

K E R I N G



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**KERING - CORPORATE**





# Gucci Owner's Fortunes Rest on Heir Letting New CEO Do His Job

(Bloomberg) -- Billionaire Francois-Henri Pinault's two-decade-long reign at the helm of Gucci owner Kering SA is ending with the group at one of the lowest points in the family company's history. A key question for investors is whether he'll give his successor leeway to clean up the mess.

The 63-year-old luxury heir, who faces shareholders on Tuesday, is relinquishing his chief executive role to outsider Luca de Meo — a former automotive executive with no luxury experience — after coming under increasing pressure from investors. But he's staying on as chairman and has said he "will be fully involved in the strategic orientation of the group" even as he has pledged to not "step in and short-circuit the new CEO." De Meo, credited with turning French carmaker Renault SA around, is set to take over on Sept. 15.

Running a dynastic business can be difficult for an outside CEO, especially when it has been led for a long time by an insider who plans to stick around, said the University of Copenhagen's Morten Bennedsen, who's a visiting professor at French business school Insead and an expert on family businesses. The corporate world is replete with such examples — from the Tatas in India to Luxottica in Italy.

"More often than not either the CEO runs away or is fired because it's a completely new situation for the family and the chairman may not be able to let go," Bennedsen said. "We see this again and again. CEOs don't get the freedom and feel like they are always watched by the family."

De Meo's appointment, announced in June, drew attention to Pinault's mixed legacy, one that has included a lucrative go-go period at Gucci, but also a series of mostly ineffectual acquisitions and in recent years a revolving door of top managers and brand designers. The group has sunk deeper into crisis as sales and profit evaporated and investors grew increasingly wary. Its stock and the Pinault family's wealth have plunged by about two thirds from their record highs in 2021. The outlook for Gucci remains precarious and labels like Balenciaga and Yves Saint Laurent are also suffering.

"It's almost been like a textbook on how not to run a company in recent years," said Flavio Cereda, a luxury brand portfolio manager at GAM UK Ltd. "There have been odd decisions made again and again and again resulting in significant, self-inflicted destruction of value."

The first thing De Meo should do, if required, he said, is "kitchen sinking" by looking at the numbers carefully and getting the real story out. "I would be extremely surprised if there aren't a couple of heads rolling by the end of the year."

Kering declined to comment.

Since the unprecedented surge in demand for luxury goods in the early post-pandemic era, most industry players, including closely held Chanel Ltd. and Burberry Group Plc have registered a downturn. But none seem to have plumbed the depths of Kering, which experienced a series of stock market downgrades and was given a negative outlook by Standard & Poor's in August related to ballooning debt.

Pressure on Pinault to drop the CEO role began some time ago, according to Marco Taricco, co-founder of Bluebell Capital Partners, which took a stake in Kering in 2023. The activist investor wrote to Pinault the following year, outlining how Kering had underperformed peers since Pinault took the helm in 2005, urging him to move on to a non-executive chairman role "in the best interest of shareholders."

"The key ask was a step back by Pinault. He did it," said Taricco, declining to say whether Bluebell still holds Kering stock.

In a letter to investors in August, Pinault acknowledged the company's results remain "well below our potential." Last year he told them he shares their pain — his family holds a roughly 42% stake and 59% of voting rights. The net worth of the clan, led by his 89-year-old father Francois Pinault — who founded the company — has tumbled to almost \$23 billion from a peak of about \$59 billion in August 2021, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.

Pinault said the company is ready for "a new vision," but it remains to be seen whether that will translate into freedom for De Meo to make the drastic fixes the group badly needs.





In recent years, Kering brands have seen changes in designers and top executives including the departure of Pinault's longstanding No. 2, Jean-Francois Palus. The March announcement of the transfer of designer Demna to Gucci from Balenciaga was panned by the market, but will be difficult for De Meo to undo since the artistic director is getting ready to unveil his creations.

Over the years, Pinault tried and failed to lower reliance on Gucci through acquisitions. The Italian label still generates over half of Kering's profit. Forays into lifestyle and sportswear brands didn't pan out, and Kering sold its stake in Puma SE and the Volcom skatewear brand. Pinault also abandoned a move into luxury watches with the sale of two brands Kering had acquired.

Investments in high-end eyewear aren't yet major earnings contributors, while many analysts say Pinault overpaid for fragrance maker Creed and Kering's 30% stake in Valentino — a combined outlay of roughly €5.1 billion (\$5.94 billion). Pinault also spent heavily on prime property acquisitions, and is now offloading some of them to cut debt.

"Bringing in someone fresh from outside the sector is probably not a bad idea," said GAM's Cereda. "I'm assuming De Meo has carte blanche. I would be very surprised if he made the move without getting carte blanche."

Still, at the upcoming shareholders' meeting, investors will not only vote on de Meo's €20 million sign-on bonus and the splitting of the chairman and CEO roles, but also on raising the age limits for the two jobs to 70 and 80, respectively, from 65. That will allow Pinault to helm the board for at least another decade and a half.

The change in the C-suite will usher in deep changes in governance at the firm, and some have speculated that De Meo may be a stop-gap along the path to a third generation of the family. His hiring came on the heels of a series of succession steps within the Pinault clan's sprawling empire. While the father and son are managing partners of family holding firm Artemis, Pinault's sister Laurence, 64, and brother Dominique, 61, head the supervisory board.

Artemis and the clan's ultimate holding company, Financiere Pinault, added to their boards three members of the third generation: one child from each sibling. They are Laurence's daughter, Olivia Fournet, 38, who works at Balenciaga; Pinault's son Francois Louis Pinault, 27, an Artemis account manager; and Dominique's 25-year-old daughter Gaelle Pinault. While it's not yet clear whether any of them, or the founder's other grandchildren, will eventually run the group, their relatively young ages indicate a hiatus is taking shape.

Pinault himself worked for more than two decades within the family group, which started out as a lumberyard in Brittany, before becoming chairman and CEO in 2005. He took on the top job after his father had already made a major pivot into fashion. The son then sold assets to focus the company on luxury and ride the wave of Chinese demand.

In what now seems prescient, Pinault talked last year about success and failure. During a commencement speech at HEC Paris, one of France's leading business schools and his alma mater, he offered words of advice for the graduates.

"Success is short-lived," he said. "In success, as in difficulty, you can't lead a fulfilling career as a solitary hero."

--With assistance from Devon Pendleton.

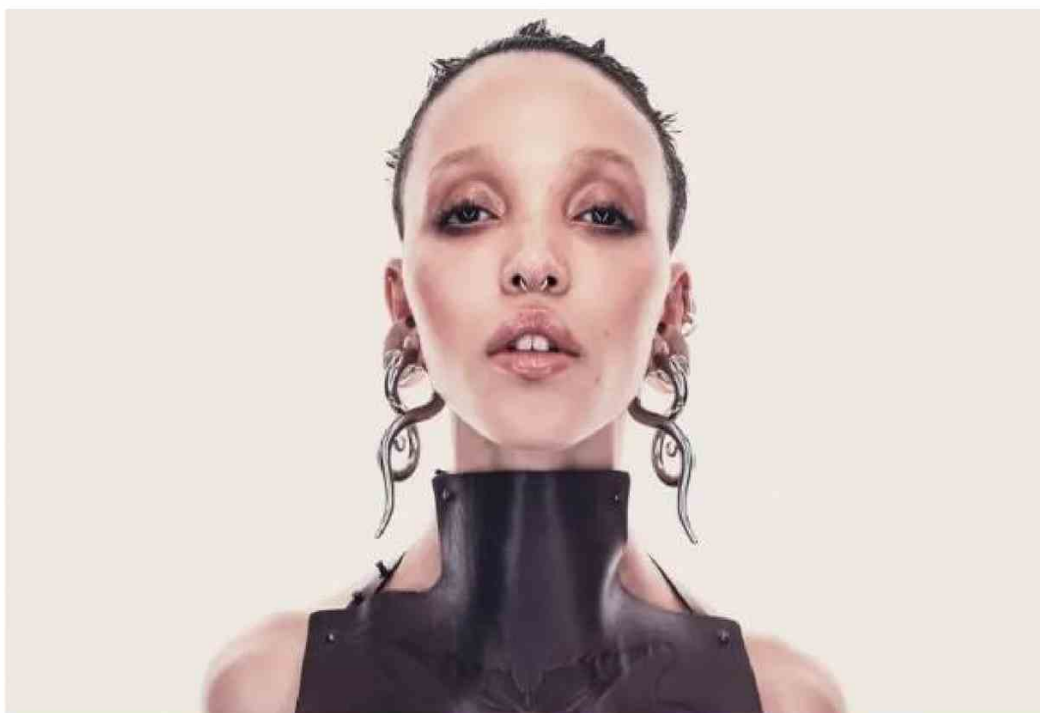
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## FKA Twigs to Perform at Kering Foundation's Caring for Women Dinner

By [Leia Mendoza](#)



The [Kering Foundation](#)'s Fourth Annual Caring For Women Dinner has announced that this year's event will feature a performance by singer-songwriter and producer, [FKA twigs](#), on behalf of Sistah Space.

The event, taking place on Sept. 11 at The Pool in New York City, will be hosted by Salma Hayek Pinault, François-Henri Pinault, Colman Domingo, Demi Moore, Dolores Huerta, Jeff Koons, Jessica Chastain, Julianne Moore and Madonna.

The dinner will raise funds for NGOs addressing violence against women. More than 200 guests from the arts and culture, media, entertainment, and fashion communities will have the opportunity to bid on exclusive items and experiences from Kering's Houses. The auction will support and benefit four NGOs committed to breaking the cycle of gender-based violence and supporting survivors and their families, including Sanctuary for Families, FreeFrom, Violence Intervention Program and Equality Now.

The live auction will be hosted by Lydia Fenet, and will raise funds for the beneficiary organizations. Various one-of-a-kind fashion and hospitality experiences from Gucci, Saint Laurent, Bottega Veneta, Balenciaga, Boucheron, Ginori 1735, ICONIQ, Pomellato, and original artworks from Damien Hirst will be auctioned off throughout the night, with proceeds going to all four organizations.

Since being established in 2008, the Kering Foundation supports local organizations that provide comprehensive services to victims of violence and prevention initiatives. The Fourth Annual Caring For Women Dinner will raise funds and mobilize new audiences to take action to end violence across multiple generations, families, and throughout the world.





## FKA Twigs Set to Perform at Kering Foundation's Fourth Annual Caring for Women Dinner



FKA Twigs will take the stage at the Kering Foundation's upcoming Caring for Women dinner, set for Sept. 11 in NYC.

The event benefits four NGOs — Sanctuary for Families, FreeFrom, Violence Intervention Program and Equality Now — committed to breaking the cycle of gender-based violence and supporting survivors and their families in gaining financial empowerment and independence. FKA Twigs is an ambassador for Sistah Space, which supports African and Caribbean heritage women affected by domestic abuse and will perform on behalf of the charity. The singer-songwriter filed a lawsuit against former partner Shia LaBeouf in 2020 bringing claims of sexual battery, assault, emotional distress and negligence; she settled the suit in July of this year.

The Kering event — taking place during New York Fashion Week — will be hosted by Kering CEO François-Henri Pinault and wife Salma Hayek Pinault, along with Colman Domingo, Demi Moore, Dolores Huerta, Jeff Koons, Jessica Chastain, Julianne Moore and Madonna. Following the dinner, a live auction led by Lydia Fenet will raise funds for the beneficiary organizations, including one-of-a-kind fashion and hospitality experiences from Gucci, Saint Laurent, Bottega Veneta, Balenciaga, Boucheron, Ginori 1735, ICONIQ, Pomellato and original artworks from Damien Hirst.

Established in 2008, the Kering Foundation supports local organizations that provide comprehensive services to victims of violence, as well as prevention initiatives, across France, Italy, Korea, Mexico, the United Kingdom and the United States. It also engages Kering's ecosystem to create safe, supportive workplaces for survivors and mobilize new audiences to take action to end violence across generations. Over the past 15 years, the Kering Foundation has supported one million women survivors and partnered with more than 100 nonprofit organizations.







# Quelle mode écoresponsable en Chine?

À l'occasion de notre événement Fashion our Future, créé par Marie Claire en partenariat avec le groupe Kering, et qui a eu lieu à Shanghai le 18 juillet dernier, les acteurs clés du secteur ont pu échanger autour de l'idée d'une mode plus durable et plus locale. Une évolution encore marginale, en Chine, mais promise à un bel avenir. *Par Galia LOUPAN*



Le 18 juillet dernier s'est tenue à Shanghai la 3<sup>e</sup> édition de Fashion our Future, l'événement consacré à l'écologie dans la mode que nous avons créé en partenariat avec Kering. Après le succès des éditions qui se sont déroulées à Paris en 2022 et à New York en 2023, c'était au tour de la Chine de se confronter à ces questions.

Au Navy Club, sublime bâtiment début XX<sup>e</sup> de style espagnol, l'un des vestiges du passé de la ville qui se cache dans les recoins de son hypermodernité, 120 personnes étaient rassemblées – lectrices de Marie Claire, étudiants en mode, influenceurs et acteurs clé du

secteur à Shanghai.

Après quelques mots d'Alex Sun, le CEO et éditeur de Marie Claire Chine, qui a placé notre événement dans le contexte et rappelé que « le luxe devait être un gardien de la nature », l'événement s'est ouvert sur une conversation avec Marie-Claire Daveu, directrice du développement durable chez Kering, qui a réaffirmé la vision et la stratégie de son groupe sur les questions d'écologie et de développement durable, salué la créativité et l'entrepreneuriat de la Chine, tout en soulignant son importance dans le marché du luxe. « Chez Kering, nous pensons qu'il est important d'engager la

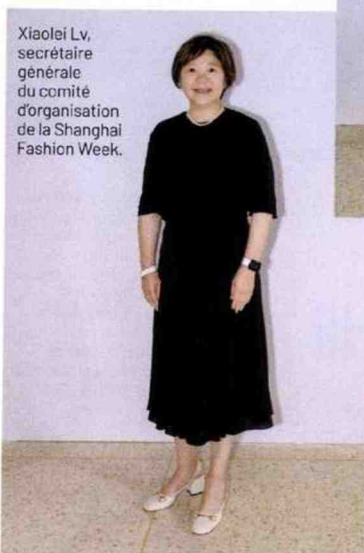
communauté dans son ensemble, pour changer les mentalités en matière d'écologie. Chacun a un rôle à jouer », a-t-elle affirmé, avant de partager son conseil à la jeune génération : « Ne croyez pas que vous pourrez développer votre marque sans penser à l'écologie. Il faut intégrer les questions écologiques dès la fondation. »

La première table ronde avait pour thème l'éducation à l'écologie. La secrétaire générale du comité d'organisation de la Shanghai Fashion Week et icône du milieu de la mode en Chine, Xiaolei Lv a souligné l'importance de penser l'écologie à un niveau systémique, l'industrie textile étant l'une des plus polluantes au monde. Pourtant, souligne-t-elle, « quand on parle d'éducation, il faut commencer petit, par des choses concrètes. » Pour Danful Yang, artiste qui intègre des actes écologiques dans sa pratique, « l'écologie peut sembler difficile ou ennuyeuse, mais un événement comme celui-ci peut briser cette barrière et ouvrir de nouvelles possibilités éducatives. » La top model Bonnie Chen a, elle, raconté comment ses parents, qui menaient une vie toute simple, étaient écolos sans le savoir. « Dans le mode de vie traditionnel, c'était naturel de préserver les ressources, de conserver, de réparer. Mes parents m'ont élevée dans cette attitude. »

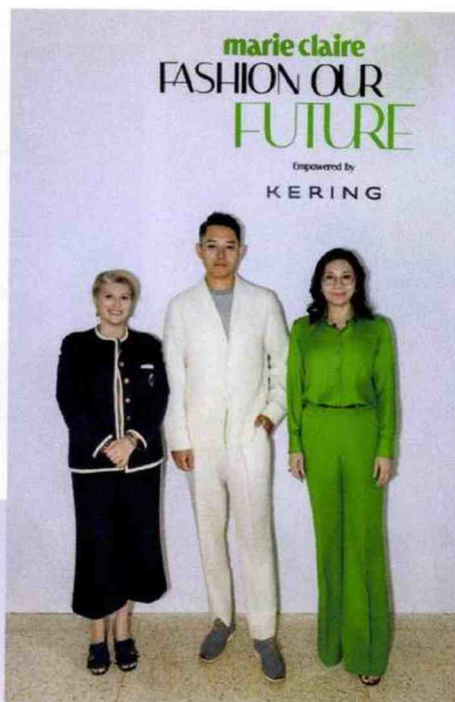
La table ronde suivante s'est intéressée à la façon dont les vêtements que l'on aime et dont on prend soin sont ceux



Cecilia Yip,  
actrice et  
chanteuse.



Xiaolei Lv,  
secrétaire  
générale  
du comité  
d'organisation  
de la Shanghai  
Fashion Week.



De gauche à droite :  
Marie-Claire Daveu, directrice du  
Développement durable et des  
Affaires institutionnelles chez Kering,  
Alex Sun, directeur éditorial de  
Marie Claire Chine et Jinjing Cai,  
présidente de Kering Grande Chine.



Bonnie  
Chen,  
mannequin.

qui auront la plus grande charge affective pour nous. La modératrice Lily Lee du W Magazine China a ainsi développé le concept de « garde-robe émotionnelle ». Cecilia Yip, actrice, grande star du cinéma hongkongais et chinois depuis les années 90 (une foule de ses fans se presse d'ailleurs devant l'entrée tout au long de l'événement), a de son côté raconté l'histoire de sa première veste en cuir, achetée à la fin de l'adolescence et qu'elle possède toujours, concluant : « Avoir une attitude écologique, c'est comme tomber amoureux. Quand on aime quelque chose, on veut le garder pour toujours. Nos vêtements préférés racontent l'histoire de notre vie. » Pour Dan Cui, journaliste et influenceur spécialisé dans la mode et l'écologie, fonda-

teur de la plateforme canU, « avoir une attitude écologique vis-à-vis de nos vêtements renforce la connexion émotionnelle que nous avons avec eux. » Puis le designer Chen Peng a expliqué que le vêtement dont il était le plus fier était le costume qu'il avait fait pour son père. « Je n'avais jamais rien fait pour moi-même, ni pour ma famille. » Pendant les dix années suivantes, son père a porté ce costume à toutes les occasions importantes. Aujourd'hui, vingt ans plus tard, c'est Chen Peng lui-même qui le possède, car sa mère a voulu qu'il lui revienne au décès de son père. « Nous communiquons par nos vêtements, ils nous aident à forger des liens. » Lily Lee conclut en encourageant le public à chérir ses vêtements comme des souvenirs. La troisième table ronde rassemblait Jinjing Cai, présidente de Kering Grande Chine, et Xu Wen, explorateur de l'antarctique et ingénieur spécialisé dans les glaciers, pour parler du concept de « water positivity ». Xu Wen a évoqué à quel point le changement climatique impacte l'eau partout dans le monde, phénomène auquel il est particulièrement confronté en raison de la fonte des glaciers. Jinjing Cai quant à elle, a détaillé la stratégie « water positive » dévoilée par le groupe au printemps

dernier. Elle souligne l'engagement de Kering pour l'innovation, notamment avec des initiatives locales comme les Kering Generation Awards, lancées pour la première fois en Chine en 2018. « Nous devons tous coopérer ! conclut-elle. Pas juste notre groupe, mais toute l'industrie et tous nos clients ! » ●

## Un partenariat ambitieux

Kering vient de conclure un partenariat avec le géant immobilier Swire Properties pour promouvoir les performances en Responsabilité sociale et environnementale (RSE) de toutes les boutiques Kering présentes dans les malls de luxe appartenant à Swire Properties en Chine et à Hong Kong. Ce programme mesure et renforce les performances environnementales des boutiques, du design aux opérations et à l'expérience client. Ce partenariat entre Swire et Kering fortifie leur engagement mutuel envers l'environnement en Chine. **G. L.**

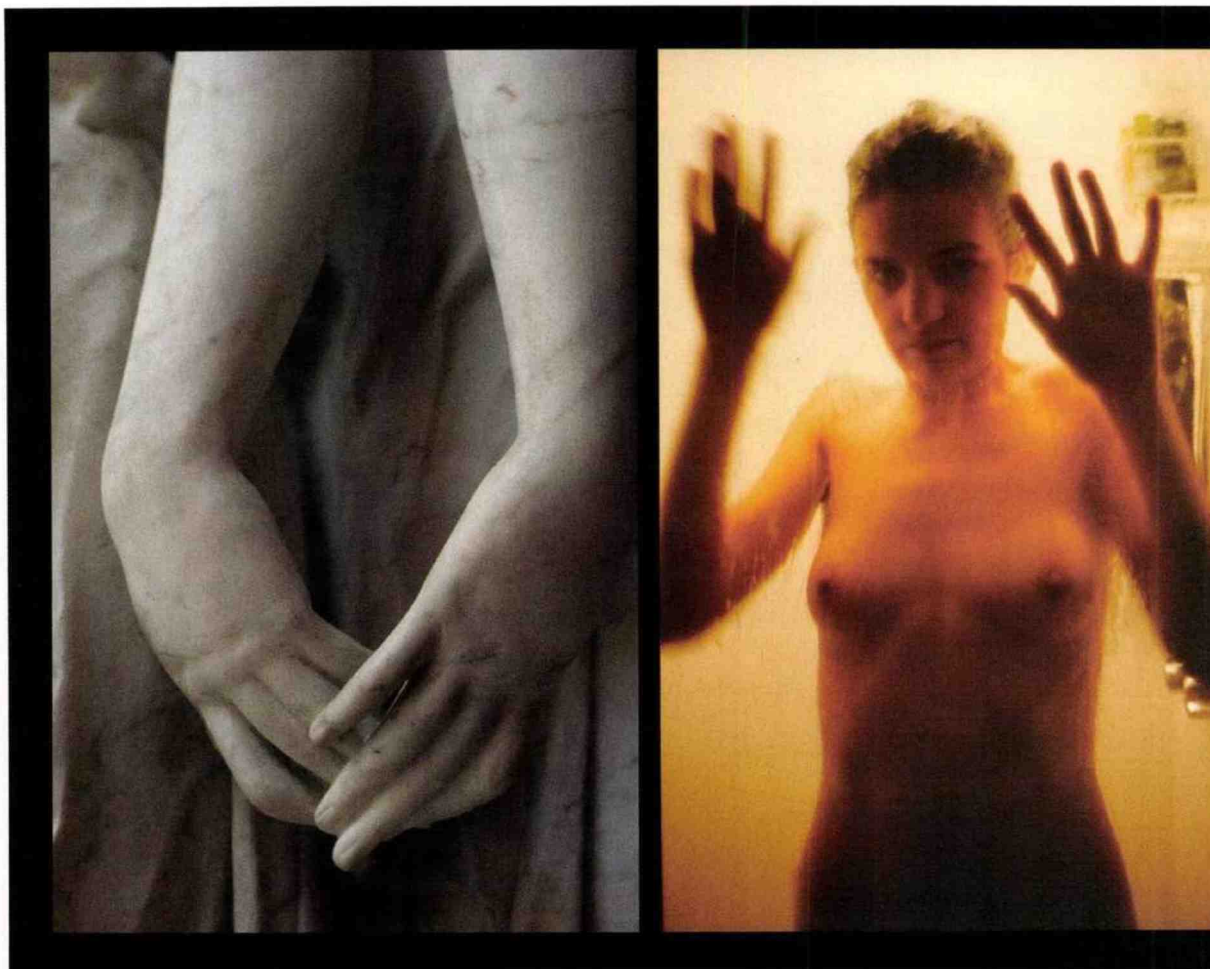
• L'ENSEMBLE DU DOSSIER  
CONSCRÉ À NOS ÉVÉNEMENTS  
FASHION OUR FUTURE EST À  
RETROUVER SUR **MARIECLAIRE.FR**







SOCIÉTÉ



Nan Goldin

# De lutte et d'extase

122





Hands, 2024.

**Portrait** À 71 ans, la photographe américaine, lauréate du prix Kering Women in Motion et actuellement à l'honneur aux Rencontres d'Arles, n'en finit pas de bousculer les regards. Sa dernière exposition, avant la rétrospective que lui consacra le Grand Palais à Paris en 2026, entremêle ses images prises sur le vif et celles capturées dans les musées, dans une quête ultime de beauté. *Par Marion VIGNAL*

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST/GAGOSIAN.







## SOCIÉTÉ



1 Self-portrait with Eyes Turned Inward, Nan Goldin, Boston, 1989.

2 Picnic on the Esplanade, Boston, 1973.

3 Brian and Nan in Kimono, 1983.

**D**es chats aux yeux verts pointant l'objectif, des sculptures de nus en marbre blanc au corps soyeux, de jeunes couples amoureux, une panthère noire, des tableaux mythologiques, *Orphée et Eurydice*, des visages aux beautés écorchées... Le diaporama enchaîne les jeux de miroirs entre les photographies de Nan Goldin et de ses proches – avec sa lumière dorée et sa crudité qui font sa signature depuis les années 70 – et les chefs-d'œuvre – tableaux et sculptures antiques – qu'elle a pris en photo depuis 2010 dans les plus grands musées du monde à Rome, à Paris, à New York. Grave et éraillée, sa voix accompagne ce que l'artiste elle-même nomme son « voyage de l'âme » et résonne dans l'obscurité de l'église Saint-Blaise, tout près du Théâtre antique d'Arles.

C'est dans ce lieu même qu'en 1987, elle venait présenter pour la première fois en Europe l'œuvre qui devait la rendre célèbre et ouvrir un nouveau chapitre de l'histoire de la photographie vers les portes de l'intime : *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* (1981-1996). Elle y donnait à voir avec le plus de vérité possible sa vie et celle de sa « tribu », rythmée par les addictions, le sexe, la violence, l'amour et la solidarité. Aujourd'hui, c'est son *Syndrome de Stendhal* (2024) qu'elle partage avec le public arlésien après avoir présenté le film à New York à l'automne dernier. Le titre fait référence au voyage de Stendhal en Italie qui, face aux œuvres qu'il découvre à Florence, ressent une émotion si intense qu'il l'assimile à un choc. « Nan Goldin aussi nous montre dans cette œuvre qu'on peut tomber d'évanouissement face à la

beauté », confie Christoph Wiesner, directeur des Rencontres d'Arles qui a voulu faire de la photographe star la figure de cette 56<sup>e</sup> édition placée sous le signe des « images indociles ».

Qui mieux que l'Américaine, photographe du réel et activiste dans l'âme, pour incarner cette thématique de l'indocilité, qui plus est dans un contexte géopolitique remettant en cause les droits des minorités ? Depuis qu'elle a décidé, à 18 ans, de faire de la photographie sa manière d'habiter le monde, Nan Goldin a toujours flirté entre l'ombre et la lumière, la poésie et la violence, l'esthétique et l'extase. « Nan est une figure de courage, elle incarne la résilience et l'amitié, ses images ont influencé toute une génération, et changent celui ou celle qui les regarde », insiste Laurent Claquin, porte-parole de Kering, lors de la cérémonie de remise de son prix Women in Motion, en juillet dernier, à Arles. À 71 ans, l'artiste pointe elle-même l'ironie de se voir remettre ce prix alors qu'elle atteint un moment de sa vie où elle arrive à peine à marcher. « Et pourtant, je me sens toujours une femme en mouvement ! », confie-t-elle non sans fierté à l'amphithéâtre comble venu l'acclamer.

**NAN GOLDIN A TOUT D'UNE SURVIVANTE.** Presque tous ceux qu'elle a immortalisés dans sa série *Memory Lost* sont partis, ravagés par le sida, la drogue ou la maladie. D'eux, il ne lui reste que les images captées dans leur vérité nue. Sa façon à elle de les garder vivants, de continuer de célébrer leur beauté et non leur marginalité. « J'ai été la première à montrer des personnes trans sans en faire des monstres », rappelle-t-elle. Nan Goldin n'a jamais cessé de témoigner, de donner une voix aux minorités, à la communauté transgenre et LGBT dont elle fait partie. « Ces gens que vous voyez sur ces images, c'est ma famille, je suis queer », tient-elle ...

NAN GOLDIN COURTESY GAGOSIAN.





NAN GOLDIN COURTESY GAGOSIAN.







## SOCIÉTÉ



- 1 Amonda at the Sauna, Hotel Savoy, Berlin, 1993.
- 2 Gravestone in Pet Cemetery, Lisbonne, 1998.
- 3 The Hug, New York City, 1980.

... à affirmer dans un moment de recul social, partageant son inquiétude face à une Amérique réactionnaire faisant fi des avancées démocratiques « comme s'il n'y avait jamais eu de révolution culturelle ». « C'est pour cela, poursuit-elle, qu'il est important de montrer à nouveau ces images. »

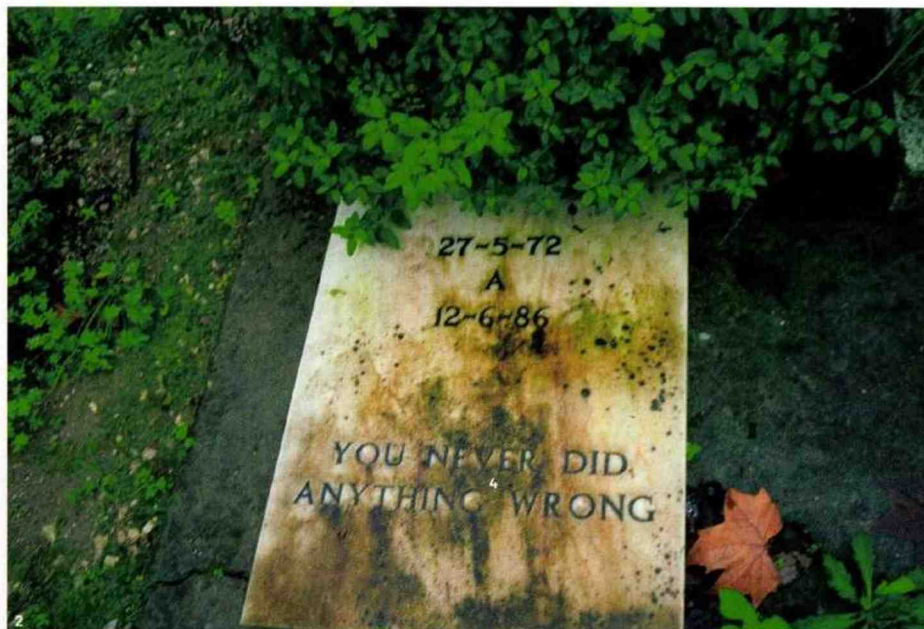
Depuis plusieurs années, Nan Goldin ne photographie plus frénétiquement son entourage comme elle le faisait dans sa jeunesse où son appareil était son troisième œil. Aujourd'hui, elle « édite » ses archives, les met en scène à la manière d'une cinéaste avec des musiques, des voix off, des dispositifs scéniques, un récit-fiction qui embarque le spectateur dans un voyage au cœur des affres de la condition humaine, à la manière d'une Zola contemporaine et « avec l'empathie qu'ont les femmes et quelques hommes », précise-t-elle. « This Will Not End Well », titre de sa rétrospective dont la dernière étape est prévue à Paris au Grand Palais au printemps 2026, donne le ton de sa narration. Même si, selon Fredrik Liew, le curateur suédois du Moderna Museet, il témoigne à l'inverse de l'humour et de « l'indéfectible joie de vivre » de celle qui a fui le conservatisme et le puritanisme de sa famille américaine à 14 ans. « Je photographie parce que je ne veux pas qu'on réécrive ma vie ou qu'on la nettoie », confiait-elle au Monde en 1987. En 2026 à Paris, elle présentera également à la Chapelle de la Salpêtrière une œuvre qu'elle avait déjà montrée dans ce lieu même en 2004 : un hommage à sa sœur Barbara, dont le suicide à l'âge de 18 ans hante depuis toujours son travail. Nancy a 11 ans quand sa sœur, victime de dépression, s'allonge

sur les rails d'un train pour mettre fin à ses jours. Barbara n'était pas folle d'après elle, juste une adolescente qui échappait aux cadres et avait besoin d'aide. C'est pour ne pas l'oublier et retrouver son visage qu'elle s'est mise à photographier obsessionnellement tout son entourage dans une tentative désespérée d'immortaliser ses âmes sœurs et de rendre les marges visibles.

**FEMME ET ARTISTE LIBRE, ESTHÈTE DE L'ERRANCE INTÉRIEURE**, Nan Goldin cultive une « approche instinctive et purement émotionnelle », raconte le photographe Léo Martin qui fut son assistant à Berlin en 2015. Tout vibre autour d'elle et se déploie dans le sens de son instinct. Chaque situation de la vie est une expérience en soi, sa vie est son œuvre, son œuvre est sa vie. Il n'y a aucune frontière entre l'intime et le public. » Matthieu Humery, co-commissaire de l'exposition « David Armstrong » – grand complice de Nan depuis les années 70, décédé en 2014 – à Luma Arles, considère que « sa vie entière est une performance ». Selon lui, « son activisme contre les opioïdes avec son association P.A.I.N. (Prescription Addiction Intervention Now), ou sa dénonciation actuelle de la guerre à Gaza est en lien direct avec son œuvre qui est déjà un acte de résistance ».

