

aito





# A?

Aalto University  
School of Arts, Design  
and Architecture

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**Holistic thinking, creativity and innovation at the core of Fashion, Clothing and Textile Design**

As part of Aalto University's Fashion, Clothing and Textile Design programme, students can choose their personal paths within fashion, clothing, textiles, strategic colour and material design during their studies. The diverse areas of the field are linked to business, science and technology in the rich environment of the university.

Since 2012 Aalto University students have occupied more final spots at the renowned fashion Festival de Hyères than any other design school. In the year 2017 Aalto fashion education was ranked high by the Business of Fashion website. The Bachelor's programme in Fashion was placed 5th and the Master's programme received a ranking of 14th in this global evaluation.

Aalto University's alumni can be found working at many of the industry's leading fashion houses, brands, mills and institutions. They are praised for original research and contemporary view on fashion and textiles with a profound knowledge in pattern cutting, garment construction and a multitude of textile techniques.



# Pirjo Hirvonen



Professor Pirjo Hirvonen is a tireless advocate for ambitious fashion practices. During the fifteen years she has worked in Aalto University, she has never lost sight of her goal to develop the programme into a platform for researching the space between academic fields and culture in order to create more avant-garde approaches. Additionally, Hirvonen is a visiting Professor at Donghua University in Shanghai and an Adjunct Professor in Shanghai International College of Fashion Innovation in China.



**“There are so many big issues: ecological responsibility, ethical questions, global competitiveness, all of which we need to take into account.”**

What are the main ingredients to the success of the current fashion programme?

I see there are three main ingredients. The first is the extraordinarily high level of creativity of the students. Without unique insight, one can't make meaningful things happen. The second is how we've managed to integrate the ways of working, the networks and demands of the international field of fashion into our curriculum. It is vital to understand that we are working on a global level and it's there the possibilities lie. Lastly, and very importantly, our vibrant, insightful, passionate and diverse team of teachers.

What makes you especially proud?

The fact that we've been able to show off what we do to the world. We've achieved something that one wouldn't assume possible for a small country like ours. In a way, our programme has been a pilot example of the way we could all work in a more international, or, global context. This makes me proud and has been our number one priority.

The recent *Business of Fashion* ranking has been an official acknowledgement of this.

Indeed. We are in amazing company. All the other top five schools have been the best for ages. But what we've done goes to show that with determined work anything can be achieved.

What are the content and goals of the Master's Programme in Fashion?

In the Master's we hope to combine a variety of points of view to the students' fashion know-how. We are thinking about

tomorrow, working for the future. We want to encourage applying the key value of our University—which is combining aspects from different fields—in order to renew not only the realm of fashion, but what our future might look like.

For example, technology plays an important role for us in Finland. It is vital in the way fashion will come to function, providing new alternatives and methods. Material development is also a huge field, which has already provided us with fantastic intriguing results and showed us ways in which future clothing will be even more closely perceived as second skin and provide us with a lot of information.

There are so many big issues: ecological responsibility, ethical questions, global competitiveness, all of which we need to take into account. When we do, it will bring true success. In the Master's we need to open our individual ways of seeing the world to these huge and pressing issues.

Is the Master's fitting for someone with a lot of questions?

Our programme makes so many things possible. This is truly unique for our school. It is a place for talented, mature and forward-looking students. We encourage them to focus on the operative and strategic aspects of their work and to develop their vision. At the same time, we have amazing facilities so there's an opportunity to combine high-tech and craftsmanship.

# Tuomas Laitinen

Last year marked the tenth anniversary of lecturer Tuomas Laitinen's teaching career. His impactful role in developing Finnish fashion talent is due to a profound understanding of the wants and needs of the current international fashion industry, where he is an active contributor. Additionally, he works as the Fashion Director of SSW Magazine and as consultant for various industry clients.

Portrait by Chris Vidal Tenomaa  
Interview by Elina Peltonen





**“My colleagues and I have wanted to create an atmosphere of experimentation, which encourages people to make mistakes.”**

What has been the most influential transformation in the fashion education programme?

