



YEARS OF BRITISH FASHION



Press Release
September 2009

'FASHION FORWARD' DESIGNERS RECEIVE BRITISH FASHION COUNCIL SUPPORT

The British Fashion Council (BFC) today announces that designers **Christopher Kane, Erdem and Marios Schwab** will receive British Fashion Council's **Fashion Forward** sponsorship for the third consecutive season.

The scheme, supported by the London Development Agency, was established three years ago to provide funding for talented emerging British designers. This second stage scheme was introduced to give a further tier of support for the most promising designers as they emerged from NEWGEN. The award consists of a financial prize, to be used towards producing an on-schedule catwalk show at London Fashion Week, along with access to business support, from supporters including Baker Tilly and Shoosmiths, which provides them with knowledge required to further develop their businesses.

Previous winners include Giles Deacon, Jonathan Saunders, Richard Nicoll, Sinha-Stanic and Roksanda Illincic. This season's recipients, despite being relatively new businesses, have already garnered a following of international influencers and are sold in directional stores and boutiques here in the UK and internationally.

In 2006, Christopher Kane launched his own label with his sister Tammy (collaborator and business partner) and has gone on to build his label into a major player in the high-fashion world. Now in its seventh season showing as part of London Fashion Week his collections are renowned for their contemporary, progressive vision and the label is a key contributor to trends.



On receiving the sponsorship, Christopher said *"I am thrilled to have been awarded Fashion Forward by the BFC. This will be my 7th show at London Fashion Week and without its support I would not have had the ability to have presented the show in the way that I would want. I am especially thankful to have the BFC's support on the 25th anniversary of London Fashion Week as it has allowed me to reach the widest international audience possible which is invaluable to the growth of my business."*

Erdem was launched in 2005 by Erdem Moralioglu and his designs have won plaudits for their fusion of sharp tailoring with romanticism and bold, graphic, custom-designed silk prints. His A/W 09/10 show was one of the top ten shows of the season as chosen by style.com. Erdem said *"I'm so thankful to have won Fashion Forward from the BFC. Being able to show at London Fashion Week is integral to the brand and with this sponsorship, we are able to showcase our brand in an ideal manner."*

Marios Schwab has been credited with leading the body-conscious fashion movement with his figure hugging feminine dresses since his label launched in 2005. Marios has recently been appointed Creative Director at Halston and will present his first collection for the brand in February 2010.

He will be showing in September for the ninth time as part of LFW, on receiving the Fashion Forward sponsorship this season Marios commented, *"I am very happy to be backed by Fashion Forward for a third season, it gives me great stability and encouragement for my business"*.

Caroline Rush, Joint Chief Executive of the British Fashion Council commented, *"The British Fashion Council's Fashion Forward scheme plays a key role in building designer brands in London. This season's winners were amongst the London based designers who led the world fashion media headlines last season for their innovation. The BFC is proud to continue to offer support to these outstanding talents."*

For more information and exclusive interviews with the designers visit www.londonfashionweek.co.uk/fashionforward

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For press enquiries regarding this seasons Fashion Forward winners please contact:

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Notes to Editors:

1. About this season's Fashion Forward recipients:

CHRISTOPHER KANE

Glaswegian-born Christopher Kane's designs creatively fuse fabric, colour and print. In the year 2000, Christopher moved to London when he was 17 years old to enroll at Central St Martins School of Art. Directly after showing his graduate collection, Christopher presented a private viewing of his work to the editor-in-chief of US Vogue, Anna Wintour. This led to him being invited to sit front row with Anna Wintour at Versace's A/W 06 show in Milan. In September 2006, Christopher was awarded NEWGEN sponsorship from the British Fashion Council and he held his first solo catwalk show. He went on to receive NEWGEN support for four consecutive seasons. His successes culminated with the receipt of the New Designer of the Year award at the 2007 British Fashion Awards.

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ERDEM

This London ready-to-wear line was established in 2005 by Erdem Moralioglu. Erdem studied in Canada, and following a defining internship for Vivienne Westwood he moved to London in 2000, earning a masters degree from The Royal College of Art. He went on to close the 2003 RCA Show with his graduate collection. After a stint in New York, Erdem moved back to London to establish his own label. Erdem has staged seven London Fashion Week shows and in 2007 he was awarded with the Fashion Forward Award. His exquisite designs are consistently in demand and are synonymous with style icons such as Keira Knightly, Kirsten Dunst, Nicole Ritchie, Claudia Schiffer, Tilda Swinton and Chloe Sevigny.

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MARIOS SCHWAB

31 year old Schwab lives and works in London where he launched his label in 2005. First studying in Berlin where he graduated with distinction and Best Student Award from Esmond, he then moved to London where he graduated with an MA in Womenswear Fashion from Central St Martins in 2003. Marios Schwab has shown on schedule at London Fashion Week since his SS06 collection when he first received British Fashion Council NEWGEN sponsorship. He went on to receive

NEWGEN sponsorship for four consecutive seasons. His dresses have been worn by Kate Moss, Hilary Duff, Kylie Minogue, Thandie Newton and Clemence Posey. Marios Schwab was awarded Best New Designer at the British Fashion Awards in 2006. In 2007 he was the winner of the Swiss Textiles Award.

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2. **Fashion Forward** is a British Fashion Council scheme designed to provide support to UK based designers who have already established a profile at London Fashion Week through the NEWGEN programme, or who are at an equivalent stage in their business. The primary aim is to enable designers to show their collections at London Fashion Week and develop their businesses through access to a range of advisors. Fashion Forward sponsorship recipients are selected by a panel of press, buyers and representatives from the BFC. Funding for this year's Fashion Forward programme has come from the London Development Agency.
3. **The London Development Agency (LDA)** aims to improve the quality of life for all Londoners - working to create jobs, develop skills and promote economic growth. The LDA awarded the British Fashion Council a three-year funding package worth £4.2million in December 2007. As part of the grant agreement the British Fashion Council will provide business support to London's emerging designers and raise the profile of London Fashion Week to international markets.
4. London Fashion Week is organised by the British Fashion Council.
5. The British Fashion Council was set up in 1983 to promote British Fashion and co-ordinate this promotion through fashion weeks, exhibitions and showcasing events.
6. The British Fashion Council is celebrating 25 Years of British Fashion throughout 2009. This encompasses 25 years of the British Fashion Council, 25 years of organising London Fashion Week and 25 years of British Fashion Awards.