

Fashion Crossover London Designer Portfolio – VULIWEAR

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Designer Introduction



Designer – Vuliwear

Behind the eyewear label with the most unique lenses is Dionne Ellison. Vuliwear sunglasses are inspired by nature, specifically the awesome colors and patterns of insect eyes. As part of our Global Young Talent in the December issue of Harper's Bazaar UK, we had the pleasure of speaking to the Philly based designer about the importance of nature and the idea behind Vuliwear.

Exclusive Interview with Fashion Crossover London

What inspired you to become a fashion designer and more particular an eyewear designer?

I come from a family of fashionistas, my mother was a seamstress who could sew without a pattern and my oldest sister is a fashion designer and artist who brings the Vuli designs to life with her detailed sketches. Growing up we hosted several fashion shows and I was one of the models, so becoming a fashion designer comes naturally. Eyewear on the other hand is a different animal all together. I had no experience in this specific industry, so I had to do a lot of research. When I came across the macrophotography of insect eyes, I was amazed by the beautiful color and patterns of their compound eyes and the fact that it was hiding right under our noses made me want to explore the possibilities. The first thing that came to mind was sunglasses and Vuliwear was born.

What's the story behind your brand name Vuliwear?

I wanted to create a brand with a story and a name with meaning that people could relate to. I wanted a name that was different, catchy and easy to remember. Vuli means "shade" in Swahili. As an African American woman, it sometimes makes me sad not knowing exactly where my family was taken from and I often wonder what language they spoke. I don't speak Swahili, but "vuli" feels right when it rolls off my tongue.

Why did nature and insect inspire you for this collection?

I loved the idea that hidden beauty was buzzing all around us. The irony is that we tend to swat to kill flies, wasps and other tiny creepy crawlers, but God creatively adorned many of them with beautiful aesthetics to be appreciated and admired. I wanted this collection to be unique, stylish and exclusive so that each lens design speaks to your personal style. Most eyewear brands focus on the frame, Vuliwear is all about the lenses, which is the first thing you see. It just makes sense to me. Our customers invest in quality fashion that looks and feels great, that's Vuliwear.

What will you take forward from this collection onto your future designs?

Quality, color and uniqueness are the essence of Vuliwear and will always be incorporated into our products. Look for additional accessories and clothing that will be inspired by nature and other beautiful elements.

You're originally from the USA, and have most recently joined Fashion Crossover London, what inspired the decision to make the leap to Europe?

After attending SILMO (Paris) and MIDO (Milan) eyewear tradeshow I noticed that eyewear appeared to be an important accessory, much more so than in the USA. Optical stores are on every corner. Europeans wear and invest in eyewear like Americans wear and invest in sneakers. I also feel that Europeans appreciate and seek out new, upcoming designers so why not explore the market. Additionally, our lenses and frames are both made in Italy. It's a big world and I don't want to put a limit on something as universal as sunglasses. The sun continues to shine on the world, so see beyond and shade up!

Collection Picture Featured in UK Harper's Bazaar



Cover of UK Harper's Bazaar Print Magazine



Feature in UK Harper's Bazaar Print Magazine

Bazaar Fashion Edit



FASHION CROSSOVER LONDON GLOBAL YOUNG TALENT 2020 THE ELUSIVE NATURE OF IDENTITY

For the last Global Young Talent of 2020, Fashion Crossover London hand-picked fifteen of the most promising designers from both East and West. We weave a fashion fantasy along with the sustainable designs of our talents that highlight the importance of nature and your true self, holding up a mirror to who we truly are.

We start our exploration by tapping into the fading memories of childhood, recorded through furniture and brought to life in Zhi Ying's jewellery. As we grow up, we come across Bingjin Zhu's mother, the glue of the family, representing her softness and power in the delicate draping of her tailored pieces. We stay close to home with Margarita & Cristina Ng's collection that looks at the unique bonds of twins and how this mirrored image affects their identity. Vera I.J. Lee, too, looks at identity and how places can become constraints for culture, menswear designer Donghun Han sees it as a global societal phenomenon, pinpointing the floating identities in this new world and Yujin Chen explores gender fluidity through grunge music.

LaFACADE offers a helping accessory, building up the human identity, one timeless bag at a time, while Audrey Alexandre supplies women with sustainable and luxurious handbags carrying the French stamp of elegance. Looking at different types of bags, Cheska Studio transforms sleeping bags into functional sportswear.

Henschke Jewellery revives the ancient techniques using the traditional Bohemian Lampfire, whereas Anne Elisabeth F Marthinsen breathes new life into the literary classic A Picture of Dorian Gray, with her sustainable womenswear collection.

Making a strong case for the unparalleled success of female entrepreneurs Dornie Ellison and Rachael Broussard, responsible for the founding of womenswear brand R. Michele The Label and eyewear brand Vuliwear, respectively.

Closing our list are Sarah Richardson and Qiuguo Renee Pan, both finding inspiration in nature, one in conspicuous carnivorous plants, the latter in the dynamic change of water.

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