Pour Christoph Wiesner, peu d'artistes aussi engagés qu'elle sont aussi prêts à affronter les pouvoirs dominants, à faire entendre des voix et des visages invisibilisés. Son autoportrait à l'œil au beurre noir reste un témoignage puissant de son engagement à parler de la domination masculine et des violences faites aux femmes. De ses récents





## “La vie entière de Nan Goldin est une performance.”

Matthieu Humery, commissaire d'exposition

travaux dans les musées ressort son obsession à capter la beauté dans sa sensualité ou sa sauvagerie. Les diptyques qu'elle compose dans *Le Syndrome de Stendhal* saisissent par leurs échos. Nan Goldin aurait aimé être peintre. On le comprend en découvrant son regard amoureux sur la peinture classique. On décrypte mieux aussi les fulgurances de ses photos, son rapport à la pellicule couleur, à ses lumières. « Certaines de ses images sont seulement des flous, des traces, comme si elle voulait rendre compte du passage du temps », ajoute Matthieu Humery, surpris de la connaître aussi éloquente et de la voir plongée dans un doute permanent, hésitant pour chacune de ses prises de parole et apparitions. Pendant les Rencontres d'Arles, pour sa soirée spéciale au Théâtre antique en juillet dernier, elle avait demandé à l'écrivain Édouard Louis de partager la scène avec elle pour invectiver le public sur les horreurs de Gaza, se laissant ainsi une porte de sortie si jamais elle ne se sentait pas le cœur à affronter la foule... Finalement, elle était là, debout, sous le ciel étoilé de l'amphithéâtre romain, avec sa silhouette frêle, sa veste en cuir Gucci rouge comme ses boucles rousses, faisant entendre de sa voix de vieille combattante, grave et posée, son désir plus vif que jamais de témoigner par la puissance de l'image du réel qu'on voudrait oublier. ●

NAN GOLDIN COURTESY GAGOSIAN







# Maigreur, fourrure, diversité... la mode rétropédale : « Depuis quelque temps, on recommence à nous demander ouvertement des mannequins caucasiens »

*Sophie Abriat et Valentin Pérez*

**Il y a peu encore, l'industrie embrassait les grandes causes qui agitaient la société. Du soutien à la Gay Pride à Black Lives Matter, en passant par son souci d'inclusivité dans la représentation des corps et des identités, elle semblait au diapason de l'époque. Mais le vent a tourné. Et l'élection de Donald Trump, qui multiplie les décrets antidiversité, change la donne.**

La caméra glisse sur le jean de l'héroïne – mince, blanche, à la longue chevelure blonde – pour s'arrêter sur son regard azur. « Mes jeans sont bleus », lance l'actrice américaine Sydney Sweeney (*Euphoria*, *The White Lotus*), après avoir évoqué la transmission des gènes des parents à leur progéniture. La voix off conclut alors : « Sydney Sweeney has great jeans », entretenant volontairement l'ambiguïté entre « jeans » et « gènes », deux mots homophones en anglais. Révélée le 23 juillet, la publicité vantant les pantalons d'American Eagle n'est pas passée inaperçue aux Etats-Unis. Début août, les grands quotidiens, du *New York Times* au *Washington Post*, lui dédiaient tribunes et analyses, tandis que CNN, ABC ou Fox News en débattaient dans leurs morning shows.

Mettant en scène un vêtement pourtant plutôt consensuel, le jean, la publicité a polarisé l'opinion. Les progressistes y ont lu un éloge « eugéniste » et un traité de « propagande suprémaciste ». Les conservateurs, un retour à une féminité idéalisée et au « bon sens ». « Une revanche culturelle après toutes ces années où l'on nous a dit qu'il fallait trouver inspirantes les mannequins lingerie potelées », écrit *The Free Press*, le jeune média « antiwoke » qui monte. Donald Trump et son vice-président, J. D. Vance, en personne, ont même défendu la campagne, trop heureux de souligner au passage que l'actrice s'était inscrite sur les listes électorales républicaines, à Monroe County, en Floride, en juin 2024. Cette campagne d'American Eagle, dont l'action a bondi sous l'effet du scandale, incarne le vent réactionnaire qui souffle depuis quelques mois sur la mode, à l'opposé des discours inclusifs et philanthropes qui dominaient ces dix dernières années. « Nous sommes entrés dans un moment post-politiquement correct », résume Kimberly Jenkins, consultante et fondatrice de la plateforme *The Fashion and Race Database*. Comme si mode et idées progressistes n'allaient plus forcément de pair... Visuellement, cela se traduit par le retour de certains codes rétro, évoquant l'imaginaire tradwife, vantant le retour pur et simple de la femme au foyer, en robe de ménagère, petit sac à main et rang de perles.

## **Retour en grâce de figures décriées**

Les observateurs ont parallèlement noté d'autres signaux faibles : la diminution du nombre de messages engagés en faveur du féminisme et du body positivisme, la perte d'influence de marques considérées comme vertueuses (LVMH a revendu en janvier ses parts de Stella McCartney à sa fondatrice, réputée



pour ses engagements écologistes), le retour en grâce de figures hier décriées à cause de scandales xénophobes (Dolce & Gabbana) ou d'accusations d'agressions sexuelles ou de viol (le designer Alexander Wang est de retour à la fashion week de New York tandis que le photographe Terry Richardson signe à nouveau des photos pour des magazines).

Diversité et écoresponsabilité, les maîtres-mots des dernières années « sont de moins en moins d'actualité, s'indigne Céline Semaan, activiste libano-américaine, fondatrice de Slow Factory, une organisation à but non lucratif engagée pour la justice environnementale et sociale dans la mode. On a l'impression d'être revenu quinze ans en arrière, comme si tous les efforts entrepris étaient balayés d'un revers de main ». Dressant le même constat, la journaliste Amy Odell, biographe d'Anna Wintour, donnait dès mars une autre lecture dans une tribune au New York Times : « La mode a renoncé à être woke et c'est O. K. » Sans être pro-Trump, elle y expliquait que la mode et l'engagement n'ont jamais, selon elle, vraiment fait bon ménage...

Depuis une dizaine d'années, le secteur a pris pourtant pour habitude de véhiculer avec succès des messages engagés. Même les poids lourds du luxe le plus commercial démontraient qu'ils avaient une conscience politique. Chez Dior, Maria Grazia Chiuri pouvait vendre des sacs par milliers en affichant ses convictions féministes à coups de slogans comme « Patriarchy = CO2 » et reverser les bénéfices des ventes du fameux tee-shirt « We should all be feminists » (le titre d'un essai de l'écrivaine nigérienne Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie) à la Fondation Clara Lionel, une ONG créée par la pop star Rihanna et qui finance des programmes d'éducation et de santé, notamment à destination des femmes.

Quant au directeur artistique italien Alessandro Michele, il est parvenu à faire engranger à Gucci des milliards d'euros de chiffre d'affaires en martelant chaque saison ses idéaux humanistes et pacifistes. Il n'a pas hésité à mettre en valeur des penseurs engagés comme le philosophe Paul B. Preciado ou encouragé la maison florentine à faire don de 500 000 dollars à March for Our Lives, un mouvement américain anti-armes.

### Engagement dans le débat politique

Aux Etats-Unis, la mode allait jusqu'à prendre ouvertement part au débat politique national. Lors de la fashion week de New York de février 2017, l'industrie américaine était ainsi vent debout contre le président Trump, fraîchement élu. Imran Amed, le fondateur du média spécialisé The Business of Fashion, lance alors la campagne [#TiedTogether](#), invitant tous les acteurs de la mode à porter un bandana blanc en signe d'attachement aux valeurs de tolérance et de solidarité, visant implicitement le décret anti-immigration du président américain.

On pouvait lire « I am an immigrant » sur les tee-shirts de Prabal Gurung et « Unity » ou « Hope » sur les manches des chemises de The Row, tandis que les casquettes de la marque Public School portaient l'inscription « Make America New York », en réplique au slogan trumpiste et en hommage à l'esprit cosmopolite de la ville. Symboliquement, Raf Simons avait, pour ouvrir son premier show pour Calvin Klein, choisi le tube de David Bowie This Is Not America. A l'époque, Marc Jacobs ou Tom Ford refusaient même, dans un élan contestataire ouvertement assumé, d'habiller la First Lady Melania Trump.

Trois ans plus tard, la mort du quadragénaire afro-américain George Floyd, à Minneapolis le 25 mai 2020, tué par Derek Chauvin, un policier blanc, et la vague d'indignation mondiale qui s'était ensuivie avaient poussé de nombreuses entreprises de mode à afficher leur soutien au mouvement Black Lives Matter, notamment sous la pression des réseaux sociaux. Dons à des associations, programmes antiracistes pour leurs employés, audits internes pour diversifier leur main-d'œuvre... De nombreuses initiatives étaient annoncées. « A l'époque, on pensait vraiment que l'intérêt des marques était réel, que les résultats en termes de productivité et de culture d'entreprise en seraient améliorés », souligne la directrice de casting Barbara Blanchard, qui a lancé à l'été 2020 son agence de conseil pour accompagner les entreprises souhaitant changer leurs pratiques en matière de diversité et d'inclusion. Trois lettres encapsulaient alors la promesse de l'engagement : CDO, pour chief diversity officers, ces responsables diversité et inclusion nommés pour faire en sorte que les marques soient ouvertes à tous



et ne véhiculent ni collection ni publicité discriminatoire. « Désormais à bas bruit, de plus en plus de marques se passent d'un tel responsable ou l'absorbent au sein d'autres services, ce qui peut amoindrir sa marge de manœuvre », constate à regret la consultante américaine Virginia Cumberbatch qui a pour clients des griffes nord-américaines comme Lululemon ou Burton.

### La diversité retrogradée

Gucci, en avance sur ces questions, s'est par exemple réorganisé pour confier les missions de son ex-CDO, qui rendait compte directement au PDG, au département des ressources humaines, pour plus d'efficacité, semble espérer la maison. « Dans les politiques des marques, on voit apparaître la tentation de ne plus assumer le terme de diversité pour privilégier des palliatifs, comme "bien-être" ou "appartenance". Bien que ces mots aient encore un sens, il faut mesurer ce que ces changements signifient, car le langage est un indicateur de nos valeurs », poursuit Virginia Cumberbatch, soulignant à quel point le terme et le concept même de diversité – « un tabou » pour l'administration Trump, analyse le New York Times dans son édition du 22 août – ne sont plus dans l'air du temps.

A l'image d'autres mastodontes (Citigroup dans le secteur bancaire, McDonald's dans l'alimentaire, Warner Bros Discovery dans le divertissement...), la chaîne de grands magasins Saks Fifth Avenue, présente de New York à Beverly Hills, a rebaptisé son ex-CDO en se débarrassant du terme « diversité ». Depuis le printemps, sa responsable « diversité, équité et inclusion » a muté en cheffe « de l'engagement des parties prenantes, de l'inclusion et de l'appartenance ». Quelques mois plus tôt, le géant suédois H&M avait fait de même avec sa cadre chargée de ces sujets, rebaptisée responsable « de l'identité et de la raison d'être des personnes ». « Son champ d'action reste identique et les sujets d'inclusion et de diversité restent au cœur de ses activités et de celles de ses équipes dévouées », défend-on chez H&M.

Groupes de luxe (Kering), maisons de mode (Gucci), labels de sportswear (Lululemon, Nike)... le phénomène touche des acteurs de différentes natures. Depuis 2020, beaucoup de CDO ont tout simplement quitté leur poste après quelques mois seulement d'activité. « Certains ont subi des résistances. Ils en avaient assez qu'on les fasse passer en interne pour des procureurs qui venaient dire ce qui était bien ou mal », relève Kimberly Jenkins, qui a conseillé Gucci sur le sujet avant 2020.

### « Washing social »

Le manque de ressources et d'investissements aurait également pesé. « Les marques de mode se sont jetées sur ces problématiques de diversité et d'inclusion dans une logique performative, regrette Agnès Rocamora, sociologue et professeure au London College of Fashion. Pour beaucoup d'entreprises, ces politiques relevaient surtout d'une forme de washing social [récupération opportuniste à des fins mercantiles] et ne reposaient donc pas sur une conviction idéologique réelle. » En somme, abonde Khémaïs Ben Lakhdar-Rezgui, auteur de L'Appropriation culturelle. Histoire, domination et création : aux origines d'un pillage occidental (Stock, 2024), « on se rend compte que la diversité a été réduite à une tendance et, comme toutes les tendances, elle a fini par ne plus être à la mode ».

Surtout, le retour, en janvier 2025, de Donald Trump comme président des Etats-Unis (un marché qui représente environ un quart des ventes mondiales du luxe) pousse à la discrétion sur ces sujets. Dès le premier jour de son arrivée à la Maison Blanche, le 20 janvier, le républicain a signé un décret exécutif déclarant illégales les politiques d'inclusion et de discrimination positive liées au genre, à l'âge, aux origines ethniques, à la classe sociale ou encore à l'orientation sexuelle et au handicap (visible ou invisible) dans les institutions fédérales et, au-delà, dans les entreprises. Sollicités aujourd'hui, des CDO, en poste ou démissionnaires, font les morts ou déclinent, confus, toute demande d'entretien « au vu de ce qui se passe en ce moment aux Etats-Unis » ...

### Souffle réactionnaire

Le souffle réactionnaire du moment ralentit ou condamne les projets. « Les budgets s'amenuisent depuis un an, les e-mails s'espacent et obtenir une validation des marques prend plus de temps



qu'auparavant », constate Virginia Cumberbatch d'Austin, au Texas, racontant avoir dû renoncer récemment à l'organisation d'un séminaire destiné à des entrepreneuses noires ou amérindiennes. « Depuis 2023, nous avons perdu 80 % de notre équipe. Ce sont des centaines d'ONG, d'associations qui sont contraintes de mettre la clé sous la porte. Fondations et sponsors nous lâchent », alerte Celine Semaan, également autrice (A Woman is a School, Slow Factory Press, 2024, non traduit) et designer, installée à New York.

A Paris, Barbara Blanchard a fini par fermer son cabinet de conseil en faveur de la diversité dès 2023, faute de contrats : « Pendant trois ans, nous avons été invitées à des séminaires, nous avons nourri la réflexion de comités d'éthique... explique-t-elle. Mais on s'est rendu compte qu'il y avait davantage de posture et de communication que de volonté de faire changer les choses. »

Pragmatique, l'Allemand Achim Berg, conseiller dans l'industrie du luxe, attribue ce recul autant à la crise du secteur – dont les ventes, en baisse, poussent à privilégier des messages commerciaux et consensuels – qu'au nouvel exécutif de Washington. « Les Américains ont voté pour un gouvernement antidéveloppement durable et antidiversité. Les maisons de mode ne peuvent pas ignorer un tel avertissement. Hier, c'était pour elles politiquement opportun d'épouser ces enjeux aux Etats-Unis. Aujourd'hui, c'est politiquement inopportun, voire dangereux », pointe-t-il. « Le retour au pouvoir de Trump confirme l'essor de narrations déjà existantes, mais jusqu'ici restées plus discrètes, que l'on pourrait qualifier d'"antidécentes", au sens où elles autorisent des discours jusqu'alors jugés socialement inacceptables et inaudibles », analyse le sémioticien Luca Marchetti.

Les géants du luxe américains n'ont pas abdiqué sur tout pour autant. Contactés, Ralph Lauren redit par exemple son attachement à ses collections capsules pensées en collaboration avec des minorités amérindiennes et présentées en 2023, tandis que le joaillier Tiffany & Co. confirme que son prix en partenariat avec le Conseil des créateurs de mode américains (CFDA), destiné à faire émerger de jeunes designers de bijoux « issus de la diversité », aura bien une deuxième édition cet hiver. Mais la tendance globale est à l'amointrissement d'engagements de ce type.

### Offensive antitrans

Dans un milieu où l'acceptation du genre et de l'orientation sexuelle ne fait plus débat depuis longtemps, la cause LGBTQ + elle-même semble défendue avec moins de vigueur. Il y a encore cinq ans, mettre en vente une collection capsule aux couleurs du drapeau arc-en-ciel en juin, lors du mois des fiertés, faisait office de tarte à la crème. L'édition 2025 a pourtant marqué un fort recul en la matière, alors que le secteur aurait pu se mobiliser au moment précis où l'administration Trump se fend d'une offensive antitrans (gel des procédures civiles de changement de genre, réclamation de données sensibles sur les personnes en soins médicaux, interdiction des personnes trans dans l'armée, les sports féminins...) et où la Cour suprême pourrait avoir les moyens de remettre en cause, dans les prochains mois, le mariage entre personnes de même sexe outre-Atlantique.

« Sous la pression du conservatisme culturel et de l'administration Trump », selon un rapport du cabinet Gravity Research, 39 % des entreprises américaines – tous secteurs confondus – ont ainsi annoncé revoir à la baisse leurs actions lors du Pride Month. Jamais pourtant autant d'Américains ne s'étaient aussi ouvertement définis comme gay, lesbienne, bisexuel, trans ou queer (9, 3 % de la population en 2024, selon un rapport de l'institut Gallup).

De nombreuses marques de mode ont ainsi passé leur tour cette année, comme la multinationale du prêt-à-porter Gap, le chausseur Ugg, mais aussi Zara, Massimo Dutti ou Bershka, les enseignes de fast fashion d'Inditex – un choix que le groupe espagnol ne souhaite pas commenter. Versace, familier de l'exercice, n'a cette fois-ci pas imaginé de vêtements particuliers, préférant reverser 10 % des bénéfices de vente d'une paire de lunettes à l'Elton John AIDS Foundation.

### « La Pride tourne au beige »

Même les marques qui ont commercialisé des collections capsules LGBTQ + en 2025 l'ont fait sans trop le claironner, privilégiant des couleurs sobres et des slogans ou symboles discrets, ce qu'ont regretté





certaines responsables d'associations habitués à voir leurs couleurs plus franchement assumées. « La Pride tourne au beige », a résumé The Business of Fashion. Le géant de l'habillement Abercrombie & Fitch a, par exemple, mis en vente des produits avec un arc-en-ciel discret cousu à l'intérieur du vêtement.

« En matière de luttes LGBTQ +, beaucoup de marques ont déserté. Elles craignent d'être trop politiques, de perdre des opportunités en termes de business. Aujourd'hui, faire défiler des personnes trans est un parti pris », souligne Louis Gabriel Nouchi. Le 28 juin, pour la Marche des fiertés parisienne, le créateur français, à la tête de la marque qui porte son nom, a tenu à organiser une soirée dans un club, en soutien à la communauté. « Enfin une marque qui fait quelque chose ! », assure avoir reçu, par dizaines de messages, le styliste qui expose depuis ses débuts des corps d'hommes non standardisés sur les podiums. « Parce qu'il invisibilise, le silence est encore pire que le washing », regrette-t-il.

### Jouer la prudence

Il est pourtant le plus tentant. Historiquement progressiste, la mode ne va pas forcément jusqu'à faire l'éloge du conservatisme, mais elle adopte un positionnement plus apolitique, en retrait, neutre. Les grandes maisons, propriétés de groupes cotés, semblent particulièrement jouer la prudence, laissant la question de l'engagement politique à quelques marques indépendantes qui tentent encore de l'occuper.

« On remarque de plus en plus la faille entre les griffes institutionnelles qui sont ancrées dans un système patrimonial, avec un héritage lourd et très contextualisé, et de jeunes labels téméraires et inclusifs qui proposent des collections progressistes », constate Leyla Neri, directrice du master en design de mode de l'Institut français de la mode. L'un des produits les plus viraux de l'année a par exemple été un tee-shirt estampillé « Protect the dolls » ( « protégez les poupées » ), dont l'initiateur, Conner Ives, jeune designer américain qui défile à Londres, reverse l'entièreté des bénéfices à Trans Lifeline, une ligne téléphonique de soutien aux personnes trans en détresse.

Dans un autre registre, Telfar, marque américaine particulièrement engagée pour l'égalité raciale, a fêté, en juin, ses 20 ans en organisant un défilé dans les rues de New York avec 200 modèles de tous âges, couleurs de peau ou morphologies. Pendant la fashion week homme de Paris en juin, la Française Jeanne Friot a imposé un casting de mannequins entièrement trans ou non binaires et s'associait, quelques mois auparavant, à la National Network of Abortion Funds, association de défense du droit à l'avortement aux Etats-Unis, à qui elle reversait certains de ses bénéfices.

L'Américain Rick Owens a, quant à lui, surpris son monde en annonçant après son défilé qu'il comptait lever des fonds pour La Maison d'Allanah, association versaillaise qui propose un hébergement d'urgence aux plus précaires et aux victimes de LGBTphobies, à sa façon : en diffusant des photos payantes de ses pieds sur la plateforme de partage de vidéos intimes OnlyFans... La rétrospective que consacre en ce moment à Rick Owens le Palais Galliera, à Paris, démontre que ses partis pris ont été payants. Libertés sexuelles et de genre, appels aux solidarités, antiracisme, défense de la dignité de chacun... Au fil de sa carrière, le créateur a à la fois politisé sa mode et élargi son audience. Et il ne compte pas revenir en arrière, a-t-il prévenu lors du vernissage de l'exposition visible jusqu'au 4 janvier 2026 au musée de la mode : « Avec ce qui se passe politiquement dans le monde, nous avons plus que jamais besoin de résistance. »

Pour Laurence Lim, fondatrice de Cherry Blossoms Intercultural Branding, une entreprise qui conseille des poids lourds, comme LVMH, Richemont ou L'Oréal, pour les aider à mieux appréhender les cultures de leurs marchés, cette bascule du secteur est contre-intuitive. « Je ne cesse de conseiller à mes clients d'assumer ce qu'ils sont et les combats qui vont avec, assure-t-elle. Tout le monde parle depuis quelques mois de réenchanter la mode et le luxe : c'est précisément par une renaissance morale que cela passera, en remettant en avant des valeurs et non en se dépolitisant. Paradoxalement, on voit émerger en Inde ou en Chine, où la jeunesse a soif d'expression individuelle, des initiatives sur la diversité et l'inclusion, au moment où les Etats-Unis freinent. Pourtant, on estime que, en 2045, la population américaine sera à majorité non caucasienne : les marques ont intérêt à anticiper et à s'adresser à tous les consommateurs dès aujourd'hui. »



### Coulisses du made in Italy

« Pourquoi voudriez-vous que la mode fasse à tout prix le bien ? nuance, en exigeant l'anonymat, un ex-PDG de grandes maisons européennes. En laissant penser qu'il se souciait de son prochain et de tous, le secteur a trop promis. A long terme, l'exemplarité peut aussi être un danger. Voyez les scandales de production récents en Italie... » Ces derniers mois, Armani, Dior, Valentino ont été accusés par la justice italienne de pratiques salariales illégales chez leurs sous-traitants, jetant ainsi une lumière crue sur les coulisses du made in Italy. Un sort que connaît aussi Loro Piana depuis la mi-juillet et qui a valu tout l'été au fabricant d'ultraluxe, propriété de LVMH, des commentaires courroucés et déçus sur son compte Instagram...

Dior et Armani ne sont plus sous administration judiciaire depuis février. Mais, le 1er août, l'Autorité italienne de la concurrence a condamné Armani à une amende de 3, 5 millions d'euros pour pratiques commerciales trompeuses. Elle estime que ce qu'elle a découvert sur sa chaîne d'approvisionnement ne permet pas de penser que la maison a honoré les engagements de responsabilité sociale et durable dont elle se prévalait auprès des clients sur ses sites Internet... La marque a fait appel.

Pour qualifier cette « marche arrière toute » de la mode, une expression revient depuis quelques mois : « boom boom ». Façonné par le prévisionniste californien Sean Monahan, ce concept décrit l'esthétique du moment, un monde où les effets visuels priment sur le discours, le bruit tapageur sur la substance. Et traduit en images ce mouvement réactionnaire qui se propage. Sur les podiums et les réseaux sociaux, une brise années 1970-1980 souffle, avec une féminité maquillée et conventionnelle, une masculinité musclée et un peu macho, un rapport décomplexé à la chirurgie esthétique.

Symbole de l'ancien monde, la fourrure reparaît. La plupart du temps, elle est fausse. Mais, dans un numéro d'illusionniste très réussi, le shearling (une peau lainée, donc du mouton) prend plus souvent qu'à son tour des allures de vison ou de zibeline, convoquant tout un imaginaire rétro. Chloé la glamourise, optant par exemple pour une lascivité seventies version « décadence sur la Riviera française » dans sa dernière campagne publicitaire. Très likée, la recette de celle de Saint Laurent, publiée fin juillet, est un condensé de nostalgie : Kate Moss et Chloë Sevigny, figures associées aux excès du secteur dans les années 1990, posent dans un cabriolet ou une piscine, ou se voient fétichisées dans des intérieurs luxueux, toutes en lingerie ou (fausse) fourrure.

### Rapport désensibilisé à la cause animale

En février et en mars, au moment où ces pièces « animales » étaient dévoilées sur les podiums, la photographe Zoë Ghertner y voyait, dans une story Instagram, le symbole d'une mode allant à rebours. « Cela ressemble à ce qui se passe politiquement aux Etats-Unis, mais aussi ailleurs. Des reculs, des mentalités rétrogrades et surtout des renversements de lois et de protections pour les femmes, les personnes LGBTQ+ et la planète. J'ai été profondément alarmée de voir ces évolutions se refléter de manière aussi évidente dans un espace créatif [comme la fashion week]. » Qu'elle soit synthétique et blâmée par les écologistes ou véritable et honnie par les animalistes, la fourrure est de fait la plus forte tendance de l'automne-hiver 2025-2026, suggérant aussi un rapport désensibilisé à la cause animale. Au diable les préventions, que l'on parle fourrure ou peaux exotiques !

Le styliste Law Roach, star du milieu qui habille Zendaya et collabore aux titres phares du groupe Condé Nast (Vogue, Vanity Fair, GQ), n'a pas hésité à poster sur son compte Instagram (1, 7 million d'abonnés), début juin, deux photos. La première montre le styliste avec, dans les bras, un véritable petit crocodile aux yeux ouverts et à la gueule muselée ; la seconde avec, à la place du reptile, un sac Hermès façonné en véritable croco et à la teinte similaire. « Avant/Après », indique la légende avec cynisme. Il y a quelques mois, une telle publication aurait fait scandale. Cette fois, les images, restées en ligne plusieurs semaines avant d'être supprimées durant l'été, ont récolté plus de 57 000 likes et une pluie d'emojis hilares.

### « Définition datée du chic »





Cette esthétique boom boom va de pair avec l'omniprésence sur les podiums et dans les publicités de la maigreur. Lors des défilés automne-hiver 2025-2026, a calculé Vogue Business, parmi 8 703 looks, 97, 7 % de modèles faisaient une taille 32, 34 ou 36 – un pourcentage en augmentation par rapport aux saisons précédentes où le body positivisme semblait être le maître-mot. Ozempic, Wegovy, Zepbound et autres Mounjaro : les nouveaux médicaments antidiabétiques ou anti-obésité, détournés en coupe-faim, participent de cet excès, particulièrement aux Etats-Unis, où leurs prix ont fortement chuté sous la pression de la Maison Blanche.

« L'extrême minceur est partout, donnant corps à une esthétique référencée et nostalgique, souffle Emma Matell, directrice de casting danoise réputée pour la variété des profils qu'elle déniche. L'élégance, depuis deux ans, tend à n'être plus définie, hélas, dans une variété de formes et d'incarnations, mais dans une définition monolithique et datée du chic. » Le canon de beauté du moment ? « Moins jeune qu'auparavant, peut-être trentenaire », applaudit-elle, mais toujours « extrêmement mince et blanche ».

« Depuis quelque temps, corrobore Barbara Blanchard, dans les briefs que l'on reçoit des marques, on recommence à nous demander ouvertement des mannequins caucasiens. » Les modèles plus-size (taille 40 et au-delà), qui avaient encore il y a peu les honneurs d'une poignée de campagnes publicitaires ou de unes de magazines, en sont maintenant absentes, certaines d'entre elles quittant le mannequinat dépitées. Ainsi de Skye Lukowski-Standley, 30 ans, qui a annoncé au Guardian au printemps avoir quitté son agence londonienne après avoir été une étoile montante, remarquée par exemple dans des pubs Dolce & Gabbana.

### « Maigreur malsaine »

En mars, la critique de mode du New York Times Vanessa Friedman, qui s'était faufilée dans les coulisses du défilé Schiaparelli, en est ressortie avec une anecdote édifiante. Interrogeant le directeur artistique Daniel Roseberry sur ses jeux de volumes, vestes à basques et épaulettes ultra-larges, elle montre du doigt une excroissance anguleuse de tissu rembourré sur une robe enfilée par une mannequin, pensant ainsi désigner un effet trompe-l'œil. Avant de se voir couper par le créateur, embarrassé : « Euh, ça, en fait, ce sont ses [vraies] hanches » ...

En 2017, LVMH et Kering avaient travaillé de concert à l'élaboration d'une charte « sur les relations de travail et le bien-être des mannequins ». Les deux géants français du luxe se sont depuis engagés à supprimer de leurs défilés la taille 32 chez les femmes, même si certaines de leurs griffes continuent de valoriser des corps d'une minceur extrême. Par ailleurs, aucun autre groupe n'a pris publiquement de résolution similaire et, dans les faits, la diversité des morphologies régresse...

Mi-août, l'Advertising Standards Authority, le régulateur britannique de la publicité, a interdit au Royaume-Uni la diffusion de campagnes créées par Zara et Marks & Spencer, pointant la « maigreur malsaine » des mannequins photographiées. Dans la foulée, le tabloïd The Sun titrait, ranimant une expression associée aux dérives toxicomanes des années 1990, sur « le retour de l'héroïne chic » ... Comme si l'on revenait bel et bien trois décennies en arrière. ■



**KERING - LUXE**



## 50 Years On, Bottega Veneta's IYKYK Accessories Remain The Ultimate Status Symbol

By Mahoro Seward



While the distinguishing marks of most luxury houses are the insignia stamped on their flagship products – whether monogrammed canvases or symbol-shaped clasps – that's never quite been the case for Bottega Veneta. The instant recognisability of the Veneto-born, Milan-based maison's über-luxe leather goods is due to a proprietary technique: the Intrecciato weave.

Woven by hand from long, thin straps of buttery leather by Bottega Veneta's artisans, the supple *tissage* has become one of fashion's most familiar – not to mention most sought-after – material textures in the half-century since its introduction. Understated yet unmistakable, its launch prompted the now iconic “When you're own initials are enough” campaign (almost a good 50 years before “quiet luxury” was the eyeroll-inducing buzz word it now is, mind you), laying the foundation for the philosophy of rigorous, craft-driven luxury that has informed the house's direction ever since.

Since the appearance of an Intrecciato clutch in the crook of Lauren Hutton's arm in *American Gigolo* (1980), the weave has also figured as a fixture of pop culture. Tina Turner, Princess Diana, Jacob Elordi, Rihanna... the roll call of A-listers who've proudly flaunted Intrecciato accessories as part of some of their most iconic looks is too long to list here (trust us, it is *long*). In itself, though, it is an irrefutable testament to the aspirational cachet of the leather weaving method.

Of course, the big 5-0 always warrants lavish commemoration, but few have marked reaching the half-century mark quite like Bottega Veneta. To toast one of its more significant contributions to the contemporary luxury vernacular, the house has expanded its footprint at one of the world's great luxury emporiums, with a month-long takeover of the exhibition windows at London's Harrods.

Centred on La Tavola – an architectural concept that evokes the communal workbenches used by the brand's artisans in the very ateliers where the Intrecciato is woven – the centrepiece showcases leather accessories and jewellery pieces, along with Bottega Veneta's lip-bitingly chic fragrance offering (yes, the ones that come in the Murano-esque glass bottles with the little marble plinths), and a selection of pop-up-exclusive stationery, to be gifted with purchases made there.





Naturally, the leather weaving technique also serves as the primary inspiration for the space's design – from the concrete and Italian walnut fixtures, which also nod to the Modernist design heritage of the *maison*'s home region, through to ultra-luxe furniture objects upholstered in Intrecciato.

The crowning glory of the takeover, though, is the exclusive capsule of iconic Intrecciato bag styles and accessories – the Andiamo, the Knot clutch and the Riva mule among them – reimagined in Harrods's emblematic pine hue and a deep maroon. You'll also find a selection of exclusive ready-to-wear pieces fashioned in the leather weave – first seen in Jack Davison's poignant *Craft Is Our Language* campaign for the house – and a preview sniff of Mezzanote, a collection of three sexily sombre scents in the Bottega Veneta fragrance line.

A trip to Harrods hardly ever needs an excuse, but with the pop-up running until 28 September, we can't think of a better one to get yourself to Knightsbridge this month.

**CONCURRENCE - CORPORATE**



# Soshi Otsuki remporte le prix LVMH

Mercredi, le Japonais de 35 ans a été distingué pour ses costumes masculins souples aux détails singuliers

Parmi tous les prix de mode, le prix LVMH compte parmi les plus audacieux car il récompense des designers encore peu connus. La douzième édition, qui s'est tenue mercredi 3 septembre à la Fondation Louis Vuitton, à Paris, ne fait pas exception. Trois designers ont été distingués : le Japonais Soshi Otsuki (pour sa griffe Soshi-otsuki), ainsi que les Britanniques Torishéju Dumí (Torishéju) et Steve O Smith.

« On était tous d'accord pour donner à Soshi Otsuki le prix principal. Il y a eu un peu plus de discussions pour les deux autres, mais c'était une très bonne année », résume Nicolas Ghesquière, directeur artistique des collections féminines de Louis Vuitton et membre du jury. Le lauréat de 35 ans l'a impressionné par « ses coupes, ses constructions, ses tissus magnifiques, son néoclassicisme indiscutable ». « Son tailoring apporte quelque chose de nouveau. Comme un nouvel Armani. C'est très sexy sur un homme. Moi, en tout cas, je le porterais volontiers », s'enthousiasme le juré Jonathan Anderson, qui pilote les collections Dior.

Soshi Otsuki est né au Japon en 1990. Après des études de mode, il a lancé sa marque Soshi-otsuki en 2015, à Tokyo, pour redéfinir le costume masculin à travers un prisme japonais. « Je veux faire valoir la culture, les traditions, les ressources de mon pays », fait-il savoir par l'intermédiaire d'un interprète.

Si Soshi Otsuki ne parle que japonais, son travail exprime clairement ses intentions. Ses costumes souples aux références an-

nées 1980 – amples, croisés, à col large – sont agrémentés de multiples détails qui les rendent singuliers : une fente dans le revers du col qui permet d'y glisser sa main, une boutonnrière de chemise tournicotée, des boutons déplacés vers l'extrémité de la manche...

Costumes et chemises sont taillés dans des tissus épais et mous, parfois issus de stocks inutilisés de kimonos, et possèdent une nonchalance luxueuse. La beauté et la qualité d'exécution de ses pièces ainsi que la cohérence de sa proposition en faisaient un lauréat tout désigné. « Ce sont des produits très créatifs, qui ont aussi une réalité commerciale », se réjouit Delphine Arnault, PDG de Dior, à l'origine du prix en 2013.

Soshi Otsuki avait déjà candidaté au prix LVMH en 2016, mais n'avait pas fait partie des finalistes. Cette fois-ci, il empoche une dotation de 400 000 euros et un an de mentorat personnalisé par les équipes de LVMH. « Je vais pouvoir investir dans un vrai atelier, car, pour l'instant, je travaille à domicile », explique le lauréat, qui espère aussi pouvoir embaucher un artisan et ainsi développer son offre avec des mailles ou du denim.

## Recrutés par la concurrence

La situation des lauréats du Prix des savoir-faire (Torishéju Dumí) et du Prix Karl Lagerfeld (Steve O Smith) n'est guère différente : chaque designer est l'employé unique de son entreprise et compte beaucoup sur la dotation (200 000 euros) et l'année de mentorat pour se structurer.

Les deux trentenaires basés à Londres explorent deux versants

très opposés de la mode. Torishéju Dumí réinterprète avec minutie les différentes pièces d'une garde-robe, transformant une robe en tablier à apposer sur un pantalon, ajoutant des poches profondes à l'avant d'une veste pour lui donner un nouveau volume. De son côté, Steve O Smith réalise des peintures qu'il transpose en vêtements sur mesure, reproduisant les coups de pinceau, l'épaisseur changeante du trait, comme si le corps devenait un tableau vivant.

