



## BUSINESS

# Christian Lacroix CEO Steps Down

- Nicolas Topiol steered the brand through multiple transformations over the past 20 years.

BY MILES SOCHA

**Nicolas Topiol** has stepped down as chief executive officer of Christian Lacroix after an eventful 20-year tenure spent shepherding the brand through multiple transformations.

Topiol confirmed his departure to WWD following a wistful post on his personal LinkedIn account.

"Bold, baroque creativity can meet the rigor of a sustainable business model," said the executive, who joined Lacroix in 2005 when Falic Group acquired the company from LVMH Moët Hennessey Louis Vuitton. "Twenty years later, the maison stands strong, resilient, profitable, desirable and protected. It has weathered crises. Shifted models. Changed markets. Passed through hands. Yet remained immovably important."

Topiol said his departure was planned after a transition period in the wake of another changing of hands, from Falic Group to Spanish company Sociedad

Textil Lonia, or STL.

A successor has not been named.

Contacted by WWD, a spokesperson for STL said "the responsibility has been fully assumed by the STL headquarters, as the current Christian Lacroix team remains relatively small."

One of Topiol's biggest decisions came in 2009 when Lacroix fell into administration after accumulating an estimated \$150 million in losses since its 1987 inception by the namesake couturier.

The executive decided to exit the costly ready-to-wear and couture businesses to focus on a few licensed categories, finding traction with fashion accessories, home furnishings and lifestyle products.

Topiol said he would now devote himself to his role as president of Bechert Corp., a private firm that advises on M&A, strategic repositioning, turnarounds and brand management.

Meanwhile, the founding designer continues to dedicate himself to costume design for top theater and opera companies across Europe, in addition to designing the Desigual x M. Christian Lacroix line.



Nicolas Topiol

