

## **Konstfack Degree Exhibition 2019 – 175 years of education, social impact, conflicts and opportunities**

**Welcome to a press preview Thursday 16th at 11 am with a guided tour by the curators Emily Fahlén and Asrin Haidari at 11.15. The vernissage starts at 12, the inauguration at 4 pm.**

Since the founding of Konstfack in 1844, the school has not only educated tens of thousands of artists, teachers, designers, architects, craft artists and other creators, but has also been a place for social engagement, struggle and debate. Battles have been fought, lost and won. Internally and in dialogue with the outside world. 2019 is no exception: the constant questioning of what we are doing, for whom, how and why has led to new insights and, ultimately, to new ways of thinking, including new artistic expressions and methodologies. The 2019 Degree Exhibition can therefore be experienced both in the glow of 175 years of history and in a single flash: the intense commitment of students and teachers in both the material, the personal and also the political is channelled into a cavalcade of expressions. It gives us an important picture of both our present and future. /**Maria Lantz, Vice-Chancellor**

**This year, the Degree Exhibition has been curated by Emily Fahlén and Asrin Haidari** whose method is to dig where they stand and, through dialogue with the surrounding context, understand the site's specific relationships, historical connections, conflicts and opportunities:

“In the works by 179 students, it is of course difficult to trace a common theme, but they include an interest in translation as an artistic practice, the language of emotions, the slow processes of craft and the role of design in the age of climate change. At the same time, we have actively chosen to look for where in the school the critical discourses take place, in which spaces and from which perspectives they occur. One such example is the POC student collective Brown Island. The cross-disciplinary group arranges exhibitions and has recently published a handbook with lessons on decolonising processes in educational environments, *Brown Island in the White Sea: A Handbook for a Collective Practice*. As part of the Degree Exhibition, we have, in dialogue with the group, allowed texts from the book to sneak into the exhibition's infrastructure. With this intervention, we as curators wish to highlight a greater issue about a school's historiography and how initiatives such as these can rub off on an institution's existing structure. What stories are hidden in the school's architecture, systems and inhabitants?”

**The curatorial duo Emily Fahlén and Asrin Haidari** work with a special interest for radical art production, intergenerational meetings and site-specific interventions. They recently inaugurated the new art space *Mint* in the Workers' Educational Association in Stockholm and are currently curators of the Gunilla Palmstierna-Weiss retrospective, *Vivid Scenes 1964-1984*, at Moderna Museet in Stockholm. They were artistic directors for the 2018 Luleå Biennial and previously worked at Tensta konsthall with local and international art projects.

**The visual concept for Konstfack's Degree Exhibition 2019, created by Jennifer Bergkvist and Moa Sundkvist**, encourages visitors to problematise the economism of society which not only transforms relationships into a game of pounds and pennies, but also permeates the language: we spend time, we pay attention. The concept's straight and expressive design is inspired by currency exchange offices around the world. The designers, both educated at Konstfack, are working together with, among other things, books, newspapers, illustrations and graphics. They also teach and lecture in design and theory.

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**Konstfack Degree Exhibition is open 16-26 May, the vernissage takes place Thursday 16<sup>th</sup>, 12-8 pm. For more information and images, please visit [www.konstfack2019.se](http://www.konstfack2019.se)**

The 179 graduating students represent the bachelor's and master's programmes in Graphic Design & Illustration, Industrial Design, Interior Architecture & Furniture Design, Ceramics & Glass, Fine Art, Textiles, Ädellab and the Teacher Education programme in Visual Arts.

**Konstfack University of Arts, Crafts and Design** is Sweden's largest university for arts, crafts and design. Since 1844, we have educated a diverse range of professionals within these fields as well as art and sloyd teachers. We conduct both artistic and scientific education/research and currently have 900 students and 200 employees. [www.konstfack.se](http://www.konstfack.se)