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For Immediate Release

**LET'S COME TOGETHER AND CELEBRATE WITH STYLE AT THE 2011
MERCEDES-BENZ FASHION FESTIVAL – BRISBANE**

The Mercedes-Benz Fashion Festival - Brisbane is back in business from Saturday 20 August through until Friday 26 August, with a more impressive line-up of designers and retailers than ever before.

The recent floods may have dampened our soils, but now there is optimism in the air as Queensland's most popular and exciting Fashion Festival is set to strut the runway at South Bank. The mood is elevated, the talent is preparing and with great anticipation, tickets for the Mercedes-Benz Fashion Festival go on sale tomorrow.

Once again, the Mercedes-Benz Fashion Festival - Brisbane will do what it always does best. It will provide an exciting platform to draw people to view our best local, national and international fashion talent and also introduce emerging artists in a stunning world-class arena. The 2011 program boasts a huge line-up with design leaders like **Easton Pearson, Akira, Paul Hunt** and **Scanlan & Theodore** to name a few.

Treasurer and Minister for State Development and Trade **Andrew Fraser** said Queensland's fashion industry was going from strength to strength every year and the State Government was again proud to support the hallmark event.

"Queensland has produced many outstanding designers who have been very successful at making a name for themselves on the international stage," says Mr Fraser.

"The Bligh Government wants to ensure that the avenues are there for our young designers to showcase their talents and continue Queensland's strong tradition in fashion as well as provide positive foundations for our economy.

"Our state's creative industries are worth approximately \$3.4 billion a year to the economy, with exports valued at \$1.1 billion and employing around 74,000 Queenslanders."

Festival Director **Lindsay Bennett** says that such a huge response from prominent Australian designers and sponsors clearly demonstrates that the Fashion Festival provides real returns for the local economy. "We are now the premier Fashion Festival showcasing Spring/Summer Collections to the rest of the country and we are committed to supporting the industry, especially after the recent floods", he says.

Mr. Bennett believes South Bank is the perfect conduit between the arts, fashion and tourism industry which are all vital components in Brisbane's plan to position itself as a city that comes together in good times and bad. "We are delighted to once again provide a world class Fashion Festival with the support of Mercedes-Benz as our naming rights sponsor for the sixth year in a row."

Gavin Allen, General Manager - Marketing Communications, Mercedes-Benz Australia/Pacific believes the Fashion Festival provides the perfect platform for local, national and international designers to showcase the innovation and adventure that so characterises Mercedes-Benz. "The emergence of the next generation of designers has always been integral to the Festival and we look forward to another exciting benchmark Mercedes-Benz Fashion Festival."

Last year, the Festival was staged over the weekend for the first time, and as anticipated, tickets sold out for the opening two nights in record time. This year will be no exception according to Mr. Bennett. "Due to the success of last year's sales, the people of Queensland have demonstrated they want to see great fashion, in a great atmosphere and I have no doubt that tickets will again be in demand."

South Bank Corporation CEO, **Malcolm Snow** is thrilled to welcome the Mercedes-Benz Fashion Festival to the Parklands, South Bank for the second year.

"The first quarter of 2011 has been challenging for the retail and manufacturing industries in south-east Queensland and the economy at large. South Bank has experienced its own challenges as a consequence of the devastating January floods. And now, very much back in business, we're delighted to help give the retail industry and the economy of Queensland a boost. And what better way to do this than to again support Mercedes-Benz Fashion Festival, a glittering showcase of the best Queensland and Australian fashion designers. The Festival is establishing itself as a critical driver of exchange and business networking for the fashion industry and our local economy and this inspired combination of commerce and creativity is emblematic of our thriving and diverse precinct," says Mr. Snow.

The 2011 Fashion Festival will celebrate the arrival of the Spring/Summer Collections with 23 events being staged over the week-long Festival including 8 group shows, an off-site swimwear group show, the Westfield Chermside Australian Fashion Graduate of the Year Award along with the Festival Gala Highlights Parade and closing party.

