PRESS RELEASE

**Her Royal Highness Princess Delphine of Saxe-Coburg, Princess of Belgium, launches ‘Love Imperfection’ at Maasmechelen Village, part of The Bicester Collection.**

**Launch ceremony**

The ‘Love Imperfection’ art takeover at Maasmechelen Village, part of The Bicester Collection, launched on 24 June with an official ceremony attended by Her Royal Highness Princess Delphine of Saxe-Coburg, Princess of Belgium. The event officially kicked off the summer-long activation with a breath-taking street-dance performance and a welcome greeting by Princess Delphine herself, after which she inaugurated the revisited six-meter-high Manneken Pis statue, Maasmechelen Village’s landmark since 2019 – dressed up by the Princess as “Delphineken Pis”.

QUOTE PRINCESS DELPHINE

The Village takeover includes two additional temporary art installations. The first – a larger-than-life ‘wishing tree’ inviting guests to hang their written wishes from its branches – supports the Village’s charity partner, Make-A-Wish® Belgium-Flanders.

The second installation – a shape-shifting series of mirrors that exaggerate physical flaws to comic effect – is intended to associate so-called ‘imperfection’ with laughter, positivity and self-love.

Celebrating uniqueness and individuality, and manifesting love and happiness, the takeover sends a powerful message of self-acceptance, empowerment and radical optimism.

**The Creative Spot**

The festivities at Maasmechelen Village include the first-ever “The Creative Spot” pop-up boutique, an initiative of The Bicester Collection family of international shopping destinations to support emerging talent by offering young designers global exposure and rent-free trading.

Princess Delphine opened the pop-up with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and an introduction to the participating designers, all chosen by the Princess and including 11 Belgian and three international talents as well as her personal stylist, Jody Van Geert. Featured in the boutique are Belgian collections by Pol Vogels, Erratum Fashion, Marylène Madou, Georgina Sanginés, Anne Zellien, Atelier ExC, Cilem Tunc, Wim Van Lessen, Le Parfum de Nathalie, Kristina Knitwear, Cornelia Hats and collections of the international designers by THEMOIRè, Torlowei, who are the finalists of The Bicester Collection Award for emerging designers 2022 and ASHISH.

**Event attendees**

A-list personalities attending the launch ceremony included <ADD>.

**Information**

The Creative Spot pop-up boutique opens 24 June until the end of July. The ‘Love Imperfection’ art installations will be on display in the Village from 24 June until 31 August.

ENDS

**EDITOR’S NOTES**

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**ABOUT MAASMECHELEN VILLAGE**

Part of The Bicester Collection, Maasmechelen Village brings together a unique edit of the finest brands in Europe for a diverse audience of guests across Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands. Inspired by the architecture of the Limburg region and the heritage of Belgium’s Surrealist artists, the Village offers a lively mix of contemporary fashion, international cuisine and seamless shopping services. Discover a selection of fashion and lifestyle brands in more than 100 boutiques, offering up to 60% off the recommended retail price, all year round.

Over the years, Maasmechelen Village has been an active supporter of all things Belgian. Home to a range of Belgian brands, the finest Belgian chocolate boutiques, a signature *brasserie*, and a larger-than-life Manneken Pis statue, the shopping destination takes pride in spotlighting the heritage of one of Europe’s most unique countries.

*For more information, visit MaasmechelenVillage.com*

**ABOUT THE BICESTER COLLECTION**

The Bicester Collection is a family of 11 distinctive shopping destinations in Europe and China defined by extraordinary experiences while offering remarkable value. The Collection, created and operated by Value Retail, brings together the world’s most discerning guests and the world’s most renowned brands – often for the first time – on a journey of discovery. The Villages are located close to some of Europe and China’s most celebrated cities: London, Paris, Milan, Barcelona, Madrid, Dublin, Brussels, Munich, Frankfurt, Shanghai and Suzhou. Collectively home to more than 1,300 boutiques, The Bicester Collection offers guests an ever-evolving curation of fashion and lifestyle brands, world-famous restaurants, exciting pop-ups, and imaginative art installations throughout the year.

*For more information, visit TheBicesterCollection.com*

**ABOUT THE CREATIVE SPOT**

The Bicester Collection is proud to support creativity in the fashion world through its ongoing commitment to Unlock Futures for tomorrow’s talent, today. This 20-year initiative has offered mentorship programmes, events, and pop-up boutiques to emerging talents across the globe, enhanced by ongoing partnerships with the British Fashion Council, Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana, the Royal College of Art and more.

