

JOHNSTONS OF ELGIN AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The Scottish Academy of Fashion is pleased to announce the winners of the Johnstons of Elgin Prize. Edinburgh College of Art student Andrew Alastair McLaren wins the tailoring award, and Sonia Jane Hunter from Heriot-Watt University the knitwear category. The students will receive £1,000 each plus a week's internship with the highly prestigious cashmere company in their Hawick and Elgin factories. The students will be given fabric and yarns from Johnstons of Elgin's autumn/winter 2012 colours to make up their garments, which will be displayed at the Scottish Borders Design and Technology Showcase on 28 June 2012, where the prizes will be awarded.

The Johnstons of Elgin Award is being awarded for the first time in 2012. It seeks to reward excellence in two categories: tailoring and knitwear, and to support and encourage the talent emergent in Scottish universities. James Dracup, Group Managing Director, commented:

“Johnstons of Elgin is committed to nurturing and working with emerging design talent. We are delighted to launch The Johnstons of Elgin Prize in collaboration with The Scottish Academy of Fashion, aiding the development of Scotland as a global centre of excellence in fashion-related learning. We have enjoyed working with the participating universities and welcoming the winning students to their internship.”

The Scottish Academy of Fashion offers an opportunity for companies to easily reach a wide range of students across different universities in subjects relating to Fashion and Textiles. Kirsty Scott, Project Director of the Scottish Academy of Fashion, says:

“Johnstons of Elgin approached us with this fantastic opportunity for Scottish fashion or textiles students to work with one of Scotland's largest textiles companies. We had over 50 entries from Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh College of Art and Gray's School of Art at Robert Gordon University, and the standard has been extremely high.”

Susan Priestley-Cooper, Design Director of Johnstons of Elgin, said that Andrew Alastair McLaren's winning design in the tailoring category showed “excellent execution of imagery and brand identity. He demonstrated good choice of colour and inspired concept of taking the traditional tweed and adding to it through the addition of burnt out design adornment and digital print.”

Gillian Paton, Design Manager, commented on the knitwear category that ‘there was a good diversity through the entrants’ submissions of how they interpreted the ‘Heritage of Johnstons’. I am very much looking forward to seeing the winning garment made in our own yarn.’

Notes for editors:

Johnstons of Elgin is the manufacturer of the world's finest cashmere and fine woollens. It has a rich heritage which spans two centuries and is the only remaining mill in the UK which can transform cashmere from raw fibre to finished garment. Known as the ‘name behind the names’, Johnstons supplies leading couture houses and fashion independents alongside its own brand label. In October Johnstons was awarded the prestigious UKFT Gold Award for export achievement. Johnstons of Elgin employs 700 people in Scotland and operates from two sites, the flagship mill in Elgin in the Scottish Highlands and the knitwear plant in Hawick in the Scottish Borders. For more information please contact Jenny Stewart, j.stewart@johnstonscashmere.com.

The Scottish Academy of Fashion is an ambitious project developing Scotland as a global centre of excellence in fashion-related learning and commercially relevant research. We aim to attract the best national and international talent through collaborative industrial and academic research, knowledge exchange and networking. Scotland has a proven track record and worldwide reputation in education and the international fashion and textiles industries. We are combining these collective strengths to create a centre of excellence in education and innovation, working on a range of fashion, design and technology-led projects with manufacturers, designers and retailers. Our board members, staff and researchers in our partner universities collaborate with businesses to generate valuable projects for the advancement of the Scottish fashion industry. For more information please contact Leila Cruickshank, l.cruickshank@scottishacademyoffashion.com.

The Scottish Borders Design and Technology Showcase presents design, technology and innovation within Heriot-Watt University School of Textiles & Design, focusing on research and knowledge exchange activities with industry through an exhibition, panel discussion and accompanying publication. The focus is on research projects within the School, industry interventions supported by South of Scotland Business Solutions and collaborations with the Scottish Academy of Fashion. The Showcase is supported by South of Scotland Business Solutions (SoSBS) and funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Scottish Funding Council. The private view takes place on Thursday 28 June, by invitation only. For information contact Maggie Marr, 07765 068 813.