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S'pore could offer bright future for 3D-printed fashion, say design experts

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SINGAPORE: Creating wearable fashion pieces using 3D printers is already a reality today.

And design experts said Singapore could be a big market for such a concept in the future.

Nanyang Technological University (NTU) on Tuesday showcased some fashion pieces at its first 3D printing festival.

The items were not

created using the traditional needle and thread, but 3D printers.

And they could soon be a common sight in Singapore.

Professor Galina Mihaleva from NTU's School of Art, Design and Media said: "I think 3D printed fashion has a big future in Singapore, because it's very new, it's very exciting. Singaporeans, from my observation, I can tell that they're very interested, very curious. And I think it would take time to introduce that, but definitely, there will be followers to wear 3D printings."

The so-called "ink" in 3D printers are materials which can range from plastic to clay and even sugar.

The printer sets out the materials layer by layer, based on 3D images linked to the printer.

In conjunction with the festival, NTU planned two global competitions: recreating the traditional abacus, and making fashion pieces with 3D printers.

Singapore's entries for the fashion category all came from students from NTU. And it is a tie up between the School of Art, Design and Media and the School of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering students, who took some three months to produce the items.

There were also overseas entries from Australia and the US.

Elena Low, top prize winner from XYZ Workshop in Australia, said: "As technology develops and more and more materials, especially the flexibility, improve, it will become more comfortable for the wearer. I'm sure everybody will latch on to 3D wearables."

Low Xin Yee, model for the Commendation Prize winning team, said: "It's quite difficult to walk (in the 3D fashion pieces) but once you get used to it, it's very comfortable. There're a lot of different pieces attached together so you have to be careful not to spoil the dress."