



ACADEMY OF ART UNIVERSITY

2025

Spring Fashion Show

A SPECIAL ART U NEWS × SCHOOL OF FASHION
COLLABORATION

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Image credits:
Photography: Jeffry Raposas.
Design: Chase Duval-Champagne, M.F.A. Fashion Design.
Model: Chen Hsuan Pai, EMG Models.



WELCOME TO THE 2025 SPRING FASHION SHOW

Fashion Executive Director Neil Gilks and the Industry Advisory Board Mentor the Class of 2025

The annual runway show ‘Origins of Belief’ will bring together the School of Fashion Industry Advisory Board members for the third consecutive year to continue the 2023 – 2025 mentorship cycle



Photograph by Danielle Rueda.

Courtesy of School of Fashion Executive Director Neil Gilks

More than ever, the freedom of expression and choice is vital. In the School of Fashion at Academy of Art University, we engage our students in this creative space to arrive at their own set of codes by which to live. In preparing for the commitment of a

career, we work to challenge students in their thinking and actions, providing them with a safe space of mutual respect regardless of personal beliefs. I am proud of my faculty team for the support of these journeys and discoveries, and excited to showcase the efforts of this thinking and learning. The origins of beliefs run strong in the School of Fashion. The Industry Advi-

sory Board has proved that genuine collaboration and collective experience can work to create grand opportunities and advance our educational experience. It has been a pleasure to continually connect with our industry insiders, aiding us to reflect on our strengths and spaces for further discovery. Their readiness to offer our students insight, opinion, and expertise in the relevancy of practices, the ever-developing industries, and impacts on the professional world has advanced our thinking and challenged us to enhance our excellence in education.

Having these highly positioned spokespeople for our school in the demanding and competitive industries has opened many doors and connected us with opportunities on a global scale.

Many introductions have been made that we have been able to capitalize upon when engaging with industry. Our annual Study

“We are thrilled to showcase the talents of 17 of our school’s finest fashion and textile designers in this year’s fashion show, ‘Origins of Belief.’ In addition, we are proud to celebrate our relationship with Gap Inc. by awarding the company an honorary doctorate. Gap Inc.’s mentorship program helps prepare our fashion students for success, and the company’s contributions to the creative industry and culture of San Francisco are unparalleled.”

—Academy of Art University President Dr. Elisa Stephens

Abroad program in Italy has been greatly enhanced by inclusion in their networks.

Alex Brownless, an inaugural Board member and the co-founder of Artstthread—the world’s largest and active platform for design graduates—graciously introduced us to the Global Fashion Graduate showcase. In October of 2025, we were invited to promote our school and the work of recent alumni in Mexico City. Throughout the five-day event, leading fashion design programs internationally came together to share perspectives,

think-tank the future of fashion design education, and build respectful links with like-minded, invested educators and industry.

Gap Inc. has proven to be a powerful partner and a trusted San Francisco neighbor, supporting numerous efforts and opportunities for partnership. Their teams offer considerable energy and learning for our School of Fashion community, much to the thanks of Simon O’Mahony, head of Gap Inc.’s creative talent acquisition and School of Fashion Advisory Board Member.

FASHION INDUSTRY ADVISORY BOARD

School of Fashion Welcomes the Industry Advisory Board



Daniel Reynolds
Senior Design Director at Print Tory Burch

Born in Derbyshire, England, **Daniel Reynolds** graduated with his master’s degree in Fashion at London’s prestigious Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design in 1999. Specializing in printed textiles, his bold use of color and intuitive and gestural hand-crafted print work drew the attention and favor of leading fashion houses in London and Paris, including Chanel, Louis Vuitton, and Chloe.

Relocating to New York City in 2008 into directorial and consultancy positions, Reynolds’ work has defined some of the country’s leading brands. He is currently the senior design director of print at Tory Burch.



Helen Bullock
Fashion Illustrator, Print Designer, and Lecturer

London-based Fashion Illustrator and Print Designer **Helen Bullock** has worked with multiple luxury fashion brands. Renowned for her bold prints and strong color, her illustrations are created by hand, maintaining an air of freedom and spontaneity, reflecting Bullock’s character and exuberant love for life.

After a stint in New York, Bullock settled in East London, completing a fashion print (B.A./M.A.) at Central Saint Martins. She now works globally, applying her unique aesthetic to the pages of magazines, fabrics of fashion designers, and shop windows of our favorite stores.

Bullock’s clients include: Bottega Veneta, Burberry, Celine, Louis Vuitton, Lulu Guinness, Selfridges, Liberty, The Dorchester, Vogue, and AnOther Magazine.



Justin Newlin
Director, Executive Search | Creative, Design + Product at PVH: Calvin Klein + Tommy Hilfiger

Originally from small-town Indiana, **Justin Newlin** graduated with a degree in retail management and a minor in graphic design from Purdue University. He has been working in recruiting for over 12 years with a focus on creative, design, and product roles.

After starting his career in Merchandising at Levi Strauss in San Francisco, Newlin spent nine-plus years with Gap Inc., working across all the brands on everything from managing Old Navy’s Design and Product Summer Internship and entry-level programs to Executive Search across the company.

After some time working with J.Crew and Madewell, he now leads Executive Search at PVH, working on global executive roles for Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger.



Simon O’Mahony
Head of Creative Talent Acquisition, Gap Inc. (Gap, Banana Republic, Athleta, and Old Navy)

Simon O’Mahony leads Creative Recruiting (Product Design, Brand Marketing, Creative Marketing, Visual Merchandising, and Media) for the Gap Inc. portfolio of brands (Old Navy, Gap, Banana Republic, and Athleta).

Originally from Dublin, Ireland, O’Mahony joined Gap Inc. in 2025. At Gap Inc., we are building a high-performing house of iconic American brands that shape culture. From the clothes we create to the communities we engage with to the culture we shape, everything we do is designed to imagine better.

INDUSTRY ADVISORY BOARD



Jenna Drumright
Product & Partnerships Lead, Google ATAP

Jenna Drumright has had a 15-plus year career in the fashion industry, working in product, studio management and business development for brands such as Oscar de la Renta, 3.1 Phillip Lim, Reed Krakoff, and Diane von Furstenberg. More recently, Drumright led connected apparel fashion partnerships within Google’s innovation group (ATAP).



Jane Francis
Artist, Designer, Creative Practitioner, Gallerist, and Researcher

Jane Francis is a multidisciplinary artist, designer, creative practitioner, gallerist, and researcher with over 35 years of experience in global fashion and creative art and design education.

She holds undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in fine art from Melbourne University and an M.A. in academic practice from UAL London, with a specialist focus on curriculum design.

Founder of her own fashion labels, including knitwear, print, product, and jewelry collections, and most recently a nonprofit gallery space for underrepresented artists and makers, The Covert Room, Francis has worked internationally for leading voices in fashion, including Vivienne Westwood.

Francis’ academic and educational philosophy encourages student-centered, creative, progressive thinking, innovation, sustainable, and socially aware methods in fashion, through experimental and practical inquiry: locating the traditions and skills of practice within a contemporary fashion landscape.



Meghan Kasperlik
Costume Designer

Meghan Kasperlik is a three-time Emmy-nominated costume designer working in television and film. Having gone to school for fashion merchandising, Kasperlik started her career in fashion PR and styling before deciding to jump over to the world of film and television. Kasperlik started her career in television working for the icon Patricia Field, with whom she worked for three-and-a-half years.

Kasperlik has gone on to design costumes for many films and TV shows, including Emmy-nominated “Mare of Easttown,” “Watchmen,” Emmy-nominated “Moon Knight,” the Emmy-nominated film “Fahrenheit 451,” and Alex Garland’s “Civil War.”



Durand Guion
Senior Vice President, Fashion Office at Burlington

Durand Guion is an accomplished fashion executive with over 30 years of experience forecasting trends, discovering new brands, developing collaborations, creating dynamic marketing and visual campaigns, and inspiring a wide range of consumers, colleagues, and business partners.

Today, Guion serves as the senior vice president of the fashion office at Burlington, where he leads the company’s fashion direction and trend strategy across all categories, helping shape a compelling and inclusive vision for Burlington’s diverse customer base.

Guion continues to be a passionate advocate for fashion education. He regularly serves as a guest lecturer and mentor, inspiring students to set and achieve their fashion retailing career goals.



Brendan McCarthy
Founder of Cloud School

Brendan McCarthy is passionate about the transformative possibilities of education. Based at the University of Hawai’i, his work focuses on utilizing the neuroscience of love and fun to create new possibilities for education. As a central part of this work, McCarthy founded the “I Want to Know What Love Is” Film Festival.

