



Fashion graduates Emily Gibson, Will Howard-Jones, Holly Hooker and Melissa Newton with Leo Fenwick (centre).

Oct 19, 2022 11:01 BST

## Northumbria graduates showcase the future of fashion at Fenwick

**Four talented fashion graduates from Northumbria University have been selected to have their work spotlighted by Fenwick, across their social and digital platforms, and in the windows of their flagship Newcastle department store.**

The iconic business, which has nine stores across the country including on London's Bond Street, has launched a *Fashion Futures* campaign to celebrate established and upcoming brands and designers within the fashion industry,

while also exploring what the future of fashion might look like. As part of the campaign, Fenwick has partnered with the Graduate Fashion Foundation who organise [Graduate Fashion Week](#), to showcase the work of fashion graduates from Northumbria University and Kingston University in London, as part of the *Fenwick Future Makers* element of the campaign.

After receiving recognition for their womenswear and menswear designs during Graduate Fashion Week 2022, held in London in June, [Fashion BA \(Hons\)](#) graduates Melissa Newton, Holly Hooker, Will Howard-Jones and Emily Gibson have all been chosen to feature in the project.

Different looks from each of the graduates are now on display in the windows of Fenwick on Northumberland Street in Newcastle and will remain there until the end of October. Interview content shot with the graduates at Northumbria University will be posted across Fenwick's social channels including Instagram, Facebook and YouTube as well as the Fenwick website.



[Watch video on YouTube here](#)

For Melissa, who has recently secured a job as a Womenswear Assistant Tailoring Designer with River Island in London, the opportunity comes at an exciting time in her career.

“Looking back on my degree, we have been given the most amazing opportunities at Northumbria,” explained the 23-year-old who has a boilersuit and outfit with trilby hat on display. “I’ve really learned how we can tell stories through fashion and my focus has very much been on making sure

people can feel comfortable and confident in the clothes I design.”

Inspired by the skateboarding and grunge culture of the nineties, Will Howard-Jones created a patchwork mohair jacket and oversized jeans which really stand out from the crowd, and will be one of the looks on display at Fenwick.

“The second I heard about the opportunity with Fenwick and Graduate Fashion Week, I jumped at the chance,” said Will, who has recently started working as an Assistant Designer on the reclaimed vintage line at ASOS. “It’s fantastic to have the chance for so many people to see my work.”

Womenswear garments with defined shoulders and an hourglass silhouette, reinterpreting traditional smock frocks, are the basis of the looks created by Holly Hooker who specialised in print design during her studies and used bold prints inspired by crops in rural fields.

Holly explained: “I love Newcastle as a city and, after visiting an open day at Northumbria, I knew it was somewhere I could see myself studying, so to have my designs on display in windows on one of the city’s busiest shopping streets is amazing. A really unique opportunity.”

Emily Gibson’s eye-catching outerwear for women, inspired by traditional Japanese kimonos, saw her picked by a panel of judges including designer Henry Holland, model Munroe Bergdorf and designer Patrick McDowell, to feature in the opening show at Graduate Fashion Week. She also won the Northumbria University Dome Show – a catwalk event watched by judges featuring designs from Northumbria students.

“I wanted to fuse the traditional with the abstract in my designs and really like the shape and knotting featured in kimonos,” said Emily. “My work will be incorporated into the international Graduate Fashion Week due to be held in India later this month. I’m really honoured and grateful that it’s also being displayed at Fenwick.”

Associate Professor [Emma Jane Goldsmith](#), who teaches on the Fashion programmes at Northumbria, said: “The Fashion team at Northumbria feel extremely privileged to be able to build on the existing collaborative relationship we have with Fenwick to ensure our students and graduates can

make the most of this fantastic opportunity to share their work.

“It’s been a pleasure for our staff and students to support the store’s 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations this year. We have had the opportunity to research into the Fenwick family archive, develop a historical timeline and produce capsule collections of clothing, printed textiles and knitwear, inspired by each decade. This work is available to view in store at Fenwick Newcastle on the first floor as part of [Exhibition 140](#).”

In September, first year students on Northumbria’s Fashion BA (Hons) programme were also given the opportunity to use the Newcastle store windows to display hoodies they designed based on historic elements of the Fenwick story.

Leo Fenwick, Head of Brand and Community at [Fenwick](#), said: “We are proud to partner with Graduate Fashion Week and Northumbria University, as we launch our *Fenwick Future Makers* project. This enables us to foster and nurture relationships with the graduates, who will soon be paving a bright fashion career within the industry.”

Nicola Hitchens, Director and Head of Special Projects and Communications at the Graduate Fashion Foundation, said: “Graduate Fashion Foundation are proud to help support and nurture fantastic collaborations between industry and our member universities. The new *Fenwick Future Makers* project with Fenwick and Northumbria and Kingston University continues our narrative of creating opportunities for graduates starting out in the fashion industry.”

[Northumbria School of Design](#) is home to an award-winning creative community, delivering an exciting range of fashion courses. For more information visit [www.northumbria.ac.uk](http://www.northumbria.ac.uk)

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