

# Architecture Student Has DESIGNS FOR FASHION

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Zain Islam-Hashmi has created his niche as an architect of fashion who creates clothing and wardrobe ensembles with materials like resin, cement and plexiglass.

Islam-Hashmi is serving as head designer for Carnegie Mellon University's annual Lunar Gala fashion show and graduates this spring with a bachelor's degree in architecture and minors in intelligent environments and digital fabrication. He has taken advantage of opportunities at CMU and around the world and shaped them into a unique education.



Photo Credit: Aisha Ham/Visual Editor

The Lunar Gala showcases CMU fashion designers annually each year. In the show, teams of students craft original and unique apparel lines that combine technology and unexpected materials to create wearable fashion.

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— Zain Islam-Hashmi, student and Lunar Gala head designer

“I really liked the fact that CMU was so interdisciplinary ... and there were possibilities to do things that weren't offered yet. When I compared it to other universities, I felt like there were more options at CMU,” he said.

For the third year, Islam-Hashmi will present a fashion line at the Lunar

Gala that relies heavily on materials more commonly found in architecture and the construction industry. His teammates on the line, known as Alluminare, are Mariana Alberola Rezza and Stephanie Smid, both second-year master's students in the School of Architecture. Islam-Hashmi said architecture and fashion are not mutually exclusive.

“We have an understanding of people in architecture. Fashion is a way to deepen that interaction,” said Islam-Hashmi, a past chapter president of the American Institute of Architecture Students. “There's a lot of techniques and material in architecture that could have a lot of relation and applicabil-

ity in fashion. Merging the two helps bridge the two worlds, where each learns from the other.”

Last spring, some of his fashion designs used dirt, concrete, sand and paper, and he was recognized as a winner at Pittsburgh's Ecolution Fashion Show. The show challenged designers to incorporate recycled and reused materials.

## GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

Islam-Hashmi's summers have been spent around the world.

After hearing Emmanuelle Moureaux speak at CMU in 2015, Islam-Hashmi applied and was accepted for an internship at Moureaux's architecture and



Zain Islam-Hashmi adjusts a top during a rehearsal for Lunar Gala.

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design firm in Tokyo. He also spent time at Arcop Associates in Karachi, Pakistan, and worked at Domaine de Boisbuchet summer workshops in Les-sac, France.

In Ghana, he volunteered to help design and build a clinic in Yeboahkrom. This experience of working with Cast Earth construction techniques served as a basis for his senior thesis.

He’s now looking at Pittsburgh to understand how the city’s physical urban environment has changed over time.

Islam-Hashmi said CMU’s Undergraduate Research Office has been a key part of his success.

“They’ve challenged my writing and how I articulate what I’m thinking. They’ve given me a bigger, broader understanding of what research is and what it can be. There are so many diverse and interesting things happening at Carnegie Mellon,” he said.

Richelle Bernazzoli, assistant director of undergraduate research and national fellowships in the Undergraduate Research Office, helped guide Islam-Hashmi’s work.

“Undergraduates like Zain are making exciting connections between disparate fields to solve pressing real-world problems and to add to the artistic context,” Bernazzoli said. “The creativity and intellectual adventurousness we witness in students like Zain truly capture the spirit of CMU: interdisciplinarity, innovation and passion.”

Islam-Hashmi has used Small Undergraduate Research Grants and Summer Research Fellowships to help support his Lunar Gala fashion line and a new map of Pittsburgh. The map, which he will build with fellow architecture student Gargi Lagvankar, is expected to be housed in a stairwell of the College of Fine Arts Building.

Architecture Professor Jeremy Ficca has been impressed by Islam-Hashmi, with whom he has worked as a studio instructor, thesis advisor and director of the Design Fabrication Laboratory.

“I’m quite impressed with Zain’s resourcefulness. He has leveraged a wide range of opportunities on campus and across the globe to further his interests, knowledge and skills,” Ficca said.

Carnegie Mellon’s School of Architecture aims to prepare students to be interdisciplinary design thinkers in diverse global contexts. Ficca said the school provides opportunities for students to apply what they are learning in their research into practice.

“Architecture can serve as a lens to understand our increasingly complex world. The range of topics our students address through their design work is a testament to the breadth of issues and conditions related to architecture,” Ficca said.