

GENERATION NOW

WorldSkills UK's Made to Measure competition 2008

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Two gold medal winners were announced following the finals of WorldSkills UK's Made to Measure competition on September 7. WGSN reports on a fascinating and thorough selection process.

Judges awarded two top prizes, as **less than two marks separated the final scores of the two winners.** Katy McGuirk, studying at Huddersfield University, and Sophie Willett from Central Saint Martins, saw off stiff competition from other worthy competitors, and can be rightly proud of their achievement.

This rigorous competition tested the participants' design, pattern-cutting and construction skills.



Made to Measure winners Sophie Willett, Richard Maynes and Katy McGuirk

The six finalists

Judges, who included former Fashion Fringe winner Gavin Douglas and established UK tailor Imtaz Khaliq, marked the participants' work at every stage, to strict, specific criteria. The winners demonstrated real focus and richly deserved their prestigious awards. Along with the gold medal, **Katy McGuirk also won a year's subscription to WGSN, while Sophie Willett won a work placement at Imtaz Khaliq's studio.**

Richard Maynes from Somerset College was awarded the bronze medal.



Sophie Willett

Katy McGuirk

Richard Maynes

Katy McGuirk said of her experience: **"I feel like I have developed so much by taking part in Made to Measure.** I finished my first year of university having only just started to learn about pattern-cutting and garment production, but this competition has pushed me to advance my skills in fashion design. **It has helped me to be much more confident with pattern-cutting and sewing, and I feel I have achieved a lot under such a tight timescale.** I think we all surprised ourselves in how much we could achieve."

The **Made to Measure** competition is managed by UK Skills in association with Fashion Awareness Direct and supported by Skillfast UK.

WorldSkills UK

WorldSkills UK is a portfolio of skills competitions designed by leading industry experts and training providers aimed at students, trainees and employees. Visit the WorldSkills UK website to find out more www.worldskillsuk.org

WorldSkills is a not-for-profit membership association open to agencies or bodies which have a responsibility for promoting vocational education and training in their respective countries/regions.

WorldSkills International

is an enormous event which encompasses a series of multidiscipline live competitions held every two years, and is regarded as the Olympics of skills-based competitions. The next event is in Calgary, Canada, in 2009. London is host for the 2011 event. To win a gold medal at this 'live' event takes commitment, hard work, total focus and attention to detail.

www.worldskills.org

FAD

The FAD (Fashion Awareness Direct) team have been brought in by WorldSkills UK to bring their impressive connections and specialist experience in running UK-based fashion competitions and workshops.

www.fad.org.uk

Contact Fran Hunt for more information on FAD - or to contact the students. fran@fad.org.uk

Judges for the WorldSkills UK 'Made to Measure'



Students at work during the final 'live' stage of the competition

The judges said: "**Katy McGuirk impressed us at every stage of this competition** - she is a really great all-rounder. Her consistent good work from the design stage through to strong pattern-cutting and constructions skills ensured that she was a real force to be reckoned with."

Competition were: **Gavin Douglas**, designer and Fashion Fringe winner, 2006; **Imtaz Khaliq**, bespoke tailor; and **Joyce Thornton**, WGSN's Generation Now senior editor.

www.gavindouglasfashio...

www.imtaz.com

The 2009 WorldSkills UK fashion competition brief will launch on the WorldSkills UK website in October. Please contact fran@fad.org.uk for further information.



Judges marking

Katie McGuirk's design work

They added: "The other gold medal winner, **Sophie Willett, made her mark with her great creative energy and sheer, focused hard work** in creating an ambitious, inventive design."

Willett said: "It's the most amazing feeling to have won a gold medal. It hasn't quite sunk in yet. The competition has given me confidence to go out there and go after my dreams."



Katy McGuirk's design work

She added: "It has taught me that hard work will always pay off, and if you put the work in you will always reap the benefits eventually. **This brief in particular has allowed me to challenge my skills and I feel that I have definitely improved as a result of this competition.**"



Sophie Willett, design and final garment

For this competition the **WorldSkills UK team forged a formidable alliance with respected UK charity FAD**, (Fashion Awareness Direct), whose **creative director, Louise De Caires, created the challenging and inspiring brief**. Student fashion designers were asked to submit designs for an innovative parka, inspired by Inuit tribes and traditions.

De Caires said: "The resulting designs were phenomenal. The creations exhibited at the final reflected the level of competence of the budding designers, and their comments of their experience not wanting to end validated my impression that **young people are eager to embrace and find solutions to complex briefs."**



Judges (L-R) Imtaz Khaliq, Joyce Thornton and Gavin Douglas at work

Following the initial design stage the students selected were challenged at stage two to cut a pattern and make a toile for their own parka outerwear design. **To ensure transparency and fairness, the students had to physically create this in a 'live' situation, held over two days at Hackney Community College in July.** 12 participants were then whittled down to six, who went through to the final stage.

For stage three of the competition, finalists had been allowed the summer months to work independently, amending their initial toile and pattern as much as they wished.



Finalists (L-R) Alice Binns, Laura May and Katie Webb

The final challenge was held over the weekend of September 6-7 at The School of Design, University of Northumbria in Newcastle Upon Tyne. The **finalists were asked to construct and complete a finished garment** for presentation to the judges. Once again, judges worked to strict criteria, marking the final patterns and toiles, before appraising the finished garment.



Louise De Caires, FAD's Creative Director and (at back) Victoria Mahwinney, WorldSkills UK Training Manager

Original 12 participants at Hackney Community College in July

The strict criteria, rigour and testing nature of this competition are what set it apart from many. The benefits of this approach are substantial. Some 'real life' pressure is injected into the competition scenario, and **students unanimously responded in a positive way to this challenge.**

Richard Maynes, bronze medal winner, told WGSN: "What I enjoyed most about the competition was it gave me the chance to indulge in my passion surrounded by fellow creative, ambitious, professional individuals. **Thanks to the competition I now feel more confident about my skills. I feel more competent and willing to experiment and explore the unknown.**"



Finalists completing their garments.

The winners and the runners-up now have the possibility to be part of the huge **International WorldSkills competition** in 2009, which will be held in Calgary, Canada. Should they be eligible (the cut-off age for WorldSkills Competitors is 23) and if selected to go forward for this "once-in-a-lifetime" experience, they will benefit from additional and varied training coordinated by their **WorldSkills UK Training**

Manager, Victoria Mahwhinney.

Mahwinney told WGSN that in addition to the obvious honing of existing skills, competitors' confidence and interpersonal skills are boosted enormously, and **participants emerge transformed by this experience.**

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