

I.T. 843: GWAND

GRAND AT GWAND

One of the most phenomenal prizes in fashion, promoting new designer talent, GWAND Fashion Festival in Lucerne proved, once again, its passion and dedication to fashion's future.

In November 2004, amongst the panoramic vistas of Lucerne north Switzerland, the 11th edition of the **GWAND** Fashion Festival took place. The festival's notoriety is largely down to having an enormous euro 100,000 major prize, awarded by Swiss Textiles. However, GWAND also encompasses other awards, ranging from the now obligatory student competitions, the *Ackermann* commercial award and numerous shows and exhibitions. What makes the event unique is its massive contact database of fashion's glitterati and the opportunity for young designers to take their work to a whole new professional level. The awards and promotion on offer here are world class and GWAND commits itself to developing a designer into a profitable and creative label.

Launched in 1993, GWAND is the brainchild of *Suzanna Vock*. Initially restricted to Swiss designers, in 2002 Suzanna opened the competition up to international talent, "Fashion is not national, it is international!" she rightly says. Contemporary fashion design must thrive on cross-reference and multicultural influences to stay cutting edge, which can only be good for all involved. Eleven years on, and GWAND has gone from strength to strength, with sponsorship from **Swiss Textiles**, **Ackermann**, **Annabelle**, **Stadt Luzern**, **Olympus**, **Swiss Air** and many more. The effort put into GWAND is astonishing and reflects a love for fashion in all its facets. In March 2004 the GWAND foundation was established to take on the promotional role and to annually organize the GWAND Fashion Festivals at a high international



level. GWAND is also a promotional platform and a networking opportunity, both nationally and internationally, for fashion designers and students. An additional highlight was a catwalk show of the fruits of last year's Swiss Textiles award winner, **Raf Simons**, and it was evident that winning this award has given his label real backbone. The festival can only be described as intense, savvy, highbrow and totally, fashionably, worthwhile.

THE PRIZES

PRIX JUSTE-AU-CORPS

The Luzerner Theatre gave Swiss designer, **Diana Ammann** the award for best costume design. The prize was to create a collection for a theatre or Opera production at the Luzerner Theatre.

FREIXENET AWARD FOR MODELS

Simon Funk and **Milena Iselin** each won a modelling contract with GWAND who have an arrangement with various model agencies worldwide.

OLYMPUS & ICON MAGAZINE AWARD

This Prize was only for a young Swiss designer, to photograph their collection to promote themselves seriously. **Kazu Huggler's** collection won the award and was photographed by **Kanjo Take**, using model **Nadine Willis** who has also appeared in previous Gucci campaigns.



From left: **Lisa Feldmann** (editor in chief *Annabelle*), **Antonio Berardi** (Designer) and **Monika Schärer** (presenter), made by the photographer **Sonja Hugentobler**

The shoot took place during the GWAND Fashion Festival and was open to public viewing, so that people who have never have seen how a shoot works could watch. Olympus and Icon offered editorial space within Icon magazine to Kanjo Take, showing Kazu Huggler's collection.

ANNABELLE AWARD

For the first time, Switzerland's top women's magazine,

Annabelle, sponsored an award offering a Swiss design student a one-year internship at **Antonio Berardi's** studio in Italy, including accommodation and subsistence. The award went to **Sophie Scheibler**, whose collection featured digital images on cotton jersey.

ACKERMANN PRÊT-A-PORTER PRIZE

By the Ackermann mail-order house/contemporary designers. Ackermann produces the biggest mail order catalogue in Switzerland – distributed to over a million Swiss households. The winner, **Lutz**, received euro 50,000 prize money, plus a specially commissioned collection for the company's catalogue, which will appear under the Lutz name. The commercial benefits are enormous – creating massive commercial awareness and contact with new producers and production locations. Inevitably the award will promote the label, bringing it to a bigger audience. The collection will be featured in the Ackermann spring/summer 2005 catalogue.

SWISS TEXTILES AWARD

The main prize, euro 100,000, is not in cash, but in financial support, to assist in the establishment of an international fashion career. The focus as to how this money can be put to best use (i.e. media work, fashion show productions, searches for suitable commercial partners etc.) is decided in conjunction with the winner. The other six finalists within the category – all established designers – each received euro 2,000 worth of fabric from Swiss Textiles. The finalists for the Swiss Textiles Award 2004 were initially chosen by an international panel, including **Suzu Menkes** (International Herald Tribune), **Joseph Quartana** (Seven, New York), **Gity Morsef** (The Fashion and Textile Museum London), **Harriet Quick** (British Vogue), and **Armand Limnander** (V Man / Visionaire, New York) in collaboration with the organizers of the festival. The overall winner was then judged at GWAND itself by **Diane Pernet** (Editor), **Ronald Weisbrod** (Vice President, Swiss Textiles), **Hannah Bhuiya** (Tank) and **Akiko Ichikawa** (Harpers Bazaar). This year's winner was French trained Columbian, **Haider Ackermann**.



From left: **Sonja Hugentobler** with Swiss Textiles Award winner **Haider Ackermann**, Swiss Textiles director **Thomas Schweizer** and GWAND founder **Suzanna Vock**.



Annabelle magazine's award winning creation by **Sophie Scheibler**.