

PRESS RELEASE

Parsons MFA Textiles Graduates Exhibition
Mana Contemporary, September 2020

“HYBRID”

Originally envisioned by Li Edelkoort in 2015-16, the Textiles MFA program was launched in the School of Fashion at Parsons, the New School, in the fall of 2018. The first graduates of this program have emerged as thoughtful makers with a humane, global perspective.

Mana Contemporary presents the 16 graduates of the inaugural cohort of the Textiles MFA program who have persevered through the pandemic, shutdown and quarantine in their final semester to create spectacular and meaningful work that is groundbreaking - and that needs to be seen on the world stage.

Each student has created a new vernacular for the 21st century through the medium of textiles - addressing larger issues of Social Justice, Sustainability, Beauty, Activism and Wellbeing. In their final capstone thesis projects, they have created magnificent textiles with compelling stories, socio-cultural relevance, considered utility and a beauty that surpasses the material and the visual, to engage the emotional and intellectual realms.

The graduating students' work has major significance in the world today, as they will pioneer a paradigm shift in not just the Textile industry and in the field of Art and Design, but also impacting several disciplines from fashion, interiors and architecture, to manufacturing and business as they seamlessly integrate fast-paced, hi-tech making with mindful, slow craft.

Textile innovations range from integrating the natural world into textiles through whimsical tapestry weaving, dyeing with natural dyes, botanical and food waste. Imbuing fabric installations with fragrance and movement, creating 3D architectural structures using hemp from 2D handloom weaves, to stunningly beautiful material innovation in bioplastics and textiles made with kelp.

We see ancient shamans imagined with wool, addressing activism and social change through felting and tufting; issues of cultural sustainability with backstrap loom weaving, material sustainability through hand knitting with e-waste and 3D knitting on the Shimaseiki, and climate change through knitting landscapes of the Aral Sea, to healing through color, light and form.

Under the leadership of founding Program Director Preeti Gopinath, this pioneering graduate program in textiles is uniquely positioned at the intersection of craft, concept, technology, fashion and constructed environments. Students are mentored by an outstanding team of educators that include Gabi Asfour, Anette Millington, Tiago Valente, Soojin Kang, YuChen Zhang, Travis Fitch, Jacob Long, Alex de Voogt, Li Edelkoort and Preeti Gopinath.

Parsons' Inaugural MFA Textile Graduates Debut Capstone Projects

The New School's Parsons School of Design announced the debut of these capstone projects from the 2020 graduates of its inaugural MFA Textiles program. The MFA Textiles program was envisioned by Li Edelkoort in 2015 who, now the Dean of Hybrid Design Studies at Parsons School of Design, says all 16 graduates are "prepared as no other to find their way in a post-Covid society that will search for authenticity and aim for a better world, considering planet and people." Take a look at each project that explores the intersection of craft, technology, and sustainability.

INTERIOR DESIGN

July 3, 2020
By Quinn Halman



Jeremy Ripley A piece from Morpho+Genesis; tancei, wood dowels, rope. Photography courtesy of Jeremy Paul Ripley. Flat texture is transformed into living forms inspired by mathematical and geometrical concepts.



Peter Salera A bowl of spinach, an orange, and two, slices of bread. Interested in renunciation and excavation, Salera's project is comprised of gathered materials



Laura Kung Fragment of Home from Meditations on the In-between; domestic wool & hemp blend, cochineal, turmeric, calendula. This woven warp painting uses natural dyes that reinterpret a traditional Chinese carpet



Olivia Koval Koval develops textile compositions of naturally-dyed fabrics and hand-weaves. Inspired by quilting, landscape, and natural color, Koval uses natural materials to create landscapes



Tess Murdoch Colourscape VII. Handweaves, silks, Romanian hemp twill, leather, cottons, wool roving and felt, digital print on cotton. Touch is everything for this collection of compositions made from raw or donated materials.



