FIT

entrepreneurs
design
class of 2020
We are pleased to introduce the 2020 class of FIT Design Entrepreneurs. Each year, participants are selected for this executive-level program based on their talent, sales, and industry traction. FIT Design Entrepreneurs helps designers take their business to the next level, providing a tailored curriculum taught by FIT faculty and industry leaders, as well as mentorship and guidance in completing a business plan. Culminating in a pitch event and designer showcase, the program allows top participants to present their business plans to a group of industry judges and compete for awards of $100,000 and $50,000.

Now in its eighth year, the program was originally created by the New York City Economic Development Corporation and the Fashion Institute of Technology to foster growth in this key sector of the city’s economy and ensure that creative talent can continue to flourish here. The program, now run solely by FIT, has gained industry recognition and support, and the alumni network has grown into a strong community. Graduates are successful in opening retail locations, expanding internationally, and garnering press and accolades.

“The Design Entrepreneurs program gave me a platform to network with other designers in the industry and open a dialogue within the group where we could share insights about business and the design process. It also allowed me to take a step back and assess which areas of my business were successful and where to focus my efforts toward improvement.”

David Hart, founder of David Hart, 2014 alumnus

“The overall program made a huge impact on how I will run my business from here on. I have learned to be more structured, to use market research to understand my brand positioning, and how to execute the P&L. Understanding the numbers will really help with future strategies.”

Mimi Wong, founder of Minan Wong, 2018 alumna
This group of emerging designers is worth keeping an eye on. Watch their progress at:

designentrepreneursnyc.com
Facebook Design Entrepreneurs NYC
Instagram @FITDENYC
#fitde

text:

follow them

This versatile collection of timelessly elegant pieces was created to make every moment of your life feel special, from delicate robes with the look of little lace coats to lingerie that’s designed to be seen. Every piece is proudly designed in the USA—handcrafted with attention to detail and savoir-faire—with the finest textiles: silks, handpicked French laces, and dreamy Italian tulles.
Ashya, an ode to exploration, is a design label documenting cultural stories and creating multifunctional accessories to help today’s explorer move more thoughtfully throughout the world.

Kate Austin’s sustainable, block-printed clothing and accessories are effortlessly stylish. The bold prints are timeless, designed for living in vibrant color. Wear your joy!
Miriam Baker challenges the current fashion business model by creating classic and chic bust-friendly pieces that flatter the average woman’s body in an environmentally sustainable way.

ADI BENJO is a women’s wear label inspired by the elements of packaging design, transforming minimalist forms into dynamic and functional garments.
Jasmine Chong embraces quiet luxury, creating meticulously crafted women’s wear pieces that marry the romance of rich detailing with the functionality of prêt-à-porter. At the heart of each garment is an unapologetic commitment to celebrating the female form, with silhouettes that are fluid and delicate. The designer weaves rich and personal stories through a canvas of color, silhouette, texture and form, producing pieces that are sculptural, romantic, and meaningful.

Ariana Bohling is a collection of distinctive and directional footwear for the modern nomad. All shoes are ethically sourced and produced by master craftspeople.
Arielle Crawford
University of Central Florida
City College of San Francisco

ARIELLE
shop-arielle.com
@shop_arielle

ARIELLE is a sustainable apparel label committed to timeless design, regenerative materials, local manufacturing, supply chain transparency, consumer education, and policy change.

Ariel Dubov
New York University
Carolina Saboya
San Francisco State University

IMBŌDHI
imbodhi.co
@imbodhiwear

IMBŌDHI is an earth-conscious activewear brand that specializes in making technical and versatile onesies for women who love to move.
Diana Ganz
University of Michigan
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Jeanne Foley
Illinois Institute of Art

Alicia Goodwin
Fashion Institute of Technology
Hunter College

LINGUA NIGRA
linguanigra.com
Linguanigra

The Groomsman Suit offers wedding suits and tuxedos for men, women, and children for under $200. They offer one of the largest size ranges of any brand, fitting all shapes and sizes. More than a wedding wear brand, The Groomsman Suit is a champion for its couples’ wedding style and is committed to helping them and their friends look their best. Because looking sharp is all about the fit and details and not the price tag, The Groomsman Suit is constantly creating and sharing style guides to make sure its customers have everything they need to look sharp on a very special day.

Thoughtfully designed organic sculptural jewelry with a nod to Victorian-era mourning pieces as well as goldwork from the Mesoamerican period of adornment.
Victoria Hayes celebrates female boldness with collections that visually depict modern femininity as a balance between beauty and aggression, fragility and strength, vulnerability and dominance.

STIVALI
stivali.us
@stivali.us
stivali_us

This brand takes its inspiration from New York sophistication, European design, and the pre-Spanish history of Colombia, where the shoes are handmade. STIVALI is where fashion meets an indigenous golden legacy.
**Angeline Hayling**
California Lutheran University

**ISLAND TRIBE**
islandtribeus.com
@islandtribeus
@islandtribe_

Island Tribe is a women’s wear brand founded with the aim of working with indigenous artisans around the globe with a strong commitment to sustainability and transparent production practices. Based in California, their minimal bohemian designs have been featured in *Vogue*, *WWD*, and *In Style* magazines, among others. Over the years, Island Tribe has fostered a dynamic, free-spirited community that embraces femininity—a “tribe” that is conscious of the environment and holistic living through empowerment workshops and retreats.