Le prix est toujours l'occasion pour LVMH de montrer sa capacité à repérer les nouveaux talents – preuve en est que plusieurs finalistes de ces dernières années ont été recrutés par la concurrence, à l'instar de Veronica Leoni chez Calvin Klein ou de Rachel Scott chez Proenza Schouler. Curieusement, le groupe n'a pas l'habitude de piocher dans ce vivier pour pourvoir ses propres maisons – à l'exception de Virgil Abloh chez Louis Vuitton.

En attendant, LVMH était fier d'exhiber comme chaque année la brochette de ses designers stars qui constituaient le jury : outre Nicolas Ghesquière et Jonathan Anderson, il se composait de Phoebe Philo, Pharrell Williams (Vuitton homme), Silvia Venturini Fendi (Fendi), Sarah Burton (Givenchy), Nigo (Kenzo), Marc Jacobs et Stella McCartney (qui reste proche du groupe même si elle a racheté ses parts en janvier). Une manière habile de rappeler, quelques jours avant le début des fashion weeks printemps-été 2026, qui est le leader du secteur. ■

E. V. B.

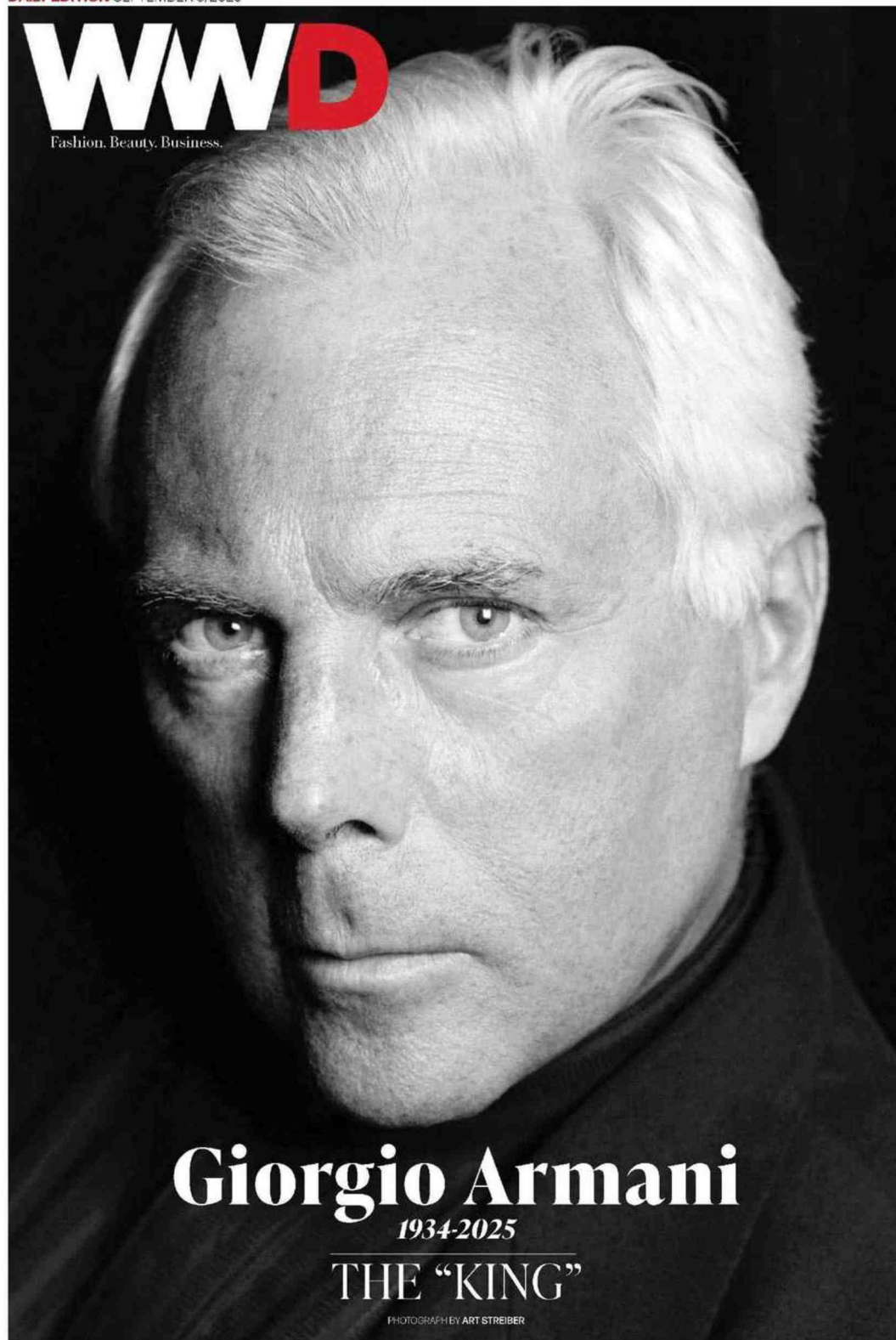




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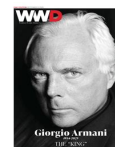


Giorgio Armani

1934-2025

THE "KING"

PHOTOGRAPH BY ART STREIBER



## OBITUARY

# Giorgio Armani, 'the King,' 91

- The iconic designer changed the way women and men dress with his soft tailoring – and his expansion into interiors and hospitality built a global lifestyle empire.

BY LUISA ZARGANI AND ALESSANDRA ILARI

PHOTOGRAPHS BY FAIRCHILD ARCHIVE

**MILAN** – Italy's fashion king is dead.

Giorgio Armani, an icon of the late 20th century and a pioneer of the celebrity-fashion juggernaut, has died in Milan. Often referred to as the "King" or "the Maestro," he was born in Piacenza, Italy, on July 11, 1934.

"In this company, we have always felt like part of a family," his employees and his family stated on Thursday. "Today, with deep emotion, we feel the void left by the one who founded and nurtured this family with vision, passion and dedication. But it is precisely in his spirit that we, the employees and the family members who have always worked alongside Mr. Armani, commit to protecting what he built and to carrying his company forward in his memory, with respect, responsibility and love."

The funeral chamber will be set up Saturday and Sunday at Via Bergognone 59, inside the Armani/Teatro, and will be open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. In accordance with Armani's explicit wishes, the funeral will be held privately.

"Il Signor Armani, as he was always respectfully and admirably called by employees and collaborators, passed away peacefully, surrounded by his loved ones," the statement continued. "Indefatigable to the end, he worked until his final days, dedicating himself to the company, the collections and the many ongoing and future projects," which is not at all surprising given his tireless and hands-on approach to work. In 2019, ahead of receiving WWD's John B. Fairchild Honor, Armani candidly described himself as a "control freak" and tales of his meticulous attention to detail are legendary.

The statement highlighted how the designer throughout his life "crafted a vision that expanded from fashion to every aspect of life, anticipating the times with extraordinary clarity and pragmatism. He has been driven by relentless curiosity and a deep attention to the present and to people. Along this journey, he established an open dialogue with the public, becoming

a beloved and respected figure for his ability to connect with everyone. Always mindful of the needs of the community, he has been active on many fronts, especially in support of his beloved Milan."

Indeed, Armani was as much a part of the character of Italy as la bella figura and la dolce vita and the reaction to his death on Thursday shot through the day, causing national television to interrupt its regular broadcast. The Milan municipality has declared that Monday will be a day of city mourning.

He was known to pose for selfies and talk to people who would approach him in his stores or during public events. In 2023, staging his One Night Only event in Venice, Armani was visibly emotional. "It's difficult to hold back the tears, when you see young and old people of all different walks of life come up to me, asking for a photograph, and equally moved...and this repays me of all the efforts I have put into my job," he said back then, adding that he attributed his "authenticity, honesty and frankness" to this outpouring of affection, elements that "bring up hidden feelings" in people.

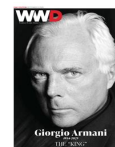
Armani's light blue eyes could be piercing and steely if something was not to his liking – and, being a perfectionist, many things initially were not – but they would then suddenly turn soft and even a bit mischievous, reflecting a keen sense of humor.

Adding further poignancy to his death Thursday is the fact that Armani, who held the role of chairman, chief executive officer and creative designer, will not be able to mark his namesake company's 50th anniversary as planned. A fashion show and party were scheduled to take place in Milan on Sept. 28 and the company had been planning the event for months.

Armani also was mounting an exhibition retracing five decades in fashion through 150 archival looks at the Pinacoteca di Brera Museum. This would be the first time the cultural institution would host a fashion exhibition. Expected to open on Sept. 24, the exhibit should be flanked by a broader digital







project called Armani/Archivio, a platform that was launched last week during the Venice Film Festival filled with a catalogue of all Giorgio Armani collections to date. ►

Armani's spring 2026 womenswear collection was slated to be unveiled on Sept. 28 with a runway display to be exceptionally held in the storied courtyard of honor of Palazzo Brera, the 17th-century landmark home to the Pinacoteca, the Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense library and the Brera Academy.

This year marked several milestones for Armani, who also marked the 20th anniversary of his Privé haute couture collection by mounting an exhibition at the Armani/Silos space in Milan retracing his journey in couture since 2005.

Opened in May and titled "Giorgio Armani Privé 2005-2025," the exhibit runs through the end of the year.

Still, even as preparations for his big celebration have been taking place, it was clear from this summer that the Italian designer was in poor health. He skipped his Giorgio and Emporio Armani men's spring 2026 shows in Milan in June as he was "recovering at home" from an illness. In his place, Leo Dell'Orco, head of menswear design, took the final bow at the shows – the first time ever Armani did not do so. Armani also did not attend the Privé haute couture show for fall 2025 a few weeks later in Paris either.

Dell'Orco is part of the tight-knit circle of friends and collaborators Armani called family. The designer's closest relatives include his nephew Andrea Camerana, the son of Armani's sister Rosanna, who also works in the company, and Roberta Armani, who is the daughter of the designer's late brother, Sergio, and who has been in charge of the group's relations with high-profile celebrities for years, often acting as Armani's deputy on social occasions around the world as the face of the company. Her sister Silvana is part of the design team.

While the future of Armani's company has sparked speculation for years, the statement issued on Thursday pointed to continuity. The company was built over five decades "with emotion and patience. Giorgio Armani always made independence – of thought and action – his hallmark. The company is, now and always, a reflection of this spirit. His family and employees will carry the group forward in respect and continuity of these values."

The designer revealed details about the future of his company for the first time in 2016, confirming he had established the long-rumored Giorgio Armani Foundation, which, while aiming to fund social projects, also ensured that his fashion

group would live on.

"I decided to create the Giorgio Armani Foundation in order to implement projects of public and social interest," Armani said at the time. "The foundation will also safeguard the governance assets of the Armani Group and ensure that these assets are kept stable over time, in respect of and consistent with some principles that are particularly important to me and that have always inspired my activities as a designer and an entrepreneur.

"These founding principles are based upon: autonomy and independence, an ethical approach to management with integrity and honesty, attention to innovation and excellence, an absolute priority to the continuous development of the Armani brand sustained by appropriate investments, prudent and balanced financial management, limited recourse to debt and a careful approach to acquisitions," he added.

While vocal over the years about his aversion to sell, take on a business partner or publicly list the company, rumors about Armani contemplating forming a foundation first emerged in 2012. The foundation reflected a key priority for Armani – independence, which he sought to maintain over the years, especially since 2000 when rumors about a possible sale to LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton or the-then Gucci Group and L'Oréal swirled around the fashion house. ►

The speculation was only natural since Armani has been a major fashion force since the '70s. In short – like Gabrielle Chanel, Christian Dior and Yves Saint Laurent – Armani literally changed the way people dressed and lived. And unlike the others, that revolution touched almost everything, from T-shirts and jeans to gowns; fragrances to hotels; suits to candles. He created a behemoth group that closed 2024 with net revenues of 2.3 billion euros.

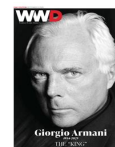
Giorgio Armani Parfums and Cosmetics, under license to L'Oréal, ranks as one of the biggest designer beauty franchises in the world. The French beauty giant since 1988 has developed Armani's fragrances, skin care and makeup in close collaboration with the Italian designer and in March 2018, it and the designer agreed to renew their beauty license until 2050.

Armani continued to think long term until the end.

"During 2024, while well aware of the market slowdown already evident in the second half of 2023 and of the many challenges arising from the international context, I continued to operate with an eye to the future," he said in July, commenting on his company's year-end performance. "It is with this in mind that







I chose in any case to invest in projects of great symbolic and practical significance, which are fundamental to the future of the company," channeling 332 million euros, almost double the 168.5 million euros channeled in 2023, and almost three times the average yearly investments in the previous years, into new projects. These included the building on Madison Avenue in New York, Palazzo Armani, the prestigious headquarters in Paris on Rue François 1er and the renovation of the mega Emporio Armani store in Milan.

Consistency and cohesion were keywords in Armani's vocabulary throughout his five decades as a designer. However, he resisted – and resented – the notion that he could be described as merely rigorous or minimalist and he disliked being associated with the color "greige," even staging the "Eccentrico" exhibit in 2012 to show his more eccentric side.

For a WWD Weekend cover story on interior design two years ago, the interview was held in Armani's Milan apartment – obviously exquisitely, but also surprisingly, furnished. Case in point: a beautifully restored armchair was newly upholstered with a leopard print fabric – not exactly a pattern that one immediately associated with Armani. The apartment was originally designed by Peter Marino, but Armani had filled it with memorabilia "of personal, more than material value." For example, a sweet portrait with his mother took pride of place, visible from the entrance into the room. Above it was a painting of a black panther and an artistic sculpture of a gorilla was also an unexpected feature.

While staying true to his own vision and strategy throughout his life, Armani also took bold decisions to ensure the long-term success of his company. After building a diversified portfolio of brands, in 2017 the designer unveiled a new brand strategy for the Milan-based group, revealing his decision to cease the Armani Collezioni and Armani Jeans brands and use only the Giorgio Armani, Emporio Armani and A|X Armani Exchange monikers, effective with the spring 2018 season, adapting to the increasingly changing and competitive market. He launched his couture line, Armani Privé, in 2005, generally shown in Paris.

In 2020, as COVID-19 was ravaging the world, Armani penned an open letter to WWD reflecting on the absurdity of the state of fashion back then, "with the overproduction of garments and a criminal nonalignment between the weather and the commercial season," asking for a "courageous and necessary" shift. ►

In 2021, due to the worsening of the pandemic, he made a courageous and trailblazing decision to cancel both his Giorgio and Emporio men's fall 2022 shows slated to be held in Milan, holding them behind closed doors, as well as his Privé show in Paris in January the following year. The designer generously made donations up to 2 million euros to Italy's Civil Protection and a range of Italian hospitals and institutions in the country, and converted his manufacturing sites to produce single-use smocks for the protection of health care providers. He took a full-page ad in more than 60 newspapers in Italy, writing a letter to all of the health care providers strenuously fighting the coronavirus outbreak and musing on his own desire as a young man to become a doctor.

From the beginning, Armani singlemindedly and sure-handedly championed a modern wardrobe based on an unstuffy and uncontrived aesthetic that earned him a wide and loyal customer base, from the corporate world through to Hollywood A-listers and artists including Sophia Loren, Robert De Niro, Cate Blanchett, Tom Cruise, Glenn Close, George Clooney, Tina Turner and Jodie Foster, to name a few.

Even though he had started his brand years before, Armani really rocketed to international fame in 1980 by dressing Richard Gere for the title role in "American Gigolo" and he went on to become one of the first go-to designers for stars attending the Oscars.

The energetic and overachieving designer, and hands-on manager of his company, built his name into one with a value that ranks among Coca-Cola and Microsoft in Interbrand's annual listings. "Only I know what I want and my message has to be consistent from beginning to end," he told WWD in 2005.

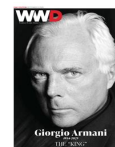
Yet Armani spurned the overtures of deep-pocketed investors that clamored for his company during the luxury sector's acquisition spree in the late '90s. He preferred to be his own boss and learned to be a shrewd businessman, especially after the 1985 death of his companion and business partner Sergio Galeotti.

"It came as a surprise to me that Giorgio was such a strong businessman in addition to being a talented designer," said Nino Cerruti, in a 2005 interview celebrating Armani's 30th anniversary.

Forever clad in jeans and a fitted blue T-shirt to show off his taut, gym-toned physique, Armani worked for Cerruti in the early stages of his career, researching fabrics and trends and designing ties and







shirts. Once he set out on his own, Armani expanded his company with the tenacity and meticulousness that characterized his career from Day One.

Armani's mother Maria played a great role in his life and influenced his sense of fashion to the point that his two yachts bore her nicknames, Mariu and Main. She died in 2001. "She was never a particularly gushy or emotional person; she was quite reserved. She just said, 'Bello' when she saw the first collections," Armani said of his mother. His father, papà Ugo, a shipping manager who worked hard to support his family, died in the early '60s.

In 1950, Armani moved to Milan, a place he remembers thinking of as a big, scary city, to study medicine, but he threw in the towel after two years to become an assistant buyer for La Rinascente, Milan's top department store, where he started creating eye-catching store windows. His first hands-on fashion design experience came between 1964 and 1970, when he landed a job at Hitman, Nino Cerruti's men's clothing line. In 1972, Armani and Galeotti opened a studio on Corso Venezia. To furnish the two modest rooms, they used the money they made by selling a car. ►

After designing his first collection in 1974, Armani and Galeotti founded Giorgio Armani SpA in 1975, forging a formidable team and creating their own label of men and women's ready-to-wear.

While Armani suffered emotionally from Galeotti's premature death, his business acumen and focus hardly faltered as the company gained momentum in the '80s thanks in large part to the lucrative licenses he signed with the now-defunct storied Italian manufacturer Gruppo Finanziario Tessile.

This new undertaking, which soon evolved into an inspirational new business paradigm for other firms, launched Armani Le Collezioni and Emporio Armani. Armani was also among the first to understand the importance of licensing details in such key categories as his booming beauty and fragrance division, and forged a formidable partnership with L'Oréal.

He unveiled his first Giorgio Armani women's fragrance in 1982 and today boasts a dizzying 40-plus scents between men and women for the various lines. He also has a bestselling color cosmetics and skin care line. "I'm very involved in every activity of my business, including the fragrance and cosmetics projects. I love the challenge of creating [something] new. It is never that easy, but always rewarding in the end," was Armani's mantra when creating a new product.

Meticulous, frugal and involved in all aspects of the business, Armani put his stamp of approval on everything from skirt lengths and the flowers strewn around at gala dinners to the colors of the curtains in the offices. Whenever he made an appearance on a photo set or at an event, you could hear his nervous staff murmuring "Sta arrivando," referring to Armani's imminent arrival. And the air instantly filled with tension.

A workaholic, Armani would occasionally indulge in la dolce vita: sailing on his Main yacht, entertaining at his holiday home on the Mediterranean island of Pantelleria, dining with family at Nobu inside his Milan Via Manzoni Emporio Armani megastore or spending a quiet night at home watching one of his favorite films, such as Alfred Hitchcock's "Notorious." He launched his home and interior design line Casa in 2000, and counted beautiful houses in Antigua; Saint Moritz; Tuscany's beach resort Forte dei Marmi; Saint-Tropez, and Broni, near his hometown of Piacenza.

But he always worked tirelessly and passionately – admitting in his later years that he had sacrificed his own personal life for the company – and was only once forced to publicly explain he was recovering from an illness. That was in 2009, when he said he had suffered a case of hepatitis.

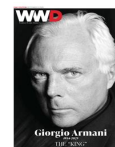
Whatever the event, Armani was bound to be there early, checking that everything was shipshape, which made it a dream for a reporter eager to carve out some alone time before the rush of visitors and well-wishers.

Just as his fellow fashion greats Saint Laurent, Valentino, Cristobal Balenciaga, Chanel and Dior did, Armani struck a new fashion chord when he launched his signature label. In fact, the Maestro paved the way for Italian ready-to-wear and the Made in Italy brands when he showed his first menswear collection in 1974. His womenswear collection, introduced in 1975, quickly became known for easy shapes and masculine cuts with feminine qualities. Since uptight styles and ornate detailing weren't up his alley, Armani pursued a less-is-more template of deconstructed suits, fashioned in fluid fabrics such as viscose and wool crepes.

While he sometimes dared shots of strong color like orange and fuchsia, the word "greige" was devised to describe his color palette of muted shades of grays, taupes and beiges. His fashions came at a time when women







were climbing the rungs of the corporate ladder and needed to dress accordingly. But instead of overwrought banker's pinstripes, Armani did it his way, delivering formality in a softer and more feminine manner. He said he wanted women "to wear jackets like men without losing anything of their feminine allure."

In more recent years, fleeting trends and other fashion antics sometimes sidetracked Armani, especially on the runway, where aviator hats or tricky pants – from bloomers to loose, low-crotch styles – won him barbs from critics. When he tried to blaze new trails, the designer felt haunted by the damned-if-you-don't, damned-if-you-do syndrome. Once, in the early '90s, he showed pouf silhouettes that raised eyebrows. "I loved them, but people said, 'Well, it's pretty, but it's not Armani,'" he said at the time. "It's difficult to convince these people that, even if it's not Armani, it must be done."

But when Armani had something to say, he didn't hold back. Self-assured and temperamental, he never refrained from slamming his colleagues, who in his eyes generated more dash than cash. He often took the gloves off with the press, developing a love-hate relationship. On the one hand, he used the media to broadcast his new projects or vent his frustrations with the industry and designers that he accused of turning fashion into a circus. On the other, he criticized the press for dedicating too many pages to unwearable designs.

"There was always that desire to shock by showing a bare behind – a cheap trick that will only make people speak badly about fashion. I'm sure it will make a lot of magazine covers, but where is the fashion in it?" he once asked. ►

He could be supportive of other designers, however. In 2013, Armani decided to start helping young designers, making his theater on Via Bergognone available to the likes of Andrea Pompilio, Stella Jean and Ricostru, Julian Zigerli, Au Jour le Jour's Diego Marquez and Mirko Fontana, Christian Pellizzari, Angelos Bratis and Edmund Ooi providing them with added visibility and a sprawling show space.

And while Armani took pride in making clothes that sold and left nudity and vulgarity to others, he was nevertheless one of the most recognizable faces in the industry. "I'm only just now getting used to being called king, but if someone wants to call me an emperor, that's fine by me," he

joked in 2004.

In general, he thoroughly enjoyed the attention when he mingled with his customers and fans, to the point that, when he opened the Armani Privé lounge in Milan, he was known to swing by for drinks and chat up patrons.

Indeed, Armani's hospitality projects were almost as groundbreaking as his fashions. He was among the first designers – along with Ralph Lauren – to break into restaurants, furniture and interiors as well as apparel. Armani took it a step farther, however, linking with Emaar Properties to develop luxurious Armani Hotels and Resorts around the globe, a venture formed in 2005. The first opened in 2010, occupying eight floors of the world's tallest building, the Burj Khalifa in Dubai. The sumptuous 160-room hotel boasts eight restaurants, a spa and three retail outlets.

In 2011, an Armani Hotel opened in Milan, leaving a further, permanent mark on the city that houses his headquarters. "I like the idea of being remembered not only for my clothes, and I like to bring an element of luxury that adds prestige to the city," the designer said upon the opening. "I love the Milanese and their sincere and direct approach. We hired 200 employees to work at the hotel. This is what I would like to happen going forward, for young people to find a job."

The Milan hotel is opposite the city's prestigious Via Montenapoleone shopping street, and near the La Scala Theater and is located in the 1937 building that also houses Armani's Via Manzoni flagship. The latest Armani hotel being built is in Diriyah, a 300-year-old site located a 15-minute drive from Riyadh, in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

In 1996, the designer raised a big Emporio Armani sign over a hangar at Linate – a genius stroke of branding in the pre-social media age with hundreds of millions of passenger eyeballs locking on it – and still doing so – as they taxi into, and out of, Linate. In September 2018, Armani decided to hold his coed Emporio show in that hangar, ending it with a performance by Robbie Williams for a crowd that numbered 2,300, including members of the public who won tickets to the event.

In 2006, Armani launched his One Night Only extravaganza, often showing his couture Privé collections and traveling through London in 2006; Tokyo in 2007; Beijing in 2012; Rome and New York in 2013; Paris in 2014; Dubai in 2021, and in Venice in 2023.

In October last year, the designer flew to New York to celebrate the opening of his company's new building on Madison





Avenue, entirely redesigned to include residential units, an Armani/Ristorante and the new Giorgio Armani and Armani/Casa boutiques. Coinciding with the unveiling, Armani decided to parade his namesake brand's spring 2025 collection in New York and not in Milan.

In 2015, marking his company's 40th anniversary, he unveiled his Armani Silos exhibition space – walking tirelessly up and down the four levels of the 48,600-square-foot building, in a restored granary of the Nestlé company and constructed in 1950. Armani, whose Tadao Ando-designed theater stands on the opposite side of the street, conceived and oversaw the renovation project himself. The building is modeled after a basilica layout, an open space four floors high with two levels of naves overlooking it on either side. The ceilings are painted black in contrast to the gray cement floors.

In addition to his own designs, Silos presented over the years exhibitions of photos by the likes of Larry Fink and Sarah Moon. He also launched the Filmmaking Workshop at Silos, offered free of charge, which will allow participants to produce a short film, partnering with the likes of

Luca Guadagnino.

Armani's achievements earned him a string of high-profile awards that started with the Neiman Marcus Fashion Award in 1979 and included two of Italy's highest honors – the Commendatore dell'Ordine al Merito della Repubblica and Grand'Ufficiale dell'Ordine al Merito della Repubblica. Others on the long list include the CFDA's Best International Designer and Lifetime Achievement Award for menswear and for art and fashion, while, in 2006, he was awarded an honorary degree from London's Central Saint Martin's College and one in industrial design from the Politecnico of Milan. In 2008, French President Nicholas Sarkozy gave Armani the Legion d'Honneur. In 2019, WWD bestowed him the John B. Fairchild Honor award, named after WWD's legendary publisher who was a longtime and ardent supporter of Armani – even wearing his clothes for years.

Armani also served as Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, and in 2003, he was honored on the Rodeo Drive Walk of Style. ■

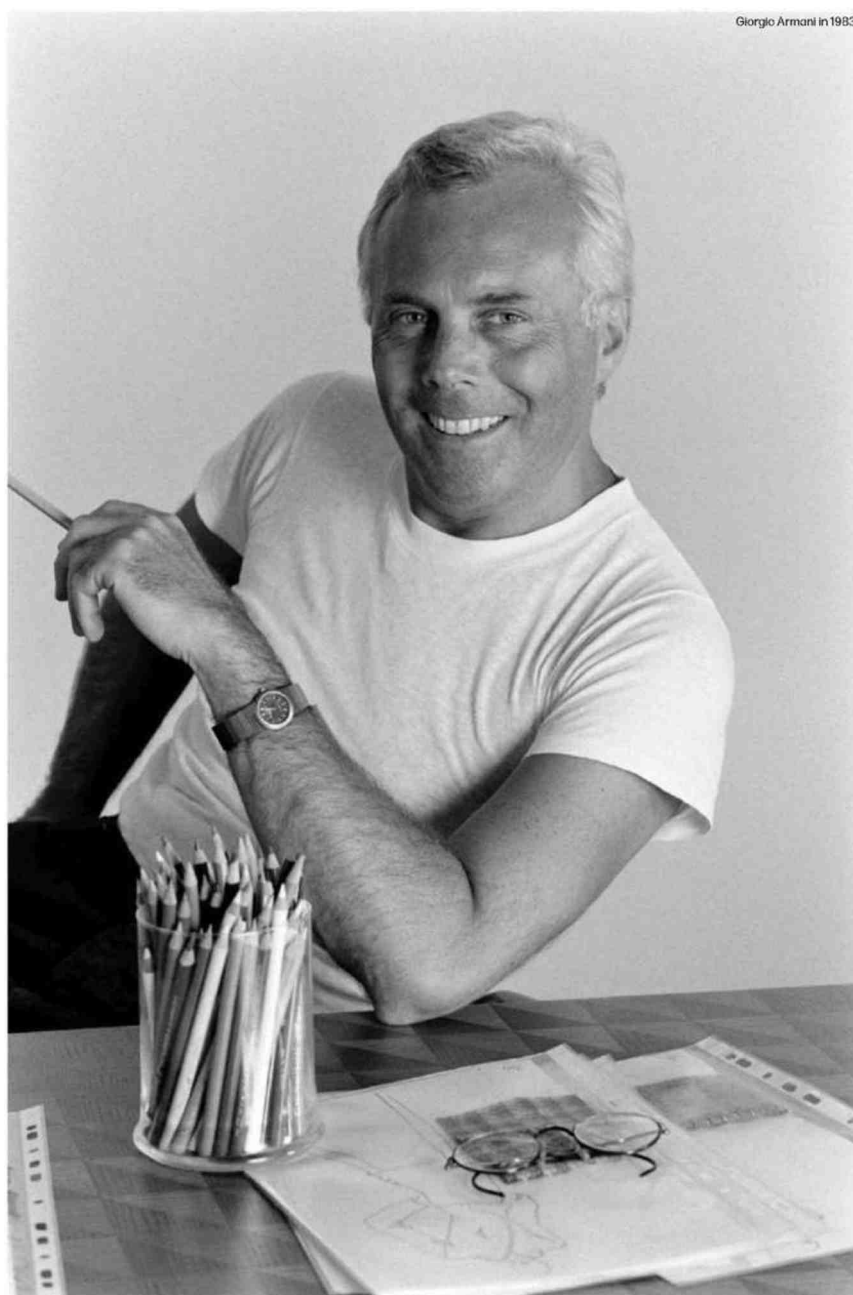
“I love the challenge of creating [something] new. It is never that easy, but always rewarding in the end.”

GIORGIO ARMANI

“I like the idea of being remembered not only for my clothes, and I like to bring an element of luxury that adds prestige to the city.”

GIORGIO ARMANI





Giorgio Armani in 1983.





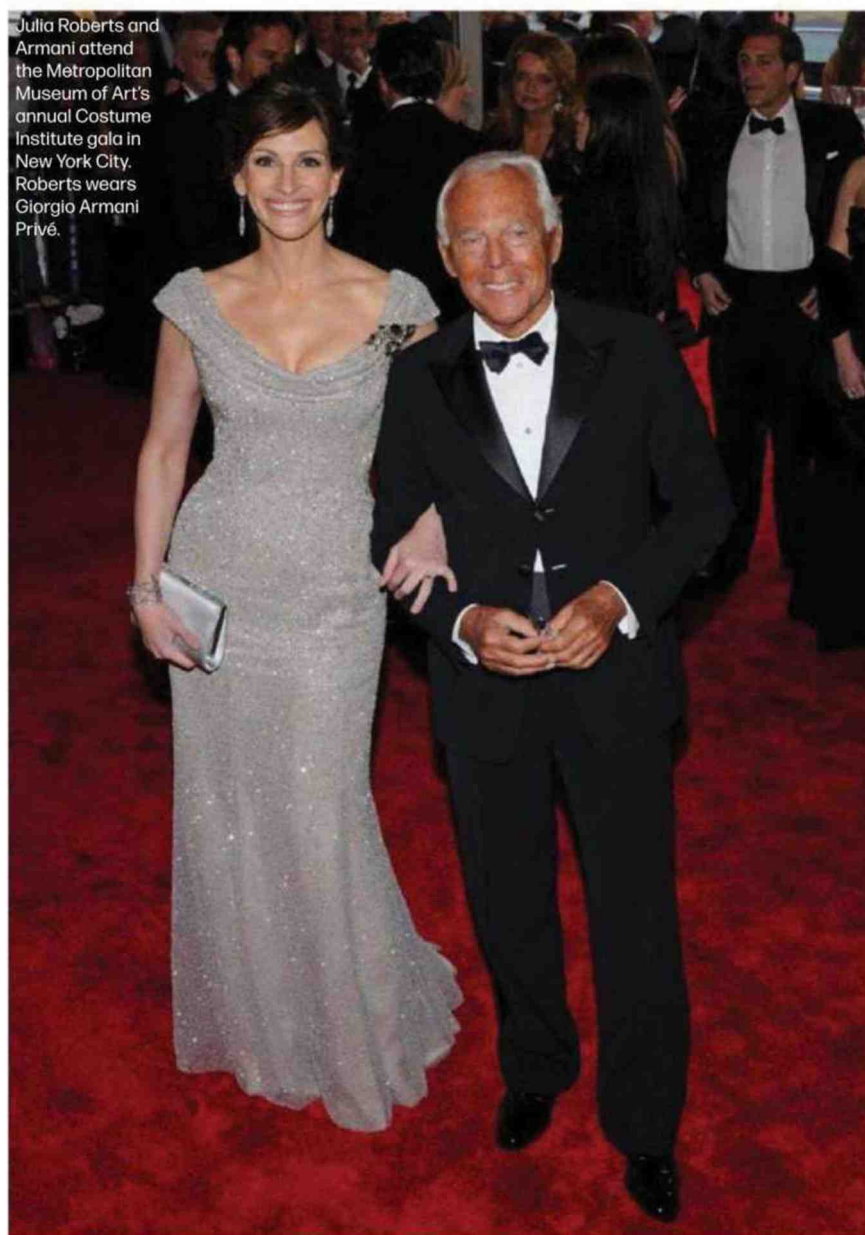
Sophia Loren and  
Giorgio Armani  
attend an event in  
Milan, circa  
October 1994.



Giorgio Armani  
Privé fall 2026  
Haute Couture  
collection.