Yi Hsuan Sung Two Nests, a pendant lamp from "Organically FAULT", agar, mica powder. Bioplastic and food waste are transformed into a sustainable textile system that creates dynamic light



Pallavi Padukone Handwoven recycled silk and velvet scented was beads dyed with cutch, turmeric. Incorporating fragrance through natural scent-coated and dyed yarn in handweaving and embroidery



Sanya Sharma Moment - A study in space and time. A study of intersectionality across time, Sharma weaves together natural fibers



Terumi Saito A wearable sculpture inspired by peacock's conveys messages of rebirth and creation. Power of hand making pulls from traditional dyeing and weaving techniques used in Peru and Guatemala



Liuxu Luo Wandering Home is a textile installation inspired by the elderly wanderers from Finnish folk tales. Beginning with watercolor then evolving to include laser-cut flower shapes, silk, ribbon



Sagarika Sundaram Indigenous sheep wool sourced from the Himalayas. an alternate society of blind oracles who foretell the future



Zhuldyz Tazhimbetova A variety of knitting practices are used to depict the change in landscape around the Aral Sea. Tazhimbetova tells stories about the shifts of depleting natural resources and landscapes



Lauren Bailey Creature Comfort: linen, banana fiber, pineapple fiber, and recycled silk yarn dyed with madder root. Previously used textiles are whimsically reimaged as home objects and masks



Anubha Sood The textiles in Between Salt and Water include fresh seaweed that has been woven, then crystallized. Water and seagrass—collected from three different oceans—are dyed, woven, and softened



Samyukta Easwaran Onian Society from Metamorphosis. Two traditional Indian garments for men and women, the dhoti and sari



Jacob Olmedo Wool, silk, glass, Swarovski crystal, hydroponic textile. Using nature as a metaphor of privilege during the ongoing climate crisis

WWD


FASHION / FASHIONSCOOPS

First MFA Textiles Graduates at Parsons Are Multidisciplinary, Ready for New Challenges In and Out of Fashion

While the new-to-the-workforce candidates could work in fashion, they also have the skills to work in other industries.

By [Rosemary Fettelberg](#) on July 6, 2020



 Jeremy Ripley created this textile on a rented loom that he reassembled in the basement of a building. Courtesy Photo

Three years after embarking on the MFA Textile program at The New School's Parsons School of Design, the inaugural graduates were not about to let the pandemic lockdown dampen their imaginative ideas.

Each of the 16 graduates have created textiles that intersect craft, technology and sustainability. "I'm so proud and I'm so sad. I'm incredibly impressed by their attitude and endurance. And the way they handled COVID-19 was so positive and so mature. They were also strong," said Li Edelkoort, who envisioned the MFA Textiles program in 2015.

It launched three years later under the leadership of program director Preeti Gopinath. After stay-at-home mandates required students to exit the classroom, Edelkoort kept up contact online. "They were all in their own houses and apartments with dogs and husbands and boyfriends and roommates — often in very small spaces. They knew how to adapt to the new circumstances in very funny ways," she said. "It was very emotional to speak to them. I was in awe."

Jeremy Ripley, for example, needed an enormous piece of textile to design a sculptural piece so he rented a loom in New York, managed to rebuild it in the basement of a building and later installed the finished product in a dance studio in Jersey City. Using Tencel, wood dowels and rope, he turned a flat texture into a living form that was inspired by mathematical and geometrical concepts. The textiles aim to create new interactions with acoustics, the color spectrum and electromagnetics.

Another student converted her dinner table into a loom, making a length of fabric from silk sari scraps. After the pandemic wiped away the prospect of any end-of-year presentations, one soon-to-be graduate opted to create an amazing film. "Suddenly, it becomes you and your work so the the video is a documentary of the work instead of an exhibition. They have learned a lot of extra skills but they managed to come through it with flying colors," Edelkoort said. "They are really educated for this future

after corona. They can be independent, they will be able to cooperate. There will be many different ways that they are able to make money and to make work...they will not be dependent on regular old fashion jobs. They are ready for the new challenges."

The graduates have been trained to work in nonfashion sectors as well. Should they choose to work in fashion, they will bring a new voice, according to Edelkoort who added, "It really starts from the aesthetic, the new usages, the new fibers, the new research. It is much more interesting than textiles have been before."

