

# ASU FIDM students to see their designs on the runway at Uncertainty Fashion Showcase

**Designers work long hours to prepare for the professionally produced event**

By Mary Beth Faller, ASU News  
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Nola Hill is perfecting every stitch of her fashion design collection, which she started conceptualizing last summer.

She is among 30 [ASU FIDM](#) fashion design students who have been working late into the night for months while preparing their capstone creations for the [Uncertainty Fashion Showcase 2025](#), the annual full-scale fashion show put on by the school.

“Now we’re in the final fabric stage and I’m now in my perfectionism phase where if a stitch comes out crooked, let’s redo it,” Hill said.

The event, which will be held at 3 p.m. on Saturday, April 12, at Scottsdale Fashion Square, will present 126 looks from Arizona State University fashion design students who are graduating this year. ASU FIDM is at two locations: the Downtown Phoenix campus and in Los Angeles. Graduating seniors at both locations are invited to participate.

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## **If you go ...**

[ASU FIDM Fashion Symposium](#)

9 a.m. to 5 p.m., April 11

Fusion on First, Downtown

Phoenix campus

[Uncertainty Fashion Showcase](#)

3 p.m., April 12

This will be the eighth Uncertainty show, which started out as 100% student run. Students from ASU's [pop music program](#) even provide the DJ services. While many students work the show — in the front and back of the house — it's grown so much that it's now produced in collaboration with Margaret Merritt Productions and The Agency Arizona.

Scottsdale Fashion Square

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[Dennita Sewell](#), director of ASU FIDM, said that the Scottsdale Fashion Square shopping center location, with audience members on two levels overlooking the stage, makes for a dramatic event for the students after months of hard work.

"The process of being a designer and finding your voice is really challenging. There are moments where you feel confident and moments where you doubt yourself," she said.

"And to be there and have all this applause coming not just from your teacher, but really, in this space, from a community that's known for fashion, it's a really good opportunity for our students to gain confidence and experience."

The fashion show is part of two days of events. On Friday, April 11, the [ASU FIDM Fashion Symposium](#) at Fusion on First in downtown Phoenix will feature industry leaders such as Beth Forsberg, the chief sustainability officer at Goodwill of Central and Northern Arizona; Ruben Toledo, a painter, sculptor, designer and fashion chronicler; and Sharleen Ernster, founder and CEO of We Are HAH, which creates sustainable apparel. The symposium, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., is open to everyone.

"As leaders in fashion education, our goal is to provide students with the skills and exposure to industry professionals to launch successful careers," Sewell said.

"The symposium and showcase serve as powerful platforms for emerging graduates to connect with the global fashion community."

Students who work behind the scenes of the fashion show also get valuable career experience. [Maya Mukherjee](#) was a backstage producer for three Uncertainty shows before graduating in 2024 and now works at New York Fashion Week as a freelance production assistant.

## Finding inspiration

The ASU FIDM students' design concepts are highly sophisticated.

Sullivan Barton's collection of five looks envisions a dystopian future in which people can't go outside because of pollution.

"All of my looks are full coverage with interspersing manipulations, so my whole thought process is, 'What's the coolest way to put fabric onto the human form?'" said Barton, who is based at the Downtown Phoenix campus.

He's worked late almost every night this semester to finish his collection.

"One of the patterns for my pants was not working the way I hoped and I showed my professor and we decided to scrap the whole idea, and I've had to revamp and redo things multiple times to get

the vision I'm imagining," he said.

Like many of the graduating designers, Barton has already worked in the industry. Last summer, he did alterations for David's Bridal through an internship. He sees tailoring as a potential career path.

"I'm planning to move to New York because there's more of a fashion scene in that city," he said.

"I would love to be a tailor or part of a design team."

Hill is from Phoenix but knew in high school that she wanted to move to either Los Angeles or New York to study fashion. She's now based at ASU FIDM in Los Angeles and will drive herself and her collection to Arizona this week for Uncertainty.

"I'm inspired by art in general, but this collection is inspired by the surrealism of the early 1900s and specifically my favorite artist, Leonora Carrington," Hill said.

"She painted a lot of things from her dreams — weird creatures and angels and monsters.

"I'm into the subconscious and things that mean something that are stored in our brains, like memories and nostalgia, and I put elements of that in the motifs and colors of the collection."

Hill said her garments, rendered in gabardine, poplin and broadcloth, are classically tailored with surrealistic twists.

Last summer, she interned on the "color and trend" team at Victoria's Secret, where she looked at runway shows to pick out trends and helped to set the fall theme for the brand.

Hill has already been offered several interviews as an apparel designer with top brands and is hoping to stay in Los Angeles.

## **Finding a passion**

Atticus Doan used Google Translate to research French fashion magazines from the 1920s for inspiration.

"I took the silhouettes and construction details of 1919 to 1923 and transformed them into contemporary menswear silhouettes," he said.

"You also see a lot of Asian and Greek inspiration with drapery," said Doan, who borrowed the kimono-inspired sleeve construction of the era for shirts in his collection.

Sustainability is important to him.

"I bought deadstock wool that was left over from a factory, and I recycled that into my pieces," he said.

He also used sustainably created rayon, linings made of biodegradable cotton and buttons made from tagua nuts, which are an alternative to animal horns.

He dyed his fabrics himself using a combination of iron and oak gall, which are tree growths caused by wasps.

Doan is a business major and a fashion design minor, and hopes to work on his portfolio after graduation before applying to a master's degree program in fashion.

"I started with a fashion design minor because I thought it was a fun hobby but I started getting passionate about it when I started making clothes, which I hadn't done before this program," he said.

"It made me realize that I could see myself doing this for the rest of my life."

Doan said that good design is a critical component of sustainability.

"If the item isn't comfortable to wear and if you don't love it, you won't wear it as often and then it's being wasted," he said.

"I'm trying to create high-quality garments in terms of construction and comfort that inspire joy when you're wearing them."

*This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).*

## Main image



Models walk the runway at Scottsdale Fashion Square during the 2024 Uncertainty Fashion Showcase. This year's event will be held at 3 p.m. on Saturday, April 12, at Scottsdale Fashion Square, showcasing 126 looks from ASU FIDM fashion design students who are graduating this year. Photo by Camille Schneider/ASU FIDM

## **Gallery**





A suit designed by ASU FIDM student Sullivan Barton will be presented at the Uncertainty Fashion Showcase 2025 at Scottsdale Fashion Square on Saturday.





A dress designed by ASU FIDM student Alexander Diesner will be presented at the Uncertainty Fashion Showcase 2025 at Scottsdale Fashion Square on Saturday.



Fourth-year fashion design student Nola Hill works on her capstone project at the ASU California Center Grand in Los Angeles for this year's Uncertainty Fashion Showcase.