

Two menswear designers among winners of McArthurGlen Spirit of Fashion Awards

LONDON, 16th September 2010. Today, the three recipients of the first McArthurGlen Spirit of Fashion Awards were announced by McArthurGlen, Europe's leader in designer outlet retailing, in partnership with the Royal College of Art (RCA), the world's most influential postgraduate art and design school.

The three Award recipients are: womenswear designer Rachael Barrett, with her pieces sought after by some of the biggest names in the music industry; Carolyn Massey, among the first-ever NEWGEN menswear designers, showing on Men's Day at London Fashion Week 22nd September 2010, and Matthew Miller, sponsored by Fashion East at MAN this month.

McArthurGlen and the RCA conceived the Awards to help further the fashion careers of three young designers, serving to shape the future face of fashion. The Awards are open to alumni of the RCA, which has fostered such world-renowned luminaries as Christopher Bailey of Burberry, Erdem Moralioglu and milliner Philip Treacy.

The Award recipients were selected by a judging panel of leading figures in the worlds of fashion and retail. The panel was made up of Professor Wendy Dagworthy, The RCA's Head of Fashion and Textiles; renowned fashion designer Betty Jackson; Tristan Webber and Ike Rust, both Senior RCA Tutors; Peter Sidell, co-owner of menswear boutique The Library and visiting RCA Professor; and Shaeren McKenzie, Group Marketing Director of McArthurGlen.

The Awards provide the three recipients with 12 months' PR agency support and mentoring. In addition, the recipients will embark on a live creative brief, with their designs potentially produced in a limited edition and sold directly to the consumer via McArthurGlen's Designer Outlets.

Shaeren McKenzie, Group Marketing Director of McArthurGlen, says: "We bring many leading International Designer Brands to the consumer via our designer outlets and in working with these brands, we understand the care and attention it takes to build a brand that stands the test of time. We created these Awards as a means to help three gifted young designers make inroads in a highly

oversubscribed industry which is notoriously hard to break into. We were overwhelmed not only by the quality of the work and the creativity displayed but also the sheer professionalism of all three designers. We hope that over the course of the year we can help them to make real progress towards growing successful businesses.”

Professor Wendy Dagworthy, the RCA’s Head of Fashion and Textiles, comments: “To be able to access the broad retailing knowledge of McArthurGlen, and the expert advice of some of the brands they work with, as well as dedicated PR services for a year is an invaluable resource which will deliver incredible insight along with much-needed support for the designers as they progress on this journey.”

McArthurGlen has seven designer outlet centres in the UK and a further twelve across Continental Europe, working alongside the leading brand names in designer fashion retailing including Burberry, Dolce & Gabbana, Fendi, Gucci, Missoni and Mulberry, as well as high street favourites such as All Saints, French Connection, Gap, Kurt Geiger and Warehouse.

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Designer Biographies



Carolyn Massey

Carolyn Massey, a London-based British menswear designer, completed her MA at the Royal College of Art in June 2005. Only one year later in June 2006 she launched her own label. Carolyn has been a three-time recipient of the British Fashion Council NEWGEN MEN award and in 2010 was selected by the Editor-in-Chief of Italian Vogue as one of the 10 designers to show at the Milano Unico Textile Fair in Milan. Her work investigates what it takes to be a gentleman, and how this concept of masculinity has been appropriated during times of civil or social unrest. She is currently stocked through ASOS.com, Daniel Jenkins (UK), Opening Ceremony (NYC, Tokyo, LA), Juxtaposition (CA), MAPP (Belgium) and La Bergerie (France).



Matthew Miller

Matthew Miller is a talented young northerner who graduated from the Royal College of Art in 2009. His final collection was a homage to his soldier friends with whom he'd drink and mull over the possibility of their dying in action. He is a talented designer, fabric technologist and maker of textile surfaces that demonstrate incredible intricacy and power. His second collection "FORM = FUNCTION" will be presented at London Fashion Week and sponsored by Fashion East this September 2010. Matthew's work demonstrates his potential, will to succeed and professional tenacity.



Rachael Barrett

Rachael Barrett, a Glaswegian, also graduated from the RCA in 2009 having previously studied at Edinburgh College of Art. Her stunning graduate collection using rubber and silicone together with ethereal lace and chiffon was sought after by some of the biggest names in the music industry and was featured in I-D, Tank, Wallpaper and Dazed and Confused. Rachael has adopted a minimalist approach to design with a strong focus on the female form. Unexpected fabric combinations and unusual construction techniques, combined with the importance she places on silhouette, are key elements of her work. For the past year she has been gaining industry experience as a freelance pattern cutter, a skill which is integral to her work. Rachael plans to launch her own label shortly.