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Mercedes-Benz announce dedicated designer platform and new award for the International Fashion Showcase 2017

**International Fashion Showcase 2017 presented by Mercedes-Benz
At Somerset House 17-21 February 2017**

design.britishcouncil.org/ifs2017
www.britishfashioncouncil.com/IFS
#IFS2017 #LocalGlobal #mercedesbenzfashion

Mercedes-Benz is pleased to announce it will for the first time partner with the British Council and British Fashion Council (BFC) to collectively present work by emerging fashion designers from 26 countries for the sixth annual edition of the International Fashion Showcase (IFS) 2017 at Somerset House in February.

In line with Mercedes-Benz' 2017 global fashion strategy in strengthening and further supporting the young and emerging talents through a wide variety of global initiatives, which has been started in January 2017 with the presentation of emerging Swiss designer Julia Seemann at Der Berliner Mode Salon during Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Berlin, Mercedes-Benz will showcase five emerging designers the brand supports through its International Designer Exchange Programme (IDEP) in a dedicated area at IFS 2017. As

part of its ongoing global fashion commitment, Mercedes-Benz continues to support, nurture and mentor young and emerging design talent through the IDEP, which offers up-and-coming designers a unique opportunity to present their collections outside of their local markets to an international audience. Launched in 2009, the Mercedes-Benz International Designer Exchange Programme is currently active across all of the Mercedes-Benz supported fashion platforms. The five designers being given this opportunity to showcase their designs during London Fashion Week are:

Angel Chen (China) graduated Central Saint Martins in 2014 to huge critical acclaim. She has since featured in many magazines and has won a number of awards. She was listed in Forbes '30 under 30' in 2016. Her brand is carried by stores around the world. Angel Chen was awarded the Mercedes-Benz China Design Award in S/S17 and will show her latest collection at Milan Fashion Week A/W17 as courtesy of Mercedes-Benz. Angel is at home at Mercedes-Benz China Fashion Week.

Anna K (Ukraine) first showed a collection of clothes at 16 in Kiev and has since shown in London and New York. Her clothes are stocked in 40 stores in 25 countries. She was listed in Forbes '30 under 30' in 2016. Anna shows regularly at Mercedes-Benz Kiev Fashion Days and was presented at Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Madrid S/S17 as part of the IDEP.

David Ferreira (Portugal) graduated from the University of Westminster in 2015 winning the Fashion Scout Merit Award which helped him show at London Fashion Week the following season. He has now shown twice at London Fashion Week and will present his latest creations at London Fashion Week on 20 February, 2017. David has been awarded the Les Etoiles Mercedes-Benz Award at Paris Fashion Week S/S17 in collaboration with Alexis Mabille.

Steven Tai (Canada) graduated from Central Saint Martin's in 2011 and established his womenswear label in London. Steven was awarded the Grand Prix of the Jury Première Vision of the International Festival of Fashion and Photography in Hyeres in 2012 and presented his collection at Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Berlin S/S13 as courtesy of Mercedes-Benz. He regularly presents his latest work at London Fashion Week.

William Fan (Germany) is German with Asian roots. He first showed at Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Berlin in spring 2015. The label collaborates with manufacturers in

Germany and Hong Kong and has a high standard of traditional craftsmanship. William Fan was one of three German designers presented at Milan Fashion Week S/S17 by Mercedes-Benz and Fashion Council Germany and shows regularly at Berlin Fashion Week.

In addition, at a prize-giving ceremony during London Fashion Week on 19 February 2017, the Chair of the IFS Judging Panel Sarah Mower will announce a winning Country, Designer, and Curator. For the first time, Mercedes-Benz will present the winning Designer with the unique opportunity to showcase his or her collection at one of the 50+ Mercedes-Benz global fashion platforms, including London, Milan, Tbilisi and Kiev.

