

WHERE FASHION AND MEDIA MEET

The University of Michigan Stephen M. Ross School of Business hosted the annual Michigan Fashion Media Summit on March 24, 2023. About 500 UM students and fashion lovers met at the Robertson Auditorium and the Winter Garden to discuss the intersection between media, retail and fashion and Michigan's connection to fashion. The event consisted of various keynote speakers, networking opportunities and expert panels.

The event kicked off with a morning keynote with Steven Kolb, Chief Executive Officer of the Council of Fashion Designers of America, who spoke about the history of the fashion industry and answered questions about CFDA. Kolb spoke about how the fashion in New York City compares to other fashion capitals like Paris, Milan and London.

"We're Americans, so we were very about selling stuff," Kolb said. "In Europe, commerce is almost like a dirty word, but what is the purpose of having a business unless you are selling things and you're making money? We don't shy away from that. So, sometimes we're considered too commercial, but in fact, we're very creative, but we're just very tapped into the commercial importance."

The fashion and media summit also included a panel titled "Made In Detroit: Fashion in the Motor City," which included experts like Aki Choklat, fashion design chair for the College of Creative Studies, Greg Schwartz, chief operating officer and cofounder of StockX, Jonathan West, senior manager of product innovation at Carhartt, and Awenate Cobbina, CEO of Bedrock Manufacturing Company. The industry experts answered questions from the audience and discussed what makes Detroit fashion unique.

"Detroit, to me, even not being from the city, has always been about stylishness [and] has been about trends," Cobbina said. "It's been about holding your own in a way that's different than most other areas in the country."

Art & Design Senior Claire Schwartz, MFMS vice president of marketing, and LSA Senior Julia Goldish, MFMS chief operating officer, helped plan the media summit. Schwartz and Goldish said the planning process includes about 70 people on a Student Planning Team, which meets several hours a week starting in August 2022. Schwartz said the summit originally started five years ago with the intention of merging business and fashion at UM.

"The Michigan Fashion Media Summit actually started

about five years ago, where a group of four students really wanted to create a summit because there was no link between fashion and the corporate side of fashion," Schwartz said. "There's no fashion track at Ross. So, this was basically created for those students who wanted to have an opportunity to meet and hear from industry leaders."

Goldish further explained the purpose behind the summit.

"I feel like there's so much to learn about the fashion industry, whether it be related to culture, whether it be related to technical things, and I think people have yet to learn that on the UM campus," Goldish said. "We've started for sure. We've cracked the toe, and I think as MFMS becomes more prominent on campus, we will continue to make our mark."



SPOTLIGHT ON STYLE

Another student poses for the camera against a backdrop, embracing their unique style.



ELEGANCE IN FOCUS

A student poses gracefully, showcasing their impeccable sense of fashion at the summit.

CLOTHING AS CANVAS

Two mannequins display stylish clothing, a visual reflection of the creative artistry being celebrated at the summit.

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— AWENATE COBBINA

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