Our goal has been to develop a programme that consists of vast courses and lays an emphasis on creating with your hands, visual research and building an identity as a designer. My colleagues and I have wanted to create an atmosphere of experimentation, which encourages people to make mistakes. It really is the only way to learn. We also want the students to learn how to communicate about their work and bring it into the broader context of what’s happening elsewhere. We’ve worked really hard on generating an authentic culture of discussion. However, developing the programme always remains a work in progress in a way.

How does the Aalto University facilitate this development?

In addition to unparalleled studios and financial support, a thriving programme requires freedom and an open state of mind. It demands that both the staff and the students are encouraged to grow and support each other mutually. It’s a curious combination of freedom and discipline.

Much of the programme’s reputation has stemmed from Näytös, the graduation fashion show. Tell us more about it.

Näytös takes place each year on the third week of May. The show we have now is highly curated. Anyone who wants to be part of it is followed from the first sketch to the day of the actual show, gruesomely. We work with the students one on one and follow every single step while they work on their collections.

Things can get crazy a few days before the show. Final line-ups are discussed with external evaluators and what we end up with is quite a professional show and the more attention it gets the more perfect you want it to be. Last year the show was covered by the international press including i-D, Dazed and Vogue Italia. Headhunters from LVMH and Kering also attended alongside the international guest speakers we invite for the fashion talk which takes place the day before the show. This means the student’s collections are seen by renowned industry professionals, which sets high standards for all of us.

What is the meaning of the show for the school and for the students?

The show is a celebration of the student’s hard work and creativity. Even if it’s a very stressful day for them and for everybody working on it, there is a lot of joy as well. On a more practical level, the show serves as a walking portfolio for the students and offers the possibility to present their work to industry professionals. It gives them a sense of what it feels like to work in the fashion industry.

For the school, the show is very significant because it brings a lot of media coverage allowing us to show everybody what we do. However, I always like to emphasize that the true substance of the show are the clothes. The music and set and everything else is just there to highlight the collections the students have spent countless nights working on. When you see what the students actually do, it’s an insane amount of work and not just artistically but also at a very high product–design level.

# Maria Korkeila





**“I love the fact that every accident and mistake also has the potential of becoming a new idea.”**



How did you become interested in fashion?

I was drawing incessantly pretty much from the moment I could hold a pencil in my hand. Already as a kid I would pay particular attention to clothes when I was drawing. I used to borrow my sister's "how to" guide on drawing dresses, and practice for hours on end. I was lucky enough to have parents who supported my creative interests, which I continued to immerse myself in as I was growing up. Drawing clothes wasn't my only creative outlet though, I was trying everything from music, to art classes, theatre and dance, but I remember having this sudden epiphany at the age of eleven that someone out there was actually designing clothes for a living, and that thought kind of got stuck in the back of my head.

Why did you want to apply to study at Aalto?

I tend to act on intuition, so I think most of my choices in life prior to studying at Aalto were based on gut feeling rather than on any solid reasoning or facts. Throughout high school this idea of going to study fashion had started to develop in my mind. I was pretty clueless back then, but all I knew was that Aalto sounded like the place of my dreams. I applied three times to Aalto before I was accepted, meanwhile I became a scuba dive master and studied at another school in Finland.

Can you recall your first day of school?

I was nervous on the first day of school, of course, but I already knew quite a few of my classmates beforehand, two of who I was sharing a flat with, which made it easier. I remember people coming up to us saying, "You must be the new fashion students, since you're all dressed in black."

Was it freeing studying in a country with such young fashion history where there's not a heavy burden of the past?

Having spent time abroad in different fashion capitals, I think the fact that Finland is a bit

of an outsider in the fashion industry actually contributes quite a lot to the success the department has had in recent years. The near non-existence of a fashion scene in Helsinki means our environment isn't over-saturated with fashion and everything related to it. This gives us quite literally a different perspective on fashion, which in turn translates to work that stands out. In Helsinki, compared to other cities, I think you see more original people, who don't follow or care about fashion, or what is 'cool', but they have their own distinct styles. This is something I've only come to realise after leaving and coming back. It's quite refreshing and intriguing.

What different aspects of student life did you enjoy the most?

