Winners of International Young Designers' Festival in Dinan announced

By Lucile Deprez – 10 April 2017

The International Young Designers' Festival 2017 was held in Dinan, France, from 7th to 9th April, and the prize-giving ceremony fizzed with the energy which pervaded the entire event, successfully hosted for the second time by the Brittany town.

The award ceremony’s tone was set by a show featuring the couture collection by Eymeric François, a former festival winner, and collections by Cyril Mirat, a finalist in 2016, and lingerie brand Allande, accompanied by a live music performance.

The winners of the 2017 edition's four prizes, awarded on 8th April, were chosen from a shortlist of ten designers picked among the 180 initial applicants. Emerging designer Laurence Lallot won over the womenswear prize jury with a collection she aptly described as "guilelessly feminine, shorn of any embellishment."

Lallot, 25, dazzled the jury with a work impeccable in its finishings, down to the smallest pleat and tiniest detail. She was rewarded with the Womenswear Grand Prix, a prize which translates in substantial professional support and visibility opportunities at the Texworld and Who's Next trade shows.

The choice of winner appears to be a perfect match with the criteria and expectations expressed by jury president Marithé Bachellerie in an exclusive interview to FashionNetwork earlier in the day, featured on Fashion Network Premium. Bachellerie, the founder with François Girbaud of long-standing French label Marithé+François Girbaud, took Girbaud's place in the jury panel at the last minute. Laurence Lallot also won the special prize sponsored by food manufacturer Gavottes and the Fédération Française des Dentelles et Broderies (the French lace and embroidery federation).

The double victory is a launch pad for the emerging designer, who said that "My goal in entering this competition was to promote myself and to meet other designers, and ideally to set up a collaboration with groups like [French mail order company] La Redoute or the Galeries Lafayette department stores. For the time being I'd rather work for a fashion label, I don't intend launching my own brand immediately."

For menswear, the eleven-member jury panel awarded the Grand Prix to emerging Chinese designer Zhikai Yang, for his peerless blend of modern materials with ancient Japanese fabrics gleaned from historical costumes. Beijing-born Zhikay Yang, 28, walked off with a prize of approximately €50,000, the same amount awarded to the womenswear winner.

"It's the first time I take part in a competition, said Zhikay Yang. I loved the 'Save the planet' theme, and I decided to combine traditional fabrics with state-of-the-art materials. I believe quality is essential in menswear collections, because clothes must be made to last. Coming to France was a real experience for me."

Finally, two designers were awarded the Eco TLC prize, sponsored by the sustainability and recycling organisation set up by the French apparel and home linen textiles and footwear industry. Entrants were asked to design items using recycled materials and pre-owned objects. The mini dress created with denim and used buttons scavenged...
using recycled materials and pre-owned objects. The mini dress created with denim and used buttons scavenged from the sewing box of French designer Alexis Jodas’ mother got the jury’s plaudit, as did the khaki trench coat contrived by Japanese entrant Mizukami Seijiro from an old overcoat.

Following the success of the festival's second edition, the date for next year is already set: the 2018 International Young Designers’ Festival in Dinan is scheduled for 13th-15th April, and will feature an additional category, accessories, in partnership with the Première Classe trade show.

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