

BRITISH FASHION COUNCIL

# FASHION FORUM

PRESS RELEASE

12<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2018

## THE BRITISH FASHION COUNCIL HOST FASHION FORUM THOUGHT LEADERSHIP EVENT ON BREAKING THROUGH BARRIERS IN THE INDUSTRY

Yesterday, the British Fashion Council in collaboration with innovation consultancy TheCurrent, hosted the Fashion Forum, a thought leadership event bringing together industry leaders from fashion, investment and technology to collectively debate and share knowledge on the topic 'Breaking Through Barriers'. Hosted by The Ned, the curated group of 140 business leaders and industry activists included representation from global brands, international retailers and designer businesses encouraged to join in the conversation on how to shape the industry to be fit for the future.

Fashion Forum is a think tank designed to debate the important issues of the sector while enabling UK fashion businesses to fulfill their growth potential through maximising opportunities presented by international expansion and technology. The event showcases businesses with high growth potential and encourages business connections to generate investment opportunities through networking between the curated list of individuals in design, investment, finance and technology alongside the broader fashion community of digital influencers, entrepreneurs and lawyers.

From international expansion and changing business models to technological advances and positive fashion; the topics of the day included 'Diversity in Fashion – Engaging in a More Progressive Conversation', 'Breaking Through Barriers – Creating Fast Growth in the Modern Era' and 'Winning in China – Understanding Expectations of the Chinese Consumer. To accompany the themes of the day, TheCurrent provided a curated 'The Innovation Space' - a collective of ten disruptive technology companies with innovative fashion applications for guests to demo.

Fashion Forum is hosted by Caroline Rush, CEO, British Fashion Council and Sian Westerman, President, BFC Business & Investment Pillar and is comprised of a series of panel discussions, brainstorming and workshops and speakers included Avery Baker, Blondey McCoy, Daniela Vega, Desirée Bollier, Edie Campbell, Elizabeth Paton, Jo Ellison, Kenya Hunt, Louise Troen, Pauline Bohl, Rodrigo Bazan, Sandrine Deveaux, Stavros Karelis, Stephanie Phair, Tommy Hilfiger and Ulric Jerome.

Key learnings from the day included:

- **Positive Fashion** – Diversity and Sustainability are key issues for all businesses in the fashion industry. Panellists discussed ways of adapting simple practices to set business practices up for success. Bravery was a key theme and speakers encouraged brands to weave sustainability and diversity into commercial pitches and core business values. A panel discussing business conduct in the age of #metoo urged powerful industry representatives to help educate the wider industry around ways to move towards true gender equality.
- **Customer, Customer, Customer** – Putting the customer first is a priority and panellists urged businesses to focus on using data to truly understand their consumer and their needs. Speakers discussed using data to inspire the customer giving them a reason to engage with the brand both online and instore.

- **Technology and Innovation** – TheCurrent presented the most exciting technologies shifting consumer expectations and their impact on the fashion industry. Invisible Tech - delivering instant gratification giving brands greater awareness of consumer demands. Intelligent Relevancy – truly understanding data to know your customer intimately, resulting in a better experience. Trusted Transparency - mirroring your customer’s values to create new, authentic bonds with them. Guests were encouraged to think about new technologies can help overcome organisational challenges as well as amplify a brand’s purpose, values and accountability.

On the day, The British Fashion Council announced a new 2-year partnership with BFC patron and supporter, The Bicester Village Shopping Collection which will see them collectively support British fashion talent with a tailored programme of expert guidance in business development. The partnership is the latest development of The Bicester Village Shopping Collection’s innovative mentorship programme “The Business of Retail” and will give a handpicked group of BFC Fashion Trust, BFC Vogue Designer Fashion Fund alumni and established British brands tailored business development, mentoring and support.

Furthermore, the partnership will bring together this collective of established designer businesses in a direct to consumer experience through an exclusive and unique annual sample sale of curated British designers at Bicester Village in Autumn 2018. A first for both organisations which will put into practice “The Business of Retail” development which designers will receive as part of the partnership’s mentorship programme.

## **FASHION FORUM 2018 TOPICS & SPEAKERS**

### **Power Down to Power Further hosted by Equinox**

Moderator: Gentry Long, Equinox Managing Director  
Justin Jacobs, Equinox Master Trainer & Sleep Coach  
Mimi Xu, DJ, Producer, Composer  
Vicky Lee, Digital Fashion Influencer

**Ulric Jerome, Chief Executive, MATCHESFASHION.COM** in conversation with Lauren Indvik, Head of News & Features, Vogue International

### **Diversity in Fashion - Engaging in a more progressive conversation**

Moderator: Kenya Hunt, Deputy Editor and Fashion Features Director, Elle Magazine  
John Horner, Managing Director, Models 1  
Munroe Bergdorf, Social Activist, Broadcaster & Model  
Naomi Shimada, Model

### **Sustainability 101 - How change is filtering throughout the industry**

Moderator: Rachel Arthur, Chief Intelligence Officer, TheCurrent  
Daniella Vega, Director of Sustainability, Selfridges  
Eva Kruse, CEO, Global Fashion Agenda  
Martine Jarlgaard, Founder & Creative Director, Martine Jarlgaard London  
Pauline Bohl, Director of Corporate Responsibility, Burberry

