

— RINGLING COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN PRESENTS —

LUMINARIES

— 2023 – 2024 TRUSTEE SCHOLAR AWARDS —

Dr. Larry R. Thompson and the
Ringling College of Art and Design
Board of Trustees present the
2023-2024 Trustee Scholar Awards

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WELCOME

This evening we gather together to celebrate an exemplary group of students, the 2023–24 Ringling College Trustee Scholars.

While we honor the accomplishments of these 15 innovative scholar artists and designers, we also acknowledge the community that is so integral to their success: families and friends; Ringling college faculty and staff; and the supporters and champions of Ringling College. Each of you play a vital role in the achievements of our Trustee Scholars. We appreciate all you do, for them and for Ringling College.

Thank you for joining us tonight in celebration of the 2023–24 Trustee Scholars!

ABOUT THE TRUSTEE SCHOLARSHIP

Students at Ringling College of Art and Design are truly the best and brightest of emerging creatives—illuminating the brilliant future of art and design. To be selected as a Trustee Scholar is the highest honor awarded to students who are leaders in their disciplines and who inspire their peers. Awarded by the Ringling College Board of Trustees, the designation of Trustee Scholar recognizes exceptional creative talent; demonstrated communication and creative thinking skills; and exemplary service, to the department, to the campus, and to the community.

Selected by the heads of each academic department and the Office of Student Life, nominees for Trustee Scholar are forwarded to the Board of Trustees for final selection. In making their decisions, the Board considers the following criteria:

- Exceptional creative talent, communication skills, and distinction of mind
- Contributions to the department, College, and/or community
- Leadership, citizenship, and mentorship

I thank the Board members who participated on the 2023–24 Trustee Scholar Selection Committee for their work to determine this year's class.

Trust me, it is no easy feat to choose between the amazing nominees presented to us. I also extend my appreciation to all my fellow Board members for the resources, time, talent, and energy you give so freely to help advance the mission of Ringling College and to support its exceptional students.

Tonight, as we honor our 2023–24 Trustee Scholars and their achievements as emerging artists, designers, creators, mentors, and campus leaders, we also celebrate the trustees, faculty, staff, and friends who continue to support our creative community. It is through your collective efforts that moments and opportunities like these are made possible. Together, we are moving Ringling College swiftly along the pathway to becoming the pre-eminent art and design college in the world.

I thank each of you for participating in this wonderful event and wish heartfelt congratulations to each of our 2023–24 Trustee Scholars!

Michael Klein
Chair, Board of Trustees
Ringling College of Art and Design

LUMINARIES

A source of light, obtaining brilliant achievement and inspiring others.

Individually, these 15 scholar artists and designers are uniquely talented, dedicated, and innovative. Together, and with the support of the College's faculty, staff, trustees, friends, families, and supporters, these distinguished students are driven to pursue excellence and to be the spark that ignites a bright and shining future.

2023–2024 TRUSTEE SCHOLARS

ELLIE MASSING

Business of Art and Design

ELENA SERENKO

Computer Animation

LOGAN FAULKNER

Creative Writing

SHELLSEA COE

Entertainment Design

MILENA MONTERO

Film

CHRISTINA ANTONIOU

Fine Arts

LAELA RUSSELL

Game Art

SANDRA LEE

Graphic Design

TAKO PHARSENADZE

Graphic Design

MICAH EUBANKS

Illustration

HANNAH NGUYEN

Motion Design

STEPHANIE VARONE

Photography and Imaging

YUNTIAN DAI

Virtual Reality Development

PING HO

Visual Studies

ALEJANDRA CINTRÓN RIVERA

Student Life

WELCOME REMARKS

Michael Klein

Chair, Board of Trustees

TONIGHT'S MENU

Salad

Lettuce wedge with champagne stilton blue cheese dressing, crispy pancetta, heirloom tomatoes, and an aged balsamic reduction

Entrée

Roasted chateau of beef and jumbo crab cake with rosemary potatoes, haricot verts, heirloom carrots, and squash

Vegetarian Entrée

Vegan Tikka Masala served over basmati rice with naan bread

Dessert

S'mores tart with caramel drizzle and toasted almonds

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Dr. Larry R. Thompson

President, Ringling College of Art and Design

MEET THE SCHOLARS

ELLIE MASSING

Business of Art and Design

I choose a future in art and design because

there is no other professional pathway like it. My career and future in art and design is filled with creative solutions and fueled by opportunity.

I want my work to impact the world by

making a positive difference. I hope to combine my outgoing personality, creative design skills, and the leadership traits my education has provided to design a better tomorrow.

