcomes designers from varied disciplines who want to redefine the design and making of products and furniture. We see conventional notions of product and furniture design as a starting point, not a limit, to our individual and collective output. We are about the real and the imagined design, creating positive change for people, communities, spaces, and places. We are interested in the making of design and who

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does it, the economies of design and who can access it, and how design responds to current and emerging needs and behaviours. We ‘make’ and ‘do’ through a studio and workshop culture that is experimental and evolves both the theoretical and practical. We collaborate with students from other courses in the Design School, as well as with brands, organisations, and manufacturers, to address design challenges beyond the university. Previous project partners include IKEA, Camden Town Brewery, Magis, The Leathersellers Foundation, Travel Things Museum, and Herman Miller.

ABOUT SUSTAINABLE DESIGN MA

The Sustainable Design MA course at Kingston School of Art, Kingston University, explores innovative, practical, provocative, speculative and radical ways to realise sustainable visions through design. We examine the diverse agendas that sustainability addresses and the intersectional challenges it presents. Through a blend of making, testing, questioning and imagining, we seek to expand our collective sustainability literacy and design meaningful responses to complex eco-social challenges. We are a multi-disciplinary cohort of graphic designers, product designers, service designers, furniture designers, textile designers, digital designers, experience designers, fashion designers, interior designers, architects, illustrators, filmmakers, strategists and more. We aim to challenge the current status quo of design as a discipline, and as an industry.

ABOUT INTERIOR DESIGN MA

The Interior Design MA course at Kingston School of Art, Kingston University has a strong ethical ethos, grounded in sustainability, community, and wellbeing. The course is a journey to define students’ practice within the London’s vibrant community of practitioners and researchers on interior design where we take an unbound approach to design. We experiment and practice several approaches to interior design to address the landscapes of spaces and the city as a whole. The course explores a number of

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projects focused on space, architecture, communities, future cities. We work with real and imaginary sites, from a market at South Bank, London, an aeroplane to a Virtual Reality speculative space envisaging sustainable future. Within our course curriculum, we use a diversity of design approaches from digital fabrication to model making, to visualising new landscapes from the room to the city to tackle Global Issues and visualise futures.

ABOUT THE DESIGN COUNCIL'S SKILLS FOR PLANET INITIATIVE

DesigningWith: took shape alongside the Design Council's Skills for Planet, a national initiative with the goal of upskilling one million designers with critical green skills by 2030. It sets out a shared Blueprint for what green design skills should look like in practice, and, working with the Council for Higher Education in Art and Design, asks higher education institutions across the UK to embed it directly into how design is taught. Kingston University has been named one of eleven Skills for Planet Regional Champions; a network of art and design educators, alongside institutions including Manchester Metropolitan University, Lancaster University, De Montfort University, Bath Spa University, University of the Arts London, Norwich University of the Arts, University of Westminster, Northumbria University, Sheffield Hallam University, Ulster University, and Robert Gordon University, tasked with driving this shift across UK higher education.