

THE ECOCHIC DESIGN AWARD 2013 FINALISTS ANNOUNCED

Eight emerging fashion designers from Asia and Europe to showcase minimal waste designs at Hong Kong Fashion Week in bid to win the chance to create sustainable collection for global retail

[16 September 2013] Today eight emerging fashion designers from Europe and Asia were announced as finalists of The EcoChic Design Award 2013, the first international sustainable fashion design competition uniting European and Asian emerging fashion designers with a shared vision of a lower-impact fashion industry and catalyzing sustainable fashion amongst sustainable stakeholders.

The EcoChic Design Award 2013, with major sponsorship from the HKSAR government, agency Create Hong Kong, educates and enables emerging designers to create mainstream clothing with minimal textile waste. With 30% of the fashion market's growth thought to come from China in the next five years¹, the competition's grand final taking place at HKTDC Hong Kong Fashion Week is a significant mark to raise awareness around sustainability in this booming market.

This year's high caliber of judges, representing design, manufacturing, retail and media industries, demonstrates the competition influence, with judges being Orsola de Castro, Co-founder of From Somewhere and Co-founder and Curator of Estethica, Johanna Ho, Fashion Designer, Margaret Kutt, Project Manager Sustainability of Esprit, Gloria Lam, Editor-in-Chief of ELLE Hong Kong and Anderson Lee, Vice Chairman of the Sustainable Fashion Business Consortium.

Judge, Anderson Lee said, *'I am honoured to engage in the innovative and eye-opening process of the future generations' sustainable fashion designs. Together, both judges and competitors are immersed in a learning and competitive environment, whilst traveling on the same journey to drive systematic change towards sustainability in the fashion industry.'*

Over the next two and a half months, all finalists are required to put their sustainable design concepts into reality with each making a six-piece sustainable collection to present at HKTDC Hong Kong Fashion Week in January 2014, where the winners will be announced. All finalists will come to Hong Kong to show their collections on the runway, battling it out for career changing prizes and participating in sustainable fashion workshops at The Redress Forum.

The EcoChic Design Award 2013 Finalists:

Alex Law (Hong Kong)
Xinyin Dai (Mainland China)
Tsung-Chin Chiang (Taiwan)
Phee Ng, Swee Yee (Singapore)

Catherine Hudson (UK)
Louise de Testa (France)
Karen Jessen (Germany)
Clémentine Sandner (UK) *wildcard finalist

¹ <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324874204578438343105661244.html>

These eight finalists, who are all designers or students with less than three years' industry experience, impressed the judges with their creative use of the sustainable design techniques zero-waste, up-cycling and reconstruction. They were amongst 20 semi-finalists who were shortlisted by seven separate local judging panels across the competition's newly expanded regions in Asia and Europe.

'The EcoChic Design Award is now in its fourth cycle and, as a judge for every cycle, I am delighted to witness first-hand the increase in knowledge of sustainable design and the high level of originality and skills from all the semi-finalists this year. Their innovation is quite an inspiration for the development of sustainable fashion in the global mainstream fashion market,' said Margaret Kutt, Project Manager Sustainability of Esprit and judge.

Another judge, who has also been with the competition from the onset, is Orsola de Castro, Co-founder of From Somewhere and Co-founder and Curator of Estethica.

'Watching The EcoChic Design Award grow to become an international platform has been amazing. The award have really helped a new generation of designers to see sustainability in a different light,' she said.

Prizes foster future careers in sustainable fashion design

The first prize winner will design a recycled textile collection for Esprit for their global retail, further demonstrating the competition's substantial influence on the fashion industry and retail sector.

The second prize winner will go on an educational trip to globally-leading sustainable jewelry brand John Hardy's design and production facilities in Bali, to experience first hand their design, production and business philosophies.

The special prize winner will create a show-stopping sustainable outfit for artist Sandy Lam, which will be featured in ELLE Hong Kong's 2014 green edition to 'redress' consumers' attitudes towards sustainable fashion.

-ENDS-

Statements from The EcoChic Design Award 2013 Finalists, along with design sketches can be found at <http://www.ecochicdesignaward.com/finalists/>

For images: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/xxj14tqjvtjt4gi/WqVtVeuQ7o>

Additional information on prizes and sponsors can be found at www.ecochicdesignaward.com

The EcoChic Design Award is supported by Create Hong Kong, Esprit, John Hardy, Miele, Vincent and Lily Woo Trust and Sandy Lam.

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About Redress (<http://www.redress.com.hk>)

Redress is an NGO with a mission to promote environmental sustainability in the fashion industry by reducing textile waste, pollution, water and energy consumption. They achieve this via educational sustainable fashion competitions, shows, exhibitions, seminars, research and by a recycled textile clothing standard. They collaborate with a wide range of stakeholders, including multiple fashion designers, textile and garment manufacturers, brands, schools and universities, multilateral organisations, governments, NGOs, financial institutions and media organisations.

About The EcoChic Design Award (<http://www.ecochicdesignaward.com>)

The EcoChic Design Award is a sustainable fashion design competition inspiring emerging fashion designers to create mainstream clothing with minimal waste. Designers are educated with the theory and techniques to enable them to create sustainable clothing via zero-waste, up-cycling and reconstruction. The competition puts emerging sustainable design talent in the spotlight, creating a platform for the next generation of designers to cut waste out of fashion. The inaugural The EcoChic Design Award was launched in Hong Kong in 2011 and previous cycles also include Hong Kong 2012 and China 2012.

About Create Hong Kong (<http://www.createhk.gov.hk>)

The Create Hong Kong is a dedicated agency set up under the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau on 1 June 2001 to lead, champion and drive the development of the creative economy in Hong Kong. It co-ordinates Government policy and effort regarding creative industries, focuses Government's resources catering for the promotion and speeding up the development of creative industries in Hong Kong, and works closely with the trade to boost the development of creative industries.

About Esprit (www.esprit.com)

Founded in 1968, Esprit is an international fashion brand that pays homage to its roots and expresses a relaxed, sunny Californian attitude towards life. Esprit creates inspiring collections for women, men and kids made from high-quality materials paying great attention to detail. All of Esprit's products demonstrate the Group's commitment to quality design and execution.

Esprit's collections are available in over 40 countries worldwide, in more than 1,000 self-operated retail stores and through over 9,000 wholesale points of sales including franchise partners, and sales space in department stores. The Group markets its products under two brands, namely the Esprit brand and the edc brand. Listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange since 1993, Esprit has headquarters in Germany and Hong Kong.

About John Hardy (<http://www.johnhardy.com>)

John Hardy is a luxury handmade jewelry brand, founded in Bali in 1989. The company's collaboration between designers and artisans yields jewelry that unites the mastery of the talented jewelers who served Balinese kings with modern design interpretations. The company adheres to strict policy of "greener every day" - the belief that a business can prosper with respect to the people, while preserving nature and the environment.

John Hardy collections are sold widely around the U.S. in high-end department stores such as Neiman Marcus and Saks Fifth Avenue. John Hardy Collections are also available in Hong Kong (Lane Crawford), United Kingdom (Harrods and Net-a-Porter), Japan (Isetan), France (Le Bon Marche) and other countries worldwide. Headquartered in Hong Kong with offices in New York, Bangkok and Bali, the company employs around 1000 people worldwide.