Designed to offer the public the broadest possible selection of accessible events, the 2011 program also boasts a series of QueensPlaza fashionable high tea and salon showings, the Myer Fashion Luncheon featuring new season designs by Sass & Bide, Leona Edmiston and more, and a program of free parades in the Queen Street Mall. Guests can also expect to explore Brisbane's depth of fashion knowledge, history and innovation via the popular 'Fashion After Hours' cultural program.

Once again the runway group shows will take place in the **Cultural Forcourt**, South Bank in an impressive purpose-built 60 metre marquee with tiered seating and a 30 metre raised runway, giving every ticket holder a bird's eye view of the show.

Fashion Festival organisers applaud all sponsors whose commitment and valued support has helped to grow the Festival into an event that continues to achieve new heights each year. Partners include **Mercedes-Benz, South Bank Corporation, Queensland Government, QPAC, Brisbane Marketing, Myer, Brisbane Marriott Hotel, Brisbane Arcade, Foreshore Hamilton by Mirvac, QueensPlaza, Sanpellegrino, Peroni, Deakin Estate, Mallesons Stephen Jaques, Westfield Chermside, Avant Card** and **QUT Creative Enterprise Australia**.

The Fashion Festival welcomes back our invaluable media partners **Network TEN, 97.3FM** and **The Courier-Mail** and **The Sunday Mail**.

The Fashion Festival's makeup partner will again be **Napoleon Perdis**. His professional team will provide make-up for all events alongside leading-edge stylists from hair partner **Schwarzkopf Professional**, both who have supported the Festival for many years.

Guests will be able to enjoy the Festival's uber-fashionable hospitality at '**The Fashion Bar**' situated in the **Cascade Court** at QPAC. Cascade Court will be transformed into fashion central with live entertainment and a chance to watch the group shows once again on the big screen.

Continuing its tradition of giving back to the community, the Mercedes-Benz Fashion Festival – Brisbane, hosted by South Bank is also proud to announce that in 2011 it will donate \$1 from every ticket sold to its chosen charity, "**AEIOU Foundation - for Children with Autism**".

Tickets go on sale from Friday the 20th May through QTIX outlets on 136 246 or online at www.qtix.com.au

The full program is available at: www.mbff.com.au

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FAST FACTS

Dates: Saturday 20 August through until Friday 26 August, 2011

Location: Group Shows will be staged in a purpose-built 60 metre marquee in the Cultural Forecourt, South Bank

Tickets: Available through QTIX from 20 May. Ph 136 246 or www.qtix.com.au

Designers: Upwards of 49 local designers, 8 national designers, 5 retailers and 5 retail centres

Cost: The festival costs in excess of \$800,000 to stage

Benefit: The Festival provides a fundamental platform to showcase Queensland's established and emerging designers, which directly results in increased designer sales and recognition in both a local and national arena.

Employment: The Festival will provide employment for over 500 people directly involved in MBFF.

Economic: The State's creative industries is worth approximately \$3.4 billion a year to the economy with exports valued at \$1.1 billion and employing around 74,000 Queenslanders

Program: 11 Group Shows, 2 x fashion lunches, 2 x high teas and fashion showings, 2 x 'fashion after hours' panel discussions and 5 x free parades in Queen Street Mall

Ticket prices: Ticket prices have been scaled to cater for all budgets, ranging from \$30 - \$125 and a selection of tailored package deals on offer including:

- **Early Booking Discount** of 10% off individual ticket prices for tickets ordered before 30 June (excludes QueensPlaza High Tea, Myer Fashion Luncheon, Fashion After Hours, Gala Highlight Parade & Party.)
- **Three (3) Ticket Package** \$117.00 (save \$21.00) - Select three (3) x \$46 Group Show tickets and receive a 15% discount (price inclusive GST and QTIx booking fee).
- **Season Ticket Package** \$850 (save \$159) – Attend all Runway Group Shows (except the QueensPlaza High Tea, Myer Fashion Luncheon and Fashion After Hours) and receive a 15% discount (price inclusive GST and QTIx booking fee).
- **Gold Pass Package** \$115 which includes entry into the VIP Runway Lounge for 1 hour of pre-show cocktails and canapés and reserved VIP seating at a runway show (excludes Swimwear and Gala Highlights Parade). NOTE: Gold reserve seats are limited.

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