

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Yves Saint Laurent co-founder Pierre Berg dies

September 8, 2017



Pierre Berg at Muse Saint Laurent in Paris, 2017. Image courtesy of Fondation Pierre Berg - Yves Saint Laurent, photo by Luc Castel

By STAFF REPORTS

Pierre Berg, the entrepreneur who co-founded fashion house Yves Saint Laurent, has died at the age of 86.

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Mr. Berg was the long-time business partner of the label's eponymous co-founder, and was also the designer's life partner at one time. Following news of his passing, luxury brands and companies mourned his death, looking back on his impact to the industry.

Fashion founder

According to an announcement from Fondation Pierre Berg Yves Saint Laurent, Mr. Berg died in his sleep on the morning of Sept. 8 following a long illness. Per The New York Times, Mr. Berg's battle was with the muscle disease myopathy.

Along with Mr. Saint Laurent, Mr. Berg founded couture house Yves Saint Laurent in 1961. He led the label until 2002.



Yves Saint Laurent with Pierre Berg. Image credit: Saint Laurent

The businessman was behind the creation of two new museums dedicated to Mr. Saint Laurent's work in Paris and Marrakech. With both slated to open this fall, Mr. Berg passed away before he could see them inaugurated ([see story](#)).

Along with his impact on the fashion community, Mr. Berg was a patron of the arts. He served as director of the Théâtre de l'Athènes Louis-Jouvet and was also the president of the Opéra National de Paris.

Mr. Berg and Mr. Saint Laurent amassed a large private art collection that was sold in 2009 following the designer's death, garnering 375 million euros that went toward their namesake foundation. The pair, who fell in love with Morocco, saved the Jardin Majorelle from being destroyed.

Another cause taken up by Mr. Berg was the AIDS epidemic. In 1994 he founded Sidaction, which focused on researching and supporting the fight against the disease.

A member of France's Legion of Honor, Mr. Berg was promoted to Grand Officier of the Ordre national de la Légion d'honneur in 2015. He was also recognized for his service to Morocco with the Grand Cross of the Order of Ouissam Alaouite.

Saint Laurent mourned Mr. Berg's death with the statement, "With immense sadness we have learned of the passing of Monsieur Pierre Berg, founder with Yves Saint Laurent of the Maison. We share the grief of his friends and family and all those who loved him. Thank you Pierre Berg. You will be missed."

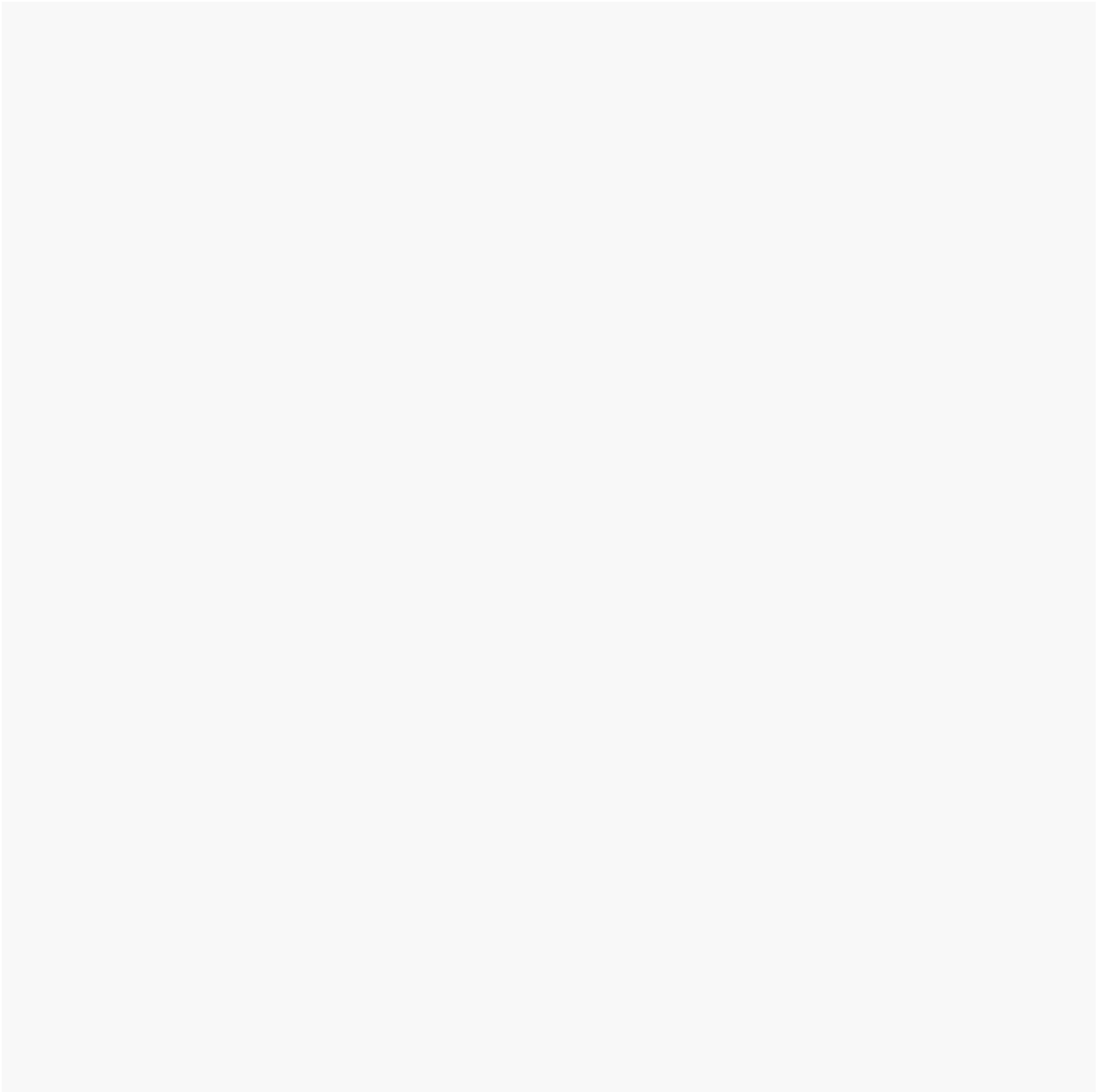
The label's parent company Kering also remarked on the executive's death.

"I will always remember Pierre Berg as a man instilled with a fertile tension between avant-gardism and the will to work relentlessly to inscribe creation in history," said François-Henri Pinault, chairman and CEO of Kering, in a statement issued by the group. "From the outset, he wished to preserve all the archives of Yves Saint Laurent's work,

an inestimable patrimony that will soon be made available to the public the world over to see in exceptional museums.

"This man who has just left us was a great cultural figure, and a man with convictions he fought tirelessly to uphold. A man I deeply respect."

Berluti also took to social media to express its condolences, sharing a shoe form for the entrepreneur and calling Mr. Berg "one of [Berluti's] greatest friends."



A post shared by BERLUTI (@berluti) on Sep 8, 2017 at 6:51am PDT