

## **Lufthansa connects SA's emerging fashion designers to the world with SAFW SS17**

- *Lufthansa First Best Collections renames to Lufthansa First Class Collections*
- *Lufthansa First Class Collections semi-finalists announced*

For the sixth year, Lufthansa German Airlines welcomes South Africa's future design stars into the creative fashion industry through the South African Fashion Week First Class collections showcase. The collection was previously known as the Lufthansa First Best Collections. South African Fashion Week and Lufthansa are proud to announce the semi-finalists for the Lufthansa First Class Collections.

The Lufthansa First Class Collections celebrates outstanding fashion talent in South Africa with the aim of cultivating and supporting the important designers of the future – bringing the prospect of marketing their brand, and getting established in the South African Market.

“Lufthansa's association with the fashion industry goes far beyond just this flight. For the last 6 years, Lufthansa South Africa has supported the local fashion industry through the partnership with South Africa Fashion Week's First Best Collections. We are very proud to have taken winners of the show's competition to experience the international fashion industry and to assist with taking South African fashion to the world,” says Jola Slomkowski, brand manager for Lufthansa in South Africa.

The winner of this prestigious competition will be flown by Lufthansa to Berlin, to attend Berlin Fashion Week, as part of the SAFW Travel Seminar in July 2017. All finalists will showcase their Lufthansa First Class Collection on 29 March at SA Fashion Week to an audience of top fashion influencers. All finalists will exhibit their collections at the SAFW trade event - from 30 March to 1 April - the only fashion B2B trade event of its kind in South Africa, where over 50 labels will sell their collections to local buyers. This season, the exhibition will run concurrently with SAFW in a marquee adjacent to the show marquee.

Lucilla Booyzen, director of South African Fashion Week says, “This opportunity, to showcase a SS17 Collection under the Lufthansa First Class Collections banner, was open to fashion designers who have been in business for less than 10 years. We are looking for those outstanding achievers that have shown promise and dedication in establishing and growing their own fashion businesses.”

The semi-finalists are:

**Sheila-Madge Designs by Sheila-Madge Bakker** – A label that reconciles concept and the Avant-garde with wearability.

**Aya Velase by Aya Velase** – A fashion label that values precision, symmetry, and design details shaped by the manipulation of lines and borders.

**Stitch and Steel by Linda Gale** – A label that strives to bring clients unique and distinctive items.

**Aya Goods by Lucy Mulima** – A label born to create eclectic, contemporary clothing inspired from African handwoven material.

Judging for the Lufthansa First Class Collection finalist group will take place on **Wednesday, 22 March 2017** at The Park, at Hyde Park Corner, and will be announced on **Wednesday 29 March 2017**.

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