

CHRISTOPHER BATES: A CHARMING FORCE IN FASHION

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Photo Courtesy: PORT/FOLIO.YVR

16 years ago a passionate, unstoppable young man followed his heart and created a renowned, award winning luxury clothing brand. I had the pleasure of speaking to Canadian designer Christopher Bates about his journey, several accomplishments throughout his career and the value of sustainability.

Born and raised in Vancouver, the visionary Christopher Bates developed his interest for fashion from a very young age. Selected by his mom in the 80's, his wardrobe consisted of clothes from T&C Surf along with Chip and Pepper. Exposure to fun colours fuelled his creative mind even more, which then lead him to composing his very first book of clothing sketches at just 13 years old. From this point, Christopher absolutely knew that he wanted to pursue a career in designing. His extensive research kept bringing him to

Instituto Marangoni, one of the most prestigious fashion and design schools in the world. With campuses in some of the most fashion oriented cities in the world; Paris, Milan, and Mumbai, Christopher decided upon Milan, the world's fashion capital. Apart from pursuing an education in fashion, just living in Italy gave him an extra zest for learning their culture. From the way of life across different cities to setting a global example for fashion and style. In fact, he refers to Italy as his “ground zero” for inspiration. Bates also puts a heavy emphasis on his visits to Cortina and the Italian Riviera, expressing just how much each of these places offer a magnitude of ideas for crafting new designs for any time of year.

Originally starting the production of his garments in Vancouver, Christopher spent years immersing himself in learning and understanding the best fabrics that he could find. After much devotion and consistent efforts, the entrepreneur expanded his brand’s production into Italy. But it certainly doesn’t stop there.



Photo Courtesy: Retail-Insider/Helen Siwak

Working with a team as talented and driven as himself, the objective of the brand has always been to ensure the highest quality materials and production. It wasn’t only the aspect of manufacturing authentic products that was important, but also to ensure that each and every piece represented timeless style and sustainability. These are two key components that are showcased through each of Christopher’s collections, which you can find at his appointment only studio or retailers such as Nordstrom and Gotstyle.

His private studio located in the Eaton Centre showcases his entire collection which surrounds his innovative runway. Yes, you read correctly, there is a runway at his studio. Christopher talked about his experience of working with DK Studio Architects, describing it as an instant bond both professionally and personally. The DK team added their renowned expertise to enhance his vision and design his dream space.

However, that's not the only runway we've seen his designs on. The Canadian fashion guru has made waves with his talent whether it be at fashion shows or through his numerous collaborations with companies like Paramount and Air Canada, just to name a few. Inspired by two of the most popular films ever made, the designer introduced his Top Gun X Christopher Bates collection to great acclaim and then followed it up with his Godfather X Christopher Bates line to commemorate the film's recent 50th anniversary. Through recreating some of the most iconic pieces from both films, he was able to combine his passion for designing and his immense love for these box-office hits. From dressing actors and musicians to winning some of the most prestigious awards such as Canadian Menswear Designer of the year award, Christopher continues to make Canada proud.

He has a captivating presence everywhere he goes and he is an extremely self-motivated, and ambitious man. With the fashion industry being so cutthroat, Christopher prepared himself from a young age for anything that was to come his way. He likes to think of himself as Rocky Balboa, "You get knocked down but you just gotta bounce back up and you know you have to have this mindset that nothing can stop you.". Having seen so much of the world, it's safe to say Milan, which he refers to as the "epicentre of fashion" has stolen his heart. That being said, Christopher's hope for the near future is to expand his line there with a boutique, next to the likes of Roberto Cavalli and Versace.