Dress of the Year 2015 Unveiled at the Fashion Museum, Bath

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The Fashion Museum, Bath has unveiled its Dress of the Year 2015, by visionary menswear designer Craig Green from his Spring/Summer 2015 show. The selection was made by Gordon Richardson, Creative Director at Topman.

Each year, the Fashion Museum invites a fashion luminary to select the Dress of the Year, an outfit that they feel encapsulates the prevailing mood of fashion, represents the past year and captures the zeitgeist or imagination. The outfit then goes on show at the museum and becomes part of its collection.

This is the first time in the history of Dress of the Year that menswear has been exclusively selected. However, since Craig Green graduated from Central Saint Martins in 2012 (his extraordinary MA collection earned him the L'Oreal Professional Creative Award), he has built a faithful female clientele that includes, amongst others, fashion editor Lou Stoppard and stylist Anna Trevelyan, who have been photographed wearing ensembles from Green's Spring/Summer 2015 collection.

Richardson's Dress of the Year 2015 selection therefore chimes perfectly with the current gender-neutral mood (an update on unisex fashion previously popular in the 1960s and 1970s), that has been trending in fashion, promoted by brands as diverse as Selfridges, Charles Worthington, Gucci, Vivienne Westwood and Hood By Air.

Green has generously gifted two ensembles, one shown on a male mannequin, and the second on a female. The mannequins have been donated to the Fashion Museum by Rootstein.

Green's Spring/Summer 2015 show (his first solo presentation), was reported by fashion writer Tim Blanks in his review on vogue.com as 'a fashion moment' that saw the audience weep. The writer went on to describe Green's collection of Zen-like clothes worn by barefoot male models as 'sweeping robes...visions of samurais, gurus...warrior, priest.' He ended his review in an ebullient mood: 'The Cult of Craig is about to explode'. For this show Green accessorised his models with kite-like wooden structures draped with muslin sails blowing in the breeze. The donation to the Fashion Museum includes one of these wearable wooden sculptures, and this too will be on display at the museum.

Craig Green said: “It is an incredible honour to have been selected for the Dress of the Year 2015. Many of the previous winners are design heroes of mine from a very young age, so to even be listed in the same list as them is very surreal. To be named as the first menswear recipient of the prize is an amazing compliment."

"There has been a female customer for the collections since the very beginning. To see anybody wearing pieces from the collections is something exciting for me – male or female. I am not sure why some of the pieces seem to attract a womenswear customer. [It] feels like some of the garments' shapes seem to have worked well on both male and female body shapes. It feels like a sign of the times, the direction that everything is moving towards. The rules and restrictions as to what is gender specific have become increasingly blurred. It feels like something that should be celebrated.”

"[The strong blue colour]… was reactionary to the seasons previous. The use of colour in those seasons was quite extreme, used within multi-tonal prints. For the SS15 season the focus was more on one single colour and the tone of the electric blue fitted the energy of the collection.”

Selector Gordon Richardson said: "My choice of Craig Green as the designer of Dress of the Year 2015 was in some respects incredibly straightforward. Modern contemporary designs do not get any better than this. There's a deliberately simple and somewhat austere element to his work that results in beautiful, sparse clothes that transcend gender so effortlessly and skilfully fuse his love of craft and fashion."

The Fashion Museum is run by Bath & North East Somerset Council. Councillor Patrick Anketell-Jones (Conservative, Lansdown), the Council's Cabinet Member for Economic Development, said: “It is wonderful that Craig Green's ground-breaking outfits will go on display at the Fashion Museum, and become part of the museum's world-class collection. Local residents will be able to see the two ensembles chosen as Dress of the Year 2015 free with a Discovery Card.”

The Dress of the Year 2015 will be on display from 3 December 2015 to 3 January 2016. It will then be showcased in a new exhibition at the Fashion Museum from spring 2016.

Ends

Note to Editors

The Dress of the Year Collection was launched in 1963 by Doris Langley Moore, founder of the Fashion Museum. Dress of the Year 1963, chosen by the Fashion Writers' Association, was a grey wool dress and cream blouse by Mary Quant. Other feted designers featured include Ossie Clark, Kenzo Takada, Missoni, Calvin Klein, Miuccia Prada, Karl Lagerfeld (for Chloe and Chanel), Alexander McQueen, Tom Ford and Raf Simons. Dress of the Year 2014 was a wrapped plastic ensemble by Gareth Pugh, selected by LOVE editor Katie Grand.

While the selector of the Dress of the Year is for the most part a journalist or stylist, Richardson is not the first retail expert to select the Dress of the Year. In 1990 Joan Burstein, owner of Browns luxury boutique, chose a glamorous velvet trouser suit by Italian designer Romeo Gigli, while in 2010 milliner Stephen Jones selected a raw-edged silk gown by Vivienne Westwood. The roll call of selectors provides a fascinating picture of the wider, ever-changing fashion industry.

The Dress of the Year scheme at the Fashion Museum Bath refers to 'dress' in the generic sense of clothing - as in 'national dress'– rather than as one type of garment. In the past selections have included trouser ensembles for women (1967, 1969, 1990, 1992) and ensembles for men (1971, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1986, 1998, 2006). This is the first time that the Dress of the Year is entirely menswear, although of course it is worn by women, and this will be reflected in the display at the Fashion Museum.

A full listing of the Dress of the Year collection can be viewed atwww.fashionmuseum.co.uk/galleries/dress-year.

Tickets for the Fashion Museum cost £8.25 adults/£7.25 concessions/£6.25 children/£24 families. Entry is free for local Discovery Card holders.

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