

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Alber Elbaz returns to fashion with Richemont alliance

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Alber Elbaz. Image credit: Tod's

By STAFF REPORTS

Israeli designer Alber Elbaz is joining forces with Swiss conglomerate Richemont on a startup-style venture.

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Dubbed "AZ Fashion" after the first and last letters of Mr. Elbaz's name, the joint venture will be focused on turning "dreams into reality." Since exiting his role as Lanvin's women's wear creative director in 2015, Mr. Elbaz has collaborated with luxury brands including Tod's and Frdric Malle, but this partnership marks a more permanent move back into the luxury business.

"Upon hearing Alber Elbaz describe his vision for fashion and the projects it inspires in him, I was again struck by his creativity and insight," said Johann Rupert, chairman of Richemont, in a statement.

"His talent and inventiveness, with his sensitivity towards women and their wellbeing, will be of great value to our group and its maisons," he said. "We warmly welcome Alber to Richemont and look forward to an exciting partnership."

Making a comeback

In 2015, Mr. Elbaz was abruptly fired from his role at Lanvin after 14 years in the role. The termination was said to have been caused by tensions between the designer and majority shareholder Shaw-Lan Wang.

During his tenure at Lanvin, Mr. Elbaz revived the house, with annual revenues estimated to be approximately \$321 million at the time of his departure ([see story](#)).

After the split from Lanvin, Mr. Elbaz has worked as a creative consultant and collaborator for a number of brands.

Este Lauder Cos.' niche perfumer Frdric Malle worked with Mr. Elbaz to portray the feel of wearing his garments in a perfume ([see story](#)).

Tod's recently collaborated with Mr. Elbaz for an accessories capsule collection. Titled "Happy Moments," the line is part of the Tod's Factory concept, which aims to bring newness to consumers on a more consistent basis through drops and limited-editions ([see story](#)).

Known for his sense of whimsy and humor, Mr. Elbaz's capsule for Tod's was launched with an effervescent campaign.

Alber Elbaz's Tod's Happy Moments campaign

While limited details have emerged about the Richemont alliance, the group has hinted that Mr. Elbaz's influence will extend to a number of its brands.

"I am very happy to partner with Richemont and to establish my dream factory,' which will focus on developing solutions for women of our times," Mr. Elbaz said in a statement. "I am extremely excited to collaborate with good people, talented and smart individuals and look forward to also having a lot of fun with this new adventure."

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