Every part of the process has its own charm but I would say my favourite thing is doing research: both in terms of thematic research for collections as well as research in terms of developing shapes, maquettes and materials. When doing research you kind of go into this zone where your mind is just buzzing with all the new information, ideas and visual stimuli coming in, and that's a feeling that I love. Working hands-on can be challenging, and for that reason also rewarding, but I love the fact that every accident and mistake also has the potential of becoming a new idea.

How beneficial is it for a young designer or graduating student to be recognised internationally by renowned members of the fashion industry?

I would definitely say it's essential in the industry to have good connections. At Aalto we are lucky to have faculty and mentors who have great contacts within the industry and provide students with help in terms of job searching and so on. Competitions like Hyères also serve as great platforms in building these kind of networks, which are crucial in finding jobs, for example.

@mariakorkeila

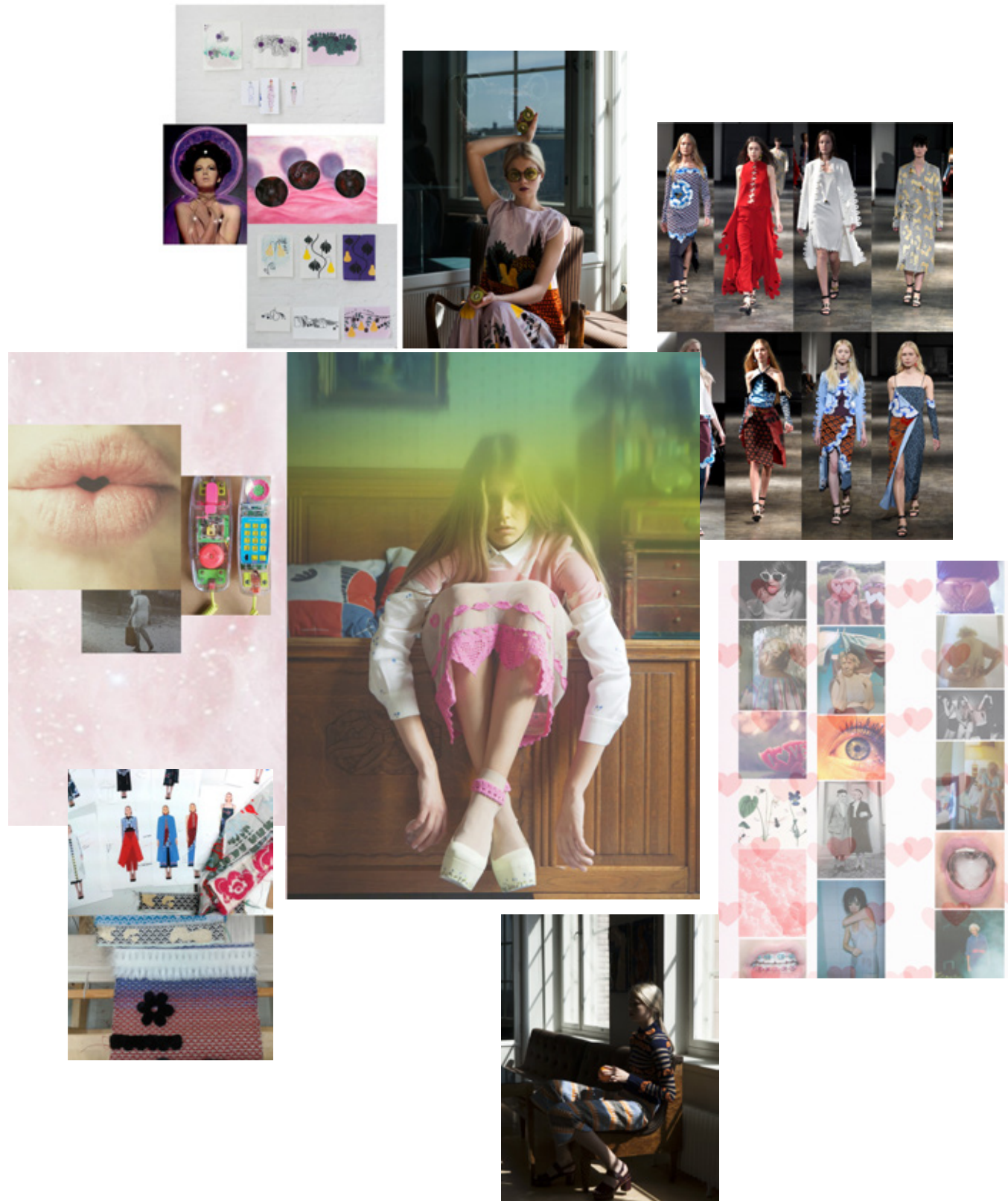


# Ilona Hackenberg





**“Connections and networking are important, but at the end of the day there is no substitute for working hard and staying motivated.”**



How did you become interested in fashion?  
What were your early memories?

