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CHENLEI ZHANG

Art and design student groups showcase social consciousness

ART PREVIEW

Reset

WHEN Runs until Friday, Mar. 1

WHERE Harcourt House (10215 112 St.)

HOW MUCH Free

Megan Hymanyk
ARTS & CULTURE WRITER

Society is constantly changing and adapting, and two U of A art and design student groups have something to say about it. In their second annual student exhibition, the university's Visual Arts Student Association and Student Design Association have joined forces to create an interdisciplinary collaboration that speaks to the societal development of the world.

The exhibit, centred on the theme of reset, combines the creative efforts of these two groups to create an unconventional display that features a contrast between art students' work — fine art projects with ageless mediums — and design students' creations, which often incorporate new technology.

But despite the differences between the two programs, this

coming together gives each artist the opportunity to appreciate a different perspective, which encourages their artistic growth.

"It's really important that artists and designers talk to each other and know each other. Artists are better artists when they are influenced by designers, and designers are better designers when they are influenced by artists," says Cara Seccafien, president of the Visual Arts Student Association.

The theme of reset was initially introduced by the SDA, and was agreed upon because of its immense real world implications. Reset looks at the concept of breaking down everything in order to start again, which each of the 17 participating students have emphasized in their pieces.

"It's really relevant to contemporary society because we are facing a unique time right now," Seccafien explains. "There's a lot of breakdown of traditions and we're facing a lot of different crises, so we have to kind of rewire the way we think about everything in order to come up with creative solutions. It's this idea of 'let's start from the beginning again and start with a new blueprint.'"

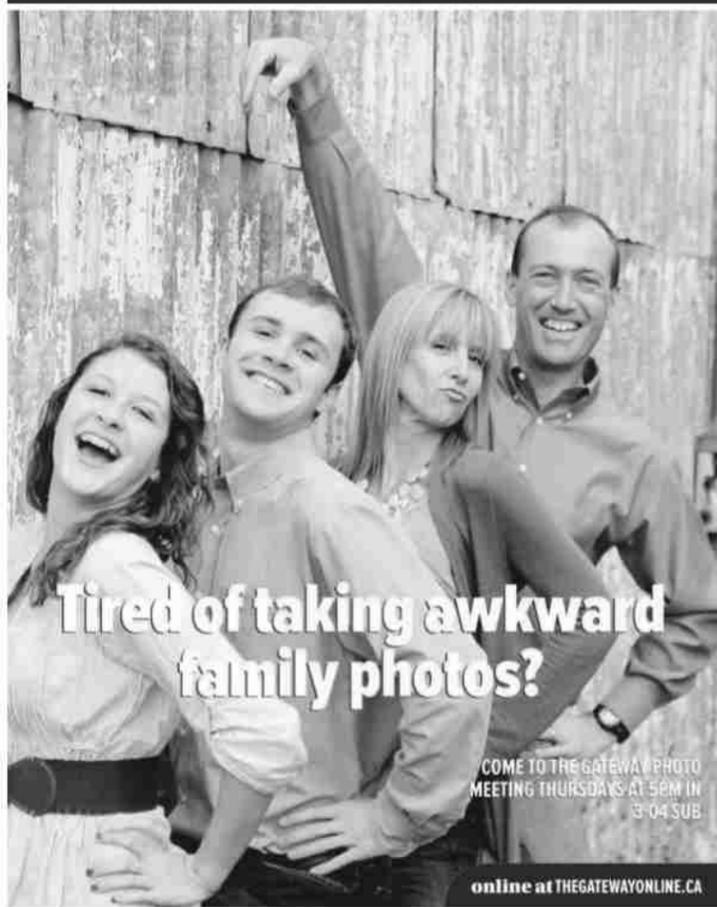
In order to express these ideas,

the design students made posters for their portion of the exhibit. But with only the medium as a common factor between each piece, the posters, distinguished by variations in colour, size and content, are vastly different from each other. The design students also played with different styles that used writing, photography and abstract designs.

The art students, on the other hand, present works that are incredibly varied, and their section of the exhibit features sculptures, drawings, paintings and more. This made it clear that the general nature of the theme allows for students to maximize their creative potential with a medium of their choice.

Not only does this pairing facilitate a combustion of creativity, but it also fosters relationships and allows for the expansion of networks between the two groups. And with each participant in the exhibit currently in their last semester of their undergrad degrees, Seccafien says that creating that foundation of support for post-graduation is more important than ever.

"By collaborating with (each other now), we hope to make those connections stronger so that when we're professional artists and designers, we still have that connection."



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