Degree Show artwork set to wow

From a living, breathing human rock to clay from a North East allotment, this year’s University of Sunderland MA Degree Shows have something for everyone.

The exhibitions open to the public on Saturday as students show off their creations at venues across the city.

Here we take a look at some of the more unusual pieces.

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Name: Rebecca Marrs

Age: 23

Programme: MA Fine Art

Venue: Priestman Building
Rebecca’s eye catching, living, breathing rock sculpture is set to go on public display outside Priestman Building at the University’s City Campus. Taking pride of place on a specially constructed plinth, the installation resembles a static rock formation which is suddenly brought to life. The specially constructed suit took three weeks to create and is already proving to be an eye catching exhibit.

Rebecca said: “I really wanted to push myself since this was my MA Degree show. My lecturers encouraged me to do something a bit different. “Originally, I had created a rock wall which was static but that gave me the idea to take things further towards a moving installation.”

The work will be available for the public to see outside Priestman Building on October 8.

Rebecca Marrs won a DOSH (Development Office Scholarships) Robson Masters Award. To find out more about scholarships available now go to: sunderland.ac.uk/dosh

**Name:** Beth Huttly

**Age:** 30

**Programme:** MA Glass and Ceramics

**Venue:** National Glass Centre
For six years, Beth Huttly taught art to some of the country’s most serious offenders.

Based at HMP Durham, the artist became aware of the many problems and issues within the prison system, including overcrowding, self-harm and boredom.

Beth’s Degree Show work reflects many of these issues and holds a mirror up to the daily problems faced by those in prison.

Beth, from Newcastle, said: “During those six years my eyes were opened in different ways. Issues like self-harm are so prolific and I wanted that to be reflected in my work.

“I got the opportunity to meet a lot of different characters; often these men have been convicted of some of the most heinous crimes yet they came together to create their own art.”

Beth is displaying two different works in the Shows. One, called ‘Overspill’ sees dishes stacked on top of each other, representing the overcrowding and instability of the prison system.

While her other work – Her Majesty’s Playground – reflects how prisoners often create drama in order to give their daily routine more purpose and meaning.

Name: Laura Marley

Age: 33

Programme: MA Glass and Ceramics

Venue: National Glass Centre
Clay dug from Laura’s North Tyneside allotment forms the centrepiece of her Degree Show exhibition.

The clay is processed by hand reflecting more primitive artistic methods. Laura then created ‘pinch-pot’ vessels.

Laura, originally from Gateshead, said: “A lot of my work is influenced by ancient pottery and the methods used to create it.

“My work remains unfired and the creations are instead burnished in an effort to conserve energy.”

Laura Marley’s research project, *Potted History*, was funded by the DOSH (Development Office Scholarships) Futures Fund. To find out more about scholarships available now go to: sunderland.ac.uk/dosh

**MA Degree Shows 2019**

MA Glass and Ceramics, National Glass Centre, open to the public Saturday, September 28 to Sunday, October 6.

MA Photography, National Glass Centre, Riverside Rooms, open to the public Saturday, September 28 to Sunday, October 6.

MA Fine Art, Priestman Studios, open to the public Monday, September 30 to Friday, October 11.

MA Design, Priestman Studios, open to the public Friday, October 18 to Friday, November 1.