

YOUTH

Students take a chic step on career path

A global fashion contest uncovers future talent, **Li Yingxue** in Beijing and **Xie Chuanjiao** in Qingdao report.

With the red orb of the sun spilling its light on the sea, spectators on Zhanqiao Pier, Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, were treated to a radiant fashion spectacular.

The pier, a landmark tourist attraction, was transformed by the bright colors of the models' outfits elegantly displayed on the 440-meter-long century-old "runway".

The pier, once used as a navy dock built in 1892 during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), was actually decreed a national industrial heritage site in April.

It reverberated to the sound of walking models and applause at the World University Student Fashion Design Competition held from Nov 7 to 9.

The event brought together 25 young designers to present their inspirational outfits.

All were students or graduates drawn from 25 universities across 14 countries, including China, France, Germany, Israel, South Africa and the United Kingdom.

The event was co-organized by the Qingdao city government, the Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology and the China Fashion Association.

More than fashion was on show, as the three-day event held indus-

trial networking, design shows, exhibitions, seminars, a fashion contest and an award ceremony.

A team of 20 judges scored the designers' works under five key metrics: fashion, quality, market, technology and responsibility. The judges talked to each designer to better understand their design concepts.

The young designers also showcased their creations at an exhibition at Qingdao Mixc, a popular shopping mall, and members of the public were asked to vote for their favorite designs. A total of 1,500 of them cast their votes.

Wang Yuqi, a student from the Royal Academy of Arts in London won first prize.

Second prizes were awarded to both Lea Kasper from the Trier University of Applied Sciences in Germany and Zhang Yuchuan from Donghua University.

The third-prize winners were students from China, Italy and South Africa.

There were four other single-item awards.

All winners were granted a full year's use of a design studio free of charge, which was provided by the Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology at its fashion industry park in Qingdao.

Japanese designer Hanchi Mri-



Top and above: Models display designers' work on Zhanqiao Pier in Qingdao. DONG ZHIGANG / FOR CHINA DAILY A fashion show at the closing ceremony of the recent World University Student Fashion Design Competition. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

yama won the "market potential" prize. The 24-year-old designs clothes with a dash of color for working women. His idea is a mix of Japanese elements and French fashion. He is a postgraduate at the ISAL Paris, a leading private fashion business school that specializes

in creation management.

Another contestant, Guan Tianai, had a collection of five menswear sets, entitled *Nice to Meet You*.

Guan said her creation had been inspired by her experience in the United Kingdom as an exchange student in 2017-18.

A design piece by the "sustainability design award" winner, Celine Zara Constantinides from the University of Huddersfield in the United Kingdom.



She participated in the Tweed Run in London, an annual event in which cyclists ride through London in British tweeds and brogues.

Guan says that, in her design, she tried to express her nostalgia for her college years and highlight unforgettable memories from Britain.

"My design was based on the features and fabrics of traditional English-style suits, aiming at comfortable tailoring," Guan says.

"I added some more elements into the design to get what I really want, something of an eclectic interest behind plain grandeur," says Guan, who just graduated from Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology in June and plans to further her postgraduate study.

During the fashion event, her design gained attention from a local clothing brand, which signed a cooperative agreement with her at the

closing ceremony. "One appealing aspect of this contest is that fashion newcomers can have many opportunities to communicate with industry insiders," says Guan.

Zhu Shaofang, vice-president of the China Fashion Association, said during the event that the competition served as a platform to cultivate talent in fashion, and she praised that "the competition not only enables up-and-coming young designers to display their work and communicate with each other, but also serves as a bridge linking governments, education institutions, industries, and city resources".

One of the participating designers, Jackson Wiederhoeft, a graduate of the New York-based Parsons School of Design, says he believes that there is great potential among Chinese people, as many of them are interested in and would like to try bold designs, while "New York people tend to be more serious".

"I hope my products will be sold in the Chinese market in the future," he said.

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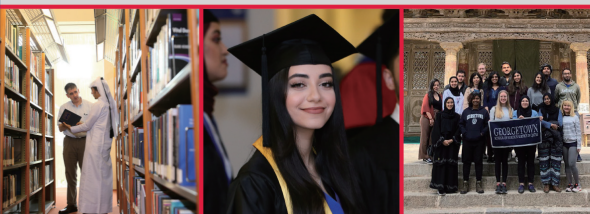


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