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Re-Fashioning the future

Northumbria students are helping bring to life visions of the future using the fashion of the past in a unique collaborative exhibition.

Re-Fashion features 60 exquisite objects from the collection at Newcastle's Discovery Museum, made between 1701 and 1916. These objects have been selected as a starting point to explore the idea of real and imagined histories. The quality and craftsmanship of the collection reveals status,

desire and changing notions of beauty across more than 200 years of history.

Between now and May, the exhibition is a live studio where designers will draw and illustrate in response to the collection. The designers imagine what Victorians might create with modern materials and technology. What would they design for the Victorian person of the day, or their historic self? The project will enable the designers to create a fresh perspective on the collection thinking beyond the high street to ask what might have happened in an imagined past.

Fashion Students and Lecturers from Northumbria's [School of Design](#) have researched the collection to develop the final garment designs, which will be exhibited in May.

Northumbria's Director of Fashion, [Janine Hunt](#), said: "The first part of the exhibition showcases sixty exquisite items from the museum collections. These examples of craftsmanship have been selected as a starting point to explore the idea of real and imagined histories in the generation of new garment designs, exploring our collective pasts to re-imagine our future.

"The initial stage displays drawings and observations while the second stage of the exhibition in May will conclude with the garments designed by Northumbria Fashion students and lecturers.

"The project has enabled the designers to step away from contemporary commercial constraints to ask what might have happened in an imagined past, it explores the notion of histories embroidered by individual viewpoints and invites a fresh and unhindered perspective. These garments reveal unseen stories about us aspiration, status, desire through their craftsmanship materials and construction."

Carolyn Ball, Manager of Discovery Museum said: "The spirit of design, innovation and invention is at the heart of Discovery Museum and so it is wonderful to have a new generation of designers inspired by our collections and working right here in the museum. It is fantastic to be working in partnership with Northumbria University and I'm very excited to see the final exhibition featuring the students' work."

Refashion is being staged as part of the Fabricating Histories exhibition planned for later in the year. Fabricating Histories was the brainchild of Northumbria's [Dr Claire Nally](#) and will re-imagine the art, fashion and technologies of the Victorian past; presenting fantastic, alternative, and imagined histories and rethinking iconic objects.

The exhibition brings together artists, students, researchers and curators to create an exhibition based on research by Dr Claire Nally into the subcultural phenomenon of steampunk and Neo-Victorianism.

Northumbria offers a range of course in Fashion and last year celebrating 60 years of teaching the subject. The University is also rated Top 10 in the UK for Art and Design research power following the Research Excellence Framework 2014. To find out more about studying Fashion at Northumbria go to: www.northumbria.ac.uk/fashion

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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