A central facet of the programme is The Creative Spot pop-up boutique. Initially launched at Fidenza Village, Milan, in 2016, The Creative Spot provides crucial support and resources to help fashion’s rising stars grow their businesses. Offering unique access to The Bicester Collection’s global network of guests, the boutique allows emerging designers to showcase their work amongst the Villages’ curated portfolio of the world’s most renowned fashion and lifestyle brands, free of charge. Along with additional mentorship opportunities, the boutique offers up-and-coming designers a chance to gain a foothold in the retail world, often leading to further opportunities. In addition to its most recent appearance at Bicester Village in summer 2022, in collaboration with the British Fashion Council, The Creative Spot will ‘pop up’ at La Roca Village, Ingolstadt Village, Fidenza Village and Maasmechelen Village in 2023.

**ABOUT HER ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCESS DELPHINE OF SAXE-COBURG, PRINCESS OF BELGIUM**

Her Royal Highness Princess Delphine of Saxe-Coburg, Princess of Belgium, is an Anglo-Belgian artist. She grew up in London, earned a BA degree from the Chelsea College of Art and Design and worked there as an artist until 2003 when she moved to Brussels to set up a new studio.

Delphine has earned a voice in the European art world as a non-conformist statement artist and colourist. She is known for creating multi-media artworks overflowing with colour, texture and humour that address universal themes. From painting, video, neon sculpture and an eponymous collection of wearable art, her artworks are vibrant, playful and often inspired by issues of identity, taboo, reputation and privilege. Her explicit use of words and language make her messages widely accessible, while colour and composition leave room for whimsy and irony.

Over the course of her career, Delphine has embarked on many high-profile collaborations with renowned galleries and institutions to showcase her art and to spread a message of self-love and radical optimism. In 2003 she even took part in the Venice Biennale with “Absolut Delphine”, representing Belgium with Wim Delvoye. For the collaboration with Maasmechelen Village, she has created brand-new art that will be showcased throughout the shopping destination.

About her selection, Princess Delphine says: “There is so much talent in the fashion and lifestyle industry that deserves to be showcased. For this initiative, I’ve selected 14 designers who do things a little differently. Some of them create very wearable pieces, but there is always a unique, out-the-box touch to their labels that has managed to grab my attention.”

*For more information, visit DelphineDeSaxeCoburg.com*

**ABOUT THE DESIGNERS**

**Pol Vogels**

With his quirky, expressive style, local Limburg talent Pol Vogels creates pieces inspired by Belgian culture and his own family traditions. From his *atelier* in Beringen, the designer created Princess Delphine of Saxe-Coburg’s 2022 royal parade gown. He is currently launching Le Colombophile Belge, a debut collection of hoodies and badges that pay tribute to Belgian carnival culture.

*For more information, please visit www.instagram.com/polvogels*

**Erratum Fashion**

Created by Siré Kaba, Erratum Fashion offers statement ready-to-wear pieces for the urban woman craving vibrancy and elegance. Inspired by Africa and made in Belgium, the brand proudly claims its mixed heritage and, as suggested by its name (Latin for ‘the correction of past mistakes’), aims to build bridges and propose a new reading of Belgium’s relationship with Africa.

Erratum Fashion is acclaimed for having dressed Princess Delphine for her first royal parade in July 2021. In The Creative Spot, the brand will showcase its latest collection of colourful, effortlessly chic pieces.

*For more information, please visit nationalstore.be/nl/store/erratum-fashion*

**Marylène Madou**

Marylène Madou launched her label in early 2017 with an exquisite collection of printed scarves. Today, print remains the starting point for each collection. Created in-house by the designer herself using her own original paintings and digital illustrations, each print is a vibrant interaction between fashion and art.

At The Creative Spot, Marylène Madou will showcase a curation of her signature silk scarves, as well as elegant homeware and accessories, including throws, puffer bags and kimonos.

*For more information, please visit marylenemadou.com*

**Georgina Sanginés**

Born and raised in Mexico where she worked in the cultural sector with artists from various fields, Georgina Sanginés moved to Antwerp in 2018, combining her passion for art and design to found her eponymous jewellery label. Today, her designs harmonise Mexican heritage with a fresh, edgy aesthetic for an eclectic and contemporary take on jewellery artistry.

At The Creative Spot, Georgina Sanginés will showcase a selection of exquisite pieces from her latest collections.

*For more information, please visit georginasangines.com*

**Anne Zellien**

Anne Zellien has always been fascinated by ‘sentimental jewellery’, a style popular in Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries, characterised by personalised engravings, hidden messages, portraits and charms. A firm believer in the importance of love and friendship, Anne focuses on creating ‘meaningful’ jewellery with a personal touch. The designer was recently joined by her son, Thomas Lebacq, who will take the business into the future.

