Life

THE UCONN DMD BFA SENIOR EXHIBITION AND ITS MAGNIFICENT WONDERS

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Art and multimedia are equally important as they are enticing at the University of Connecticut. If you're fascinated by intersections between art and media, you'll be stoked to hear that UConn is currently hosting its 8th annual Digital and Media Design Bachelor of Fine Arts Senior Exhibition.

Beginning on April 10, the collection continues to be shown at the Jorgensen Gallery until April 26.

The UConn DMD BFA Senior Exhibition features projects from 59 Digital Media and Design seniors from the Storrs and Stamford campuses. Twenty-eight of them are presented in the gallery while the remaining 31 will be featured at the Film & Animation Festival on April 25 at the Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts.

According to Heather Elliott-Famularo, head of the Digital Media and Design department at the Storrs campus, seniors in the program go through a year-long process to compose their work.

"Our DMD BFA seniors create a two-semester capstone project in their area of concentration — resulting in a short film or animation, a fully-playable video game, an interactive website or mobile app, or some kind of hybrid work based on their expertise and focus," Elliot-Famularo said.

Elliot-Famularo added that the projects are crucial to the students' academic journeys.

"It is the culmination of four years of dedicated studies, and having the opportunity to publicly display their work is an essential part of their professional development," she said.

There are four types of work presented in the exhibition: motion design and animation, 3D animation, web or interactive media design, digital film or video production, and game design.

One notable piece from the motion design and animation section is "Imagination in Overdrive" by Quinton Miller. According to the artist's statement, "Imagination in Overdrive" is an animation where a toy bus travels through a city of blocks. The animation was inspired by Miller's memories of playing with his little brother as a child.

Miller said he began doing this project in Feb. 2025 and completed it this March. He also said he dedicated over 100 hours to crafting the animation. Along the way, he said he encountered some obstacles.

"I encountered many learning curves with the software, computer bugs and scheduling challenges throughout the process," Miller said. "But with patience, time management and perseverance, I worked through them."

There are dozens of other astounding projects featured in the motion design and animation section. Some of those are "Continuum" by Jamaile Hall and "Snooze Support" by Natalie Ciarleglio.

In the game design section, there are many fascinating video games. One is "Knight of Ash" by Samuel Victoria.

According to the artist's statement, "Knight of Ash" is a symbolization of Victoria's growth as a game developer. Set in a dark fantastical world, it contains knights and dungeons.

Victoria said they've spent over a year designing the game. They also mentioned they worked on the game on and off until their fifth or sixth semester. During that time, they decided to start over from scratch.

"The second version of the project also went through various changes both in its gameplay and its visual aesthetic before becoming what is now my finished senior project build," Victoria said.

3D animation holds a ton of inspiring work from gifted artists. "Memorias" by Ana Marcano Diaz and "Starlight Circus" by Elaina Tiplady are two of those works. "Contained Conditions" by Mari Klein is another outstanding 3D animation piece.

Experimenting with psychology and horror, "Contained Conditions" presents a teenager's irrational fears that are personified as grotesque monsters. The goal of the animation is to connect viewers that are debilitated by phobias, Klein said.

Klein stated that her interest in horror came from her father. She also mentioned that science fiction horror films were influential to "Contained Conditions."

"The subgenre definitely inspired me while I worked on my senior project," Klein said.

Klein also elaborated on the use of fear in her animation.

"I know being afraid is not the best feeling, but I want viewers of my animation to understand how scary the unknown can be, especially those who have debilitating phobias," Klein said. "I don't think 'Contained Conditions' would be as impactful if I didn't watch horror films with my family."

Some pieces are reflections of the artists' personal life or memories. Others are based on their goals. An example of the latter is "Honeycomb," a website designed by Aliyah Ronda.

"Honeycomb" was designed to help consignment shops make smarter buying and data-driven selling decisions, according to the artist's statement. Ronda crafted this website to address the lack of accessibility to resources that small businesses need to track customer demand, inventory performance and trend shifts.

Ronda also said her website can help small businesses with growth and decisions.



A promotional poster for the 2026 DMD BFA Senior Exhibition. The exhibition is on display at the Jorgensen Gallery until April 26.

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A preview for Aliyah Ronda's DMD BFA Senior project. "Honeycomb" was designed to help consignment shops make smarter buying and data-driven selling decisions.

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"Honeycomb can transform everyday resale issues into strategic opportunities for growth," Ronda said. "The platform aims to promote decisions that are better for the customer, the company, the community and the environment."

Meanwhile, there are designs that focus on historical sites. "Echoes of Baltic Village" by Alex Roth does just that.

"Echoes of Baltic Village" is a digital film that discusses Baltic, a significant Connecticut town that was once home to the western hemisphere's largest textile mill. The film focuses on the decay of that mill.

Roth stated that his film's roots of his work are based on his childhood in New England.

"Growing up, I spent a lot of time hiking throughout New England," Roth said. "Coming across old foundations, stone walls and fences, I wondered what communities and industries once existed there."

Producing their designs was an extensive journey for the seniors, according to Elliott-Famularo. However, she said it's also valuable to their academic careers.

"It's a really special experience and helps prepare them for working collaboratively with others in their future careers," Elliott-Famularo said.

It also provokes a sense of community within the students.

"The shared senior project experience really brings the students closer together," Elliott-Famularo said. "They are in class together all year, giving each other feedback on their stories and art styles, helping each other with technical issues, and critiquing regularly as their projects come to final fruition — they're in it together.'"

Aside from the exhibition, seniors can submit their work to game or web conferences, competitions and film festivals. This was a huge success last year, Elliott-Famularo said.

Elliott-Famularo said she can't wait to see what happens with this amazing group of seniors, and she wishes them the best of luck in their post-graduate lives.

The exhibition is open Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Thursdays from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. It can also be viewed before performances and during intermissions taking place at the Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts. The exhibition also has its own website where visitors can virtually explore the designs.