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Fleurish Runway Show Returns to Ijams Nature Center April 21

(KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE, 3/25/24) – The third annual Fleurish: A Sustainable Fashion Event (and Fundraiser) at Ijams Nature Center brings eco-friendly and sustainable Punk vs. Funk designs to the runway Sunday, April 21.

The fashion collaboration showcases how sustainability, conservation, and beauty intertwine with our lives and our future, and raises funds for the nonprofit nature center. Each year, local designers, hair stylists, and makeup artists join forces to create designs that incorporate sustainable materials and innovative recycling methods, and reuse what was once discarded.

The 2023 event built on the inaugural event in 2022, and featured sustainably sourced and upcycled fashions by 17 designers and 65+ models at the newly renovated pond on the Ijams Plaza.

This year's event will be bigger and bolder, bringing together 25 designers who have created more than 100 looks for dueling runways featuring live music from Brent Hyder and Duck Experience.

"Fleurish shows how the average consumer can make changes to their day-to-day lives while never losing sight of the beauty of nature and the human experience," Ijams Visitor Services Director Sarah Brobst said. "These looks showcase how vintage clothing, found objects, and natural elements can be combined to create fresh, stunning looks. It's the epitome of 'upcycling,' and this year's theme is going to take it over the top!"

Brobst said the audience is highly encouraged to come dressed in their favorite punk or funk fashions.

"Audience participation will make it even more fun, and they'll receive 'bonus points' if their outfits are thrifted or upcycled!" she added.

The cocktail hour from 6-7 p.m. will feature photo ops on the "green" carpet, education stations, and information about conservation efforts in the fashion realm, as well as a cash bar featuring punk and funk signature cocktails, and delicious bites from Coffee & Chocolate, Cafe 4, and The Kennedy. Following the fashion show, attendees will be able to meet the artists, designers, and models on the nature center's hillside. Brobst said there may be some surprise elements as well.

Tickets are \$30 and are available at Ijams.org/fleurish. All proceeds support Ijams Nature Center.

Fleurish: A Sustainable Fashion Show is sponsored by Clayton, Boston Beer Company, Kara Hudgens Photography, Sierra Nevada Brewing Company, Coffee & Chocolate, *Mountain Escapes*, and *HUSHH Magazine*. Sponsorships are still available.

Ijams Nature Center is a 318-acre nonprofit educational center in the heart of Knoxville and serves visitors of all ages, stages, and abilities. Its mission is to encourage stewardship of the natural world by providing an urban greenspace for people to learn about and enjoy the outdoors through engaging experiences. Ijams features 14 miles of hiking and mixed-use trails, a public access river dock, swimming, boating, biking, and so much more. Hundreds of world-class educational programs and events are coordinated and offered annually. Ijams' grounds and trails are open every day from 8:00 AM until dusk. For more information, visit ijams.org or call 865-577-4717.

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All Photos by ISABEL MEZZCAPPA PHOTOGRAPHY



