Kingston University's MA Fashionstudents Captivate London Fashion Week Crowds With cosmopolitancollections.doc

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From a Cuban guerrilla gang determined to instigate a fashion revolution to a satirical look at the Spanish working class and the power of empty space in architectural design, Kingston University's latest crop of graduating MA Fashion students has taken inspiration from far and wide for its final collections. Garments from the young designers received a rapturous reception from a select audience of industry experts when they made their catwalk debut on the final day of London Fashion Week in front of a select audience of industry experts.

Course leader Andrew Ibi said the event, at Stationers' Hall in the heart of the capital on Tuesday 16 September, had been the perfect platform for his graduates to showcase an array of thought-provoking work. He praised the quality of the collections, saying there was a huge amount of talent amongst the university's latest cohort of MA Fashion designers.

"This year's show was called Amendment because of the strong theme of re-evaluation running through the collections," Mr Ibi said. "The graduating students were interested in exploring how design could be used as a catalyst to alter ideas and change perceptions of life and culture. They were a group questioning their very subject and using fashion as a medium to start conversations about culture, art, architecture and even politics and religion."

The eye-catching collections unveiled on the runway included the precision tailoring and acute angular silhouettes that were a key feature of Charlotte Ham's striking womenswear range. Growing up around the family's house building business, the 22 year old, from Wincanton in Somerset, was inspired by her father's architectural background. The result was a set of elegant garments incorporating cut out shapes structured with wooden frames.

The Kingston University MA student used the joinery workshop at her father's business to create the frames from thin layers of beech veneer. "We stopped manufacturing windows and doors in Wincanton for a month," Charlotte's father, Andrew Ham, said. "I had someone working full time on bringing Charlotte's designs to life."

The young designer drew plenty of applause for her favourite piece - a striking red, knee length dress with a structured circular gap at the midriff. The vibrant outfit interrupted the collection's otherwise muted colour palette.

Also taking to the catwalk was Louise Aquilina's range of street-style unisex clothing, reflecting a band of renegade fashion fiends she dubbed the Demo Division. Louise regards the revolutionary characters she created as a representation of a rebellion against bad taste fashion and her collection merged the gender blurring of hip hop culture with Cuban workwear and street clothing.

The Maltese designer, who teaches textiles and 3D design at a further education college in her home country, used patchwork denim throughout her eight looks – a nod to her belief that garments should be durable rather than thrown away as seasons pass and trends change. Illustrations she gathered from children in Havana during a trip to Cuba earlier this year also featured in five colourful, chunky knit jumpers.

– ENDS –

- To arrange interviews with the graduating students or MA Fashion course leader Andrew Ibi, please contact Anna Kharbanda in the Kingston University Press Office by emailing press@kingston.ac.uk or calling 020 8417 3023.
- High resolution images of the graduate designers' final collections are available on request. Examples of their work can be viewed on Vogue.com

Kingston University London

With more than 21,000 students, Kingston University is the largest provider of higher education in south west London, offering an extensive range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes both in the United Kingdom and overseas. The University is a growing force in research and a pioneer in e-learning.

Major developments in teaching, learning and facilities have all contributed to positioning Kingston University at the heart of education and economic development in the region. The Higher Education Business and Community Interaction Survey 2012-13 reported that, for the fifth year running, Kingston had the highest number of graduates starting up their own companies of any institution in the United Kingdom.

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