I have always had an interest in textiles and clothing but growing up I never thought I'd make a career out of it. I was interested in illustrating and arts and even studied it for a while after high school. Soon however I realised that being an artist wasn't the right career choice for me. While I was thinking about the next step on my career path, I started to learn to become a seamstress. While working with clothing again I rediscovered my old interest in fashion and decided to apply to study fashion design at Aalto.

Why did you want to apply to study at Aalto?

Aalto is Finland's premier design university and the fashion design programme is held in high regard. I felt no need to go study abroad even for my Master's since I knew that by being motivated and independent and by using the amazing studios I could learn as much at Aalto as anywhere else.

Can you recall your first day of school?

The year I started at Aalto, they had sent two different starting dates for the semester. I hadn't noticed the updated one, so my first day of University I wasn't actually there. I was hiding from rain in a small vintage book shop on Yrjönkatu when our study coordinator told me I should be at school. The next day I started my bachelor and met all my lecturers and fellow students.

Was it freeing studying in a country with such young fashion history where there's not a heavy burden of the past?

I think young finish designers have a fresh and open approach to fashion. I find it interesting that many of the students studying at Aalto create collections that are colourful, wild and visually very far from the traditional minimalistic and pure aesthetic of Finnish design.

How was your experience like transitioning from University to the work place?

The transition was smooth for me. A fellow student helped me get in contact with Lanvin and to get my first internship there. My boss from Lanvin moved to Alexander McQueen and took me with him. I am still working there and advancing steadily in my career.

How beneficial is it for a young designer or graduating student to be recognised internationally by renowned members of the fashion industry?

Connections and networking are important, but at the end of the day there is no substitute for working hard and staying motivated.

@ilona.hackenberg



# Elina Määttänen





“It’s a great sensation when you are able to surprise yourself with the outcome of your work.”



How did you become interested in fashion?  
What were your early memories?

In the beginning I was interested in models, not really fashion. My earliest obsession is Kate Moss in the CK Be ad. I still wear that perfume sometimes. My mother's sisters sew and my grandmother was a dressmaker, which ironically I did not find out until much later. So maybe the interest in fashion is genetic. I made clothes for myself since a very early age and my mother used to make clothes for me and my younger sister. I didn't have great ambitions about what I wanted to be in life, certainly not being a fashion designer. I sort of drifted into it.

Can you recall your first day of school?

I remember the first school day very vaguely. I think I was wearing hair extensions. I forgot my knit in the lecture room and afterwards I had a job interview that I did not get. I don't remember anything about the fellow students from that day, but we did get along well shortly after. When I got the acceptance letter I cried and paid more attention to the traffic when I was cycling. I didn't want to die now that things were finally lining up for me!

What was studying in Helsinki like, where the fashion scene is quite small?

I've had and still have little to no interest in the fashion scene. But after you spend all your time in school with your new friends for life, maybe you sort of become the scene. Fashion students are hard workers, so the student life isn't as wild as in other disciplines. Also, I'm quite boring.

Was it freeing studying in a country with such young fashion history where there's not a heavy burden of the past?

It always felt free. I'm not sure if it was because the lack of a cultural burden, but it felt free regardless. Compared to some other countries, the Aalto students have a broad

view on interpreting age, sexuality and gender roles, which is a great sign of maturity already as students. The same outlook is very evident when you compare how people dress in Helsinki compared to say, Paris. People are freer to be individuals.

Can you share some personal stories about working on Näytös?

