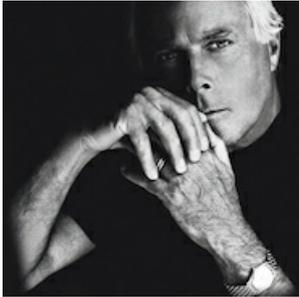


COMMERCE

Armani vows to cease fur use in all collections post-fall/winter 2016

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Promotional image of Giorgio Armani for #Atribute

By STAFF REPORTS

Italian fashion house Giorgio Armani has pledged that going forward its collections will be 100 percent fur-free.

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The brand has made a no-fur promise from the fall/winter 2016 collection onwards, with the policy being applied to its Giorgio Armani, Armani Priv and Emporio Armani lines. Alongside a want for brand transparency, today's consumers are also looking for labels with ethical business practices regarding the sourcing and use of raw materials such as leathers, exotic skins and furs.

Free of fur

Global fur retail sales are estimated at \$35.8 billion, according to an independent study conducted by the International Fur Federation and PwC Italy.

Fur has maintained its appeal for designers, and the interest is growing, with 500 brands using fur in their fall 2015 collections. While there has been some dissent from animal rights groups over the use of fur, for the time being luxury's affection for the textile shows no signs of waning ([see story](#)).

But for fans of Armani, apparel and accessories made with real animal fur will no longer be designed by the brand. Armani's announcement follows a similar promise made by German fashion label Hugo Boss last year.

The end of fur use by Armani also comes after its founding designer worked closely with the Humane Society International and The Fur Free Alliance. The Fur Free Alliance is an animal protection coalition made up of 40 brands and is represented in 28 countries working to end the fur trade.



Armani fall/winter 2016 ready-to-wear collection

Recently, the Humane Society International exposed the mistreatment and suffering of rabbits, foxes and raccoon dogs on Chinese fur farms. These animals, subjected to confinement in small, bare, wire cages, live a life void of natural behavior, with many displaying stress-related habits such as repetitive turning and pacing.

In a Humane Society International video, the group's footage exposed the methods used to slaughter these animals for the use of their furs.

"I am pleased to announce that the Armani Group has made a firm commitment to abolish the use of animal fur in its collections," Mr. Armani in a statement. "Technological progress made over the years allows us to have valid alternatives at our disposition that render the use of cruel practices unnecessary as regards animals.

"Pursuing the positive process undertaken long ago, my company is now taking a major step ahead, reflecting our attention to the critical issues of protecting and caring for the environment and animals."

Animal rights groups often target luxury brands for their use of exotic leathers. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals has singled out Italy's Prada and France's Hermès for the unethical treatment of ostriches.

Ostrich leather, an exotic skin known for its polka dot pattern where the bird's feathers once grew, is commonly used by leather goods brands. PETA's latest investigative report, posted to YouTube, shows the mistreatment of ostriches for the benefit of luxury brands.

In regard to Mr. Armani's announcement, Claire Bass, executive director of Humane Society International United Kingdom, said, "Armani is the first word in luxury fashion, and so it is hugely significant for the global fashion industry that Armani has pledged to remove animal fur from all his new collections going forward.

"Those designers such as Prada, Fendi and Michael Kors who continue to put animal suffering on the catwalk are looking increasingly isolated, with this move by Armani probably the most powerful message yet that killing animals for their fur is never fashionable."

According to the Humane Society International, fashion labels are swapping fur for cruelty-free alternatives, with Hugo Boss, Calvin Klein, Tommy Hilfiger and Ralph Lauren among the brands to make the switch. But, despite best efforts, real fur is commonly and misleadingly labeled as synthetic, presenting consumers wishing to avoid fur with

a challenge.

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