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Lois Hill and Chris Meeten's receptionist uniforms for the M by Montcalm hotel in east London



## Lois Hill

CLOTHES DESIGNER

"It's a symbiotic relationship," says designer Lois Hill of working with high-end hotels to make stylish, contemporary uniforms for their staff. "The touches of detail created when luxury hospitality brands collaborate with artists and designers elevate the brand and the experience for the customer."

As creative director and co-founder of The Uniform Studio, with a client list including W Hotels, The Langham in London and Soho House, she's a strong believer in the contribution design can make to customer experience. "People are much more image savvy these days and want an all-encompassing luxury experience. Brands want their staff to look as good as the restaurant's expensive furniture and the beautifully presented food they serve. It has to be a fluid visual experience."

Hill launched The Uniform Studio in 2008 with business partner Chris Meeten, who grew up around the cutting rooms of London's East End, and both are driven more by everyday style than haute couture trends. "It is dressing real people that excites me," she says. "I wanted to create pieces that look great and last, but also give people an identity and a

positive sense of belonging to an organisation or brand." The Uniform Studio filled a gap in the market. "There was very little going on with uniform design back then. I set about designing stylish, durable uniforms that struck a balance between looking great and doing a job well."

It is Hill's job to deliver luxury with a robust edge. "We are constantly asking, will this look good after six months of washes? Could I wear this all day and still feel comfortable and stylish?" The studio responds to every brief with versatility. "Working with the W Hotel, London, I played on the history of tailoring in Soho, bringing in traditional Savile Row methods," she says. "We used Prince of Wales checks and dandy-style cuts to give a quirky feel unique to London."

Designs can be as bold or subtle, as stylish or personalised as the client desires – it's all in the detail. "I will often research a brand's history or focus on the building they are in," she says. "Altering the shape of a neckline by a centimetre can change the whole look, and fabric always plays an important role in elevating a piece from drab to luxurious."

[theuniformstudio.com](http://theuniformstudio.com)