Prior to the University of Hawai’i, McCarthy was an assistant professor and co-director of the undergraduate fashion design program at Parsons School of Design in New York. He leveraged his unique background to develop interdisciplinary, systems-based curricula that invite students to work directly with the people and communities they care most about to co-create new possibilities for fashion that address important challenges facing our society.



Ulrich Grimm
Design Consultant (Shoes, Bags & Accessories); former EVP, Global Design at Calvin Klein

Ulrich Grimm is an industry-leading creative director and global accessories and product designer with a proven track record of success in identifying emerging trends and positioning products for long-term profitability.

Grimm most recently served as Calvin Klein, Inc.’s executive vice president for global design of men’s and women’s shoes, accessories, and home, where he oversaw the design of all handbags, wallets, belts, watches, jewelry, and eyewear, spanning all brand tiers produced by Calvin Klein, Inc., as well as the soft and hard product categories of Calvin Klein Home.

He joined the iconic brand in 1998, invited by the company’s inspirational founder, Calvin Klein.



Deborah Hampton Moore
Chief Design Officer

Deborah Hampton Moore received her B.A. in fashion design and textiles from Kingston University, London. Upon graduation, she was recruited to design in NYC.

Moore has been a global fashion design leader for three decades, specializing in womenswear. She utilizes strong iconic brand building and creative vision along with her knowledge and experience to drive inspirational concept boards to final collections, ensuring relevant product stories.

Moore’s expertise extends to large corporate brands as well as startups. She has been based in London, New York, and San Francisco, heading design teams for the luxury brands Burberry, Michael Kors, Calvin Klein, and Donna Karan, as well as large corporate brands Banana Republic and Lands’ End.



Tessa Ito Glase
Global Omni-Channel Merchandising & Product Strategist

Tessa Ito Glase is a strategic, product-driven merchandising executive with a passion for building global lifestyle brands across omnichannel platforms. With over 15 years of international experience, she has successfully scaled and revitalized brand platforms across a variety of business models at world-renowned companies including Ralph Lauren, Banana Republic (Gap Inc.), Coach, and Pottery Barn.

Glase’s leadership spans direct-to-consumer retail, e-commerce, marketplace, wholesale, licensing, franchise, distributor, and both full-price and off-price channels. She brings a holistic, cross-functional approach to product development and merchandising strategy, grounded in a deep understanding of the consumer and the ever-evolving retail landscape.

Originally from Honolulu, Hawaii, Glase earned her Bachelor of Science in marketing from the State University of New York and completed a Digital Marketing Certificate at New York University. She currently resides in the San Francisco Bay Area.



Kate Wallace
Integrated Design and Sustainability Strategist

Kate Wallace is a UK-born designer and creative director with two decades of experience in the international fashion industry, where she has led brands into the future through impact-driven design strategies.

Wallace is known for her collaborative approach—working across merchandising, product development, production, visual creative, and marketing to deliver cohesive, integrity-led outcomes. She is skilled at translating broad strategic initiatives into clear, actionable design and brand direction.

HONORARY DOCTORATE

2025 Honorary Doctorate Recipient: Gap Inc.

Courtesy of Gap Inc.

Founded in 1969 by Don and Doris Fisher, Gap Inc. began as a single store on Ocean Avenue in San Francisco, offering a wide selection of jeans and records. Over the years, it has evolved into a global retail powerhouse, yet its roots remain deeply embedded in the city

that nurtured its inception.

This year, Gap Inc. is the first ever company to receive an honorary doctorate from Academy of Art University in recognition of its contributions to the creative industry and culture of San Francisco over the last six decades. The recognition will be accepted by Old Navy Head of Design & Product

Development Sarah Holme on Gap Inc.'s behalf.

"One of the ways Gap Inc. honors its San Francisco heritage is through active support of the local creative community and collaborations with institutions like the Academy of Art University," said Holme.

Gap has been a cornerstone of San Francisco's

retail and creative landscape for decades, growing from a humble beginning into a global portfolio of purpose-led heritage brands – including Old Navy, Banana Republic, and Athleta.

Gap's journey began with a simple yet revolutionary idea: to offer a wide range of Levi's jeans in one place, ensuring customers could

always find their size and style. It bridged the generation gap by serving all ages, all races, and all sizes. The success of this concept led to rapid expansion, with the company going public in 1976. By the 1980s and '90s, Gap Inc. had diversified its offerings and expanded internationally, opening stores around the world.

The company's relationship with San Francisco's creative community is deeply rooted in its corporate ethos. As any visitor to the sprawling Fisher Collection at SFMOMA can attest, Gap founders Don and Doris Fisher were major patrons of the arts, and the company they built has always championed creativity by supporting a vibrant creative culture in the city through a mix of grants, mentorship programs, and events hosted at its stores and headquarters.

Gap Inc. has a long-standing relationship with the Academy of Art University in San Francisco, collaborating on various initiatives that bridge the gap between education and industry. These partnerships provide students with real-world experience and exposure to the fashion industry's inner workings. In the last two years, the company offered mentorship programs and internships to many of the School of Fashion's students and graduates. The company also supports learning opportunities in Digital Product Creation at the Academy, teaching students the next generation of creative tools essential to a career in the modern fashion industry.

"Our ongoing relationship with Academy of Art is key to nurturing the next generation of creative talent in San Francisco, ensuring the region remains a hub of innovation and artistic expression for generations to come," said Holme.

Gap Inc.'s history in San Francisco is a testament to the power of innovation and community engagement. From its early days selling Levi's jeans to its current status as a global fashion leader, the company has maintained strong ties to its birthplace. By supporting local artisans and collaborating with educational institutions like the Academy of Art University, Gap Inc. continues to enrich San Francisco's creative landscape, fostering a culture of creativity and collaboration that benefits both the company and the community.



Gap store exterior, 1969. Courtesy of Gap Inc.



Don and Doris Fisher in front of Gap store, c.1969-1973. Courtesy of Gap Inc.

Meet the Designers

Raise the curtain at
"Origins of Belief" with a
sneak peek of the collections
hitting the 2025 Spring
Fashion Show runway

Lookbook photography:

Yohei Hirano, M.F.A. Photography
Alejandro Tuzon, M.F.A. Photography
Jeffrey Raposas

Makeup

Chelsea Heintzman, B.F.A. Fashion Communication
and Styling
Valentin Van Zandt
Eleana Martinez

Models:

Amani MC Cray, 3 Model Management
Lucile Henderson, Look Model Agency/Look Artists
Chen Hsuan Pai, EMG Models

Portrait photography was produced by students in
PH 235 'People Photography' class, led
by Timothy Archibald.

Designer features were written
by students in Fashion
Communication and Styling
program and FSH 108
'Foundations of Fashion
Journalism' class, led by Elena
Eberhard.

Read the full features online at
FashionSchoolDaily.com.

Photography by Jeffrey Raposas.
Design by Chase Duval-Champagne,
M.F.A. Fashion Design.



2025 SPRING FASHION SHOW LOOKBOOK



Photograph by Vince Vu.

Patric Yikun Wang

M.F.A. COSTUME DESIGN

Building a Story

By Bea Pritchard

Patric Yikun Wang, M.F.A. Costume Design, celebrates drag and the art of transformation in his collection. Like the drag scene he’s inspired by, Wang is resourceful and resilient, using his intuition to craft corsets and padding.

When asked about the difficulties of turning from the discipline of costume to fashion, Wang confidently responded, “Fashion and costume are not that different. They use the same language, they just tell different stories.”

Born in the conservative corner of Jilin, China, Wang faced the harsh reality of being queer. This experience, paired with his love for performance art, has informed his oeuvre during his time at Academy of Art University. He explores the queer experience, his battles with body image, and himself through his art.

Rather than approaching creation with new, shiny

textiles, Wang explores how used materials create a story and memory, especially in the wigs that accompany the hip pads and corset ensembles. Through stacking and teasing wigs, he creates giant, structured wigs to work as companions to his garments.

His thesis tells a story down to the padding using condoms to allude to the AIDS epidemic of the 1980s and makeup remover wipes, partly inspired by the Queen of Filth, Divine, and her ability to balance glamour with grotesque imagery. In his free time, the artist watches documentaries and videos on the art of drag, recalling the resourcefulness of queens on a budget, and using household items like beans to build the silhouette of a bosom.

“Before I even wanted to make this into a fashion collection, I was inspired by the body-building part,” explained Wang. “I was just thinking if I can use all these scraps and all these things



Model: Randy Donovan

around the queer community, like condoms, which are associated with AIDS and pills. If I can just make all that into a body shape and padding, it would be amazing. We can have so much information and messages just in the garment itself. I think it’s meaningful and interesting to see.”