While the current job market is not going to be easy for anyone, Edelkoort described the graduates as "very entrepreneurial. They were given made-to-measure courses so they have developed their own vision and problematics. So they are very well-armed, emphatic. They have done work with industries. They have done personal work and group work," she said.

From her standpoint, it is almost the revival of the period of arts and crafts in terms of the beauty and the social aspects and inclusivity. "There are positive reasons to rejoice even if that sounds bizarre nowadays," Edelkoort said.

BUSINESS OF HOME

INDUSTRY INSIDER | SEP 17, 2019



The exhibition of the Obeetee rugs that Parsons students designed. Courtesy of Obeetee

When The New School's Parsons School of Design launched a two-year MFA program dedicated to textiles last fall, the faculty was keen to have a partnership with a brand that would allow its students to fully explore both the present and future of the medium. The school struck up a deal with Obeetee, a luxury hand-woven rug company, that would give students the opportunity to experience every facet of the rug making process—from meeting the weavers in India to interacting with customers in the brand's New York showroom.

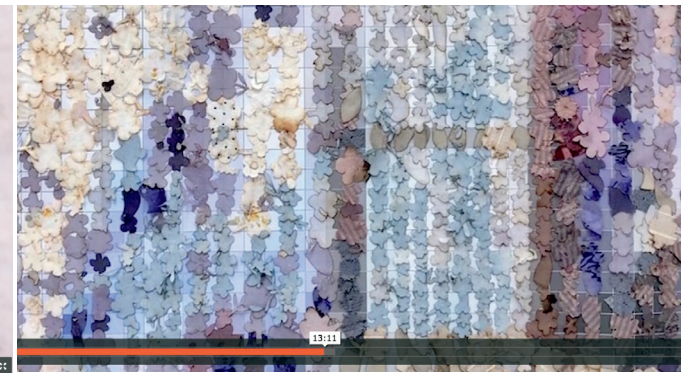
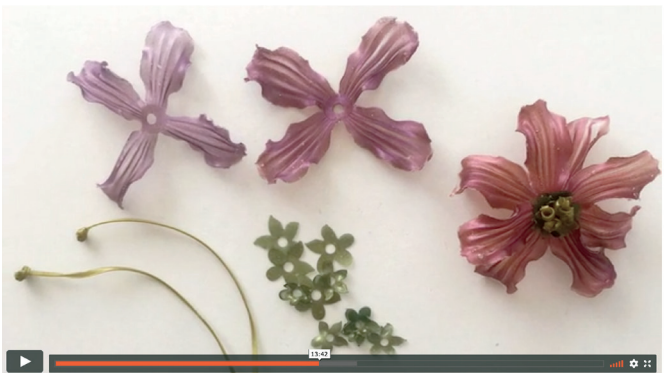
"Through our partnership with Obeetee, students in the MFA Textiles program were able to work with one of the world's leading rug brands, where they gained invaluable experience," **Burak Cukmak**, dean of fashion at Parsons, tells Business of Home. "They were challenged to help Obeetee innovate their products, move into new markets, define the role of a rug in daily life, and think about how to push the boundaries of tradition through new methods centered around sustainability and more."

According to Obeetee's chairman, **Rudra Chatterjee**, the partnership was a chance for the brand to share what they do and to benefit from the academic perspective craft that Parsons students could bring. "We want to know how we can work better with our weavers," Chatterjee says. "This is a consequential industry. Outside the science and art of this, which the students already know, the social impact is important for them to see."

The MFA students were able to study with Obeetee's weavers in Mirzapur, India for a month and have since been designing several innovative rug prototypes with sustainability and luxury in mind. Their creations are on display at Obeetee's Chelsea showroom through the end of the month. "This exhibition is a culmination of their work over the past few months and shows how many new concepts they've brought to this craft," says Chatterjee. "This is a product that's been around for a century, but these students incorporated modern technology and even ideas about ergonomics to their designs."

INTERIOR DESIGN®

Editor in Chief Cindy Allen hosts *Design Giants* featuring [Lidewij Edelkoort](#).