On the day of Näytös you realise that summer has arrived as it creeps up on you while you are working. When I was working on my MA graduation collection, I had a small and very demanding kitten at home. I used to bring her to school with me during weekends to keep her entertained so she would let me sleep at night. My collection was very fringing and tassel-y and I took comfort in thinking that if I'd fail miserably I could at least make a career in cat toys.

What different aspects of student life did you enjoy the most?

I enjoyed the research, both garment and picture research as well as academic research. In my distant future, I hope to return to research to get a doctorate. I also really enjoy the actual making of the garment. It's a great sensation when you are able to surprise yourself with the outcome of your work.

What fun memories do you have from Hyères?

There was a lot of waiting. The concept of Hyères is that you rush to wait. I was ridiculously nervous the whole time. You are allowed to bring one assistant. It's best to take your best friend to take the edge off the nervousness. There were some fabulous parties, but I'm notoriously bad at working with a hangover, so I was quite well behaved. It wasn't me who vomited in the taxi.

@virve\_elina



# Maiija Mero





**“I love finding new details in fashion history or cool things from different subcultures. Research is the most important part of my process.”**



How did you become interested in fashion?  
What were your early memories?

I have always been interested in visual things. When I was two years old I got an amazing pink satin ruffle princess dress from my uncle who bought it abroad. It was something that I was supposed to wear only on special occasions but I wanted to have it on all the time until I literally grew out of it when I was 6. My mom also never told me what clothes I should wear. I was completely free to put on what I wanted. Once I remember when drawing with my friends I drew a whole paper full of 70s style high heels while other kids drew whatever typical funny faces and flowers.

Why did you want to apply to study at Aalto?

I studied design at the University of Applied Sciences where I learned lots of technical skills and the basics of fashion. After that I wanted to deepen my knowledge of fashion. I wanted to understand the international high fashion that I had seen only in the magazines. Who does it and how and where? I had heard of the high level of teaching in Aalto Fashion department. At that time Aalto was also a lot in the media cause of the first international successes, like with Hyères Festival finalists.

What was your first day of school like?

It was exciting of course. Actually my really good friend also got into Aalto the same year so I was lucky not to be there alone. I remember watching others coming in the classroom. I tried to find familiar faces from the entrance exams. It was funny how well I remembered all the faces.

What is your favourite memory from your time at Aalto?

My friends! I so miss those times. Making collections and having a table next to your best school mate's and sharing all the joys and griefs together. So far those times have been both the best and the most challenging in my life.

Was it freeing studying in a country with such young fashion history where there's not a heavy burden of the past?

Yeah you could say so. I don't even think about my work from that aspect. In school I felt free to do the aesthetic that I wanted to. In Aalto it was really important to somehow get a more personal point of view across. They really underlined the importance of the inspiration and research behind every work.

Can you share some personal stories about working on Näytös?

We were all tired as hell. The experience was somehow unreal. All the hard work culminated on that day. Everybody was stressed out and relaxed and happy at the same time. We could finally see all the looks at the same time on the models in the line-up backstage. It was so rewarding.

What different aspects of student life did you enjoy the most?

Research is something that I enjoy very much. Especially when you find an interesting topic. I love finding new details in fashion history or cool things from different subcultures. Research is the most important part of my process. I also like hands-on things like draping or creating surfaces on the fabric. Fashion is after all always 3D, not just nice illustrations. I try to do concrete shapes and details as much as I can. I enjoy working in the studios. Thank god we have such good facilities at Aalto.

What fun memories do you have from winning the LVMH award?

It was unreal. The driver picked me up from home in the morning and took me to the Louis Vuitton Foundation and there I was with all the key people from the LVMH. All the creative directors, legends like Karl Lagerfeld, Riccardo Tisci, Nicolas Ghesquière. And of course being at the same party with Rihanna. That made all my friends so jealous.



# Satu Rauhamäki





**“The DIY mindset was overall really strong in my family, and I’ve only recently realised how much it must have affected my working methods and aesthetics.”**



How did you become interested in fashion?  
What were your early memories?

My first connections to clothes and fashion come from childhood and hand crafts, like my big sister teaching me to stitch and knit. It always felt very natural to make something with my hands. The DIY mindset was overall really strong in my family, and I’ve only recently realised how much it must have affected my working methods and aesthetics. I was not so aware of fashion in my youth. I didn’t follow any brands, but I was fascinated by clothing both technically and as a way of self-expression. I started to make patterns out of newspaper and tape and I was stitching clothes for myself when I was about eleven years old. It was so rewarding to make something wearable.