Rather than taking the traditional approach to actively buying supplies that designers tend to take, Wang’s process involves creating abstract padding to turn the underpinnings into the main attraction. By taking thick, sponge foam and putting it beneath stockings, replicating the technique that drag artists use to sculpt the illusion of a womanly silhouette under their costumes.

“The padding is made from foam, like the spongy stuff, which is so expensive to buy, and I don’t have the budget for it,” shared Wang. “But the other night I found a sofa left on the street. I was happy because I was able to

get it for free.”

Joining the thick, sponge foam are corsets, made from heavyweight coutil and twill tape to create the boning. One of the corsets is accompanied by a padded corset masquerading as a large Elizabethan collar and features a design of saggy breasts in pink, playing with the concept of body positivity and acceptance.

In this process of creating his presentation, Wang said he feels a sense of freedom. It’s an opportunity for the artist to focus on doing things as he goes, rather than a strictly defined plan or guidelines that he often follows as a costume designer by trade.

“My process is different from other people’s,” said Wang. “I’m kind of just making all kinds of padding, like all kinds of shapes, and using all kinds of materials. And when I started to make them more abstract and focused more on the technique and shape, I think that point was also an a-ha moment for me

too. It made me realize that this is the thing I’m going to do. Like, this is the center of the collection.”

In an ever-evolving world of the complications of being queer, the costumer seeks to tell his audience that drag is much bigger than what it appears to be from the glimpses of “RuPaul’s Drag Race.”

“I just want people to know that drag is expression. It’s not only what we see on TV, which is really popular right now because of ‘RuPaul’s Drag Race,’” Wang remarked. “I think so many drag artists around us need support, and we can just go see them at the club, and they’re more authentic. I also think that drag, on a larger scale, we are all doing drag every single day when we put a garment on, when we step out the door, to talk to people. That is drag because we are playing a character.”

2025 SPRING FASHION SHOW LOOKBOOK

Jade Well Dragon

By Bea Pritchard

Born in Shaoxing, China, Yujing Wang, M.F.A. Fashion Design, mixes Chinese culture with elements of the self in her collection. Starting as a painter, Wang has always been drawn to fashion and completed her undergraduate degree in fashion design before moving to San Francisco in 2022 to pursue her master’s.

At the age of 14, Wang moved to Shanghai, the metropolis best known for its finance and fast-paced urban environment. Shanghai was also a large source of inspiration for the designer, using old Shanghai style cheongsams as a base for her

collection.

“I personally love Chinese culture, and I love to watch how they use those Intangible Cultural Heritage techniques on TikTok or video sites,” shared Wang. “During my undergraduate years, I had a special class to learn about traditional Chinese clothing and the history of clothing in China.”

When asked about how Chinese culture informed her design, Wang said, “There was also a class where we were asked to use Chinese traditional culture to design clothing. Maybe that’s when I started to be attracted to traditional Chinese fashion and started to want to explore and utilize it.”

While Wang employs techniques from both her time as an undergraduate and at Academy of Art University, she also implements the meaning of the self into her modernized qipaos, like the use of dragons to represent her zodiac sign and color palette inspired by her name’s meaning (Yu Jing means “Jade Well” in Chinese).

In addition to implementing familiarity into her designs, Wang also experiments in her collection, using shadowplay and converting 3D shapes into 2D forms.

“There were some experiments with creative ideas, such as converting 3D to 2D and presenting them

in the garments,” shared Wang. “At the beginning, the shape of the dragon may be superficial, a very figurative dragon coiled in the costume, after continuous attempts to do the costume silhouette, from the silhouette or the use of the shape of the darts to continue to explore how to integrate the elements of the dragon into the design. There is also the idea of shadowplay, where the idea of a 2D plane is applied to a 3D costume to make it three-dimensional.”

The designer also uses traditional fabrics from China, such as silk dyed with Shoulang Yam called gambier Guangdong gauze and the delicately ornate Song brocade, and draping

to create the juxtaposition of elegant Chinese culture with novelty design.

Wang wants her collection to evoke a feeling of intrigue in Chinese culture, stating, “Many people will think that China’s history is too long, so they think that traditional Chinese things are very old, but I want them to find out that traditional Chinese culture is very interesting and that traditional clothes can be very trendy. Let people want or are willing to learn more.”

The foray of cyan and jade, paired with both the old and new techniques, displays a new flavor of Wang’s culture.



Yujing Wang

M.F.A. FASHION DESIGN



Photograph by Vince Vu.

2025 SPRING FASHION SHOW LOOKBOOK

By Talia Drue Gillette

Biodegradable materials, recycled fibers, and 3D printing; not the typical elements you'd expect to see in a fashion show, but they came together perfectly for this oceanic collaborative collection.

Kendra Rae's love of garment construction fully sparked to life during the COVID-19 pandemic, attending online sewing classes with City College. "I was self-taught for three years, so I figured it was time to level up my skills," said Rae, B.F.A. Fashion Design.

From there, she created a capsule collection that earned her a scholarship to Academy of Art University. Now, Rae is just a step away from graduation, showcasing her art to a larger audience and leaving an impact in her own way.

A major objective of Rae's is ensuring the

materials in her designs are sustainably sourced. "I try to create with a sustainable mindset; always trying to source second-hand fabrics, deadstock fabrics. I try not to buy new if I don't have to," explained Rae.

One of the more impressive and innovative parts of this collection is not only her use of 3D printing, but also using a newly publicly available biodegradable filament, a first of its kind. Rae's enjoyment of designing culminates in the construction of a piece. "My favorite part is making the clothes. Once everything is cut and prepped and ready to go, you can start sewing," she shared. "That is so satisfying to me; that's when it starts coming to life."

This collection is inspired by seafoam and rock formations found on beaches. Featuring seven looks, with a variety of unique silhouettes and equally distinct

handiwork, just like waves or incoming tides, each piece is different and offbeat in its compelling way.

With an avant-garde silhouette and inspired design, Rae's 3D printed dress exhibits her expertise in not only her use of handwoven elements but also her technical skills in merging technology and fashion. Exemplifying her proficiency in the breadth and depth of textile and yarnwork, her textile design collaborator Gigi Youngbauer's fully hand-made two-piece summer ensemble is a complex and detailed feat of her abilities. Of their shared looks, we see custom-printed designs on modest silhouettes, interesting and original takes on traditional garments, and a distinctly noteworthy dress, highly reminiscent of seafoam, all in neutral shades and deep oceanic blues.

For Youngbauer, B.F.A. Textile Design, being taught

Irregular Sea

how to knit and crochet by local church ladies isn't exactly how you'd expect an eight-year-old to spend their time. However, it sparked the designer's lifelong passion.

Growing up in Wisconsin, Youngbauer always had a yarn project in the works through her schooling years. It was also during the pandemic that Youngbauer started spending more time knitting and crocheting than doing university assignments, and she thought, "Yeah, something has to change."

From there, she found Academy of Art University. Since then, as a textile major, she has grown proficient working with media beyond just yarnwork, from embroidery to screen printing and

more.

Youngbauer's hope for this collection is to push people's boundaries for what they find acceptable in fashion. "I want people to be comfortable with things that are maybe unusual... to show something different in a way that's appealing."

A shared feeling during this process was an appreciation for the metaphorical meaning of the ocean in this collection. Both an inspiration artistically, and a representation of life ebbing and flowing, with their time in college coming to an end.

"This process has been an emotional mess for me, this is a very distinct end of something, you can't help but acknowledge that it is the *end* end," shared Rae.

Kendra Rae

B.F.A. FASHION DESIGN



Photograph by Alejandro Quintero.

Gigi Youngbauer

B.F.A. TEXTILE DESIGN



Photograph by Alejandro Quintero.

2025 SPRING FASHION SHOW LOOKBOOK

California Dreamin'

By Lola O'Donnell

A fashion collection that is a blossom of cultures, Hannah Kim, B.F.A. Fashion Design, blends '60s and '70s San Francisco with her Korean heritage creating a unique mix of silhouettes and textiles.

Upon moving to San Francisco for college from Korea, Kim had an epiphany that served as inspiration for her thesis collection. "It was a trend to move to California for all the young people," said Kim. "I resonated with it. It felt like I was one of those '60s hippies."

Parallels meet with her

inspiration with the bokjumeoni, a coin bag purse, used in the Joseon Dynasty in Korea inspires the details for the tassels, knots, and shapes of the looks.

The city's rich history of self-expression and the liveliness of its youth do not go unnoticed. Taking notice of objects and outfits seen on the street, Kim used the connection of the straps from both iconic hippie accessories/clothing, and bokjumeoni to thread the collection into one. Additionally, the bubble-like shape of the bag and the knots used to create the bokjumeoni, are used in her prints and silhouettes.