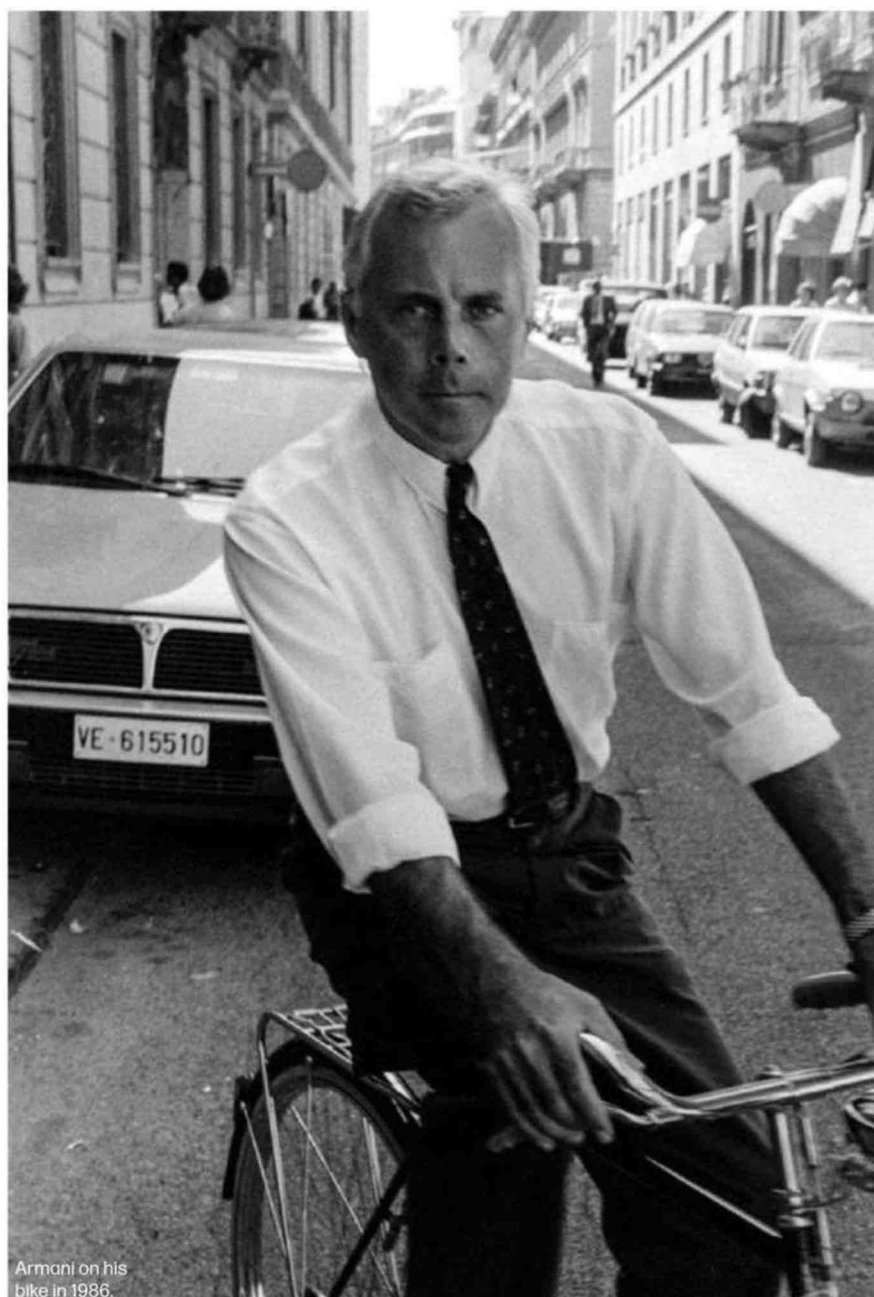
Armani and his dog  
pose during an  
interview in the  
designer's Milan  
home in 1972.



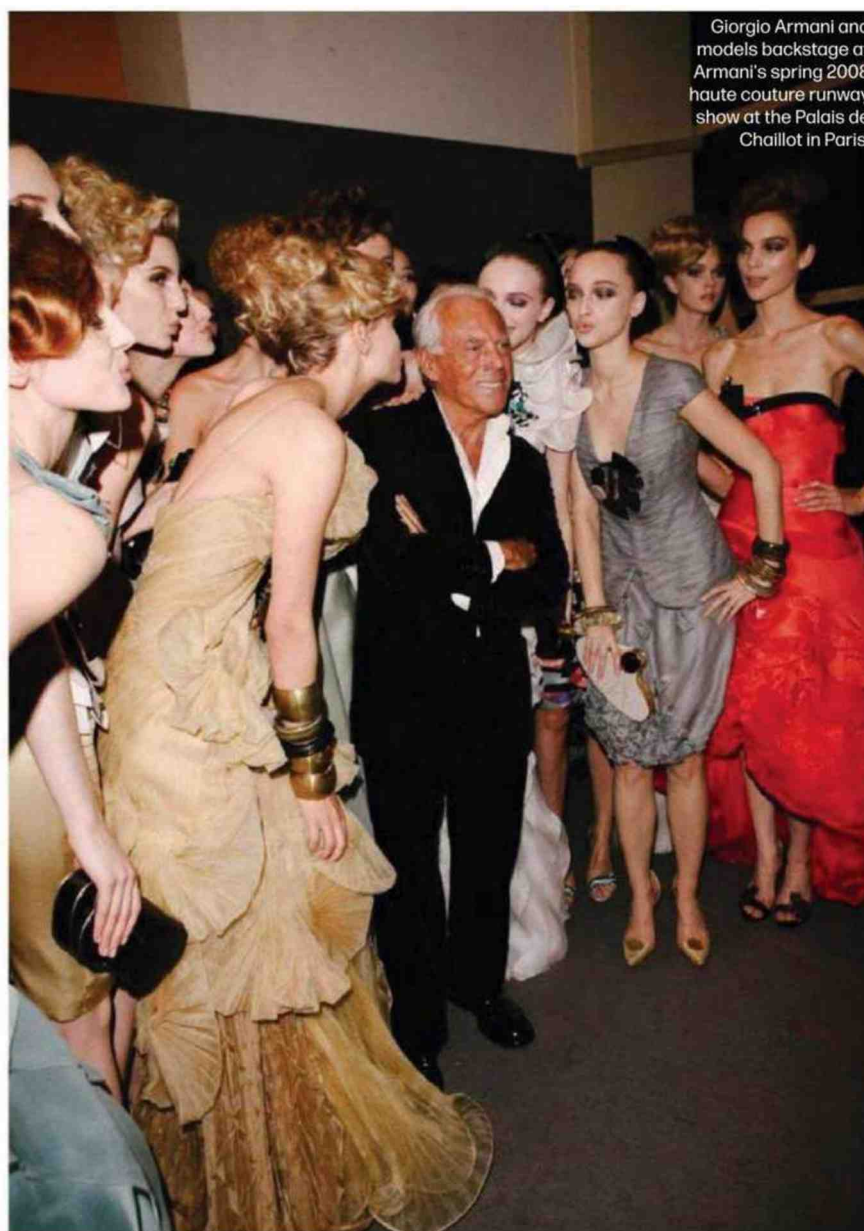




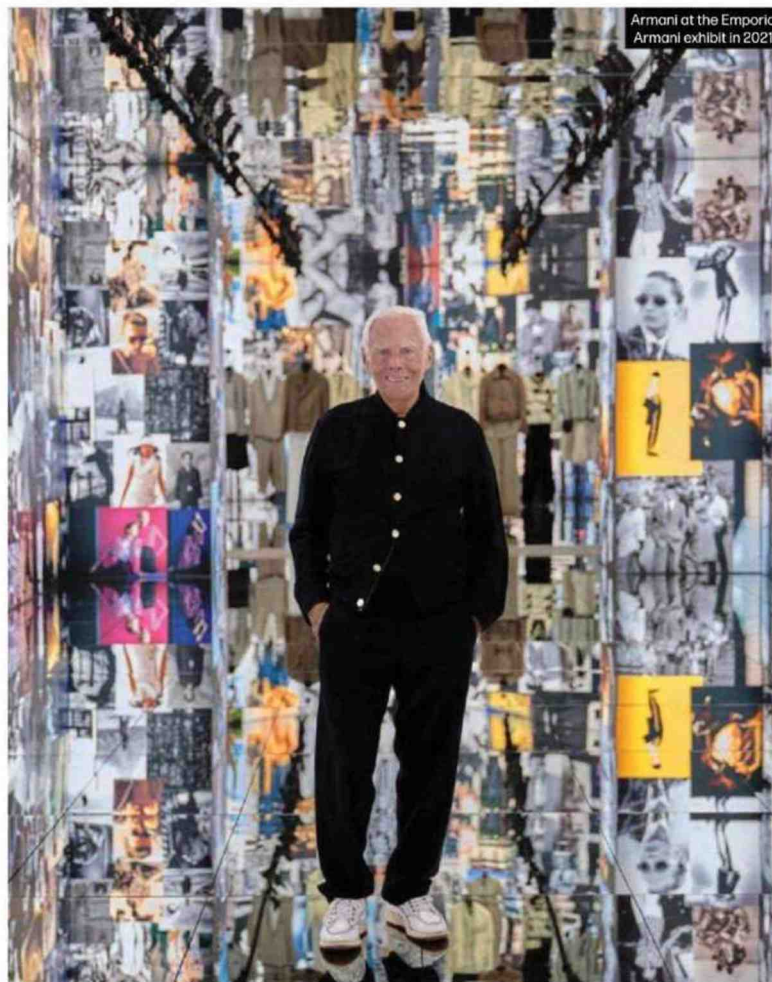














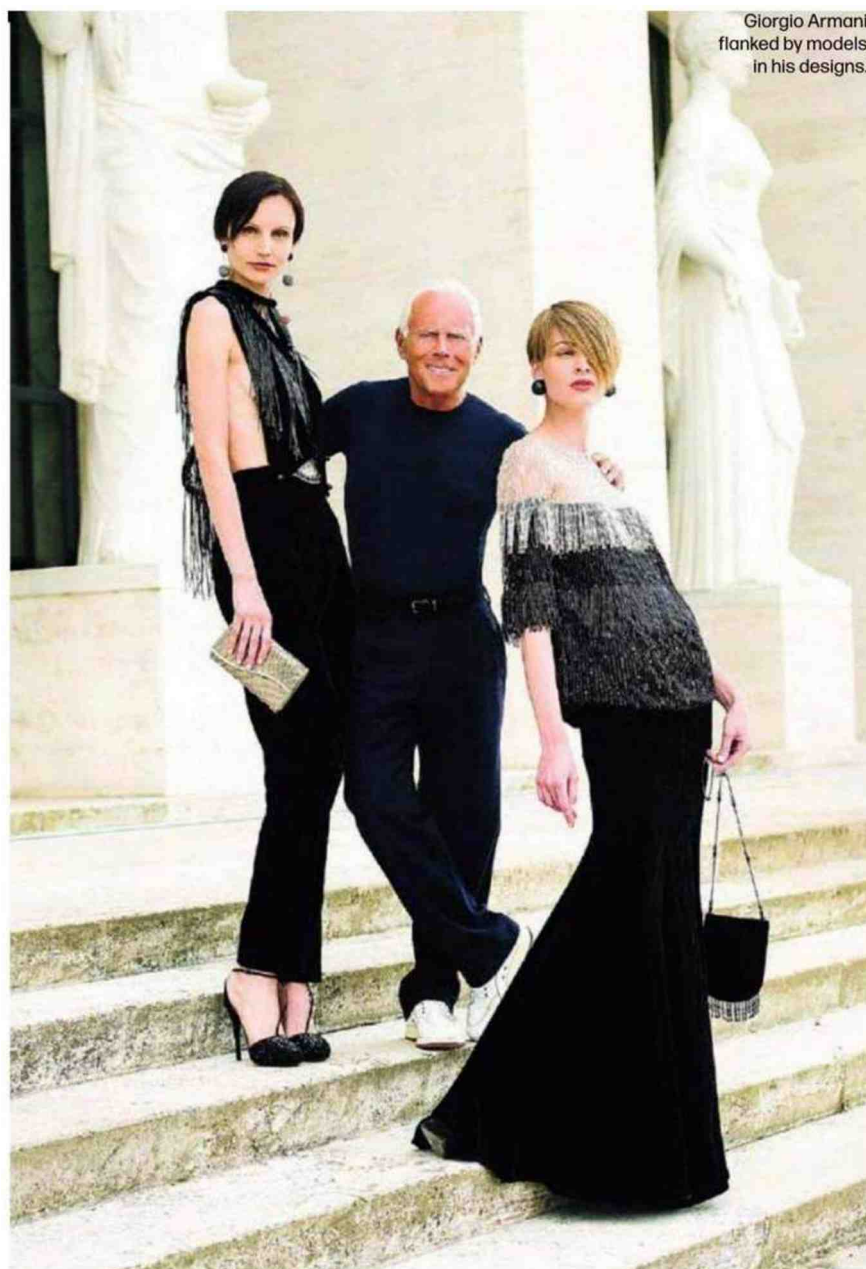
Giorgio Armani poses for cameras during the "Moda in Milan" film premiere and dinner party during the Venice Film Festival in 1990.



Giorgio Armani  
Privé spring  
2010 Haute  
Couture  
collection.

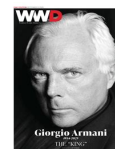


Armani with model during rehearsal  
for Giorgio Armani spring 1994  
ready-to-wear collection.



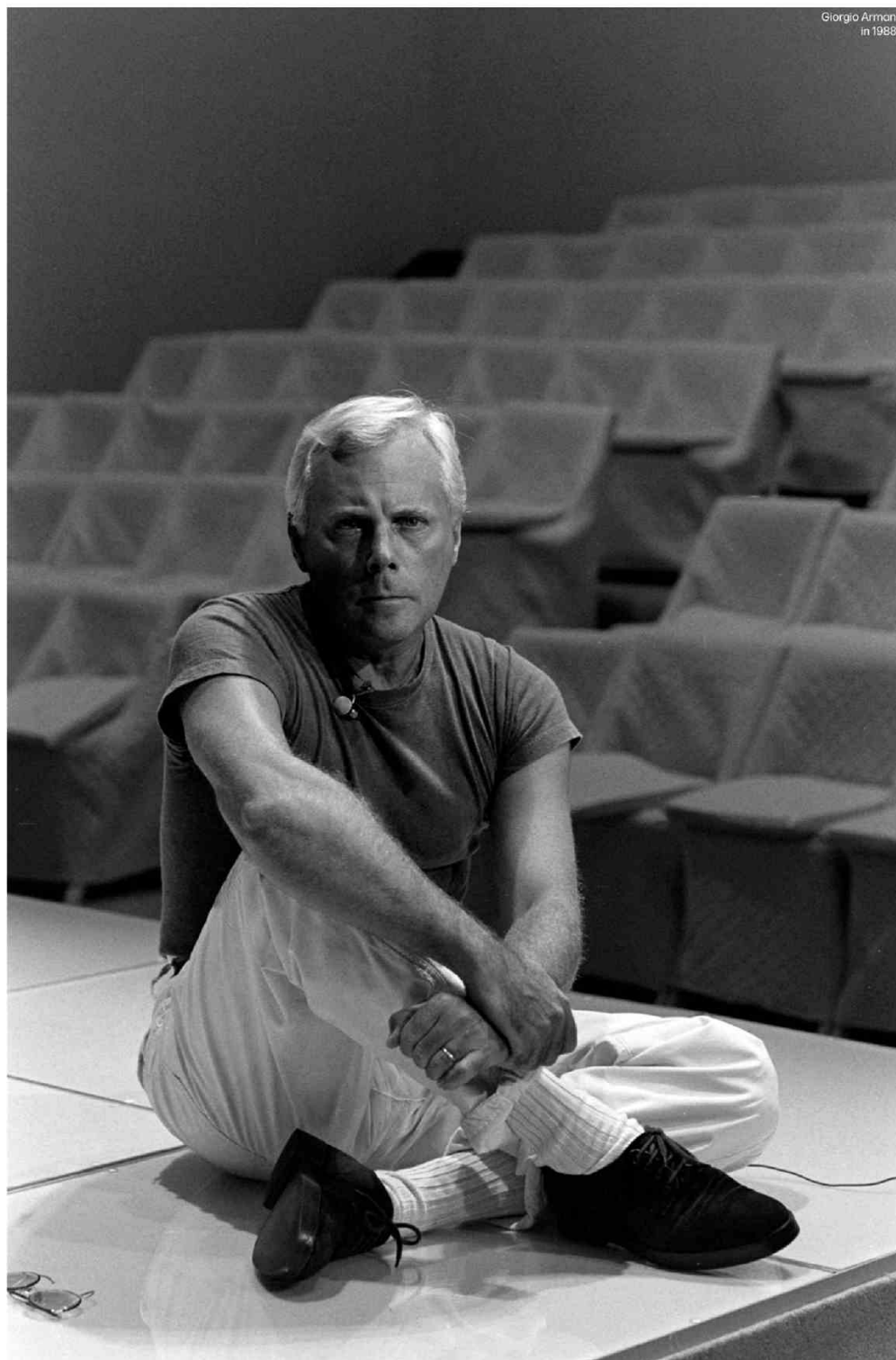






PEOPLE

# The World Reacts to the Death of Giorgio Armani



Giorgio Armani  
in 1988.

● Designers, business figures across the global fashion industry, and Hollywood A-listers reacted with great sadness and praised the designer's legacy, vision and trailblazing style.

BY LUISA ZARGANI, MILES SOCHA, SAMANTHA CONTI, HIKMAT MOHAMMED, SANDRA SALIBIAN, TIANWEI ZHANG, ANDREA ONATE, JOELLE DIDERICH, EMILY MERCER, THOMAS WALLER, MARTINO CARRERA, LEIGH NORDSTROM AND JEAN E. PALMIERI

PHOTOGRAPHS BY FAIRCHILD ARCHIVE

The news of Giorgio Armani's death shook the fashion industry at large on Thursday. Designers and business figures across the global reacted with great sadness and praised the designer's legacy, vision and trailblazing style.

"Giorgio Armani shaped contemporary fashion by redefining its boundaries and creating a lifestyle concept that is recognized and admired worldwide, establishing Made in Italy as a true symbol of excellence," stated Carlo Capasa, president of the Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana. "As one of the founders of Milan Fashion Week, he generously and visionarily contributed to the growth of the fashion system and its values, always showing deep awareness and engagement with the major events of our time and pressing social issues. He supported young designers, cultural initiatives in Milan and around the world, and fostered the fusion of different artistic expressions. His legacy is a profound source of inspiration for all of us."

"It is with an immense sadness that the LVMH Group has learned of the passing of Giorgio Armani," a statement from the French luxury giant read. "He was the last of the post-war, golden generation of fashion designers who shaped, year after year, the paragons of highest elegance. His legacy will live in the hearts and imaginations of current and future designers for a long time. LVMH maison collaborators express their condolences to the Armani Group team."

Armani was also a hero to many young designers. Among those who attended his fall 2024 Privé couture show were Ami Paris designer Alexandre Mattiussi, and Simon Porte Jacquemus, a self-declared fan of vintage Armani, which he collections and wears. He also nurtured young talents, among them Stefano Pilati.

Here's what leading industry figures had to say:

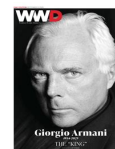
## Executives

**Bernard Arnault, chairman and chief executive officer, LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton:** "I feel profoundly saddened by the passing of Giorgio Armani. He created a unique style, combining light and shadow, that he developed into a large and successful entrepreneurial journey and extended Italian elegance to a global scale. He was also a true friend and admirer of France. I wish to express my sincerest sympathy to his family."

**François-Henri Pinault, chairman and CEO, Kering:** "It is with immense emotion that I pay tribute to Giorgio Armani. A remarkable visionary and entrepreneur, he redefined elegance with a rigor and independence that have marked our time. An undisputed master of Italian couture, his influence extends far beyond fashion and will continue to inspire entire generations. I have deep respect for his exceptional career and send my most sincere thoughts to his loved ones and his teams." ►







► 5 septembre 2025 - N°nc

**Pietro Beccari, chairman and CEO, Louis Vuitton:** "With the passing of Mr. Armani, the world mourns a true visionary. His impact on elegance and class changed the course of luxury forever. As an Italian, I always had a special admiration for his courage, for his inexhaustible passion and his rigorous discipline. He will be deeply missed in the industry."

**John Elkann, chairman of Ferrari and Stellantis:** "Giorgio Armani was a great entrepreneur, a man of culture, sensitive and refined, and above all for me a teacher and a friend. For half a century, his creations have represented the highest expression of Italian taste, a symbol of elegance and timeless beauty. My thoughts are with his family and loved ones."

**Delphine Arnault, chairman and CEO, Christian Dior Couture:** "I am deeply saddened by the passing of Mr. Giorgio Armani for whom I had tremendous admiration. He was at the same time an exceptional designer and an extraordinary entrepreneur. He held a unique vision of elegance. The fashion world has lost one of the greats."

**Francesco Milleri, chairman and CEO, EssilorLuxottica:** "Giorgio Armani was a master of style and an undisputed icon of Italian elegance who, through his creative and visionary genius, redefined the very codes of fashion and beauty. He shared with Leonardo Del Vecchio an extraordinary passion for excellence, quality and innovation, as well as a genuine friendship built on mutual personal and professional respect. For over 40 years, they nurtured shared values, ideas, and long-term visions, forging a profoundly inspiring partnership that forever transformed the world of eyewear. For EssilorLuxottica, it has been a true privilege to collaborate with Giorgio Armani over so many years. The legacy he leaves behind – rooted in friendship, courage, and vision – will continue to live on through the projects he helped bring to life. My heartfelt thoughts are with his family and loved ones during this time."

**Leonardo Ferragamo, chairman of the Salvatore Ferragamo SpA:** "With deep condolences on behalf of my family and myself, I join in the sadness of the passing of Giorgio Armani, the undisputed master of fashion and a symbol of pure Italian elegance. He was an exceptional man whose values profoundly marked the history of Italian fashion. They remain alive today and will continue over the course of time as will his long-term vision and entrepreneurial spirit that will be an ongoing inspiration for generations to come."

**Gildo Zegna, chairman and CEO of the Ermenegildo Zegna Group:** "This news saddens me deeply. I would like to thank Maestro Giorgio Armani for his enduring inspiration, for his singular vision of beauty, and for bringing the spirit and culture of Made in Italy to the world. His legacy shaped our industry and elevated us all. I will always be profoundly grateful."

**Renzo Rosso, chairman of OTB Group Italy:** "Italy and the world are mourning the loss of an extraordinary man today. Every time we met, it was a genuine pleasure to talk with him. He was always curious, eager to learn and explore. His knowledge of the fashion world – and beyond – was profound. Our conversations were always insightful and engaging, a truly stimulating exchange of ideas. His positivity and the passion he poured into everything he touched and created were remarkable. What truly stood out was the depth of his soul and his

unique way of seeing the world. He was a true icon who will be deeply missed – but thanks to everything he built, his legacy will live on. And perhaps the greatest gift he leaves us is this: his immortality."

**Remo Ruffini, chairman and chief executive officer of Moncler:** "Ever since I was a kid, I looked up to him as a role model, a guide. He was the symbol of what I dreamed of, the point of reference for anyone who loved this world. His consistency, his elegance, his ability to look ahead with clarity and courage marked an era and set a path. He embodied what makes a person great: the discipline, the vision, and the strength of someone who never gave in to the trends of the moment but guided and inspired an authentic, timeless style. He was what so many would have liked to be, and what no one will ever truly be able to match. An example that will stay with us forever."

**Marco Bizzarri, president and cofounder of Forel and chairman of Elisabetta Franchi:** "For half a century, he shaped the very definition of fashion and elegance, remaining unwaveringly true to himself while resonating with every generation. His legacy will endure through time, a timeless testament to vision, integrity and inspiration."

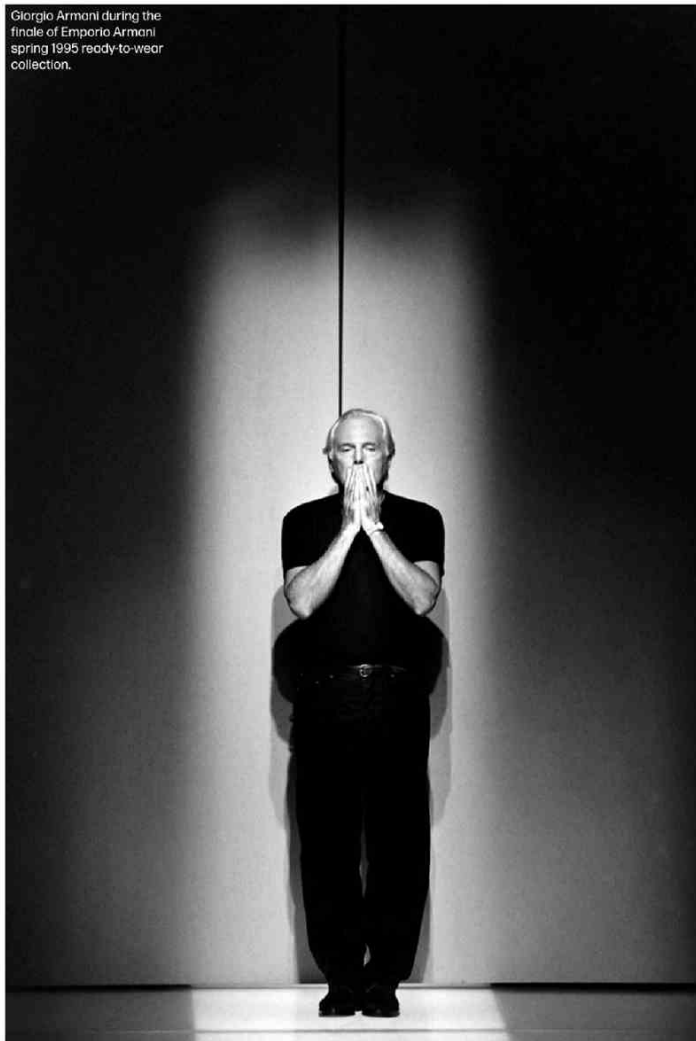
**Federico Marchetti, founder of Yoox Net-a-porter Group:** "With the passing of Giorgio Armani the world loses a giant, and I lose a Maestro. For more than 30 years, I was fortunate to share unforgettable moments with Mr. Armani on projects both professional and personal. From the letter of recommendation he penned by hand for me when I applied to Columbia for my MBA in the 1990s, to being an earliest supporter of my e-commerce dream in the early 2000s, he encouraged my desire to think differently and aim higher."

**Luca Sburlati, president of Confindustria Moda:** "We lost a man and an entrepreneur who has been a true champion of Italian identity around the world. Giorgio Armani has successfully showcased the beauty and creativity of our country, becoming its ambassador with elegance and vision. I hope that future generations of entrepreneurs will continue to love Italy with the same passion and dedication that he has shown over the years."

**Bruno Pavlovsky, president of the Fédération de la Haute Couture et de la Mode:** "Giorgio Armani embodied the privileged ties between the excellence of Italian fashion and French fashion. His contribution to Haute Couture Week was immense, reflecting both his respect for and deep commitment to craftsmanship. His creative aesthetic has had, and will continue to have, a major influence through its timeless codes." **Pascal Morand, executive president, Fédération de la Haute Couture et de la Mode:** "Giorgio Armani was an exceptional designer, an unrivalled innovator, and a man of absolute refinement and sensitivity. He always embraced modernity while respecting tradition. He built an artistic, cultural and economic universe with a unique language, inventing an Italian way of life that spread throughout the world."

**Caroline Brown, global brand president, The North Face:** "Giorgio Armani set the foundation for so much of our industry and his influence will be felt for decades still to come. As a designer, he changed the way we dress with his elegance and vision – this is known everywhere. But as a unique leader he also built incredible teams with deep connection to both the company and to

Giorgio Armani during the finale of Emporio Armani spring 1995 ready-to-wear collection.



one another. Many of the leaders in our sector today passed through the invaluable school of Armani, shaped not only by aesthetic but also by his example every day of genuine passion and extraordinary work ethic. His impact is indelible and all of us who had the chance to work under his leadership will be forever grateful."

**Stan Herman:** "This is a devastating loss. It's like losing someone in your family. It is the end of an era."

**Luigi Maramotti, chairman, Max Mara Fashion Group:** "An extraordinary person in terms of spreading Italian style and fashion around the world. A crucial role model for those in this profession, also for the intuitions he had in the development of his stores. He will forever be remembered as the man who has revolutionized fashion with his intuition to adapt the men's jacket to the women's wardrobe. He was a figure who inspired and will continue to inspire new generations because, beyond being a designer, he was truly a visionary entrepreneur."

**Anna Wintour, chief content officer of Condé Nast and global editorial director of American Vogue:** "Giorgio Armani had such a clear force of personality and vision that you knew his work instantly, wherever you found it. He understood power and attitude and elegance as well as anyone ever has in fashion, and he understood women

too: how they wanted to dress and what message they wanted to send as they asserted themselves through his rise in the '70s, '80s, and beyond. He also never confined himself to one field or one discipline, and understood that fashion can't exist in a silo. For him fashion wasn't one thing: It was also film, music, sport, art, design and architecture, and he left his mark in all these worlds – and everywhere he went."

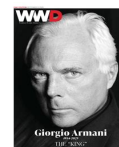
## Designers

**Valentino Garavani and Giancarlo Giammetti:** "We mourn someone we have always considered a friend, never a rival. We have known him for over 50 years – from Mare Moda in Capri, where we showed our collections together, to so many other shared moments in fashion. We can only bow to his immense talent, the changes he brought to our work, and above all, to his unwavering loyalty to one style: his own."

**Ralph Lauren:** "I have always had the deepest respect and admiration for Giorgio Armani, not only as a designer who never strayed from his vision, but as a man who loved his family and friends and his homeland in such a special way. Though he was an icon of the world of fashion, he lived with great humility and a love of living that inspired the way he worked and the way he lived. He created a world reflecting all the things he loved with a foreverness that will be his legacy." ►







Giorgio Armani poses with models in looks from Armani fall 1990 ready-to-wear preview at the designers headquarters in Milan on Feb. 25, 1990.

**Donatella Versace:** "The world has lost a giant today. Giorgio Armani changed history with fashion. He defined style all over the world for generations and was a true genius and a master of class and elegance. He will be missed forever but his style is eternal."

**Miuccia Prada and Patrizio Bertelli:** "We have learned with deep sorrow of the passing of Giorgio Armani, a Maestro recognized for his elegance and creativity, and an undisputed protagonist of Italian and international fashion. His enduring contribution will remain forever in the history of fashion and in the memory of all who admired him."

**Raf Simons:** "I am deeply saddened by the passing of Giorgio Armani, a visionary whose creative genius defined elegance and sophistication in fashion. His work has inspired generations of designers around the world, and his enduring legacy will remain a cornerstone of fashion history."

**Sir Paul Smith:** "It's with great sadness that I hear the news of Mr. Armani, a dear friend and fellow designer, passing away. He has been an enormous source of strength and creativity for many years. His continuity, his down-to-earth nature and his staying power in remaining as an unlisted, independent company have always been a huge inspiration."

**Brunello Cucinelli:** "In my world, in the world of all those who love beauty, sobriety and work, the star of Giorgio Armani has dimmed in our earthly reality."

He shone brightly in the firmament of the most brilliant artists of our time, and from today he will shine gloriously in the realm of immortal spirits as the absolute symbol of Italian fashion. To him belongs the honor reserved for the greats."

**Tom Ford:** "I've only just learned of the death of Giorgio Armani. I am deeply sad and honestly, I am stunned as he was that rare human being that seemed immortal. An institution, a grand man of great talent. He was an inspiration to us all and it is hard to imagine the fashion world without him."

**Jean Paul Gaultier:** "I always admired Mr. Armani and his creations. He gave fluidity to men's suits, not least in the cinema. Who can forget Richard Gere in "American Gigolo"? He also brought a certain strictness and precision to womenswear with some of the most beautiful suits ever made. When I started to work in fashion in the '70s, I dreamed of having a piece of his and I bought an Armani leather jacket – it was a dream come true. Bravo, and thank you Giorgio!"

**Dries Van Noten:** "So sad, that just before celebrating 50 years, Giorgio Armani, he left us... Strange that somebody who was always there, can also pass away. He was for me the master of consistency, that style is more important than fashion, always a relevant reality. As a young fashion student in the '70s, I remember seeing the ads photographed by Aldo Fallai in Uomo Vogue – a quiet revolution in cut, color and material. It blew me away. I loved it,

I wore it, and it shaped my vision. Thank you, Giorgio!"

**Stefano Pilati:** "Working for Mr. Armani was a dream come true. Everything surrounding you reflected his greatness and strong style coherence. He was a true leader and he allowed me to grow my role within the team enormously. I keep the rare letters he exchanged with me as precious trophies. The last one, in his own handwriting, brought me to tears... I will forever pay respect to Mr. Armani in my work."

**Alessandro Michele, Valentino:** "I am deeply saddened and sorrowed for the loss of Giorgio Armani, one of the founding fathers of Italian fashion history."

**Jonathan Anderson, Dior:** "I am deeply saddened to hear of Giorgio Armani's passing. Having also started my journey designing windows before venturing out to create my own brand, I found his story incredibly inspiring. It gives me an even greater appreciation for all that he accomplished. He not only built an empire but also shaped fashion history. He will be greatly missed, and his influence on fashion will never be forgotten."

**Matthieu Blazy, Chanel:** "For my generation, Giorgio Armani has been a true inspiration. We have lost one of the greatest innovators and visionaries of our time. His style will outlive him and belongs to the future."

**Pierpaolo Piccioli, creative director, Balenciaga:** "This is a sad moment for fashion and the world. We have lost an incredible talent and a true gentleman. Nevertheless, the legacy of Giorgio Armani is monumental and will continue to live on, powerful and undisputed."

**Pieter Mulier, Alaïa:** "He was one of my obsessions in the 1990s. Giorgio Armani was the sum of many things that shaped my taste: the images, the style, the taste. And then there were the clothes, of course. The way he introduced movement and lightness into menswear – it was bold. The timelessness of his designs. Pieces that seem to belong to no era, and therefore to every era. But most of all, there was his proposition of a new masculinity. Softer. In motion. With very little, he created something immense: a presence, an inimitable way of holding oneself. Something only his clothes could give."

**Oliver Rousteing, Balmain:** "We all are deeply saddened by the loss of Signor Armani, someone I have long admired and will always remember as a symbol of integrity, elegance and vision. Throughout his extraordinary and enduring career, he remained deeply committed to his values, carrying them forward with strength and profound respect. Signor Armani defined fashion beyond trends, staying true to his unique style without compromise. His work captured the very soul of Italy, sharing its essence with the world through grace, authenticity and uncompromising beauty. His journey stands as a powerful reminder of what passion, determination and honesty can build: when you stay true to yourself, your name doesn't just endure, it becomes timeless legacy."

**Stella McCartney:** "I remember many years ago I had a show in Paris and I invited Mr. Armani to come as my guest and I could not believe it when he said that he would. I nearly fell off my chair in the crush of the crowd. Afterwards he and I came face-to-face, heart-to-heart and as he held me and congratulated me, he whispered in my ear that he had never been to any other designer's fashion

show in his entire career and I believe that is probably still the case today. When we sadly lost this great icon, not only in fashion but also in business. I am so proud to have met him. I'm so honored that he graced me with his presence. There will never be another Armani."

**Maria Grazia Chiuri:** "Giorgio Armani taught the world the elegance of Made in Italy. With his vision, he helped define a modern and emancipated vocabulary for both women's and men's fashion. His contribution to Italian fashion, his vision and his integrity will forever remain a guiding light."

