

July 5, 2018

## **Fresh new fashion on Ekka runway**

### **– 70% of the designers are new to the Show**

The Royal Queensland Show's (Ekka) 2018 Natural Fibres Fashion Parades will champion Queensland fashion with a whole new stable of 26 women's and menswear designers showcasing the natural materials of cotton, wool, silk and leather in 40 shows over the 10 days of Ekka.

This year's Natural Fibres Fashion Parade Program will transport audiences to a whimsical winter wonderland in its fabulous new Enchanted Winter-themed show. The brand new set design will provide a spectacular ice forest-themed backdrop to showcase Queensland's natural fibre fashion to best effect.

Other new additions to the long-running Natural Fibres parades are the introduction of a lingerie designer segment; an extra show each day of Ekka and daily Meet the Models sessions after each parade where fashion lovers can be photographed with their favourite model and designer outfit. The student design competition and educational Fibre to Fashion Conversation Series will return to the 2018 program.

Natural Fibres Fashion Event Director Laura Churchill said the Natural Fibres Fashion Parades were all about celebrating Queensland fashion but also understanding the link between farm and fashion.

"To continue the Ekka tradition of celebrating everything Queensland, we have assembled a fresh lineup of 26 local designers – 18 which are new to the Ekka runway," said Ms Churchill.

"This year's spectacular show will open with a stand-out winter-themed collection lead by one of our state's most exciting up and coming designers, year 12 Brisbane student Connor O'Grady.

"The return of the lingerie designer segment will also delight our audiences and further show the versatility of natural fibre silks!" said Ms Churchill.

Queensland designers featuring in this year's Natural Fibres Fashion Parades include:

Gail Sorronda, White Label Noba, Darb Bridal Couture, Tengdahl, Lazygirl Lingerie x Missy Noir, Irma J Smith, Pia du Pradal, Living Silk, Nelson Molloy, Jordan Hewitt, Bora, Annalisse Designs, Silk Illk and Jericho Road Clothing.

12 student designers will be selected to participate in the parades through the Ekka Fashion Student Design Competition initiative which will judge entries from the Australian Institute of Creative Design, TAFE Qld and the Billy Blue College of Design.

The parades celebrate and pay homage to Queensland-grown wool and cotton along with fashion favourites leather and silk and this year's enchanted winter theme will carry throughout the entire show.

“Through spectacular staging and choreography, the 2018 Ekka Parades will invoke the wonder and fantasy of a white winterscape, the extreme of the natural world. The entire show will feel romantic and the models will interact and create memorable moments for the audience,” said Ms Churchill.

“Once again education is a key focus this year with the Fibre to Fashion Conversation Series offering audiences a snapshot of four key aspects of the natural fibre industry and an understanding of the links between Queensland grown natural fibres and our fashion designers,” she said.

The Fibre to Fashion Conversation Series will be hosted by Laura Churchill on the fashion stage at 12pm between the 11.30am and 12.30pm pm fashion shows on August 11, 12, 15 and 18. Speakers include:

August 11: Fashion lecturer, mentor and creative Carla Van Lunn will record her Fashion Wayfinder podcast live.

August 12: 17 year old designer and school student Connor O’Grady talking about his early start in fashion at the age of 8 and his successful career since.

August 15: Up-cycling fashion design artist and natural fibre advocate Jonathan Pampling, aka Athan Jon.

August 18: Designer panel discussion

This year marks the 27<sup>th</sup> year of Ekka presenting its Natural Fibres Fashion Parades which is the Ekka’s most glamorous event.

The Natural Fibres Fashion Parades will be staged on the Entertainment and Fashion Stage, upper level, Royal International Convention Centre, Brisbane Showgrounds at 11.30am, 12.30pm, 1.30pm and 2.30pm daily during the Ekka.

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