NYTM

NEW YORK TEXTILE MONTH

TALENT!

TALENT! is an ongoing exhibition series featuring graduate works from the world's leading art and design schools. Following the success of the three first editions in Eindhoven and Milan (2008-09),

Edited by Philip Fimanno
September 2019

Olivia Koval considers how we retain a connection with nature as the world becomes increasingly urbanized. **Jeremy Ripley** How do we use textiles to build identities? **Zhuldyz Tazhimvetova** explores the boundaries between artisanal handcrafted knit design and mass produced knitted products **Liuxu Luo** used laser cutting and a sewing machine to make lace- like, three-dimensional pattern draping from two-dimensional embroidery. **Anubha Sood** has been building a body of work that explores the natural world through textiles. **Pallavi Padukone** integrated materials and aroma together through interactive textiles. **Yi Hsuan Sung** cooks yarns from agar and food waste in her kitchen to create completely compostable textile designs. **Sanya Sharma** uses wevaing to evoke an ethereal emotion by transporting one's mind to a different reality. **Tess Murdoch** sought to create a personal inventory of domesticity within her body. **Laura Kung** works in between design and art using textiles as a medium and introspective tool. **Terumi Saito** unites energy and joy by giving life to space, objects, and creatures. **Samyukta Easwaran** aims to represent anxiety visually. **Sagarika Sundaram** creates felted textile explosions over the human limits on migration. **Peter Salera** created a speculative art object examining electronic waste as a textile material. **Lauren Bailey** a mobile and adaptable structure that aims to cradle its user in a soft shell of comfort and security.

SENSING THE FUTURE: Computer cables knit into **textiles**, embroideries made with fragrant plants and an onion-dyed collection are among the inventive ideas brought to life by the New School's MFA Textiles students.

The New School's dean of Hybrid Studies Li Edelkoort started scripting the programs and designing the curriculum four years ago. The first 16 students from China, Japan, India, Kazakhstan and the U.S. embarked on the two-year program last fall and 18 more are lined up. Most are not just making **textiles**, preferring to do textiles plus something else like biotech research materials that appears to be macramé or lace.

Their imaginative creations are on view this weekend at two campus buildings — one at 2 West 13th Street and another across on Fifth Avenue. The students will be on hand for the two-day public viewing to explain what they are doing.

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"In a way, they are hybrids as designers. Somebody is cooking fibers and textiles. Somebody is working with fragrance. Somebody is a textile farmer who is growing nature and so on," Edelkoort said. "It's very enlightening to see they reach out to other domains to include that in the textile making. This generation is going to be more than 100 years old and they naturally feel that they cannot concentrate on only one domain. From the beginning, they feel they want to be trained in different areas. This will only increase in the future. This is why education needs to prepare students for this much more complex future where you introduce other worlds into your worlds."

To that end, one student has incorporated a musical performance into her work. Another one made beautiful embroideries of the fragrant and unruly-looking plant vetiver that a spritz of water diffuses. "It's very interesting because fragrance cannot be photographed. Therefore, fragrance has problems today because you cannot Instagram it. Certainly by doing these works it becomes visual. I see that as a very important way to look at fragrance in the future.

A student collected digital debris such as discarded connection cables to create an enormous vortex-looking piece made of rubber, plastic and metal that he knitted with very heavy needles. Collected from Parsons' leftovers and waste centers, the floor piece serves as "an accusation of what we are doing with our connectivity," Edelkoort said. "When tech started, it needed to look like tech. In the period of [Pierre] Cardin, it needed to look like going to the moon. Each period in culture has a moment of innovation. Then the first generation handling the innovation gives it a futuristic form. Once it becomes just a tool like everything else. It starts to look like general culture. It doesn't have to be edgy and cold."

Tech-Based Textiles, Fragrant Embroidery and Other Imaginative Ideas on View at the New School

Onion-dyed textiles and a vortex-looking design made from discarded computer cables are some of the creations made by MFA Textile students at the New School.

By **Rosemary Feitelberg** on May 17, 2019



Knitted discarded computer cables on display at the New School's MFA Textiles' Open Studios.

