

Young designers walk tall after big Bata win

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Three young design students - one from Kenya, one from Italy and one from the Czech Republic - have been named winners of the Bata Young Designers' Challenge 2019. They will all see their design-proposal sneakers put into production and sold at selected Bata stores across the world. Scores of exciting design talents had entered the contest. The winners were announced at Bata Fashion Weekend, held in Prague on 13 April at Zofin Palace during the VIP evening show, with people around the world watching via livestream.



Three young design students are on top of the world after being named winners of the Bata Young Designers' Challenge 2019. The winners – **Natálie Nepovímová** from the Czech Republic; **Tuvshin Batkhuu**, originally from Mongolia and now studying in Italy; and **Cyprian Kavita Kiswili** from Kenya – will see their inspirational designs put into production and sold at selected Bata stores worldwide.

The format of the competition saw scores of design students from three participating universities – the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague, Czech Republic; the University of Florence, Italy; and Nairobi University, Kenya – present shoe designs to a jury, with selected students from each university going through to the next round.

Ten students were then chosen and invited to produce a prototype at Bata factories in the Czech Republic and Kenya, under the watchful eye of dedicated and experienced shoemakers.

These production-ready shoes were then presented on the catwalk and exhibition at Bata Fashion Weekend, held in Prague on 13-14 April. The winners were announced at the Saturday evening VIP show in front of a panel of judges, comprising of members of the fashion media, established fashion designers and Bata representatives, including CEO Alexis Nasard.

The three winning students beat off competition from scores of exciting design talents to win the top prize.

Commenting, Jana Barbatí Chadová, Head of Global Marketing at Bata, said: "We are so delighted for all the students who took part in the contest. It was an incredible experience for all these talented young designers, and a brilliant achievement for the winners. What a boost for them as they start their design careers. It was such a privilege to be side-by-side with them throughout the entire contest, from the very start to being named winners. It was inspiring, and we feel really honoured to have been able to walk this path with them."

The winning students were thrilled with the award. Cyprian Kavita Kiswili, studying at Nairobi University in Kenya, said: "I can't believe it. It is amazing to have something that I designed go into production and be sold in shops around the world. I just can't explain the feeling. And I can't stop smiling!"

Natálie Nepovímová, studying at the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague, Czech Republic, was equally enthusiastic: "I am so happy," she said. "It was such a great opportunity and an incredible competition. We were all nervous, of course, but it was so special to work alongside the Bata team and to meet the other design students from different parts of the world. I think everyone has learnt so much."

Finally, Tuvshin Batkhuu, studying at Florence University in Italy, summed up: “This was a fantastic competition for everyone who took part – and a big ‘thank you’ to Bata for giving us this opportunity. It was so special, not just winning but the entire journey.”

The winning shoes will be put into immediate production and be available in selected Bata stores globally in April 2019.

Bata Fashion Weekend’s evening catwalk show was livestreamed across the world. To see a recording of the live stream, go to Bata’s YouTube channel @batashoes.



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