

# Digital printing

KNITWEAR DESIGNERS IN NEW ZEALAND ARE BEING OFFERED ACCESS TO THE SAME REVOLUTIONARY TECHNOLOGY THAT HAS BEEN CREDITED WITH TRANSFORMING THE EUROPEAN TEXTILES INDUSTRY.

BY PAOLA GHIRELLI

The Auckland-based Textile & Design Laboratory (TDL) has digital printing technology from Japanese manufacturer Shima Seiki capable of printing high-resolution images on knitwear without changing the original fabric handle.

The TDL is available to local designers and fashion and textiles companies to develop samples or small runs of knitwear or printed fabrics.

TDL manager Peter Heslop told *Apparel* there are significant advantages to the digital printing technology in relation to knitwear.

"Only one colour of yarn is required, small quantities of each printed design are both achievable and affordable and the designer can apply as much or as little colour in their design as they wish, without affecting the feel of the garment," he said.



A DIGITALLY PRINTED MOHAIR SINGLET CREATED BY DESIGNER SAMANTHA ERKKILA USING THE TECHNOLOGY OFFERED AT TDL.

Printing with reactive dyes means that the colour chemically bonds with all types of natural fibres, maintaining the softness of cotton, wool and luxury fibres alike.

"Digitally printed knitwear not only opens up a whole world of colourful opportunities, it is also the ideal vehicle from which to launch new collections for established and emerging knitwear designers," continued Heslop.



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