



15 October 2010

Best of Manchester Awards - and the winners are...

Gerardine (correct spelling) Hemingway was given a lifetime achievement award at the Best of Manchester Awards 2010 this evening at an event held at St Ann's Church in Manchester city centre.

One half of a formidable partnership with her husband Wayne, she helped create the world-famous fashion brand Red or Dead, starting out with stalls on Camden and Kensington Market and establishing themselves at Afflecks in Manchester's Northern Quarter. Gerardine designed, made and sold her first collection from an 180sq ft space in Kensington Market and within a week of opening received her first order from Macy's, New York. The order successfully delivered (using family who opened a small manufacturing unit in Blackburn), Red or Dead was off and running and developed into a label that received global acclaim, resulting in winning the prestigious British Fashion Council's "Street Style" Designer of the Year Award for an unprecedented three consecutive years in 1996, 1997 and 1998.

In 1999, having sold Red or Dead, Gerardine and Wayne set up HemingwayDesign, which specialises in affordable and social design. Gerardine has four grown-up children with Wayne and was awarded a MBE for services to design in the June 06 Queens Birthday Honours list and has a Doctorate from Plymouth, Lancaster and Stafford Universities.

Gerardine was presented with the lifetime achievement award by Peter Saville, Manchester Creative Director and co-founder of Factory Records.

Commenting on the lifetime achievement award, Vaughan Allen, chief executive of Cityco, award organisers said: "Gerardine was instrumental in creating a brand that is so much more than just a fashion label. She brought her quintessential Northern, worker bee mentality, that unique Manchester maverick approach and unflinching self drive and fearless belief and launched the globally celebrated and cult-followed

brand Red or Dead. A brand that summed up exactly what British youth and street culture stood for more than any other."

Wayne Hemingway, commenting on his wife's award said: Gerardine is a natural born designer. Like all great designers she believes that everything can be improved. Unlike most designers though she has remained true to her roots and her social conscience and from the success we have achieved with the affordable housing projects, to the coastal regeneration schemes to the products in retailers like Topps Tiles and B & Q, to our own home which she designed, Gerardine hasn't forgotten what value means. She constantly surprises me. No one works harder and no one can do it better .She's a star and a most unassuming one at that."

In the New Designer category Kirsty Payne aged 21, a graduate in fashion design from the University of Salford beat off stiff competition from two other young designers, Rebecca Thomson and Charlotte Taylor to scoop the £2, 000 prize.

One of the judges, Caroline Rush, chief executive of the British Fashion Council, commenting on Kirsty Payne said: "There is a wealth of talent in Manchester that made judging incredibly difficult, however Kirsty's pieces showed a level of sophistication that stood out. Recognition and financial support can make a real difference at the beginning of a career and that is what this award is all about."

The judges all loved Kirsty's sophisticated spin on the quintessentially British equestrian theme, merging the Country Girl and City Girl silhouette and bringing a look of the countryside onto busy city streets so effortlessly. The judging panel also commended Kirsty's quiet confidence in the simplicity of her designs. It was felt that the award could make a massive difference to her, offering and opening up opportunities to further her skills and talents.

In the smaller independent retailer category Junk Shop, the eco-logical fashion brand pipped Barton Arcade's couture design boutique Cocu and Northern Quarter men's wear tailor James Darby to the post and picked up the top prize and a £2, 000 cheque.

Rob Warner, Umbro's design director commenting on the independent retailer award said: "Junk is offering so much to the industry and the city. It's not just a style

orientated concept but embraces so many things that are on the minds and in the hearts of progressive fashion thinkers today. This award is very well deserved.”

The judging panel commented that Junk Shop's approach to offer the broadest retail experience was of particular interest. They also paid tribute to their socially conscious ethos, including its Green Pound currency, use of reclaimed and recycled products, community involvement, collaborative business partnerships and their educational and skills development packages.

This is the fourth year for the The Best of Manchester Awards. This Urbis legacy project is now organised by Cityco, Manchester's city centre management company, and has three awards which focus on fashion to coincide with the city centre Manchester - Heart of Fashion marketing campaign launched this week. The awards aim to help kick-start the careers of talented individuals by offering professional development and contacts.

Vaughan Allen, chief executive of Cityco, Manchester's city centre management company added: “It's not just about a glittering awards ceremony and a prize on the night, but about how we work with creative designers and independent retailers to open doors for their future careers—how we work with them over the next year to maximise their creative skills.”

Judges included Manchester's Creative Director, Peter Saville; Dolly Jones, Vogue.com; Caroline Rush, Chief Executive, British Fashion Council; Claire Lomax, Co-founder, Flux Magazine; Jessica Lowe, Press and Marketing Manager, Harvey Nichols; Rob Warner, Design Director, Umbro; Helen Tither, Manchester Evening News, Oscar Pinto Hervia, Creative Director of Hervia Bazaar and Hervia Ltd.

