

Works of Art Take Stage at 39th Annual TRENDS Fashion Show

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Senior designer Alex Gonzalez opened the 39th annual TRENDS fashion show with her collection, MOONCREEP [13]. Photo by Patricia Carrillo.

When the very first model walked through the large golden frame dressed in a meticulously designed black leather outfit and a gas mask, guests knew they were in for a night of walking works of art. California State University, Northridge's 39th annual TRENDS Fashion Show transformed the Northridge Center on April 29 into a striking runway event for student design creations under the theme of Art Museum: Fashion on Display.

The annual spring show is organized by CSUN's Family and Consumer Sciences'

Apparel Design and Merchandising students and comes together through the collaboration of Family and Consumer Sciences' Apparel Design class, Fashion Show Production class and TRENDS, which is a student-run club. The entire production is student-led, from concept to completion.

"It's a lot of work, it's a lot of dedication, it's a lot of stress but it's a lot of fun," said this year's director Jessi O'Connell. "Honestly I don't think I've ever had this [much] fun. Getting to see our work come alive, I'm in awe of everything that everyone has been doing."

The evening started with a VIP reception where donors, hosts, judges and alumni were invited to enjoy food, music and designs by apparel design and merchandising graduate student Fatimah Hakeem before the runway show.

Hakeem's collection *Denim Couture*, featured seven looks made entirely from upcycled denim and crafted with inspiration from Japanese origami. The process of upcycling includes taking used garments and crafting them into something new. Hakeem carefully manipulates fabrics using different techniques to create new styles and add value to her upcycled designs, in the hopes of making people consider sustainability in fashion.

Fifteen student designers from CSUN's apparel design and merchandising class each showcased five to six looks in which the designers have been responsible for developing everything from pattern making to construction to final fittings.

The fashion show kicked off with a contemporary dance performance by students of the Kinesiology Dance Team, followed by the runway presentations of the student designs.

Following the main runway show, students from the Pattern Making class presented looks as part on the annual Future Designers segment of the show.

Farrell Webb, dean of the College of Health and Human Development, emphasized the hard work and long nights the students put into making their collections.

“For me as the dean, it’s very exciting because I get to see the collision of faculty and students coming together,” said Webb. “It’s amazing to me to see how they can, out of nothing, create such wonderful things.”

The fashion show is also a competition among the senior student designers, where a panel of judges award first and second place. This year’s grand prize included a chance to showcase the winning collection at Bloomingdale’s this upcoming fall.

The six fashion industry judges looked at three criteria when they judged the designs coming down the runway: trend awareness and marketability, creativity and pattern and construction design.

Apparel design and merchandising seniors Matthew Garrett and Quoc Ly took home first place with their collection *A Retrospective: Topanga Canyon, 1968*.

“I’m feeling pretty overwhelmed, it doesn’t feel real,” said Garrett. “This was a really cool learning experience because going into it we really pushed ourselves beyond what we learned in class.”

The winning collection was inspired by Los Angeles culture of the last century and most of the collection included upcycled fabrics to emphasize sustainability.

“Many companies make stuff very fast and cheap and by doing so we are putting more unnecessary waste on the planet,” said Ly. “As big as the fast fashion is growing the more customers need to be smarter about buying what they actually need instead of what they want.”

Second place went to Jingyi Dong for her collection *The Ancient of Beauty*, which included silk pieces inspired by ancient Chinese culture.

Hosting the show were Vice President of Fashion Advisory Board in LA Women’s Business Center Africa de Broek M.S. ’17 (Apparel Design and Merchandise), and Geoff Duran, designer and founder of Geoff Duran Custom Clothing.

“I thought the show was amazing,” said Duran. “I could really see the passion and the effort in all of the designers’ work. As designers, we draw inspiration from everything and everyone. We can always learn and what I have picked up is that it is always about passion. These students showed that tonight in their work.”

Apparel design and merchandising professor and TRENDS advisor Shirley Warren has helped produce the past eight shows and gets a behind-the-scenes look at the students’ hard work throughout the semester.

“I think the creativity of the designers this year was amazing and everybody had their own interpretation of Fashion on Display,” said Warren. “In my opinion, they were all winners.

“I’m very proud of the students,” she added. “This year, I think they did a great job and I think they raised the bar for future productions.”