Can you recall your first day of school?

It’s a common joke now to compare the first day of being a fashion student, being all well dressed and having a trendy haircut, and how it evolves into wearing the same outfit for a week and forgetting to shower. So I think I had a trendy haircut and I was as excited like I was starting elementary school plus also super happy that I had gotten in after applying three times.

What is your favourite memory from your time at Aalto?

Probably the best memories are the most stressful moments, staying up till very late at the studios with my classmates. Having emotions shift uncontrollably from crying to laughter and seeing the sun go down and come up again while sitting behind the sewing machine.

Was it freeing to study in a country that has a very young fashion history and culture?

I never actually thought about it that way. If your aesthetic is big colourful prints, then your work will inevitably be compared to Marimekko, but since there aren’t a lot of other legendary brands like that, then yes, maybe it is freeing in a way. I think Finland is slowly starting to take fashion seriously and it’s ex-

citing to be involved in it right now.  
What is the atmosphere like at Aalto?

I always felt that the atmosphere is really supportive. I guess students feel a connection to each other because the industry is so small. If some of the students are chosen as finalists at the the Hyères Festival, for example, then others would offer their help. I think that’s so important, but not obvious at all. Of course there is a lot of stress and the competition is normal, but in the end you find support from those who understand the challenges and the load of the work.

How was your experience like transitioning from University to the work place?

Compared to studying at school, working for a brand is so much more about communicating ideas to everyone around you, constantly. At school it’s easy to get self-absorbed, which is important for that time, but it can get a bit too comfortable and then it can be challenging to step out into the “real world”. As a student you also might think it’s the most important thing to find a brand that perfectly fits your aesthetic, but in the end it might be a lot more about finding a team that fits your personality well. I tend to process things privately without sharing them to others and it’s difficult to let go of those habits. At school you get used to working fourteen hours a day, pushing yourself to the limits with every task, and then at work you go home after nine hours. It’s like, really?

How did you feel about receiving Wallpaper’s Graduate Directory mention?

It was cool to have my work presented in that context because I didn’t see the potential of my collection speaking to the target group of a magazine like Wallpaper. They made a really nice connection to a more sophisticated style. That’s the exciting thing, when your personal work becomes public, someone might interpret it differently.

@totaleclipsegirl

**Näy töös**

**21:00**

**May 17th 2017**

**Hel sinki**





Above Julia Trofimova, MA Womenswear Graduation Collection  
Photographed by Guillaume Roujas  
Left page Sini-Pilvi Kiilunen, BA Menswear Graduation Collection  
Photographed by Eeva Suutari





Above Tina Verbic, MA Womenswear Graduation Collection  
Photographed by Diana Luganski

Left page Anna Isoniemi, BA Womenswear Graduation Collection  
Photographed by Eeva Suutari





Above Lucille Pialot, MA Womenswear Graduation Collection  
Photographed by Guillaume Roujas  
Right page Fanni Lyytikäinen and Christine Valtonen, BA Menswear Collection  
Photographed by Eeva Suutari





Above Hanna Herva, Ville Pöhlö and Milka Seppänen, BA Menswear Collection  
Photographed by Diana Luganski  
Right page Antonina Sedakova, MA Menswear Graduation Collection  
Photographed by Eeva Suutari







Above Rolf Ekroth, MA Menswear Collection  
Photographed by Guillaume Roujas

Left page Taneli Ukura, BA Menswear Graduation Collection  
Photographed by Diana Luganski





Above Janette Friis, BA Womenswear Graduation Collection  
Photographed by Eeva Suutari

Left page Anna Semi, Eetu Kempainen and Jarno Kettunen, BA Menswear Collection  
Photographed by Diana Luganski





Above Sini Saavala, BA Womenswear Graduation Collection  
Photographed Guillaume Roujas  
Left page On the left: Ellen Rajala, BA Menswear Graduation Collection  
On the right: Ida-Sofia Tuomisto, MA Womenswear Graduation Collection





