

FALL 2017
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**FALL'S
NEW
MOOD**

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FLORALS
BOLD LEATHER

**OBSESSED
WITH
KATE MOSS**

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FINAL SAY

True Patriot

Society maven

SUZANNE ROGERS sets out to raise **CANADA'S FASHION FLAG** with her eponymous institute.

No one would argue that

Jeanne Beker ranks among this country's most—if not the most—knowledgeable and passionate fashion experts. I've been fortunate to count Jeanne as a friend and colleague—spanning endless fashion-related events, fundraisers, committees, and juries—for many years. Along the way, I've learned that she and I share a deep commitment to Canadian fashion. Though my personal tastes are extremely wide-ranging, reflecting a broad worldview, I've always

reserved significant space in my heart (and closet) for the work of Canadian designers. Canada has blessed the global fashion arena with many remarkable visionaries, from Alfred Sung, Wayne Clark and the delightful Caten twins to comparative newcomers like the wonderful Erdem and forward-thinking Sid Neigum, who recently added a Think2Thing Be3Dimensional Innovation Fund grant to his shelf full of awards. (Intriguingly, the grant will fund integration of 3D technologies into his design work).

Jeanne and I have often discussed what can and should be done to help nurture and support homegrown talent. Not long ago, in a Canadian Press interview, she sounded the trumpets, decrying "the stigma of being Canadian and having to scream twice as loud to make ourselves heard. ... There's something to be said about buying into our own as Canadians, I think that's incredibly important." Canadian fashion is, she added, "part of our national identity; it's what we're wearing

[and] what we're saying about ourselves, and plays a large part in telling the world who we are."

To ensure the prolonged growth and escalating strength of our fashion industry, I've long been an avid supporter and champion of the School of Fashion at Toronto's Ryerson University. I know from firsthand observation that it holds its own against the best fashion education institutions anywhere. As the school's chair, Robert Ott, so aptly observes, it is a singularly inspiring place "to drive innovation, honour heritage, and celebrate diversity."

But even the finest training isn't enough. Which is why I'm so proud to have established the Suzanne Rogers Fashion Institute, a Ryerson-affiliated fellowship program in craftsmanship and design. More than two years in the making, and made possible through a \$1-million gift from The Edward and Suzanne Rogers Foundation, the Institute's intent is to bridge the gap between school and the early years of an emerging designer's career. Open to Ryerson's second, third, and fourth-year Fashion Design students, the Institute will support up to six fellows per year. Each is provided a spectrum of benefits, including master classes led by fashion leaders, mentorships, funding to facilitate their participation in national and international competitions, and support in identifying opportunities for paid internships and work placements.

As recently announced, the program's first three fellows are Alexandra Armata, Quentin Collier, and Stephanie Moscall-Varey. All are remarkable young artists, poised to raise Canada's fashion flag ever higher. I will be closely watching their progress, applauding every new step toward their richly deserved success.