

Fashionable and socially responsible: the students from Raffles Design Institute Shanghai dominate the EcoChic Design Award China 2012!

October 22, Shanghai – This year’s Spring-Summer Edition of Shanghai Fashion Week sported a magnificent green color! The EcoChic Design Award was launched in China to promote environmental friendly designs within the local fashion industry. The nationwide competition, organized by fashion NGO “Redress”, reached its climax on the 22nd of October 2012 when the 10 finalists presented their collections during the grand finale under the white tents of the Shanghai Fashion Week. . The emerging fashion designers based their creations on reducing wastage as well as reusing and recycling fabrics. These 3 pillars of sustainable design have been particularly well executed by the students from Raffles Design Institute since they have dominated the competition, winning 2 of the 3 prizes awarded that night.

Yang Qi Ying (Cherry), Gong Jia Qi (Joanne) and Herlina Wijaya, fashion design students of Raffles Design Institute Shanghai, along with other 3 students from Raffles Design Institute Beijing, were shortlisted in the 10 grand finalists for the EcoChic Design Award since this June. The organizer, “Redress”, has provided all the finalists with professional workshops in order to help them in their creations.: Their sustainable garments were styled by Cheryl Leung, a world famous stylist and shot by Matthieu Lunard, an influential photographer. From August to October 2012, the grand finalists’ first sustainable garments were taken on an exhibition tour in the hotspots of Shanghai, Chengdu and Beijing. After six months of training on sustainable creative approaches, the 10 grand finalists each revealed their six-piece collections, made using textile waste and one or more of the sustainable design techniques of zero-waste, up-cycling and reconstruction.

Designers were judged by a panel of renowned experts, including Orsola de Castro (Co-founder of “From Somewhere” and “Esthetica”), Dorian Ho (Fashion Designer), Anderson Lee

(Vice Chairman, Sustainable Fashion Business Consortium), Helen Lee (Deputy Secretary General of Shanghai Fashion Designers' Association, Raffles Alumni), Margaret Kutt (Manager for Sustainable Projects, Esprit), Vega Wang (Fashion Designer) and Xiao Xue (Editorial Director of ELLE China).

After the catwalk and two competitive judging rounds, Gong Jia Qi, fashion design student from Raffles Design Institute Shanghai, was proclaimed Winner of the EcoChic Design Award China 2012. Her prize will be to design a sustainable collection for Esprit made out of recycled textiles. The “eco-friendly” garments should hit the stores in China in 2013.

“I am honored to win The EcoChic Design Award China 2012 and I hope my designs will inspire more Chinese designers and consumers to embrace sustainable fashion,” said Gong Jia Qi. “Designing Esprit’s next sustainable collection is a career-changing opportunity and I’m excited that I’ll be seeing my collection hit the streets of China.”

“We are delighted that Gong Jia Qi will design the next Recycled Collection for Esprit,” said Margaret Kutt, Project Manager Sustainability, Esprit. “The EcoChic Design Award allows Esprit to develop sustainable fashion lines whilst also engaging with Asia’s emerging sustainable fashion designers,” said Kutt.

Alongside Gong Jia Qi, another Raffles student, Yang Qi Ying, received the EcoChic Most Promising Student Award China 2012. She will visit Hong Kong Fashion Week in 2013 and explore Hong Kong’s booming sustainable fashion scene.

Finally, Chen Qin Zi was voted The EcoChic People’s Award China 2012 Winner, an award voted by the attending media covering the runway show in Xintiandi. Chen Qin Zi will have the opportunity to visit John Hardy’s sustainable production facilities in Bali, Indonesia.

On the runway of this Grand Finale, Raffles students proved that they do not only have an eye for design but also a mind for business and a responsible attitudes towards their community! Raffles Design Institute awakens the social awareness of the new generation of designers by providing courses such as ‘sustainable design’, “design futures” or “design research and interactive systems”. The genuine achievements of our students will be used as an example for the next generations of Chinese designers.



Gong Jia Qi wins the EcoChic Design Award China 2012 with a collection inspired by Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and has a chance to design a sustainable collection for Esprit.



Yang Qi Ying wins the EcoChic Most Promising Student Award China 2012 with a collection inspired by energetic April spring day.



Grand finalist Herlina Wijaya's collection inspired by dynamic urban lifestyle of modern ladies



Three winners take group photos with judge panel.



Two winners from Raffles Deign Institute: Yang Qi Ying (left) and Gong Jia Qi (right)



Official photos of Raffles students' sustainable collections: Gong Jia Qi, Yang Qi Ying, Herlina Wijaya (from left to right)

About Raffles Design Institute, Shanghai

Established in 1994, Raffles Design Institute, Shanghai is a collaboration between Singapore's Raffles Design Institute and Dong Hua University, China. The college enjoys pioneer status as one of the earliest approved Sino-Foreign Joint Cooperative Schools in China.

Raffles Design Institute, Shanghai is located within the campus of Dong Hua University, one of the most prestigious top ranking universities in China. The college enrolled its first intake of students in March 1995 and is the leading creative and business education provider in China offering higher education programs of international standards across a variety of disciplines in a multicultural setting.

Raffles Design Institute, Shanghai is committed to nurturing creative talents and design management expertise for the arts and design industry. Over the years, the college has built up a strong reputation for producing the most talented young designers and creative professionals in the region.

About The EcoChic Design Award

The EcoChic Design Award is a sustainable fashion design competition inspiring Asia's emerging fashion designers to create mainstream clothing with minimal waste. Designers are educated with the theory and techniques to enable them to create desirable sustainable clothing via reconstruction, up-cycling and zero-waste design techniques. The competition puts Asia's emerging sustainable design talent in the spotlight, creating a platform for the next generation of designers to break the boundaries of conventional fashion forever. The inaugural EcoChic Design Award was launched in Hong Kong in 2011.

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