



Press Release

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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 menswear 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.