Each winner will be given £2,000 prize-money and will be offered a tailored prize to suit their specific requirements. In previous years, winners and nominees in the fashion category have gone on to see their collections displayed in high-profile outlets such as Harvey Nichols and featured in nationally distributed print publications, all raising their professional profile remarkably.

Previous winners and nominees include Rags to Bitches who went on to be nominated for Womenswear Retailer of the Year at the Drapers Magazine Awards and are now on-line, Junk Shop who launched a new collection with Top Shop and a

commission from Oxfam Boutique, their designs sitting along side high-end labels including Prada and Nabil El Nayal , MMU fashion graduate who has been tipped as the 'next face of British womenswear' and Vogue declaring his work as 'beautiful and bold'. Last year's fashion winner, Holly Russell, also an MMU alumnus, has had her designs worn by Lady Gaga.

For more information visit www.cityco.com or <http://bestofmanchester.wordpress.com/>

The Awards are supported by the Manchester Fashion Network.

Ends

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Notes to editors

Cityco works in partnership to manage and market city centre Manchester. It is an independent, not-for-profit, company funded by both public and private sector.

The Best of Manchester Awards were originally created by Urbis, Manchester's centre of popular culture, to support the city's creative community across art, music and fashion. Now run as an Urbis legacy project, with the support of Cityco, Manchester's city centre management company, the awards continue to encourage and support the next generation of creatives and businesses. Coinciding with the launch of a new Manchester Style Guide, and a major campaign based around the city's leading fashion offer

New Designer Award judges:

Peter Saville is one of the most influential designers of our time. He has created a series of iconic images, including album covers for the bands Joy Division and New Order, and conceptual design projects that are exhibited all over the world. He is now contributing to the economic regeneration of Manchester as the city's creative director. Born in Manchester in 1955, Saville studied graphic design there, and in

1979, a year after graduating, co-founded the legendary independent record label, Factory Records, with the late Tony Wilson. As the label's creative director, he began his famous collaboration with Joy Division and New Order. Saville later designed seminal artwork at other labels for Roxy Music, Wham!, Suede and Pulp. He has also worked extensively in fashion by creating advertising and branding for Alexander McQueen, Dior, Jil Sander, Stella McCartney, Yohji Yamamoto and, most recently, Kate Moss and Kilgour. Saville's clients in the cultural sector have included Centre Pompidou in Paris and the Barbican Centre and Whitechapel Gallery in London. He has also developed products in collaboration with Adidas and Raf Simons. Saville has won numerous design awards, and his achievements in design were celebrated in The Peter Saville Show at the Design Museum in London, 2003 followed by Urbis in 2004. In 2005, he staged his first major show in a contemporary art museum with the exhibition, ESTATE, at the Migros Museum in Zurich. Saville's ongoing work in conceptual design is exhibited at Paul Stolper in London and at Galerie Neu in Berlin. An international authority on design and creativity, he is a regular broadcaster on design issues and lectures all over the world. Throughout his career, Saville has engaged with design at a strategic level, culminating in his appointment as consultant creative director to Manchester City Council in 2004. Peter's work with the city provides a catalyst that allows organisations and initiatives across all sectors to think creatively about strategy and implementation, and to strive for excellence in pursuit of the established brand vision. His involvement shapes the direction of many public and private sector projects across the city, resulting in significant impacts and successes such as the critically acclaimed Manchester International Festival.

Claire Lomax is a co-founder of Flux Magazine and has worked with some of the world's biggest names in fashion. She strives to commission the most cutting-edge creative talent for Flux, an irreverent and thought-provoking take on leftfield and popular culture that brings fun, wit and adventure back to art, music, fashion, film and culture. From its Manchester base, Flux distributes 70,000 copies of FLUX nationally and internationally four times a year alongside its online editorial magazine. Flux features a brave and bold mix of well-respected figures and groundbreaking fashion, bands, artists and ideas. Those appearing in Flux include Yohji Yamamoto, Alexander McQueen, The Fall, Boudicca, The XX, David Shrigley, Franz Ferdinand, Tracey Emin, Pixies, Liars, Squarepusher, Shane Meadows, Bill Drummond, Nick Cave, Jake and Dinos Chapman and Vivienne Westwood.

Caroline Rush was appointed CEO of the British Fashion Council in April 2009 following two years advising on PR and Communications Strategy for the BFC as an external adviser and running the press office for London Fashion Week. She has 16 years experience in PR and Marketing across fashion, music, beauty and lifestyle both in house and from an agency perspective.