My dream job is

something that took me a while to figure out. As scary and intimidating as it can be to think about the future, I have discovered my passion for brand design and hope to one day become a creative director at a well-known agency.



ELENA SERENKO

Computer Animation

I choose a future in art and design because

its core is human empathy and interaction. Art is a cultural byproduct that can unite people in a call to action, manifest an indicator of our societal values, and evolve with burgeoning technologies.

I want my work to impact the world by

promoting empathy with a kick of humor. I believe intolerance comes from a place of misunderstanding and by telling diverse stories with the intent of breaking down stigmas, we can create a better and brighter future.

My dream job is

directing projects that push visual boundaries and breaking down stigmas while being accessible, funny, and thought-provoking. Humor is a direct way of earning people's attention. It can be used to bring awareness to important topics and expand perspectives.



LOGAN FAULKNER

Creative Writing

I choose a future in art and design because

stories are the gateway to understanding our world, healing our emotional wounds, and learning morals and messages that speak to our souls. I hope my work can give back what stories have given me.

I want my work to impact the world by

inspiring people to explore the world and the stories that make it, and allowing their emotions and imaginations to run free. I also hope my stories can teach lessons and help comfort and heal people from wounds they are feeling.

My dream job is

opening a multimedia studio that encourages creatives to freely explore new mediums and skills outside of their main expertise, while collaborating on a diverse array of creative projects such as novels, movies, video games, board games, animations, and graphic novels.



SHELLSEA COE

Entertainment Design

I choose a future in art and design because

since I was a child, I have been drawn to the world of art and design and fascinated by the process of turning abstract ideas into tangible creations. This passion for bringing information to life has guided my choice of a future in the field.

I want my work to impact the world by

dedicating myself to using my art to provide enriching and immersive experiences that can positively impact people's lives on a broader scale. Through creativity and innovation, I aim to create works that resonate with diverse audiences, offering them unique and meaningful encounters.

My dream job is

to become a creative director for a scenic design company. In this role, I aim to bring my creative vision and expertise to life, crafting captivating spaces that leave a lasting impression on audiences.



MILENA MONTERO

Film

I choose a future in art and design because

I believe art and design are universal languages that have the potential to transcend cultures, inspire change, and empower others.

I want my work to impact the world by

creating accessible and thought-provoking films that will present new stories, perspectives, and voices.

My dream job is

leading and producing content that lives at the intersection of art and activism.



CHRISTINA ANTONIOU

Fine Arts

I choose a future in art and design because

I believe that art and design simplifies the complicated. It has the ability to create an entire reality that can influence minds, educate, inspire, and most importantly connect with your community with just a blank canvas.

I want my work to impact the world by

creating work that has the ability to heal, and as simple as it sounds, that brings complete enjoyment to others. To know that you possess the ability to impact others in that way is why I keep creating.

My dream job is

to be a traveling creator. I find my best artmaking is only achieved through new perspectives and I hope to continue my exploration after graduation.



LAELA RUSSELL

Game Art

I choose a future in art and design because

I found my voice through art. Conceptualizing my ideas through visuals allows me to tell my stories in a way words never could.

I want my work to impact the world by

incorporating complex themes and narratives into worldbuilding for games. Video games are such a widely digested medium and I want my artwork to emotionally impact and have a long-lasting meaning to the players.

My dream job is

being a 3D environment artist or a worldbuilder. I can see myself impacting the creative field through these positions.



SANDRA LEE

Graphic Design

I choose a future in art and design because

multidisciplinary art has given me an avenue to express myself and helped me to discover that I can make positive change in the world.

I want my work to impact the world by

being evocative, accessible, and thought-provoking. I aim for my art to be a means of advocacy, namely through social justice, environmental sustainability, and multicultural understanding.

My dream job is

curating and designing impactful exhibitions, social awareness campaigns, and movements.



TAKO PHARSENADZE

Graphic Design

I choose a future in art and design because

I simply like to be creative. My artistic motivations shift; sometimes I create to beat boredom, other times to make a difference. My passion for design sparked after realizing that it's like solving puzzles; putting words, images, or shapes together into one piece of harmony has become an absolute thrill.

I want my work to impact the world by

conveying ideas effectively by considering audience needs and environmental ethics. I strive for ethical creation, addressing graphic design's sustainability concerns, and minimizing environmental impact through thoughtful material choices. My work aspires to harmonize creativity with responsible global influence.

