

**Kering and The New School's Parsons School of Design announce winners of the fifth "Empowering Imagination" fashion design competition: Ya Jun Lin and Tiffany Huang.**

Yesterday evening at the 68th annual Parsons Benefit, Laurent Claquin, head of Kering Americas, announced Ya Jun Lin and Tiffany Huang as winners of the fifth 'Empowering Imagination' competition. They will enjoy a fantastic learning expedition to several Kering facilities in Italy.

For the fifth year in a row, Kering and Parsons School of Fashion rolled out the 'Empowering Imagination' design competition. The competition engaged twelve talented 2016 graduates of the Parsons BFA Fashion Design program who were selected for their excellence in vision, acute awareness in design identity, and mastery of technical competencies.

The finalists were invited to present their thesis 3D collection and portfolio in the areas of Womenswear, Menswear and Accessories to a panel of fashion insiders including Altuzarra Founder and Creative Director Joseph Altuzarra, CFDA President and CEO Steven Kolb, Management Artists President and fashion talent agent Massimiliano Di Battista, Vogue Runway Director Nicole Phelps, Saks Fifth Avenue's SVP Fashion Director Roopal Patel, Stylist Mel Ottenberg, and Head of Kering America's Laurent Claquin. The panel selected two winners based on the conceptual vision and creativity of their thesis collections, as well as their technical skills and ability to communicate the unique point of view behind the collection.

**Ya Jun Lin's** "White Noise" collection was inspired by signal waves and white noise as her computer crashed while she was researching images. She found it really interesting that signal waves bring all the images to the screen by transmitting with wire. This influenced her to design different fabric manipulations to visualize this concept.



**Tiffany Huang's** "Looking Down/Walking Through" collection is about the experience of looking at a city from an aerial perspective versus the physical experience of walking through one. She developed prints and embroideries that show aerial perspectives of the city, and to create the experience of physically walking through the space, she trapped little pieces of trash in her garments and used lines to indicate the feeling of space. She developed her own draping technique, where the geometric shapes that represent space and irregular panels of the aerial view translate the experience.



The winners will be given the fantastic opportunity to experience a 2-week trip to Kering facilities in Italy in June 2016. They will visit Kering's *Materials Innovation Lab*, which houses more than 2,000 sustainable fabric options available for use to all Kering brands, and many other brand locations in Milan, Vicenza, and Florence.

Before the trip, the winning designers' thesis collections will be exclusively featured in Saks Fifth Avenue New York's windows from May 27th to June 10th, 2016.

Additionally, the twelve finalists were granted invaluable visibility on Vogue.com and will be hosted for a mentoring session with Vogue.com editors.

Laurent Claquin, head of Kering Americas, said: "Parsons' students have, once again, exceeded our expectations during this year's "Empowering Imagination" contest. Ya Jun Lin and Tiffany Huang exhibit considerable talent. Their creative design and craftsmanship qualities are very important at Kering. We are happy to offer them a fantastic learning expedition at a number of Kering facilities in Europe".

Burak Cakmak, Dean of the School of Fashion, said: "I am proud of the work that the finalists presented, and thrilled that Ya Jun Lin and Tiffany Huang will be able to experience this wonderful opportunity. Kering is a leader in the fashion industry, and they continue to push past barriers into the future. At Parsons, we teach our students to think for real world problems, and I know the winners will learn and grow from their trip to the excellent Kering facilities in Europe."

#### **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, Boucheron, Dodo, Girard-Perregaux, JeanRichard, Pomellato, Qeelin, Ulysse Nardin, Puma, Volcom and Cobra. 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 more than €11.5 billion in 2015 and had more than 38,000 employees at year end. The Kering (previously PPR) share is listed on Euronext Paris (FR 0000121485, KER.PA, KER.FP).*

#### **About Parsons**

*The New School's Parsons School of 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, 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](http://www.newschool.edu/parsons).*

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