

Annex A: Singapore Stories 2022 Finalist Collections

Jamela Law, *Mindful Intersections: Charting the Course Less Travelled*

Titled 'Mindful Intersections: Charting the Course Less Travelled', my collection is sparked by the Astrolabe under the ACM collection.

An important scientific instrument introduced by the Islamic community, the Astrolabe measures the position of heavenly bodies to illuminate many things, such as one's position, latitude, and time. It is a map of three-dimensional heavens projected stereographically onto a palm-sized image; a minute representation of things far larger. This useful device helped kickstart a heritage of trade and in Singapore and established it as a centre of a global trading network.

Such artistic devices highlight the travel-yearning and curiosity of past peoples. Similarly, at Baëlf, our experiments with technologies and techniques characterises our search for knowledge and enlightenment through art, science, and the spiritual.

I am intrigued by the idea of the micro and macrocosm, that within the human body lies a meta-physical map of the universe. I explore how we may use the intriguing line-play of these maps to encapsulate the human body, to convey larger-than-life visual spectacles, literal embodiments of the cosmos and forged pathways seen from humanity's viewpoint.

This collection represents our tiny efforts to make sense of the intangible, of things far larger than our physical selves.

About the designer:

Jamela Law, 30, is the creative Director of Baëlf Design. Jamela is a neurodiverse artist, designer, activist based in Singapore and Hong Kong. She holds a BA (Hons) degree from LASALLE College of the Arts Singapore, accredited by Goldsmiths, University of London. Her graduation collection was named Best Collection by her school's Dean of Design. Jamela was notably a finalist in the 2018 Graduate Programme, organised by the Council of Fashion Designer in America (CFDA+) and second runner up in the 2018 International Foundation of Fashion Technology Institutes competition. Jamela has since dedicated herself to Baëlf Design as Creative Director, a company she established with her partner Lionel Wong since late 2017.

As a first-generation immigrant, Jamela's works often revolve around themes of culture, social justice, and environment. As a nomad and traveller, she is an outsider in a myriad of ways. Jamela hopes to redefine social constructs through her practice by casting light on issues related to diversity and connectivity, as well as cultivating empathy and emotional resilience into her adoptive communities. Her retrospective, reflective outputs are often executed with state-of-the-art technology and self-developed computational processes.

Hu Ruixian, Xi 囍

喜 (xi) by itself is the meaning of happiness and joy, while 囍 is the coming together of a couple, and a common symbol used in Chinese weddings to signify the double happiness and joy the momentous event brings.

As a multicultural and multiracial country, Singapore is proudly made up of Chinese,

Malays, Indians and Eurasians—with each ethnic group honouring their unique heritage and traditions. The coming together of different races and cultures for a common good is akin to the union of a couple with different backgrounds—and that is something we want to create with our collection “Xi 囍”

Inspired by the various racial groups in Singapore, this collection features different fabrics such as Saree, Songket and Chinese Brocade, with elements signature to each racial and cultural group. To enhance each look, beading and tassels are added to symbolise the intertwined cultures.

By ourselves, we can do good. But with others, we can do so much greater. With “Xi 囍”, we want to emphasise on the marriage of different cultures and ethnicities, the understanding of one another, and the beginning of intertwined lives that builds the foundation of a special union.

About the designer:

Hu Ruixian, 28, is the founder of Studio HHFZ.

With eight years of experience since graduating from Temasek Polytechnic with Diploma in Fashion Design and Merchandising in 2014 - Ruixian is now a dressmaker, fashion designer and founder of Studio HHFZ. Fuelled by passion, the homegrown brand, Studio HHFZ specializes in bespoke occasion wear such as cheongsams and gown. Paying close attention to craft and workmanship, all of the pieces are handmade within the humble studio located at Waterloo Centre. Also featured in Straits Times, Her World Magazine and not too long ago on a Mediacorp Channel 8 programme, Tuesday Report - showcasing some of the works exhibited in Asian Civilization Museum and Temasek Polytechnic. Occasionally delving into the theatre scene and have since worked on costume design for several of Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan Arts and Cultural troupe’s productions performed at Victoria Theatre and Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre. Most recently for Toy Factory’s Masters of Comedy in 2021 and Kwa Geok Choo in 2022.

