

PRESS NOTE!



'Nature based Fashion Design for Environmental Awareness' A WildRoots-India Online Short Internship Programme for Students of Indian Design Institutes initiated during the COVID-19 Lockdown Period

Famous French Fashion designer **Coco Chanel**, who ruled over the *Parisian Haute Couture* for almost *six decades* once said, "*Fashion is not something that exists in dresses only. Fashion is in the sky, in the forests as well as in the urban streets; fashion has to do with ideas, the way we live, in Nature and in what is happening around the Natural World, an equilibrium of existence itself.*" Nature is a perfect way to recharge one's soul and attractive colours, shapes, textures, and patterns exist all around in Nature. Taking inspiration from Nature can give us a fresh perspective on Design. '*Fashion Design*' is an Artwork inspired by Nature itself where observing Nature enables a designer to incorporate new elements into their designs. City based organisation WildRoots-India, has been able to engage the students from various Fashion Design Institutions, pan India, into an innovative project - '**Nature based Fashion Design for Environmental Awareness**', where the participating students have come up with fascinating designs to spread awareness about Climate Change, Habitat Loss, threats to Bio-geographical Hotspots and Endemic and Endangered Species all over the World , a press note said.

The Initial idea about this project was sparked during the interaction between, Mr. Biswajit De, the Founder President of WildRoots-India and Mr. Sean Southey, the present Chair of the IUCN - CEC, Commission on Education and Communication, at the St. Catherine's College, University of Oxford, where they discussed the ways of using Design as a 'Tool for Engagement', to inspire the young Generation of Design Students and motivate them to find ways and means for Environmental Awareness and find solutions for Local and Global Conservation. 'There is an abundance of '**design culture**' to be discovered from nature. The awe factor in nature is sure to inspire the creativity of designing - encompassing personality, colour and variety. Many contemporary fashion designers put a lot of emphasis on nature based wearable designs and practical clothing. So, a project was envisioned after I got back to India, last year, where I thought of creating a Creative Platform where

students from various Design Colleges and Institutions can come together, brainstorm on ideas and come up with some Nature-based Designs, which have the potential to be used for Environmental Awareness and Conservation, since that is the need of the hour. Awareness should be innovative and interesting. Wildroots-India created the Project as an *Online Short Term Student Internship Programme*, where the students would be mentored and helped in the development of innovative design ideas, inspired by Nature', De said.

Students from Design Colleges, primarily the National Institute of Fashion Design (NIFT Campuses pan-India) and Royal School of Fashion Design joined the Project. An introductory Online session was organized where students were explained how the designs could be an amalgamation of both *ethnic* and *chic*. They were motivated to do extensive research on various topics, and were asked to break the norms and try new patterns apart from the standard ones that exist. **Simran Arora (NIFT, Shillong)** wants to explore the Elements of Nature through her designs while **Aayushi Mor (NIFT, Shillong)** is keen on developing ideas that create awareness about Fungi, that play an important role in the Ecosystem. **Abha Jangid (Royal School of Fashion Design, Guwahati)** has created designs based on the Conservation of Coral Reefs and the plethora of species that are dependent on them. **Ankita Ghosh (B.Des Graduate - NIFT, New Delhi)** has come up with her design concepts based on the threats faced by different species from the introduction of Microplastics in the Marine Environment. **Diksha Shivam (NIFT, Hyderabad)** wants to spread awareness about the importance of Wetlands, through her designs. The students were joined by **Bhargabi Ghoshal (NIFT, Kannur)**, **Varunavi Das (Royal School of Fashion Design, Guwahati)**, **Priyama Borpujari (NIFT, Hyderabad)**, **Nahida Ahmed ((Royal School of Fashion Design, Guwahati)**, **Madhumita Das (NIFT, Shillong)**, **Kabyashree Bhowmick (NIFT, Chennai)**, **Fardina Yesmin (Royal School of Fashion Design, Guwahati)**, **Bhavya Soni (NIFT, Shillong)** and **Anoushka Ghosh (NIFT, Kannur)**, who have created their design concepts based on the Rainforests of the World, Camouflage in Species, Ecological and Economic Importance of Algae and Sea-Weed, Conservation of Mangrove and Marine Ecosystem, and more. The Project is now a part of WildRoots' - '**Art for Conservation**', **Educational & Action Module** which is now copyrighted to the Founder President of the organisation, under the **(Indian) Copyright Act, 1957**, as per the amendments in 2012, which fully reflects the **Berne Convention for Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, 1886** and the **Universal Copyrights Convention**.

'For centuries, Nature had been a greatest source of inspiration for artists and designers. In contemporary times, it is not just enough to celebrate nature, and conduct taxonomic research. Creativity of Fashion Designers, with appropriate patterns and colour choices brings clothes with timeless elegance, and makes customers marvel at the beauty of nature, and can also make them aware. The inspiration that Nature provides to the Fashion Industry is a solid proof that Mother Nature is indeed Fashion Industry's '**greatest muse**'. Contemporary Design Students need '*creativity with purpose*' which will make a difference in their Design Ideology, and perceptions and make them better professionals of the future. Nature based Design is an experience. It is this experience that we are aspired to explore, through this Innovative Project', De added.