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APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Loro Piana names Knit Design Award 2023 winners

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The annual competition invites young designers from around the world to submit their innovative, creations. Image credit: Loro Piana

By AMIRAH KEATON

Italian cashmere label Loro Piana is supporting creativity and craftsmanship with the seventh edition of an annual initiative.



The Loro Piana Knit Design Award is an international competition that seeks to discover and support the most promising emerging talents in the field; the competition invites young designers from around the world to submit their innovative creations. With this distinction, Loro Piana aims to nurture creativity and foster new approaches to knitwear design, all the while redefining the role of sustainability in fashion.

Knit Design Award 2023

Loro Piana's Knit Design Award provides an unparalleled platform for emerging and established designers to showcase their visionary interpretations of knitwear.

The 2023 edition of the Loro Piana Knit Design Award offers participants an opportunity to compete in two categories: Women's Knitwear and Men's Knitwear.

Recipients of the Loro Piana Knit Design Award 2023 are awarded a handmade silver trophy, plus an employment contract with the company. The winning duo announced in April got the chance to see their designs produced and showcased at Pitti Filati in Florence, thus gaining international recognition and exposure.

The grand prize also included a cash award of just over \$20,000, providing not only prestige but also practical support for the winning designer's career.

Additionally, the winner will have the unique opportunity to collaborate with Loro Piana's skilled craftsmen and gain insights into the brand's unparalleled expertise in textile production.

Runners-up will also receive generous cash prizes, further emphasizing the award's commitment to nurturing talent and fostering creativity. Adhering to the "Regenerate" theme, this year's award cycle followed a comprehensive selection process.

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Focusing on the circular reuse of fibers and materials, young talents from six participating schools including the Fashion Institute of Technology of New York, Heriot Watt University of Edinburgh, Donghua University Shanghai, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Universita IUAV di Venezia, and Institut Français de la Mode were invited to submit their original knitwear designs.

Entries were then evaluated by a panel of esteemed judges, comprising industry experts, fashion designers and Loro Piana executives.

Judges assess the entries based on various criteria, including creativity, technical expertise, sustainable practices, and the ability to push the boundaries of knitwear design. After careful consideration, a shortlist of finalists is selected. These finalists are then given the opportunity to bring their designs to life, with the support and mentorship of Loro Piana's master artisans.

The effort culminates in an extraordinary event that showcases the finalists' exceptional wear. A grand finale brings together esteemed guests who gather to witness the unveilings.

During the event, each finalist presents their collection on the runway, allowing the audience to experience the intricate craftsmanship and artistic flair behind their work. The atmosphere is charged with anticipation as the judges carefully evaluate the collections, considering their technical execution, aesthetics and ability to resonate with today's luxury consumer.

While the Knit Design Award 2023 celebrates emerging talent, it also acknowledges the achievements of established designers.

The competition features a special category, the Loro Piana Heritage Knitwear Award, which pays homage to traditional knitwear techniques and craftsmanship. This category honors designers who have made significant contributions to the field, showcasing their dedication to preserving and evolving age-old techniques.

Future of knitwear

The company's Knit Design Award holds significant importance for the luxury fashion industry and emerging designers alike.

For aspiring designers, it serves as a springboard for their careers, offering exposure to a global audience and industry recognition. The mentorship and support provided by Loro Piana enable these designers to refine their skills and develop a deeper understanding of the luxury market.

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Moreover, this competition highlights Loro Piana's unwavering commitment to sustainable practices (see story). As part of its corporate responsibility strategy, Loro Piana strives to promote ethical production, reduce environmental impact, and ensure the longevity of traditional craftsmanship (see story).

By recognizing and celebrating sustainable design, the Knit Design Award brings a positive boost to sustainable strides made within the high-end apparel segment.

All in all, the competition honors the time-honored traditions of knitting while encouraging designers to experiment with new techniques, materials and technologies. In doing so, the award bridges the gap between tradition and innovation, creating a platform that inspires and propels the future of luxury knitwear forward.

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