**Angela Missoni:** "I have known Giorgio since my teenage years, and throughout the years our families have shared a bond of mutual respect and heartfelt affection. We enjoyed many moments together, from meaningful exchanges to the simple joy of each other's company. My parents, Ottavio and Rosita, and my whole family greatly respected his work and his vision – one that has left an indelible mark on the fashion world over the past 50 years. Today, with my family, I stand close to his loved ones in this moment of profound sorrow. The world will deeply miss him."

**Alberta Ferretti:** "Giorgio Armani has meant many things to fashion and to our country, but what I would like to emphasize at this moment is his immense and unparalleled ability to always remain true to himself. As a man, as an entrepreneur, and as a fashion designer. Giorgio Armani has created a unique, unmistakable style that has evolved over time but has never betrayed its essence in the slightest. To me, this reflects a strong and confident personality, a powerful identity that did not bow to the trends of the moment but left an indelible mark on international fashion. Today, the true king of the Italian fashion industry is leaving us, but his enormous legacy of style and culture will shine forever."

**Lorenzo Serafini, creative director, Alberta Ferretti:** "An innate elegance in his gestures and in his style. His perpetual ease – spontaneous and never contrived – has always held a deep fascination for me and for my creativity. Discipline combined with creativity, passion meeting the utmost dedication... Giorgio Armani was a monumental example for all of us designers, with his unique ability to remain always and forever true to his own vision and principles."

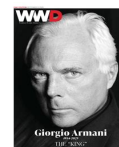
**Fausto Puglisi, creative director, Roberto Cavalli:** "Giorgio, you were the purest embodiment of Italian fashion and elegance. Through you, the world discovered the true meaning of Italian style and the power of Made in Italy. For me, watching "American Gigolo" was a revelation, your vision turned cinema into a milestone of fashion history and inspired my own dreams. You defined not only a way of dressing, but a way of living with grace, dignity and timeless sophistication. Your legacy will live forever in the soul of Italian creativity."

**Marco De Vincenzo, creative director, Etro:** "With Armani, a gigantic part of the imagery associated with Made in Italy disappears. Rebuilding a new one is complicated, because revolutions need time and enlightened minds like his to happen."

**Jacopo Etro:** "Giorgio has been a pioneer, a perfectionist and a man with a vision, his vision, that he followed without compromise. His ethereal and soft elegance will be greatly missed especially nowadays in these difficult times." ►







► 5 septembre 2025 - N°nc

**Dean and Dan Caten, founders and creative directors, Dsquared2:** "We are heartbroken by the loss of our dear friend Mr. Giorgio Armani. We were blessed to know him. He was and will always be the 'Signore of Signori'. Rest in peace."

**John Galliano:** "A hero of deconstruction, deeply saddened by this news."

**Lavinia Biagiotti Cigna, creative director, Laura Biagiotti:** "I pay tribute to my friend Giorgio Armani, a man of rare human and intellectual virtues, an unparalleled example of dedication, integrity and respect. His devotion to beauty and hard work has left an indelible mark on contemporary culture and will continue to inspire future generations."

**Antonio Marras:** "I have always felt particularly close to Maestro Armani, partly because opposites attract, partly because he started out as a window dresser like me, and partly because he was a true workaholic. A great innovator, a Creator with a capital C. Women will always be grateful to him for dressing them with class and charm."

**Simon Porte Jacquemus:** "I always considered Giorgio Armani as a genius, both personally and professionally. I am a huge collector of his archive as was obsessed by his menswear designs that I wear myself almost every single day. His impeccable taste, his houses, his campaigns, his sense of beauty and independence always inspired me, and will forever... Forever Giorgio."

**Alexandre Mattiussi, Ami Paris:** "Today, we face an immense loss – not only for the world of fashion, but for the world at large. I have the deepest admiration and respect for Mr. Armani, who has always been an endless source of inspiration for me."

**Massimo Giorgetti, founder and creative director, MSGM:** "Fools are never elegant. Intelligent people, even dressed in rags, are always elegant." One of Armani's quotes I've always loved. We will miss him, we will miss his style. I will also miss his words."

**Giuliano Calza, creative director, GCDS:** "The first time I heard the name Giorgio Armani I was a kid, watching 'Il Sarto di Panama' with my father. I asked him if Giorgio was Italian and he said: 'Yes, the king of chic.' For years I thought Armani was a place and he was the king. That idea of elegance resonated with me my whole life. To this day, when I think of '90s power, of an oversized jacket, my mind goes straight to Julia Roberts at the Golden Globes in that Armani suit. He was, and will always remain, the benchmark of effortless authority in fashion."

**Manolo Blahnik:** "Giorgio Armani was a master of elegance who redefined modern sophistication. His vision was timeless, his discipline unmatched, and his influence will endure for generations. We will all miss him."

**Gherardo Felloni, creative director, Roger Vivier:** "There are only a handful of visionaries who truly shift the course and the language of fashion, and Giorgio Armani was one of them. What makes his story even more extraordinary is not only the revolution he brought, but the way he sustained his greatness over decades, remaining a guiding light for generations of designers. To me, as an Italian, he has always embodied more than elegance, he represented both pride and possibility, reminding us that resilience, devotion and constancy can be as timeless as beauty itself."

**Giovanna Engelbert, creative director, Swarovski:** "Giorgio Armani taught us that true elegance is inner confidence and creative discipline. He made us proud to be Italian, showing the world that our style can be universal without losing its roots. His regality was never about appearances, but about inner strength and grace. With love and extreme admiration, I will always carry his lesson with me."

**Rocco Iannone, creative director, Ferrari:** "His teaching is more relevant than ever today, reminding us of the value of building things with perseverance, determination and consistency. Great achievements are never instant; they are built patiently, step by step, by learning day after day. In this way, he created a story of elegance and beauty so extraordinary that it has inspired generations and will forever stand as a timeless example for us all to follow."

**Stefano Ricci:** "Fashion, and Italy above all, has lost its incomparable Maestro. He taught the world the true meaning of style and the elegance of subtlety. To his family, and to the entire organisation, we extend our deepest condolences."

**Graeme Black:** "I was lucky to visit Giorgio a few weeks ago and spend some precious moments with him. He was a beacon of refined, respectful creativity. I was fortunate to meet Giorgio as a young man and had the opportunity to witness his genius firsthand. He helped me realize that quality and integrity matter most in life. He instilled in me a sense of humility and a respectful curiosity for the design process which I still believe in today. We have lost a genius of style today, but mainly I mourn the passing of a witty, clever man who gave my life clarity."

**Joanne Yulan Jong:** "Working closely with Mr. Armani was a formative period in my career, one that has forever shaped my perspective on the world of fashion. He taught me, and everyone he hired, to aim extraordinarily high, to pay obsessive attention to detail, and to never settle for less than the best. He was meticulous, with a laser-sharp focus. Nothing ever escaped his eye. At times, it could be pretty terrifying. I remember how nervous I would get presenting collections to him in what we called the 'Sala Bianca' at his Milan headquarters. We would spend hours debating the tiniest adjustments to a garment, the curve of a lapel, the slope of a shoulder line. Occasionally, I'd summon the courage to defend a design choice I felt strongly about. He'd fix me with a stern look, but there was always a flicker of humor in his blue eyes. He is truly an irreplaceable titan of the industry. What an unspeakable loss for the world of fashion."

**Donna Karan:** "To me, Giorgio Armani was more than fashion. Giorgio Armani was life – menswear, womenswear, furniture, food, hotels, beauty. It was everything. It is Coco Chanel and Giorgio Armani; those two are it. He was kind of my idol and always will be. He didn't care what other designers did – Armani did his."

**Joseph Abboud:** "Giorgio Armani was a true giant in our industry. His global impact on the fashion world was unparalleled and his influence reached far beyond any other designer in the history of fashion. We were sister companies under the GFT banner and I had the great good fortune to meet him on a number of occasions. He was the consummate gentleman, humble and approachable, yet he was a true genius of our time: a legend, a master of soft drape and sensual color who can never be replicated. I'm truly saddened by the loss of one of my heroes,

this extraordinary man who will forever ever be a cornerstone of fashion history."

**Stephen Jones:** "Giorgio Armani reinvented menswear away from the British idea from Savile Row. Growing up in the '70s, he was always a beacon for what was modern. There has been very few hats which are as perfect as his small beaded caps and berets in his Haute Couture collections. I always treated them as a benchmark for the perfect blending of head decoration with a head and face."

**Norma Kamali:** "Giorgio Armani made us proud to be in the same industry he dignified and honored. Thank you to Mr. Armani for all he has done during his historic tenure in the world of fashion, and the memory that will continue under his name."

**Joseph Altuzarra:** "Giorgio Armani transformed the way the world dresses. He introduced a modern idea of wardrobes that allowed for movement, sensuality and ease, while never compromising on elegance or rigor. He was the first designer I became aware of, and the first piece of luxury clothing I owned was a soft, unstructured Armani suit I still wear to this day. His influence on fashion is immeasurable, and his vision continues to shape how we think about clothing."

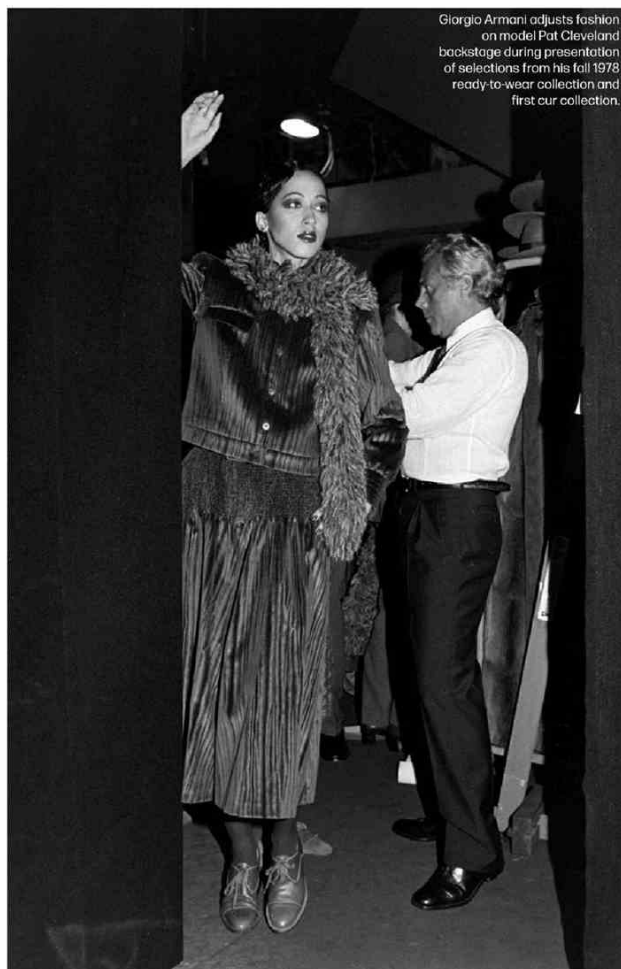
**Edeline Lee:** "Giorgio Armani defined the soft approach to tailoring for his generation. I am so inspired by how his work spoke to women navigating the power structures of their time with ease and a new definition of femininity. It's a conversation I consistently strive to carry forward in my own work."

**Christian Siriano:** "I admire Armani as the man and the designer who was able to stay true to his eveningwear vision and aesthetic when it wasn't always the 'fashionable' thing to do – no matter the trend, he kept true to that vision of serving his customer with the utmost luxury and glamour. This has always resonated with me as something that I've strived to do in my own journey as a designer. He is and always will be an inspiration to me and so many designers for years to come."

**Sergio Hudson:** "It's a dark day in fashion. One of our last great visionaries is gone. I'm grieving not just for Mr. Armani but for an entire industry of true craftsmen that seems to be disappearing. It feels like the end of an era, and the loss is deeply personal."

**Jeffrey Banks:** "From his very early mid-'70s ads in L'Uomo Vogue featuring page after page of headshots of handsome men wearing his collaborations, I was an enormous admirer of his beautiful work. Many years ago I was privileged to attend an Armani show in Venice at the Hotel des Bains on The Lido and it was simply breathtaking. One year, after a CFDA Awards event at Lincoln Center, I got to the after party nearby early, and there was no one there yet except the host and Mr. Armani. We got to speak for a few minutes alone: me with my broken Italian and he with his hesitant English. He was gracious and kind, the perfect gentleman. The world has lost a quintessential master of his métier, and we shall never see a replacement for his boundless talent. Il Maestro è morto. Lunga vita al re!"

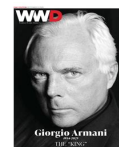
**Diane von Furstenberg:** "Giorgio Armani invented the industry of Italian ready-to-wear. His tailoring for men and women had a huge impact in global fashion and he was the first to create Armani casa. He was hard worker, kept total control of his company and always did things his own way! His consistency has been SUPERB." ►



Giorgio Armani adjusts fashion on model Pat Cleveland backstage during presentation of selections from his fall 1978 ready-to-wear collection and first fur collection.







**Todd Snyder:** "Mr. Armani is the reason I fell in love with tailoring. From the moment I discovered his work in the 1980s, I was captivated by the elegance of his drape, the ease of his silhouette and the quiet power of his style. He was the master tailor. Every collection carried an effortless sophistication that redefined modern menswear. His vision inspired generations of designers, myself included. He was a true genius, and his influence will continue to shape fashion for decades to come. Today, I mourn the loss of a legend and celebrate the life of an icon who changed the way we see tailoring forever."

**Kenneth Cole:** "For decades, Giorgio Armani dressed and empowered the world with enduring style and reliable quality. He inspired me – and generations of designers and consumers worldwide."

**Reed Krakoff:** "As a teenager in the early 1980s, I remember visiting Barneys and seeing Armani's tailored clothing for the first time. He had transformed the idea of the Brooks Brothers suit that my father wore and created something that had a modernity and power I had never imagined a suit could suggest. Years later, I had a similar moment when I first saw pictures of his first widely published apartment in Milan, furnished almost entirely with Jean-Michel Frank pieces – a true visionary again and again."

**LaQuan Smith:** "Mr. Armani's legacy is one that has defined and redefined modern luxury. His vision, discipline, and ability to create timeless sophistication have influenced generations of designers, myself included. He showed us the power of restraint, of elegance without excess, and how clothing can empower a woman while still feeling effortless. His impact on fashion is eternal, and his contribution to the language of luxury will continue to inspire us all. My deepest condolences go out to his loved ones and family during this time."

**Tommy Hilfiger:** "Giorgio Armani was a true luminary who redefined elegance. His vision shaped not only fashion, but also the way style itself is understood – demonstrating how a clothing brand can extend into lifestyle, hotels, restaurants, culture, film and beyond, creating experiences that transcend design. I have always deeply admired his artistry, innovation and unwavering dedication to excellence. His passing leaves an immense void, yet his legacy will stand as one of the most influential chapters in fashion history. My heartfelt condolences go out to his family, his colleagues, and all who cherished him."

**Helmut Lang:** "Rest in peace Mr. Armani. Pioneer and legend."

**Michael Kors:** "I bought my first Giorgio Armani jacket when I was 19 years old, after saving up. It was the first time I'd ever worn a jacket that felt as laid-back and relaxed as a hoodie. I could throw it on over a T-shirt, push up the sleeves, and dance all night or go to work. Mr. Armani truly changed the way people lived and dressed. His timeless elegance was always all about the individual. Even people who have never worn his clothes have worn things imbued with the relaxed spirit he brought to everything. There are very few designers who can revolutionize the way people dress in a meaningful way. Armani is one of those rare few. I will miss his grace, his sense of style and his approach to everything he did in life."

**Pierpaolo Piccioli, Balenciaga:** "This is a sad moment for fashion and the world. We have lost an incredible talent and a true gentleman. Nevertheless, the legacy

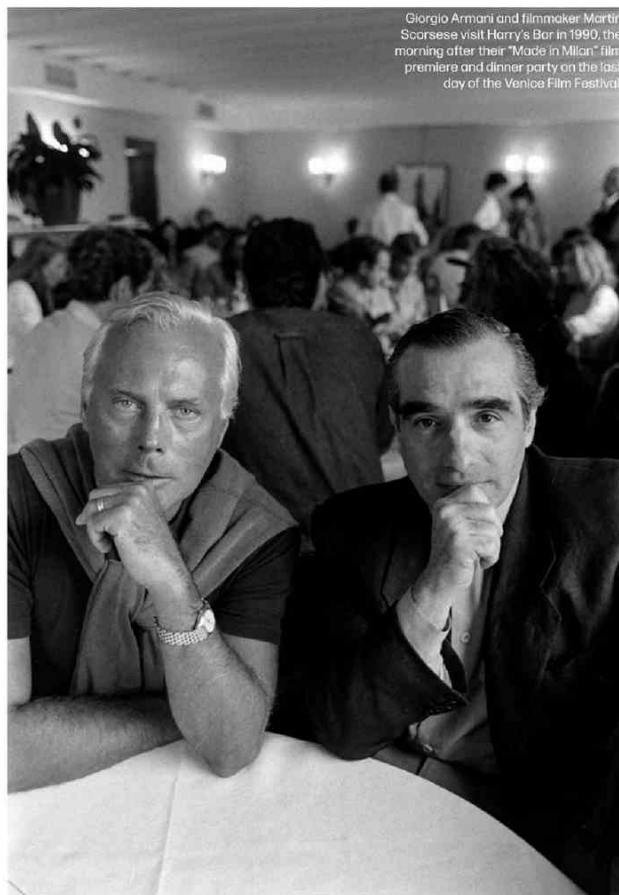
of Giorgio Armani is monumental and will continue to live on, powerful and undisputed."

**Giambattista Valli:** "I have always admired Mr. Armani's unwavering ethics and tireless commitment to beauty. In his uncompromising pursuit of perfection, I often see echoes of myself – perhaps a kinship, since we are both Cancers. His coherence, his honesty, and his integrity remain a lesson in fidelity, to himself, to his team, his vision, and to the message he carried almost as a ritual. He extended elegance beyond fashion, elevating it into a philosophy, an everyday posture. Never through excess or ostentation, but through quiet discipline – a meditative expression of grace. And now, like a constellation, he has traced his own Milky Way – a path filled with stars that will shine forever, inspiring and guiding us with their eternal light."

**Tory Burch:** "It is impossible to overstate Giorgio Armani's impact on our industry. He genuinely transformed fashion, not only as a designer but as an entrepreneur. He built a world and a lifestyle, and he was uniquely sensitive to how women want to feel: powerful, sensual and free."

**Thom Browne:** "Giorgio Armani was a true creative visionary... a true original that did everything, uncompromisingly, his own way... He was always true himself... and his world... he was a true inspiration in this way... The fashion world, and the world, will surely miss this inspirational genius... We should all take a moment and appreciate how he inspired us..."

**Narciso Rodriguez:** "Mr. Armani will forever be a hero of mine and I will always admire his precision, his love of the craft and the consistent excellence he delivered under his name. He inspired peers and profoundly changed the way men and women dressed on a global scale. Few designers have or ever will leave such an impression on fashion as Mr. Armani did."



Giorgio Armani and filmmaker Martin Scorsese visit Harry's Bar in 1990, the morning after their "Made in Milan" film premiere and dinner party on the last day of the Venice Film Festival.

**Zac Posen, executive vice president and creative director, Gap Inc.:** "There is only one Giorgio Armani, the man, the legend, the pioneer who changed what it meant to be a designer and a true maverick. He redefined elegance, making it authentic, timeless, relaxed yet glamorous, and built one of the greatest brands of our lifetime. He carried Italy to the world stage, celebrating its beauty, preserving its spirit, and evolving it into the future, making it mean something everywhere. To be dressed by him was one of the highlights of my career; nothing feels like an Armani suit. Thank you, Maestro, for transforming our industry, for staying true to your vision, and for leaving behind an empire and a legacy that will endure forever. Rest in peace."

**Emily Smith, creative director, Lafayette 148:** "Giorgio Armani defined how modern women dress today and set the standard for building a truly global fashion brand. His impact on our industry will be felt for years to come."  
Retailers

**Pierluigi Cocchini, chief executive officer, Rinascente:** "The passing of Giorgio Armani leaves us without one of the greatest masters and innovators of global fashion. His bond with La Rinascente was deep and formative: at the beginning of his career, he worked in our offices as a window dresser and textile buyer, experiencing firsthand that creative environment which was much more than just a department store. It was a laboratory of ideas, a stage where graphic design, photography, design, visual arts, and communication came together – and for him, it was a decisive training ground... In this moment of sorrow, we would like to recall a passage from his story about La Rinascente, which I found to be one of the most beautiful compliments ever received: 'La Rinascente, which had hired me, also gave me enough self-confidence to leave it.'"

## Retailers

**Bob Mitchell, Mitchells Stores:** "I cherish the picture Giorgio and myself did for our 50th anniversary. He will always be an icon in our industry."

**Ronnie Fieg, Kith:** "When I think of true titans of the industry – those who broke barriers and inspired generations of designers – only one name comes to mind: Mr. Armani. I'll never forget the day I presented the book I had prepared for our collaboration to Mr. Armani – it was easily the most nervous I'd ever been, because I was about to meet the very person who inspired me to do it all. Today, I feel as though I've lost a pillar in my life. His vision shaped not only my career, but the way I see design and possibility. He stood for the highest level of opulence and elegance."

**Simon Longland, buying director – fashion, Harrods:** "Giorgio Armani was one of the great architects of modern fashion. With the deconstruction of men's tailoring and the effortless refinement he brought to womenswear, he liberated the way an entire generation dressed, introducing a new elegance that continues to define contemporary style. He was a visionary not only in design but also in business: the path he forged – from diversifying into womenswear and accessories to building a lifestyle empire under his own name – became a model that others have since followed. Above all, Giorgio Armani will be remembered for the purity, beauty and craftsmanship of his collections, and for the profound, lasting influence he had on the way the world dresses."

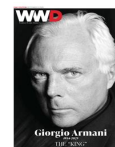
**Joan Burstein, founder of Browns, who introduced Armani to the U.K. market:** "The first menswear show at his apartment in Milan was an unforgettable moment. I remember the unlined, floating jackets in pastel colors, like nothing on the market. I asked him if he would do a women's collection in the same [style] – which he did. A lovely man."

**Carla Sozzani:** "Remembering Giorgio Armani means retracing not only the history of a great designer, but also fragments of my own life that are intertwined with his. My memories of Giorgio Armani are made of admiration and friendship, of encounters that I treasure with deep emotion. Armani's legacy is a lesson in essentiality, discipline and authenticity. For the new generation of creatives immersed in a world that rushes forward and often rewards the ephemeral, Armani remains a solid point of reference. He teaches that style is never ostentation, but identity; that true modernity is born of fidelity to oneself. In a time of noise and distraction, his quiet yet authoritative voice continues to show the way. A guiding light, his powerful voice will continue to inspire the future."

**Michael Gould, former chairman and CEO, Bloomingdale's:** "Giorgio was the giant of the giants. They don't come much bigger than Giorgio Armani. Not only did he set a tone in fashion with incredible design, you could feel the quality, the workmanship, but also the merchandise had incredible commercial value and was very profitable. That was one of the things that set him apart. His ready-to-wear and menswear were major businesses at Bloomingdale's, and there was consistency to his collections, year after year – great fashion, great commercial value. He never deviated from his vision. When you went into his stores, there was never any confusion about who you saw. Other designers shifted their vision many times, but with Armani, there was no mistaking him. I remember seeing him often at the shows. He was a true gentleman." ►







Actor Richard Gere shows designer Giorgio Armani his suit label, as guests watch the exchange, with socialite Lee Radzwill.

**Gene Pressman, former co-CEO, creative director, Barneys New York which launched Armani menswear in the U.S. in 1976:** "We had a very close relationship. I worked with Giorgio for many years. We went to many dinners together. We went to parties together. I spent time in his apartment. He was so creative and brilliant. Waiting for his next show in Milan was like waiting for the next Beatles album to come out. When you hang out with someone with that much talent, you get a bit tingly. It was special. He was very low key and unassuming, a bit of a loner. His partner Sergio Galeotti was a character and very outgoing. He made the deal with my father (the late Fred Pressman.) My father discovered Armani in the pages of Vogue Italia. He said to me, 'this guy is really talented,' and wanted to sign him up as an exclusive. He called Gabriella Forte, working at the Italian Trade Commission then. She eventually ended up running Armani's operations, and he asked her to find Giorgio. In those days there were really no Italian designers (selling) in America. With my father and Giorgio, it was an extraordinary mutual admiration society, if you will. They loved each other and worked creatively together. It was a very pivotal moment for Barneys and for menswear. Both were never the same. In those days, menswear was all about Brooks Brothers. With Giorgio, it became sexier. Giorgio brought in a whole different genre of clothing. But he did it in a very nuanced way, with great taste. He was an unbelievable colorist, and the hardest working guy I ever knew except for my father. He did a whole range just for Barneys. We collected fabrics together, and we were building a huge business together for Barneys. It was almost like a house brand at Barneys. Giorgio also influenced changes in the customers coming to Barneys. We started seeing SNL and Hollywood types. He was truly a visionary."

**Marc Metrick, CEO, Saks Global Operating Group:** "Today we lost a true pillar of the fashion community. A trailblazing force for quality craftsmanship and refined tailoring, it has been a profound honor to have had Mr. Giorgio Armani's partnership for so many years. When I started at Saks Fifth Avenue in 1995, Armani was the defining brand of the time. He set his own standard for fashion and successfully upheld the Armani brand's unwavering significance ever since. The first designer piece I ever bought was an Armani suit, which marked a deeply meaningful and unforgettable moment for me. As both a businessman and designer, Mr. Armani's passion is what cemented the brand's lasting legacy and cultural impact. With his bold creativity and vision, he was an inspiration to me and so many others. He will be greatly missed. On behalf of Saks Global, we extend our deepest sympathies to Mr. Armani's family, friends and loved ones."

**Linda Fargo, senior vice president, fashion office and store presentation, Bergdorf Goodman:** "On behalf of Bergdorf Goodman, we are deeply saddened by the passing of Mr. Armani. He was an exceptionally important part of our history and the very fabric of Bergdorf Goodman. As Armani's first retail partner in the women's business in the U.S., opening with Bergdorf Goodman in 1980, only a few years after he started his business, our intertwined relationship is especially significant. Mr. Armani was exploding with his new vision as he revolutionized fashion at that time, and our clients fell in love with how they felt empowered, chic and understated in their Armani. That love affair never ended. Over the years, we remained good friends and partners, and our clients' attachment to his aesthetic has never wavered. Armani has always been about the ultimate Italian craft and design, a passion for style and timelessness, and a vision for both strength and beauty. It is with the utmost

respect, gratitude and affection that we have to say goodbye now to the maestro of fashion – a man who made a difference, a man who belongs to history."

**Geoffroy van Raemdonck, former CEO, Neiman Marcus Group:** "Mr. Armani defined an era of elegance with a vision that transcended fashion to shape culture itself. His genius lay in making sophistication feel effortless, while his discipline and artistry inspired generations of designers, retailers and clients around the world. For those of us privileged to partner with him, he embodied not only excellence but grace and generosity – a true icon whose legacy will remain timeless."

**Judd Crane, executive director – buying and brand:** "Giorgio Armani was a legend, a visionary and an icon. As a designer, Mr. Armani has shaped the meaning of modern fashion. As a business leader, he will be remembered as an independent spirit and a visionary brand builder. My first memory of Armani was of his eradicating interpretation of masculinity in the film 'American Gigolo,' and most recent memory was collaborating on a project in our London Corner Shop earlier this year to celebrate Emporio Armani and its indelible history as a maverick of the 'concept store' combining flowers, books, confectionery and fashion."

### Celebrities

**Richard Gere:** "Giorgio was certainly an original. An artist. A visionary of sorts. With the eyes and hand of a craftsman, and the soul of a painter. His work had his essence all over it. And he cared right up to the end. Uncompromising. I know there were those who he terrified because of his exacting nature. To me he was a supremely talented pussycat."

**Michelle Pfeiffer:** "I was so fortunate to be introduced to Giorgio at such a young

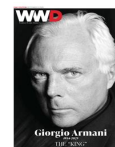
age and during such an impressionable time in my life. I will always remember him for his kindness, generosity, and enormous heart. Though he spoke no English and I not a word of Italian, we understood each other deeply. He was one of the most principled and loyal people I have ever known. His taste and talent were unparalleled, setting the bar incredibly high for all who followed. He opened his fashion house, his heart – and at times even his home – to those he loved and admired. He will be deeply missed."

**Laura Dern:** "What a heartbreaking loss of one of the world's greatest artists. A true pioneer and a hero in the world of fashion. Thank you Mr. Armani, for your genius and grace, and for all that you taught me about walking through the world – as you dressed me for so many of the most special moments in my life. It was a blessing and an honor."

**Martin Scorsese:** "I met Giorgio Armani for the first time in 1983, in Milan. We found common ground right away. I loved fashion and he loved cinema – in fact, he was inspired by the films he saw as a young man. Over the years, a real friendship bloomed. And then, a collaboration. I made a film portrait of Giorgio, and he gave us the support we needed for a documentary on Italian cinema, and then on the World Cinema Project. Through all the years, he's been a constant for me. A pillar. Giorgio was more than a clothing designer. He was a real artist, and a great one – people use the term 'timeless' quite often, but in his case it happens to be true. There's nothing hip or tied to the moment in Giorgio's designs. They're genuinely elegant, inside and out, and they aren't meant to be gazed at on a runway. They're for people to wear, to enhance their own individual sense of natural elegance. I've had to say so many goodbyes. This one hits hard. But his artistry, his presence and his abiding friendship will never leave me." ■







## BEAUTY

# Giorgio Armani Leaves A World of Beauty

- The late designer, with licensee L'Oréal, created a dynamic three-axes fragrance and cosmetics brand.

BY JENNIFER WEIL

**Giorgio Armani** left an indelible mark on the beauty industry, with his signature blend of sophistication and simplicity.

Since 1988 the Italian designer, who died Thursday in Milan at age 91, developed his beauty brand – including perfume, makeup and skin care – in close collaboration with L'Oréal. That license was among the first in the Armani Group's portfolio.

"Giorgio Armani was, without question, one of the greatest creators of the last hundred years," said Jean-Paul Agon, chairman, and Nicolas Hieronimus, chief executive officer of L'Oréal, in a joint statement.

"He didn't just conceive unique, original and timeless fashion; he was also a formidable entrepreneur, who built one of the most important couture and luxury houses known today. Beyond his brilliant, visionary mind, marked by flashes of creative genius and worldly intelligence, he was also a truly charming and humorous individual," they added.

"Together we have built one of the most desirable beauty brands in the world. We are committed to upholding its legacy in line with the heritage of Mr. Armani," Agon and Hieronimus said.

The group paid condolences to the designer's family, friends and colleagues. "His passing leaves an immense void in the world of fashion and beauty," said L'Oréal, in the statement.

The Armani brand is timeless, but also in tune with the times. Blockbuster products such as Si fragrances and Maestro foundation have attracted A-list brand ambassadors like actress Cate Blanchett and Hanni, the lead singer of NewJeans, who helped transform Armani beauty into

a sustainable, global powerhouse. It is among L'Oréal's "billionaire" brands.

"Mr. Armani, the private man leaves a void that is impossible to fill," stated Blanchett. "Not just in the worlds of fashion, art, cinema, theater architecture and design,

but in the hearts of millions of people whose lives he influenced. Ever a man of dualities, he was a Colossus, a King, a Titan – but simultaneously a thoughtful, hands-on craftsman; true, direct and sincere.

"The Mr. Armani I had the pleasure to know was deep of heart, loyal, wise and courageous," she added. "I count it as one of the greatest privileges of my life to have been in his orbit. How will we all keep turning without him? My heart is with his fashion family and, of course, with his beloved Roberta, Silvana, Andrea and Rosanna Armani."

Véronique Gautier, who served as Armani Beauty's global president until January 2024, said: "It's an understatement to say what a privilege it was to work alongside Mr. Armani for 13 years. A true connoisseur of fragrance and beauty rituals, he had a visionary approach.

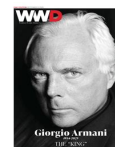
"Long before it became a trend, he championed simplicity, inner beauty and quiet confidence, creating a unique vision shaping iconic products," she continued. "His credo was a powerful guidance: Elegance is not about being noticed, but about being remembered. Beyond his own brand, he leaves behind an immense legacy, one that has elevated the standards of the entire beauty industry."

Armani first dipped into beauty with fragrances: Armani for Women in 1982, followed by Armani for Men. The angular shape of the perfume bottles, conceived by the designer, reflected his penchant for geometrics.

Other scents followed, including Acqua di Giò men's cologne in 1996, which became a runaway success and has ranked among the top three men's scents worldwide for years. The fragrance's marine notes set a new olfactive trend, and its campaign fronted by a pensive Larry Paul Scott became iconic.

The 2000s saw the launch of Armani Code and the Armani Privé high-end collection of perfumes, both of which have





subsequently been expanded.

The Si women's fragrance, out in 2013, was positioned as Armani's first women's perfume pillar to be launched

since Acqua di Gioia in 2010.

It was fronted by Blanchett, who already had a close relationship with the designer.

Not long after, Armani launched its long-awaited makeup collection in fall 2001. That was streamlined and minimalist, just like the designer's clothes.

"I wanted to create a line that was special in its sophistication and luxury – both as an extension and a

complement to my fashion," explained Armani, in a WWD article dated June 23, 2000. "The new cosmetics line fits into our Giorgio Armani lifestyle."

The color collection, with 139 stock keeping units and a focus on foundation in both powder and liquid forms, was created in collaboration with makeup artist Pat McGrath. Alongside representing a new product category, the makeup was also meant to push the brand's beauty business – which until then consisted of fragrance only – to the next level.

Colors ranged from fresh nudes to highly sophisticated hues, as they do still today. Armani makeup, and especially its foundations, are known for their transparent formulas with a feeling of weightlessness and softness.

After the makeup launch, for the first time, Armani sold its beauty products in shops-in-shop, a concept the designer himself wanted created.

By then, the Armani brand had become a big player in both the men's and women's perfume categories. The Emporio Armani men's and women's duo, a pair packaged in twin acid-dipped aluminum columns with rubber heads, launched in 1997, were a hit, for instance.

Armani in 2007 entered skin care, with Crema Nera, which translates into Black Cream. The cream itself was white, but the moniker winked to a mineral complex found in black volcanic rocks on the Sicilian island of Pantelleria. That's where the designer saw firsthand the effects of local mud baths on skin. The Crema Nera line has

continued to be expanded from there.

A year after its introduction, Armani launched Skin Minerals for Men, starting with five products with a lighter texture than Crema Nera.

Armani beauty's high-wattage celebrity power has never dulled and spans generations.

In November 2024, it unveiled "A Few Days in Venice," a documentary directed by Loïc Prigent focusing on young actors at the 81st Venice International Film Festival. The 23-minute film starred Camila Mendes, Chase Stokes, Chris Briney, Clara Galle, Isabela Merced, Jackson Yee, Julio Peña, Lili Reinhart, Muhannad Hamdi and Beatrice Vendramin.

