

ALL EYES ON THE PRIZE

With five impressive names in the frame, it won't be easy deciding who is the Scottish Fashion Awards Designer of the Year. But the winner will be a deserving one, finds **Elizabeth McMeekin**

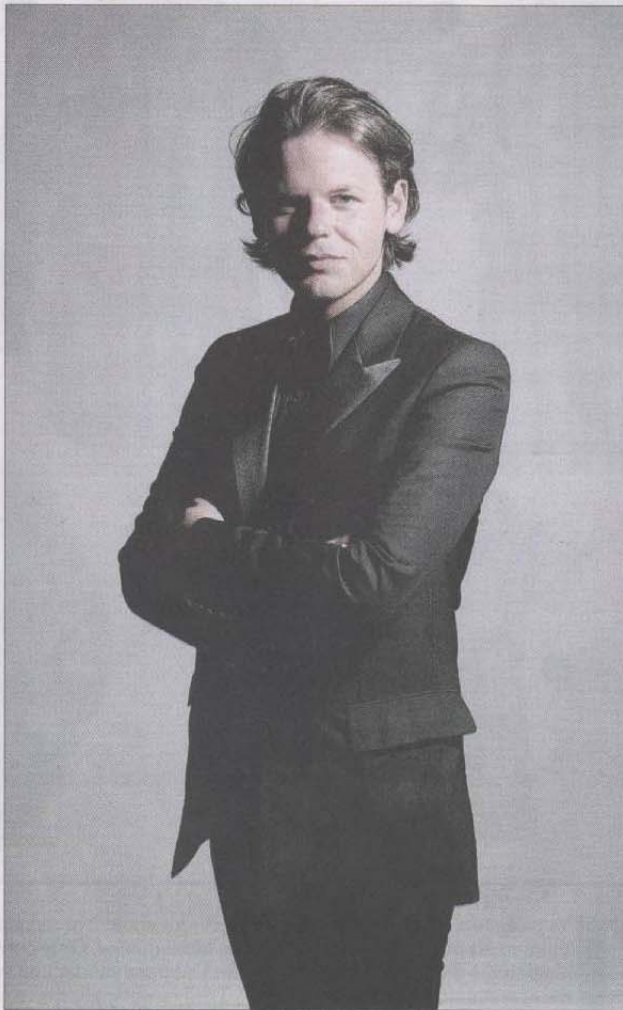
The judges are going to have a tough old time deciding who to crown Scottish Fashion Awards Designer of the Year 2010. Not only does the category, which is sponsored by Vogue.com, include such established names as Jonathan Saunders and fashion favourite Christopher Kane, there's also the fun-fuelled, wild-card designing of Pam Hogg to consider as well.

Of course, the fact that designer of the year is arguably the most high-profile category of the Scottish Fashion Awards, to be held on June 20 at the Glasgow Science Centre, probably won't help matters either. As this is the fifth anniversary of the awards, all eyes will be on the nominees: Saunders, Kane and Hogg as well as Graeme Black and Clare Waight Keller for Pringle of Scotland.

As the current hero of Scottish – and indeed British – fashion, Christopher Kane must be one of the favourites. His recent gingham, Little House on the Prairie-inspired collection went down a storm with fashion insiders and has already been seen on celebrities such as musician Joanna Newsom. Then there's that gorilla-printed dress he made last year, which was spotted on practically every famous female you can name, from Rihanna to Twilight star Kristen Stewart.

That said, Kane isn't the only nominated designer who has been dressing celebrities recently. Black, who used to work with labels including Armani and Ferragamo, has recently dressed Sarah Brown as well as Queen Rania of Jordan. His clothing is unashamedly inspired by Scotland and is often made from tweeds, wools and cashmere, making him a favourite with mature, well-to-do ladies.

Glasgow School of Art-educated designer Saunders, who took his label to New York in



Christopher Kane's gingham-inspired collection went down a storm PHOTOGRAPH: SIMON MURPHY

2008, returned to London Fashion Week last year stronger than ever. A textile and fashion designer, he has always been known for his bold use of colour and print, but these days fashion insiders are also praising him for his business acumen and commercial viability.

With the might of Pringle of Scotland behind her, Waight Keller is another nominee who has had to learn a bit about how to design for a large fashion label. The English designer has transformed the fate of the Scottish fashion house in the last few years by bringing a little glamour to its collections.

Of course, the judges could always side with the wild woman of the category. Hogg, though not new to the British fashion scene, is going through a bit of a renaissance at the moment. Her daring lycra designs are favourites with flamboyant musicians such as Siouxsie Sioux, as well as London club kids. She might not be the most commercial designer nominated, but her fun, youthful attitude to clothing makes her a real contender for the prize. ■

The Scottish Fashion Awards icon of the Year nominees sponsored by Galaxy Radio

- George Lamb
- Karen Gillan
- Tilda Swinton
- Alex Gardner
- Simon Neil

- Isla Fisher
- Gerard Butler
- Sharleen Spiteri
- Paolo Nutini
- Amy Macdonald

For more information on all the nominee categories, visit www.scottishfashionawards.com.