

PRESS RELEASE

River Rights: Guardians for the Hogsmill

– A Curated Dinner at Stanley Picker Gallery

Date: 3 July 2024

Location: Stanley Picker Gallery, Kingston University

The Stanley Picker Gallery, in collaboration with MA Curating Contemporary Design from Kingston University in partnership with the Design Museum London, hosted **River Rights: Guardians for the Hogsmill**, a unique interdisciplinary curated dinner on 3 July 2024. Set against the thought-provoking exhibition "Haunted Ecologies" by artist Thomas Pausz, the event sought to highlight the urgent environmental struggles of the Hogsmill River and advocate for its recognition as a living entity with legal rights.

Guests, including environmental activists, cultural practitioners, legal experts, and community representatives, gathered to explore innovative ecological advocacy through an immersive dining experience. The event positioned the Hogsmill River itself as the honoured guest, symbolically represented through a central, river-like woven table runner crafted from recycled denim. Powerful visual displays, including pressing environmental headlines under UV blacklight, underscore the urgency for action against ongoing pollution and neglect. This visually and conceptually evocative setting facilitated discussions around seven fundamental river rights, as outlined in the Universal Declaration of River Rights (UDRR), such as the right to flow freely, remain unpolluted, and sustain native biodiversity.

The curated menu featured symbolic dishes and beverages, each narrating aspects of the river's ecological challenges:

- A nettle tea tinted with spirulina symbolising river pollution, paired with seaweed snacks.
- Herb-infused drinks with chia seeds sourced from local community gardens, underscoring the river's biodiversity.
- Clear water served through a 3D-printed filter designed by Thomas Pausz, representing a future vision of purity and respect for river ecosystems.

The dinner included interactive rituals, reflective exercises, and passionate discussions, encouraging participants to pledge their ongoing commitment to protecting the Hogsmill. The event culminated in a communal toast, affirming solidarity and shared responsibility in ecological stewardship.

Curated dinner 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/cbfpvj9x5ks9giy6ylich/ACf1lzKX_kzhpg9JTmBvcTI?rlkey=oq705vv7a07lm3lkj9nna31zi&st=3huhpds&dl=0

Exhibition Design Case Study:

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

Contact information:

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