Parsons And Lidewij Edelkoort On The Value Of Imperfection And Why Textiles Matter

At Parsons School of Design, students in the MFA program which begins accepting applications in 2018, will aim to bring the best of both worlds together, to dissolve the boundaries between technology and craft. In the two-year, 60-credit full-time program, they will learn and honor traditional skills and knowledge and marry them with chemistry and biology along with engineering and AI to create textiles that work beyond fashion such as set design, construction, architecture, automotive design, computing, and health. Students will develop a critical understanding of textiles' sociocultural, environmental, and emotional dimensions throughout human history while looking to the future supported every year by a growing community of textile artists brought together for New York Textile Month.

You can find out more information about the Parsons School of Design MFA in Textiles and the 2019 NY Textile Month [here](#). Lidewij Edelkoort has garnered the respect of the institutions and companies around the world for decades by fearlessly speaking her mind with an unerring ability to predict the future. See more at [Trend Tablet](#).



Awards Grants Scholarships 2018 - 2020

Awards

Biodesign Challenge (BDC), 2020, New York, NY
Tishman Award for Excellence in Climate, Environmental Justice and Sustainability, 2020, New York, NY
“CAMP: Notes on Fashion” The Costume Institute Graduate Fashion Design Competition, 2019, New York, NY
The Nippon Club and Consulate General of Japan Exhibition “FORWARD TOGETHER!”, 2020, New York, NY
International Talent Support Artwork by Swatch Art Peace Hotel, 2020, Shanghai, China
Techstyle for Social Good by Mills Fabrica and Hong Kong Polytechnic University, 2020, Hong Kong, China
Role Models Student Contest | Healthy Materials Lab 2019, New York, NY
Role Models Student Contest | Healthy Materials Lab 2020, New York, NY
WindowsWear Student Award Finalist, 2020, New York, NY
Dorothy Waxman Textile Design Prize, 2020, New York, NY
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Judges Recognition Award, Uyen Tran
Winner, Sagarika Sundaram
Winner, Yi Hsuan Sung
Winner, Terumi Saito
Finalist, Lui Luixo
Grand Prize, Uyen Tran
Honorable Mention, Yi Hsuan Sung
Second Prize, Jacob Olmedo
Finalist, Pallavi Padukone
Finalist, Yi Hsuan Sung
Finalist, Jacob Olmedo
Finalist, Peter Salera
Finalist, Peter Salera
Finalist, Pallavi Padukone
Finalist, Pallavi Padukone
Finalist, Sagarika Sundaram
Finalist, Yi Hsuan Sung
Finalist, Jacob Olmedo
Finalist, Lui Luixo

Grants

Michael Kalil Endowment Grant for Smart Design, 2020, New York, NY
The New School Graduate Fund, 2019, New York, NY
The New School Parsons Graduate Student Research Fund Award, 2010, New York, NY
The New School Parsons Graduate Student Research Fund Award, 2019, New York, NY
The New School Parsons Graduate Student Research Fund Award, 2019, New York, NY
Parsons The Design for Aging Fund, 2020, New York, NY

Receipient, Sagarika Sundaram
Receipient, Sagarika Sundaram
Receipient, Sagarika Sundaram
Receipient, Yi Hsuan Sung
Receipient, Terumi Saito
Recipient, Liuxu Luo

Scholarships

CFDA Design Scholar K11 Innovation Award
Tishman Scholarship for Sustainable Design, 2019, New York, NY
Council of Fashion Designers of America Liz Claiborne Graduate Scholar, 2018, New York, NY
NEWH Interior Design scholarship sponsored by P/Kaufmann, 2019, New York, NY
Ministry of Education Grant For Study Abroad, 2019, Taipei, Taiwan
The New School President's Scholarship, 2020-2018, New York, NY

Receipient, Uyen Tran
Receipient, Jacob Olmedo
Receipient, Jacob Olmedo
Receipient, Yi Hsuan Sung
Receipient, Yi Hsuan Sung
Receipient, Sagarika Sundaram