

# Cape Town film student named *Elle* Style Reporter

19-year-old film student Trevor Stuurman has been named the winner of the [Elle Style Reporter](#) search in association with BlackBerry. Cape Town-based Stuurman will now have the opportunity to report on South African style on the *Elle* digital platforms and travel abroad to hone his eye for style.

# E L L E

A five-month search to find South Africa's own Sartorialist culminated on Tuesday, 20 November 2012, when seven finalists faced their sixth and final challenge at the *Elle* Style Reporter in association with BlackBerry Blog Party hosted by 5fm's Poppy Ntshongwana at MOAD in Jo'burg's Maboneng Precinct.

The one-of-a-kind competition kicked off in July when the magazine and BlackBerry launched the search for a style scout with a perfectly-tuned instinct and unerring eye for what's new and noteworthy on the street, as well as the fashion knowledge and credibility to take his or her place in the front row. In September the 291 entrants were narrowed down to 18 semi-finalists who fought it out in a second challenge for a place in the finals. Three more challenges awaited the final seven, who were put through their paces by a judging panel headed by photographer Ed Suter and including *Elle* editor Jackie Burger, *Elle* online editor Jenna McArthur, director for channel marketing Africa at Research In Motion (RIM) Ulanova Visser, head of retail marketing (RIM) Judy Smith and corporate communications manager (RIM) Christa Botha.

Stuurman clinched the prize after the final challenge, which took place during the Blog Party. Finalists were given 90 minutes to report live on the event as guests watched their progress on screens placed around the venue. The reports had to integrate South African themes allocated via a draw at the start of the evening, and were supported by live tweets.

## Smart, creative and a strongly rooted point of view

Despite the high standard, the judges had no hesitation in naming Stuurman as the blogger with the visual, conceptual and writing skills that best connect with *Elle's* philosophy that there is no style without substance. "Smart, creative and a strongly rooted point of view - Trevor and his Stuurman Style Diary have taken South African pop culture reporting to a whole new level," Burger said. "He's a worthy winner indeed."

RIM's director for channel marketing Africa Ulanova Visser said, "Trevor crafted his own success in this challenge by keeping going despite tough competition throughout the competition. This win is a phenomenal opportunity for him to make his mark in the industry."

Chief judge Ed Suter said he was inspired by the work of the Style Reporter finalists. The creator of Sharp Sharp, a groundbreaking visual record of South African streetstyle, said: "They have made their work resonate with where they come from and what is important to them and they are astoundingly innovative about how their amazing talent will contribute to South African fashion and the magazine."

Stuurman drew 'Swanky Shweshwe' as his theme for the final test and had to overcome technical hitches that included a crashed hard drive and having to rely on images backed up on his BlackBerry to complete the task. He said: "The theme was quite narrow, so I broadened it to reference African prints in general and the way we modern Africans translate our heritage into what we wear and how we wear it, and to show that 'swanky' style is about using and making the most of what you have."

## **Smalltown boy working towards his big city dreams**

The 19-year-old, who turns 20 on Christmas Day, grew up in Kimberly and describes himself as 'a smalltown boy working towards his big city dreams'. He is inspired by an upbringing rooted in 'a mixture of African and Christian beliefs' and became interested in photography as a way to tell stories about his home-town culture. After moving to Cape Town to study film, he discovered 'a massive runway with beautiful people and eclectic fashions' and launched his blog, Stuurman Style Diary, in March 2012.

As the *Elle* Style Reporter in association with BlackBerry, Stuurman will now enter a seven-month contract with the magazine to report on trends and events. He will receive regular exposure in the magazine and on the digital and social media platforms of *Elle* and BlackBerry, and will be equipped with all the resources he needs to carry out the role of Style Reporter, including a BlackBerry PlayBook tablet and a BlackBerry smartphone.

"It's been five months and six challenges, and finding the Style Reporter in association with BlackBerry has been worth every minute. We asked for tipping-point stuff and we got it and so much more. Each of our seven finalists brought heart and soul and mind-blowing creativity to this search and they all contributed to making it what it is - the first of its kind in South Africa and a very, very cool opportunity," said McArthur.

Stuurman will receive a monthly stipend of R10 000 for the duration of his contract, and will travel abroad for an international fashion experience. He will also be one of the first people in South Africa to receive a BlackBerry 10 device when it launches in the first quarter of 2013.

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