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16.05.2013

Parsons and Kering announce winners of second 'Empowering imagination' competition: Harim Jung and Yunxiang Zhou

∞ In Collaboration with Style.com and Barneys New York, two Parsons BFA Fashion Design Students Have Been Selected to Receive Prestigious Internships with Kering Brands

NEW YORK, May 16, 2013 – Kering and Parsons The New School for Design have announced the two winners of this year's "Empowering Imagination" student design competition. Harim Jung has been selected for her women's ready-to-wear designs, and Yunxiang Zhou has been chosen for her men's ready-to-wear designs. In addition to being awarded an internship at one of Kering's 19 luxury and sport & lifestyle brands, Jung and Zhou will also take part in a closed mentoring session with Style.com and will have their work showcased at the flagship Barneys New York on Madison Avenue, in the 8th Floor Co-op from May 28 – June 10. Their collections will also be on view as part of the Parsons Fashion Benefit taking place May 22.

The 14 Parsons BFA Fashion Design graduate finalists presented their thesis collections to a panel of fashion industry insiders, including Eco Age's Livia Firth, Style.com's Dirk Standen, Barney's New York's Dennis Freedman, Kering's Laurent Claquin, Paper Magazine's Mickey Boardman, and Parsons' Simon Collins. The panel selected the two winners based on quality and conceptual vision of their thesis collections, as well as their ability to communicate the idea behind the collection. As part of a special partnership this year, Style.com has been featuring the 14 finalists on their website since May 2.

"The fourteen student finalists for the Empowering Imagination competition exemplify the high level of talent and creativity that Parsons The New School for Design is so famous for. This year's competition was particularly difficult to judge as each student exhibited a unique point-of-view and creativity, marks of true emerging talent. Harim and Yunxiang both possess a natural level of maturity and skill which we feel will benefit greatly from at an internship with one of our 19 luxury and sport & lifestyle brands," said Laurent Claquin, Head of Kering Americas.

Harim Jung's inspiration for her thesis collection was a school uniform from her hometown of Seoul, South Korea. Her collection, called Identity + Ethos, is focused on personal experience. "It was quite clear from the start that I didn't want my collection to just be a re-creation of a memory," Jung says. *"I wanted the collection to be something more imaginative and, personally, more fun to make. As a result, I ended up really enjoying the process of creating different methods of patternmaking as a conceptual "time machine" that took me back in time. However, since I didn't want to keep this experience to myself, and wanted to leave room for anyone who would have*

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access to it as real garments, it was equally important to find the balance between accessibility and creativity."

Yunxiang Zhou was born in Tai'an, China and when she was five, her family moved to Israel. *"After four years at Parsons, I have learned a lot about fashion that I was never aware of before. My biggest gain, I think, is my personal awareness of the issue of sustainability. My focus is to establish a utility in the garment that the wearer would find useful and efficient for everyday life, and hence never throw away. I also utilize textiles that age well, such as leather and denim. For my thesis collection, I explored vintage menswear—the classic leather jacket and military parka, for example—and found that in menswear, the utility of a garment always gave birth to a classic that never went out of style. Based on the idea of workers' garments and tools, I developed a collection of aprons that celebrate utility. I am a strong believer that work is a person's greatest source of pride; when we have honed our craft, we feel accomplished and valuable. My thesis is a celebration of work."*

"There was an incredibly strong crop of talent this year competing for this prestigious competition," said Simon Collins, Dean of the School of Fashion at Parsons. *"Both Yunxiang and Harim provide a taste of the innovation and creativity to be found at Parsons, and their collections will be featured, alongside those of our other graduates in our annual Fashion Benefit on May 22, where we will honor another Parsons success story—our alumni Jack McCollough and Lazaro Hernandez of Proenza Schouler."*

About Parsons The New School for Design

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 the first fashion design program in America 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 that was 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 and Anna Sui; and rising talents Prabal Gurung, Derek Lam, Ohne Titel, Thakoon Panichgul, 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, Stella McCartney, Sergio Rossi, Boucheron, Girard-Perregaux, JeanRichard, 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 2012 and had 33,000 employees at year end. The PPR (in future Kering) share is listed on Euronext Paris (FR 0000121485, P RTP.PA, P PFP).

** PPR will become Kering, subject to approval at the Annual General Meeting on 18 June 2013.*

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