



FASHION

Balmain's Olivier Rousteing to Be Honored by The Museum at FIT

● He will win the 2025 Couture Council Award for Artistry of Fashion.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD

Olivier Rousteing, creative director of Balmain, will receive the 2025 Couture Council Award for Artistry of Fashion at the Couture Council of The Museum at FIT's annual luncheon on Sept. 3.

The event will take place at the David H. Koch Theater at Lincoln Center in New York City.

The event marks the arrival of New York Fashion Week, with proceeds benefiting The Museum at FIT, the only museum in New York dedicated exclusively to the art of fashion.

Jane De Florio, corporate director at Vivid Seats Inc., and Stephanie Loeffler, philanthropist and board member of the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, will serve as co-chairs. Bloomingdale's will serve as the presenting sponsor of the luncheon, an extension of Bloomingdale's longstanding commitment to celebrate and support the art of fashion. (Nordstrom had sponsored the luncheon for the past five years.)

For more than a decade Rousteing has been the creative director of the Balmain house. In 2011, he was selected to head Balmain's design team, becoming one of the youngest talents named to lead a historic Parisian fashion house at the age of 25. During the past 10 years Rousteing has been building on the legacy of the house's founder, Pierre Balmain, who introduced a fresh, feminine and surprising "New French Style" to postwar couture.

Beginning with inspirations pulled directly from the house's archives, and fully utilizing the Balmain atelier's traditional couture techniques, Rousteing has been able to create his own distinctive style at the historic house.

The designer was born in 1985 and was adopted from a French orphanage at a young age and raised in Bordeaux. He studied fashion at Paris' Ecole Supérieure des Arts et Techniques de la Mode. At 18, he moved to Italy, where he worked at Roberto Cavalli for five years and rose through the ranks to the post of designer for the men's and women's ready-to-wear collections. When the opportunity arose for him to return to Paris to work at Balmain, Rousteing took it, forming a part of the house's design team for two years before being named creative director.

"Receiving The Museum at FIT's Couture Council Award for Artistry of Fashion is a profound honor and a unique moment of reflection," Rousteing said. "Style is not merely about clothing; it's about the art of expression and the beautiful stories we share. Throughout my journey at Balmain, I've always pushed boundaries and challenged conventional notions of beauty to offer new and unexpected narratives. This award celebrates not just my work and my incredible team, but the collective spirit of boldness and creativity that fuels our industry as we continue to redefine the world of fashion."

Dr. Joyce F. Brown, president of FIT, said, "Appointed to his post at Balmain at the age of 25 as the youngest creative director in Paris since Yves Saint Laurent, Olivier Rousteing has had a major influence on the industry. Olivier's path as a visionary young designer is especially inspiring to our students, and we celebrate his cultivation of a broad and inclusive clientele over the past 14 years at Balmain."

Valerie Steele, director of The Museum at FIT, said, "We are delighted to honor Olivier Rousteing of Balmain, whose fashions have attracted a diverse global audience through the famous Balmain Army. Olivier's strong and beautiful fashions have been featured in a number of major exhibitions at The Museum at FIT, including 'Paris, Capital of Fashion' (2019), 'Africa's Fashion Diaspora' (2023) and the forthcoming 'Dress, Dreams and Desire' (2025). I have such respect for Olivier Rousteing, who is not only a very talented designer but also a thoughtful and genuine person."

Denise Magid, chief merchant at Bloomingdale's, said, "I am honored to support the 2025 annual Couture Council Luncheon, both on behalf of Bloomingdale's and personally as a member of the FIT Board of Trustees. We are especially thrilled that this impressive award will recognize our incredible partner, the esteemed fashion house Balmain and well-deserving Olivier Rousteing, who has contributed to innovation and creativity within the industry through his designs."

Past recipients of the Couture Council Award for Artistry of Fashion are Simon Porte Jacquemus, Gabriela Hearst, Maria





Grazia Chiuri of Dior, Wes Gordon of Carolina Herrera, Christian Louboutin, Narciso Rodriguez, Thom Browne, Albert Kriemler of Akris, Manolo Blahnik, Carolina Herrera, Michael Kors, Oscar de la Renta, Valentino, Karl Lagerfeld of Chanel, Dries

Van Noten, Isabel Toledo, Albert Elbaz of Lanvin and Ralph Rucci. In 2008, Giorgio Armani received a special award for Global Fashion Leadership.

Olivier Rousteing

