



PRESS RELEASE

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SHORTLIST FOR BFC/GQ DESIGNER MENSWEAR FUND 2016 ANNOUNCED

The British Fashion Council (BFC) today announces the shortlist for the BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund supported by Vertu. The winner will receive a bespoke, high level mentoring support programme over a twelve month period, as well as a **£150,000** grant to provide necessary infrastructure to take them to the next stage in their business and **£50,000** value in kind services.

BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund shortlist 2016:

Astrid Andersen | Craig Green | Christopher Raeburn | Lou Dalton | Sibling

Dylan Jones OBE, Editor of British GQ and Chair of London Collections Men said, *“The 2016 shortlist is an outstanding example of the talent in the UK’s menswear market. It is a great example of the variety and spread of designers that are working here in London. Working with Vertu and the BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund panel is an opportunity to project these brands to the next stage and every one of them has the ability to win the biggest prize in menswear.”*

The shortlisted designers will participate in a mentoring programme developed by the BFC over the next two weeks, where industry experts will provide guidance on topics including branding, leadership, commercial retail, e-tail and wholesale and digital innovation. Vertu will have its own mentoring day held at Interchange Camden. At the end of the month the designers will submit a revised business plan to the judging panel. The winner will be announced on Wednesday 18th May.

The Fund is aimed at businesses that have been trading for over two years, with UK and international stockists. The shortlisted designers have been chosen as each one has the potential to develop into a global designer brand and is ready for the level of support the Fund offers.

Gordon Watson, CEO of Vertu commented: *“Vertu is delighted to support the BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund, now in its third year. The selection process seems to get harder as each year passes, as the designers continue to raise the bar, not just with their creative abilities but also with their commercial acumen. The shortlisting and mentoring process is never anything less than inspiring and it is a delight to spend time with each of the designers. I am looking forward to seeing who comes to the fore over the coming weeks because right now, it is impossible to call.”*

Vertu, the world’s leading luxury mobile manufacturer and lead partner on the Fund, will play a key role in the mentoring programme and give access to its team of business leaders in technology, global distribution, legal and finance.

Caroline Rush CBE, Chief Executive of the British Fashion Council, said, *“As the menswear industry continues to grow in size and reputation this year’s shortlist shows the diversity and the talent of London’s menswear designers. As well as sheer creativity these designers also have impressive business strategies and the potential to be Britain’s next big menswear brands.”*

The BFC/GQ shortlist selection committee includes **Dylan Jones OBE**, British GQ (Chair); **Ben Banks**, Fourmarketing; **Caroline Rush**, British Fashion Council; **Charlie Porter**, Financial Times; **Gordon Watson**, Vertu; **Helen Seamons**, Guardian; **Jason Basmajian**, Cerruti; **Jon Stanley**, Vertu; **Robert Johnston**, British GQ and **Stephen Doig**, Telegraph Luxury.

- ENDS -

For more information visit www.britishfashioncouncil.com/designermenswearfund

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EDITOR'S NOTES

The British Fashion Council was set up in 1983 to promote British fashion internationally and co-ordinate this promotion through fashion weeks, exhibitions and showcasing events. The BFC now supports designers beginning at college level and extending to talent identification, business support and showcasing schemes to help British designer businesses develop their profiles and business globally and promote British fashion and its influential role in Britain and London. The BFC Colleges Council offers support to students through its Foundation, BA and MA scholarships, links with industry through design competitions and Graduate Preview Day. Talent identification and business support schemes include the BFC Fashion Film sponsored by River Island; BFC Rock Vault; BFC Headonism; BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund supported by Vertu; BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund; NEWGEN sponsored by TOPSHOP and NEWGEN MEN sponsored by TOPMAN. Showcasing initiatives and events include London Fashion Week, London Collections Men, LONDON show ROOMS, the BFC Fashion Arts Foundation, International Fashion Showcase, London Fashion Weekend and the annual celebration of excellence in the fashion industry: the British Fashion Awards.

Vertu Vertu aims to deliver the world's best luxury mobile phone experience for its customers by combining expert craftsmanship and peerless materials with innovative technology and unique services. Today, Vertu leads the market that it pioneered over a decade ago.

The Vertu range of mobile phones is made up of three distinct models – Signature, Signature Touch and Aster. The Vertu Audio Collection comprises V Headphones (HP-1V) and V Speaker (SP-1V). Vertu mobile phones are handmade in England using the world's finest materials, with each one assembled by a single craftsman.

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