



## Rome-ing Around?

Does Fendi have its eye on Willy Chavarria?

According to sources, the Roman fashion house has had discussions with the New York-based designer, who electrified Paris Fashion Week last January with a coed display that marked the 10th anniversary of his signature brand.

Last October Kim Jones parted ways with Fendi after four years as its artistic director of haute couture, ready-to-wear and fur collections for women, making his mark with high-profile collaborations and destination shows.

Since then it is understood Fendi has held discussions with an array of potential successors, including John Galiano, Maria Grazia Chiuri, who

recently wound up a nine-year tenure as creative director of Dior couture and women's collections, and Pierpaolo Piccioli, the longtime Valentino designer who is to succeed Demna at the creative helm of Balenciaga on July 10. One Milan source also pointed to Francesco Risso, who recently exited Marni, as another potential candidate.

The likelihood of a deal with Chavarria could not immediately be learned. It is understood the search is still at preliminary stages, and the designer could not be reached for comment.

Silvia Venturini Fendi, artistic director of accessories and menswear collections, has been leading the design effort as Fendi celebrates its

centenary year, and is to stage a coed show for spring 2026 during Milan Fashion Week in September.

Chavarria is in the mold of the maverick designers that Fendi parent LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton sometimes recruits – Galiano being an early example, first tapped for Givenchy in 1995 and soon after Dior; Alexander McQueen, who succeeded Galiano at Givenchy, and later Off-White founder Virgil Abloh, who rose through the luxury streetwear ranks to become artistic director of men's collections at Louis Vuitton, which he helmed for three years before his death in 2021 at age 41.

In the past year, Chavarria has been honored with

Designer of the Year at the Latin American Fashion Awards as well as the CFDA Menswear Designer of the Year.

The designer has made no secret of his ambition to be named creative director of a top fashion house.

After years of toiling away at a slew of brands including Calvin Klein, Ralph Lauren, American Eagle Outfitters, Yeezy, Dickies Construct and others, the designer is increasingly being recognized for his own collection. To wit: Chavarria is among 11 finalists for the 2025 ANDAM Fashion Award, now on its 36th edition. The prize ceremony is scheduled for June 30.

— MILES SOCHA AND LUISA ZARGANI