Armani beauty's long-standing affiliation with the Venice Film Festival keeps evolving, and this month the brand is taking that partnership to the next level. In its eighth consecutive year as the festival's official beauty sponsor, it upped the number of activations for the edition that runs through Saturday. That coincides with the 50th anniversary of the Giorgio Armani maison.

To mark the occasion, Armani beauty took over the Venice Venice Hotel to set up the Giorgio Armani Cinema Club, a new format that aims to become a hub celebrating the seventh art, fashion, glamour and beauty for two weeks. From the branded facade to interiors revisited as a movie theater, the space intends to offer a gathering point for actors, friends of the brand and influencers to meet, relax and discuss movies during the event, as well as become Armani beauty's epicenter of content creation.

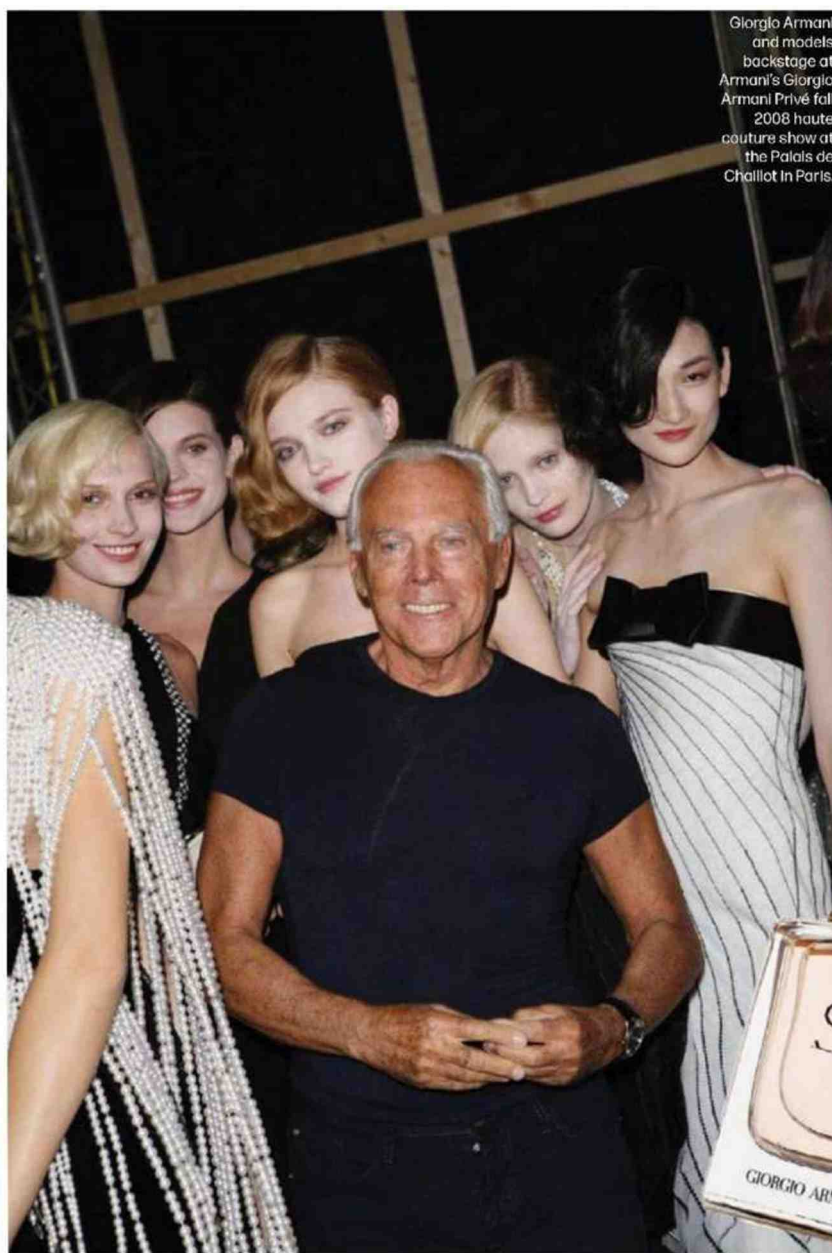
Along with long-standing Armani beauty ambassadors such as Blanchett, Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Sadie Sink, Nathalie Emmanuel and Madisin Rian, actors spanning from Sofia Carson to Shailene Woodley and Riley Keough were expected to attend the curated program staged at the venue in between their red carpet appearances. Dinners, a masterclass and behind-the-scenes videos were also planned.

Armani beauty has strengthened its bond with the world of cinema through different projects. In Venice, Armani beauty supports and presents the "Audience Award" in the "Spotlight" competitive section dedicated to new cinematic voices and where the public is to select the best movie.

Other film events Armani beauty partners with include Romania's Transilvania International Film Festival.



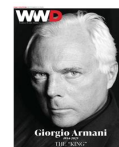




Giorgio Armani and models backstage at Armani's Giorgio Armani Privé fall 2008 haute couture show at the Palais de Chaillot in Paris.

Photograph by Delphine Achard





## HOME DESIGN

# The Design Community Honors Giorgio Armani's Legacy

- A pioneer in the world of fashion, he was equally respected for his interiors and lifestyle vision, channeled into the Armani Casa line, branded hotels and residences.

BY SOFIA CELESTE

**MILAN** – When Giorgio Armani unfurled his first home collection, packed with soft streamlined designs and his trademark neutral palette 25 years ago in Milan, he said the philosophy behind it was simple. “There’s not a lot of difference between a piece of furniture and a piece of clothing: both have to feel good when you come into physical contact with them,” the designer, who died at age 91 on Thursday, said at the time.

While he wasn’t the first to enter into the home and design sphere – Ralph Lauren and Gianni Versace had tested the waters before him – his lifestyle vision rose forcefully on a global sphere and was over the years embraced by real estate and hospitality developers, culminating in 2010 with his first hotel covering eight floors within Dubai’s Burj Khalifa, the tallest building in the world.

That opening was quickly followed by the opening of the Armani Hotel Milan on Via Manzoni in 2011. In 2014, it was announced that he would brand a 60-story oceanfront condominium tower in Sunny Isles Beach, Fla., designed by Argentinian architect César Pelli.

His participation in Milan Design Week here in the early 2000s and the formation of his interior design studio in 2004 contributed greatly to Milan’s reputation as a modern design capital and spurred the wider fashion industry’s participation in the home sector.

“We should always remember Giorgio Armani for the clarity of his vision and his quiet, everyday pursuit of excellence. His work embodied rigor and restraint, seeking forms built to endure. Behind those essential choices lay a rare blend of genius and discretion – a belief that style should never eclipse the individual. These principles remain a touchstone for our design community,” said Maria Porro, president of Salone del Mobile.Milano, the international design tradeshow.

Patricia Urquiola, the Milan-based Spanish architect and designer known for her work with world-renowned names like Cassina and luxury brands like Louis Vuitton and Buccellati, said Armani’s death leaves a palpable void in the community and Milan as a whole.

“With Giorgio Armani, we lose not only a great maestro of fashion but a figure who embodied the spirit of Milan. His language of elegance [was] essential and timeless. His philosophy [was one] of harmony, restraint and authenticity. Milan was his stage and his mirror: rigorous, international, yet deeply human,” she told WWD.

Armani Casa marked its 25th anniversary this year and, in April, the brand unveiled a striking collection that spoke volumes about Armani’s admiration for the Far East – a recurring influence and inspiration over the years. The new lineup was more decorative than in previous iterations, bringing the amount of craftsmanship and detail to couture level.

Dubbed “Oriental Inks,” the collection was displayed during Milan Design Week at the sprawling Armani Casa store in the city, and was also displayed in the 15 shop windows.

In 2024, Armani opened his company’s new building at 760 Madison Avenue in New York, which was entirely redesigned to include residential units, the new Giorgio Armani and Armani/Casa boutiques, and an Armani/Ristorante, which opened in November.

Bendis Ronchetti Illulian, who together with his brother Davis runs the Milan-based carpet company Illulian, said that in the ’80s, their Himalayan-made rugs caught Armani’s eye. He later commissioned them for his own home and later for Armani Casa and numerous projects for his various residences. The firm worked closely with him to create unique pieces from the start.

“For Illulian, collaborating with Mr.







Giorgio Armani has been both a privilege and a great fortune: not only a passionate client of our antique Chinese rugs, but above all one of the first to believe in our vision of contemporary and custom-made rugs."

Armani's foray into the food and beverage world in 1998 served as a precursor to his interior design endeavors but greatly established his design vision. The group started with the opening of a restaurant in Paris, which served as the launching pad for the development for the design concepts of the Armani Ristorante and Caffé, Emporio Armani Caffé and Ristorante, and Nobu in Milan. Today, 20 locations are punctuated throughout the globe – from Milan to Tokyo and from Monaco to Dubai.

Over the years, he developed strong working relationships with some of the most prominent architects and interior designers in the world, like Peter Marino and Doriana and Massimiliano Fuksas, who conceived the designer's Manhattan

and Tokyo boutiques, and Tadao Ando, who designed the Armani theater on Via Bergognone in 2001.

Doriana Fuksas said the duo's friendship with Armani grew over the years, through numerous collaborations, creative exchanges and travels, where they "turned cities where we worked into laboratories of ideas and beauty." They first met Armani in Hong Kong when he was 70 years old.

"He was in the prime of his strength, beautifully tanned and observing us with keen attention and curiosity." Armani, she said, was unique for his precision and razor-sharp decisiveness.

"Giorgio was a quick-minded man, exceptionally intelligent, with a rare quality: the ability to change his mind if someone proposed something interesting. Every gesture revealed an extraordinary attention to detail, a capacity to grasp what was yet to emerge, and to bring it to life through design and fashion."



Armani Casa designs.



The Armani Hotel Milano.

Giorgio Armani photograph by Stefan Giffthaler

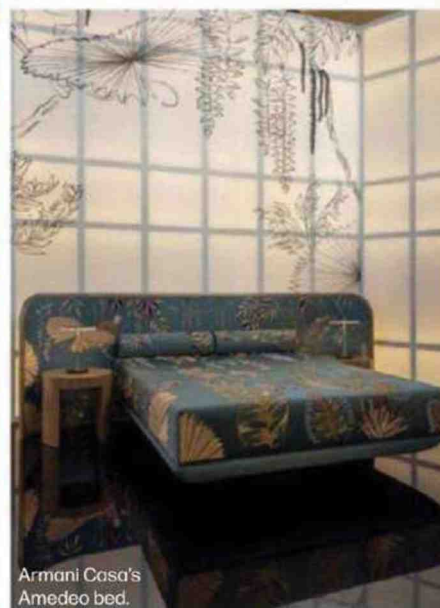
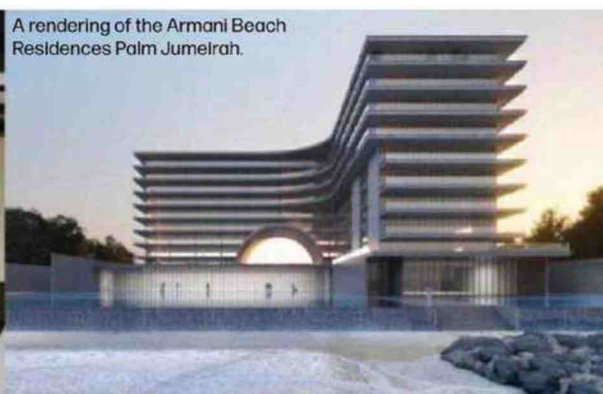






Portrait of Giorgio Armani  
photographed by Stefan Giftthaler  
for WWD at Armani's private  
home on March 30, 2023 in Milan.

A rendering of the Armani Beach  
Residences Palm Jumeirah.



Armani Casa's  
Amedeo bed.

## Giorgio Armani's Multi-Dimensional Legacy

Herald of soft masculinity, outfitter of the working women's revolution, the designer who dressed New Hollywood... Armani made a titanic impact on fashion and society, writes Angelo Flaccavento.

By Angelo Flaccavento



The passing of Giorgio Armani, the absolute monarch of the group that bears his name, is a stunning loss. He will forever live in the world's collective imagination for his sharp, soulful and uniquely transversal approach to business in which fashion, furniture, hotels, cars, flowers, restaurants and more made up a coherent if multifaceted whole.

Should he be remembered as the designer who gave working women a uniform worth their newfound roles? The herald of soft masculinity? The man who dressed the new Hollywood? Or the arch strategist of brand diversification? It's impossible to decide.

The Giorgio Armani legacy is titanic and sprawling, spanning five decades of profound social and aesthetic change, which Armani was typically the first to see, anticipate, follow and mould to his own whims, only to inevitably retreat in recent years into the fortress of a formula that, although timeless, was at times disconnected from the present. "You are only modern once," said the Italian journalist and playwright Leo Longanesi. That Armani retained his modernity for more than three decades of his fifty-year career is already a heroic achievement.

The news of his passing is stunning because Armani, the last living exponent of that wild bunch that, on the crest of the 1970s and '80s, turned Italian Style into a global phenomenon, felt immortal. Fiercely and stubbornly independent, Armani worked until the end and leaves behind a body of work of immense value: clothes of infinite softness, discreet yet full of personality, made to mould with the wearer in the most elegant of ways. Never minimalist but never loud, he created a world that was unmistakably his own out of balance and restraint.

The group that Armani leaves behind is solid, but the uncertainty that has long surrounded his succession is suddenly very real. The helm will likely pass to his trusted lieutenants Leo Dell'Orco and Silvana Armani, but the void left by such a legend will take a long time to fill.





## Armani Succession Plan, Always Mysterious, Is About to Get Tested

With Giorgio Armani's death come questions about whether his chosen successors can avoid 'rupture' and maintain the Italian fashion empire's independence.

By Eric Sylvers



Giorgio Armani embraced his reputation as a meticulous micromanager who had a hand in everything big and small at the fashion juggernaut he founded and led for five decades until his death on Thursday at 91.

Whether the obsessive attention to detail that had Armani personally making last-minute alterations to garments backstage helped him create a viable succession plan has always been a mystery in Milan fashion circles. Even when Armani for the first time in his career missed several fashion shows in June due to health issues, he and his closest collaborators remained largely silent on the particulars of what would happen when he died.

Armani, who has no children, has spoken of passing the reins to his family members and his closest collaborator, Pantaleo Dell'Orco, the head of the men's style office who has been with the company for more than 45 years. Armani has two nieces, the daughters of his late brother Sergio, and a nephew, the son of his sister, who have had various roles at the company through the years.

In an interview with the *Financial Times* published last week, Armani gave tantalising hints about a "gradual transition" that would avoid "rupture," but as in the past, he remained vague on the particulars.

It remains unknown, for example, who will become chief executive and chairman, positions Armani held onto until his death. How Armani's 99.9 percent holding in his company will be portioned is also unknown. Some answers will emerge with the reading of Armani's will in the coming days, but since the company isn't publicly listed, there is no urgency for a clear plan on the company's future to be made public.

"The day-to-day will continue without interruption, but the medium term is a lot fuzzier," said David Pambianco, the chief executive of Pambianco, a Milan-based fashion industry consultancy. "Right now, it's premature, but soon the family will have to decide whether they want the company to remain independent. Armani is small compared with the French conglomerates and the family will have to consider seriously about joining one if they want the company to continue to flourish."

France's LVMH and Kering have gobbled up countless Italian fashion houses in the past two decades and few large ones remain independent. Among those still on their own, Prada is controlled by the Prada-





Bertelli family but is listed in Hong Kong. Armani and Dolce & Gabbana are the last of the larger Italian fashion houses that aren't listed and aren't part of a conglomerate. Forbes estimates Armani's net worth, the vast majority of which is tied up in the value of the company, at about \$12.1 billion.

"Giorgio Armani always made independence — of thought and action — his hallmark," the company said in a statement announcing the designer's death. "The company is, now and always, a reflection of this spirit. His family and employees will carry the Group forward in respect and continuity of these values."

Armani resisted advances from LVMH and Gucci, now part of Kering, which made bids to buy the company in the late 1990s during a period of industry consolidation. In the years that followed, Armani remained coy on succession plans and decided against a stock market listing, which would have given the company funds to expand or buy rivals, but would have broken Armani's total control of the company.

In 2016, Armani created the Giorgio Armani Foundation that has bylaws outlining how style directors would be appointed and stating that his heirs must wait five years after his death before initiating an eventual stock offering. The bylaws, which were never made public but have leaked in the Italian press, include details on the different classes of shareholders that will emerge following Armani's death, but they don't say who will be given which type of shares or how many.

Armani's passing and the questions surrounding the company's future come amid a general fashion industry slowdown. In 2024, Armani's operating profit fell by a quarter to €398 million (\$463 million), not including licences, while revenue dropped about 5 percent to €2.3 billion. The company has almost 9,000 employees.

"My plans for succession consist of a gradual transition of the responsibilities that I have always handled to those closest to me such as Leo Dell'Orco, the members of my family and the entire working team," Armani said in the FT interview. "I would like the succession to be organic and not a moment of rupture."





## Giorgio Armani, Italy's Fashion 'King,' Has Died

The designer, aged 91, was the richest in the world, and sole owner of the Armani Group that was for many years the country's most successful fashion company.

By Eric Wilson



Giorgio Armani, whose single-minded pursuit of an aesthetic ideal led him to become the richest designer in the world, and the sole owner of what was for many years the most successful fashion company in Italy, has died at 91.

The designer and entrepreneur "passed peacefully, surrounded by his loved ones," the company said in a statement just weeks before a planned celebration of the brand's 50th anniversary.

"He worked until his final days, dedicating himself to the company, the collections and the many ongoing and future projects," the company said.

The funeral will be private, respecting Armani's wishes, but the casket will be open for viewing on September 6 and 7 at the company's Milan headquarters on Via Bergognone.

Giorgio Armani, whose single-minded pursuit of an aesthetic ideal led him to become the richest designer in the world, and the sole owner of what was for many years the most successful fashion company in Italy, has died at 91.

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For five decades, Armani, a one-time window dresser turned self-made industrialist, towered over the Milanese fashion world as he crafted a multibillion-dollar empire of luxury apparel, accessories, fragrances, makeup, furniture, hotels and restaurants. His signature stripped-down, soft tailoring was widely credited for having redefined the working wardrobe for both men and women in the 1980s, and his pioneering embrace of Hollywood made him a glamorous household name in America long before his peers acknowledged the value of red-carpet exposure.

In an industry where creative and commercial functions are rarely led by the same person, Armani, whose near-obsessive sense of control also extended to business matters, was the rare designer who simultaneously served as chairman and chief executive of his own company. For decades, the results







were spectacular. Even as sales and profits declined in recent years due to a restructuring and streamlining of Armani's brand portfolio, the Armani Group remains among the most lucrative privately held fashion companies in history. With €2.3 billion in revenues and operating profits of €398 million in 2024, not including licenses, it was also the subject of increasingly intense speculation as to whether the designer, effectively the company's sole shareholder, might finally name a successor or pursue a sale.

Armani told the *Financial Times* in an interview published August 31 that he was preparing a "gradual" handover of responsibilities to collaborators including "Leo Dell'Orco, the members of my family and the entire working team," after poor health had forced him to miss his recent fashion shows in Milan and Paris.

Armani, who was both creative director and CEO of the company he founded, had never previously missed one of his catwalk events.

From humble beginnings to the highest-ranking designer to appear on the *Forbes* list of the world's billionaires (No. 177 in 2024), Armani's success was all the more remarkable for having come at a relatively mature age. Armani was 41 when he and his partner, Sergio Galeotti, formally founded the business in Milan in July 1975. Only seven years later, in 1982, he appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine, looking deeply tanned and handsome, a shock of salt-and-pepper hair, wearing an unbuttoned white shirt and a black leather bomber jacket under the headline, "Giorgio's Gorgeous Style." With sales of \$135 million that year, he was already being called "The King."

Armani's big invention was, in fact, rooted in the traditions of Neapolitan tailoring, which favoured more relaxed, natural looking silhouettes, softer shoulders and lightweight or non-existent linings designed for comfort in the Mediterranean heat. But his initial designs for men were so thoroughly modernised — the buttons moved slightly down and the lapels dropped just so, with fluid fabrics chosen to flatter the body — that the form-fitting look took off like a rocket, especially among a burgeoning class of newly affluent and fitness-obsessed young urban professionals. Almost immediately, Armani was adapting the style for women with neatly fitted armholes and cuts designed to promote movement, emancipating them with power suits in a way Coco Chanel once did with tweed jackets. Seeking to equalise the sexes, he described his designs as "insisting on more gentleness for men and more strength for women."

It is a look that Armani, with a tailor's sense of precision, continued to perfect over nearly five decades, expanding his business with collections targeting a range of price points and lifestyles, while always remaining true to the core essentials of a well-made suit. Though critics sometimes chided the designer for his unerring consistency, or dismissed him as too conventional, his dedication to a singular mission — to create beautiful clothes for his customers — and his position atop the Italian fashion pyramid gave him the final word on style:

"Elegance is not about being noticed," he said. "It's about being remembered."

## Made in Milan

Giorgio Armani was born on July 11, 1934, the second of three children of Ugo Armani, a shipping manager, and Maria Raimondi in Piacenza, Italy, about 45 miles southeast of Milan. His grandfather Lodovico made wigs for the local theatre company, and it was on the stage that his parents met while performing in a production of Ibsen's "A Doll's House." Armani described his family as very poor, but spoke of his parents in such reverential terms — "My father was someone for whom it took very little to look elegant," he said — that it was clear his aesthetics were shaped largely in their image.

"There are pictures of my mother and me on the beach," Armani wrote in a monograph published by Rizzoli in 2015, which included several essays by the designer. "She would often wear a black wool







bathing suit with white buttons that I really liked. I can still smell the walnut oil she would rub on our skin so we wouldn't get sunburned."

Any fond memories of his childhood, however, were overshadowed by the start of World War II. As Allied forces began bombing the factories around them, Armani's mother moved the children — Giorgio, then five, his older brother, Sergio and younger sister, Rosanna — to a nearby village, while Ugo remained behind in Piacenza to join Mussolini's Fascist Party (an act of self-preservation, Giorgio later argued, though he was less sympathetic toward his brother's participation in the fascist *Fiamme Bianche*, or White Flames, squads). After the war, his father was shunned as a collaborator and briefly went into hiding. Meanwhile, Giorgio suffered a scarring accident: along with several other boys, he was badly injured in an explosion caused by friends playing with gunpowder from a shell they had discovered in an empty barracks. Armani ended up spending more than 20 days in a hospital, unsure if he would ever be able to see again, traumatised to the point that he said he would throw himself into a ditch whenever a plane would pass overhead. It was hardly surprising that, in later years, Armani often described the solace he found by escaping to the imaginary world of cinema.

"When I was young, movies were my real education," he said. "Much more than what I learned at school, they shaped my imagination, my culture and my tastes."

In the early 1950s, the family moved to Milan, where Giorgio studied medicine and Rosanna found work as a model. Both siblings were strikingly attractive and, taking after their mother, carried themselves with a certain composure that belied their difficult upbringing. Rosanna's arrival was a hit; she briefly worked as an actress, appearing in a film directed by a nephew of Luchino Visconti, and the Armanis were quickly at home among the city's post-war society. Giorgio left for military service for two years, working in a hospital in Verona, but when he returned, he abandoned his studies, which he found too difficult, and found a job in 1954 working on the window displays of department store *La Rinascente*. Before long, he had graduated to the fashion and style department, where he spent seven years, until the mid-1960s, when he was recruited by Nino Cerruti to work as a stylist for a new line. Cerruti later recalled Armani as having an innate sense for fashion.

"He would have stood out from the crowd in any case," Cerruti told *Time* magazine. "Men like Armani are so rare that when one emerges, even the blind are aware of it."

Speaking to director Martin Scorsese for a short documentary called "Made in Milan," in 1990, Armani described learning the trade from scratch:

"I worked in a textile factory so I could really learn about fabrics," he said. "I remember enormous rooms full of looms that never stopped working, and noise and people who seemed deaf. Though they were talking, they didn't seem to hear each other. It was very hard work and I never thought I'd fall in love with it. Then, little by little, it became a passion. A centimetre of fabric, pushed under the table by someone's foot became an act of irreverence toward the person who had created it."

On a seaside vacation in Forte dei Marmi in 1966, Armani met and fell in love with Galeotti, a young architect, whom he persuaded to return with him to Milan. Galeotti was convinced of Armani's talent and urged him to strike out on his own, which he did, in 1970, as an independent designer consulting for Ungaro, Zegna and Sicons, and before long he was being publicly credited for his designs. Five years later, they founded the company that would become the Armani Group with \$10,000 in savings. In an unusually candid interview with *Vanity Fair* in 2000, Armani described his relationship to Galeotti as having been that of a protector, much as he was to become the "Papa" to all of his employees.

"Love is too reductive a term," he told the writer Judy Bachrach. "It was a great complicity vis-à-vis life and the rest of the world... Naturally, Sergio had no experience in business and, naturally, behind Sergio there was me. But in the eyes of the world — even for him — we pushed the idea that Sergio was the big guy behind it all in this business. And I was the creator."





Inspired by the fashions of the '30s and '40s, Armani created unstructured suits that were at first polarising. Some saw the unlined jackets as too unserious and rumpled-looking when compared to the prevailing corporate styles of the '70s, which featured stiffly glued linings for structure, creating strong lines to be worn with thick neckties. But others recognised that their subtle sophistication and gently and richly textured fabrics conveyed an image of wealth, much as would a fine watch or expensive taste in shoes or wine. The name Armani became synonymous with style.

GFT, one of Italy's biggest manufacturers, began producing Armani's collections with an investment that enabled him to create advertisements, art directed by his sister, Rosanna, that appeared on the back covers of *L'Uomo Vogue*. (Rosanna worked closely with the designer on image until her 50s and remained active in various roles.) Fred Pressman, the pioneering chairman of Barneys New York and son of its founder, was so impressed with the images that he introduced Armani to America with a \$90,000 order that quickly blossomed into contracts worth millions. Soon, Armani was everywhere. Maxfield, the Los Angeles luxury retailer, brought his designs to Hollywood, where the filmmaker Paul Schrader became a devoted customer and, in a fateful moment, asked Armani to create the wardrobe for Richard Gere's character, Julian Kay, in the movie "American Gigolo."

In one scene, Julian, whose louche sex appeal can at least partly be attributed to his impeccable ability to loosen a necktie, pulls up in a black Mercedes convertible to Juschi to shop for clothes, funded by one of his clients; in another he samples a range of beige suits and blue shirts from his closet (some with the Giorgio Armani label clearly visible) while preening shirtless and singing along to "The Love I Saw in You Was Just a Mirage" by Smokey Robinson and The Miracles. The film, and that scene in particular, further catapulted Armani to international fame and fuelled a love affair with celebrities that would continue throughout his career. In 1993, he appeared in front of the camera himself, portraying the prime minister of Italy during the cold open of late-night comedy show *Saturday Night Live*, the joke being that he was mistaken for a mentally unstable person visiting the Clinton White House.

In total, Armani outfitted stars for more than 200 movies, including Martin Scorsese's "The Wolf of Wall Street," "Goodfellas" and "The Departed," in addition to dressing hundreds of major celebrities for red carpet appearances. Before Armani became the first international designer to open a major Los Angeles showroom in 1988, most stars either dressed themselves or relied on costume designers to outfit them for their premieres. His designs have famously been worn to the Oscars by Diane Keaton (wearing a jacket over a full skirt in 1978), Michelle Pfeiffer, Jessica Lange, Jodie Foster, Glenn Close, Sharon Stone, Julia Roberts and Cate Blanchett.

"In the movie industry, the young actors were rejecting the theatricality of the old Hollywood red carpet for a new naturalness, and I became the go-to designer for this fresh approach," Armani said in *Vanity Fair*. "People like Diane Keaton and Robert De Niro had a completely different idea of what the image of stardom should be — they wanted to be relatable, people first and stars second."

## Total Control

Throughout the '80s and '90s, Armani's sales continued to grow at an astonishing pace. In a way, Armani seemed to be boasting of his ability to single-handedly manoeuvre a fashion company at a time when so many other independent, family-led businesses were being snapped up by conglomerates, which would dramatically change the luxury market. To maximise sales while maintaining the power of his brand, Armani carefully introduced several tiers of new collections — Mani, Emporio Armani, Armani Collezioni, Armani Jeans and EA7 — and managed licensees with an iron fist to ensure quality remained high. If he was dissatisfied with a partnership, as with a money-losing venture with the lower-priced A/X Armani Exchange collection that was launched in the '90s, Mr Armani eventually bought back control of it and produced the designs to his own standard.







In 2019, the company had cash reserves of €1.2 billion, enabling it to remain a competitive force in the face of increasing pressure from French conglomerates LVMH and Kering. While Armani had held fast to what had become a sprawling portfolio of sub-brands, even as others like Saint Laurent and Dolce & Gabbana took discontinued diffusion lines, the company finally trimmed its structure from seven to three divisions — Giorgio Armani, Emporio Armani and Armani Exchange — in a restructuring from 2018, which put a dent in sales.

Armani's insistence on remaining independent, having been courted aggressively by LVMH and Kering precursor Gucci Group during the rush of designer acquisitions in the late 1990s, cost him the support of several key executives over the years but ultimately left him in an enviable position of total control. In 2016, after years of speculation as to whether he would eventually sell or go public, he announced the creation of the Giorgio Armani Foundation to ensure its autonomy. Among the provisions that were included at that time, revealed in a 2023 Reuters report, Armani introduced bylaws directing how its board members would appoint style directors and stating that his heirs must wait five years after his passing should they desire to initiate a stock offering.

Armani's succession issue came to the fore amid the Covid-19 pandemic, which hit the company hard, sending 2020 revenues down by 21 percent on the previous year. Armani was the first major designer to recognise the peril of the pandemic, showing his Autumn/Winter 2020 collection in an audience-less theatre even as others carried on with in-person fashion week events in Milan and Paris. And he later said that Covid-19 forced him to rethink his approach, hinting that he might be open to a partnership.

"The goal is to return to pre-pandemic levels by 2022," said Armani in July 2021. The same month, Agnelli heir John Elkann was reported to have explored a deal to acquire a minority stake in Armani Group through family holding Exor, with a vision to create a luxury conglomerate that would include Ferrari, Christian Louboutin and Shang Xia. But those talks stalled. In September 2021, Armani called the company's independence "an essential value."

Armani also resisted entreaties to name a successor while he was still alive, even after he suffered a debilitating case of hepatitis in 2009. Most industry observers presumed the company would be taken over by a committee of family members who have held various roles over the years, including Roberta and Silvana Armani, the daughters of his late brother Sergio, and Andrea Camerana, the son of Rosanna, as well as Pantaleo Dell'Orco, the head of the men's style office and Armani's closest companion, who has been at the company since 1977. Silvana Armani heads the women's lines.

"I have always taken care of other people, more than myself, so much that sometimes I should have quit my job or divided my time between public and private life," said Armani. "I could never do it, though, because this is a job that absorbs you completely from morning to night."

His complete dedication to the business struck some as almost monastic, even sombre, despite his obvious personal wealth, estimated at \$11.4 billion, with nine homes and a 213-foot yacht among his assets. His properties included a Milan palazzo designed by Peter Marino in the 1980s, a home on the island of Pantelleria, a penthouse on Central Park West in Manhattan and a weekend compound in Broni that featured a pink stucco villa built in the 1950s by Franco Cella di Rivara, the creator of Marvis toothpaste, as well as a menagerie of exotic animals made up of zebras, alpacas, longhorn deer and a large assortment of rescue dogs. In 2024, he opened a 12-story building on Madison Avenue that, in addition to Armani stores and another restaurant space, included ten Armani-designed residences (starting at \$21.5 million), with one saved for himself.

Armani never bothered to learn English and acknowledged that he had few friends outside of the company, noting that his aloofness may have been due to the fact that his biggest fear was being perceived as a failure. When Galeotti died of AIDS in 1985, Armani seemed to become even more insular, expressing little interest in art, literature or music beyond that of his own self-created world.







“Keep in mind that the goal of your profession, which has also been my goal so far, is to improve people’s image through fashion,” he told students at the Fashion Institute of Technology in 2008. “So, you must somehow subdue your desire to give free reign to your imagination and try to see your designs on the streets, not just on the covers of magazines, not just displayed in fashion shows, but having some kind of follow-up in reality.”

The criticism that his designs never changed chafed at Armani over the years, and he made sure to respond, signalling his own self-importance most famously with a lavish retrospective at the Guggenheim Museum in 2000, with a set by Jean Nouvel and stage direction by Robert Wilson, that later travelled to museums around the world. Though the museum received some criticism for the ethical questions raised by such a large show dedicated to a living designer, which was swiftly followed by donations of as much as \$15 million from Armani, it demonstrated amply that Armani was about more than just beige jackets. In fact, his more elaborate designs, including celestial costumes for Lady Gaga, later were displayed in exhibitions at Armani’s own Tadao Ando-designed theatre on Via Borgonuovo and a Silos museum that he opened across the street in 2015 for the company’s 40th anniversary.

“Silos is the answer to anyone claiming that I have done nothing or that I repeat myself,” he said. “There are entire floors with a variety of clothes, in which the classic Armani suit goes almost unnoticed.”

Armani’s grand ambitions sometimes exposed the scale of his ego. With more than 2,000 stores under the Armani brand umbrella, none have surpassed the size of the palatial flagship he opened in 2000 on the Via Manzoni in Milan, which includes spaces for both his luxury and jeans collections, a florist, an art-book store, a nightclub, a branch of Nobu and an Armani Hotel that opened on the upper floors in 2012. The footprint of the building, restored by the architect Michael Gabellini at a cost of \$10 million, creates the shape of the letter “A” when seen from above. In 2009, he opened a Fifth Avenue flagship at an enormous cost right after the global financial collapse, with a swirling ribbon staircase, prompting its nickname, “Guggenheim 2.”

In his final years, Armani experimented with new show locations, including a 17th century courtyard, an airport hangar and his New York flagship. The changes of scenery brought a renewed sense of energy that critics had been longing to see.

For Armani, who at the age of 87 was awarded Italy’s highest civilian honour by President Sergio Mattarella, it was business as usual.

Milan, he noted, is a city whose appeal is not always apparent on the outside, but rather tucked away in the details of courtyards and interiors, something that rubbed off on his designs. It was often noted in profiles that Armani was so focused that he insisted the frescoes of his palazzo be covered whenever he was creating a collection, so as not to be distracted by their beauty.

“True elegance,” Armani believed, “is that which is most subtle and hidden.”





