The Maison Mode Méditerranée Endowment Fund awards its grand prize to Louis-Gabriel Nouchi

By Dominique Muret  -  5 April 2022

The Marseille-based institution, Maison Mode Méditerranée (MMM), founded by Maryline Bellieud-Vigouroux in 1998 and transformed into an endowment fund in June 2020, announced its six winners for the 2022-23 year. The competition attracted over 120 applicants from 15 different countries in the Mediterranean and French-speaking Africa, as stated by the institution, which awarded its grand prize to French designer Louis-Gabriel Nouchi.
The six scholarships worth a total amount of 120,000 euros were awarded in four different categories: “Global Fashion Brand” for brands that wish to evolve their development, “Craft & Care” for brands that aspire to create and promote local and ethical know-how, “Heritage & Give-back” intended to accompany a project of learning and transmission of fashion, and finally, “Scientific Research” aimed at supporting the new generation of doctoral students in fashion studies. These are complemented by two partner grants: the Tajima Fashion Tech Prize and the Fragonard Fashion, Heritage and Modernity Prize.

Louis-Gabriel Nouchi, winner of OpenMyMed 2018 (the competition formerly organized by MMM), won this year's grand prize (Global Fashion Brand) and 50,000 euros. He additionally received the Fragonard Prize, benefitting from an artist residency in Grasse centered around the technical Provençal know-how, boutis.

A 2014 graduate of the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Visuels de La Cambre in Brussels, the young French designer launched his menswear brand, LGN, with the support of the Duval real estate group at the end of 2017. Since then, he has launched his own online store, expanded his brand's universe and opened his first boutique in Paris, where he offers refined sportswear with beautiful cuts, paying close attention to details and materials. The designer, who is also the creative director of Chinese fashion label Joeone, has presented his collections in Paris for several seasons now.

Patchouli Studio, a gender fluid and artisanal brand founded in 2020 by Italian designer Andrea Zanola, was awarded the "Craft & Care" scholarship together with €30,000. The Itinérance collaboration between French Alexia Tronel and Caroline Perdrix (winner of MMM in 2016), who is working on a collection inspired by Moroccan cultural heritage, won the "Heritage & Give-back" grant (€20,000), while PhD student Pierre-Jean Desemerie, whose thesis focuses on colonial women's clothing in Algeria, received the "Scientific Research" scholarship (€20,000).

Last but not least, the "Tajima Fashion Tech Prize" was awarded by Japanese embroidery specialist Tajima to Croatian designer Marija Kulusic, who had already won an MMM recognition in 2020, while the Fragonard Prize for accessories was awarded to French designer Emma Bruschi, who distinguished herself in 2019 at the Hyères Festival by winning Chanel's 19M Métiers d'art prize.

The jury, composed of Farida Khelfa, Serge Carreira (FHCM), Olivier Saillard, Françoise Montenay (Chanel) and Dominique Jacomet (IFM), among others, has also created two "Enthusiasm for Fashion" prizes worth 5,000 euros each for this year to highlight "the quality and originality of the projects" of Lebanese designer Cynthia Merhej, founder of the brand Renaissance Renaissance, and Lebanese Vogue Arabia journalist Joe Challita for his fashion archive platform, Lebanese Fashion History.