

Armani says no to fur

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On 22nd March 2016 the Italian daily newspaper “La Repubblica” (http://www.repubblica.it/ambiente/2016/03/22/news/armani_rinuncia_alle_pellicce-136081880) reported on a most important story for the world of fashion. The designer Giorgio Armani, who has stamped his influence on the second half of the 21st century, so much so that the great Suzy Menkes, international editor of VOGUE (<http://www.vogue.es/suzy-menkes/articulos/giorgio-armani-plays-in-the-sand-suzy-menkes/20836>), has referred to this period as the “Armani era”, declared that, starting from his Autumn/Winter 2016-2017 collection, he will not use animal fur in his designs, in consideration of the fact that nowadays, thanks to technological progress, people can find valid alternatives that do not involve cruelty to animals¹.



The declaration of the famous Italian designer, made in agreement with the “Fur Free Alliance” (<http://www.furfreealliance.com/>), has produced waves of support amongst animal rights activists, but, above all, has stirred the great fashion houses, journalists and specialized magazines, fashion bloggers, stylists and, ultimately, an industry that accounts for a large percentage of profits (Armani is the second

¹ The declaration of Giorgio Armani, worth to be read in its entirety: "Progresso Il tecnologico raggiunto in questi anni - ha dichiarato Giorgio Armani - ci permette di avere a disposizione alternative validate che inutile rendono il ricorso a pratiche crudeli nei Confronti degli animali . Proseguendo il processo virtuoso intrapreso da tempo, mia azienda compie quindi oggi un important step away to testimonianza della particolare attenzione verso le delicate problematiche relative to rispetto alla safeguard and dell'ambiente and the mondo animale ". A strong plea for respect for the environment and the ethical treatment of animals.

largest Italian company, after “Ferrero”), and that uses approximately 95 million animals for their fur has a decisive influence on the world, apart of course from the cosmetic industry, which, in spite of prohibitions², continues testing on animals, as is the case with L'Oreal and other brands.

Since Stella McCartney (<http://www.thesartorialist.com/paris/stella-mccartney-introduces-fur-free-fur/>) declared some years ago that she would not use material that emanated from cruelty to animals in her designs, the creations of the British designer proudly display the label “Fur Free”, which is an ethical standard that guides consumers, although at the moment it is completely unregulated. The question of ethical and sustainable labelling, in contrast with other areas of consumption (food, cosmetics, cleaning products, for example) has yet to be resolved by the fashion industry³.



Hilfiger, Hugo Boss, as well as low-cost fashion groups (Zara, H&M, American Apparel, Berschka, Asos) have positioned themselves in favour of eco-friendly fashion, against the use of animals for their creations). Since the famous designer – daughter of the no less famous musician Sir Paul McCartney, also an animal rights activist-, defined herself as being in favour of the use of ethical alternatives, there has been no turning back. In Italy, la Lega Antivivisezione (Lav <http://www.lav.it/>), has promoted the project Animal Free Fashion (<http://www.animalfree.info/>) which encourages people to wear cruelty free fashion and presents alternatives for respectful and sustainable fashion.

As has occurred with other social movements that have decisively influenced economic activity, it is certain that the transformation and disappearance of the fur industry will become a reality. I do not think that there is anyone nowadays that wears a whale corset, because the mythical garment can now be made with synthetic material, which has successfully replaced the use of laminae or “whale bone”. An

² About the RD 53/2013 of February 1, pursuant to Directive 2013/15 / EC, Vid. GIMÉNEZ-CANDELA, M., Cosmetics and Animal Experimentation (<http://www.derechoanimal.info/eng/page/2464/cosmetics-and-animal-experimentation>), with the relative regulations and literature cited therein.

³ Of great interest, SOUTHERN, C.E., Human v. House: a Combat Command for Couture of Luxury Labels in DePaul Journal of Art, Technology & Intellectual Property Law (24) 2013, Issue 1 49ff.

acquaintance of mine, during his years as a boarder in a Jesuit college (in Orihuela) recalled that the boarders used to collect in a box the “objects” that they found in the food that was served to them. The “star” of said box was, as a matter of fact, a whale corset, presumably of one of the cooks.

Fashion is anything but banal. It is art and a reflection of society, of its reality, of its needs and also of its dreams and ideals. It is a vehicle of social change, so we should celebrate the fact that the desire to respect animals and care for the environment has reached such an influential sector. I would like to know that from now on in the Schools of Fashion Design and in the Masters of Fashion (if there are any!), they will teach a variant of corporate social responsibility, as is the ethical treatment of animals. I will be delighted to know that, after Armani, the great Masters, the great houses of design, will position themselves in favour of respectful alternatives with those who wish to continue wearing the fur they have been born with.

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