



Press Release

Parsons and Kering announce winners of the third annual "Empowering Imagination" competition: Justin Chu and Mijia Zhang with Honorable Mention to Ximon Lee

In Collaboration with Style.com, Two Parsons BFA Fashion Design Students have been Selected to Receive Prestigious Internships with Kering Brands

NEW YORK, June 3, 2014 – Parsons The New School for Design and Kering have announced the two winners in the third annual "Empowering Imagination" student design competition. **Justin Chu** has been selected for his women's ready-to-wear designs, and **Mijia Zhang** for her unisex collection. The student designers will be awarded an internship at one of Kering's 22 luxury and sport & lifestyle brands and take part in a closed mentoring session with Style.com. Honorable Mention is being awarded to **Ximon Lee** for his menswear collection.

A panel of fashion insiders including designer Tomas Maier, Sofia Sanchez Barrenechea, Style.com's Dirk Standen, Kering's Laurent Claquin, Paper Magazine's Mickey Boardman, Saks Fifth Avenue's Colleen Sherin, and Parsons' Simon Collins, met on June 2nd to judge the work of the 14 finalists. The panel selected the two winners based on the quality and conceptual vision of their thesis collections, as well as their technical skill and ability to communicate the unique point of view behind the collection.

Justin Chu's voluminous collection combines elegant fabrics with structural forms. "My thesis collection explores the notion that an evolutionary perfection is unattainable because standards of perfection are always in flux. I design for a woman constantly changing, one who is never settled on one way of living."

Mijia Zhang took inspiration from robots for her unisex collection. Creating playful, boxy geometric shapes by combining classic fabrics with technical materials, Mijia's designs contrast street wear and luxury design. "Humorous and playful are the two main adjectives behind my design. I believe the process of both designing and wearing clothes should be full of fun and delightful surprises."

Ximon Lee's menswer collection, Children of Leningradsky, is based upon a winter journey to Russia earlier this year." In Russia, I was captivated by the unintentional styles of street children near suburban Moscow."

"Parsons' students have, once again, exceeded our expectations during this year's "Empowering Imagination" contest. Justin and Mijia exhibit considerable talent, which include focus on creative designs and quality craftsmanship. These qualities are inherent in all of Kering's brands, so we look forward to seeing their talent further honed at an internship with one of our brands.", said Laurent Claquin, head of Kering Americas.

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As part of their ongoing partnership, Style.com has been featuring the 14 finalists on their website since May 20th and will host a closed mentoring session for the students.

"Now in its third year we are especially proud of our collaboration with Kering. said Simon Collins, Dean of Fashion at Parsons The New School. Not only do Parsons students get the chance to work at some of the world's best brands like Balenciaga, Bottega Veneta, YSL and Gucci, but also their work is shown on one of the world's most important sites Style.com, it's any fashion student's dream come true."

Parsons The New School for Design is a global leader in design education, with programs that span the disciplines of design and the fine arts. With the launch of its fashion design program in 1906, Parsons is credited with the rise of Seventh Avenue, the epicenter of American fashion. Parsons offers a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Fashion Design, Associate degrees in Fashion Design and Fashion Marketing, and a Master of Fine Arts Program in Fashion Design and Society initiated through the support of Parsons alumna Donna Karan. Parsons has educated generations of leading American fashion designers, including Tom Ford, Marc Jacobs, Donna Karan, Isaac Mizrahi, Tracy Reese, Narciso Rodriguez, Anna Sui, Prabal Gurung, Derek Lam, Proenza Schouler, Vena Cava, Alexander Wang, and Jason Wu. For more information, visit www.newschool.edu/parsons.

About Kering

A world leader in apparel and accessories, Kering develops an ensemble of powerful Luxury and Sport & Lifestyle brands: Gucci, Bottega Veneta, Saint Laurent, Alexander McQueen, Balenciaga, Brioni, Christopher Kane, McQ, Stella McCartney, Tomas Maier, Sergio Rossi, Boucheron, Dodo, Girard-Perregaux, JeanRichard, Pomellato, Qeelin, Puma, Volcom, Cobra, Electric and Tretorn. By 'empowering imagination' in the fullest sense, Kering encourages its brands to reach their potential, in the most sustainable manner.

Present in more than 120 countries, the Group generated revenues of €9.7 billion in 2013 and had 31,000 employees at year end. The Kering (previously PPR) share is listed on Euronext Paris (FR 0000121485, KER.PA, KER.FP).

Style.com, a Fairchild Fashion Media brand (FFM), takes its global audience deep inside the world of fashion. From catwalk to sidewalk, backstage to after-party, Style.com employs breakthrough technology to deliver instant gratification to fashion obsessives. Based in New York, Style.com launched in September 2000. FFM, a division of Condé Nast, includes WWD (Women's Wear Daily), Style.com, FN (Footwear News), NowManifest, Beauty Inc, M and Fairchild Summits.

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