Michael Bock, Director Sport & Lifestyle Marketing, Mercedes-Benz Cars said: *“For more than 20 years we have been committed to the world of fashion through promoting creative and talented people who represent both quality and variety in the fashion sector. We are excited to be partnering with the British Council and the British Fashion Council who are commitment to support, nurture and mentor emerging design talent on the International Fashion Showcase. The IFS is a fantastic platform which much like the objective of the Mercedes-Benz International Designer Exchange Programme, cross-pollinates between nations and creates a valuable commercial and critical platform for upcoming and established designers.”*

International Fashion Showcase 2017 presented by Mercedes-Benz at Somerset House 17 – 21 February 2017

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Notes to Editors:

Listings Information

Dates: 17 – 21 February 2017

Opening Hours: 10.00 – 18.00 Daily

Address: West Wing Galleries, Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 1LA

www.somersetshouse.org.uk

Free admission, pre-registration advised via Biletto <https://biletto.co.uk/international-fashion-showcase-2017>

Transport: Temple, Embankment, Charing Cross, Waterloo

For press and media enquiries about the International Fashion Showcase and information about the British Council contact:

Rebecca Ward

T: +44 (0) 7977 071450

E: rebecca@rebeccaward.co.uk

Or Mary Doherty, Senior Press Officer

T: +44 (0) 207 389 3144

E: mary.doherty@britishcouncil.org

For media enquiries about the British Fashion Council contact:

Michalis Zodiatis, Senior PR Executive

T: +44 (0) 20 7759 1989

E: michalis.zodiatis@britishfashioncouncil.com

For press enquiries about Mercedes-Benz Fashion contact:

Davina Wedderburn, Senior Account Director

T : +44 (0) 207 287 9890

E : davina.wedderburn@karlaotto.com

For media enquiries about Somerset House contact:

Stephanie Lilley, Acting Head of Press

T: +44 (0)20 7845 4638

E: stephanie.lilley@somersetshouse.org.uk

International Fashion Showcase 2017 images: <http://bit.ly/1MQaY3e>

[Follow Mercedes-Benz Fashion on Instagram @MBFW. #MercedesBenzFashion](#)

For more information visit: design.britishcouncil.org/ifs2017

The International Fashion Showcase 2012 was founded in the year of the Olympics to celebrate its values of respect, excellence, equality and friendship. Finalists included a group show by Botswana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, as well as Belgium, China, Estonia, Italy, Japan, Korea and USA. Korea was the winning country with their exhibition A New Space Around the Body, which showcased eight emerging designers from the region, and was presented with a trophy designed by Jordan Askill.

In 2013 Estonia was awarded with a sculpture designed by former BFC NEWGEN recipient Dominic Jones for their exhibition The Estonian Ministry of Creative Affairs. The shortlisted countries were Argentina, Austria, Estonia, The Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Scandinavia (Denmark, Norway, Sweden), Switzerland and Tanzania.

In 2014 sixteen countries exhibited at a central venue at 180 Strand. The overall Showcase winner was again Estonia with their exhibition Fashion Now: Estonia; and the recipients of two new awards, for Designer and Curator, were Hyein Seo of Korea and Yoshikazu Yamagata of Japan respectively. Each winner was presented with a sculpture created by previous NEWGEN and BFC Emerging Accessory Designer 2010 recipient, jewellery designer Husam el Odeh.

New initiatives for 2015 included a partnership with On|Off, curators of Next in Line, and a designer support programme organised with London College of Fashion. Colombia were the winners of the International Fashion Showcase Country Award; while the Designer Award was presented to Julia Männistö from Colombia and the Curation Award went to Yegwa Ukpo of Stranger Lagos in Nigeria. Winners received a trophy designed by emerging Brazilian jeweller Fernando Jorge, a BFC Rock Vault graduate.

2016 saw the countries exploring the theme of Utopia and the Czech Republic were the winners of the International Fashion Showcase Country Award for their exhibition *Last Fata Morgana*; the Designer Award was presented to Hala Kaiksow of Bahrain for her impressive designs showcased in the Next in Line room, and the Curation Award went to Tala Hajjar of the Lebanon. Winners received a trophy designed by jewelers Yunus and Eliza, participants in the BFC Rock Vault initiative.

