

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Kenzo creative directors to leave label

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*Kenzotopia campaign. Image courtesy of Kenzo*

By STAFF REPORT'S

LVMH-owned fashion label Kenzo's creative directors Carol Lim and Humberto Leon are said to be parting ways with the house as they look to focus more on their Opening Ceremony brand.

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According to a report from *Women's Wear Daily*, Ms. Lim and Mr. Leon's final runway show for Kenzo will be held June 23 during Paris Men's Fashion Week, and their last day at the brand will be July 1. As of press time, no successor has been named.

### Parting ways

Ms. Lim and Mr. Leon, who are both American, joined Paris-based Kenzo in 2011. The designers took an affordable approach to luxury fashion, and a number of their pieces became street-style hits, such as the tiger sweatshirt.

"At Kenzo, luxury is synonymous with the highest quality at affordable prices," Ms. Lim and Mr. Leon said in a statement. "This means creating fashion that reconciles the runway with the street.

"It is very important for us because we do not want to create collections that could only exist in a fashion show," they said. "What excites us is seeing people wear our clothes in daily life and reinvigorating its original energy into Kenzo. We do that by playing with codes such as color, materials and prints and by mixing art worlds."

Ms. Lim and Mr. Leon's multicultural vision for Kenzo also embraced their Asian heritage that they share with house founder Kenzo Takada. For their spring 2018 runway show, the designers cast only Asian models to honor Mr. Takada's background.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

"The first definition of our relationship is friendship." KENZO Creative Directors, @carollim and @humberto, discuss their long-standing collaboration in the dedicated article in @instylemagazine. Shot by @jasonschrnmidtstudio. #CollectionMemento4 #KENZOTALI #KENZOPress

A post shared by KENZO (@kenzo) on Apr 20, 2019 at 9:00am PDT

### *Instagram post from Kenzo*

Under its current creative direction, Kenzo's marketing has been content-focused and whimsical. Kenzo often played the role of film producer, commissioning short narrative movies from talents such as Carrie Brownstein and Gregg Araki.

Kenzo recently mixed after-school specials and superpowers in a cinematic fall campaign.

For the first time, Kenzo's Mr. Leon turned filmmaker, writing and directing a 30-minute short that follows a family filled with teenagers possessing quirky special abilities. Infused with personal touches, the film serves as not only a marketing effort but a look into Mr. Leon's formative years ([see story](#)).

"Humberto and Carol consistently brought diversity and inclusion to the forefront at Kenzo, using their collections, fashion shows, advertising and special projects to engage and galvanize a new generation of creative," said Sylvie Colin, CEO of Kenzo, in a statement to *WWD*. "They have always approached everything they do through the lens of customer experience and pioneered a modern vision of what it is to be a creative director. We wish them all the best in their new adventures."

The designers are reportedly leaving to focus more on Opening Ceremony, the concept boutique chain and brand that they founded in 2002.