



**Press Release**

**00.01am, 11<sup>th</sup> July 2008**

**'FASHION FORWARD' SPONSORSHIP WINNERS ANNOUNCED**

The British Fashion Council today announces that designers **Christopher Kane, Erdem, Marios Schwab** and **Roksanda Ilincic** have been chosen to receive British Fashion Council **Fashion Forward** sponsorship.

The scheme, established two years ago, provides financial support to UK-based designers who are in the early stages of developing their business and have already established a profile at London Fashion Week.

The award, partly supported this season by the London Development Agency, consists of a substantial cash prize, to be used towards producing an on-schedule catwalk show at London Fashion Week, and has been previously won by Giles Deacon, Jonathan Saunders, Richard Nicoll, Jens Laugesen and Sinha-Stanic.

Christopher Kane, Erdem and Marios Schwab are all being awarded Fashion Forward sponsorship for the first-time. Roksanda Ilincic is a recipient for the second time.

In 2006, Christopher Kane launched his own label with his sister Tammy (collaborator and business partner) and has gone on to build his label into a major player in the high-fashion world. The label is a key contributor to trends, demonstrating a contemporary and progressive vision.

On receiving the sponsorship, Christopher said "I am thrilled to have been awarded Fashion Forward sponsorship by the British Fashion Council, this is my fifth catwalk show at London Fashion Week and I am grateful to have their continued support."

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Erdem was launched in 2005 by Erdem Moralioglu and has since won plaudits for its signature look fusing sharp, forward tailoring with romanticism and bold graphic custom-designed silk prints. His most recent collection was inspired by the fashion legend Iris Apfel and vintage colour photographs of his mother from the 60's and 70's. Key pieces included botanical print dresses, Macs and embroidered biker gowns. Erdem said "We are thrilled about winning Fashion Forward sponsorship! Showing in London is paramount to us as a brand, the sponsorship will not only allow us to show but also to grow as a company."

Marios Schwab has been credited with leading the body-conscious fashion movement with his figure hugging feminine dresses since his label launched in 2005. His collections can be bought in directional boutiques and stores world-wide, including Browns, Harvey Nichols and Dover Street Market in London, Maria Luisa in Paris and Opening Ceremony and Barneys in NY. Marios commented "I am very excited about winning this award and am looking forward to the next collection. This award, to me, means recognition - both in a business sense as well as a creative one."

Roksanda Ilincic is feted for her haute couture glamorous contemporary feminine style and personal elegance. Concentrating mainly on her covetable cocktail and occasion dresses for which she is renowned, the collections conjure up the romantic and feminine feel of the past, while their execution provides a sharper, modern twist. The two aspects of haute couture and modern prêt-a-porter are an essential base for her design work and the label's market position. On receiving the sponsorship, Roksanda said "The attention and feedback that I received from my last Fashion Forward show was phenomenal and I feel extremely lucky to be in a position to enjoy this privilege for the second time. I think it's great that the British Fashion Council has introduced this valuable award to London Fashion Week."

Hilary Riva, Chief Executive of the British Fashion Council commented: "Fashion Forward is a British Fashion Council support scheme which contributes to building a sustainable fashion industry in London, through providing funding to talented emerging designers at a time when it is often required the most. This season's winners already have an international reputation, giving them a firm platform to develop their businesses into influential fashion brands."

For more information and exclusive interviews with the designers visit [www.londonfashionweek.co.uk/fashionforward](http://www.londonfashionweek.co.uk/fashionforward)

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For further information regarding this seasons Fashion Forward winners please contact:

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**Notes to Editors:**

**About this season's Fashion Forward recipients**

**CHRISTOPHER KANE**

Glaswegian-born Christopher Kane's designs creatively fuse fabric, colour and print. In the year 2000, Christopher moved to London when he was 17 years old to enroll at Central St Martins School of Art. Directly after showing his graduate collection, Christopher presented a private viewing of his work to the editor-in-chief of US Vogue, Anna Wintour. This led to him being invited to sit front row with Anna Wintour at Versace's A/W 06 show in Milan.

In September 2006, Christopher was awarded New Generation sponsorship from the British Fashion Council and he held his first solo catwalk show. He went on to receive NewGen support for four consecutive seasons. His successes culminated last year with the receipt of the New Designer of the Year award at the 2007 British Fashion Awards.

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**ERDEM**

This London ready-to-wear line was established in 2005 by Erdem Moralioglu. Erdem studied in Canada, and following a defining internship for Vivienne Westwood he moved to London in 2000, earning a masters degree from The Royal College of Art. He went on to close the 2003 RCA Show with his graduate collection. After a stint in New York assisting Diane Von Furstenberg, Erdem moved back to London to establish his own label.

Erdem has staged four London Fashion Week shows and in 2007 he was awarded with the British Fashion Council Fashion Enterprise Award sponsored by Swarovski. His exquisite designs are consistently in demand and are synonymous with style icons such as Keira Knightly, Kirsten Dunst, Nicole Ritchie, Elle MacPherson, Claudia Schiffer, Tilda Swinton and Chloe Sevigny.

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## MARIOS SCHWAB

31 year old Schwab lives and works in London where he launched his label in 2005. First studying in Berlin where he graduated with distinction and Best Student Award from Esmond, he then moved to London where he graduated with an MA in Womenswear Fashion from Central St Martins in 2003.

Marios Schwab has shown on schedule at London Fashion Week since SS06 when he first received the British Fashion Councils NewGen sponsorship. He went on to receive NewGen sponsorship for four consecutive seasons.

His dresses have been worn by Kate Moss, Hilary Duff, Kylie Minogue, Thandie Newton and Clemence Posey.

Marios Schwab was awarded Best New Designer at the British Fashion Awards in 2006. In 2007 he was the winner of the Swiss Textiles Award.

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## ROKSANDA ILINCIC

After studying both Architecture and Applied Arts in her native Belgrade, Roksanda Ilincic came to London where she gained her Masters Degree in Womenswear at Central St Martins. Feted for her haute couture glamorous contemporary feminine style and personal elegance, she epitomises modernity and glamour, and is a regular presence at some of London's most fashionable parties.

With 6 shows at London Fashion Week under her belt, Roksanda Ilincic has become feted for her demi-couture, and beautifully crafted costumes, which combined elements of 40s and 50s Parisian haute couture with a modern feminine silhouette. She has attracted a loyal customer base including celebrity clients who include: Cate Blanchett, Rosamund Pike, Roisin Murphy, Cristina Ricci, Thandie Newton, and socialite Olympia Scarry, as well as elegant women of all ages.

This is the second season that Roksanda has been awarded the Fashion Forward sponsorship and she previously received the British Fashion Councils NewGen sponsorship four times. She is regularly nominated for designer awards, including: Swarovski Fashion Enterprise 2006, and BFC New Designer of the Year 2006.

She is a visiting lecturer at Central St. Martins and Instituto Marangoni.

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### About Fashion Forward

Fashion Forward is a British Fashion Council scheme designed to provide support to UK based designers who have already established a profile at London Fashion Week through the New Generation programme, or who are at an equivalent stage in their business. The primary aim is to enable designers to show their collections at London Fashion Week. Fashion Forward sponsorship recipients are selected by a panel of press, buyers and representatives from the BFC.

The London Development Agency (LDA) works to improve the quality of life for all Londoners and drive sustainable economic growth. The LDA awarded the British Fashion Council a three-year funding package worth £4.2million in December 2007. As part of the grant agreement the British Fashion Council will provide business support to London's emerging designers and raise the profile of London Fashion Week to international markets.