



PRESS RELEASE
29TH JANUARY 2013

**BRITISH FASHION COUNCIL ANNOUNCES WINNER OF THE BFC/VOGUE DESIGNER
FASHION FUND 2013**

The British Fashion Council (BFC) today announced the winner of this year's BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund is Nicholas Kirkwood. The prize, now in its fourth year, was established to further enhance the reputation of London's rising stars and assist in the development of their businesses. The Fund comprises of monetary prize of £200,000 and access to key senior level mentors across the UK fashion industry.

Nicholas Kirkwood commented, "I'm thrilled. It was a great honour to be part of such a strong shortlist of talent. Being awarded the fund will enable us to realise our plans to develop the brand globally".

The choice to award Nicholas was based on his and business partner Christopher Suarez's extremely professional 3 year plan and presentation at interview. Nicholas has demonstrated exceptional skill in building a modern, individual and recognisable accessories line and was very clear on his business growth strategy and the key challenges he would like to address with the support of the Fund and its advisors.

The BFC will develop a bespoke mentoring programme tailored specifically to assist Nicholas to achieve his business goals for the next 18 months, with the aspiration that the network developed during this mentoring year will endure throughout his career as he makes the transition from a developing creative business into a global fashion brand.

The five shortlisted designers Roksanda Ilincic, Mary Katrantzou, Nicholas Kirkwood, Peter Pilotto and Emilia Wickstead were chosen by a panel of representatives of Fund sponsors. All designers shortlisted demonstrated incredible creativity combined with entrepreneurship encouraging a dynamic debate to agree on a single winner. All of the shortlisted will be invited to participate in the Fashion Trust mentoring programme for a 24 month period.

An alumnus of prestigious design schools Central Saint Martins and Cordwainers, Kirkwood's collection launched in spring 2005 challenged the conventions of women's luxury footwear. This inaugural collection of architecturally inspired pieces blended genres subverting the relationship between femininity and modernity winning the attention of Grace Jones, Daphne Guinness and Cecilia Dean of celebrated art-house publication Visionaire as well as rave reviews from the fashion industry.

Kirkwood's stockist list includes many of the world luxury retailers such as 10 Corso Como, Milan; Barneys, New York and Lane Crawford, Hong Kong and has two recently opened flagship stores in London and New York.

Beyond his eponymous label, Nicholas has worked alongside established and emerging Ready-to-Wear designers to create shoes for their runway shows and over the past eight years since he launched his collection, Kirkwood has won much critical acclaim for his unique craftsmanship and perspective.

The British Fashion Council has an international reputation for supporting emerging talent through its existing schemes; NEWGEN supported by TOPSHOP, NEWGEN MEN sponsored by Topman and Fashion Forward sponsored by Ebay Fashion and supported by the Mayor of London. The BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund set up in 2008, specifically aims to aid business growth, global reputation and create employment opportunities.

British Vogue, headline sponsor, whose March issue is on sale 7th February, will showcase the talents of all five finalists.

Caroline Rush, Chief Executive British Fashion Council commented "The calibre of applications in the shortlist were second to none, all of the designers proved that they are at a very crucial stage in their business when the fund could deliver a real opportunity to accelerate growth. However Nicholas' application provided a clear and compelling case for how both funding and targeted mentoring would be used to assist him in taking the next steps in developing a global brand."

Alexandra Shulman, Editor British Vogue said "I am delighted Nicholas Kirkwood is the winner of this year's award. Nicholas has created a real business in an impressively short amount of time and has become one of the world's most influential shoe designers. I very much look forward to seeing what he does next."

The BFC would like to thank the fund sponsors Burberry, Clothing at Tesco, Debenhams, Harrods, LF Europe, Marks & Spencer, Paul Smith, Topshop, and Vogue.

For more information please visit www.britishfashioncouncil.com/designerfashionfund

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Editors notes:

- Previous winners of the BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund are Erdem, Christopher Kane, and Jonathan Saunders.
- The British Fashion Council (BFC) 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 Creative Britain and Creative London. The BFC Colleges Council offers support to students through its MA Scholarship, links with industry through Design Competitions and Graduate Preview Day. Talent identification and business support schemes include the BFC/Elle Talent Launch Pad; BFC Fash/On Film sponsored by River Island; BFC Rock Vault sponsored by International Palladium Board; BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund; Estethica; Fashion Forward sponsored by eBay Fashion and the Mayor of London; NEWGEN sponsored by Topshop and NEWGEN MEN sponsored by Topman. Showcasing initiatives include London Fashion Week, London Collections, LONDON show ROOMS, the BFC/Bazaar Fashion Arts Foundation, International Fashion Showcase and the annual celebration of excellence in the fashion industry: the British Fashion Awards.
- Chaired by Alexandra Shulman, Editor of British Vogue, the Fund Judging Committee comprised representatives from those supporting the Fund, as well as industry professionals. The judging panel included Alexandra Shulman, Vogue UK & Chair of the Fund Committee; Caroline Rush, British Fashion Council; Emily Shamma, Clothing at Tesco; Joan Burstein, Browns; Lisa Marie Peacock, Debenhams; Lisa Armstrong, The Daily Telegraph; Marigay McKee, Harrods; Mary Homer, Topshop; Samantha Cameron; Sarah Manley, Burberry; Susanne Tide-Frater and Tony Yusuf, Hardy Amies (LF Europe)