

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Hublot inks eyewear license with Italia Independent

April 11, 2018



*Hublot has previously worked with Italia Independent on watches and eyewear. Image credit: Hublot*

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By STAFF REPORTS

Swiss watchmaker Hublot is building on its existing relationship with Italia Independent through a licensing deal for eyewear.

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After partnering on limited-edition designs such as chronographs and sunglasses, Italia Independent and Hublot are making more of a push into collaborative eyewear. The first licensed eyewear collection will launch in September.

"The collaboration between Hublot, Lapo Elkann and Italia Independent is a marvelous example of our 'The Art of Fusion' concept," said Ricardo Guadalupe, CEO of Hublot, in a statement. "It fuses two creative spirits, both intent on leaving the beaten track behind, and on furthering the quest to use new materials.

"We have worked together since 2014 and hope it will continue in the future," he said.

Eye on eyewear

Italia Independent, founded and artistic directed by Lapo Elkann, has worked with Hublot a number of times.

Last year, the partners teamed for sunglass collections named after Hublot's Big Bang and Classic Fusion timepieces.

"This licensing agreement is extremely important to us because it highlights our ability to attract brands of excellence and strengthens the process of relaunching Italia Independent, allowing us to enter a premium eyewear segment with Hublot, a unique company in terms of style, innovation and creativity," said Giovanni Carlino, CEO of Italia Independent, in a statement.



*Hublot's eyewear with Italia Independent. Image credit: Italia Independent*

The global eyewear market is currently valued at \$90 billion, and the popular category shows no signs of slowing, as it is expected to see growth of 65 percent by 2020, according to a new report by Fashionbi.

Optical and sunglass collections are an interesting faction of the luxury market due to the category being manufactured by only a small handful of companies such as Italy's Luxottica and Safilo, two of the largest eyewear players. Luxottica, Safilo and other eyewear manufacturers work with luxury brands through licensing agreements, a strategy that consumers may be unaware of or disregard ([see story](#)).

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