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Senior art students put their capstone projects together to create the exhibition “Gown to Town: Visual Art Mapping in the ‘Boro,” for display at the Averitt Center for the Arts and the Roxie Remley Center for Fine Arts. The exhibition opens on April 7 and runs until the end of the month. The opening reception will take place at the First Friday event in downtown Statesboro on April 7 at 5:30 p.m.

“When we started this project in 2016, we discovered the enormous emphasis put on steering students into the downtown area with projects like Blue Mile and City Campus. This made me curious about which elements of the city draw students naturally,” said Elsie Hill, assistant professor in the Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art. “This is year two of what I am calling a socially engaged legacy project that examines Statesboro from the visual art students’ perspective.”

Capstone students were asked to design visual art projects that reflected their viewpoint of Statesboro, based on local traits such as history, geography, personal experience and emotional growth. They employed their studio skills in combination with personal experience, visual and historical research, and geographic information system mapping to represent aspects of the city they have come to know through their time at the University.

“Once the students were asked to pull from their personal perspectives and broad studio skills, there was an abundance of ideas that covered many parts of the city,” said Hill. “Story Mapping is the perfect tool to bring together multiple experiences, multiple locations, and multiple mediums because it integrates mapping with visual elements and text.”

Story mapping essentially includes multiple layers of geographic data that use GIS technology and visual art to tell stories. These can be used to map tour routes or trails, examine influences and relationships or track patterns and data.

“You might think of the artists as explorers, researchers or scientists — examining multiple visual, historical, and inspirational aspects of the community and its inhabitants and think of their visual art projects as their reports based on their research and observations,” said Casey Stoddard, creative design director for the Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art. “The story map adds an interactive, digital dimension whereby viewers can experience their narratives in a new way.”

The exhibition will showcase capstone projects from 10 graduating seniors, and will include animation/video, ceramics, digital art, drawing, mixed media, painting, and printmaking.

- Zackery McVey and DeMyron Kendall— both creating animations from local video footage
- Robin Lane continues her ceramic book project with topics from Statesboro history.
- Jenny Callahan and Denson McLain both presenting a series of landscapes
- Stefani Waters and Jasmyne “Joala” Johnson— creating mixed media works depicting architectural and natural elements that often go unnoticed
- Rian Mobley-Luke— painted portraits of strong women who have influenced her success while attending Georgia Southern
- Peyton Snell and TJ Thomas— both developed a visual vocabulary based on their travels around town
Each student shared their stories on an interactive map of Statesboro by cataloging their artwork in a specific area of the map.

This exhibition will be on view at the Legends Gallery on the second floor of the Averitt Center for the Arts on 33 E. Main St., and the second floor of the Roxie Remley Center for Fine Arts on 31 E. Vine St.

To view the BA Capstone Legacy Project, visit http://arcg.is/2ln9vt1. The 2017 project will go live on April 7.

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