

PRESS RELEASE

River Rights: Guardians for the Hogsmill

SPG Curated dinner: 3 July 2024, Stanley Picker Gallery

KSA Exhibition: 14–23 April 2025, Platform Gallery, Kingston School of Art

The curatorial project, **River Rights: Guardians for the Hogsmill**, brings urgent attention to the critical environmental movement advocating legal river rights—focusing specifically on Kingston's local Hogsmill River. Initiated and curated by students from the MA Curating Contemporary Design at Kingston University in collaboration with the Design Museum London, this project unites communities, activists, legal experts, and cultural practitioners in collective action and environmental stewardship.

Launched on **3 July 2024**, the project opened with a thought-provoking curated dinner hosted at the Stanley Picker Gallery. Guests experienced a symbolic three-course menu inspired by the river's current ecological challenges, accompanied by dynamic conversations and artistic interventions. The immersive event explored the Hogsmill's urgent environmental threats—including pollution, biodiversity loss, and declining water quality—and introduced guests to the revolutionary concept of granting rivers legal rights. The dinner included interactive rituals, reflective exercises, and passionate discussions, encouraging participants to pledge their ongoing commitment to protecting the Hogsmill.

From **14–23 April 2025**, the dialogue continued at Kingston School of Art's Platform Gallery with a documentary exhibition. This reflective and visually engaging exhibition transformed elements of the original dinner event into a compelling installation. A striking 10-metre wall of fluorescent posters illuminated under UV lights highlighted pressing headlines on river pollution across the UK. Visitors navigated the exhibition around a river-like table runner woven from recycled denim, viewing photographs, and script excerpts from the original dinner—each element deepening public awareness and advocating active guardianship of local waterways.

In addition, a dedicated reading space in the library at Kingston School of Art enriched the exhibition's narrative with a curated reading list on ecological ethics, indigenous environmental practices, and environmental justice.

Together, these interconnected events encouraged the public not only to rethink their relationship to the Hogsmill but to join a global dialogue that seeks recognition of rivers as living entities entitled to legal rights, protection, and stewardship.

Project credits:

Curators from MA Curating Contemporary Design, Kingston University in partnership with the Design Museum, London: Wendy Chen, Yuyuan Huang, Oliwia Kochanowicz, Sylvia Liu, Karina H Miriklis, Marçal Prats, Eliza Priede, Heesun Ryu, Qingyun Wang, Teoh Wen Xin, Hong Kuan Wong, Skylar Zhao.

With thanks to CCD Course Leaders, Dr. Jana Scholze and Dr. Donna Loveday.

PRESS RELEASE MEDIA FILES:

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/cbfpvj9x5ks9giy6ylieh/ACf1IzKX_kzhpg9JTmBvcTI?rlkey=oq705vv7a07lm3lkj9nna31zi&st=3huhpdsv&dl=0

Exhibition Design Case Study:

<https://www.behance.net/gallery/226826385/River-Rights-A-Curated-Dinner>

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