

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Maria Grazia Chiuri appointed as Dior's first female artistic director

July 8, 2016



*Maria Grazia Chiuri*

By STAFF REPORTS

French atelier Christian Dior has confirmed Maria Grazia Chiuri as its artistic director of haute couture, ready-to-wear and accessories collections for women.

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Ms. Chiuri joins Dior from Italian fashion house Valentino, where she served as co-creative director with design partner Pierpaolo Piccioli for the last eight years. Valentino announced that Ms. Chiuri would be leaving the brand after a 17-year tenure yesterday, which added to the speculation that the designer would land at Dior in the coming days ([see story](#)).

### First lady of Dior

Sources had suggested that Dior would announce its replacement for Raf Simons, who exited the brand in October 2015, after its couture presentation held on July 4.

LVMH-owned Dior welcomed Ms. Chiuri as its new artistic director with a portrait of the designer shared to its social media accounts, as well as a post to the DiorMag blog.

The appointment is historic for the 70-year-old House of Dior, as Ms. Chiuri will be the first female artistic director to design for the brand. Ms. Chiuri is the seventh designer since the house was established by its namesake founder in 1946.

In its announcement, Dior aligned Ms. Chiuri's design aesthetic with Mr. Dior's, saying that her vision of women is "both sensual and poetic, elegant and refined, modern and respectful of the past."

Also, Dior praised Ms. Chiuri's passion for artisan work, a pillar of its brand.

Ms. Chiuri's first collection for Dior will be ready-to-wear for spring/summer 2017. The collection is scheduled to be presented on Sept. 30.

"It's a big responsibility to be the first woman to lead the creation of a house so strongly linked to the expression of femininity," Ms. Chiuri said in a statement. "The vast richness of its heritage is a constant source of inspiration for fashion today and I am delighted to express my own vision."

Fashion critics have suggested that Dior would benefit from a return to more "romantic, fairytale-like" designs rather than its recent modern styles ([see story](#)).

The details of Ms. Chiuri's contract were not disclosed, but Sidney Toledano, president/CEO of Dior told WWD it will be a "long-term relationship."

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