**BlueSnap: How to Protect Your Business in the Digital-First Economy**

### **Breaking through barriers - Creating fast growth in the modern era**

Moderator: Lauren Indvik, Head of News & Features, Vogue International  
Han Chong, Founder & Creative Director, Self-Portrait

Nicolaj Reffstrup, CEO, Ganni  
Rodrigo Bazan, CEO, Thom Browne

### **Winning in China - understanding expectations of the Chinese consumer**

Moderator: Desirée Bollier, Chair and Global Chief Merchant, Value Retail  
Angela Farrugia, EVP/Group Managing Director, CAA Global Brands Group  
Bora Aksu, Designer & Owner, Bora Aksu  
Paul Tyce, UK Country Head, VIP.com

**Whalar:** Liberating the creative voice: elevating your brand with the next generation of influencers

**Real Innovation for Today's Fashion Consumer:** Rachel Arthur, Chief Intelligence Officer, TheCurrent

### **Cutting Out the Middleman - Lessons on engagement from direct to consumer disruptors**

Moderator: Liz Bacelar, Founder, TheCurrent  
Jen Rubio, Co-Founder & Chief Brand Officer, Away  
Tim Brown, Co-Founder & CEO, AllBirds  
Toby Darbyshire, CEO, Heist Studios

### **A New Code of Conduct - The changing face of business in the age of #metoo**

Moderator: Elizabeth Paton, European Styles Correspondent, NY Times  
Ciara Byrne, Director of Strategic Initiatives, Condé Nast  
Edie Campbell, Model, Journalist, Equestrian & Activist  
Louise Troen, VP of International Marketing & Communications, Bumble

**The Culture Builders:** Haute couture culture - creating a high-performance culture in the fashion business

### **Future Flagships - The new role of brick-and-mortar through the lens of digital**

Moderator: Liz Bacelar, Founder, TheCurrent  
Edgardo Osorio, Founder & Creative Director, Aquazzura  
Sandrine Deveaux, Managing Director, Farfetch Store of the Future  
William Kim, CEO, All Saints

### **Harnessing the Hype - How Luxury can learn from Streetwear culture**

Moderator: Tammy Smulders, President, VICE Fashion & Luxury Group  
Blondey McCoy, Artist, Designer, Skater & Model  
Ferdinando Verderi, Creative Director & Founding Partner, Johannes Leonardo  
Stavros Karelis, Founder and Buying Director, MACHINE-A

**rewardStyle:** Redefining influencers: How to drive ROI for your business

**Tommy Hilfiger, Designer & Founder and Avery Baker, Chief Brand Officer** in conversation with Jo Ellison, Fashion Editor, Financial Times

**The Innovation Space curated by TheCurrent:** Antavo, Bumble Bizz, FTSY, Hero, Heuritech, Kino-mo, Restory, Save Your Wardrobe, SplitBase, Wide Eyes and Zigzag

The British Fashion Council would like to thank TheCurrent, The Ned, The Bicester Village Shopping Collection and DHL for their support of Fashion Forum as well as all speakers, moderators and workshop hosts for donating their time and sharing their insight and knowledge.

- ENDS -

**For BFC press enquiries please contact:**

Sophie Matthews, Head of Media and Retail Partnerships, British Fashion Council  
[sophie.matthews@britishfashioncouncil.com](mailto:sophie.matthews@britishfashioncouncil.com) | +44 (0) 20 7759 1986

**For Fashion Forum enquiries please contact:**

Millie Graham, Head of Commercial and Sales, British Fashion Council  
[millie.graham@britishfashioncouncil.com](mailto:millie.graham@britishfashioncouncil.com) | +44 (0)20 7759 1951

**ABOUT BRITISH FASHION COUNCIL**

The British Fashion Council (BFC) was set up in 1983 to promote British fashion internationally and co-ordinate this promotion through fashion weeks, exhibitions and showcasing events. The BFC now supports designers beginning at college level and extending to talent identification, business support and showcasing schemes to help British designer businesses develop their profiles and business globally and promote British fashion and its influential role in Britain and London. The BFC Colleges Council offers support to students through its Foundation, BA and MA scholarships, links with industry through design competitions and Graduate Preview Day. Talent identification and business support schemes include BFC Fashion Film; BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund; BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund and NEWGEN which includes womenswear, menswear and accessories. The BFC supports Boden's Future British initiative. The BFC also runs and owns charities including the BFC Fashion Arts Foundation, the BFC Fashion Trust and the BFC Education Foundation. Showcasing initiatives and events include London Fashion Week, London Fashion Week Men's, LONDON show ROOMS, International Fashion Showcase, London Fashion Week Festival and the annual celebration of creativity and innovation in the fashion industry: The Fashion Awards.

**The Ned:** Set in the former Midland Bank building, The Ned was designed by Sir Edwin 'Ned' Lutyens in 1924. A collaboration between Sydell Group and Soho House & Co, the space includes ten restaurants, 250 bedrooms channeling 1920s and 1930s design, a range of men's and women's grooming services and 'Ned's Club', where members have access to a rooftop pool, gym, spa, hammam and a late-night bar & lounge in the original vault.

**TheCurrent** is an innovation consultancy at the forefront of consumer retail and technology. We amplify innovation capabilities for the fashion and luxury industries by using actionable insights and a large global network to build results-driven collaborations between brands, retailers and top startups around the globe.