

Chicago Fashion Incubator Welcomes 2019 Class of Designers

The Chicago Fashion Incubator, a two year-long residency on the business of fashion, welcomes the most diverse class in its 10-year history.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, UNITED STATES, April 26, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Chicago Fashion Incubator at Macy's on State Street (CFI), a two-year residency focused on the business of fashion, welcomes three new designers-in-residence for the 2019 year. These designers join three continuing designers-in-residence to receive mentoring and training to take their independent fashion businesses to the next level.

The CFI workroom welcomes Barbara Keisman, Kpoene Kofi-Nicklin and Goli Parvinian, as they join Rakan Shams Aldeen and Cara Farella, who began the CFI program in 2018, as well as Adilah Muhammad, who returns for a third year after beginning with CFI in 2017. Brief descriptions of these talented designers are listed below.



The Chicago Fashion Incubator's 2019 designers (from left): Barbara Keisman, Cara Farella, Goli Parvinian, Kpoene' Kofi-Nicklin and Rakan Shams Aldeen (not pictured: Adilah Muhammad)

The CFI provides emerging Chicago-based designers with resources, including work space, mentoring and workshops, to help grow their careers in fashion. Workshops range in topics from media training, creating business plans, cost analysis, and building a brand strategy to more artistic sessions like preparing patterns for production to color and proportion theory. Throughout the two-year program, the designers have the chance to establish relationships with a network of industry professionals including lawyers, accountants, fashion buyers, merchandisers and branding, marketing and communications experts.

"In the 10 years since CFI was founded, this is the most diverse class we've had – diversity of race, religion, country of origin as well as of design background and business expertise. This diversity will truly help to enrich the experience for all of the designers as they are able to learn, grow and collaborate, unified by their shared passion for the art and business of fashion," said Andrea Schwartz, CFI Board President. "CFI's past designers have been successful in building their careers, and we expect the same from this talented class."

2019 Designers-in-Residence:
Barbara Keisman of Feel Good Fashions
www.barbarakeisman.com

Barbara Keisman got her start in fashion as a professional model and then a fashion photographer. After stepping away from the industry for many years to raise her children, in 2011 she started her own brand Feel Good Fashions, a figure-flattering, affordable fashion line

made entirely in the United States. Feel Good Fashions' name was inspired by two things: its comfort-forward style and the company's commitment to donating 10% of profits to disaster relief efforts and female empowerment organizations in developing countries

Kpoene' Kofi-Nicklin of Mignonette

www.mignonette.com

Kpoene' Kofi-Nicklin is a Togolese-American bridal designer. After originally founding Mignonette as a ready-to-wear label in 2002, Kpoene' relaunched the brand as Mignonette Bridal with the first brick-and-mortar store opening in 2011. Since then, Mignonette Bridal has specialized in timeless designs for brides who want to write their own stories. Mignonette has been featured in Martha Stewart, Huffington Post, Chicago Magazine, and The Knot, among others. Kpoene' has completed studies at Middlebury College, Fashion Institute of Technology and with the Goldman Sachs 10KSB Program, and has been a contributor to Martha Stewart, AOL, Glamour, and The New York Times.

Goli Parvinian of Goli June

www.Golijune.com

After receiving her BFA in Fashion Design from Columbia College Chicago in 2015, Goli Parvinian went on to work for renowned bridal brands in New Zealand, New York City and Melbourne, Australia. She completed her MBA at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology at the end of 2018 and returned to her hometown of Chicago in order to launch her own bridal brand. Fueled by her love of travel, culture and a nomadic lifestyle, and her desire to utilize her craft to empower women on this pivotal point in their lives, she will be launching Goli June, a non-traditional, aesthetically wearable bridal brand, in 2019 through her residency at the CFI.

Rakan Shams Aldeen of RAKAN

www.rakanshamsaldeen.com

Rakan Shams Aldeen was born in Syria. He studied architecture at University of Kalamoon, Syria and after graduation moved to Lebanon to study fashion design and pattern making at l'Ecole Superieure des Arts et techniques de la Mode in Beirut (EsMode-Beirut). After an internship at Azzi and Osta fashion house in Beirut, Rakan moved to Istanbul and graduated from Vakko-EsMode Istanbul in 2015. He and his business and design partner established their own couture line LamRak Atelier, where Rakan worked as the head designer from 2014 through 2016 until he moved to Chicago to establish his own brand RAKAN. Rakan's work has been featured in Elle and Chicago Woman and in the American Heart Association Red Dress Collection 2019 fashion show. He was a contestant on the 17th season of Bravo's Project Runway.

Cara Farella

www.caramariafarella.com

A Chicago native and alumnus of The Chicago Academy for the Arts, Cara Farella is European-trained in fine art, fashion and textile design. Cara completed her foundation year at Central Saint Martins School of Art and Design in London and received her BA with honors in fashion and textile engineering from the UK's prestigious Chelsea School of Art and Design. Dually-trained as a fine artist and fashion/textile designer, Cara incorporates a spectrum of natural elements, including crystal, pearl, stone and forged metals into her designs, creating extraordinary and powerful pieces. Cara has returned home to Chicago to launch her brand, Cara Maria Farella, Inc., a striking line of richly woven fabrics, stand-out bridal gowns and accessories that blend romantic designs with old world artistry.

Adilah Muhammad of ADILAH M

www.adilahm.com

Adilah Muhammad earned a Bachelor's of Science in Fashion Merchandising and Design at North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro in May 2014. While in college, Adilah developed an interest in fashion entrepreneurship through participation in Teen Vogue Fashion University, a trip to Paris, and an internship for a CFI alum. Adilah designs one-of-a-kind looks for clients throughout the US.

About the Chicago Fashion Incubator at Macy's on State Street

The Chicago Fashion Incubator (CFI) provides six emerging Chicago-based designers with the resources including work space and mentoring needed to strengthen and grow their careers in fashion. The Designers in Residence (DIR) are required to complete a core curriculum of business and creative workshops and seminars conducted at Macy's on State Street. For more information on the CFI, visit www.chicagofashionincubator.org.

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