

The Style Column

Belinda Nash takes us behind the scenes in New Zealand's fashion industry and gives us her hot picks of the month

Proudly Inspired By Home

Fashion designer Dru Douglas proudly acknowledges his Papua New Guinean heritage, which he has weaved into his urban womenswear label Lumai.

"I love designing because it gives me the ability to tell stories with garments," says Douglas. "Lumai's unique point of view lies in transforming history and culture into contemporary fashion that is relevant to all and yet conveys stories of the few."

The Auckland-based label launched its first capsule collection in late 2017 after showcasing to rave reviews at the Pacific Runway event in Sydney. Lumai's designs celebrate empowerment and identity through Western styles and Papua New Guinean influence using draped fabrics and elegant silhouettes. And is not afraid of a touch of wry humour.

Douglas, who is gay, says he designs for women who appreciate and connect with the Lumai story.

"Growing up I always got bullied for being effeminate, so it's great to finally be able to embrace that part of me and design for women. I feel it allows me to bring an emotional quality to the design that women connect with," says Douglas.

"Featuring women of colour wearing Lumai is extremely important too," Douglas adds. "Being Papua New Guinean and growing up there, I instantly became aware of how important representation meant to me.

"I never saw anyone that looked like me or my mother's family in mainstream media. So with Lumai, I wanted to change that and provide a platform for women of colour especially here in the Pacific," he says.

The former IT professional turned fashion designer is excited about merging his culture with Auckland's multicultural and multi-faceted fashionscape.

"I'm in the process of creating some woven bags in collaboration with women's weaving collectives back home in Papua New Guinea. The artisanal work in PNG is amazing, so I wanted to provide an alternative revenue stream for communities back home," says Douglas.

"I am also working on Lumai's second capsule collection, which will be a continuation of ideas from this first collection," he says.

Find Lumai at www.lumailabel.com



BELINDA NASH is a writer and has just launched her own lifestyle blog www.thebellaedit.co.nz to share her edit of the exciting world she inhabits.

MONTHLY
Hot picks:



Donna Acqua
100ml \$205 &
Uomo Acqua
125ml \$177 by
Valentino



Street Down Vest in Khaki Camo \$279.90 by Huffer



Burroughs Black
eyewear \$349 from
Israel Adesanya X Karen
Walker Monumental:
The Second Collection
eyewear by Karen Walker



Dina Wide Legged Pleated Pants \$272 by Lumai



L'Oréal Paris X
Balmain Colour
Riche Collection
lipsticks 'Freedom'
and 'Rebellion'
\$23.99 exclusive to
Farmers for a limited
time



Street Down Jacket in Red \$349 by Huffer



Blue Agate bracelet
in Rose Gold \$89 by
Cathy Pope



Panic Ring
Oxidized in Sterling
Silver \$435 by
Meadowlark



The Duffle \$99.95 by Federation