

Coffee
BREAK
WITH



ANNE DAVIES

BBC PRESENTER &
FASHION GURU

Our Global Brand Manager, Sabine Watson, spoke with BBC presenter and Fashion Guru, Anne Davies, to talk about the Fashanne event and her thoughts on the future of Fashion.

I can't believe a year has gone since we last got together! When we last spoke, Fashanne 2020 was still in preparation.

So firstly, tell us about Fashanne 2020, how did it go?

Well, unsurprisingly lockdown had a huge impact on not only our plans but also the lives and work of our students. However, we decided that Covid would not bow us down and so took the exciting step of transferring everything online. Our wonderful sponsors stayed with us and the students were thrilled to have an award to take part in. Some of them had been unable to finish their final collections, some had left university without saying goodbye to friends, so to have the awards to aim for was hugely important.

Although we reduced the categories to two rather than eight, 59 finalists were put forward from four top British Fashion universities. All our judges, including you of course Sabine, took part in the judging process – sending us short videos of their comments after receiving the full complement of entries. We asked students to send us moving pictures of their entries wherever they could so that the awards programme would look as exciting as possible and they didn't disappoint.

It was fantastic for our students to receive the comments from industry leaders like yourself, the MD of John Smedley, the menswear designer from Paul Smith, the creative director of Pentland Brands, NEXT's directory product manager, the sustainability director of GreenEarth Cleaning and of course our lead judge Patrick Grant. As you can see from the awards film, the winners were absolutely blown out of the water by their success.

“Thank you again for the opportunity! I'm so happy I was able to take part and I'm really looking forward to next year”, said Ciara Pontin, Winner of the Judges Choice from Trent University.

Our People's Choice Award, as the name suggests, was open to everyone via the Fashanne website. More than twenty-six thousand people voted in this category which was a huge thrill for all of us and most especially for the winning finalist.

With Fashanne 2021 well underway already, tell us more about it.

All being well, Fashanne 2021 will be taking place on May 6th at St Mary's Church in Nottingham.

Our two 2020 winners will be showcasing their entries at the grand event, which is fantastic as it gives them the opportunity to enjoy the applause they were slightly robbed of this year.

It should be a really exciting event with all sorts of things planned to make the experience something for everyone to remember! We have some wonderful circus-themed acts booked, interesting food and of course, the opportunity to see some of the most innovative and exciting Fashion ideas from the next generation of talent. Who knows, you may just be watching and meeting the next Julien MacDonald or Coco Chanel.

Following the success of this year's awards, we will also be going online for 2021, so that as many people as possible can take part – even if they can't be there in person on the night. That also means that fewer available tickets for the night thanks to social distancing will not hamper the availability of the awards to a wider audience... we may even stream live into certain other venues.

The 2021 Fashanne awards aims to give its students, universities, judges and audience a fantastic night of innovation and excitement. Whatever Covid may throw at us, you can rest assured that the Fashanne team will rise to the challenge and provide awards like no other.

And speaking of fashion, what do you think the future looks like for the Fashion industry?

If our entries are anything to go by, and as so many of our judges said, with the Fashion industry in the hands of this generation – the future is looking good. Hopefully, we will see a huge move away from the world of fast Fashion to one that embraces quality and sustainability just as much as style and innovation. The future of our world is in our hands and in the hands of those who come after us – let's hope that together we can make it a better one for all.