CIRCULAR DESIGN CHALLENGE

EIGHT TALENTED FASHION ENTREPRENEURS SHORTLISTED FOR INDIA'S FIRST SUSTAINABILTY AWARD IN FASHION

~The challenge saw over 900 registrations from over 30 cities in India~

~ 'Circular Design Challenge' – a collaborative initiative of RIL's R | Elan 'Fashion For Earth', UN in India and LFW ~

Mumbai, 3rd January 2019: The 'Circular Design Challenge' - a collaboration of Reliance Industries Ltd.'s (RIL) R | Elan 'Fashion for Earth' initiative, Lakmé Fashion Week (LFW) and the United Nations (UN) in India, has announced a shortlist of 8 designers. These designers were chosen based on innovative collections made by them using materials from diverse sources of waste including plastics. The aim of this initiative is to bring to the forefront environmental champions of tomorrow in the Indian fashion and textiles industry.

Circular fashion is a concept aimed to reduce the waste that goes into landfills today and increase the lifespan, reusability and recyclability of the products created. The finalists– Pozruh by Aiman Sabri, Bareek by Aman Singh, IRO IRO by Bhaavya Goenka, I Was A Sari by Poornima Pande & Stefano Funari, Lifaffa by Kanika Ahuja, Saltpetre by Pooja Monga, Miesu by Seerat Virdi and Doodlage by Kriti Tula were chosen after a rigorous selection process by an eminent jury. The challenge saw over 900 registrations from over 30 cities across the country.

The designers were required to incorporate circular components across the textile value chain in their design through the application of circular-design principles and demonstrate a positive impact on the environment and on society. They were evaluated and scored on usage of waste in their collection, fashion & aesthetic quotient, business viability/scalability, value chain and collaborations.

These chosen applicants will be mentored across personality, pitch and presentation development. There will be a final round where an esteemed panel will choose the winner on 31st January 2019, which is celebrated as Sustainable Fashion Day at LFW Summer Resort 2019.

The winner will be felicitated with a Grand Cash Prize of Rs 20 Lakh, to build their sustainable fashion brand, and will also avail an exclusive opportunity to showcase at the next season which is LFW Winter/Festive 2019.

Commenting on the partnership **Mr. Vipul Shah, COO – Petrochemicals, Reliance Industries Ltd.** said, *"As an industry leader in petrochemicals, RIL has embraced circularity and sustainability in our core values and operations, aiming to make the world a better place for the generations to come."*

"We are confident that the Circular Design Challenge will provide enormous opportunities for budding concept creators, fashion designers and the entire textile value chain to exhibit their innovative ideas, designs with a focus on circularity and sustainability. The initiative will help the entire Indian textile value chain to become a global leader in ingraining circularity in their business strategy and operations," Mr Shah added.

Yuri Afanasiev, UN Resident Coordinator in India, said: "*The Circular Design Challenge is an opportunity for innovative young designers to combine sustainable design practices with new circular business models, rethinking how we design our products for their next use -- not for 'end of life,' but rather 'end of use'.*

Atul Bagai, UN Environment, Country Head, India said, *"Total greenhouse gas emissions from textiles production, at 1.2 billion tonnes annually, are more than those of all international flights and maritime shipping combined. Creative approaches such as The Circular Design Challenge are a perfect opportunity to promote sustainable textile production and consumption and accelerate sustainable development in general.*

Jaspreet Chandok, Vice President and Head of Fashion at IMG Reliance said, *"We are committed to bringing new design talent and innovators to the fore season-on-season. Our partnership with the UN in India and R | Elan's Fashion for Earth initiative for the Circular Design Challenge is a step towards identifying and supporting champions in the field of sustainability."*

About the batch of 8 Circular Design finalists, image from their collection and quote:



Information on the designer and the collection:
Name: Aiman Sabri
Label: Pozruh
Age: 33 years
City: New Delhi

Aiman has a Masters in Fashion & Environment from London College of Fashion

The circularity elements in her collection include discarded fabric from t-shirts & other cutting waste, end of the line material from own garment manufacturing unit & local scrap dealers, reuse of discarded fabrics, wires, bags as textures & patterns using fabric patching and eco-friendly dyeing/printing and other techniques.

Her designs are inspired by the subcultures around the world through shared passion of creativity, fashion and the environment.

Quote on Circularity and Sustainability:

"As a designer; I want to use the power of fashion to make eco cool. The global fashion industry is the second most polluting industry next to oil. I want to use my creative ability and create solutions to this issue of textile and clothing waste and its impacts. I believe effective reuse solutions can enable the diversion of textile sources from landfill and create meaningful work opportunities."



Information on the designer and the collection:

Name: Aman Singh
Label: Bareek
Age: 28 years
City: New Delhi

Aman has done his BA honours from Delhi University.

The circularity elements include the waste plastic collected from beaches in Goa and processed as PET fabric for the collection of shirts. His shirts will be constructed with no-extra yoke, seamless sides, non-fused shirts and waste pinewood buttons. Additionally, the designer will have seed paper tags and recycled packaging for his collection.