When looking at Kim's collection, you see the detail in her research from the swinging '60s, including various textiles like corduroy and silk satin, along with leathers such as suede, which are heavily inspired by the day-to-day fashionable person of the time. Everything comes together when the continuation of Korean-influenced silhouettes meets the warm, vibrant, and earthy tones of the groovy '70s decade. Creating a combination of organic and geometric shapes that complete the vision.

Prints are a significant detail within Kim's

collection. Drawn by hand, the prints are based on photos she took of her inspiration on the active streets of San Francisco. Using various methods, such as heat transfer, burn-out, and silk screening, she created prints on different fabrics and textiles, adding an abstract essence to her garments that pulled the collection together.

Through her thesis collection, Kim expressed the vulnerable side of the process that motivates herself, inspiring admirers of similar creativity to keep taking risks even when the lines seem blurred ahead.

"Doing art—it doesn't

have an answer, you have to just trust yourself," she explained. "No one will see the final result during your process; you're the only person who knows this collection better than anyone else."

Kim plans to pursue her career and projects in the U.S. through her passion for creativity through her love for sustainability, printmaking, and colorful textiles. She wants to design ready-to-wear garments, as she enjoys seeing her works worn on the street by people who aren't afraid to express themselves through fashion.



Photograph by Washi Wu.

Hannah Kim

B.F.A. FASHION DESIGN



2025 SPRING FASHION SHOW LOOKBOOK

Cailee Lola Grayhorse Pupecki

B.F.A. FASHION DESIGN



Photograph by Alejandro Quintero.



When Athletic Wear Becomes Art

By River Smusz

The first thing Cailee Lola Grayhorse Pupecki, B.F.A. Fashion Design, will tell you about her collection is that it's a love letter to the sport that shaped her. "That's why I decided to make softball uniforms—just to show my gratitude for the sport and also my gratitude for the sisterhood that I've created," said Pupecki. Originally from Southern California, Pupecki played softball for 15 years. Her designs reinterpret traditional baseball and softball uniforms through an unexpected lens. "I researched a lot of old baseball and softball uniforms and then created new uniforms," said Pupecki. "When I say unconventional, it's like I'm having people

on the field play in suits or dresses, or skirts—things you really wouldn't expect." Pupecki's connection to fashion began early. As a child, her mother styled and photographed her in elaborate at-home photo shoots. It was her best friend's grandmother who first taught her how to sew. "She saw that I was talented at it. So, for one of my birthdays, she bought me a sewing machine," said Pupecki. In high school, Pupecki began cutting up thrifted clothes and reworking them into her own pieces. By college, there was no doubt about her path forward. "That was the only thing that I was really passionate about," she shared. Now, finishing her undergraduate degree at

Academy of Art University, Pupecki draws heavily from personal experience and visual symbolism. One of her standout illustrations features pigeons and was inspired by a question she had during her first year at school. "Our school has a mascot, it's called the Urban Knight. When I first heard it, I wondered what an Urban Knight would look like," recalled Pupecki. "The only thing that makes sense to me is a pigeon could be an Urban Knight in the city because there's so many of them—like an army." From that idea, Pupecki developed Pajane, a fictional pigeon character who appears throughout her collection. "Her name's Jane, so... Pajane," explained Pupecki. One of the central pieces in

her lineup is "The Pajane Dress," which draws directly from her concept. She has titled many of her looks to reflect their character and silhouette. "The Bubble Look," featuring oversized, rounded pants, is one of her favorites. There's also "The Catcher Look," a top that mimics a catcher's gear, and "The Padded Suit," inspired by the quilted padding of vintage baseball pants. While Pupecki didn't name the specific colors in her palette, they stem from an illustration she made two years ago. "I always like teal, sage-y colors, and I felt like the plummy red tones would really complement that well," she said. Pupecki's artistic process is rooted in both

illustration and textiles. "I always loved painting with gouache," she said. "I really love making textiles. A lot of my designs have appliques and stuff, because I like little characters, little guys. It's like creating your own little world through that." Her sonic world includes Frank Ocean, Kendrick Lamar, SZA, and Tyler, the Creator—artists whose introspective, layered styles mirror the narrative quality of her work. As her collection evolves, Pupecki continues to explore what happens when athletic wear becomes art. Each look in her lineup is stitched with story, memory, and a sense of transformation. "Softball taught me a lot," she shared. And now, she's returning the favor—uniform by uniform.

2025 SPRING FASHION SHOW LOOKBOOK



Photograph by Jeffry Raposas.

Chase Duval-Champagne

M.F.A. FASHION DESIGN



Courtesy of the designer

Chase Duval-Champagne possesses a bachelor's degree in fashion merchandising and marketing, with a concentration in design, alongside a master's degree in fashion design, complemented by a foundation as a classically trained artist. Their professional path has granted them the privilege of living in vibrant cultural centers, such as Boston, Massachusetts; Paris, France; and San Francisco, California, as well as various locations across New Hampshire, embodying a modern nomadic lifestyle that enriches their artistic perspective. Recognized as the "Mad Artperson of Fashion," Duval-Champagne actively engages in various artistic pursuits, including photography, poetry, painting, drawing, interior design and restoration, landscaping, and floral arrangements. This

extensive artistic background is intricately interwoven with their diverse experiences, enabling them to embrace many opportunities and roles that foster their professional development and enhance their capacity for creative expression. Duval-Champagne's thesis collection is a thoughtful exploration of the intersection between fashion, art, and neurodiversity. It captures the nuanced journey of a neurodivergent individual navigating the complexities of anxiety within the creative landscape. Each piece is meticulously crafted to convey a compelling narrative, skillfully merging visual appeal with profound emotional resonance. This collection invites viewers to engage thoughtfully with the intricacies of creativity and the emotional challenges disproportionately experienced by those with neurodivergent conditions.

In an era where the

fashion industry increasingly prioritizes capitalistic models, there is a notable decline in the emphasis on the artistry integral to its creation. Duval-Champagne's mission, as a classically trained artist, is to reintegrate the essence of art into the fashion realm, inspired by their deep admiration for the innovative legacy of Alexander McQueen. They utilize unconventional materials in their work as a means of symbolically representing neurodivergence, particularly within the fashion sector. The strategic incorporation of color throughout their artistic process not only enhances aesthetic value but also serves to convey deeper meanings and emotional connections inherent in each creation. A quote that has profoundly influenced Chase's life comes from Sylvia Plath, penned in a heartfelt letter to Eddie Cohen on September 11, 1950. In this candid expression of her inner struggles and convictions, she wrote, "I am so pathetically intense. I just can't be any other way." This reflection not only encapsulates her passionate nature but also resonates deeply with Duval-Champagne, reminding them of the power of authenticity and the undeniable strength found in embracing one's true self, even amidst the complexities of human emotions. The piece within their thesis collection, titled "The Flowering of Anxiety," emerges from a profound appreciation for the written word and the transformative power of literature. Books have significantly shaped their life experiences, impacting them both positively and negatively. This work aims to honor those literary influences and the meaningful moments spent either immersing oneself in fictional worlds or seeking refuge from an imposed reality. Included in the collection of florettes are notable titles such as "Turtles All The Way Down" by John Green, "Twilight" by Stephenie Meyer, a selection of musical scores featuring Bach's Christmas carols, and an introductory guide to basic art skills. This thesis reflects a foundational perspective that provides solace during moments of anxiety, offering an escape into a realm enhanced by the beauty and fragrance of peony flowers.

2025 SPRING FASHION SHOW LOOKBOOK



Photograph by Washi Wu.

Mel Lamore

M.F.A. FASHION DESIGN



Letting Softness Speak

By River Smusz

Mel Lamore, M.F.A. Fashion Design, didn't plan to be in fashion. In fact, she spent years backstage—literally.

Growing up in Southern Oregon, Lamore's creative world began in theatre: costuming, stage managing, and making things happen behind the scenes. But somewhere along the way, the structure of theatre started to feel more limiting than inspiring.

"I kind of realized it wasn't really for me," said Lamore.

That realization led her into a small fashion seminar, where something clicked. "I've always wanted to go into fashion, but just kept putting it off," she explained. "After that seminar, I was like, screw it. Let's just go for it."

Lamore's debut collection isn't flashy or trend-driven. It's quiet, raw, and deeply personal. Built around her own experience with depression, the work is fragile and held together by a thread, draped with softness, and often on the edge of unraveling.

"It's like it's falling apart at the seams," shared Lamore. Her designs feature

hand-made thread mesh, delicate finishes, and a color palette of whites, slate grays, and washed periwinkle.