# GIORGIO ARMANI

## Le dernier empereur de la mode italienne





L'Italie vient de perdre un génie de l'esthétique qui révolutionna l'allure de ses contemporains. Ce travailleur obstiné, parti de rien, est mort, à 91 ans, laissant derrière lui un empire de la mode et une immense fortune. Une veillée ouverte à tous se tiendra ces samedi et dimanche au Teatro, son fief de Milan.

Sokha Keo

**E**n toute discrétion. Sa vie, sa créativité, sa disparition. Jusqu'à la fin de ses jours, Giorgio Armani a entretenu la distance essentielle à une existence superflue. Une manière de se protéger et de prendre part aux bonheurs du quotidien, des plus simples aux plus luxueux, des plus futiles aux plus profonds, des plus solitaires aux plus mondains. Le créateur, né le 11 juillet 1934 à Plaisance, dans le nord de l'Italie, s'est éteint ce 4 septembre 2025. Il laisse derrière lui les pièces cultes d'un dressing qui se conjugue au masculin-féminin. Avec un style minimaliste et sophistiqué à la fois, tout en fluidité et en nuances.

Lorsqu'il débute en tant que styliste indépendant, en 1970, Giorgio Armani a déjà passé neuf ans auprès de Nino Cerruti à apprendre l'art du *tailoring*. En 1975, il crée sa marque de prêt-à-porter avec un capital de 10 000 dollars, épaulé par l'architecte Sergio Galeotti, son compagnon, dont le décès à 40 ans en 1985 le laissa inconsolable. Quarante ans plus tard, il révélait dans les colonnes du *Figaro* que le seul regret de sa vie était « *naturellement que Sergio ne puisse voir ce qu'Armani est devenu* ». « *Sergio a été le moteur de ma carrière. Il a cru en*

*moi avec l'inconscience de ceux qui aiment et qui, ne doutant pas de vos faiblesses, vous forcent à vous dépasser* », racontait-il.

La première collection masculine est immédiatement remarquée. L'un des modèles présentés, une veste déstructurée sans doublure, fait sensation. Et va préfigurer des décennies d'assouplissement du costume et de l'allure, la fameuse « *sprezzatura* », du terme italien intraduisible désignant l'élégance décontractée. Cette reconnaissance encourage le binôme à développer rapidement une ligne féminine. Un an plus tard, les premières pièces pour la saison printemps-été 1976 marquent un tournant dans la mode. Milan devient, avec Paris, une capitale où s'habiller en s'affranchissant des codes anglais. L'élégance est de rigueur. Les matières et le « *made in Italy* » symbolisent des créations de grande qualité. Giorgio Armani apporte un modernisme très attendu après l'époque contestataire post-soixante-huitarde. Les femmes enfilent des costumes fluides, associés à des talons plats, pour aller au bureau. Leurs silhouettes souples révèlent leurs personnalités sans ostentation.

Une gent prête à en découdre avec les stéréotypes qui profite du savoir-faire du

créateur. Celui-ci joue habilement la carte du féminin-masculin, brouille les pistes et s'affranchit des codes. Hors mode, il travaille des lignes intemporelles, sobres et élégantes. L'esthétisme Armani séduit. De saison en saison, le combo entre simplicité et raffinement fait des émules, jusqu'aux dégradés de beiges, taupe, gris et noirs. L'hiver, il décline tailleurs, robes longues et manteaux enveloppants dans des tissus lourds et chauds parfois rehaussés de broderies ou tranchant avec des tops transparents. L'été laisse place aux matières soyeuses et légères, ondulations satinées et joyeuses sur les corps dénudés. Lors d'une conférence de presse, en novembre 2019 à l'occasion de la présentation de la collection Transformisme à Milan, il déclarait : « *Je veux donner aux femmes plus de liberté et de possibilités d'être différentes, ma proposition est destinée à une femme qui veut pouvoir se transformer au gré de ses humeurs et de ses sensations. Où elle veut, quand elle veut. En mixant les genres.* » Un modernisme cool qui dépasse les frontières. Et ce, depuis plus de cinquante ans.

### Un empire colossal

Le couturier suit un scénario bien ficelé



en prêtant son style aux acteurs et actrices qui comptent. En 1978, Diane Keaton reçoit, habillée en Armani, un Oscar pour son rôle dans *Annie Hall* de Woody Allen. Le rêve américain ne fait que commencer. Deux ans plus tard, Richard Gere crève l'écran, vêtu des costumes cintrés, dans *American Gigolo*. Les ventes explosent et son nom circule. De cérémonies en festivals dédiés au septième art, il devient la référence des photocalls. Les succès se suivent. En 1987, dans *Les Incorruptibles* de Brian De Palma, Armani revisite les années 1930. Sean Connery, Kevin Costner et Robert De Niro se drapent de manteaux oversized, costumes trois-pièces ajustés et Borsalino. Les collaborations avec les plus grands costumiers de Hollywood se multiplient : *Ocean's Thirteen* de Steven Soderbergh, *The Dark Knight Rises* de Christopher Nolan, *Le Loup de Wall Street* de Martin Scorsese, *A Most Violent Year* de J. C. Chandor, etc.

Le casting des fidèles de la marque est impressionnant. De Cate Blanchett à Leonardo DiCaprio en passant par Isabelle Huppert, tous apprécient ce rapport à l'élégance. Son attrait pour les coulisses ne se limite pas au grand écran. En 2010, il surprend, en signant une robe futuriste

aux tubes fluorescents pour Lady Gaga lors des Grammy Awards. Il dévoile une nouvelle facette de sa créativité et imagine quatre looks pour la tournée asiatique de la chanteuse « The Born This Way Ball tour » en 2012. Les groupies qui connaissent à peine la griffe découvrent leur idole dans un body en plexi transparent, un top aux épaules démesurées recouvertes de clous ou une minirobe de métal. Des tenues audacieuses qui tranchent avec l'image de la maison italienne.

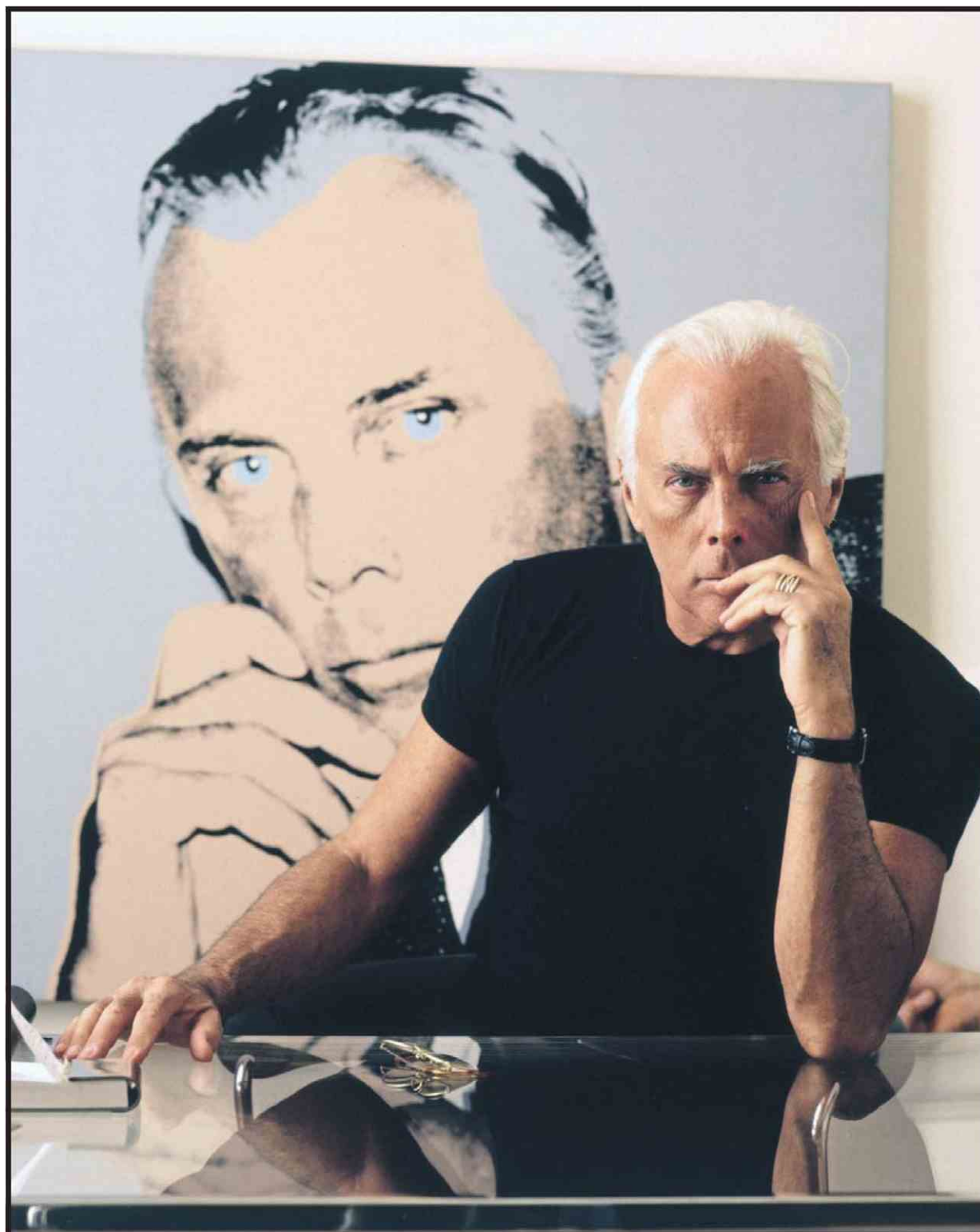
Son génie ne se limite pas aux jeux de matières. Chef d'entreprise de talent, il comprend très vite l'enjeu de la diversification. En 1981, il propose la ligne de sportswear Emporio Armani. Suit une déclinaison de collections pour toucher une large cible, de l'enfant à la haute couture : Armani Jeans, Armani Junior, Emporio Underwear, AX Armani Exchange, Giorgio Armani Privé. Cet empire colossal ne serait rien sans les parfums, lancés en 1982, qui pèsent lourd dans le chiffre d'affaires de la maison. Ce visionnaire sent très tôt le potentiel du « lifestyle ». Une Fondation Armani voit le jour en 2016. Il s'ouvre à la décoration d'intérieur, l'hôtellerie et la restauration. Le groupe compte aujourd'hui 500 boutiques dans 46 pays. Pas question de céder à l'appel d'investisseurs extérieurs. Giorgio Armani considère l'indépendance

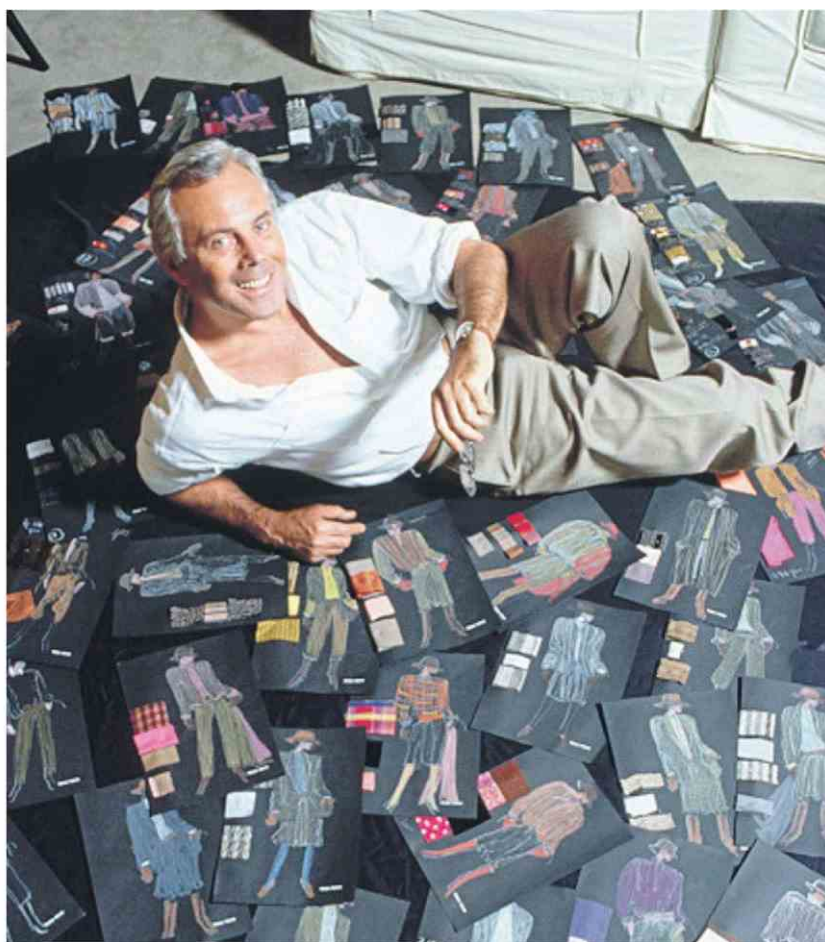
économique comme « la valeur fondamentale pour travailler en pleine liberté, sans conditionnement ».

En octobre 2024, à tout juste 90 ans, il orchestre un défilé XXL à New York pour fêter la réouverture de son flagship sur Madison Avenue. En janvier 2025, il marquait dans la Ville Lumière, qu'il aimait tant, les 20 ans de sa haute couture Armani Privé dans un très beau « palazzo », au 21, rue François-Ier (8<sup>e</sup>) qu'il venait juste d'acquérir. Il prévoyait de célébrer ses 50 ans de carrière en clôture de la Fashion Week de Milan en septembre prochain. Il disait que le secret de sa longévité résidait dans son indépendance, son désir renouvelé de relever de nouveaux défis, mais aussi son obstination à rester fidèle à son style. « Ce qui me distingue, c'est ce sens de l'élégance sophistiquée mais très naturelle et mon souhait de créer des vêtements comme du mobilier qui puissent envelopper la personne sans l'écraser. J'ai sans cesse cette phrase à l'esprit : "L'élégance, c'est l'art de ne pas être oublié sans se faire remarquer". » ■









**Ci-dessus, Giorgio Armani, dans son bureau, en 1997, devant son portrait réalisé par Andy Warhol. À gauche, avec un groupe de modèles à Milan, en 1993. Ci-dessous, le créateur italien pose au milieu de ses croquis.**

VITTORIANO RASTELLI / CORBIS VIA GETTY IMAGES,  
JEAN-MARIE PÉRIER / PHOTO 12, VITTORIANO RASTELLI  
/ CORBIS VIA GETTY IMAGES







## ENTREPRISES

# Giorgio Armani laisse son empire orphelin

### MODE

**Le groupe Armani a annoncé jeudi le décès à 91 ans de son fondateur.**

**La succession de l'empire qu'il a bâti est une question ouverte, malgré la création d'une fondation pour préserver son héritage.**

Virginie Jacoberge-Lavoué

« La vie n'est pas faite pour abdiquer », confiait-il y a quelques années le couturier Giorgio Armani, infatigable créateur, disparu à 91 ans après une carrière menée avec brio pendant plus de cinquante ans. Sa disparition a été annoncée par le groupe de luxe jeudi 4 septembre. Le communiqué revient sur son parcours et annonce une chambre funéraire qui sera ouverte ce week-end pour le recueillement au théâtre Armani à Milan. À l'image de son compatriote Gianni Agnelli dans l'automobile, le créateur aux yeux bleus perçants fut une personnalité hors norme dans la mode. « Dans cette maison, nous avons toujours eu le sentiment d'appartenir à une famille. Aujourd'hui, notre émotion est vive », ont salué les employés ainsi que sa famille dans un communiqué.

Giorgio Armani fut le virtuose d'un style chic, sobre et sexy, inimitable, du vestiaire de Richard Gere dans le film « American Gigolo » (1980) de Paul Schrader, qui popularisa ses silhouettes, à ses dernières collections femme dont celles pour Armani privé, la ligne haute couture lancée en 2005 qui défile à Paris.

**Dernier empereur**

### de la mode italienne

Par sa créativité, sa stature et son indépendance, ce visionnaire a acquis le titre de « dernier empereur de la mode italienne ». La presse transalpine l'a salué très tôt dans sa carrière comme « le roi Giorgio ». Selon Luca Solca, analyste chez Bernstein, le groupe a atteint en 2024, « un chiffre d'affaires de 2,3 milliards d'euros », mais l'ensemble des revenus qu'il génère est bien plus colossal : de l'ordre de « 7 milliards d'euros », avance-t-il en incluant aux ventes de l'enseigne celles des licenciés et les « ventes en gros ».

Giorgio Armani a cofondé son entreprise en 1975 avec son compagnon Sergio Galeotti, disparu en 1985. Parti de l'univers masculin, il a largement décliné ses lignes pour l'homme et la femme avec, dans le sportswear, Emporio Armani... 2025 marquant les cinquante ans de sa marque éponyme. Le communiqué du groupe italien indiquant le décès, rend hommage à « cinquante ans d'histoire bâtie avec émotion et patience ». Les célébrations de ce 50<sup>e</sup> anniversaire sont programmées fin septembre à Milan, alors qu'une rétrospective devrait être inaugurée à la Pinacothèque de Brera, musée de la mode.

L'Italie perd cette figure de la mode à un moment où les questions de succession se posent dans plusieurs maisons transalpines : chez Prada où le fils de Miuccia Prada et de Patrizio Bertelli, Lorenzo Bertelli, se forme aux côtés du directeur général Andrea Guerra, pour prendre la relève ; ou encore chez Dolce & Gabbana où les cofondateurs sont sans héritiers directs.

Farouchement attaché à son indépendance, Giorgio Armani a, lui, indiqué à plusieurs reprises que jamais il ne vendrait sa maison à un

groupe étranger. « Etre englouti dans un conglomérat français était sa terreur », confie un patron italien qui le connaissait bien. « Mon souhait est de diriger l'entreprise aussi longtemps qu'il me reste à vivre », confiait le créateur italien à la fois directeur artistique, PDG et actionnaire unique de son empire.

**« Ma plus grande faiblesse, c'est que je contrôle tout »**

Mais au crépuscule de leur existence, les grands fauves, parfois, s'inclinent. En avril 2024, Giorgio Armani a pour la première fois reconnu qu'il n'écarterait plus l'option d'une reprise de son groupe. « Il parlait d'un groupe partageant ses valeurs donc l'italianité », confie un patron du luxe italien.

Le plan de succession inclut des membres de sa famille proche, dont au moins ses deux nièces, Silvana et Roberta, ainsi que son neveu Andrea Camerana. Hors famille, un collaborateur de longue date (1977), Leo Dell'Orco (de son nom complet Pantaleo Dell'Orco), responsable des collections homme, opérant sur toutes les marques du groupe et membre du conseil d'administration, occupe une place majeure. Il est considéré par beaucoup comme son bras droit et légitime successeur.

« Mon plan de succession consiste à transférer progressivement les responsabilités que j'ai toujours assumées à mes proches, comme Leo Dell'Orco, aux membres de ma famille et à l'ensemble de l'équipe de travail », avait confirmé Giorgio Armani le 29 août au « Financial Times ». Il avait alors pour la première fois reconnu : « Ma plus grande faiblesse, c'est que je contrôle tout. »

**Préserver l'essence même de la maison**





Les statuts de la société divisent le capital social en plusieurs catégories avec des droits de vote distincts, assurant ainsi une répartition équilibrée du pouvoir. Le document consacré aux principes de gouvernance à suivre après sa disparition aborde l'éventualité de fusions et acquisitions, et la marche à suivre en cas d'IPO.

Pour préserver l'héritage de l'empire qu'il a bâti, Giorgio Armani a créé en 2016 en toute discrétion une fondation caritative, s'inspirant peut-être de celle qui chapeaute le

géant suisse Rolex. « *La fondation a été conçue comme un rempart afin d'éviter le démantèlement du groupe* », note un observateur.

L'existence de cette structure n'a été révélée qu'en 2023 par Reuters, sur la base d'un document consulté chez un notaire, qui prévoit des garde-fous pour préserver l'essence même de la maison : une attention particulière au style sans ostentation, une veille continue sur la qualité et la visibilité de ses créations... Il évoque également sa structure capitalistique. « *Armani a communiqué sur la manière exacte de perpé-*

*tuer son héritage* », assure un observateur. La capacité à assurer la pérennité du groupe et son indépendance n'en demeure pas moins une question ouverte. ■

**Giorgio Armani a indiqué à plusieurs reprises que jamais il ne vendrait sa maison à un groupe étranger.**





« Le roi Giorgio », ici à la Fashion Week de Milan en septembre 2024, s'est éteint à l'âge de 91 ans. Photo Gabriel Bouys/AFP

# Addio re Giorgio

Lo stilista Armani è morto a 91 anni, ad annunciarlo i suoi dipendenti  
Il mondo piange l'uomo che in mezzo secolo ha rivoluzionato la moda

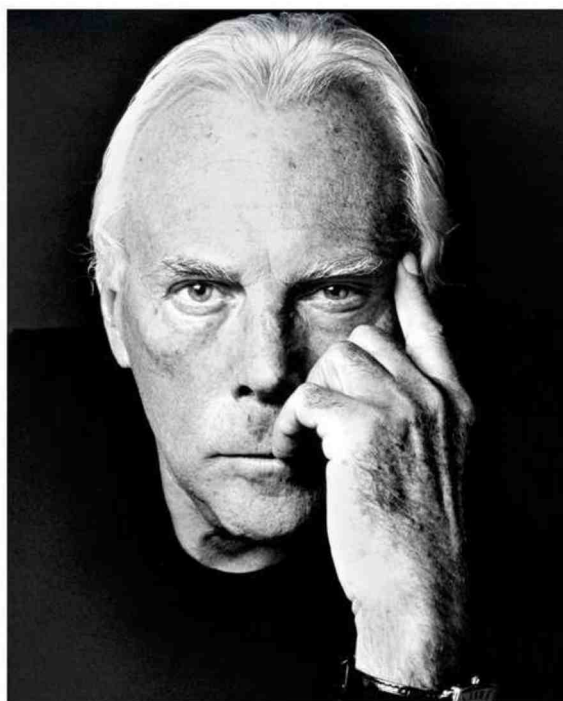
di **EMANUELE FARNETI**

**V**ita privata? Io non ho vita privata, cari signori. Voi ce l'avete?». A chi negli ultimi mesi lo incontrava nello studio milanese di via Borgonuovo, circondato da due piani di libri e da molti suoi ritratti, Armani non nascondeva una certa malinconia per il tempo negato agli affetti.

➔ a pagina 4 e 5 con i servizi di

**BENNEWITZ, CROSETTI, GIOVARA, MANACORDA, MASTROLILLI, ROMANO, SCHIRINZI, SCOTTI, TIBALDI e VITALI**

da pagina 2 a 15







# Il ritratto Dalla provincia alla copertina di Time l'epopea di re Giorgio

L'infanzia a Piacenza  
la gavetta da Cerruti  
l'incontro con Sergio  
Galeotti, primo amore  
e ispiratore dell'impresa  
aziendale

di EMANUELE FARNETI

MILANO

Vita privata? Io non ho vita privata, cari signori. Voi ce l'avete?».

A chi negli ultimi mesi lo incontrava nello studio milanese di via Borgonuovo, circondato da due piani di libri e da molti suoi ritratti – celebre quello di Andy Warhol – Armani non nascondeva una certa malinconia per il tempo negato agli affetti. Alla costruzione prima dell'azienda, e poi del mito, aveva in effetti dedicato ogni sua possibile energia: una corsa immane, come lui stesso l'ha definita, terminata ieri a 91 anni, pochi giorni prima che sulle passerelle venissero festeggiati i 50 anni del suo marchio.

Non era destinato a diventare stilista, il ragazzo dagli occhi chiari nato a Piacenza l'11 luglio del 1934. I genitori, padre impiegato e madre direttrice di una colonia, lo volevano medico, e lui in effetti a medicina si

iscrisse, fino a che la chiamata della leva non interruppe gli studi spalancando possibilità inattese.

Prima c'era stata la campagna piacentina e i ricordi d'infanzia legati alla guerra: un aereo che mitraglia la strada sterrata, lui e la sorella nascosti in un fosso; il crollo di una casa e la morte di due compagni di giochi. Ma il dopoguerra aveva portato un cambio di scenario, con la famiglia trasferita a Milano e, per lui, un lavoro alla Rinascente, grande magazzino affacciato sul Duomo sulla cui terrazza, molti anni dopo, venne scattata la foto di gruppo degli stilisti che stavano scrivendo il boom del nostro prêt-à-porter. C'erano tutti: Valentino e Ferrè, Krizia e Fendi, Moschino e Versace – lui, Armani, camicia celeste e cravatta, sorride e abbraccia Mila Schön. Era il 1985, coronamento di un tempo che avreb-



be retrospettivamente definito splendido, con tutta probabilità il più felice, cominciato a metà degli anni 60 con un incontro, quello con Sergio Galeotti, destinato a cambiare la vita di entrambi. Fu infatti Galeotti a convincere Armani a lasciare l'impiego da Nino Cerruti, che nel frattempo lo aveva voluto con sé, e a mettersi in società. Il 24 luglio 1975 era nata l'azienda, due stanze e quattro scrivanie in corso Venezia.

Poche settimane dopo, all'inizio del 1976, la prima sfilata all'hotel Plaza. La coppia, nel lavoro e nella vita, aveva le idee chiare su una certa idea di stile, che Armani avrebbe poi definiti così in un'intervista a *U*, il mensile di *Repubblica*: «La nostra eleganza nasce dal modo di vestire, semplice e pieno di dignità, che mi aveva trasmesso mia madre, e poi dal fascino che esercitava su di me il cinema, dai film che guardavo da ragazzino, in quell'idea di morbidezza e raffinatezza senza orpelli».

Proprio il cinema sarebbe stato decisivo nell'affermazione del brand a livello internazionale: da Richard Gere in *American Gigolò* ai film di Sorrentino, da *Gli Intoccabili* a *Quei bravi ragazzi* e poi *The Wolf of Wall Street*. E le muse: Sophia Loren e Claudia Cardinale ieri, Cate Blanchett, Julia Roberts, Lady Gaga oggi. Già nel 1982 una copertina di *Time* lo incoronava – onore concesso prima di lui a un unico altro stilista, Christian Dior: «Lo stile gorgeous (magnifico, sfarzosso) di Giorgio». È la moda degli anni 80, in cui Armani costruì il successo sciogliendo gli uomini dal rigore dell'abito formale con le sue giacche morbide e destrutturate, e soprattutto celebrando la forza e la libertà femminile, in un'epoca in cui l'empowerment era ancora lontano dal diventare di moda.

Nell'agosto del 1985 muore di Aids Sergio Galeotti, colui che fino all'ultimo Armani, pur nell'affetto per il compagno degli ultimi decenni Leo Dell'Orco, ha sempre definito l'uomo più importante della sua vita. Fino a quel momento aveva potuto

dedicarsi solamente alla parte creativa dell'impresa, ma da lì in poi gli riuscì quello che pochissimi suoi colleghi si sono poi dimostrati in grado di fare: prese in mano ogni aspetto dell'azienda, di cui fino alla fine è stato oltre che stilista, anche presidente, azionista orgogliosamente unico, amministratore delegato e direttore generale dalla leggendaria capacità (e volontà) di controllo: fino a poco tempo fa era normale vederlo passare la sera in un suo negozio a sistemare la vetrina o a controllare la mise en place di un suo ristorante.

Così, anno dopo anno, alla linea Giorgio Armani si è aggiunta prima Emporio, poi lo sport con EA7, la linea AX, nel 2005 l'alta moda di Armani Privé, e poi profumi e cosmetici, Armani fiori e il cioccolato, la squadra di basket di Milano, i ristoranti, Armani Casa e gli hotel 5 stelle lusso (quello di Milano, visto dall'alto, ha una pianta a forma di A, come la sua iniziale – l'edificio è del 1937, ma viene da pensare che il dettaglio non sia sfuggito nell'atto di decidere l'acquisto). Oggi il gruppo dichiara ricavi netti per 2,3 miliardi di euro, conta 8.700 dipendenti e 9 stabilimenti di produzione. Con un uomo solo al comando, che nel suo ruolo di responsabile unico – Re Giorgio, appunto – ha potuto prendere decisioni rapide, che altrove avrebbero richiesto di coinvolgere lunghe catene gerarchiche. È stato così che, il 23 febbraio 2020, mentre in Italia ancora non era chiaro cosa stava succedendo nelle prime ore dell'emergenza Covid, scelse di non far accedere il pubblico al suo défilé per non metterne a rischio la salute. E fu svelto nel decidere, due anni più tardi, di far camminare le modelle in silenzio per rispetto alle vittime della guerra appena scoppiata in Ucraina.

Non tenero nei giudizi verso i suoi colleghi, anche quelli più blasonati, né verso le maison francesi («arroganti»), l'uomo, va detto, aveva di sé una legittima considerazione. Si







autodefiniva: preciso, pignolo, rigoroso, intransigente, leale, costante, determinato, appassionato. Spiegava che il suo lavoro era sottrarre e non aggiungere. Che l'eleganza, citazione assai abusata, consiste non nel farsi notare ma nel farsi ricordare. Che ciò che ha da sempre distinto il suo lavoro è stato il non credere alle soluzioni facili. Lo faceva molto arrabbiare chi gli diceva che "Armani è sempre Armani": non basta, rispondeva lui, non basta proprio, perché Armani è Armani ma si evolve, Armani è Armani ma cambia. Amava, molto, pochi colori: il beige, il grigio, il nero, l'avorio e quel blu che indossava sempre, T-shirt e pantaloni morbidi, quando usciva in passerella a ricevere l'applauso alla fine di ogni sfilata, fino all'ultima volta, lo scorso 2 marzo al termine dello show Autunno/Inverno.

È stato in effetti un lungo addio. L'anno scorso, con le celebrazioni per i suoi 90 anni (alla festa erano invitati tutti i dipendenti). Quest'anno, per i primi vent'anni dell'alta moda, una mostra a maggio nel suo museo Armani Silos. Una sfilata a New York a ottobre 2024, un po' il saluto a una città molto amata (era lì l'11 settembre 2001). Infine Parigi, con l'inaugurazione del nuovo palazzo in rue François Ier nei primi mesi dell'anno. Ora tocca alla famiglia, alla sorella Rosanna con il figlio Andrea Camerana, alle nipoti Silvana e Roberta e a Leo Dell'Orco garantire quella continuità che lui sperava così: «Il mio sogno più grande è che quello Armani rimanga un'espressione di stile italiano per molto tempo e che ancora tra 50 o 100 anni lo

si identifichi con qualcosa di speciale, autentico e originale». E viene da sorridere a pensare che la sua ultima decisione, che lui stesso ha definito un gesto d'affetto, sia stata quella di acquistare la Capannina, storica discoteca di Forte dei Marmi. Proprio lì davanti, in quell'estate del 1975, conobbe Sergio Galeotti: così, come capita un po' a tutti, anche Re Giorgio, prima di andare, ha voluto chiudere un cerchio.

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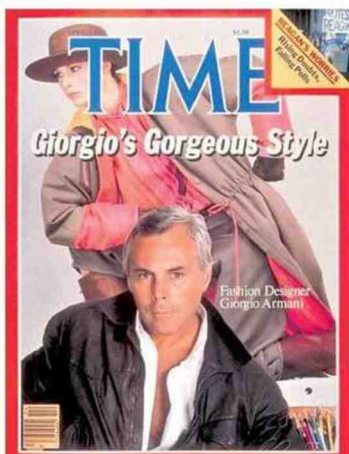
➔ Una foto dello stilista Giorgio Armani da bambino



➔ Lo storico scatto con Armani e gli altri big della moda







Il 5 aprile 1982 la rivista "Time" dedica la copertina a Giorgio Armani, onore concesso prima di lui a un unico altro stilista, Christian Dior: "Lo stile gorgeous (magnifico) di Giorgio"





# Armani, ambasciatore del miglior stile italiano Anche nel fare impresa

**La scomparsa a Milano.** Quest'anno la sua azienda compie 50 anni, l'alta moda che sfila a Parigi ne festeggia 20 e viene messo online l'archivio di mezzo secolo di lavoro: non sono coincidenze ma conferme della fine di un'epoca e dell'auspicio che alla moda resti il tocco magico di Re Giorgio

**Giulia Crivelli**

Si tramanda che i Navajo lasciassero dei punti imperfetti nel creare i loro tappeti, per evitare che l'anima del tessitore rimanesse imprigionata. È una delle piccole grandi scoperte che si fanno leggendo il *Piccolo manuale illustrato per cercatori di stoffe*, appena pubblicato dal Saggiatore, un libro che certamente Giorgio Armani avrebbe apprezzato: lo stilista e imprenditore scomparso ieri a Milano a 91 anni ha passato la sua vita adulta a dare forma a un'idea di eleganza, partendo spesso proprio da tessuti e stoffe. Quanto al destino della sua anima, difficile pensare che resti in alcun modo imprigionata: l'eredità stilistica, imprenditoriale e umana (si vedano i diversi ricordi e approfondimenti di queste pagine) di Giorgio Armani è talmente vasta da garantirgli non solo la libertà legata all'es-

sere stato pioniere in ogni aspetto del suo lavoro, ma anche un posto nella storia del sistema moda italiano e globale. Se non addirittura una sorta di eternità, per quanto fragile e incerta appaia l'attuale condizione del mondo.

Oggi e domani sarà aperta dalle 9 alle 18 la camera ardente, allestita presso l'Armani/Teatro di via Bergognone 59, una delle molte eredità fisiche che lo stilista regala a Milano, dove si trasferì nel 1975 lasciando la città natale, Piacenza. Per sua espressa volontà i funerali si svolgeranno invece in forma privata. Anche in queste scelte si può leggere molto dell'uomo Armani: nelle prossime 48 ore saranno sicuramente tanti colleghi stilisti, amici, conoscenti e rappresentanti delle istituzioni a dargli un ultimo saluto, ma visiteranno la camera



ardente anche moltissime persone che non lo hanno mai incontrato personalmente e forse non hanno neppure mai comprato una sua creazione.

