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## SUSTAINABILITY TAKES CENTRE STAGE AT WWD CHINA SUSTAINABILITY SUMMIT BETWEEN LU YAN AND IWC'S CMO FRANZISKA GSELL

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Schaffhausen, 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2021 – WWD China hosted a digital summit between IWC Schaffhausen's CMO Franziska Gsell and newly-announced IWC brand ambassador, supermodel and Chinese fashion entrepreneur Lu Yan. Chaired by Johannes Neubacher, co-founder and chief content officer of WWD China, the webinar took place on April 22<sup>nd</sup> to mark Earth Day and focused on the theme of sustainability.

Franziska Gsell and Lu Yan represent two leading lights from two different industries: Swiss luxury watchmaking and fashion. With a shared passion for sustainability, the wide-ranging conversation between the two covered a great deal, including insights into each companies' programmes for sustainability, an exploration of what lies ahead and the importance of innovation and community action in creating change.

After starting modelling in France in 1999, Yan enjoyed incredible global success, gracing runways and magazine covers worldwide. In 2013 she decided to retire from modelling to launch her own womenswear label, COMME MOI. Founder of the now internationally-acclaimed brand, Lu has a hands-on role in the company, known for its designs' luxurious wearability. She also has a long-standing association with Teach China which promotes progress by harnessing education's power.

"I was delighted to join the summit and to be asked to talk about issues which are truly important to me personally and professionally," explained Yan. "At COMME MOI, I have always spearheaded a sustainable approach to fashion, and as well as making beautiful clothes, I dedicate my time to finding workable solutions for real-world needs."

Franziska Gsell has been the Chief Marketing Officer of IWC Schaffhausen since 2015 and chairs the company's Sustainability Committee. IWC has long been a proponent of sustainability in Swiss luxury watchmaking. In 2018, the company led the industry by being the first brand to release a Sustainability Report in line with the best-practice standards of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), providing a transparent window into the world of a luxury Swiss watch company never offered before. A second report, also conforming to GRI standards, was released last year. In March 2021, IWC was the first luxury watch brand to attain Chain-of-Custody (CoC) certification from the Responsible Jewellery Council (RJC), confirming the gold and platinum used in its supply chain are responsibly sourced. Recently, IWC also launched TimberTex watch straps, a new range of vegan straps made from a low-impact, FSC-certified paper-based material.

"The long life of our products is matched by our long-term thinking. Our work for a more sustainable future has such an important focus for IWC that it's always rewarding to talk about it," said Gsell. "Our collaborative and transparent approach to the topic ensures it's incorporated into every aspect of our business."

Like Lu, we are dedicated to managing our social and environmental impact and adding value to society. The WWD China Sustainability Summit was a fantastic opportunity to exchange ideas and share insights.”

Host Neubacher started his career at the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation and was responsible for designing and implementing various sustainability programmes throughout China. He became China’s first foreign editor-in-chief, launching various lifestyle titles during his 15-year career in Chinese media. He co-founded WWD China in 2019.

“Sustainability is one of the key content focuses for WWD China,” he added. “Our role is to share the latest insights and intelligence, as well as support the industry, especially the supply chain in China, to reach their sustainability goals. Through events like this one, we aim to bring together the global community to prompt important conversations and brainstorm for a brighter future.”

A recording of the WWD X IWC Schaffhausen Sustainability Summit can be watched via the following link:

<https://www.iwc.com/ch/en/company/sustainability-at-iwc.html>

## IWC SCHAFFHAUSEN

In 1868, the American watchmaker and entrepreneur Florentine Ariosto Jones travelled from Boston to Switzerland and founded the 'International Watch Company' in Schaffhausen. His visionary dream was to combine advanced American manufacturing methods with the craftsmanship of Swiss watchmakers to make the best pocket watches of his time. In doing so, he not only laid the foundation for IWC's unique engineering approach but also established the centralised production of mechanical watches in Switzerland.

Over its 150 year history, IWC Schaffhausen has developed a reputation for creating functional complications, especially chronographs and calendars, which are ingenious, robust, and easy for customers to use. A pioneer in the use of titanium and ceramics, IWC today specialises in highly engineered technical watch cases manufactured from advanced materials, such as titanium-aluminide and Ceratanium®. Preferring the principle of "form follows function" over decoration, the Swiss watch manufacturer's timeless creations embody their owners' dreams and ambitions as they journey through life.

IWC sources materials responsibly and takes action to minimise its impact on the environment, creating intrinsically sustainable timepieces that are built to last for generations. The company prides itself in training its own future watchmakers and engineers, as well as offering an excellent working environment for all employees. IWC also partners with organisations that work globally to support children and young people.

## DOWNLOADS

Images can be downloaded at [press.iwc.com](http://press.iwc.com)

## FURTHER INFORMATION

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