My dream job is

to own a marketing company, ideally back home in Georgia. I envision uniting creative minds and assisting local brands in reaching new heights of creative innovation. I aspire to help local brands break through international borders and ultimately contribute to the globalization of my country.



MICAH EUBANKS

Illustration

I choose a future in art and design because

I want to love what I do. Working in art and design has its ups and downs, like any industry. However, I do not see myself as anything other than an artist. I simply started drawing and did not stop!

I want my work to impact the world by

advocating for the acceptance and representation of minority groups in the media. Societal prejudices are shaped by the media we consume and I believe that helping create positive representation through art can be my contribution to the larger social conversation.

My dream job is

to be an art director in the animation industry while continuing to pursue freelance illustration on my own time. I am also interested in further exploring animation production and working administrative roles in the entertainment sector.



HANNAH NGUYEN

Motion Design

I choose a future in art and design because

creativity allows me to express my voice and culture. Being an artist gives me the power to influence and shape society and people's perspectives. Art can inspire change and design can bring communication across language barriers. Motion design leaves an incredible mark on the hearts and minds through the magic of motion.

I want my work to impact the world by

using the beauty of visual narratives and creativity to inspire positive change, spark empathy, and bring people together. We all come from different cultures and art is the key to uniting our diversity, connecting us to our emotions and shared experiences.

My dream job is

being in a position where I am always able to grow and collaborate with diverse and visionary teams while creating beauty beyond standards, expressing different cultures, and bringing people happiness through unexpected art approaches.



STEPHANIE VARONE

Photography and Imaging

I choose a future in art and design because

I love the idea of creating something that causes emotional reaction in others, whether pleasant or sorrowful. I enjoy constructing images that showcase the human experience and allow others to relate to the feeling being shown.

I want my work to impact the world by

showing that the emotions we feel as humans are normal. I want my photographs to convey the emotional experiences we have been through and how we cope with them.

My dream job is

to work with musicians and create their album promotional materials. Music is an important part of people's lives and to be able to create the visuals that assist in a song's development is impactful to me.



YUNTIAN DAI

Virtual Reality Development

I choose a future in art and design because

I believe art holds limitless potential, as it can blend with various industries to create greater value. I aspire to become a storyteller, expressing my inner thoughts through diverse art forms such as paintings, animations, and even games.

I want my work to impact the world by

aspiring to merge art and technology, allowing individuals to immerse themselves fully in a variety of fantastical virtual worlds when they put on a VR headset. This way, they can achieve ideals that are unattainable in the real world and break down the barriers between dimensions.

My dream job is

to become a technical artist because it demands continuous improvement, staying abreast of technological advancements, and developing cutting-edge techniques to achieve exceptional artistic effects. I firmly believe in the philosophy of lifelong learning, and I possess a strong ability for self study and adaptation.



PING HO

Visual Studies

I choose a future in art and design because

art is life; art belongs to everybody. I believe that art has the power to foster connections among people by uniting individuals and communities in environments that encourage discussions, shared experiences, and a sense of belonging.

I want my work to impact the world by

creating platforms for social engagement and different expressions that embrace inclusivity, captivate audiences, and offer accessibility across various forms of curated artistic representation.

My dream job is

to become an independent curator and use art to bring people closer together. I dream of sharing art experiences that deeply resonate with me as I curate them and evoke emotional responses from viewers as they perceive them.



ALEJANDRA CINTRÓN RIVERA

Student Life

I choose a future in art and design because

while growing up my favorite films gave me an escape from the realities I struggled with. Filmmaking showed me how much joy it can bring to me and others. I wish to create impactful films and hopefully inspire another little girl that may be struggling.

I want my work to impact the world by

focusing on projects that tell stories of unique perspectives and by giving people, who may not have a voice or an outlet, the opportunity to share their experiences.

My dream job is

to work in the industry as a successful Latina cinematographer, creating complex images of beauty and empowerment that leave a mark on my audience and help them see life through a different lens.



THANK YOU

This evening was truly illuminating and we want to extend a special thank you to the faculty, staff, and students who dedicated their time and talent in bringing Luminaries to life. We also want to express our gratitude to the Trustee Scholar Selection Committee and the Ringling College of Art and Design Board of Trustees for their investment in the brilliant future of our students and our institution.

Finally, thank you to our Ringling College friends, families, and supporters. You are the spark that ignites creativity and passion in our students as they prepare to light up the future of art and design.

2023 Ringling College Design Center
Design by Diego Villarreal '24, Graphic Design
Photography by Matthew Holler '11, Photography and Imaging

