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Inspiration in Russian city

THE University of Northumbria will be dancing to the tune of Stravinsky after two of its students made the final of the Russian-inspired Fashion Awareness Direct Graduate Fashion Competition – A tale of two cities: from St Petersburg to Moscow.

Students Lucy Bashton and Tessa Birch were both praised by the judges for "the standard of conceptual innovation in combining the 'peasant' with the 'aristocratic,'" and are now being touted as the UK's next big things in design.

Both students will be attending a star-studded event that will be overseen by an expert judging panel, including Russian Fashion Week General Producer, Alexander Shumsky.

The competition is supported by Edge, a new charity that aims to change attitudes towards practical learning, and a cash prize of £2,000 is being made available to the winners, as well as work placements with leading fashion houses such as Tata Naka and Selfridges.

Andy Powell, chief executive of Edge, said: "The standard of entries to this year's competition have been first class and the finalists have demonstrated a level of creativity, and intelligence that makes Edge proud to be the sponsor. The awards send out a clear message that tomorrow's talent should get out of the classroom and get inspired by life."

Finalists will present their collections on Tuesday, March 15, at 7pm.



NEXT BIG THING – student Lucy Bashton at work on her inspired designs



GOING ON SHOW – Tessa Birch and Lucy Bashton are in the final of the competition