

FLINDERS UNIVERSITY

Citation for the Award of Doctor of Letters *honoris causa*

Mr Paul Vasileff

Paul Vasileff is the Creative Director and Founder of South Australian couture house, Paolo Sebastian.

Paul learnt to sew from the age of three and never looked back. Initially taught by his Grandmother, he completed his first evening dress at age 11 – Paul was fascinated by the inner workings and underpinnings of garments. With dreams of one day becoming a fashion designer, he developed his skills by undertaking private lessons in pattern making and sewing at the age of 13 and created countless formal dresses for friends in his teens.

Aged 17, Paul debuted the first Paolo Sebastian collection which was entirely designed, drafted, and hand-sewn by himself. The collection received rave reviews from the public and press and he immediately began taking orders for private clients.

Wanting to further his skills and knowledge, he sought out an apprenticeship with an Italian tailor practising in traditional sartorial methods, where he would develop his knowledge and technique. Shortly after, he was granted a scholarship to the prestigious Europeo Istituto di Design in Milan, Italy, where he graduated with honours.

After returning to Australia, Paul expanded the business to employ and train staff that were equally passionate about honouring the traditions of fine sewing. In the years since, the label has evolved to become one of Australia's leading couture houses, specialising in garments designed to accentuate the beauty of the individual.

With a love of producing grand showcases, Paolo Sebastian was honoured to present in Paris for the first time in 2016 with its Gilded Wings collection. After leaving an impression, Paolo Sebastian now hosts annual showings in Paris. Key features of Paolo Sebastian creations include intricate hand-embroidery, elegant draping, delicate tulle, French lace, and romantic silhouettes. Paolo Sebastian now also visits Paris, Dubai and Doha regularly for trunk shows.

In 2017, Paul was awarded Young Australian of the Year for his work in founding Paolo Sebastian and its contribution to the Australian fashion industry. Later that same year, he was awarded Designer of The Year in the Prix de Marie Claire Awards.

Determined to create a local brand, the Paolo Sebastian designs are handmade in Adelaide, South Australia with each piece brought to life through the mastery of Paul and his team of 18 specialised seamstresses using traditional methods of craftsmanship.

Paolo Sebastian is worn by celebrities walking the red carpets of the Golden Globes, the Met Gala, the Oscars and the Logies. Notably, Paolo Sebastian, has dressed the likes of Kim Kardashian, Katy Perry, Rebel Wilson, Hailey Steinfeld, Heidi Klum, Sydney Sweeney, Adut Akech, and Anya Taylor-Joy.

In recognition that Paul Vasileff has truly made his mark in the fashion industry with his unique skills, passion for couture, and scope of creative vision, Flinders University would like to present him with a Doctor of Letters *honoris causa* .