

GLOBAL GRAD SHOW, NOVEMBER 12-16

‘The era of endless consumption is over’

Eleanor Watson, curator of the world’s leading exhibition of graduate design work, looks forward to the inspiring solutions that occur when young designers from around the world gather under one roof

How does Global Grad Show work and what does it aim to do?

This year we had 1,300 submissions put forward, from which we’ve selected 150 for the exhibition from about 40 different countries. The purpose is simple – to show the lay of the land in graduate design, but also where we’re heading. That’s the interesting aspect of graduate design work: a lot of it can be quite speculative and push boundaries of how we think about products and services, and what we might need in the future.

Do you have a sense as a curator about the kinds of things that are preoccupying young designers in 2019?

Absolutely. There are two major forces that are shaping the way we live: the climate crisis and AI. What’s interesting about both is that they’re vast systems that can feel overwhelming. But all these designers are grappling with them on a human scale and coming up with different solutions in a positive

way. They’re very forward-thinking and optimistic, actually.

What solutions have impressed you?

The ones that stick in the mind are so blindingly obvious you can’t believe no-one’s come up with them before. Spectrum is a project using reflective thermochromic paint that changes its colour based on temperature. If you paint your roof with it and it gets over 30°C, the paint becomes white and stops the building absorbing heat. Once the temperature drops, the paint goes back to its darker tone and allows for greater heat absorption. Apparently if a whole town did it, they could reduce the temperature by three degrees.

The idea of innovation with an impact is key to Global Grad Show, isn’t it?

Totally. For example, 46 per cent of the plastic in the ocean is as a result of waste from the fishing industry. So Oliver Greenwood from the Hague University of Applied Sciences has designed a

recyclable Sonar Sphere which attaches to a fisherman’s net and makes it impossible to be lost. There’s definitely an awareness on the part of young designers that the era of endless, thoughtless consumption has come to an end.

Global Grad Show is a year-round project to support graduates in developing successful startups. Are your instincts that today’s graduates have that pathway if their design is good enough?

Previously, big companies would have hired designers to come and work for them straight out of school. Now designers have to be self-driven – but that also means there’s more opportunity for them to take the initiative and take their products to market themselves. Actually, Global Grad Show has a start-up programme and some projects will be paired with startup incubators in Dubai and offered funding.

Dubai Design District, Dubai, UAE.
globalgradshow.com



Watson is taking on the curatorial reins for the 150 solutions presented during the show



10-17 NOVEMBER

ATP FINALS

The thrilling climax to the men’s tennis season, the top eight-qualified singles players and doubles teams of the year go head to head in London in this exciting, Emirates-sponsored festival of tennis. The top three of Rafael Nadal, Novak Djokovic and Roger Federer have already made it to the Finals, but they’ll have to watch out for US Open finalist Daniil Medvedev, who will be playing at the tournament for the first time. London, UK. nittoatpfinals.com



4-5 NOVEMBER

15TH CYPRUS SUMMIT

At the crossroads of three continents, Cyprus is perfectly placed to take the temperature of our economic and political state of mind. This year’s summit, attended by government, banking and business leaders from around the world, discusses first whether Cyprus can diversify its economy, before asking whether the EU will manage to form a new narrative for itself.

Nicosia, Cyprus. events.economist.com



9-12 NOVEMBER

LOY KRATHONG & YI PENG

Two distinct celebrations in Thailand they may be, but they have one thing in common; light. During Loy Krathong, small floats holding candles are carefully placed in rivers as offerings, thanks and praise to Buddha, while Yi Peng sees thousands of paper lanterns lit and released into the sky. Chiang Mai is probably the best place to see both festivals at the same time.

Across Thailand. Tourismthailand.org



22-24 NOVEMBER

SAN FRANCISCO HIP-HOP DANCE FEST

Breakdancing is often something of a competitive sport – in fact, it might even be a part of the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris. This San Fran festival celebrates the artistic roots of the form, with companies from Norway to New York showcasing their moves, as well as masterclasses from some of the world’s best. San Francisco, US. sfhiphopdancefest.com