



Slim's students redefine Filipino fashion in annual exhibit

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For this year's annual exhibit of student works, Slim's students explored what could make them truly Filipino designers—and tapped into everything from history, culture and literature to ordinary things like local food and flowers.

While historic Philippine garments, tribal costumes and religion were a natural resource, most of the creations were not literal interpretations, and instead presented a fresh take on traditional influences. Many students took iconic everyday objects, incorporating them into the contemporary garments on display. Ivan Ruiz's red carpet gown featured satin subtly woven like palaspas. Rum Corvera's fashion design sketch was inspired by stained glass windows.

Some went as far as creating statement pieces verging on conceptual art. Justin Nalangan's piece transformed Maria Clara into a kawaii character, bringing to mind the works of Jeff Koons and Andy Warhol. Roald Sena made a bold hand-painted statement about colonial mentality on a flamboyant gown. Others used nonvisual sources of inspiration, like Marc Carcellar's "Noli Me Tangere" pages on silk organza.



The garments boasted of superior construction; many featured extremely complex techniques. This has come to be expected from Slim's students, given that the school is widely known for in-depth technical training. Every garment on display was designed, cut and sewn by the student. In their pattern-making course, each student produces roughly 20 full garments over an average of 12 months.


For the first time, innovative barong created by students from Slim's new bespoke tailoring course were also on view. Many students chose to interpret the barong in a more contemporary way.

With Asean integration just around the corner, the school's directors have been encouraging students to get to know their own culture, and to develop a distinctive identity that could potentially set them apart from designers of other nations.

In support of this thrust, Mark Higgins is co-authoring a book with acclaimed scenographer and costume designer Gino Gonzales on the evolution of the terno, as evidenced through photographs taken from 1860 to 1960, from various private collections. Gonzales has been wanting to do this book for some time, and it was finally made possible with support from Bench, who will publish the book.

This will be the first "fashion book" about the terno, and it is designed to be very informative and factual, but in a manner that will appeal to a young, impatient audience.



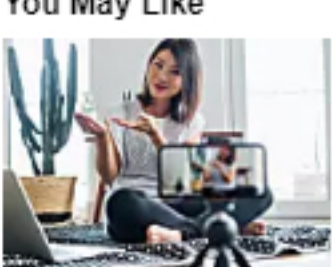
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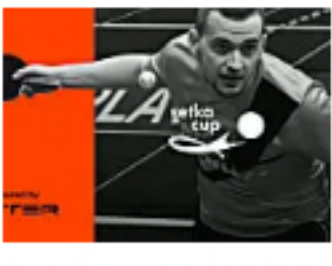
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