The International Fashion Showcase is directed by Anna Orsini, Strategic Consultant British Fashion Council and Niamh Tuft, Programme Manager British Council.

The Advisory Panel for the International Fashion Showcase 2017 is:

Chair: Sarah Mower MBE, BFC Ambassador for Emerging Talent and Chief Critic at Voguerunway.com

Alistair O'Neill, Central Saint Martins and Independent curator
Anders Christian Madsen, i-D
Anna Orsini, British Fashion Council
Ashish Gupta, Designer
Barbara Grispini, British Fashion Council
Claire Catterall, Somerset House
Fabio Piras, Central Saint Martins
Karla Otto, Karla Otto Ltd. on behalf of Mercedes-Benz
Mandi Lennard, Mandi's Basement
Martyn Roberts, Fashion Scout & Graduate Fashion Week
Miriam Bouteba, Time Out
Natalie Kingham, Matches
Nick Vinson, Wallpaper*
Paul Yuille, London College of Fashion
Robb Young, Business of Fashion
Sarah Mann, British Council
Stavros Karelis, Machine A
Zowie Broach, Royal College of Art

About the British Council

The British Council global arts team works with the best of British creative talent to develop innovative, high-quality events and collaborations that link thousands of artists and cultural institutions around the world, drawing them into a closer relationship with the UK. The British Council creates international opportunities for the people of the UK and other countries and builds trust between them worldwide. We are a Royal Charter charity, established as the UK's international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations. Our 7000 staff in over 100 countries work with thousands of professionals and policy makers and millions of young people every year through English, arts, education and society programmes. We earn over 75% of our annual turnover of nearly £700 million from services which customers pay for, education and development contracts we bid for and from partnerships. A UK Government grant provides the remaining 25%. We match every £1 of core public funding with over £3 earned in pursuit of our charitable purpose.

www.britishcouncil.org

About the British Fashion Council

The British Fashion Council (BFC) was set up in 1983 to promote British fashion internationally and co-ordinate this promotion through fashion weeks, designer showrooms 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 BFC Fashion Film sponsored by River Island; BFC Rock Vault; BFC Headonism; BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund; BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund and NEWGEN. The BFC supports Boden's Future British initiative. The BFC also runs and owns charities including the BFC Fashion Arts Foundation, the BFC Fashion Trust and the BFC Education Foundation. Showcasing initiatives and events include London Fashion Week, London Fashion Week Men's, LONDON show ROOMS, International Fashion Showcase, London Fashion Week Festival and the annual celebration of excellence in the fashion industry: The Fashion Awards.

www.britishfashioncouncil.com

About Mercedes-Benz

For the past 22 years, Mercedes-Benz has established itself globally as a partner and title sponsor at selected fashion weeks and events. The brand is currently involved in more than 50 fashion platforms globally, including Mercedes-Benz Fashion Weeks in Sydney, Beijing, Kiev, Tbilisi, Moscow and Berlin, as well as the acclaimed International Festival of Fashion and Photography in Hyères. Mercedes-Benz continues to support selected fashion events and platforms globally and over the course of two decades, has made a name for itself in particular for promoting talented new designers. As part of its global fashion commitment Mercedes-Benz continues to support young and talented fashion designers through the Mercedes-Benz International Designer Exchange Programme. The programme offers emerging designers a unique opportunity to present their collections outside of their local markets to an international audience. Launched in 2009, the Mercedes-Benz International Designer Exchange Programme is currently active across all of the Mercedes-Benz supported fashion platforms. The Mercedes-Benz International Designer Exchange Programme is often supported by an award programme initiated by Mercedes-Benz and underpinned by a panel of experts. Mercedes-Benz is committed to nurturing and mentoring emerging design talent, and the International Designer Exchange Programme reinforces the brand's commitment to this.

www.mercedesbenz.com/fashion