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Distribution Report

Award-Winning Designer Assem Kiyalova Joins Rutgers University Faculty to Teach Visual Storytelling and Social Design

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United States, 5th Nov 2025 – Rutgers University's Mason Gross School of the Arts has announced the appointment of <u>Assem Kiyalova</u>, an internationally recognized graphic designer and researcher, to its faculty. Kiyalova brings over a decade of advertising industry experience and a distinguished portfolio of socially engaged creative work to her new role teaching emerging artists and designers.

As a second-year MFA student at Mason Gross, Kiyalova has distinguished herself through research that explores how design can transcend commercial objectives to address pressing social issues and foster critical awareness about artificial intelligence and human connection. Her appointment reflects Rutgers' commitment to bridging professional practice with academic inquiry.

"I believe design can be more than a marketing tool. It is a language of empathy and change," says Kiyalova. "Through my research and teaching, I aim to tell women's stories and create work that challenges familiar perspectives while reconnecting humanity with the world around us."

Kiyalova's current research examines the human need for validation and emotional nurturing in the age of artificial intelligence. Her project, titled "Project MA," invites audiences to pause, reflect, and reclaim moments of awareness amid the constant demands of modern life.

"I noticed how people increasingly enjoy interacting with AI chatbots," Kiyalova explains. "Whenever you say something, the bot responds with praise, telling you that you're right, that you're doing great. But what are the consequences of this constant affirmation? Is it healthy to be endlessly cheered on? Can we truly grow as individuals or as a society without challenge or contradiction?"

Her inquiry raises important questions about whether growing attachment to comforting digital companions might distance people from authentic human connection. At the same time, she acknowledges the emotional exhaustion of contemporary life. "In a world driven by capitalism, where there's never enough time for family or rest, maybe what we crave most is simple kindness and attention," she observes.

Before relocating to the United States to pursue graduate studies, Kiyalova established a successful career in advertising with a focus on socially conscious campaigns. She collaborated with UN Women on projects addressing the role of women in Central Asia, creating visual narratives that challenged cultural stereotypes and promoted gender equality.

Her creative work has garnered numerous international accolades, including recognition from the Clio Awards, White Square, and Epica Awards. She was also an early honoree at the Cannes Lions Young Creatives competition, one of the advertising industry's most

prestigious platforms for emerging talent.

Kiyalova's pedagogical approach reflects a deep belief that design education should nurture not only technical proficiency but also critical thinking and empathy. She brings an intercultural perspective shaped by her experience working across different markets and her commitment to using visual communication as a tool for dialogue and social change.

"Assem represents a new generation of socially engaged designers who understand that visual communication can be a powerful force for equality and human consciousness," said a spokesperson for the Mason Gross School of the Arts. "Her professional achievements and research interests make her an invaluable addition to our faculty."

Balancing motherhood, academic research, teaching, and creative practice, Kiyalova embodies the multifaceted nature of contemporary design practice. Her courses at Rutgers emphasize the intersection of aesthetics, ethics, and social responsibility, preparing students to use their creative skills to address real-world challenges.

Students in her classes benefit from her extensive industry experience, learning not only design fundamentals but also how to navigate the professional landscape while maintaining artistic integrity and social consciousness. Her teaching integrates case studies from her own award-winning campaigns with theoretical frameworks that encourage critical reflection on design's role in society.

As she continues her MFA studies while teaching, Kiyalova is developing a body of work that explores female identity through visual storytelling. Her research investigates how design can create spaces for underrepresented voices and challenge dominant narratives about gender, technology, and human connection.

For more information about Assem Kiyalova's work or to arrange an interview, please contact [Media Contact Name] at [email] or [phone number].

About Mason Gross School of the Arts

Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University is New Jersey's premier professional school for the visual and performing arts. The school offers undergraduate and graduate programs in art, design, dance, music, and theater, preparing students for careers as practicing artists, educators, and cultural leaders.

About Assem Kiyalova

Assem Kiyalova is a graphic designer, researcher, and educator with over ten years of experience in advertising and social design. Her work has been recognized internationally and focuses on using visual communication to explore issues of identity, technology, and social change.

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