



## PRESS RELEASE

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### SHORTLIST FOR BFC/GQ DESIGNER MENSWEAR FUND 2015 ANNOUNCED

The British Fashion Council (BFC) today announces the shortlist for the BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund supported by Vertu.

**BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund shortlist 2015: Astrid Andersen, Christopher Raeburn, E.Tautz, Matthew Miller and Sibling**

Dylan Jones OBE, Editor of British GQ and Chair of London Collections Men commented, *“Over the last year the global menswear market has grown faster than womenswear showing that there has never been a more important time to drive support for accomplished British designer menswear businesses. The opportunities surrounding menswear are still underexploited, which is why we at GQ thought it was so important to launch this menswear fund. It is fantastic to be working with Vertu and the BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund panel to lead the charge when it comes to high level mentoring and support. With this year’s outstanding shortlist of talented designers it’ll be hard to predict the winner - each of them is in good shape to scoop fashion’s biggest menswear prize.”*

The judging panel agreed that each of the shortlisted designers were in a strong position to develop into a global designer brand and ready for the level of support the Fund offers. The shortlisted designers will participate in a mentoring programme developed by the BFC over the next month, where industry experts will provide guidance on topics including branding, leadership, commercial retail, e-tail and wholesale and digital innovation.

Massimiliano Pogliani, CEO of Vertu commented: *“Vertu is delighted to be supporting the BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund for the second year. As a British brand operating globally, we are well aware of the challenges young businesses can face as they build their brand and expand into new markets. The opportunity to mentor exciting, new, British designers and bring to bear our commercial expertise and experience in growing a brand that combines design and craftsmanship with cutting-edge technology, is something I and my colleagues relish. We have shortlisted five young designers with the talent and tenacity to bring something new and exciting to menswear and I am now looking forward to seeing which of them will raise their game even further through the mentoring process.”*

Vertu, the world's leading luxury mobile manufacturer and lead partner on the Fund, will play a key role in the mentoring programme and give access to its team of business leaders in technology, global distribution, legal and finance. The shortlisted designers will pitch their business plans to a judging panel on 12th May 2015 when the winner of the Fund will be selected.

Caroline Rush CBE, Chief Executive of the British Fashion Council, commented *"The standard of applications this season was extremely high and really proves how far the shortlisted designers have come whilst demonstrating the strength and growth of the British menswear industry. We look forward to working with the designers over the coming months across mentoring sessions and helping them to further develop their brands."*

The Fund provides one designer with a bespoke, high level mentoring support programme over a twelve month period, as well as a £150,000 grant to provide necessary infrastructure to take them to the next stage in their business and £50,000 value in kind services. The Fund is aimed at businesses that have been trading for a minimum of three years, with UK and international stockists and have graduated through the existing BFC talent support schemes or are at a similar stage in their business.

**- ENDS -**

For more information visit [www.britishfashioncouncil.com/designermenswearfund](http://www.britishfashioncouncil.com/designermenswearfund)

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**Editors notes:**

The **BFC/GQ** shortlist selection committee includes **Ben Banks**, Fourmarketing; **Caroline Rush**, British Fashion Council; **Charlie Porter**, charlieporter.net and Financial Times; **Dylan Jones OBE**, British GQ; **Helen Seamons**, Guardian; **Jonathan Akeroyd**, Alexander McQueen, **Justine Rouch**, Vertu; **Massimiliano Pogliani**, Vertu; **Robert Johnston**, British GQ

**The British Fashion Council (BFC)** was set up in 1983 to promote British fashion internationally and co-ordinate this promotion through fashion weeks, exhibitions and showcasing events. The BFC now supports designers beginning at college level and extending to talent identification, business support and showcasing schemes to help British designer businesses develop their profiles and business globally and promote British fashion and its influential role in Britain and London. The BFC Colleges Council offers support to students through its Foundation, BA and MA scholarships, links with industry through design competitions and Graduate Preview Day. Talent identification and business support schemes include the BFC Fashion Film sponsored by River Island; BFC Rock Vault; BFC Headonism; BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund supported by Vertu; BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund; BFC Contemporary sponsored by eBay; NEWGEN sponsored by TOPSHOP and NEWGEN MEN sponsored by TOPMAN. Showcasing initiatives and events include London Fashion Week, London Collections Men, LONDON show ROOMS, the BFC Fashion Arts Foundation, International Fashion Showcase, London Fashion Weekend and the annual celebration of excellence in the fashion industry: the British Fashion Awards

**British GQ's** status as a byword for men's style is unparalleled. Urbane, upscale, occasionally irreverent and always stylish, the multi-platform media brand is known for the highest standards in content. The recipient of 56 major awards, including Dylan Jones named as PPA Editor of the Year in 2014, and Paul Solomons awarded Digital Art Director in the BSMEs and Designer of the Year in the Digital Magazine Awards, GQ has a combined print and digital circulation of 125,090 (ABC July-Dec 2014); readership is 413,000 (NRS July 2013-June 2014); and unique users to the website total 1,489,259 (Google analytics Nov 2014-Jan 2015).

**Vertu** aims to deliver the world's best luxury mobile phone experience for its customers by combining expert craftsmanship and peerless materials with innovative technology and unique services. Today, Vertu leads the market that it pioneered over a decade ago.

The Vertu range of mobile phones is made up of three distinct models – Signature, Signature Touch and Aster. The Vertu Audio Collection comprises V Headphones (HP-1V) and V Speaker (SP-1V). Vertu mobile phones are handmade in England using the world's finest materials, with each one assembled by a single craftsman.

Vertu is renowned for its curated services; a suite of carefully selected exclusive offers, content and assistance especially selected to enhance the Vertu customer's lifestyle. At the heart of these services is Vertu CONCIERGE, offering luxury lifestyle assistance and enrichment. Vertu CONCIERGE is on-hand 24/7 to facilitate your every request. Vertu LIFE offers personalised recommendations and privileged access to experiences and events. Vertu CERTAINTY delivers security for customers, their data and their phones.

Vertu is available from around 500 stores, including 70 Vertu Boutiques, in 66 countries.

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