

RETAIL

Saks enables in-store visibility for Vanity Fair's 2017 International Best-Dressed List

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Image courtesy of Vanity Fair magazine

By JEN KING

Department store chain Saks Fifth Avenue is demonstrating its sartorial sense in an exclusive partnership with Cond Nast-owned title Vanity Fair.

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Each year since its inception in 1940, Vanity Fair has catalogued global style leaders in its International Best-Dressed List. With honorees ranging from Hollywood starlets and models to royalty and heads of state, the International Best-Dressed List has influenced the fashion choices of Vanity Fair readers for more than 75 years.

"Vanity Fair, like Saks Fifth Avenue, is an arbiter of style, and to partner with them on this year's International Best-Dressed List is a thrill," said Roopal Patel, senior vice president and fashion director at [Saks Fifth Avenue](#), New York.

"Dressing fashionable figures is something that comes naturally to Saks, and we can't wait to celebrate the list throughout 2017," she said.

An arbiter of style

The International Best-Dressed List was developed by Eleanor Lambert in the 1940s.

Ms. Lambert's contributions to the fashion industry include the launch of what is now known as New York Fashion Week in 1942 and the organization of Council of Fashion Designers of America in 1962, among many other accomplishments throughout her decades-spanning career.

A year before her death in 2002, Ms. Lambert passed the International Best-Dressed List torch to four of Vanity Fair's editors. The annual list's care was bequeathed to Graydon Carter, Aimee Bell, Amy Fine Collins and Reinaldo Herrera.

The annual International Best-Dressed List is an anticipated element of the global style calendar and is based on ballot entries. Per WWD, the list is determined by a poll, based on approximately 2,000 ballots, taken by fashion journalists, retailers, past honorees, philanthropists, photographers and other fashionable individuals with a "significant social presence."

Once the ballots, which were sent out this month, have been submitted, entries are reviewed by a committee. Ms. Fine Collins explained that the committee aims to create a well-balanced list of individuals of different ages, locations and professions.

The Vanity Fair special correspondent describes the final International Best-Dressed List as being on par with the guest list of a dinner party.

Vanity Fair's [2016 International Best-Dressed List](#) included Olivia Chantecaille of Chantecaille Beaute, writer Zadie Smith, former United States vice president Joe Biden, HRH Prince Harry, professional football player Victor Cruz and actors Helen Mirren, Lily James, Idris Elba and Eddie Redmayne, to name a few.

By being an exclusive partner for the listorial, the retailer positions itself as a point of sale for readers looking to replicate the style choices of the 2017 International Best-Dressed List's winners.

Through its partnership for Vanity Fair's 2017 International Best-Dressed List Saks will host events throughout the year. Activations include events hosted by Ms. Fine Collins at Saks locations across the U.S.

The department store chain will also feature an Instagram campaign of Best-Dressed looks styled by Ms. Collins. The content will be shared as the lead up to Vanity Fair's October issue announcement of the year's honorees.

Saks' content for the International Best-Dressed List will be an accompaniment to Vanity Fair's own materials on all its platforms and a gala celebration.

Synonymous with fashion

Recently, the retailer has worked to display its connection to the fashion landscape.

For example, Saks scouted up-and-coming fashion talents through an open call in New York.

The second edition of the retailer's Emerging Designer Showcase took place April 7 at its downtown store, and invited women's wear labels to pitch their lines to Saks' fashion and buying teams. Finding and stocking labels before competitors discover them is one way for retailers to differentiate their offerings.



Inside Saks Downtown

Last year, Saks discovered London-based Roberta Einer and sustainable-focused New York brand Vetta in its showcase, making a buy from the two collections ([see story](#)).

Also, Saks is refining its contemporary offerings by opening the doors to its new speciality store concept, The Collective, in Greenwich, CT.

Although Saks' flagship is in New York, the retailer has turned to nearby Greenwich, an affluent suburb not far from the city, as a testing ground for new in-store strategies. Saks describes The Collective as a prototype for modernizing its contemporary departments at all of its stores across the United States and Canada ([see story](#)).

"The annual International Best-Dressed List is one of the most highly anticipated moments on the global style calendar," said Chris Mitchell, chief business officer at [Vanity Fair](#), New York.

"We're so pleased to partner with Saks Fifth Avenue as we continue to grow our I.B.D.L. program to include content across all Vanity Fair platforms, in-store events and a celebration of the honorees in October," he said.

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