

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**IMG ANNOUNCES 2021 WINNERS OF NEXT GEN,  
AFTERPAY AUSTRALIAN FASHION WEEK'S EMERGING DESIGNER PROGRAM**

**SYDNEY** (1 March, 2021) – IMG today announced the winners of *Next Gen, Afterpay Australian Fashion Week's (AAFW)* emerging designer program, presented by DHL. AAFW will take place 31 May – 4 June, 2021, live at Carriageworks, Sydney, and virtually at [australianfashionweek.com](http://australianfashionweek.com). The Next Gen runway show will take place on Tuesday, 1 June at 2pm on the official AAFW schedule.

Established in 1996 with the goal of identifying Australia's emerging designers, each year's winners selected for the Next Gen prize are provided invaluable marketing, publicity and social media coverage to reach a global audience, and industry-networking opportunities. Next Gen has helped discover and launch the careers of Camilla and Marc, Kate Sylvester, Gorman, sass and bide and Akira.

IMG is pleased to share the list of winners of the 2021 program:

- **Aaizél:** Minhee Jo has a unique approach to fashion, converging the influences of romantic and detailed European Art and traditional East Asian clothing construction. With a strong focus on structured silhouettes and undone styling, sharpened with a contemporary edge, all Aaizél collections are designed and produced in Australia.
- **Erik-Yvon:** Erik Yvon is a Melbourne-based fashion designer who draws inspiration from his origins in Mauritius. Erik has found success in national design competitions such as The Wool Awards and the Australian Fashion Awards, and gained experience within the Australian fashion industry with Romance Was Born and Neo Dia before forming his own label.
- **Outfaced:** Designer Megan Taylor is a recent graduate of Whitehouse Institute of Design, Melbourne. During her time at school Megan was selected as a finalist for the Student Award at Melbourne Fashion Week 2019. She went on to secure the Student of the Year award at the Whitehouse Institute Graduate showcase in December of 2019.
- **Replica Project:** Prior to undertaking a Master of Fashion at RMIT University Australia, designer Amanda Nicols worked as a costume cutter and maker with film credits including Baz Luhrmann's 'Australia' and 'The Great Gatsby,' and Ridley Scott's 'Alien: Covenant'. Nichols is also a recipient of the Winston Churchill Fellowship.

Designer look books and imagery can be found [here](#).

"IMG is dedicated to supporting Australia's emerging designers through our Next Gen program. This year's winners showcase the creative excellence and talent of those who are shaping the future of Australian fashion," commented Natalie Xenita, Executive Director of IMG's fashion events group, Asia-Pacific region.

To complement the Next Gen runway show, a panel discussion will be presented by DHL, on Thursday 3 June at 6pm, as part of AAFW's ongoing series of culturally-enriching conversations, **AAFW: The Talks**. Australian fashion's next generation of designers will share the challenges and opportunities of working during the pandemic, and where they see the future of our industry.

"DHL congratulates the exemplary winners of the 2021 Next Gen program. For more than 50 years, we have helped emerging designers connect with their global customers and we understand the incredible ingenuity and dedication Australian designers employ to achieve continued success on the world stage," Gary Edstein, CEO and Senior Vice President, DHL Express Australia said.

AAFW is an IMG event supported by Destination NSW, the NSW Government's tourism and major events agency.

Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney, Stuart Ayres, said: "Fashion is a central part of our cultural fabric and is closely interwoven into so many different parts of our society, including

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agriculture, manufacturing, retail, job creation and the local economy. The NSW Government is proud to support an initiative that recognises the future leaders of this important industry and gives them a platform to showcase their ingenuity and innovation from Australia's fashion capital, Sydney, to the rest of the world."

In addition to DHL and Destination NSW, AAFW is made possible through the support of Afterpay, City of Sydney, Skye Suites, ghd hair, Napoleon Perdis, Hunter Lab, GlamCorner, San Pellegrino, Tempus Two and Disaronno.

The digital home for AAFW is [www.australianfashionweek.com](http://www.australianfashionweek.com) and @AusFashionWeek across Instagram and Facebook, and @AUSFW on Twitter, where fans may follow along through the official event hashtags #AUSFW and #AAFW.

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**About IMG:**

IMG is a global leader in sports, fashion, events and media. The company manages some of the world's greatest athletes and fashion icons; owns and operates hundreds of live events annually; and is a leading independent producer and distributor of sports and entertainment media. IMG also specialises in licensing, sports training and league development. IMG is a subsidiary of Endeavor, a global entertainment, sports and content company.

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