

Pick up groceries and watch a fashion show

Outsider, a festival which combines fashion and art, will take place at Big Box HyperMart in Jurong East next month

May Seah

Fashion shows have been held in many interesting locations, but this may be the first time models will be strutting their stuff at a Jurong supermarket.

Outsider, a new festival that aims to combine fashion and art, will take place from Oct 20 to 22 at Big Box HyperMart in Jurong East.

One-third of the hypermart's space will be set aside for the event and the exhibits and live art will be placed along the aisles.

Festival director Zachary Goh, 37, hopes that by holding the event at a supermarket, visitors will get the message that "fashion and art should be part and parcel of our lifestyle".

The supermarket, he says, is a place everyone can access and relate to, which is the message the festival hopes to convey about fashion and art.

Outsider is organised by creative agency Untitled Collective, which Mr Goh founded. The festival, he says, is Untitled Collective's "self-funded passion project" in collaboration with "partners who contributed with resources and products".

Partners include modelling agency Basic Models Management and lifestyle brands Converse, Akira and Castilla.

The event will feature 10 fashion labels from Singapore and the region, including Singapore's

Voltaire.Visions, Hong Kong's Methodology and Makin Jan Ma, and China's Lanneret, as well as 10 home-grown artists including yarn and crochet artist Kelly Limerick, installation artist Sab Koh and multimedia artist Andrea Goh.

Forty-five works by this year's fashion graduates from the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts will also be on display in the Atrium from Oct 20 to 29.

Some exhibits will include collaborations between fashion designers and visual artists.

For instance, Chinese brand l=x will exhibit its nature-inspired collection against a backdrop of paper sculptures, also inspired by nature, by conceptual artist Melvin Ong.

And Singapore label Voltaire.Visions is collaborating with oil painter Simon Ng, who will paint portraits on its clothes.

Voltaire.Visions' designer Jireh Ng, 29, says: "We wanted to let more people learn about Voltaire.Visions and this collaborative collection with local artist Ng. This festival will help increase the visibility of our brand."

The inaugural Outsider festival was born out of a desire to bridge gaps – one between fashion and art and another between fashion and the regular consumer.

"We realised that there isn't a festival celebrating both fashion and art, which is strange as they are often seen together, influencing each other," Mr Goh says.

Secondly, he says, "fashion and art are both media reflecting pop culture. Yet, they are at times rather elitist in their delivery."

"Many fashion events are exclusive – if you can't secure an invitation or you are not in a certain clique of people, you wouldn't be able to attend. We wanted to do quite the opposite."



Home-grown fashion label Voltaire.Visions will collaborate with oil painter Simon Ng, who will paint portraits on its clothes. PHOTO: OUTSIDER

Comparing the local market with other global fashion cities such as Shanghai, he says there is "an obvious lack of a fun, inclusive festival that the greater consumer market can feel a part of".

Mr Goh hopes that the millennial generation, in particular, will be encouraged to better understand and build on their interest in fashion and art.

Designer Glori Tsui, 33, of five-year-old Hong Kong label Methodology, says: "We find that presenting our collection on a runway and in a trade show to audiences is great, but it cannot tell the full story of our collection and brand, as we always have a story or theme behind each collection."

"Fashion presentations and installations such as this are a new way for us to communicate our story to consumers."

Hong Kong label Makin Jan Ma's designer, 38-year-old Makin Ma, waxes philosophical about the significance of holding a fashion show at a supermarket, saying: "I think it is a bit ironic as it seems our artistic talent is selling out cheaply, but somehow, with fast fashion and all the art fairs taking place these days, maybe it is kind of true."

If there is enough support from the public and partners, Mr Goh aims for the festival to be a yearly event.

In addition, he shares, there are plans for pop-up capsule show-

cases of the festival in other cities in the region, such as Shanghai.

At least 2,000 visitors are expected during the three-day festival, which also includes free modelling and catwalk workshops organised by modelling agency Basic Models Management.

Admission is free, but visitors must register online at www.outsider.sg and obtain a QR code for entry.

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• The Outsider Fashion and Art festival will be held from Oct 20 to 22, 11am to 10pm, at Big Box HyperMart, 1 Venture Drive.