

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Louis Vuitton designer Virgil Abloh dies of cancer

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Virgil Abloh. Image courtesy of LVMH

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

Virgil Abloh, men's artistic director of Louis Vuitton and founder of the Off-White label, passed away Sunday, Nov. 28 of cancer. He was 41 years old.

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Mr. Abloh had been privately battling an aggressive form of cancer – cardiac angiosarcoma – for a couple of years. The son of Ghanaian immigrants to the United States, Mr. Abloh was a man of many facets, including architect, artist, engineer, creative director and designer.

"We are all shocked after this terrible news," said LVMH Group chairman/CEO Bernard Arnault in a statement. "Virgil was not only a genius designer, a visionary, he was also a man with a beautiful soul and great wisdom.

"The LVMH family joins me in this moment of great sorrow, and we are all thinking of his loved ones after the passing of their husband, their father, their brother or their friend," he said.

Mr. Abloh was men's artistic director of Louis Vuitton since March 2018.

In July 2021, LVMH had acquired a majority stake in Off-White LLC, the trademark owner of Off-White. Mr. Abloh was the founder and artistic director of Off-White since 2013.

Additionally, LVMH and Mr. Abloh had announced the expansion of their relationship to launch new brands and partner with existing ones in a variety of sectors beyond the realm of fashion, the company said in a statement.

Mr. Abloh was born in Rockford, Illinois in 1980. After earning a degree in civil engineering from the University of Wisconsin Madison, he completed a master's degree in architecture at the Illinois Institute of Technology in a curriculum founded by noted architect Mies van der Rohe.

Mr. Abloh's brand Off-White c/o Virgil Abloh was started in 2012 as an artwork titled "PYREX VISION." In 2013, the brand premiered a seasonal men's and women's fashion label showing runway collections during Paris Fashion Week since 2015.

In 2015, Virgil Abloh for Off-White c/o Virgil Abloh was among the finalists of the LVMH Prize.

Mr. Abloh has also presented his work at major design institutions including the Harvard Graduate School of Design, Columbia Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation and the Rhode Island School of Design.

In 2019 Mr. Abloh had a major exhibition of past and current work at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Chicago, Illinois.

Mr. Abloh was been awarded various gongs throughout his career, most recently winning the British Fashion Awards "Urban Luxe" award and International Designer of the Year at the GQ Men of the Year Awards in 2017.

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