

# TEXTILE + DESIGN LAB

**Case Study Number:** 09/2021

**Project Title:** 'Tongue 'n' Cheek'

**Researcher:** Daniel Collins - B Design (Textile Design)

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**Project Period:** 2019

## **Project description:**

Tongue 'n' Cheek is a gender-neutral knitwear collection that was put together to break down established male stereotypes and question the idea of the 'ideal man' within a New Zealand context. Traditionally, the male gender has been presented according to two ideals characterised both physically and aesthetically. The standard safe and straight male or flamboyant, camp and 'out there' one. Furthermore, masculinity has a social construct of attributes and has traditionally been defined by the stereotypical 'ideal man'. This collection aims to reflect and celebrate alternative and diverse representations of masculinity within New Zealand.

Knitted textiles allow for expression through their ability to incorporate graphic elements as well as texture, scale and colour. Research into the current market reinforced that men currently have limited options for playful, graphic, off the rack knitwear. This collection was designed to challenge the culture of traditional masculinity in New Zealand through the development of a diverse and unique range of garments, which allow people an alternative to the either or choice of styling that men are continually offered, and provides more choice in the clothing that one can choose to express themselves through.

## **Background:**

The drive behind the collection emerged from reading of the shockingly high youth suicide rates in New Zealand, especially within the young male demographic. Bateman (2019) states that 'In the past decade, the number of suicides has risen 29 percent... the youth suicide rate is also up, particularly in the 15 - 19 age range, with 20 more deaths by

suicide than the year before'. 'I wanted to do something to raise awareness of this issue and provide a platform that was relevant and relatable for youth, and which would be viewed by a public audience' says Dan.

### **Process:**

The design process was a mix of hand drawings and digital sketches, which were programmed then knitted on the lab's Shima Seiki knitting machines. Using both WholeGarment® technology and plain knit for cut and sew clothing methods, the designer was able to code and create the textiles to put this collection together. The use of WholeGarment® knitting enabled seamless plain knit under garments to be made, whereas the SIG intarsia machine produced knitted panels to incorporate colour and graphics. The designer also knitted beanies on the lab's accessory machine to enhance the collection.

### **Project outcomes:**

The outcome achieved was a streetwear/ready to wear brand and a collection that highlighted the issues of toxic masculinity in New Zealand.

### **Value of Textile and Design Lab:**

The designer would not have been able to complete this project without the technical support and the resources of the Textile and Design Lab. The designer worked with the lab's Senior Technician, Gordon Fraser, to create the necessary programmes to be able to knit the various panels and garments. The team at the TDL provided key knowledge and support to enable the designer to create the complicated pieces. 'Gordon taught me a lot about knitting whilst doing my work at the TDL', says Dan. 'There is really no other place to start making your own knitwear with the resources and machinery that the lab has at its disposal', he adds.

Through acquiring this newfound knowledge and skills, Dan was offered an internship with a New Zealand Knitwear company before taking up a longer-term position with Fisher + Paykel Healthcare as a knit programmer, developing knitted masks for the company's sleep apnea range of products.

### **Publications:**

AUT Rookie Fashion Show 2019

### **Images:**







*Images courtesy of Dan Collings*