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ARTSTHREAD AND OXO TOWER WHARF ANNOUNCE WINNERS OF STUDIO RESIDENCY

ARTSTHREAD and Oxo Tower Wharf are pleased to announce the winners of the *Graduate Residency Programme*; Freya Grötecke & Julia Forslund founders of genderless knitwear brand Ecke Faei and Monica Tong x Wai Yan Choi, a craft and design duo specialising in ceramics, jewellery and glass.

Oxo Tower Wharf x ARTSTHREAD have partnered up with support from the Cultural Recovery Fund to launch the *Graduate Residency Programme* where two designer/makers are offered a complimentary studio residency for a four month period between September - December 2021 in the heart of London at the iconic Oxo Tower Wharf, South Bank.

The aim of the residency is to support emerging designers in launching their studios, with a space to work, showcase their creativity and sell in the heart of London. Oxo Tower Wharf partnered with ARTSTHREAD who for over 12 years have supported and nurtured a future generation of creative graduates, providing opportunities that help students gain employment or launch their own brands.

Ecke Faei was created during the 2020 lockdown by Freya Grötecke & Julia Forslund who both met whilst attending Kingston School of Art. Drawing from their shared backgrounds, the duo design fragile knitwear pieces for all sizes and gender identities. They aim to create slow fashion that subverts the ideas of working-class aesthetics and get to celebrate where they come from in a high fashion world. Having graduated in summer 2021, Freya and Julia are taking *Ecke Faei* from strength to strength, garnering the attention of celebrity stylists and securing press coverage from the likes of i-D and TMRW Magazine.

<https://coinstreet.org/shop-eat-drink/ecke-faei-graduate-residency>

<https://www.artstthread.com/profile/eckefaei/>

Monica Tong and Wai Yan Choi also graduated in summer 2021, both from Royal College of Art's Ceramic and Glass department, "We would like to use the space to work collaboratively by incorporating different materials into our design, hosting skill-share workshops, as well as pop up exhibitions. By taking on further experiments and collaborations with other artists as well as showcasing our working process with the possibility of gaining instant feedback from the market, we can carry on working in the momentum after graduation"

<https://coinstreet.org/shop-eat-drink/monica-tong-x-wai-yan-choi>

<https://www.artstthread.com/portfolios/artstthread-x-oxo-tower-wharf/>

Sophie Cain, Design Curator, Oxo Tower Wharf "The aim of the residencies is to support emerging designers to launch their studios with a space to work, showcase and sell in the heart of cultural London. Setting these graduates up in studios amongst our existing creative community of designer-makers and small businesses will be mutually beneficial and we're hoping to see collaborations and new ideas develop as a result. We had so many brilliant applications and although it was tough to narrow it down, we are delighted with our selected residents and I'm really excited to see what they do with their spaces".

The initiative comes at a pivotal time for Oxo Tower Wharf as they re-focus on craft & design, seeking talented makers to join them, with studios now available. The iconic riverside building provides a unique opportunity for makers to have a studio and showroom, along with the added bonus of open door to the public too.

It also comes at an important time for ARTSTHREAD as they prepare the announcement of the winners for the Global Design Graduate Show 2021 edition in collaboration with Gucci.

Webpage: <https://coinstreet.org/oxo-arts-thread-graduate-residency>

About OXO Tower Wharf

Oxo Tower Wharf is a cultural hub and creative community at the heart of London's South Bank and Bankside. Right on the riverside, it is a lively community of designer-maker studios, gallery and event spaces, shops, cafes and restaurant. There's always something going on. The iconic building with its famous art deco tower is owned and managed by Coin Street, a local social enterprise creating a thriving, diverse, and welcoming place for people to live, work and play.

For further information about Oxo Tower Wharf please visit oxotower.co.uk

Social: @oxotowerwharf (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook)

About ARTSTHREAD

ARTSTHREAD was created in 2008 and over the years has helped thousands of new artists and designers launch their own businesses and gain employment worldwide. ARTSTHREAD has built relationships with more than 900 creative higher-education institutions, engaging with over 400,000 students and recent graduates in approximately 125 countries. ARTSTHREAD partners with leading brands, organisations, events & media to help launch the next generation of creative talent globally.

For further information about ARTSTHREAD visit www.artsthread.com

Social: @oxotowerwharf / @artsthread (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook)

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