

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Francois Kress reportedly leaving Carolina Herrera

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Carolina Herrera, resort 2016

By STAFF REPORTS

U.S. fashion label Carolina Herrera's CEO is said to be stepping down from his position after less than one year.

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Women's Wear Daily's report that Francois Kress would be exiting the company came mere days after Carolina Herrera settled a lawsuit against Oscar de la Renta over design talent. Through filings in the suit, Mr. Kress' plans to transition the label's eponymous designer away from the creative director role came to light.

Changing leadership

Mr. Kress joined Carolina Herrera in March 2015, taking over the role from Caroline Brown, who moved to Donna Karan International.

Prior to arriving at Carolina Herrera, Mr. Kress had a resume that included president of Stuart Weitzman and president/CEO of Prada.

Carolina Herrera filed a suit against Oscar de la Renta in December, claiming that the defendant's hire of its former employee Laura Kim violated her non-compete agreement.

According to the lawsuit, Ms. Kim was a vice president at Carolina Herrera when Mr. Kress offered her the creative director position. Ms. Kim declined the role because she would not have complete creative control as Ms. Herrera is very much involved in designing for the brand ([see story](#)).



Carolina Herrera spring/summer 2016 runway

After saying no to Carolina Herrera, Ms. Kim was offered a co-creative director position with her former employer Oscar de la Renta, with which she had worked for about a decade.

The New York-based fashion houses Carolina Herrera and Oscar de la Renta ended their dispute over one employee's non-compete agreement discreetly on Jan. 6.

The terms, which were not disclosed, have allowed Ms. Kim to resume work on Oscar de la Renta's fall/winter 2017 collection, her first at the head of the label. With this settlement wrapped up before their court date of Jan. 10, both companies avoided arguing their cases in public, but documents shed light on the competitive tension between the brands ([see story](#)).

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