Newsroom

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Georgia Southern University

Georgia Southern master's student creates thesis exhibition by rolling the dice

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Turning fantasy into reality, Georgia Southern University art student Zak Kelley used Dungeons and Dragons to help shape his MFA thesis exhibition titled "Neo_Fluxus and Dragons." His work will be on display from March 28 to April 1 at the Center for Art and Theatre's University Gallery on the Statesboro Campus, with a reception to be held on March 29 from 7 to 9 p.m.

Art by Zak Kelley.

"Dungeons and Dragons has only one main rule: specific over general," Kelley said. "I use this game mechanic to create rules for my artworks."

Like determining the outcome of an event in Dungeons and Dragons, Kelley rolls the dice to determine the outcome of his artwork. How the dice fall determines what shapes, colors, and type of medium and materials he will use in his art.

"The formula is vague enough to allow for interpretations of the rules, and this allows for me to create dynamic compositions out of the specific, chance-induced ruleset," Kelley said.

With his instillation, Kelley has created an experience for gallery guests — some of it scripted, some of it not — where their experiential choices are as driven by chance as his compositional choices. By combining the passive Fluxus style and audience participation with the story-telling aspect of Dungeons and Dragons, Kelley's work explores how the viewer participates in an art experience.

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/R2 institution founded in 1906, offers 141 degree programs serving nearly 26,500 students through nine colleges on three campuses in Statesboro, Savannah, Hinesville and online instruction. A leader in higher education in southeast Georgia, the University provides a diverse student population with expert faculty, world-class scholarship and hands-on learning opportunities. Georgia Southern creates lifelong learners who serve as responsible scholars, leaders and stewards in their communities. Visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu.

Tags: Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art, College of Arts and Humanities

Georgia Southern students to represent University at first-ever Georgia Inventure Prize

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Students from the annual 3 Day Startup at Georgia Southern pose after their concept "Ghost Runner" was selected as the best idea.

An app designed to "gamify" running by encouraging virtual running competitions among friends was the idea selected to move on to the inaugural Georgia Inventure Prize competition by panelists at the Georgia Southern University Business Innovation Group's (BIG) annual 3 Day Startup (3DS).

The app, called "Ghost Runner," was designed by four students in the Allen E. Paulson College of Engineering and Computing and three College of Arts and Humanities students. The idea was deemed by panelists made up of the University's Intellectual Property Committee to be the one that made the most progress during the three days teams had to prepare their ideas.

"Ghost Runner seemed scalable," said panelist and Georgia Southern Professor of History and Director of Digital Humanities, Robert Batchelor, Ph.D. "I really liked the idea that it solved a problem of messy apps for this concept currently on the market, and it was something that small businesses, running tournaments, etc., could rely upon as an app solution to marketing."

The winning team includes computer science majors Marcus Joachim, Wyatt Landers and Jacob Poston; graphic design majors Zee Doehling and Thomas Martin; mechanical engineering major Shadrach Stark; and international studies major Michael McFarland.

The students will work with BIG to prepare for the inaugural Georgia Inventure Prize Competition. Each college and university in the state was invited to send one team to Atlanta to compete April 3 – 4. The top five finalists will present via live GPB broadcast and streaming, with up to $50,000 in cash prizes and in-kind professional services.

3DS is a world-renowned program that brings together individuals from various backgrounds in a learning-by-doing environment to give students the tools needed to start successful companies. Students talk about ideas and form teams on a Friday and work on bringing those ideas to life by the following Sunday. On Monday, the competition culminates with a "Shark Tank" style pitch competition in which students pitch their ideas to panelists who judge and select the most viable idea.

In addition to "Ghost Runner," five other teams pitched ideas during this year's 3DS including ideas on aquaponics, a speeding device, bags made from textile waste, peer-to-peer lending and roommate matching.

Audience members also got a chance to vote for their favorite, giving the People's Choice award to Olam Aquaponics. Led by biology major Cameron Milton, the team started with a large farm operation that provided food grown by aquaponics. The team made a pivot to set up and maintain aquaponic systems for assisted-living communities and schools.

"I definitely plan on continuing this project with the businesses that I'm in contact with, and I hope my team joins me in the next step," said Milton.

The event was organized by the Square One student organization. The Square One leadership team includes Marin Coleman, president; David Vaughn, vice president; Josh Curtis, treasurer; and Tinia Holmes, secretary.

"The students took charge this year and did a wonderful job finding sponsors and mentors to help support the event, which helps ensure the event runs smoothly," said club advisor, Suzanne Hallman. "After managing the event for five years, it's nice to have a group of students who can run with it."

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