Oscar Pinto Hervia, Creative Director of Hervia Bazaar and Hervia Ltd. Born

Valparaiso, Chile in 1965. Oscar began his retail career by working for a fashion retailer on Bridge Street, Manchester for 7 years. He then went on to set up his first independent boutique in the Royal Exchange in 1993 called Hervia with his partner.

Hervia quickly became the place to visit for innovative and exciting British brands like Vivienne Westwood, Alexander McQueen, Helmut Lang and Hussein Chalayan. It was a destination store for North West celebrities and Take That were seen in there on numerous occasions buying the latest designs from famous 90s t-shirt designers Antoni and Alison and Hysteria Glamour to wear in their videos.

Before the Manchester bomb destroyed the Royal Exchange store in 1996, Hervia went into discussions with Vivienne Westwood to open a standalone store selling only her collections on Saint Mary's Street just off Deansgate. This store opened in 1995 and here began a working relationship that has lasted over 15 years and has seen Oscar open seven Vivienne Westwood stores throughout the country. Hervia are now the leading UK franchisee for Vivienne Westwood with stores in Manchester, York, Liverpool, The Trafford Centre, Newcastle and Nottingham.

In February of this year Oscar opened a luxury multi brand boutique in Spring Gardens stocking some of the most high end and highly respected designers of the fashion world. Hervia Bazaar is a beautiful art deco inspired store selling designs for men and women from Antonio Berardi, Viktor & Rolf, John Galliano, Pierre Hardy, House of Holland, Ann Demeulemeester, A Child of the Jago, Rick Owens and many more. Although only open since the end of February Hervia Bazaar has already won praise from the national press being heralded as one of the most desirable shops to visit in the North West with Grazia magazine saying it "fills a design gap in the North."

Oscar has recently joined forces with Elle Magazine and The British Fashion Council to support an initiative they are running called Launch Pad. The scheme puts successful retailers together with new British design talent in order to help them develop their business. Oscar was on a prestigious panel of judges who included model Helena Christensen, Elle editor Lorraine Candy and BFC's CEO Caroline Rush and from S/S11 has chosen to stock and support new designers Holly Fulton and Eudon Choi.

Small Independent Retailer/Designer Award:

Peter Saville – see bio above.

Dolly Jones studied History of Art at Manchester University before arriving at Vogue for three week's work experience. Next came London's University of the Arts Periodical Journalism course, during which she was commissioned to interview "someone at the top of their game" – Alexandra Shulman obliged – and she was later invited back to take up a six month internship as editorial assistant of the magazine. The "Writer" job at VOGUE.COM came up in January 2000. A decade later – after breaking news every day, working with the Condé Nast Digital team to develop the site to its fullest potential and being named editor in 2005 – she is now responsible for an awarding-winning website that is the most fashion-forward and regularly updated fashion destination online. In 2008 her role was expanded to Executive Editor of Condé Nast Digital, while remaining editor of VOGUE.COM. She sits on various fashion panels including the British Fashion Council and the Innovation Initiative Forum and she is also on the committee of the British Society of Magazine Editors.

Jessica Lowe is Press and Marketing Manager for Harvey Nichols in Manchester. She works promoting the garments of some of the world's finest and most successful designers as well as more niche brands and new names in the fashion world. In the competition she will be looking for retailers that have a creative approach in building a brand, customer service and communicating with their customers.

Rob Warner, Umbro Design Director - Global Product. Warner joined Umbro in August 2009 and leads product design for all categories across performance, lifestyle and fashion.

Originally from Birmingham and a graduate of the BA Fashion Design with Technology course at Manchester Metropolitan University, Rob's former employers include Puma and O'Neill. He has directed product concepts for the 2006 World Cup, 2008 Olympic Games and Volvo Ocean Race as well as collaborations with the likes of Luella Bartley, Neil Barrett and Ferrari.

Rob's passion for challenging design preconceptions saw Peter Saville introduced to the Umbro fold, leading to the "New Fabric of England" home uniform for the English national football team.

Helen Tither - Manchester Style Guide editor and Manchester Evening News columnist. She has interviewed everyone from Posh Spice to the Prime Minister in her 10 years in journalism.

As Women's and Fashion editor at the M.E.N. she set up the award-winning Style supplement and interviewed some of the city's favourite fashion exports including Matthew Williamson and the first interview with Henry Holland. As well as reporting from the catwalks of Milan and London fashion weeks. But her passion has always been for unearthing the up-and-coming design talent and independent boutiques that make our city such an amazing shopping destination.

Since going freelance last year, Helen now edits Manchester Arndale's Inside magazine, the new Manchester Style Guide, alongside a weekly opinion column for the M.E.N. and various fashion features for the internet. In her spare time, she admits to spending far too much time "researching" the fashion finds in Manchester's coolest new stores.