At The Creative Spot, Anne will showcase a selection of her iconic jewellery designs for men and women, including bracelets, cufflinks, rings and earrings.

*For more information, please visit www.annezellien.be*

**Atelier ExC / Ebru Sari**

Boasting a master’s degree in architecture, Ebru Sari, together with her husband, launched her couture label in 2016, creating cocktail and evening pieces for some of the world’s most discerning clients. She is official designer to Miss Belgium, as well as a costume designer for Miss World and Miss Universe.

At The Creative Spot, she will showcase a capsule collection of 39 floral-inspired gowns, including six ready-to-wear ensembles.

*For more information, please visit www.atelierexc.be*

**CILEM TUNC**

A contemporary ready-to-wear designer brand based in Antwerp, CILEM TUNC’s pieces are defined by handcrafted embroidery and meticulous attention to detail. Boasting quality fabrics and innovative, comfortable silhouettes crafted for women of every description, the brand promotes fashion as an expression of individuality and lifestyle.

At The Creative Spot, CILEM TUNC will showcase its 2023 Spring-Summer collection as well as selected pieces from its Flash collection, normally only available online.

*For more information, please visit www.cilemtunc.com*

**Wim Vanlessen**

A renowned ballet dancer with a career spanning 25 years, Wim Vanlessen was knighted Chevalier in the order of Leopold in recognition of his extraordinary contribution to Belgium’s cultural arts. Representing the Royal Ballet of Flanders, he remains an international ambassador for dance, both on and off the stage.

At The Creative Spot, Wim will showcase his latest book, *Dancer*, an acclaimed publication that documents his passion for movement, fashion and photography.

*For more information, please visit wimvanlessen.com*

**Le Parfum de Nathalie**

Le Parfum de Nathalie is a high-end perfume and skincare line created end-to-end – from fragrance development to packaging – by Nathalie Baeten-Coucke.

At The Creative Spot, Le Parfum de Nathalie will showcase Mountain Chic, the brand’s debut collection of luxury scented candles, home perfumes and skincare products. 30% of the revenue will be donated to the Make A Wish Foundation.

*For more information, please visit leparfumdenathalie.be*

**Kristina Knitwear**

Created by Kirsten and Karen Damen, Kristina Knitwear focusses on Belgian craftmanship, sustainable materials and timeless silhouettes.

At The Creative Spot, Kristina Knitwear will showcase eight of the brand’s signature styles in two colourways each.

*For more information, please visit kristinaknitwear.be*

**Cornelia Hats**

From an early age, Josje Huisman loved wearing hats. Her brand, Cornelia Hats, is rooted in the desire to express personal style and individuality both creatively and authentically, and successfully positions headwear as the ultimate accessory.

At The Creative Spot, Cornelia Hats will showcase a selection of colourful hats and caps from the label’s latest collection.

*For more information, please visit corneliaworld.com*

**THEMOIRè**

Founded in Milan in 2019 as an ethically and ecologically responsible fashion brand, THEMOIRè is on a mission to “sew the seams of a more sustainable future” with innovative, environmentally-friendly fabrics for pieces that are as functional as they are elegant. Collections include materials sourced from cactus plants and apple industry waste, cork, eco-fur and vegan leather.

At The Creative Spot, THEMOIRé will showcase a selection of vegan leather handbags and footwear.

*For more information, please visit the-moire.com*

**Torlowei**

Founded in Lagos in 2017 by mother and daughter Patience Torlowei and Mojisola Adegbile, Torlowei’s timeless designs are rooted in African artistic heritage and designed to be passed from generation to generation. The Nigerian duo, who lived for some time in Belgium, reinterpret classic silhouettes in avant-garde materials, with prints, colours and shapes inspired by fauvist and cubist art. High-profile fans include the late André Leon Talley, Naomi Campbell and Black Lives Matter co-founder Opal Tometi.

In The Creative Spot, Torlowei will showcase its collections of lingerie, lounge and resort-wear.

*For more information, please visit www.patiencetorlowei.com*

**ASHISH**

With his mix of western and eastern influences, London-based designer Ashish Gupta merges sportswear, high-octane glamour and craftsmanship to create one-of-a-kind statement collections. Celebrity clients include M.I.A, Madonna, Victoria Beckham, Lily Allen, Taylor Swift, Katy Perry and Lizzo who all adore his defiantly optimistic use of colour and his artistry with sequins.

At the Creative Spot, ASHISH will showcase an exclusive collection of sequinned tops.

*For more information, please visit www.ashish.co.uk*