Felicia Pang, *Blooming Dreams*

Delicate lace, vibrant appliqués, and elegant silhouettes; Blooming Dreams evokes a sense of tactile whimsy and wearability for the contemporary girl. Inspired by flora and fauna scattered in Singapore’s cultural landscape, each garment pays tribute to the beauty of the old and new through a journey of dreams.

About the designer:

Felicia Pang, 23, is the Creative Director of the Singaporean label, Feel Archives, and a Fashion Design graduate from Temasek Polytechnic. She hopes to create beauty with clothing that will encourage authentic connections amongst individuals.

Growing up as a compassionate person yet pigeonholed as being “too emotional” has led her on a journey of transformation. Initially viewing it as a flaw, she now cherishes the ability to feel fully and vividly. She hopes to create clothing that will encourage others to likewise embrace their feelings and self-expression.

Claudia Poh, *It’s Only In Water I Can Move Freely*

Together with Paralympian swimmer Yip Pin Xiu, Werable aims to bring accessible adaptive styles to the runway.

Zippers can be a real challenge for people who experience reduced dexterity. Pin Xiu shared that whenever she had events that ran late, her mom would wait up to help her unzip her dresses. Werable innovated a range of wrap dresses and swapped out finicky fasteners for magnets.

Werable also noticed that tops and clothing tend to bunch in the front of the torso when Pin Xiu was seated. Vents and cut outs help alleviate any bunching. We layered separates and coordinated high waisted bottoms to match.

The capsule explores the importance of water and the freedom it enables. Steel blues, soft warm greys, ivory and pops of cornflower blue were curated for the colour palette. Pleated waves are lined with Tencel lyocell.

About the designer:

Claudia Poh, 26, is a designer and the founder of Werable.

The Parsons School of Design and Central Saint Martins alumna founded Werable with Potato Productions, a transformative business that seeks innovative new ways to construct clothes, making fashion accessible, dignified and easy to wear. Their latest launch titled We Are Able, features a collection of clothing that can be worn with one hand. She's a guest speaker at Harvard Law School, Parsons School of Design New York, London College of Fashion and NTU, with a focus on inclusive design and design thinking.

Kavita Thulasidas, *Heritage Reinterpreted and Beyond*

Heritage Reinterpreted and Beyond showcases the amalgamation of cultures in Singapore. It is a proud tribute to our Asian roots while looking forward to our global aspirations for the future. It echoes the Singaporean confidence in our future, that when our Lion roars, the world listens.

The collection incorporates various indigenous craftsmanship from the South Asian regions such as Parsi embroidery that travelled from China to India, and textiles such as woven silk brocades with over 400 years of Asian history.

These are highly intricate embroidery techniques, our culture in fashion, that are passed from one generation to the next but are fast disappearing. This collection seeks to remember our culture while inspiring a contemporary perspective to these Asian fashion practices, as we view art through fashion.

About the designer:

Having been brought up under the canopies of a family in the fashion industry, marrying various fabrics with creative weaves and embroidery came naturally to Kavita. She started her fashion career by taking over her family's garment business in 1999 with the vision of inspiring appreciation for our heritage through fashion. Through her creative direction and eye for weaving together Singapore's diverse cultures, the business soon became lauded as a uniquely Singaporean brand.

Since then, Kavita has won numerous awards, the most recent being the Women Entrepreneur Awards 2017. Recognising that high-profile powerful Singaporean women like to dress in modern style with an ethnic twist that reflect their cultural background,

Kavita launched her own fashion label, Asian Woman, in 2004. Through its success, Kavita was a finalist of a national start-up competition that was featured on Channel 5. She has also been featured on several other TV channels and print media, such as Channel News Asia and The Straits Times, as one of Singapore's most successful designers. She has dressed high-profile clientele such as ministers for state events and even foreign royalty. With the vision of bringing Singaporean culture and fashion to the rest of the world, she created her own line and launched her first independent store at the One Galle Face mall in Colombo.

In addition to her accomplishments as a designer and entrepreneur, Kavita strives to use her platform in fashion and business to give back to society. On top of partnering with local charity organisations such as the Shirin Fozdar Foundation, she has turned her annual fashion shows into fundraising initiatives to build and refurbish schools and orphanages in Sri Lanka.