

NET-A-PORTER

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL SEPTEMBER 5, 2022, 09:00 CET / 08:00 BST

NET-A-PORTER ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF THE INAUGURAL VANGUARD EDUCATION FUND AND INTEGRATES 3D DESIGN SUPPORT

NET-A-PORTER presents the recipients of its first student Vanguard Education Fund and celebrates the latest designers to join the broader Vanguard program – Miss Sohee and Grace Ling

LONDON, UK (SEPTEMBER 5, 2022) – NET-A-PORTER announces the winners of its inaugural Vanguard Education Fund for final-year university students, in partnership with the British Fashion Council (BFC), furthering its long-term commitment to nurturing emerging talent. An extension of The Vanguard, NET-A-PORTER's renowned mentorship and business-support program for womenswear designers, the new Education Fund provides both financial support and dedicated mentoring to final-year students as they embark on their careers.

This year, winners of the Vanguard Education Fund, alongside Miss Sohee and Grace Ling, will benefit from 3D garment-design training to create technically advanced, digitized products using true-to-life garment visualization, thereby reducing waste and improving time efficiency when creating samples. NET-A-PORTER has invested in the specialized training and access to the cutting-edge 3D software CLO, covering all associated costs for the designers for one year, equipping them with skills to design for the metaverse. The students will also be paired with two industry-leading mentors for 12 months, selected to complement the students' individual ambitions.

The Vanguard Education Fund 2022 is awarded to:

- Ben Davis, BA Fashion Design with Industry Placement, Kingston School of Art
- Renato Bras, BA Fashion Design with Marketing, Central Saint Martins
- Finlay Roberts, BA Fashion Design, Falmouth University
- Maissane Zinai, BA Fashion Design Womenswear, Central Saint Martins

NET-A-PORTER also celebrates its Vanguard program this month through a standalone campaign featuring the latest Vanguard brands for 2022, Miss Sohee and Grace Ling, the latter of whom also guest features in NET-A-PORTER's fifth Incredible Women podcast series, *The Rule Breakers*. In the campaign, Miss Sohee and Grace Ling are joined by alumni brands including Peter Do, Commission, Gauchere, Christopher John Rogers, Jia Jia, Sindiso Khumalo, Conner Ives, Lukhanyo Mdingi, Interior.NYC and Renaissance Renaissance, all of which are celebrated across NET-A-PORTER's channels. This gives the designers the opportunity to leverage NET-A-PORTER's digital scale and exposure to a global online audience of more than nine million, as they continue to build their profiles as designers.

As a champion and incubator of new talent, NET-A-PORTER takes pride in the powerful role it can play in bringing emerging brands to the industry and to a global audience. Through The Vanguard program, it has to date supported 27 brands, 52 percent of which are BIPOC-owned, on their journey to becoming successful businesses. Each designer is mentored by NET-A-PORTER's unparalleled global team of experts, who deliver in-depth training that focuses on building a successful business.

"We are thrilled to announce the inaugural winners of The Vanguard Education Fund and are excited to support the students as they embark on their professional journeys. Our goal is to continually expand our mentorship programs, and being able to offer learnings from our long-standing Vanguard program to university students marks an exciting next step in our work to ensure emerging designers have the tools they need for a successful career. The supporting campaign celebrates the best fashion from the most talented up-and-coming designers in the industry, showcasing the individuality and high caliber of brands launched as part of The Vanguard." **Libby Page, market director, NET-A-PORTER.**

Followers of NET-A-PORTER are invited to join the conversation on social media using: @NETAPORTER
For more information about NET-A-PORTER visit www.net-a-porter.com

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EDITORS' NOTES

The Vanguard Education Fund

- The Vanguard Education Fund is accessible to final-year students through a competition run by the BFC, open to all BFC Colleges Council members, as well as Parsons School of Design, Politecnico di Milano, TAFE Australia and FEDISA Fashion School Cape Town
- Four BA final-year university students are chosen as the winners of the fund by a group of judges from NET-A-PORTER and the BFC
- Each winner receives a monetary prize and access to two mentors for the academic year
- Mentors consist of NET-A-PORTER spokespeople, industry experts, brand founders, designers (including The Vanguard program alumni) and entrepreneurs
- Four winners are selected from more than 180 student applications following a competitive interview process with a panel of industry experts

2022 winners:

- **Ben Davis**
 - University: Kingston School of Art
 - Course: BA Fashion Design with Industry Placement
 - Highlights: Davis's work has been featured in music videos, including videos on regarded media platform Mixtape Madness; he buys and resells vintage clothing on Depop to help fund his work
 - Mentors: Conner Ives and Jessica Jung
- **Renato Bras**
 - University: Central Saint Martins
 - Course: BA Fashion Design with Marketing
 - Highlights: BFC Education Foundation BA Exceptional Circumstances Scholarship; The Grand Prix LVMH BA Scholarship; BFC BA Final Year Scholarship
 - Mentors: Christopher John Rogers and Alice Casely-Hayford
- **Finlay Roberts**
 - University: Falmouth University
 - Course: BA Fashion Design
 - Highlights: member of FACE (Fashion Academics Creating Equality); BBC Radio Cornwall segment on sustainability in fashion; 'Create the Future' challenge winner; successful Falmouth University Dragons' Den applicant
 - Mentors: Catherine Holstein and Libby Page
- **Maissane Zinai**
 - University: Central Saint Martins
 - Course: BA Fashion Design Womenswear
 - Highlights: *Paper* magazine cover with Katy Perry; BFC Scholarship Fund; winner of the Transmission Project (work showcased in the Balenciaga Museum)
 - Mentors: Eva Chen and Julia Sarr-Jamois

2022 mentors:

- Eva Chen, director of fashion partnerships at Instagram
- Julia Sarr-Jamois, fashion director at British Vogue
- Christopher John Rogers, fashion designer, founder and creative director of his eponymous label
- Conner Ives, fashion designer, founder and creative director of his eponymous label
- Catherine Holstein, fashion designer, founder and creative director of Khaite
- Jessica Jung, musician, actor and businesswoman
- Alice Casely-Hayford, content director at NET-A-PORTER
- Libby Page, market director at NET-A-PORTER

ABOUT NET-A-PORTER

NET-A-PORTER delivers incredible fashion to a global audience of more than nine million. As the world's leading online luxury and fashion retail business with the most authoritative product edit, it offers the ultimate curation of fashion.

NET-A-PORTER places special emphasis on highlighting the creativity and promise of the next generation of fashion talent via The Vanguard, a program that supports emerging brands, and its efforts extend to The Vanguard Education Fund, a mentorship scheme that helps final-year students as they embark on their careers within the fashion industry.

As consideration for environmental and social impact increasingly shapes its offering, NET-A-PORTER continues to grow its NET SUSTAIN edit. Furthermore, in 2021, NET-A-PORTER entered the world of luxury resale through a partnership with leading technology provider Reflaunt, enabling its customers to contribute to a more circular fashion system by selling and extending the lives of their designer items.

NET-A-PORTER speaks to a global community through award-winning editorial and content, from its entertaining and engaging podcast series to playful livestreamed videos featuring a diverse range of Incredible Women.

NET-A-PORTER champions unparalleled customer service, offering express worldwide shipping to more than 170 countries, a seamless shopping experience across all devices and a multi-lingual Customer Care and Personal Shopping team, available 24/7, 365 days a year. A pioneer of personal shopping and client-relations services for the digital era, NET-A-PORTER innovates and strengthens its offering with virtual styling, invitation-only digital exclusives and a world-class suite of specialized offers for the brand's most loyal and valuable customers.

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