His designs have taken inspiration from beaches and architecture - the Basilica of Bom Jesus, a UNESCO World Heritage site in particular; it has also been conceptualized from the Goa's tangible and intangible heritage to create The Goan Shirt™ for CDC.

Quote on Circularity and Sustainability:

"Through the Circular Design Challenge, we would be able to repurpose waste plastic that would otherwise end up in the wrong place. The Goan Shirt™ will be a beach/vacation shirt made of recycled poly ethylene terephthalate (PET) yarn. Derived from discarded plastic bottles on beaches, this yarn translates into a shirt that not only has you cleaning up well but has you doing your bit for Goan beaches. We want to create a contemporary garment which is Indian yet global and sets the benchmark in circularity. The Goan shirt is only the beginning. We want to take this concept to all polluted beach towns across the world."



Information on the designer and the collection:
Name: Bhavya Goenka
Label: IRO IRO
Age: 24 years
City: Jaipur

Bhavya has studied Textile Design from Indian Institute of Craft & Design and has trained under Crafting Luxury and Lifestyle Businesses from IIM-Ahmedabad.

The circularity elements include the usage of wastage offcuts of cotton, linen, and denim. He makes use of an indigenous fibre – Aakh that is grown without water in Rajasthan and natural dyes such as Neel and Kashish from artisans in Bagru.

His designs involve upcycling through handloom and mechanized embroidery that reflect attitude of revolution.

Quote on Circularity and Sustainability:

"I have been recently working to revive and document the use of a late 19th Century local fibre from Rajasthan- 'Aakh' which was used to make fabric. This fibre does not require water to grow. We also took up the offcuts produced in the process of manufacturing garments at our company and re-wove them into new fabric. This reweaving happened at a weaving cluster. Artisans there had moved on to alternative jobs but found this work interesting and did it on Sundays. They said this work helped them connect with their roots, establish uniqueness and give exposure of working with handloom to the next generation. Now they have 26 weavers across 2 villages attached with them. We have also collaborated with design houses and hotels who sent us their waste and we made a collection for them."



Information on the designer and the collection:
Name: Poornima Pande & Stefano Funari
Label: I Was A Sari
Age: 33 (Poornima), 50 (Stefano)
City: Mumbai

Poornima Pande has a post-graduation degree in Digital Marketing, along with a Bachelors' degree in Apparel Manufacturing from NIFT. Stefano Funari has graduated from Universita Bocconi, Italy.

The circular element is the fabric which is upcycled from pre-loved saris. The collection uses waste of one product as surface ornamentation of another to complete each look with coherence. It also includes hand embroidery on different products.

Their collection theme is vintage which includes vintage denims and old saris, along with embroidery & embellishments and the idea is to utilize existing resources and reinvent something truly unique & soulful.

Quote on Circularity and Sustainability:

"I was a Sari (IWAS) is as an eco-ethical lifestyle fashion brand, made by upcycling pre-loved saris. We engage with women from underprivileged communities to become the artisans of our designs and their futures. The relationship with the artisans, the training and production is managed through our NGO partners: Community Outreach Programme and Animedh Charitable Trust. We see things differently by taking an eco-ethical approach to fashion, implementing a sustainable, eco-friendly model which focuses on a triple bottom line constantly analyzing its social, environmental and financial impact, and understanding the relationship each has with the others."



Information on the designer and the collection:
Name: Kanika Ahuja
Label Name: Lifaffa
Age: 28 years
City: Delhi

Kanika has a bachelor's in engineering in Information and Communication Technology from Manipal University. She also has a Masters in Global Business Operations from Sri Ram College of Commerce, University of Delhi
The circular elements include usage of Hemp and PET fabric, handmade recycled plastic made from recycled polythene bags & discarded industrial fabric. The collection encompasses waste threads recycled and woven into textiles, recycled HRP made into embroidered clutches and fabric dyed using plant dyes.

Her collection combines the aesthetics of western contemporary fashion while providing a sense of familiarity with traditional Afghani embroideries and techniques.

Quote on Circularity and Sustainability:

"Our current fashion ideology of create, wear and dispose has made the fashion industry the second most polluting industry of the world. Our collection has a deep positive impact socially, economically and environmentally. 85% of the collection is made from plastic waste - PET bottles and low-density, single-use plastics. It is imperative to design a closed loop system for the usage of plastic to control pollution due to post-consumer waste plastic. Our upcycled plastic fabrics are produced sustainably and reduce the load of plastic waste in landfills. I want to be a part of this revolution which would provide a tremendous leap towards environmental protection. Alongside our collaboration with Akseer - a group of low-income Afghani refugee women, enriches this collection with dying Afghani embroideries and the delicate art of crochet. The sales of these pieces would have a deep social impact to create livelihoods for these women."



Information on the designer and the collection:
Name: Pooja Monga
Label Name: Saltpetre
Age: 37 years
City: Mumbai

Pooja boasts an MBA in Marketing from MICA.

