

Chicago Fashion Incubator Welcomes 2020 Designers

One-year residency program provides mentoring and training to help designers take their independent fashion businesses to the next level.

CHICAGO, IL, USA, May 28, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Chicago Fashion Incubator](#) at Macy's on State Street (CFI), a one-year residency focused on the business of fashion, welcomes two new designers-in-residence for the 2020 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 welcomes [Amy Taylor](#) and [Lola Osire](#) as they join Kpoene Kofi-Nicklin and Goli Parvinian, who began the CFI program in 2019, as well as Cara Farella, who returns for a third year after beginning with CFI in 2018. Brief descriptions of these talented designers are listed below.

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Andrea Schwartz



Lola Osire and Amy Taylor are CFI's newest designers-in-residence.

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 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.

While CFI's offices and workspaces, located in the Pedway of Macy's State Street, remain closed due to COVID-19, the Incubator continues to provide robust programming as well as mentoring for both its current and alumni designers. CFI's public events, which include expert panels speaking on a variety of fashion industry-related topics, have been put on hold for the time being.

"Although we certainly wouldn't have chosen to welcome in our new designers during a global pandemic, our Board is proud of CFI's ability to pivot to remote programming, ensuring that all of our designers won't lose valuable time as they work toward developing their fashion lines," said Andrea Schwartz, CFI Board President. "In the weeks since CFI's facility has been closed, our Director of Programming and Events, Anna Hovet, has arranged informative seminars with fashion leaders and influencers – including an editor from Vogue – as well as invaluable mentoring sessions with industry pros like David Sanchez of 10 MGMT and seasoned designers like Nora Jewett and Alice Padrul. COVID-19 has certainly not stopped us from providing our designers with educational programming that can't be found anywhere else in Chicago!"

2020 Designers-in-Residence:

Amy Taylor of Ms. Amy Taylor – First Year Designer-in-Residence

www.shop.msamytaylor.com

Amy Taylor is a natural dyer and textile artist living and working in Chicago. She creates exquisite textiles using only natural dye materials such as plants, insects, and mineral salts. With a passion for eco-friendly materials and ethical fashion, Amy's work focuses on fabric and form to create high quality, one-of-a-kind garments to make her customers feel comfortable, confident, and beautiful.

Lola Osire of Lola Élan – First Year Designer-in-Residence

www.lolaelan.com

Nigerian-born designer, Lola Osire, originally entered the fashion world as a model in Minneapolis, Minnesota. After graduating from Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising in 2013, she earned an internship with Elie Tahari but passed it up to focus on family life, while developing the concept for Lola Élan, a contemporary womenswear brand made in her Chicago studio. In 2019 she launched the thoughtfully-designed brand, which includes sophisticated, stand-alone pieces for the modern-day, style-conscious woman.

Kpoene' Kofi-Nicklin of Mignonette – Second Year Designer-in-Residence

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, Crain's, 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. She is passionate about design and the feminist history of clothing, especially wedding gowns; in 2014 she was named an Editor's Choice Finalist for the Martha Stewart American Made Award and in 2016 she received an Artist's Grant from the City of Chicago.

Goli Parvinian of Goli June – Second Year Designer-in-Residence

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.

Cara Farella of Cara Maria Farella – Third Year Designer-in-Residence

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.

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

The Chicago Fashion Incubator (CFI) provides up to 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.

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