

Van Heusen announces the grand finale designers for the Van Heusen India Men's Week 2009: Ashish Soni, Rohit Gandhi and Rahul Khanna

28 August 2009

*Also announces the final three contenders for the Van Heusen Emerging Designer of the Year Contest, in association with FDCI*

Van Heusen today announced that Ashish Soni, Rohit Gandhi and Rahul Khanna will design for the Van Heusen Grand Finale for the forthcoming Van Heusen India Men's Week. They will present their Spring-Summer 2010 lines as the final show on the final day of the event scheduled to be held on 11-13 September 2009 at the Grand Hotel, New Delhi.

Ashish Soni's contemporary formal range designed especially for the Van Heusen Grand Finale, promises to be both modern and experimental with a strong trend on narrow draped trousers, short jackets with slim lapels and sharp cuts. The garments are body hugging, very fitted, short and sharp. The collection is in three main colours, black, charcoal, and white with hints of blue, and is custom made for the experimental man. Ashish Soni's collection as always will exhibit immaculate tailoring and attention to detail.

"I am amongst the few designers that started my career designing only menswear in 1993. Needless to say menswear has come a very long way in our country and the fact that it is finally getting its due recognition with its own industry platform gives me tremendous happiness. Presenting a collection for the Grand Finale always comes with a sense of great excitement and I would like to thank Van Heusen for this fantastic opportunity and congratulate FDCI for putting together yet another great initiative", said Ashish Soni.

The finale collection by Rohit Gandhi and Rahul Khanna revolves around the concept "Hypernature"- the now nature phenomenon caused by the industrialisation of human culture. The duo draws inspiration from linear structures, geometrical lines and is greatly inspired by modern contemporary art. The collection enjoys an infusion of new age cuts and construction along with a strong graphic feel using texture, colour blocking and digital prints as main elements. The colour palette shows an eclectic mix between monochromes and brights and the silhouettes effortlessly blend from structured to relaxed.

The designers' exclusive lines are being created for Vdot by Van Heusen and will retail out of Van Heusen and Vdot stores in the beginning of next year.

Commenting on the partnership, Rohit Gandhi and Rahul Khanna, said: "We feel honoured to be chosen as the Grand Finale designers at the first Van Heusen India Men's Week. It is an exciting time for men's fashion in India as for the first time the country's best menswear designers have come together under one roof to showcase their collections. We would like to thank FDCI and Van Heusen for this endeavour. We are looking forward to designing for Van Heusen and feel that a corporate back up would enable us to reach a wider audience and make hi-fashion accessible."

Mr. Sunil Sethi, President, FDCI, said: "We are delighted to have Ashish Soni, Rohit Gandhi and Rahul Khanna as the Grand Finale designers at the forthcoming Van Heusen India Men's

Week. They are among the most sought after designers in India, well known for their excellence in design and clothing construction. I have been a customer of theirs over the years and I have found them to be in tune with international styling.”

“In a departure from tradition, we have agreed upon the choice of two great Indian designers instead of one, who will bring to the audiences signature lines that are flawless and showcase the best of fashion for men” he further added.

Mr. Shital Mehta, COO, Van Heusen, said: “We are extremely happy to have chosen Ashish Soni; Rohit Gandhi and Rahul Khanna as the Van Heusen Grand Finale designers. We are confident that their lines will bring together the best of contemporary design and practical fashion and more importantly, make it accessible to a larger set of our consumers. With the best fashion designers across the country showcasing their exclusive men’s line for the first time at the Van Heusen India Men's Week, we are certain the event will raise Men’s Fashion to a new level.”

FDCI also announced the short-listed contenders for the ‘Van Heusen Emerging Designer of the Year’. An independent jury deliberated over the 70 entries received from fashion institutes across the country, before deciding on the final three. Amalraj Sengupta, a NIFT Kolkata graduate; Divyanka Bedi, a graduate from Raffles Design Institute, Mumbai; and Varun Arora, a student at Pearl Academy of Fashion, New Delhi, have been selected as the finalists of the Emerging Designer of the Year Contest.

The three finalists will now create a line based on the submitted sketches in accordance with model measurements provided to them to showcase their talent and creativity. They will enjoy the privilege of exhibiting their line at the ‘Van Heusen India Men's Week’ to be held from September 11-13, 2009. The jury will select the winner based on the presentation of the final line and felicitate the ‘Van Heusen Emerging Designer of the Year’ with the winners trophy.

‘Van Heusen Emerging Designer of the Year Contest 2009’ in association with FDCI was open from August 5, 2009 for all students and professional fashion designers with experience of three years or less. Interested contestants were asked to submit their entries on the event website <http://www.vanheusenindiamensweek.com/>. All the contestants had to submit three entries, outlining clearly the concept, material used, and collection note in full colour by August 20, 2009.

Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI) and Van Heusen are set to change the dynamics of the Indian fashion landscape, with the first seriously exclusive fashion week JUST for men. FDCI made the formal announcement of its first annual ‘Van Heusen India Men's Week’ at a press conference a month ago. After a decade of successful India Fashion Weeks, FDCI is ready to explore the growing potential of Men’s Fashion in India in partnership with Van Heusen, India’s leading lifestyle brand. The ‘Van Heusen India Mens Week’ positions India as the fourth Fashion Capital of the world to host an independent Men's Week.

Fashion Design Council of India – A decade in the business of fashion

In the last 11 years FDCI has taken the Indian Fashion industry global and secured national pride for the business of fashion. It has been instrumental in promoting the business of fashion and creating new opportunities for all stakeholders. Over the years FDCI has used various marketing platforms, seminars and workshops to promote fashion.

FDCI, a not for profit organisation, is the apex industry body in the field of fashion in India. Its primary objective is to provide a cohesive platform for Indian designers and act as the mouthpiece of the industry at all relevant platforms, in a bid to promote Indian fashion - at home and abroad. FDCI is actively involved in promoting the 'business of fashion' and working towards corporatisation of fashion labels in India. FDCI is instrumental in facilitating designer-corporate tie-ups, aimed at expanding the fashion market in the country. To mark its 10th anniversary FDCI introduced India's first couture week in September 2008 and now in its 11th year the India Mens Week. For details visit <http://www.fdc.org/>

### **About Van Heusen**

Van Heusen is the world's No.1 dress shirt brand. It's no different in India, except that it is also the country's No. 1 premium lifestyle brand for men, women and youth. With a rich heritage of 128 years, the brand entered India in 1990. It has had the unique distinction of establishing not only the brand, but also the ready-to-wear category. The brand epitomises 'fashion for the corporate', and its design driver is the combination of fashion and elegance. Since its launch in 1990, Van Heusen has consistently tracked and understood the Indian male. In the last two decades the clothing preferences of Indian men have undergone many stages of evolution. At each turning point Van Heusen has stood witness to these changes – and has been ahead of the curve when it has come to forecasting emerging trends and making it accessible to the Indian consumer.