"It wasn't about fabric quality, really," she explained. "It was more about how it feels. Comfort is really important to me."

Lamore doesn't follow a clean, step-by-step process.

"I work intuitively but also as a planner, and it's a very chaotic process," she said. Lamore sketched loosely, draped with paper, built things up and tore them down again.

"I tried to just trust the process," she said. "Every single step of the way, it was a surprise."

Originally, Lamore thought of the project as an outlet. But the more time she spent with it, the more it transformed into something softer.

"It really has become a love letter—not just to myself—but to something so many people experience," said Lamore.

If the collection were a person, Lamore isn't sure who they'd be. "Oh gosh... I have no idea," she laughed.

And maybe that's okay. The work isn't about conclusions. It's about process, presence, and letting softness speak.

2025 SPRING FASHION SHOW LOOKBOOK



Devashree Jhaveri

B.F.A. FASHION DESIGN

Photograph by Alejandro Quintero.



Dance With Feelings of Love, Anger, Happiness, and Sadness

By Anudari Tuvshintuya

A unique aspect of having a different background is the opportunity to discover a rich culture. Devashree Jhaveri, B.F.A. Fashion Design, was born in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India, and was raised by her mother, a textile collector. Growing up, she learned a great deal about textiles from her mother and now aspires to share her culture and elevate Indian textiles on a global stage.

Jhaveri's Spring 2025 collection explores her emotional connection with the spirit world. She drew inspiration from the song "DAKLA" by Bandish

Projekt, which made her realize the depth of her connection to the piece. The song evokes a wide range of emotions, including strength, weakness, power, sadness, and happiness.

"Hearing the song takes me to a different place, where my mind and body dance with feelings of love, anger, happiness, sadness, and so much more," explained Jhaveri.

Through her work, she aims to tell a story highlighting that every woman embodies the essence of a goddess, much like the song that celebrates women's strength, power, anger, and softness. During this process, Jhaveri encountered significant

challenges in translating her emotions into her designs, but as a result, she grew as a designer.

Her work focuses on sustainability. Most of her designs utilize recycled mashru fabrics that her mother collected in India. "In ancient times, mothers gifted blankets made from mashru to newborn babies because it was soft and satiny," said Jhaveri.

The collection of mashru fabrics features a silky front and a cotton back, with each side displaying a different color that Jhaveri primarily selected, including green, yellow, blue, and red. These colors reflect her emotions, which she also translates

into her music.

To bring her inspiration to life, Jhaveri listened to the song repeatedly and let its beats guide her as she drew on the paper. Each line and painting emerged on the page, reflecting her imagination and artistic collection. She chose canvas as the primary medium to showcase her artwork clearly.

A significant element of the design is the white rope, which she drew inspiration from the instrument featured in the song. This white rope represents the parts of the instrument made of wood, leather, and rope.

"I decided to use rope to symbolize that holding a mother's hand may lead you

on a long journey, but it will always be beneficial for you," said Jhaveri.

In Indian culture, people hold onto the instrument's rope to connect with the woman's emotions, which can change over time.

Through her work, Jhaveri looks to demonstrate that Indian culture, art, and techniques have much to offer and can be applied to a wide range of contexts. At Academy of Art University, she challenged herself as a designer and made significant improvements, allowing her to convey a story through her work, even when her imagination and thoughts are messy and chaotic.

2025 SPRING FASHION SHOW LOOKBOOK



Photograph courtesy of the designer.

Martharine Anne Olivia Jabo

M.F.A. FASHION DESIGN



Urithi: A Culture Experience

Courtesy of the designer

Hailing from Uganda and inspired by her late mother in the field of fashion, Martharine Anne Olivia Jabo, M.F.A. Fashion Design, developed her love for fashion, art, and interior design right from a tender age. She began cutting out different fabrics left by her mother to make clothes for her dolls and sketching from time to time. In later years, she worked on independent projects in various design fields, which gained her local and regional recognition.

In order to gain comprehensive knowledge in the fashion industry, Jabo moved to San Francisco to pursue a graduate degree in fashion design from Academy of Art University. As a recent graduate, her work has evolved over time. She aspires to establish and maintain a meaningful network in the industry and create a global presence through her work, going beyond fashion and continuing to work as a philanthropist.

With a focus on

women's and menswear, Jabo has always been drawn towards the luxury and couture space and loves creating trans-seasonal pieces that transcend time. She takes great pride in her culture, and her work focuses on embodying aspects of a rich African heritage fused with modern elements of design and premium craftsmanship. She hopes to create a platform that debunks the myth surrounding "made in Africa" products.

Martharine's thesis collection, titled "Urithi," which means Heritage in Swahili, embodies aspects of a rich African heritage fused with modern elements of design and premium craftsmanship. "Urithi" is a re-interpretation of African fashion and culture into contemporary fashion.

"This is a collection that's a celebration of my cultural identity, a preservation of traditional African practices that showcases the uniqueness, beauty, and diversity of African fashion to a wider audience," shared Jabo. "Some of the traditional elements included in the

garments are beadwork, use of traditional African woven fabrics, fabric manipulation, silhouettes, as well as ancient beauty practices like the wearing of lip plates and body art techniques."

As a way of preserving her African heritage and cultural practices, Jabo chose to use sustainable fabrics such as Asooke and

Kente that were hand-woven from various parts of Africa, and the process of creating these fabrics involves the use of sustainable fibers as well as sustainable production techniques that have been used for centuries.

"My collection embodies different unique design ethos and is a combination of several aspects of fashion

such as millinery, tailoring, beading, corsetry, needlework among others that I have interpreted in my own way," explained Jabo of her creative process and techniques. "In addition to that, I have explored textile fabrication through the use of gold paint and gold leaf that have both been applied delicately by hand."

2025 SPRING FASHION SHOW LOOKBOOK



Glaciers' Breathtaking Beauty



Photograph by Washi Wu.

Emma Latham

B.F.A. FASHION DESIGN

By Lola O'Donnell

Inspired by the rugged glacier terrain of Alaska, Emma Latham, B.F.A. Fashion Design, purchased a second-hand tent from Facebook marketplace and experimented with its potential. By cutting up and draping the material onto a mannequin, Latham began to explore the possibilities unfolding within her growing concept.

Taking her exploration a step further, she set out to go backpacking through the mountains and glaciers of Alaska.

"I knew what a glacier was, but never really knew what it would really look like up close. I was really inspired by just the depth that the crevasses go for miles and miles and miles, it's so much bigger than you could ever imagine," Latham said, musing about the layers of nature, and its overlooked depths, intricacies, and breathtaking beauty.

An old tent is just the start; while constructing her collection, Latham utilized multiple resources to create dimensional fashion that

conveys nature's ability to simply awe. She used custom-printed fabrics of her photos to contrast against stark matte black fabrics, recreating the sinking depth of the crevasses she saw along her trip. Additionally, she incorporated bright neon gear used for surviving in the harsh conditions of the Arctic within her garments.

Latham struggled to create a garment on a scale that expresses her experiences. She reflected on an early obstacle to connect these wonders of the world to her collection: "I was just constantly being like, make it bigger, make it bigger, make it bigger, because it was hard to get across in my designs, they are just so much bigger than you would think that they are."

To counteract, she continued to source used tents to collage her materials in various ways to add to her dynamic collection.

The outdoors has been a consistent inspiration for Latham, helping her creative and positive thinking bloom from the breathtaking sights while hiking and

backpacking in the wilderness. Her early exposure through spontaneous art classes growing up, while not always fashion-centered, gave her the ability to express her art and creativity, which had a significant effect on her design process for her collection.

"I want people to be able to understand the outdoor space and the hugeness of it. Inspired specifically by Alaska and just how beautiful the world is," said Latham, who hopes to communicate the incomprehensible abilities of our precious nature with her collection. "On top of that, a lot of the materials are repurposed, so being able to connect the outdoors with caring for the environment and reusing materials."

San Francisco gleams with opportunities for Latham; she's ready to contribute her ideas to the world. Between her thesis collection and design style, she shows range and finds herself aiming for S.F.-based companies like Gap and Levi's matches her style with their brand identities.

2025 SPRING FASHION SHOW LOOKBOOK



By Itzel Morales

Vanda Ouyang, B.F.A. Fashion Design, decided to use her collection to embrace nostalgia. Titled “The Smell of Stars,” her concept takes us on a journey of what you can imagine stars would smell like. This would include certain scents such as gunpowder, liquid metal, and even welding fumes.