The circular elements include Green Gold fabric by R-ELAN that is made using recycled PET bottles, Azo free dyes and natural buttons made of coconut shells. Additionally, the designer uses a 100% biodegradable packaging that can be used as a kitchen herb planter.
Her black & white capsule collection is inspired by Japan's Zen monochrome paintings. The designs have been produced using scientifically validated sustainable processes

Quote on Circularity and Sustainability:

“Each Saltpetre product is easy both on the wearer and on the environment. Our choice of raw materials, suppliers and all other parts of our supply chain is directed at minimizing the impact on the earth while maximizing the value for the wearer. We track the environmental footprint of our products from cradle to grave and share this information with an independent research team at Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur to quantify & compare with industry standards. We also facilitate loop-back of used Saltpetre clothes into the system through donation to Goonj. The production of garments happens only in a production unit with ethical with minimum standards for workers.”



Information on the designer and the collection:
Name: Seerat Virdi
Label Name: Miesu
Age: 27 years
City: Ludhiana

Seerat has a degree in BA Honors in Fashion Design from Pearl Academy of Fashion

The circular elements include the usage of discarded cotton and organic silks sourced from local boutiques and factories. Additionally, she uses recycled polyester fabric and discarded zippers & buttons in her collection.

Her collection attempts to mix her modern take on Phulkari, focusing on creating strong basics by prioritizing classic tailored items with youth-led street wear for today's empowered woman.

Quote on Circularity and Sustainability:

"As a designer we have power to influence change and realizing that made me shift my practices to be more ethical. Having the opportunity to be a part of an Indian community that is promoting sustainable fashion is extremely exciting. I really believe that powerful design can help heal the obliviousness that people have in regard to their impact on the environment. Using the CDC platform, I am demonstrating how achievable it is to apply the core ideology of circularity in fashion, (i.e. reuse and upcycle) to create beautiful and smart fashion that is also ethical. It should be a part of our responsibility to encourage sustainability and reusability of our clothes."



Information on the designer and the collection:
Name: Kriti Tula
Label Name: Doodlage
Age: 30 years
City: Delhi

Kriti has an MA in design management from the London College of Fashion and BA (Honors) fashion designing from Pearl Academy of Fashion.

The circular elements include the usage of discarded lyocell fabric, recycled cotton and wool, patchwork and paneling of waste fabrics and hand embroidery to fix stains. Additionally, she follows the Zero waste production techniques at in-house unit and MasterG, an ethical production unit in Delhi working to empower women.

Her collection is always inspired by the fabric itself. Taking an image of a young flower girl, all silhouettes of the collection are delicate with hints of lace. The colors are neutral with highlights of rust and mustard.

Quote on Circularity and Sustainability:
"Every mass manufacturing unit in India has a capacity of discarding up to 45000 meters of fabric waste daily. This accounts for defected fabrics, end of the line fabrics, post cutting waste and post stitching waste. We work to fix this fabric along with patching, paneling and embroidering to create numerous limited-edition collections. In FY 2018, we saved more than 6000 mtrs. of fabric from ending up in landfills. Producing no new fabric in a zero-waste set up. We saved, 4.6 million litres of water. 18,000 kgs of carbon footprints and added no chemicals and pesticides."

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Instagram: Lakméfashionwk
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/LakméFashionWk?fref=ts
YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/user/LakméFashionWk

About Lakmé Fashion Week:

Lakmé Fashion Week is jointly organized by Lakmé, the No.1 cosmetics and beauty services brand in India and IMG Reliance Pvt. Ltd., leaders in sports, fashion and entertainment marketing and management. Lakmé Fashion Week has been conceived and created with a vision to "Redefine the future of fashion and Integrate India into the global fashion world." Lakmé Fashion Week is organized twice every year. For further information log on to http://www.Lakméfashionweek.co.in

About IMG Reliance:

IMG Reliance Pvt Ltd. is an equal joint venture between Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), India's largest and most recognized private sector company, and IMG Worldwide (IMG), global leaders in sports, events, media and fashion.
The joint venture company develops, markets and manages sports, fashion and entertainment in India. Its current assets include India's premier fashion event, Lakmé Fashion Week and the Maharashtra Open. IMGR, having recently ventured into Talent Management, represents Rohit Sharma and Hardik Pandya for worldwide management and marketing representation.

UN Environment:

UN Environment is the leading global voice on the environment. It provides leadership and encourages partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. UN Environment works with governments, the private sector, civil society and with other UN entities and international organizations across the world.

R|Elan™:

R|Elan™ is a fast-growing brand of innovative fabrics that are borne out of a future-ready balance of performance, aesthetics, and sustainability and committed to the cause of creating a circular economy in the textile and fashion industry. R|Elan™ is one of the world's largest recycler of PET bottles, converting them into superior, wearable fabric using practices that help reduce waste and pollution. Throughout its manufacturing processes, R|Elan™ strives to contribute towards beautiful fashion that not only paves the future of responsible apparel and related industries but also preserves the beauty of our planet