UAL Student Voices: Darsanaa

SPEAKERS
Victoria (Academic Support), Darsanaa

Victoria (Academic Support) 00:00
Hello, well today I'm going to be speaking to Dasanaa, who has just completed a study abroad programme at London College of Fashion. And I'm really keen to hear a bit about how she came to be here and her experiences of her time here. So, welcome the Darsanaa.

Darsanaa 00:18
Thank you.

Victoria 00:20
And maybe just tell us a bit about your story how did you come to be studying at UAL?

Darsanaa 00:25
So, where I live in India, it's like we are filled with cultures and we used to have more textiles, handloom fabrics etc. So, even my grandparents are used to have a textile business. So, it came to me now. So, I got my textiles in Bachelors and I thought I should take my textiling to the next level. So, I started to research for fashion and I got to know about UAL and I just applied and faced some interviews during my course and I just entered.

[00:58]
Yeah, in India I used to skate between my parents wherever I go, they will carry me. I need to go to school my father used to pick me up. So, I was like born with a diamond spoon. But once I reached here, like starting this really horrible, I do have language problem, food problem climate problem, everything was problem over. But my confidence goes back I want to complete my goals. After a few weeks you will be okay. You will be fine and you will enjoy ourselves, tell ourselves, we are we should and we can. But you should not just hear whatever they say if you have to Google it, learn it, learn about the country more, food, accommodation areas, metros etc. So, you have to learn everything. For example, India is really different in culture, including fashion, buildings, everything. Our houses will be like very big, it will be like colony but here it's like totally different. So, here everything is like apartment. It's very tall… everything. So, it's like more colourful in India here. They are like very neutral colours. So, you have to learn everything before coming. I mean, you can accommodate according to that.

Victoria 02:15
You did have a Bachelor's in textiles?

Darsanaa 02:19
My bachelor courses like four years course. It's consists of all arts like first two years I used to learn photography painting, portraits and something about textiles. And entering the third year I just divided

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into textiles and I started to weaving and my final project was about textiles and I did that my screen prints and weaving. After completing that I got fashion designing intensive course in Paris. So, I just completed that, it's like all about like sketching, drawing sketches etc. Again, now I entered into UAL in January, it's like a three-month course where we have options to choose our subjects. So, I chose draping and corsetry, start a fashion label. So, draping is all about like practical to drape a mannequin and bring that into the 3D forms, so I'm bringing 2D forms into 3D forms. Corsetry is all about like how to boning the corsetry channel etc. and start a fashion label is like …she taught everything to what we have to including business like what we have to see carefully. Something like that.

Victoria 03:33
What has learning those subjects in London at UAL, what does that give you?

Darsanaa 03:41
Yeah, like while comparing India, in India, like most them will be like 75 percentage theory and just 25 percentage will be practical. But over here, it's like 100% practical, so they teach me everything. So, I guess I'm confident that I can make a dress which is… can be like so difficult. For example, I used to sketch a lot, but I didn't make that sketch into 3d, but UAL taught me to make my 2D into 3D like as a complete dress in short in short time so yeah. And the business plan it's like it's was really fantastic it had like... it's not only for fashion it can be related to any fashion business applicable for accessories, shoe designs everything. Like I really feel very confident I really feel that okay, I can survive in fashion world, yeah, I can keep my fashion store. Yeah, of course I can create more designs. I know, I don't want anyone helped me with this so I’m now. As a single person. I can create my own career. Yeah, so that gives me more confidence.

[04:53]
Yeah, starting, I was really scared to attend this class. But after a few weeks after one week, one or two classes I get more confident, like, I can build my career in, among all the fashion it's like, I will be a fashion designer. I mean, I will be fashion designer and among all the fashion designers I will be, it's like, I will. Yeah.

Victoria 05:17
What do you need to overcome the challenges? What do you need for in the middle of the night when you wake up and you are really scared about the next day?

Darsanaa 05:25
Yeah, it's like you have to research if you have research, everything you will be confident because once I reach London, I was scared and I started crying. But if we look out our aim, if we look at our, like, I do write my notes.... I mean, my aims...in my notes. If I looked at I will get a confidence and my parents who are really encouraging me, my family, my parents, my sister and brother-in-law, the four of them are really encouraging me. And they are pushing me from my back to stay here. And if you look at your aim, you will automatically you will get more stronger and more confident.

[06:03]
Only one point it's like here you have to be very positive. Whatever they says it's not the point: you
know about you. So, you have to be confident that you should be here you can. If you can, you can and if you cannot, you cannot. So just think if you can, you can. When you wake up in the middle of night or something, you just sit calm, peacefully, have some coffee, then here are some sounds, then sleep, that's it. And you have to be really confident. Of course, it's not easy to be confident but it will come with you while you are going out. Explore a lot, talk to the people, it's like talking to those people in the classes gives you more confidence because even they are like you, even they will be facing everything. So, they will share their experience and talk to professor's so all this will make you more confident. You have to think that everything should go well everything is good. So be like positive, don't think about the negativity whoever whatever. Yeah.