Ouyang translates these sensory impressions into her design through experimenting with burning fabrics to create raw, uncontrolled textures. She implements sequins and delicate lace to capture the radiant,

shimmery quality of stars.

“From my childhood memories of reading a book by myself, biting my fingers, and having that sensorial curiosity, it made me want to explore other random things in depth, and this book inspired me to do just that,” explained Ouyang, sharing that her collection is inspired by the book, “The Little Prince.” “It was the first book I can recall reading by myself, so it holds a very special place for me. Growing up, my parents were very busy people, so I had to become a very independent child, and reading this book was the moment

where I realized I was much stronger than I thought.”

The silhouettes and fabric of Ouyang’s garments blend the harmonious use of puffy dresses and structured but edgy necklines. There is such movement in the clothes that allows one to be transported to the swirling clouds of stars, dust, and gas. The burning fabrics against the gleaming sequins are a fusion of the luminous balls of gas covered in a veil of lace. These include the burning of cotton fabrics, as well as the sequins and lace. The rose fabric is the epitome of a storyteller in this collection, as it references



Photograph by Alejandro Quintero.

Vanda Ouyang

B.F.A. FASHION DESIGN

The Smell of Stars

the rose in the book, which the Little Prince mourns when he enters Earth from his asteroid. The boning is used to shape the silhouettes, which give them a sculptural and ethereal presence. The shapes include other cosmic elements such as the crescent moon and the enormous empty space that is the galaxy.

Ouyang is an inspired artist who shares that she developed her artistic style through her family. “My father is also an artist, very traditional,” said Ouyang. “He taught me the vulnerability and strength it takes to channel your emotions in

art, and not something negative. Through him, I gained the confidence to truly take the time to grow as an artist and find out what that truly means. For me, it’s to express my emotions and candidly process my observations, whether that be what I see or smell.”

Ouyang’s Spring 2025 collection fuses such powerful and contrasting elements to deliver a unique cosmic fantasy. “The Smell of Stars” leaves a stimulating sensory impression through memories and fabric.

2025 SPRING FASHION SHOW LOOKBOOK

The Bond that Connects Us

By Anudari Tuvshintuya

Taking bold steps toward a dream is empowering and requires self-confidence. Kira Chen, B.F.A. Fashion Design, made a significant career change, transitioning from a focus on Science in English to pursuing her passion for fashion design. Her passion for fashion ignited long ago when she began redesigning her clothes through YouTube tutorials. In 2020, she decided to follow her dream at Academy of Art University. Now, she is working towards completing her undergraduate degree in

Spring 2025.

Growing up, building relationships, and making connections were the most important aspects of Chen’s life. Born in Castro Valley, she was raised in a family that emphasized the significance of connection. Her final collection is inspired by Hong Kong film director Wong Kar-Wai’s Love Trilogy and the concept of “Kizuna,” which translates to “the bond that connects us.” She drew key inspiration from the films, as she felt deeply moved by the main characters and felt a parallel connection to their lives.

“Through my collection,

I hope to showcase the raw emotions that arise from connecting with others and building relationships as we grow,” expressed Chen.

To express her feelings through her garments, she primarily uses red and black colors to symbolize femininity and love, incorporating materials such as satin, velvet, jersey, silk dupioni, and repurposed plastic bags. The focus of her project is eco-consciousness and sustainability, which she effectively brought to life by transforming takeout and grocery bags.

Staying true to her theme of connection, she

also collected plastic bags from local neighborhoods to use as material for her collection. She received substantial support from others, which mirrored the bonds formed through shared experiences. She pressed these bags together to create sheets with varying densities. Her garments symbolize confidence and self-assurance, showcasing skin and fostering a connection to others.

“This textile came to fruition because food has always been the primary way my family has expressed love and care for one another, and takeout and grocery bags are the carriers of this

form of love,” noted Chen. “Pressing and melting the bags together creates a stronger sheet, which I wanted to represent.”

Chen’s design skills flourished while she studied at the Academy, where she gained valuable knowledge from her instructors. She aspires to effectively utilize her skills and share her talent by helping a smaller, environmentally conscious company, which will also provide her with further insight into the industry. Additionally, Chen is seeking a job in virtual pattern making and design, with the long-term goal of starting her brand.



Photograph by Washi Wu.

Kira Chen

B.F.A. FASHION DESIGN



2025 SPRING FASHION SHOW LOOKBOOK



Photograph by Washi Wu.

Dongying Jiang

B.F.A. FASHION DESIGN

By Itzel Morales

Abuse, verbal or otherwise, is not something that is easily explained to an outsider. One can say it is a very personal experience, one that no one should have to go through.

Dongying Jiang, B.F.A. Fashion Design, uses her collection to give those who have suffered or are going through verbal abuse a voice and to truly evoke emotion in her viewers.

“The transparent fabrics symbolize fragility and exposure, which directly convey the sense of vulnerability of those who are verbally attacked,” explained Jiang. “When this happens, their weaknesses are exposed without any way to protect themselves.”

Her use of transparent fabrics on the outer layer of the silhouettes implies that, especially in vulnerability, there is still a need for protection. Her lightly saturated red inner linings provide internal coverage and protection for the victim. This component is also meant to illustrate that in the time of abuse, one’s internal emotions and personalities

are exposed. The materials she used for this immense interpretation include chiffon, transparent, and sheer fabrics. The restricted and uncomfortable-looking necklines are to elicit emotion through the clothes. Additional elements are the incorporation of Chinese shadow puppets and knots.

“Such a design integrates historical and cultural elements into modernity, highlighting the cultural background and the individual’s inner struggles,” shared Jiang. “Growing up in China, I got inspired by so many things, but coming to the United States has given me the confidence to stand and speak up about these issues that really matter.”



Sense of Vulnerability and Inner Strength

2025 SPRING FASHION SHOW LOOKBOOK



Dominic Godina

B.F.A. KNITWEAR DESIGN

Photograph by Washi Wu.



Memory of the Waters

By Brie Parker

In Dominic Godina’s first year at Academy of Art University, he was required to take a knitwear course solely as part of his prerequisites. However, something about its creative possibilities, especially the capacity to add texture in ways conventional materials cannot, drew him in, to the world of threads, yarn, and bulky industrial machines where a few yards of yarn and a couple of knitting needles could create the intricate silhouettes and oceanic tones now fitted onto Godina’s dress forms. After encouragement from his instructor at the start of his journey at the School of Fashion, they suggested he take it further. End goal? Like many designers’ dreams, the creative director of a fashion house will play a

part in his success story.

The knitting machines are often the culprit of most knitwear artists’ struggles. Godina, B.F.A. Knitwear Design, expressed the difficulties between man and mechanism he had in the process; he was reaching towards creating a silk-like texture that is close to impossible by hand. But to achieve this without some breakdowns is close to impossible as well.

Vision-wise, Godina has a fantasy fairytale perspective rooted in his experience in costume design through his high school plays. He began to appreciate the art of feminine textures, silhouettes, and corseting with soft palettes. His collection, “Memory of the Waters,” celebrates the feeling of being nurtured when connecting with nature. Moss,

wisteria trees, vines, and the ocean were the forefront of Dominic’s inspiration when creating his designs. In each look, there are repetitions of patterns and textures to highlight nature’s amazing fractal structure. Living in San Francisco, he feels a special connection with nature that he didn’t experience before in his life, and he felt inspired to translate this through his thesis collection.

When describing his unique approach, Godina shared: “I wanted the process of creating my collection to also have a connection to nature, so I put an emphasis on what our human hands can do. The majority of my garments are handmade by strategically crocheting each look right on the body, which resulted in forms that cannot be replicated by machine, since before machinery we

had our hands.”

Godina’s skillset is decidedly impressive, but every creative still has doubts. “I compare myself a lot to other knitwear students because they may know more,” Godina candidly shared. “But most of the designers I love are really independent; this helps me psych myself out of it because a lot of them just start from the ground up.” Godina’s concerns regarding his future in the competitive fashion industry are often remedied by the stepping stones his idols took, like Alexander McQueen. He mentions that adopting the position of creative director of iconic fashion houses (notably McQueen) is one of his dreams, but nothing compares to building his own empire.

With graduation on the

cus, Godina still feels there is an immense amount of knowledge to attain. After receiving his bachelor’s, he plans to push toward his master’s degree at the Institut Francais de la Mode.

“There’s just so much more that I want to learn to be able to enter the high-end fashion houses,” said Godina, “like knowing how to operate computerized knitwear and the Dubied Machine.”

With extreme appreciation and praise for his instructors, he expressed that no matter the kind of designer, the technique of knitwear will consistently elevate their work. He encouraged ArtU to continue inspiring other students with opportunities like these. For Godina, the 2025 Spring Fashion Show is only the beginning.