Above Rikka Buri, MA Womenswear Graduation Collection  
Photographed by Diana Luganski  
Right page Maria Ahti, BA Menswear Graduation Collection  
Photographed by Diana Luganski







Above Linda Kokkonen, BA Womenswear Graduation Collection  
Photographed by Eeva Suutari

Right page Arita Varzinska, MA Womenswear Graduation Collection  
Photographed by Sanna Saastamoinen-Barrois



**Naytos 17**

**Responsible Tutor:** Tuomas Laitinen

**Collections Coordinator:** Lutz Huelle

**Producer:** Susse Roos

**Music:** Matti Ahopelto

**Make-Up:** Jenny Jansson, Anu Levy, Janne Suono, Emilie Tuuminen, Emma Jokelainen, Keiku Borgström, Heidi Viskari, Satu Sirelius, Hanna Vähäpassi, Eevis Liedes, Eeva-Maria Häkkinen, Meliina Savela, Laura Krutsin, Tytti Tiainen

**Hair:** Mikko Vainio, Sanni Syd, Jaana Hellsten, Kinoia Pönni, Kasper Vähä-Ojala, Sami Järvinen  
Student Production Team: Emma Saarnio, Emilia Kuurila, Heidi Karjalainen, Rolf Ekroth, Luyi Liu, Anna Sarasoja, Pauliina Salmela, Maria Metso, Maria Korkeila, Valter Tornberg, Sandra Wirtanen, Havina Jäntti

