

Tuesday, 1 March, 2016

RUNWAY PROJECT SHINES A LIGHT ON INDIGENOUS FASHION

Victorian Indigenous fashion talent will take to the catwalk at this year's Virgin Australia Melbourne Fashion Festival as part of a Global Indigenous Runway event, Minister for Creative Industries Martin Foley announced today at the Kayala Indigenous Gallery at Melbourne Museum.

With him were Melbourne designers Ly-Al Young (evening wear) and Heather Kennedy (footwear), who will represent Victoria and showcase their collections alongside Indigenous designers and emerging talent from Canada, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands.

Designed to help Indigenous fashion talent and designers to break into the fashion industry, the Indigenous Runway Project - which manages the runway program - was established in Melbourne in 2012 when its founder, make-up artist turned mental health worker Tina Waru, ran a make-up class for Indigenous young people.

Since then the Runway Project has gone on to hold workshops, mentoring programs and runway events for aspiring Indigenous designers, models and hair and make-up artists across Australia and internationally.

Fourteen designers, working across street wear, haute couture, accessories, swimwear, footwear, jewellery and daywear will participate in this year's runway. Victorian models, hair and make-up artists and backstage crew members – all with Indigenous heritage – will round out the production team.

Previously part of the Fashion Festival's cultural program, the 2016 event is part of the Offsite Runways program, which showcases independent, emerging designers.

The Global Indigenous Runway event will take place at Melbourne Museum at 4pm on Tuesday, 8 March, 2016. Tickets are now on sale. For more information visit www.vamff.com.au

Quotes attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Martin Foley

"Our first peoples were the first creatives of this country. Today, our emerging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander designers are leading the way with collections that express their cultural heritage in contemporary and dynamic ways."

"This is an important initiative that aims to inspire Aboriginal people to get into fashion and design. It creates opportunities for Aboriginal designers to gain exposure, develop their careers and businesses and connect with others from across the globe."

"The Andrews Labor Government proudly supports the Virgin Australia Melbourne Fashion Festival and the Indigenous Runway Project. This is also a chance for fashion lovers to discover the next generation of design talent from home and abroad."