2025 SPRING FASHION SHOW LOOKBOOK

The Shape of God

By Bela Cole

Tied directly to her faith, Haemi Lee, B.F.A. Fashion Design, has based her collection on religious experience. “The Shape of God,” a collection of seven original pieces featuring extravagant pleating and vibrant hand-painted fabrics, handles faith, an often delicate topic. A collaboration with Claudia Ayleen Nicholas, B.F.A. Textile Design, the collection is a result of their own relationships with religion and shared perception of God.

An Oakland native, 23-year-old Lee was raised in a Christian household, but truly began her religious journey when she was in the transitional child-to-teenager stage.

Citing one of her original inspirations as the traditional Japanese Butoh dance, Lee tied it into her relationship with religion. “It taps into this visceral state

of mind and subconscious, and it got me thinking about my dream state, which is so often tied to God,” she explained.

Making sure she doesn’t diminish anyone’s experiences, Lee clarified, “I’m not doing this collection to change someone’s perception of [Christianity] because if you have negative feelings, I don’t want to invalidate that. Religious trauma is a real thing. God is such a personal experience. A lot of people who are proponents often don’t live their lives according to the morals of the Bible, and that’s really unfortunate.”

Lee’s choice to use cotton and common materials considered “cheap” represents His humility as represented in the Bible. “If I want to expand upon the divine nature of God and what he means in relation to me, I want something grand,” explained Lee.

She utilized large,

extravagant silhouettes and pleating in her collection to depict Him folding in upon Himself, representing minimizing “something so infinite into something understandable and digestible to the fallible human.”

Cited as a vital inspiration in the duo’s collaboration is textile artist Susan Maddux, who creates hand-painted pleated art installations. Maddux makes pleats in large gatherings of fabric and hangs them on the wall. When planning her collection, an instructor recommended Nicholas’s skillset and works to Lee, as hand-painting and dying fabric is difficult to take on alone. The two came together and bonded over their shared religious inspirations and experiences, creating this collaborative and colorful collection.

By Michaela Andrews

In a quiet San Francisco studio, surrounded by fabric and paint, Claudia Ayleen Nicholas, B.F.A. Textile Design, dips her brush into a jar and starts painting. Her hand moves slowly at times, quickly at others—both always with meaning.

“I can’t remember ever not creating,” she said. “It’s how I understand the world.”

Ayleen, as she prefers to be called, is part of a new generation of fashion creatives who care deeply about purpose and values. While

others may focus on trends or big brands, her path is shaped by sustainability, culture, and faith.

“I started feeling distant from the clothes I saw,” she said. “So, I began changing old pieces, painting on them, and thinking about how to make them feel more like me.”

Ayleen’s creative process is deeply personal. She doesn’t always begin with a clear plan or sketch. Instead, she lets her instincts guide her. This approach has grown even stronger through a collaboration with

Haemi Lee, B.F.A. Fashion Design.

“Working with her has been such a blessing,” she said. “She’s patient, supportive, and also a Christian, so we understand each other on a deeper level. It feels like we’re creating something meaningful together.”

Even though there are stressful moments—like painting pieces at the last minute before a deadline—Ayleen says her partner always reminds her to stay calm and trust the process.

“She tells me, ‘God’s got it,’ and that really encourages me,” said Ayleen.

With each hand-painted piece and printed fabric, Ayleen is creating her own place in the fashion world—one that is honest, thoughtful, and full of care.

And for someone who believes that beauty shows up not just in clothing but in how we live, that might be her most powerful creation of all.

Claudia Ayleen Nicholas is grateful to Jacquard Products for providing the Dye-Na-Flow Colors for her textile designs. For more information, visit www.JacquardProducts.com



Photograph by Washi Wu.

Claudia Ayleen Nicholas

B.F.A. TEXTILE DESIGN

Haemi Lee

B.F.A. FASHION DESIGN



Photograph by Vince Vu.



2025 SPRING FASHION SHOW LOOKBOOK



Photograph by Alejandro Quintero.

Dangerous Dives with the Lionfish

By Italy Pacheco

Ope, there’s that pull.

Twenty-three-year-old fashion designer Lindsey Londono is caught on the hook of creation. Londono has been interested in fashion since she was a young girl. Born and raised in Florida, Londono stayed on the coastline throughout her life, making an impact on her, which is reflected in her thesis collection.

Londono’s creativity flows mesmerizing and mysterious as if the ocean whispered its secrets to her. The process of her collection captures Londono’s growth as a woman and designer, enticing the audience with splashy palettes, fabric that flows like water, and silhouettes that mimic those of the lionfish. It’s a must to dive into the pieces as she did to connect with her collection.

The venomous lionfish is an invasive species to the coral reefs of the Caribbean. It seduces the eye while leaving its chaos behind. It consumes many algivorous fish, which causes algae overgrowth, killing the coral reefs and slowly destroying the ecosystem. Environmentalists in Key Largo came up with an annual Florida Keys Lionfish Derby. Divers from everywhere come and compete to spear, net, and capture as many lionfish as possible, and in return, they win prizes along with slowly improving the ecosystem. This became the foundation for the collection.

“I started by just photoshopping the fish onto the models, then I went to the derby last year, where I connected with their cause, as I am always looking for ways to better the environment, especially in the fashion industry,” Londono explained.

The collection is divided conceptually; some pieces represent the divers, while others embody the lionfish, and some are about capturing the dark ambiance along the Caribbean waters.

Londono innovates with textures, textiles, and materials to better embody the role of the environment with her collection. She strayed away from traditional textiles in her collection, using fishing lines as boning in the sheer organza corsets and scuba fabric to mirror the thickness and functionality of wetsuits on the divers. She brought a different perspective for her male wetsuit look, as the piece shows spears going through it.

“The male scuba look has spears to show they are invading and aren’t welcome, but the true invader is the lionfish affecting the Caribbean.”

As Londono casts her line, she leaves us with awareness and a way of incorporating her activism into her passion. She challenges the boundaries of fashion by moving away from traditional materials and expectations and reshaping how we view fashion’s role in the environment.

Lindsey Londono

B.F.A. FASHION DESIGN



2025 SPRING FASHION SHOW

Jolie Zhang’s Illustrated Tribute to the “Origins of Belief” Collections



Photograph by Vince Vu.

By Anudari Tuvshintuya

Creating fashion illustration tributes for the graduating designers has become part of a beautiful tradition at the School of Fashion. This spring, Jolie Zhang, B.F.A. Fashion Design, drew a series of illustrations dedicated to the class of 2025 for the “Origins of Belief” Spring Fashion Show.

In the days leading up to the show, Zhang shared her experience working on this challenging, yet exciting project.

Your work is unique compared to other illustrators. How did you come up with such a distinctive idea, and what was your process?

After discussing with the designers, I ensured I fully understood their concept, the direction they wanted to take, and what they wanted the garments to represent. I then went on Pinterest to research independently, as if the designs were my own. I drew inspiration from the images I found and incorporated those ideas into my illustrations. Additionally, I looked up various model and photo shoot poses to ensure each figure effectively conveyed the message the designers wanted the garments to express.

In the last two years, how have your drawing skills improved as an illustrator?

I have primarily been a pencil-and-paper illustrator. For this project, I wanted to branch out and experiment with different materials, such as ink and various types of paper, as well as try my hand at collages. At first, it was a struggle because I didn’t want all my illustrations to look the same, but I also didn’t want them to be too different from one another. I aimed to maintain a cohesive style that still felt like my own. Since I am still relatively new to professional drawing, I found it challenging to

illustrate what I believe my style is, as I am still figuring it out. Nevertheless, this project was a fun experience that helped me discover more about who I am as an artist.

How did using different mediums contribute to the vitality of your drawings for this project?

The reason I chose ink is that it can sometimes bleed or spill, which adds an element of movement to the designs. In contrast, pens create more straight lines, although you can also use pens and pencils to create movement. However, most garments are quite large and feature many intricate details. Therefore, I primarily used ink because it allows for unique and dynamic designs.

How did you connect with the designers?

I conducted mini interviews with the majority of them in one day, asking about their concepts and shows. They shared their mood boards and concept designs with me, which was fascinating. It was interesting to see how the different designers collaborate.

I had many conversations with each of them to understand how they developed their concepts. The process was a bit challenging for me because I wanted my work to stand out. Seeing that last year’s event was a huge success made it feel intimidating to start, especially since I didn’t have much of an illustration background—I had only done it for fun. When I create things just for enjoyment, they tend

to turn out well, but when there’s pressure to showcase them, it becomes important.

What is your plan after attending the Academy?

