



L-R Meg Fletcher, Aimee Mann, Kira Banks and Amy Clunes all enjoyed success at Graduate Fashion Week 2023

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Northumbria creatives shine at Graduate Fashion Week

Final year fashion students from Northumbria University are celebrating creative success at the world's largest showcase of up-and-coming fashion talent, Graduate Fashion Week in London.

Organised by the [Graduate Fashion Foundation](#), the event features collections from final year fashion students at universities across the UK while providing them with the visibility they need in order to begin conversations and establish industry connections with recruiters, buyers, stylists and the media.

The four-day event took place at London's Truman Brewery on Brick Lane from Monday 12th to Thursday 15th June and the class of 2023 soon-to-be Northumbria graduates returned with a number of impressive accolades.

Fashion student Aimee Mann specialised in pattern cutting and womenswear during her studies. One of her key designs was an eye-catching dress made from hand-dyed silk chiffon which began life as a corset.

"This garment was about elevating the female form and I'd describe it as ethereal and ghostly in a lot of ways," said Aimee, whose ambition is to work in Milan or Paris one day on couture designs which stand out from the crowd. "For me, couture is the height of fashion and an art form all of its own, so I'd love to be able to do that in the future."

She was selected as winner of the [Creative Pattern Cutting Award](#) in recognition of her innovative work.

Rebecca Frost with her Graduate Fashion Week Childrenswear Award

Rebecca Frost impressed the [Graduate Fashion Week](#) judges with her garments created for children, which included an embroidered jacket with detachable sleeves and a tiered dress decorated with vibrant screen-printed patterns..

The [Fashion Design and Marketing](#) student said: "It was an absolute honour to win the [Childrenswear Award](#) after such a brilliant opportunity to be seen and to present my work and portfolio to the judges.

"My collection is inspired by the childlike joy found in the little things in life. The things children often find value in and collect like old stamps or badges. That's the thinking behind the prints I used and I'm really proud of the feedback I received."

Sustainability is a hot topic, particularly in the world of fashion, where occasion wear garments are often bought for special occasions and never worn again. Amy Clunes from Northumbria's Fashion programme set out to challenge that with her collection based around upcycling deadstock to

create unique looks which can be worn repeatedly.

“For one of my favourite looks I took an old wedding dress and repurposed it as an evening wear top with a train, which I paired with some tailored trousers with cut out stars and pointed edges,” explained Amy. “I enjoy that juxtaposition because of the play on what we traditionally see as masculine and feminine pieces of clothing.”

Her efforts secured her the [Hilary Alexander Sustainable Trailblazer Award](#) and led to discussions about offers of paid work with a number of brands who had representatives present at Graduate Fashion Week.

Meanwhile Meg Fletcher from the Fashion programme was selected as winner of the [Catwalk and Fashion Presentation Award](#) for the Northumbria catwalk show. Fellow [Fashion](#) student Kira Banks was given the Highly Commended title.

Kira was also selected by expert judges from the industry as one of the winners of the Kornit Printed Textiles Competition for her outerwear garments featuring a striking print she calls the ‘Future of Antarctica’. Kira was one of eight young designers selected by Kornit, a company which offers digital printing technologies for the garment and textile industries, to be flown out to their headquarters in Dusseldorf, Germany, to see their designs brought to life.

A Best of Show catwalk, which closed Graduate Fashion Week on the Thursday evening, also featured garments designed by Amy, Meg and Kira.

Overall, 20 Northumbria students featured on the awards shortlist. They were:

- Digital Fashion Award – Lucy Fletcher ([Fashion Communication](#))
- Fashion Communication Portfolio Award – Storm Walker and Anna Jeffries (Fashion Communication)
- Fashion Moving Image Award – Lucy Fletcher (Fashion Communication)
- Fashion Styling and Creative Direction Award – Adam Raitr (Fashion Communication)
- New Business Award – Lulu Nabridnyj (Fashion Communication)

- Footwear Award – Meg Fletcher and Holly Haughin (Fashion)
- Accessories Award supported by YKK – Meg Fletcher and Holly Haughin (Fashion)
- Hilary Alexander Sustainable Trailblazer Award – Amy Clunes (Fashion) and Julia Marzec (Fashion Design and Marketing)
- Considered Fashion Award – Amy Clunes (Fashion)
- Creative Pattern Cutting Award – Aimee Mann (Fashion)
- Sportswear and Leisurewear Award supported by Gymshark – Kira Banks (Fashion) and Anna Wright (Fashion Design and Marketing)
- Childrenswear Award – Rebecca Frost (Fashion Design and Marketing)
- Fashion Portfolio Award – Olivia Gomez De Zamora and Lauren Lansbury (Fashion Design and Marketing)
- Fashion Innovation Award – Julia Marzec (Fashion Design and Marketing)

Once back from London, the Graduate Fashion Week showcase by Northumbria students was recreated for visitors, industry professionals and family members as part of the REVEAL graduate degree shows held every year at the University's Newcastle City Campus.

Head of Fashion at Northumbria, Professor Anne Peirson-Smith, said: "This year's Graduate Fashion Week was another amazing showcase of Northumbria talent and one that our students, academic and technical staff can be exceptionally proud of. I was really left in awe by the creativity and skill represented in all of the students' garments and portfolios on display. Our catwalk show with a difference was choreographed to make use of a cross-formation runway which enabled the collections to be viewed in a 360 degree way to fully appreciate their full creative impact.

"Recognition on a national level, thanks to events such as Graduate Fashion Week, is the best way for our fashion students at Northumbria to stand out from crowd as they take the next steps on their chosen career path or towards furthering their studies."

Fashion programmes at Northumbria are internationally recognised for producing innovative and industry-ready graduates. Northumbria School of Design was ranked 11th nationwide according to the Guardian University Guide 2022, and Art and Design at Northumbria is ranked 4th in the UK for

research power, according to the [Research Excellence Framework](#) 2021 results.

Visit northumbria.ac.uk to find out more about fashion-related study options at Northumbria.

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