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W LONDON COLLABORATES WITH UP-AND-COMING DESIGNER FOR LONDON FASHION WEEK

W Hotels Worldwide and W London commission emerging menswear designer James Small to create exclusive accessory for the hotel

London – 22nd September 2010: W Hotels Worldwide and American Express today announces a collaboration between hot, up-and-coming London menswear designer James Small and the new W London - Leicester Square. As part of this collaboration, James Small will be designing three bespoke belts which will be sold exclusively at W London and worn by W London's Insider, the living embodiment of W Hotels who knows London inside out.

W Hotels Worldwide, the hotel category buster and leading hotel industry innovator, has always supported the world of fashion and was the first to link hotels with fashion when it launched the Backstage VIP Lounge at New York Fashion Week over 11 years ago. This year at Mercedes-Benz New York Fashion Week W has launched *Fashion Next*, an integrated approach to fostering and supporting fashion designers all year long. *Fashion Next* brings W from backstage to centre stage, where it will host the presentations of several emerging designers who W Hotels will then collaborate with beyond Fashion Week.

For more than 10 years, W has continually broken new ground through innovative and first-of-a-kind fashion initiatives and programmes. In March 2010 W Hotels revealed an industry first, appointing international stylist and industry innovator Amanda Ross as the brand's first ever Global Fashion Director. Through Amanda Ross, W Hotels has formally launched its Winter 2010/Resort 2011 Global Glam collection with a presentation at Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week New York. A fashionable interpretation of W's continued global growth, Global Glam is a seasonal line of fashion and accessories inspired by the design of new or upcoming W Hotels. For W's latest collection, each designer was inspired by the design narrative for W London - Leicester Square (opening early 2011), W St. Petersburg (opening early 2011) and W Retreat & Spa - Vieques Island (now open).

'W Hotels has always had a passion for fashion and supported young emerging talent. London is the epicentre of cutting edge creativity and is one of the most fashionable cities in the world so we are proud and excited to support new designers like James Small, who represent everything integral to the W brand' says Amanda Ross, Global Fashion Director, W Hotels Worldwide.

When designing the belt, James Small drew inspiration from both the role of the W Insider and the theme of his new SS/11 collection, travel. The W Insider will be the first port of call for W London guests, where no question or task is too big or small. The W Insider will know London inside out and

will have their finger tips firmly on the pulse of fashion, entertainment and music scene. The W Insider will be chosen by a judging panel consisting of Kevin Rockey (General Manager, W London), J Alexander (Fashion Insider), David Waddington (Entertainment Insider) and Libby Sellers (Design Insider) on the 29th September 2010.

James Small wanted to design a belt which is transitional and reflects the ever-changing and demanding requirements of a HOT hotel. The belt will be available in three versions, male, female and bespoke. Created in luxury leather and designed to reflect the dual personality of the hotel - day and night, formal and informal - the belts will be reversible with one side formal business black and the other night time super silver.

To help the W London Insider, James has selected a series of bespoke attachments which can be chosen depending on time of day and requirement. Options include an American Express card holder, hip flask, phone holder, decision dice holder, USB stick holder and for extra special luck a St Christopher.

The bespoke luxury W Insider belt will be available in a choice of mock alligator or mock lizard and accessory attachments can be made to specifically meet guests individual requirements. Prices start from £400 for the W Insider version and £600 for a bespoke belt.

'The inspiration for the belt derived from the concept of travel and the unique journey that everyday brings. Whether at work, travelling around London or through a field to a festival, I wanted to design something which would reflect not only the transitional requirements of the W Insider and the dual nature of W London, but also the demands of everyday life', says James Small.

To celebrate the launch of the W Insider belt, W Hotels and American Express have continued the relationship with James Small and are proud to support the launch of James SS/11 collection. As part of the relationship the belts will feature in James Small's moving image installation as part of the NEWGEN MEN showcase, which will be premiered at London Fashion Week on September 22nd.

The seven minute debut film entitled 'Journey' was shot by James Small, Tom Beard and Jamie Hince, and stars Louis Simonon. The concept was born from the very same elements which inspired the second collection of James' eponymous fashion label, the love of travel, journey's and festivals, which play such a huge part of their summer.

The film centres around four boys, including Jack Guinness and Louis Simonon, modelling the W Insider belt. Each of the four models are captured with entirely differing personalities and contrasting looks. Jamie Hince drew upon his Super 8 home films to direct the shoot and concept basing it at the rural setting of the Cotswolds. Jamie used Super 8 and digital cameras which serves to reflect the vintage feel, yet still retain a sharpness which makes for a visually striking contrast.

Tom and James wanted 'Journey' to evoke a sense of daydream in the viewer, again harking back to their travels and so simply follows the four protagonists as they make their way through the country side. No beginning, middle or end. Just a Journey.

The film will be available to view from the 23rd September on www.wlondon.co.uk/gallery and www.facebook.com/wlondonhotel

The belt will be available to buy from W London when doors open in early 2011.

-ENDS-

For further information, access and stills please contact Samantha Cunnington at John Doe on 0207 1005050/ samantha.cunnington@johndoehub.com

For further information on James Small SS11 collection, please contact Nicole Levy at Dust PR on 0207 836 0440 / Nicole@dustpr.com

Editors Notes :

W Hotels Worldwide® is an innovative contemporary lifestyle brand and the hotel category buster with 34 hotels and retreats in the most vibrant cities and exotic destinations around the world. Inspiring, iconic, innovative and influential, W Hotels provides the ultimate in insider access to a world of “Wow.” Each hotel offers a unique mix of innovative design and passions around fashion, music, entertainment, design, architecture, pop culture, and everything in between. W Hotels are unique and individual expressions of modern living, reflected in the brand’s sensibility to a holistic lifestyle experience with cutting-edge design, contemporary restaurant concepts, glamorous nightlife experiences, and signature spas.

James Small demonstrates everything the W brand and American Express support – creativity, passion, and cutting edge design. James Small graduated from London College of Fashion in 2001 with a BA in Fashion Menswear Design. James has since worked as head designer for Kim Jones for seven years, as well as collaborating on projects for fashion heavy weights including Hugo Boss, Iceberg, Mulberry and Commes des Garçons. Since starting his self titled menswear label this year, which debuted at Somerset House in February during London Fashion Week, entitled ‘Group Control’, he has been awarded ‘New Generation’ by the British Fashion Council, a scheme which supports talented emerging designers. September will see him return to London Fashion Week for the second time this year to showcase his new collection for SS11 and the moving images installation.

Tom Beard has been working as a music photographer for several years in London. He began in his teens by taking photographs of his friends who included Jamie T, Adele and The Mystery Jets. This access gave his photographs a uniquely intimate perspective, evident on Jamie T’s classic album cover shot for Panic Prevention. This is a tradition he’s continued most recently with, amongst others, Florence and The Machine and The Horrors.