I hope to continue drawing, and I have come to realize that fashion illustration could be a potential career for me. I plan to explore this further and see how my work develops. I’ve observed that becoming a full-fledged fashion designer requires a tremendous amount of effort, as I have seen from my interactions with seniors who are currently in the field. They seem stressed, but their creativity inspires me, and I look up to them as role models.

Do you have anything to say to fellow Academy students?

If you are given an opportunity, take it. Even if you lack the necessary skills, you will eventually learn them. Remember, sometimes it’s okay to “fake it until you make it.” If you don’t possess a specific skill right now, you can acquire it along the way. I am very grateful to Gary Miller for providing me with this opportunity to showcase my work and connect with senior designers and teachers.

Anudari Tuvshintuya is a B.F.A. Fashion Communication and Styling student at Academy of Art University.



Inspired by Martharine Jabo’s Spring Fashion Show collection.



Inspired by Patric Yikun Wang’s Spring Fashion Show collection.



Inspired by Devashree Jhaveri’s Spring Fashion Show collection.

2025 SPRING FASHION SHOW

Immersed in Italian Craft and Innovation

Fashion students explore industry roots through Study Abroad

By Elena Eberhard, School of Fashion’s PR Office, additional reporting by Art U News staff

Academy of Art University’s School of Fashion is set to embark on its 2025 Study Abroad program in Italy, offering students an immersive experience into the heart of the fashion industry. Led by Online Director Iliana Ricketts, Fashion Director Gary Miller, Director of Fashion Merchandising Jinah Oh, and Coordinator of Future Textiles program Jennifer Jeon, the program is designed to help the students bridge academic learning and real-world industry exposure. The resources gathered by the academic team during the last session are available for the current students to explore in a gallery space at the School of Fashion’s Atrium, located at 625 Polk.

“It helps to experience the industry deeply,” Ricketts explained at the Show & Tell event for the program in Fall 2024. “The reason we started this program is because we have a very

good team of instructors here in San Francisco, and we know what it’s like out there working in industry. However, the local fashion industry is less production-driven. We wanted to bring the students to factories and manufacturers that produce fabrics, clothing, and products, and who are trend forecasters and trend setters. It will help our students to get jobs when they graduate. Many students who came with us in summers 2023-2024 are either moving back to Italy to work, or pursue personal professional projects. This is where all industry resources feed our imagination.”

The Study Abroad program is also distinguished by its integration of traditional craftsmanship with contemporary fashion thinking. Students visited textile mills, leather workshops, and fashion houses’ archives, witnessing every step of production up close and building an appreciation for the heritage techniques combined with modern design strategies.

Adriana Barrios, vice president of SRISA, the host university in Florence, emphasized the depth of the program: “Florence is the center of the Renaissance, but there’s a lot of contemporary and a lot of important contemporary conversations around design and craft and medium that are happening in Florence, interwoven with that history.”

Barrios further highlighted the unique experience SRISA offers: “We’ve been in Florence for many, many years, and we’re deeply connected to the city. Our staff and faculty are international and Italian. There’s a sort of experience that you have when you come to SRISA; you become part of the family, is what we like to say.”

Student experiences from previous years show how the skills and knowledge gained in Academy classes translated into projects they produced in Italy. Ronnie B., an M.A. Art Direction student, used the opportunity to create an editorial shoot titled “Tripleta Uncharted,” capturing the essence of Milan, Florence, and Venice. “I wanted to be able to really take advantage of doing an editorial shoot there and really bringing in the fashion and the influence of Italy into the shoot,” Ronnie B. shared. “I wanted to take different areas of the three cities that we went to—Milan, Florence, Venice—all together and show some personality of each one of those places that I took from them when we went.”

Ryan Walker, B.F.A. Product Development major, reflected on his project “The Layers of Love,” inspired by his experiences in Italy and



At Luigi Bevilacqua, 18th century weaving facility for silk velvet production in Venice, Italy, which still uses the original looms and techniques. Photo courtesy of the School of Fashion.

an internship opportunity: “When I did an internship out there for SRISA’s school with the CEO (Rebecca Olson) at her home, she had a lot of just crafty projects that you could make. And I had made these clay pieces with six layers [each], and I didn’t know what I was going to do with the pieces exactly. And when my family left me, I was really upset. I cried a lot. And then when I talked to her, she said, ‘Just put it into work.’ And this is what came out of it during the final project.”

Walker emphasized the transformative nature of the trip: “That trip made everything matter. It made everything make sense. You can feel lost as a student. You don’t really know if you’re going to the right place. Sometimes the inspiration that’s driving you, you’re a little bit nervous [about] if it’s taking you in the right direction. And you may be nervous about it, but the trip itself put everything into perspective.”

The Study Abroad program not only enhances

students’ academic portfolios but it also provides them with industry insights and opportunities to network outside of the classroom. As Ricketts noted, exposure to the production-driven fashion industry in Italy equips students with the knowledge and experience that can impact their future careers.

For students considering the program, Ronnie B. offered this advice: “Do it, do it, do it. It’s definitely a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. And I think a cultural lens outside of what you can get in the classroom is just so imperative to your creative experience. It just allows you to see the world outside of just sitting in your classroom or being here at home.”

Looking ahead, the School of Fashion’s Study Abroad program is expected to continue evolving to provide more international opportunities for professional development through meaningful, hands-on experiences and industry networking.

Follow the Study Abroad Italy program on Instagram at @AcademyUFashionStudyAbroad. Watch the Show & Tell presentation and the library of resources’ opening at 625 Polk in Fall 2024 at video.academyart.edu

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2025 SPRING FASHION SHOW

Shop657: Encore Custom Meets Collegiate Collaboration

By School of Fashion, PR Office

Get ready to bring your ArtU style to the next level with a new Shop657 x Encore Custom collaboration. This collaboration is about merging student creativity with high-quality customization, giving ArtU’s FSH 460 Industry Collaboration class a platform to bring their visions to life through real-life industry experience.

The project became a hands-on journey from sketch to retail, where students transformed ideas into wearable reality. It allowed students to customize and create in a way that’s both personal and professional. Dropping exclusively at Shop657 pop-up store 2025 Spring Show opening on May 9, the collection highlights the power of student-led design with a special-edition lineup.

Shop657 is known for featuring brands and products that are designed and produced by Academy of Art University alumni, students, and staff members. The store

allows students to gain experience in all aspects of retail operations, from product development and merchandising to marketing and sales.

The project’s industry partner, Encore Custom Apparel, specializes in making custom-made sportswear for teams, training clubs, and everyday lifestyles. Founder and CEO Neil Butterfield started the brand as a lacrosse team apparel company in 2020, later expanding into a lifestyle, multi-sport uniform, and team wear custom design business. Encore is based in San Francisco and has a staff of 40 employees who specialize in the best sports material fabrics.

In a social media announcement of the upcoming launch, Butterfield said, “Watching the students take creative risks and bring real products to life—it’s been inspiring to see their growth. I’ve really enjoyed mentoring throughout the process and seeing how each student’s perspective adds something unique to the collection.”

The ArtU students

on the project’s design product team were B.F.A. Merchandising students Amy Nguyen and Kylie Nicita and B.F.A. Marketing student Aabha Acharya. The marketing team included B.F.A. Merchandising student Pranishi Agrawal and B.F.A. Marketing students Alecia Aguilar, Seungju Kim, and Krysta Mohair. The students designed the retro-inspired menswear and womenswear in popular styles. While researching for the product development, the designers noted that rugby tops, polo shirts, smart joggers, and varsity jackets are silhouettes seen in recent resort sport trends.

“Collegiate graphics are in high demand as they add a nostalgic and preppy feel to sporty silhouettes. With the rise of social resort sports, such as padel, pickleball, and golf, consumers are looking for nostalgic-inspired garments to play and socialize in,” shared the team in their research notes.

The project lead, Andrea

Custom x COLLEGIATE

SHOP 657

Shop Locations

The Cannery
2801 Leavenworth Street,
San Francisco, CA, 94133

Polk Street
625 Polk Street
San Francisco, CA, 94102





Images courtesy of the School of Fashion.

Skillings, School of Fashion adjunct faculty, shared her favorite part of the collaborative project: “Students apply classroom knowledge in real-life industry settings, experiencing the entire product lifecycle—designing, merchandising, manufacturing, and

marketing, which leads to aha moments.”

After initial launch at the 2025 Spring Show, the Custom x Collegiate products will be available at Shop657 at 625 Polk and The Cannery.

JOIN US

FRIDAY, MAY 9, 2025, 10 A.M. - 5 P.M.



SPRING SHOW 2025

601 Brannan Street, San Francisco, CA, 94107
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