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Northumbria University showcases the Northern flair of fashion

Dresses inspired by Japanese armour, outfits taking you back to 1970s Brooklyn and the birth of hip-hop, and clothing made from repurposed photoluminescent materials. These were just some of the innovative creations that graced the runway at Northumbria's annual graduate fashion show last night at BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art.

The breadth of creative talent which has contributed to the University's reputation as one of the best in the country for fashion design was on full display at yesterday's catwalk show and exhibition. A total of 53 students of

the [Northumbria University's BA \(Hons\) Fashion](#) programme showcased their final collections for their first time at the annual event, revealing truly unique and inspired designs. The collections, which included up to five different catwalk outfits per designer or textile samples, consisted of a combination of womenswear, menswear and constructed textiles designs.

Among this year's graduates and future trend-setters were Samuel Beaumont Perkins, Courtney Simon and Kate Skelton. Perkins's 'ANXIETY' collection of menswear was inspired by the darker side of the mind, representing erratic behavior with swaddle feel and the use of minimalistic red to portray anger and red mist. His creativity and originality have already secured him a full-time position at Old Navy in San Francisco, adding to other successes such as being shortlisted in the Graduate Fashion Week Topshop competition.

Courtney Simon's 'SIMON.C' collection was inspired by not only The Apartheid but also her Caribbean heritage. Her highly personal womenswear collection highlights some of the key quotes from the Apartheid period and Caribbean culture, including mirror image detail, African print and garment inspiration from African robes.

Kate Skelton's graduate menswear collection is the second one she has completed during her studies, following "A Woven Tale" which she presented at Jakarta Fashion Week last summer and granted her an award from the Jakarta Fashion Week International Collaborative Design Competition. Kate's inspiration for her graduate collection comes from 1970s Brooklyn and the eruption of hip-hop culture, with graffiti artist Jean-Michel Basquiat as her main muse. A colour driven designer, Kate re-works key 80s items in her collection such as the tracksuit, and incorporates new textile techniques.

Kristen Pickering, programme leader for Fashion at Northumbria University, says: "We are truly impressed by the quality and creativity shown by our students this year. It has been an entirely rewarding experience for the whole teaching body witnessing the inception, development and final result of all the collections. The incredible effort and commitment students have demonstrated during their studies has paid off and many of them have already secured high-profile job opportunities with international fashion houses. We couldn't be more proud and are excited to see what the future holds for them."

Graduates from the class of 2016 have already gained international industry

experience, having undertaken high profile work placements with esteemed fashion houses - such as Barbour, Old Navy, Lulu and Co., Hobbs and Jonathan Saunders - during their studies.

Twenty student designers from this year's Northumbria Fashion course will participate in the high-profile London Graduate Fashion Week catwalk shows from 5 June to 8 June 2016. This will be an opportunity for them to showcase their designs and compete with other graduating fashion students as the country's rising fashion stars. Students from Fashion, Fashion Design and Marketing and Fashion Communication, will also be showing their final undergraduate year work on the Northumbria Graduate Fashion Week stand.

Northumbria is renowned for nurturing the talent of its fashion students, ensuring they develop their creativity and reach their full potential, so that they are equipped to enter such a highly competitive industry. Previous alumni have joined the ranks of internationally renowned fashion houses and companies, including Burberry, DKNY, Lanvin, Paul Smith, Karen Millen, ASOS, and Zara among many others.

For further information about the show, please visit www.northumbria.ac.uk/fashionshow

Northumbria is a research-rich, business-focused, professional university with a global reputation for academic excellence. To find out more about our courses go to www.northumbria.ac.uk

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