**Jasmine Jones**
Trinity Washington University

**CHERRY BLOSSOM INTIMATES**
cherryblossomintimates.com
@cbintimates
@cherryblossomintimates

After creating the first-of-its-kind breast health facility and intimates boutique, Jasmine is using innovation and inclusion for global impact through creatively designed post-mastectomy bras.
Emily Kenison
Columbia University
New York University
Anne McGuigan
College of Charleston

Sterling King
Parsons School of Design
Eugene Lang College
Central Saint Martins

Sterling King is a sculptural jewelry brand best recognized for bold forms, distinctive textures, and baroque embellishments. Sterling King jewelry is proudly made in New York City.

Straplets is a fashion tech startup that created a true innovation in the women’s footwear market. Our line of utility patented shoe accessories fit over virtually all shoes, instantly transforming them into the latest trend, while adding comfort and support. Straplets is created by women to empower women—versatile, sustainable, convenient, affordable, and transformative.

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At Maguire, we offer high-end shoes at a fair price. We produce our own designs and source from the same factories as our favorite high-end brands but we sell our products for half the price, thanks to our direct-to-consumer business model.

KHIRY makes luxury goods inspired by life and culture throughout the global African diaspora.
Forty years ago, G. Sherman Jewels made a promise that its jewelry was “made to last a lifetime,” and its work certainly has. Forty years later the heritage brand is back and ready to continue the history and share their sparkle!

Asthana and Sidharth is not just an eponymous label, it defines us. We don’t work; we play and throw our selves into it with great energy and dedication. Our work is a conversation about the present transitional nature of India: We create products that grow from the soil of our nation but evolve them into more contemporary forms.
Sydney Suh-Lee

Parsons School of Design

OAD NEW YORK
oadnewyork.com
OAD NEW YORK

Former Kate Spade and Calvin Klein designer Sydney Suh-Lee launched OAD with the goal of creating accessories that combine minimalist form with function. Inspired by simple geometric shapes and rendered in a striking array of colors, OAD bags also include a generous number of card slots and pockets, making organization effortless. All OAD handbags are made from the finest leather and produced in small batches by artisans in Seoul, South Korea.

Célia Torvisco

École nationale supérieure en création industrielle (Les Ateliers)

CÉLIA TORVISCO
celia-torvisco.com
celiat pivotisches

Influenced by everyday life scenes, the goal is to produce distinctive objects with a twist. Clean lines, functional details, and quality materials are main preoccupations for the brand.
Yegang Yoo
Parsons School of Design
Fashion Institute of Technology

IMAGO-A
imago-a.com
@imago_a

The IMAGO-A (pronounced ee-mah-go ah) collection is built upon geometric and sculptural shapes that are both original and functional.

Karolina Zmarlak
Fashion Institute of Technology
KZ_K STUDIO BY KAROLINA ZMARLAK
karolinazmarlak.com
@karolinazmarlak
@karolinazmarlak

Karolina develops modern feminine silhouettes using innovative technical fabrics and structured multifunctionality, with an aesthetic driven by her Polish heritage: European minimalism.

Jesse Keyes
Princeton University
Columbia University
Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya

The IMAGO-A (pronounced ee-mah-go ah) collection is built upon geometric and sculptural shapes that are both original and functional.
FIT Design Entrepreneurs

FIT Design Entrepreneurs is grateful to G-III Apparel Group, Ltd., the program’s founding sponsor, for its exceptional support. Its generosity has made it possible to support outstanding program participants in advancing their businesses, and to provide financial workshops, networking opportunities, and other support for graduates. G-III has secured participation from industry friends in order to ensure FIT Design Entrepreneurs’ continued success.

The Israel Goldgrub Award

The 2020 second-place award has been generously provided by Michael Gold, president of YM, Inc., in honor of his father, Israel Goldgrub. The only member of his family to survive WWII, Israel Goldgrub left Europe after the war, emigrating to Argentina and then to Canada. With his son, Michael Gold, he founded the Cosa Nova leather manufacturing company, which grew into the Young Manufacturer (YM). Today, YM owns numerous brands and operates hundreds of retail outlets across Canada and the U.S. Israel Goldgrub passed away at 95 in 2015.

FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

FIT, a part of the State University of New York, has been an internationally recognized leader in career education in design, fashion, business, and technology for 75 years. Providing an uncommon blend of practical experience and theory on a foundation of arts and sciences, FIT offers a wide range of affordable programs that foster innovation, collaboration, and a global perspective. FIT draws on its New York City location to provide a vibrant, creative environment for learning, exploration, and research. The college offers nearly 50 programs and grants AAS, BFA, BS, MA, MFA, and MPS degrees, preparing students for professional success and leadership in the new creative economy.

Learn more about FIT at fitnyc.edu.

ENTERPRISE STUDIES AND DIGITAL DESIGN

For more than 30 years, Enterprise Studies and Digital Design at FIT has provided designers with the business training they need to meet the enormous challenges of entrepreneurship. Developed to help maximize New York City’s creative assets for economic growth and job creation, programs include such courses as Starting a Small Business, Artist in the Marketplace, The Business of Illustration, Creative Enterprise Ownership, Tools of the Trade, and Sustainable Design Entrepreneurs.

Learn more about Enterprise Studies and Digital Design at fitnyc.edu/enterprisesstudies.

designentrepreneursnyc.com

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