Giorgio Armani ha compiuto una specie di miracolo, nell'Italia delle tifoserie: era ammirato e rispettato da tutti, forse anche per il suo inconfutabile ruolo di ambasciatore di alcuni dei tratti più lusinghieri di noi italiani, mentre appariva lontanissimo da altri, assai meno lusinghieri. Non amava le scorciatoie, ammirava i giapponesi per la capacità di proiettarsi nel futuro e proporre innovazioni senza rinnegare il passato. È importante anche riconoscere un suo stile imprenditoriale: scomparire ricoprendo, nella sua azienda, non uno bensì tre ruoli, presidente, amministratore delegato e direttore creativo. Appare quasi ingeneroso, nel suo caso, pensare a una mania di controllo: meglio vedere nel suo impegno e dedizione, fino all'ultimo giorno, la volontà di consegnare al futuro un'azienda solida, che possa continuare a essere volano economico e di immagine non solo per il nostro sistema moda, ma per l'intero Paese. Fu pioniere in tutto e in alcuni casi persino profetico: il 2025 non è solo il 50° anniversario dell'azienda, ma anche quello in cui si festeggiano vent'anni di alta moda. Le collezioni Armani

Privé sfilano a Parigi, nei giorni della couture di cui i francesi si sentono ancora oggi maestri, e quegli abiti unici ed estremamente esclusivi li stiamo vendendo proprio in questi giorni sul red carpet della Mostra del cinema di Venezia. Armani è stato tra i primi a intuire il potenziale delle licenze, dai profumi

agli occhiali, e della diversificazione in ambiti inesplorati dalla moda, dagli hotel ai ristoranti. Un esempio che in molti hanno poi seguito, come è successo con il legame con il mondo dello sport: non solo Giorgio Armani ha fatto germogliare, attorno al marchio principale, linee più casual, accessibili e pensate per diverse generazioni, ma ha anche vestito atleti di tante discipline sul campo e fuori. Un amore per lo sport e forse per alcuni dei valori che sa esprimere sfociato pure nell'acquisto di una squadra di pallacanestro, l'Olimpia Milano, e nella partnership con il Coni per disegnare le divise delle nostre nazionali olimpiche e paraolimpiche.

Quanto all'essere profetico, basti ricordare l'intervento a pochi mesi dallo scoppio dell'epidemia di Covid, nel 2020: invitò tutti, nel mondo della moda, sé stesso e i suoi marchi compresi, a riflettere sugli eccessi degli anni precedenti. Auspicava che si tornasse a sfornare meno novità, ma con maggior cura, convinto che la moda stesse perdendo la sua anima e quindi il suo ruolo culturale, sociale ed economico. Non si stancò mai di impegnarsi per migliorare la sostenibilità sociale e ambientale della sua azienda, con azioni concrete, indispensabili – non sembra un paradosso – a mantenere intatta la magia della moda e la sua capacità di cambiare, in meglio, il mondo.

**Pioniere nel campo delle licenze, stabili inoltre un forte legame con i valori e il mondo dello sport e con la sostenibilità**

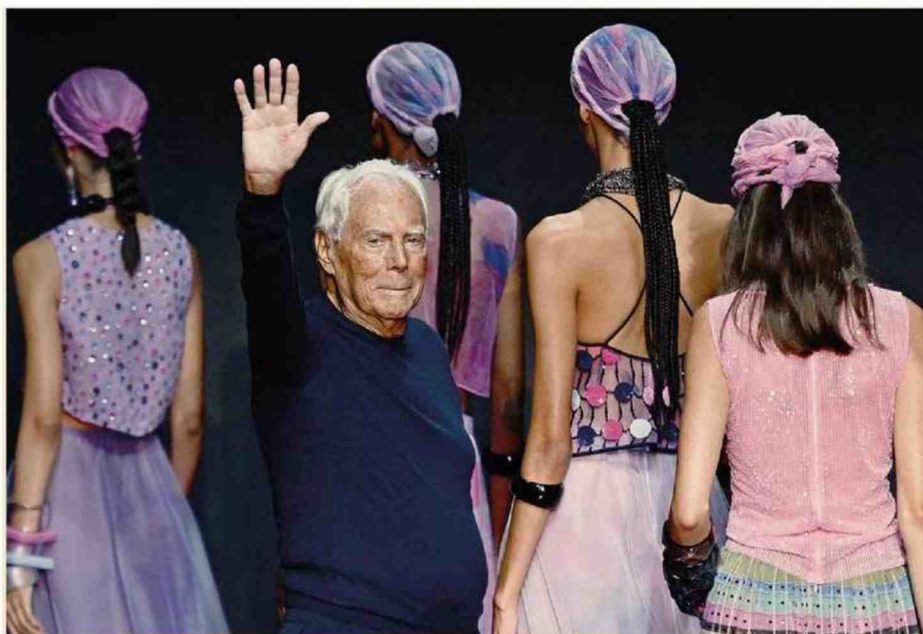




► 5 septembre 2025



**Storia del cinema.** Richard Gere in *American Gigolo*, il film del 1980 che rese famoso l'attore e aiutò Armani a conquistare il mercato e l'immaginario americano: erano suoi tutti i vestiti del protagonista, inizio di una lunga collaborazione con Hollywood





UN GRUPPO MAI QUOTATO

Il nodo successione  
per un impero  
che vale 12 miliardi

Carlo Festa — a pag. 7

# L'eredità e il futuro di un patrimonio che vale 12 miliardi

L'ipotesi Borsa, le mire  
di Lvmh: il ruolo dei nipoti  
e della Fondazione

## La partita finanziaria

Carlo Festa

MILANO

Da qualche anno lo stilista e imprenditore Giorgio Armani stava lavorando alla successione del gruppo da lui fondato. Lo ha fatto con un preciso messaggio: «Finché vivrò, sarò io il padrone», aveva detto qualche tempo fa, dopo una sfilata.

Ora bisognerà attendere le disposizioni testamentarie, ma di fatto in questi anni il terreno è stato preparato in modo meticoloso da Armani e dai suoi collaboratori: «Per la successione — aveva dichiarato in passato — credo che la soluzione migliore sarebbe un gruppo di persone fidate, a me vicine e scelte da me», con un chiaro coinvolgimento della Fondazione Armani, e un riferimento alle due nipoti, Silvana e Roberta, figlie del fratello Sergio, scomparso anni fa, all'altro nipote, Andrea Camerana, figlio della sorella Rosanna, e a Leo Dell'Orco, che viene spesso indi-

cato come suo braccio destro nella gestione manageriale e dell'ufficio stile. La successione era stata preparata in un documento del 2016, poi rivisto due anni fa: Giorgio Armani possedeva il 99,9% del gruppo, mentre lo 0,1% fa capo alla Fondazione che porta il suo nome. Il nuovo assetto azionario e la successione dovrebbero essere garantiti proprio da quest'ultima, nata quasi 10 anni fa, su iniziativa di Leo Dell'Orco del banchiere Irving Bellotti, amministratore delegato di Rothschild Italia e advisor storico di Giorgio Armani.

Con questa garanzia sul futuro del gruppo, dovrebbero quindi essere previste sei categorie di azionisti (dalla A alla F, più altre senza diritto di voto), tutti uguali in termini di dividendi. I soci-eredi si ripartiranno il capitale azionario, assieme alla stessa Fondazione, e nomineranno il nuovo consiglio di amministrazione (di cui Andrea Camerana fa parte dal 2017). Tuttavia alcuni nuovi azionisti avranno il triplo dei voti e il diritto a nominare l'amministratore delegato del gruppo. I soci A avranno il 30% del capitale, quelli F il 10%, gli altri il 15%. Se

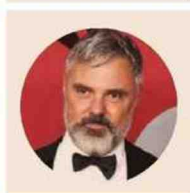


da una parte il riassetto è dunque già stato definito con questi paletti, dall'altro lato non mancano scenari di tipo più finanziario. Una delle opzioni – con la successione tra gli eredi, i manager e la Fondazione – potrebbe essere la quotazione in Borsa della Giorgio Armani Group in un arco di tempo di cinque anni.

I numeri del gruppo, del resto, sono importanti e fanno gola anche ai mercati finanziari: con quasi 12 miliardi di patrimonio stimati da *Forbes*, oggi il gruppo Armani non è solo moda, ma anche ristoranti e alberghi nel mondo sulla scia della notorietà del brand. Malgrado la congiuntura poco favorevole per il lusso nell'ultimo anno, secondo gli ultimi dati, nel 2024 il fatturato della Giorgio Armani ha toccato i 2,3 miliardi di euro con un ebitda di quasi 400 milioni. L'azienda siede inoltre su una montagna di cassa: circa un miliardo di euro e in quattro anni sono stati realizzati quasi 600 milioni di utile, parte dei quali sono stati distribuiti in dividendi.

Oltre alla quotazione in Borsa, una delle variabili è quella dei potenziali interessati. Il dossier è da anni sul tavolo delle banche d'affari internazionali. Molti osservatori ritengono che si potrebbero fare avanti grandi multinazionali straniere della moda, come Lvmh, il più grande gruppo del lusso al mondo, che più volte ha provato ad avvicinarsi allo stilista italiano negli anni passati. Ci sono inoltre i maggiori fondi di private equity a livello internazionale, a cominciare da big come Cvc, Blackstone e Kkr.

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**ANDREA CAMERANA**

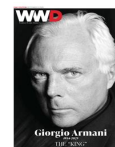
Nipote di Giorgio Armani, classe 1970, fa parte del cda dell'azienda dal 2017



**L'ultimo acquisto.** L'operazione è stata annunciata lo scorso 27 agosto







## BUSINESS

# Burberry Returns to FTSE 100 Blue Chip Index

- Since CEO Josh Schulman joined last year, Burberry's share price has more than doubled and his turnaround strategy has begun to take hold.

BY SAMANTHA CONTI

**LONDON** — Burberry is returning to the FTSE 100 on the London Stock Exchange, a year to the day after it fell out of the blue chip index due to the downward spiral of its share price in 2024.

FTSE Russell, a global index provider that provides analytics and data services to financial markets, confirmed the change at the close of trading on Wednesday.

It said the change would be made at the close of business on Sept. 19, and take effect from the start of trading on Sept. 22.

The news follows multiple reports in WWD that a return to the FTSE 100 was likely this year.

Since Josh Schulman joined as Burberry chief executive officer last year, its share price has more than doubled, trading at a 52-week high of 13.75 pounds. In early trading on Thursday, shares were down 1.6 percent to 12.54 pounds.

Burberry's readmission to the FTSE 100 is another sign that Schulman's turnaround plan is working, despite the ongoing slowdown in the wider luxury sector, and tepid demand from Chinese consumers.

In the first fiscal quarter ended June 28, sales in Greater China were down 5 percent, with mainland China decreasing 4 percent.

The banks have turned bullish on Burberry, and also like Schulman's "Burberry Forward" plan, which is aimed at rebuilding sales, margins and cashflow.

Since Schulman joined, the company has successfully stemmed the double-digit sales declines of the past year and

outstripped growth expectations for the first fiscal quarter.

In the three months to June 30, comparable store sales were down 1 percent, compared with analysts' projections of a 3 percent decline. In the corresponding quarter last year, comparable store sales were down 21 percent.

"The question for us is not whether Burberry will come back, but the magnitude to which it will, and how much investors are ready to pay for it," HSBC said in a report in July, shortly after Burberry posted promising first-quarter results.

There were already signs of a recovery earlier this year. In May, Schulman told analysts: "If you had asked me 12 months ago where we would be today, I wouldn't have imagined the amount of progress that this exceptional team has been making."

Schulman added that "it's early days, and it's a tough macro, but we are really starting to see the potential of what lies ahead. We're taking things step by step, but we are optimistic about the quarters ahead and optimistic about the business in general."

Burberry made its debut on the London Stock Exchange in 2002, and entered the FTSE 100 four years later.

Companies drop out of the index when their valuations fall below a certain threshold, and it's not an unusual occurrence. In 2019, after witnessing a slide in its share price, Marks & Spencer lost its slot in the prestigious index, only to return in 2023.





## **CONCURRENCE - LUXE**





## Glenn Martens and Sarah Burton among the 2025 Fashion Award nominees

The British Fashion Council's annual ceremony will take place in London on 1 December, the first under new CEO Laura Weir's leadership.

By Maliha Shoaib



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Glenn Martens (for Diesel and Maison Margiela), Jonathan Anderson (for Dior and JW Anderson), Martine Rose, Miuccia Prada (for Miu Miu), Rick Owens and Willy Chavarria have been nominated for Designer of the Year at the 2025 Fashion Awards, the British Fashion Council (BFC) announced on Thursday.

The award recognises British or international designers who have made an impact on the industry. Anderson was named the winner last year for the second year in a row.

The winner will be revealed at a ceremony, which will take place on 1 December at the Royal Albert Hall in London, sponsored by Pandora.

The Fashion Awards raises money for the BFC Foundation, which provides funding for the various grant and education programmes the BFC offers to British designers. Founded in 1989, this year marks the first awards ceremony under the leadership of new BFC CEO Laura Weir.

The nominees were shortlisted by a jury of 19 key critics, editors and buyers including *GQ* deputy global director Adam Baidawi, *Vogue* chief critic Sarah Mower and Machine-A founder and buying director Stavros Karelis. The shortlist will now be presented to a voting committee of leading industry members.

The British Womenswear Designer of the Year nominees are Charlotte Knowles and Alexandre Arsenault for Knwls, Simone Rocha (who won last year), Emma Chopova and Laura Lowena for Chopova Lowena (who won the BFC Foundation Award last year), Erdem Moralioglu, and Sarah Burton for Givenchy. Among the British Menswear Designer of the Year award nominees are Craig Green,



Foday Dumbuya for Labrum London, Grace Wales Bonner (who won last year), Kiko Kostadinov, Stefan Cooke and Jake Burt for Stefan Cooke, and Nicholas Daley.

The Vanguard Award (a new category replacing the New Establishment awards for womenswear and menswear) recognises a designer at the forefront of a new wave in British fashion who demonstrates creativity, cultural leadership and global influence. The nominees are Aaron Esh, Dilara Findıkoğlu, Feben, Steve O Smith, Tolu Coker and Torishéju Dumi. Earlier this week, Smith won the LVMH Karl Lagerfeld Prize and Dumi took home the Savoir-Faire Prize (Coker was among the finalists, too).

The BFC will announce the nominees of the other award categories in the coming months.

*Comments, questions or feedback? Email us at [feedback@voguebusiness.com](mailto:feedback@voguebusiness.com).*





## Jonathan Anderson, Martine Rose and Willy Chavarria Nominated for Top Honor at Fashion Awards



**LONDON** — Homegrown talents Jonathan Anderson and Martine Rose will be competing against Miuccia Prada, Glenn Martens, Rick Owens and Willy Chavarria for the top honor of Designer of the Year at the 2025 Fashion Awards, slated for Dec. 1 at the Royal Albert Hall in London.

They were nominated by a voting panel comprising 19 individuals in media and retail.

The BFC on Thursday also revealed the nominations for three major awards: British Womenswear Designer of the Year, British Menswear Designer of the Year, and Vanguard, a new category that somewhat combines the New Establishment Womenswear and New Establishment Menswear awards.

Notable nominees among these awards include Sarah Burton, Simone Rocha, Erdem Moralioglu, Craig Green and Grace Wales Bonner, as well as Steve O Smith and Torishéju Dumi, who took home the Karl Lagerfeld Special Jury Prize and the Savoir-Faire Prize, respectively, at the LVMH Prize for Young Designers award ceremony on Wednesday in Paris.

This year's fashion awards, the primary fundraiser of the BFC Foundation, which aims to support the future growth and success of the British fashion industry, will be the British Fashion Council's new chief executive officer Laura Weir's first major project to put through.

Compared to previous editions, this year's nominations are being revealed at a slower pace. Last year, by early September, the BFC had unveiled recipients for the Special Recognition Award and the Isabella Blow Award for Fashion Creator.

Assuming Weir is not making too many drastic changes, more designer nominations and award announcements, such as the Trailblazer Award and the Leader of Change Award,





are expected to be revealed in the coming months, leading up to the main event, which counts Pandora as a headline sponsor.

Below is the full list of the nominees so far.

Designer of the Year

Glenn Martens for Diesel and Maison Margiela  
Jonathan Anderson for Dior and JW Anderson  
Martine Rose for Martine Rose  
Miuccia Prada for Miu Miu  
Rick Owens for Rick Owens  
Willy Chavarria for Willy Chavarria

British Womenswear Designer of the Year

Charlotte Knowles and Alexandre Arsenault for Knwls  
Emma Chopova and Laura Lowena for Chopova Lowena  
Erdem Moralioglu for Erdem  
Sarah Burton for Givenchy  
Simone Rocha for Simone Rocha

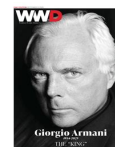
British Menswear Designer of the Year

Craig Green for Craig Green  
Foday Dumbuya for Labrum London  
Grace Wales Bonner for Wales Bonner  
Kiko Kostadinov for Kiko Kostadinov  
Nicholas Daley for Nicholas Daley  
Stefan Cooke and Jake Burt for Stefan Cooke

Vanguard

Aaron Esh for Aaron Esh  
Dilara Findıkoğlu for Dilara Findıkoğlu  
Feben for Feben  
Steve O Smith for Steve O Smith  
Tolu Coker for Tolu Coker  
Torishéju Dumi for Torishéju





# Fashion Scoops

## To the Highlands

Loro Piana is launching the Loro Highlands capsule collection with a dedicated campaign featuring Edie Campbell, photographed by Alasdair McLellan in Gloucestershire.

The images have an equestrian spirit, further enhanced by Campbell's legitimacy, as she is a talented horseback rider part of the Loro Piana Eventing team, a three-day competition consisting of dressage, cross country and show jumping, wearing the Loro Piana uniform.

"I have lots of nice things to say about the Loro Highlands Capsule Collection. It's very Scottish. That's kind of drawing on Loro Piana's links with Scotland and all of the history of fabric-making and textiles and tartans," Campbell told WWD. "We shot the collection in the Cotswolds, in the British countryside. It was a really beautiful day. We had horses on set, dogs, full shebang, felt very at home."

The men's and women's capsule, which will be available starting from Wednesday in Loro Piana boutiques and at

the brand's online store, features some of Loro Piana's finest fabrics: Cheviot, Cover Wool Storm, rainproof waxed finishes, and Loro Clan, which reinterprets the traditional Scottish tartan and is made of cashmere and the trademarked Wish wool. The tartan is available in two variations, one in brown and beige tones, and the other in green nuances, seen for example on the Elia button-down shirt for men and the Dalia shirt for women.

The capsule's color palette ranges from moss greens, dark browns and ochre-yellow nuances to coppery orange reminiscent of the Highlands in the fall season.

"I've always loved the rhythm of the countryside – the calming nature, the fresh air, the quiet," said Campbell. "The Loro Highlands Capsule captures that feeling of ease, with an authentic, timeless and sophisticated timbre."

"This sport is impossible without the horse. It's so important to have confidence in each other's ability, in each other's

decisions. It's deeply kind of spiritually nourishing being around horses," said Campbell.

The signature trademarked Horsey jacket is available in three-layer fabric – linen, silk and jersey with the Loro Clan tartan. The coats and double-breasted trenches are oversized adding to the comfort of the collection.

A focus is also on accessories, from felt hats and silk twill foulards to boots, from ankle high and with a gaiter to just below the knee, and the brand teamed up with a French master bootmaker to add a signature touch to the entirely waterproof Chasseur boots with a signature Loro Piana touch at the inner panel, in cashmere tartan.

Loro Piana has long had a strong connection with the equestrian world. In 1985, it established the Loro Piana Jumping Team and it subsequently forged an enduring bond with the Italian Federation of Equestrian Sports and the Italian Show Jumping Team.

In 1992, leveraging its technical knowledge, the brand created the official

uniforms for the Italian Show Jumping Team at the Barcelona Olympics, leading to the design of one of its signature jackets, the Horsey, in blue technical fabric with a yellow trim.

Since then, Loro Piana has continued to dress the Italian team at the Olympic Games and other significant international events, including the European and World Equestrian Games. It has also supported the Loro Piana Puissance Event and the Loro Piana City of Rome Grand Prix at the Piazza di Siena International Horse Jumping Show – the latter for more than 30 years.

Edwina Tops-Alexander, Jessica Springsteen and Lorenzo De Luca are professionals part of the Loro Piana Jumping Team who compete wearing Loro Piana uniforms in the International Show Jumping circuit.

Sara Morganti is the Olympic para-dressage champion who competes wearing the Loro Piana uniform as part of the Loro Piana Paradressage Team.

— LUISA ZARGANI







## BEAUTY

# Miu Miu Beauty Names U.S. Ambassadors

● Paloma Elsesser, Chloë Sevigny and Coco Gauff front a digital project, lensed by Petra Collins, for the recently launched Miutine.

BY JAMES MANSO

**Miu Miu Beauty is building** out its roster of U.S. ambassadors in tandem with its product offerings.

Having debuted Miutine in August, the brand has named three accompanying ambassadors for the U.S. Paloma Elsesser, Coco Gauff and Chloë Sevigny front the Petra Collins-lensed digital project promoting the launch.

"Miutine is a scent that doesn't beg to be understood – it simply exists, with confidence," Collins said in a statement. "It's not about being seen. It's about being felt. This is a celebration of women who exist on their own terms. Women who know the rules – and quietly undo them."

The U.S.-specific ambassadors join the global face of the fragrance, English actor Emma Corrin. Miutine is the brand's first fragrance launch under licensee L'Oréal, and the juice was nosed by IFF master

perfumer Dominique Ropion. At the time of its launch, industry sources estimated Miutine to reach 150 million euros in first-year retail sales.

"We want Miutine to be the emblem of the new chapter we are opening on Miu Miu," said Ladan Lari, global general manager of Miu Miu Beauty at L'Oréal, at the time of the launch.

"We think with Miutine, we can offer the young generation a space for this deliberate insouciance," Lari continued. "We want to give the definition of this Miutine girl in motion."

It's been a busy season for L'Oréal's Luxe division, which has named Usher the face of a new Ralph Lauren fragrance; opted to resurrect Studio 54 for a Valentino Beauty party, and introduced Prada Paradigme with fellow celebrity face Tom Holland.



Miu Miu Beauty's Miutine fragrance.

## STYLE MODE

## MATIÈRE PREMIÈRE

## LE DIAMANT D'AFRIQUE DU SUD

Les pierres d'exception sont devenues un argument majeur pour la haute joaillerie. C'est le cas de ce diamant taille coussin de 13,08 carats présenté par Dior Joaillerie.

**P**our sa dernière collection de haute joaillerie, la directrice artistique de Dior Joaillerie (groupe LVMH, propriétaire des Échos), Victoire de Castellane, confirme son goût des bijoux narratifs. « Victoire avait émis le souhait d'utiliser un diamant ovale. Le service Pierres s'est donc mis en chasse et a réussi à trouver cette pierre magnifique dont le brut a été extrait en Afrique du Sud. Elle a des proportions parfaites qui lui confèrent une élégance incroyable. D'ailleurs, nous l'avons sertie telle quelle », précise-t-on chez Dior Joaillerie. La taille ovale moderne a été inventée en 1957 par Lazare Kaplan, qui a été formé par son oncle Abraham Tolkowsky, fondateur d'une lignée d'illustres diamantaires. Il s'agit d'une variation elliptique de la taille ronde brillant – définie par Marcel Tolkowsky en 1919 –, comportant 56 à 58 facettes. Elle vient ici souligner la matière exceptionnelle de la gemme. « Elle possède une transparence et une brillance que l'on trouve uniquement dans un diamant type IIa. » Ce type chimique désigne une catégorie extrêmement rare, puisqu'elle concerne moins de 2% de tous les diamants naturels extraits. Totalement dénués d'atomes de nitrogène, ces diamants possèdent le cristal le plus pur et une transparence incomparable. Ce qui est le cas avec cette pierre d'un blanc exceptionnel et d'une pureté interne parfaite sous un grossissement de 10 fois. Certains laboratoires produisent des rapports de gradation qualifiant ces diamants comme étant de « type Golconde ». Ce nom renvoie aux mines légendaires d'Inde qui ont produit entre les <sup>xvi</sup><sup>e</sup> et <sup>xviii</sup><sup>e</sup> siècles certains des plus beaux diamants jamais découverts. Or, si l'extraction diamantifère en Inde est un fait attesté, aucun



Collier Diorexquis en or blanc, diamants blancs et jaunes, nacre blanche, saphirs roses, perles, grenats rhodolites et tsavorites, turquoises, émeraudes, spinelles et laque.

critère de gemmologie ne permet aujourd'hui d'attester avec certitude l'origine d'un diamant.  
**Gabrielle de Montmorin**

**L'AVIS DE L'EXPERTE**

**Valérie Goyer, directrice du département joaillerie d'Artcurial**

Les diamants de type IIa sont très très cotés sur le marché des ventes aux enchères. Nous en avons vendu un exceptionnel à Monaco, de 17,50 carats, taille émeraude, D et VVSI, pour un montant de 1,062 million d'euros.

ILLUSTRATION PORTRAIT : KIM ROSELIER POUR LES ÉCHOS WEEK-END DR



**RESPONSABILITE SOCIALE ET ENVIRONNEMENTALE**





## Can a new industry standard change the way fashion uses deadstock?

In recent years, the term ‘deadstock’ has been misinterpreted and overused, leaving brands vulnerable to greenwashing accusations. A new standard hopes to fix that, and maximise reuse in the process.

By Bella Webb



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At first glance, fashion brands working with deadstock materials is a rare win-win for both the planet and the industry’s profit margins. When deadstock — or unsellable inventory — is repurposed, it stops the environmental damage used to produce those materials from going to waste, and in an ideal world, also displaces virgin materials. On the financial side, brands are able to recoup some of their losses from overproduction and avoid sending expensive materials to landfill or incineration.

But criticism of deadstock has been mounting in recent years. The term has been overused and misinterpreted, referencing everything from industrial waste to unsold products, with little transparency over when, where or how it was produced. There is also a debate around how long materials need to be sat unused before being considered deadstock, when in the production journey those materials ought to be intercepted, and to what degree using deadstock can be marketed as a sustainability play. All of this has left the sector susceptible to greenwashing.

A big part of the problem is that deadstock doesn’t have an official definition, says Stephanie Benedetto, co-founder and CEO of inventory management platform Aloqia (formerly deadstock marketplace Queen of Raw). On 5 September, Aloqia is launching a new platform called the “Foundstock Standard” in an attempt to establish a consensus on what exactly deadstock is, and incentivise its reuse. Central to its work is reframing waste as a resource, rather than “dead”.

Aloqia’s proposed definition of “foundstock” is currently a 20-page working document — available in full on the standard’s new website — which will be reviewed and updated by its advisory board and independent auditing partners over the next six months. However, at its core, foundstock is defined as unused, pre-consumer textile materials such as yarns, fabric rolls or raw goods that were produced but never used, shipped or sold. This also includes unfinished items that were developed for a specific purpose, but were set aside or discarded before fulfilling that purpose, and have been held in storage for at least 90 days.



Depending on the level of traceability and the documentation provided alongside deadstock materials, brands using the standard will be awarded silver, gold or platinum status. Crucially, certified foundstock can only be sold at the same price or lower, to avoid incentivising brands to produce deadstock for profit.

The platform is open to the whole industry, for a yet-to-be-determined fee, and companies do not need to be an Aloqia client to gain access. The two organisations will remain separate legally and financially, Benedetto says.

The need for a harmonised definition is clear. Brands selling into the European Union will soon have to consider what happens to their products post-purchase under the new extended producer responsibility (EPR) rules. The circular infrastructure required to comply will create meaningful avenues for waste at every stage of the supply chain, including deadstock, the majority of which is currently resold, wasted, sent to landfill or incinerated.

Meanwhile, despite some flip-flopping by the European Commission — largely related to how widely new regulations should apply — the stakes for greenwashing are only getting higher. Shein was recently hit with a €1 million fine for greenwashing (it said it took immediate action to address the concerns raised and has improved its website to ensure that all environmental claims are compliant with regulation). And as of April 2025, the UK watchdog, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), has the power to fine businesses up to 10 per cent of their worldwide turnover for greenwashing.

And for US brands, there's an additional incentive to identify and utilise deadstock: with tariffs making it more difficult and expensive to import products, fashion businesses are looking at what is already available domestically. While the US has limited raw materials appropriate for fashion production, what it has in abundance is waste, of which deadstock makes up a significant proportion.

## A work in progress

Aloqia has clear stakes in the game. Originally founded as Queen of Raw in 2014, the US-based company rebranded in 2024 to reflect its growing B2B business, developing software that enables brands such as Nike, Ralph Lauren and Victoria's Secret to manage excess materials at scale.

In 2022, Aloqia announced a controversial partnership with Shein, which it says has helped the ultra-fast fashion giant divert over 32,000 metres of deadstock fabric. Critics questioned whether the use of deadstock fabrics from other brands was sufficient to offset the waste created by Shein's broader business model, and raised concerns over how the use of deadstock was marketed, pointing out how difficult it is to make credible claims about the virgin resources displaced by using deadstock without accurate lifecycle assessments.

Benedetto says the marketing of brand partnerships is outside of Aloqia's remit, but the Foundstock Standard will include best practices on how to communicate the use of certified materials. She also notes that broader business practices will be built into the Foundstock Standard's three tiers. While the exact details will be ironed out during the pilot phase, the idea is that brands with worse environmental and social impacts outside of their use of deadstock will be denied the certification, or capped at lower tiers, depending on severity.

She also emphasises that, while Aloqia instigated the Foundstock Standard and has been driving its rollout, much of the backstage work has been undertaken by third-party auditors Control Union and Peterson. The process started with a landscape analysis of existing rules and regulations around deadstock, highlighting the lack of a standardised definition. Then, the auditors interviewed representatives from Aloqia and a wide-ranging consortium of fashion brands to understand the different definitions currently at play, and common points of fracture.





“That process included smaller and larger companies, all the way from mass market to luxury, spanning from Europe to Asia, and even extending to supply chain partners of the brands involved,” explains Benedetto. “It’s very important to us that all of those voices are heard.”

The names of consortium members will be kept under wraps until the public consultation (which goes live today) closes before the end of the year. This is to avoid biasing public opinion on the standard, at the recommendation of Control Union and Peterson. Once the consultation is complete — likely in the new year — Aloqia will unveil the standard’s consortium partners, advisory council and pilot programmes.

“Without a clear definition, how are you going to measure, report and comply with regulatory requirements going forward?”

When the pilot programmes come into play, participating brands will road-test the standard’s certification and platform. Some will centralise their deadstock for internal reuse, while others will identify deadstock to sell it on. Either way, transparency and traceability will be key, says Benedetto, noting that the Foundstock Standard will also monitor how much deadstock companies are producing and whether this decreases over time.

The pilot programmes have a lot of kinks to work out, including the exact fees for certified brands and whether brands will be able to repurpose all of the deadstock they find. Older materials which were made before certain regulations came into play will have to reckon with their chemical heritage, which could render them inappropriate for contemporary consumers. Benedetto says quality assurance and content testing are part of the process. How this works in practice — especially when deadstock appears in small pockets all over the world, often buried deep in supply chains — will be determined during the pilots.

If these questions are answered, a unified standard could help unlock progress and curb waste, says Benedetto. “The definition of deadstock was a huge white space,” she explains. “The idea for the pilots is to figure out whether the definition we have come up with actually works. Which elements are too hard or too easy to meet? What needs to change so that everyone can participate?”

There is scope for the definition to inform more progressive regulations in future and raise the industry’s ambition, she adds. “Without a clear definition, how are you going to measure, report and comply with regulatory requirements going forward?”

*Comments, questions or feedback? Email us at [feedback@voguebusiness.com](mailto:feedback@voguebusiness.com).*



## **CONJONCTURE - TENDANCES**



## Thrifty Luxe: 5 Takeaways From The RealReal's 2025 Resale Report



The RealReal's 2025 Resale Report. Courtesy

Even if luxury brands are still trying to get their heads around the resale market — is it a competitor? A gateway to new consumers? Something else? — designer-loving shoppers don't seem to need any help.

The RealReal Inc.'s 2025 Resale Report, released Thursday, underscores just how important secondhand has become for many shoppers who are clearly looking at moment-to-moment developments in the fashion industry and turning to resale to buy or for context.

Mark that as a signal of a rapidly changing industry and a world that's maybe a little more mixed up than usual.

"The instinct to value what lasts feels more relevant than ever," said Rati Levesque, president and chief executive officer of The RealReal, in the report's introduction.

"In 2025, the world felt like it was shifting by the hour with economic instability and rising global tensions," Levesque said. "AI blurred the lines between real and synthetic. Trends were accelerated and flattened by social media.

"In response, shoppers rejected uniformity and instead wanted styles that felt real, unfiltered, and un-replicable," she said. "Fashion 'rules' were irrelevant. The result is a moment in fashion not shaped by brands or trends, but by individuals expressing their personal style, opting out of the mainstream, and shopping with intention. Rather than being told what was 'in,' shoppers decided for themselves — and turned to the secondary market to do so."

Here, a peek through resale's lens on fashion.

### 1. The Resale Winners, According to The RealReal's Data

Jonathan Anderson — who made the jump from Loewe to Dior — ranked as the buzziest creative director of the year on The RealReal, with new Loewe buyers growing 77



percent on the platform.

Kendrick Lamar's Super Bowl halftime show was picked as the Most Iconic Celebrity Fashion Moment, pushing searches for "Celine Flare Jeans" up 963 percent in 24 hours.

And the 2010s reigned as the favorite fashion era as searches for Hervé Léger bandage dresses rose 106 percent.

## 2. The Resale Impact of All Those Designer Moves

While luxury brands have sought to juice up their businesses with designer changes all over the place, there was an echo effect on The RealReal, where searches for on-the-move design stars skyrocketed.

Searches for Loewe jumped 488 percent the day Johnathan Anderson's departure was announced.

And searches for "Demna" increased 310 percent in one day as the designer made his move from Balenciaga to Gucci.

## 3. The Most Searched Brands

The big names are, for the most part, also the big winners when it comes to the most searched brands on The RealReal. Here, the brands resale shoppers are looking for the most, in order.

1. Louis Vuitton
2. Chanel
3. Prada
4. Miu Miu
5. Gucci
6. Loewe
7. Bottega Veneta
8. Celine
9. Dior
10. The Row (tie)
10. Fendi (tie)
4. Closely Watched

The RealReal has seen a 46 percent increase in new watch buyers this year, with Rolex and Cartier leading the way. It is a trend that the resale report found is touching every generation, with each giving their own take on what time it is. According to The RealReal, the breakout is as follows:

- Boomers: The Generation Most Likely to Wear a Status Symbol
  - Gen X: The Generation Most Likely to Have a Collection
  - Millennials: The Generation Most Likely to Rock a Gold Explorer
  - Gen Z: The Generation Most Likely to Seek Out a Bold Brand
5. Lived-in, Naturally

The one thing resale doesn't have? New product.

And The RealReal sees that as a trend-right asset.

"In an age of AI-powered LinkedIn portraits, fortysomethings with facelifts, and the increasingly rare site of natural teeth on the silver screen, there's a status symbol in embracing the imperfection," the report said. "Being hot in Hollywood without veneers? It's a power play. The same thing applies to fashion: pieces with patina and wear are more in-demand than ever. Shoppers want proof of life."





Sales of bags with some patina were up 45 percent this year on The RealReal, with increases in styles from Louis Vuitton (up 14 percent), Chanel (15 percent), Hermès (35 percent) and Balenciaga (22 percent).