Victoria 07:04
If somebody is feeling really lonely. What would you suggest to them?

Darsanaa 07:08
If they're lonely, you just go out, just go like you have a lot of places to see over here, just go to the park just relax see everywhere. Like most of people here are students, so everyone will be lonely. So you should not think only you are lonely or you can contact your friend you can go out again. So, you can talk to the people over here that's what I've done. I just used to talk to the people, neighbourhoods and you feel in the student accommodation, every student are really separate, right so you can go and talk with them but you have to take a first step, just go and talk with them. Just say hi hello. And they will start talking to you so… and mostly if you're in the college you will be having like most of the college work so you won't feel loneliness after two weeks. Because I know I got so much pressure but that's good for …we just came for studies like so. You won't feel after two weeks...yeah.

Victoria 08:08
Okay, so let's talk a little bit about your practice coming from India. So, many textiles, different textiles are made in India, what have you learnt being here in the West, in London? And how has that informed your practice?

Darsanaa 08:23
Okay, so like, I studied like textiles in India so it's like hand looms. In India if you see like major textiles will be like handloom textiles. My mom … not really my mom, most of the the 80s generation people who used to put sari all day like draping them. I used to wear sari when I was like childlike with my just small scarves. So, I really like they wear the sari, it's just a rectangle fabric. So, I got once I completed my schooling, I thought of going to the textile because of crush on saris. So, I really loved the fabric in India. I thought why we should take that as our project? So, I created some handloom fabrics with wooden frames and small weaving frames.

[09:18]
So, all that was like really inspiring me. I thought okay, we should go into the fashion. So, I just applied over this side and came. So, after coming here, I can see here textiles are really different. Here textiles are so thick, it's like really so thick and here they are giving respect to crochet and knitting. But in India, we are not used to have a crochet fabric we use as a decorative purpose. Not, as a dress. But here it's like totally different. Colours are like very neutral and pastel colours. So, it's like opposite to my India.
We really respect textiles. And we really celebrate textiles as a festival. So we really celebrate the textile days. But here, it's like totally different here like, yeah, blasers, T-shirts, denims etc.. So it's really the other side of the fabric. It's suitable for the climate over here. But mine fabric, it's like suitable climate of there. And we have only summers, we don’t have winters. Yeah.

Victoria 10:18
So, what do you take away? What has this experience added to your understanding of fashion?

Darsanaa 10:26
I really love Indian fashion a lot. So, I thought I should bring that up here. You should not forget what you are. That's the most important thing you should not forget, what you are. Whoever says, you should not forget where you're from and what you are, you should not change. If you have bad qualities, you can, but you no need to change your good quality for someone who just told you to change, so you should be who you are, you should not change yourself.

Victoria 10:56
That's a fantastic comment. And one final question is actually working with other people, because a lot of your projects I imagine are collaborations. Yeah. So, talk to me about the experience of collaborating.

Darsanaa 11:11
Two of my projects, it's like collaborating with someone, one is as a team and the other we both. So, it's like really nice experience because they're like different from me. And whatever they say about… from their country and home town, whatever I say it's like some world class thing. And it was really interesting to have a group meeting. Yeah, challenges like, we have to hear what they say, it may be far from our taste, it may not be in our field, or it may not be in our side. We can give a personal …personal experience about our project. But it's like it's in their hand, they can take it or cannot take it. So, we should be so slow and steady. And we should go in their way to getting that.

[12:02]
We should not think only me we need to think as a group. So, it's good for them also for us, finally, we will get graduated. Right? So, it's better to think like we, thinking of I, in group collaboration, because everyone are not from one place. Everyone are like different. So, whatever they say we have to hear them first. And then we have to say what we are thinking about them… I mean, only for project I'm not like personal… for project. Luckily, my group is like …they are like on time and they completed everything. And they encouraged me. We had Zoom meetings, everything was perfect. Yeah, I hope everyone will be too good in that matter because everyone needs their marked their graduation, everything, so I’m hoping everyone will be good.

Victoria 12:50
And finally, what you intending to do now?

Darsanaa 13:11
Yeah, I just now my major plans to get into the job or internships in like India or in UK. But my main
focus is to get into the UK because I need to get some more experience and internships. So, after that I thought of planning to start up a business in fashion. That's my main aim. So, I started to research for that, with the help of my business plan, start a fashion label. So, I started to research fabrics, sourcing like, where I get wholesale fabrics. So, that's my next step. Yeah, so yeah, I just want to apply for internships in all wherever I can. I need to create a good portfolio for that.

Victoria 13:38
Well, I wish you every success. I know you're flying back to India tomorrow. So, have a good journey and all the best. Thank you so much for taking part.

Darsanaa 13:47
Yeah, thank you. Thank you so much, yeah.