

The Enterprising Sisters Behind Mushmina Bring Fair-Trade Fashion Flair to New York and Employment to Women Artisans in North Africa

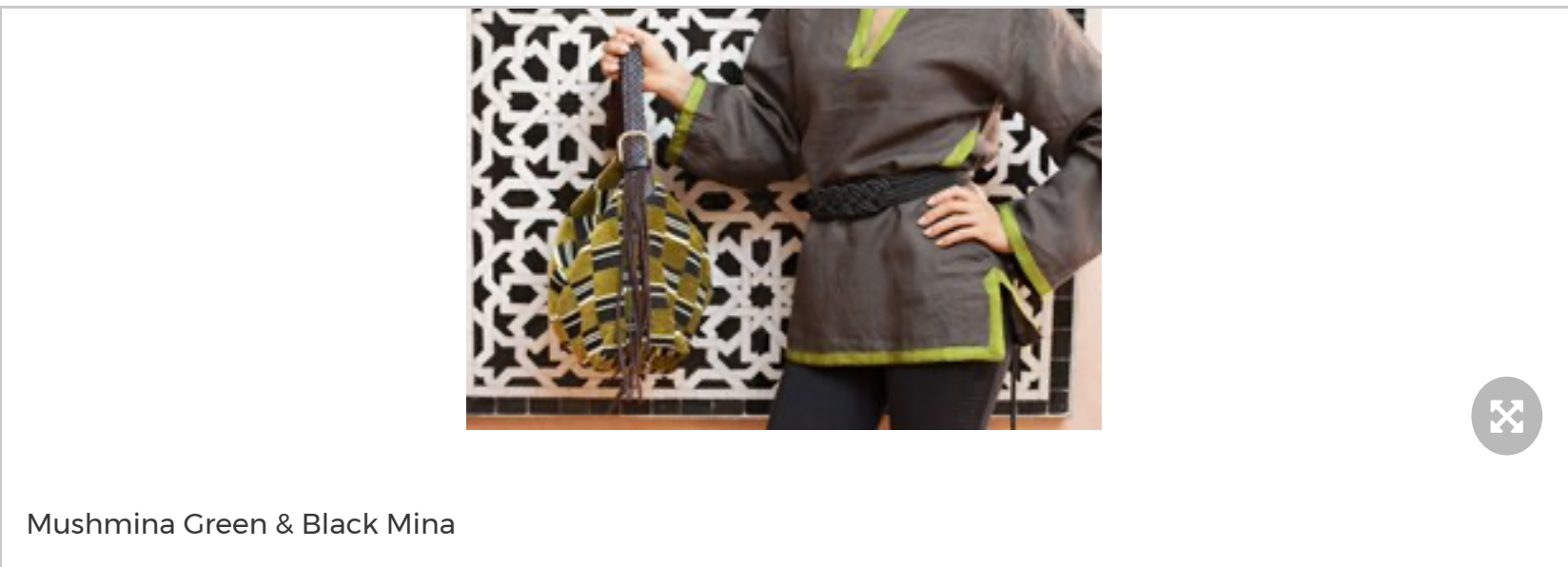
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NEW YORK, NY (PRWEB) November 18, 2013 -- Entrepreneurial sisters Katie and Heather O'Neill have taken their passion for fashion and design and transformed it into **Mushmina**, an online and retail shop that sells handmade clothing and accessories crafted by artisans in Morocco.

Mushmina will feature the stylish and colorful pieces at the 2013 **Grand Central Holiday Fair**. This will be Mushmina's third consecutive year at New York's only indoor holiday market. "We look forward to the Grand Central Holiday Fair and seeing our New York customers come out to shop with us every year. Sometimes they show up wearing Mushmina bags, scarves, and jewelry--we love it," says co-founder, Heather O'Neill.

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The road to establishing their own fashion brand began with the sisters' travels overseas. Heather who is fluent in Arabic and has a Master's Degree in Global Affairs from New York University went to Africa with the Peace Corps in 2003, while Katie traveled throughout Mali studying Malian textiles.

Inspired by the people and artistry they encountered, the two decided to take their training in fine arts and years of combined experience in retail and design to launch a fashion company in 2009 that would employ and empower women in North Africa.

In 2011, the Mushmina flagship store opened in Philadelphia and an online store followed in November 2012.

The custom designed unique and vibrant pieces are created by local women in Morocco employed through a system of co-ops that gives the women the opportunity to work from home and sell their goods to a global market.

"Working with Mushmina has given me my 'risik' (my path), 'floose' (money) to take care of my family, and a workshop full of scarves to stitch," says Kenza Jbilou, the manager of the Flying Camel Workshop.

The sisters have a larger, long-term strategy that extends beyond employment. Their goal is to establish a tradition of ongoing education and entrepreneurship. The Flying Camel Women's Training Center, opened in 2013, is a centerpiece of that plan. It will provide 30 women in rural regions of Morocco with training in employable skills such as embroidery, sewing, and pattern making. The center is set up to be self-sustaining with monthly membership dues from students.

Katie and Heather say they are just getting started in their quest to make Mushmina into a powerhouse fashion label. "Our presence at the Grand Central Holiday Fair is important to our growth because it allows us to feature our products in one of the most international and fashion conscious cities in the world," adds co-founder, Katie O'Neill.

About Mushmina:

Mushmina is a fashion and design company with a social mission that began with two sisters, Heather and Katie O'Neill living and traveling in Morocco and Mali. They started Mushmina to translate the impeccable craftsmanship and vision of local artisans to the global market. Their mission is to create beautiful inspired products that have cultural integrity and soul. Through the sale of uniquely stylish, handmade fair-trade clothing and accessories, Mushmina creates employment opportunities for women and men in developing countries. Mushmina's products empower all people to be beautiful and expressive. <http://www.mushmina.com/>.

If you would like more information about Mushmina or to schedule an interview contact Mirrah Curtis at 215-732-5500 or pr@mushmina.com.

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