**Casting:** Emma Saarnio

**Street Casting:** Jasmin Islamović

**Models:** Brand, Paparazzi, Nisch Management, Tomorrow is Another Day, Sage



# Portf olios





Above Rolf Ekroth  
MA Menswear Collection



Above Janette Friis  
BA Womenswear Graduation Collection



Above Janette Friis  
BA Womenswear Graduation Collection

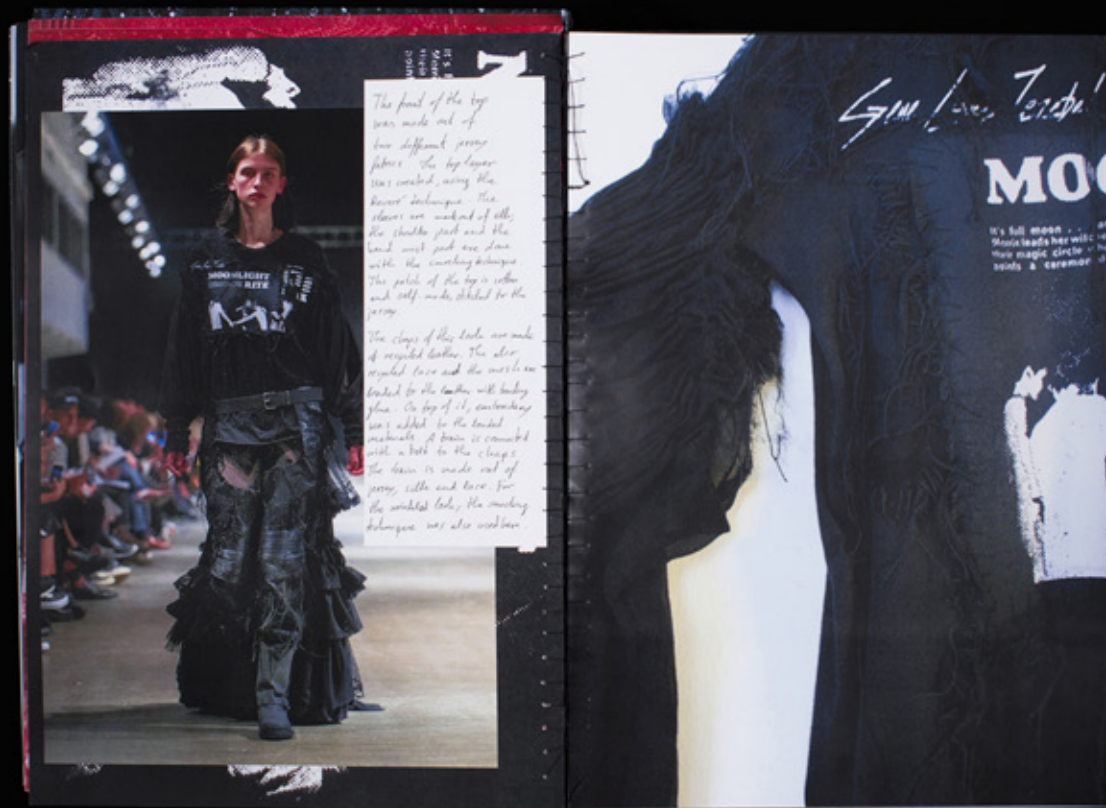




Above

Ellen Rajala  
BA Menswear Graduation Collection





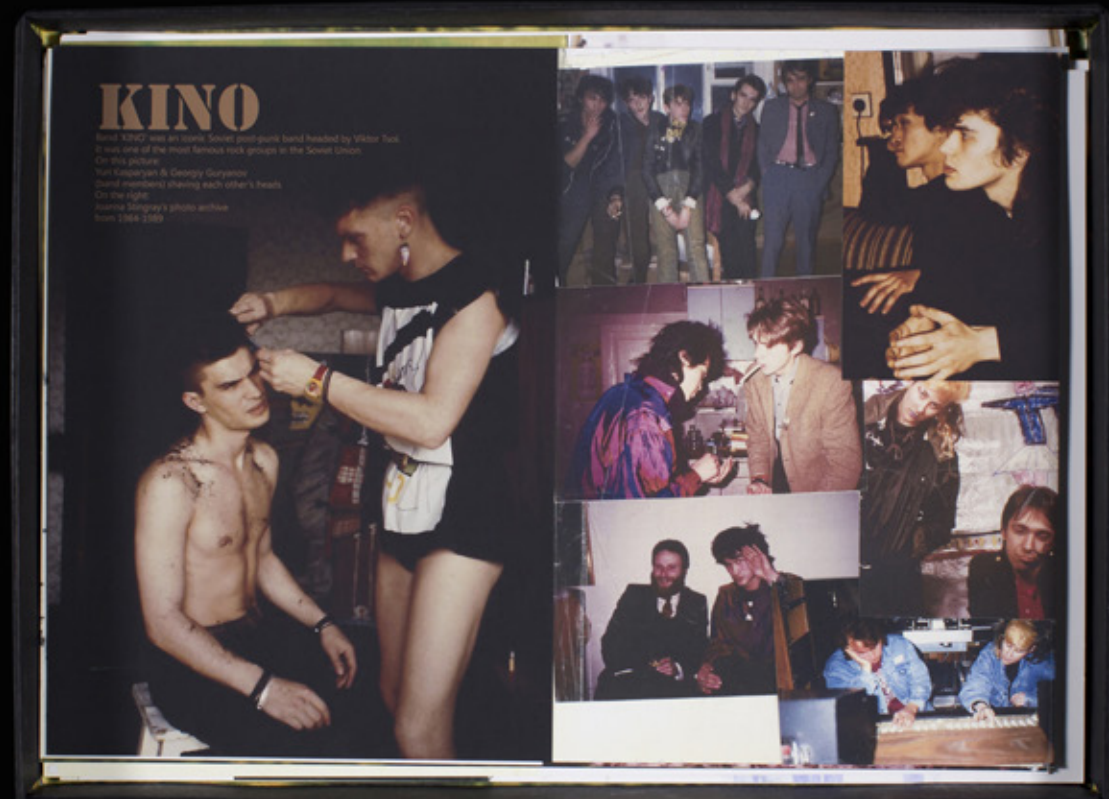
Above Linda Kokkonen  
BA Womenswear Graduation Collection  
Below Jussi-Pekka Ojala and Santeri Mortti Valtanen  
BA Menswear Graduation Collection

Above Taneli Ukura  
BA Menswear Graduation Collection  
Below Ida-sofia Tuomisto  
MA Womenswear Graduation Collection









Above Antonina Sedakova  
MA Menswear Graduation Collection

Above Julia Trofimova  
MA Womenswear Graduation Collection



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Back cover Ellen Rajala, BA Menswear Graduation Collection  
Photographed by Eeva Suutari  
Above Photographed by Sanna Saastamoinen-Barrois





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