

Hands On Bursary recipient 2014, Rachel McGann



What did winning the Hands On Bursary and the recognition of the Artspace Mackay Foundation mean to you?

The Artspace Foundation & gallery formed a key part of my teenage experience in Mackay, and continues to when I visit home, so receiving the bursary was a welcome recognition of the work I'd been putting in toward graduating from my dual bachelor degrees, as well as a reminder of the supportive creative community in my hometown.

What did you spend the Bursary on?

It was put toward my final year assessment of design and actualising a fashion collection. The twelve months of many sampling stages, final fabric costs and required look book and editorial photography (including professional model, hair, make-up, photography and printing costs) easily grew to costing many thousands of self-funded dollars.

How has your career progressed since winning the Bursary and what are your plans, goals and aspirations for the future?

I first continued to work in fast fashion wholesaling, and since then have been working in retail buying and product development for an ASX listed clothing retailer. I'm currently most focussed on gathering knowledge across the finances, strategy and creative sides of the industry to hopefully one-day work on and run a fashion label social enterprise of my own.

If you had one piece of advice for young art students considering an application for the Hands On Bursary, what would it be?

Trust your intuition when it comes to design. Your period of study is the time to experiment, learn the history of your industry or craft, and ultimately to develop your taste. Better understanding and subsequently growing confidence in your own creativity will put you far ahead once you enter the workforce – as merging your point of view with that of a commercial brand, customer, and/or budget will likely form a key part of the first jobs you have in your industry.