



LANVIN LEGACY

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Lanvin Legacy

Artistic, innovative, and highly influential, Madame Jeanne Lanvin created her own elegant empire within fashion, perfume, advertisement, and decoration. Taking her inspiration from various outlets, Lanvin's House of couture has been a success for over a century. With the combination of romanticism and historicism, Jeanne Lanvin seamlessly outfitted celebrities and royalty, as well as regular men, women, and children alike. Madame Jeanne Lanvin's sixty-one years of design brought forward elements of beading, embroidery, appliqué, and a signature blue all her own. Her unrivaled legacy is something to be imitated, as Jeanne Lanvin remains one of the most prominent pioneers of fashion.

French-native, Madame Jeanne Lanvin began her career in fashion at a young age. At sixteen, she was a seamstress and millinery apprentice at Madame Félix in Paris, and then trained as a dressmaker at a fashion house called Talbot (Wikipedia). In 1889, when Lanvin was just twenty-two years old, she established her now renowned couture house with just forty francs in cash and three-hundred francs in credit- about sixty-six United States dollars (Encyclopedia of Clothing and Fashion). 1897 brought Lanvin her greatest gift of all- a daughter named Marguerite Marie-Blanche- who would become the most prominent inspiration to her design profession.



Marguerite.

<http://www.toutenparfum.com>

Jeanne Lanvin's fashion reputation sparked when she began creating a gorgeous wardrobe for her adolescent Marguerite. The elaborate dresses attracted the attention of numerous wealthy inhabitants of France, across Europe, and the United States, each of them desiring copies for their own daughters (Fairchild's Dictionary of Fashion). It was only a matter of time that Madame Lanvin was designing her lavish dresses for both mother and daughter. Consciously, Jeanne Lanvin developed her designs for the mothers with the same youthful charm as her children's wear. It was this very ageless quality that made an important impact on the worldwide fashion of the impending 20th century.

Now with a growing clientele of some of the most famous names in Europe and America, Lanvin brought in a new century with formally becoming a couturier in 1909 (Wikipedia). She dressed film actresses like Mary Pickford, Marlene Dietrich, and Yvonne Printemps as well as the Queens of Italy and Romania, and English princesses (www.designerhistory.com). In addition to her beloved daughter, Jeanne Lanvin looked to various other influences to create her unique and ground-breaking 20th century haute-

couture collection. Madame Lanvin extracted inspiration from various outlets such as previous centuries, exotic destinations, current events, and art and translated them “into viable, modern, functional design” (Encyclopedia of Clothing and Fashion).

Her famous *robes de style* was based on 18th century designs with small, high waists, and full skirts. These popular dresses were also the very predecessor of the famous “New Look” of Christian Dior designed several years later (www.designerhistory.com). These *robes de style* “flattered every figure at every age for all occasions” (Encyclopedia of Clothing and Fashion) and provided a preferred, alternative to the slim, cylindrical silhouettes designed by other couturiers at the time.



Robe de Style 1924.

(www.columbia.edu)

The intricate beading and embroidery she became synonymous with were inspired by her avid travels around the world. These trips brought The Orient, Egyptian, Italian, Ancient Greek, Russian, Central European, North African, South American, and Aztec ordination

into her exotic eveningwear. “Jeanne Lanvin’s skillful use of intricate trimmings, virtuoso embroideries and beaded decorations in clear, light, floral colors became a Lanvin trademark” (Wikipedia).



Evening Ensemble 1934.

www.metmuseum.org



Evening Jacket 1936.

Madame Lanvin also took ideas from a predominant event of her time- World War I. Postwar, Jeanne introduced “Wartime Crinoline”- new, mid-calf length dresses and wide-brimmed hats trimmed in furs, beads, ribbons, and silks (www.designerhistory.com). In addition, works of art like her collection of fifteenth-century Italian frescoes and Art Deco paid a heavy role in Jeanne Lanvin’s designs. Jeanne Lanvin’s evening dresses echoed the characteristic stream-lines and geometry in the Deco style.



No Title.

www.thefrock.com



Evening Dress 1932.

www.ulstermuseum.org



Geometry and Abstraction 1935.

www.vam.ac.uk

Also, through the very artwork of Fra Angelico's frescos, the "Lanvin Blue" was born. This color reflected her desire to craft the perfect colors for her fashions. "Lanvin Blue" soon became so original and exclusive to Jeanne, that she established her own dye factories to ward off competitor duplicates.



A Woman of Exception.

www.lanvin.com

Before her death at age 79, Madame Lanvin expanded both her repertoire and her business by adding menswear, perfumes, interior design, and advertising campaigns to her résumé. Several boutiques and shops in her name opened all over Europe, branching out her legacy of innovative design. The couturiere career of Madame Lanvin was survived by many successors including Antonio del Castillo, Dominique Morlotti, Jules-Francois Crahay, Maryll Lanvin, Claude Montana, and Patrick Lavoix all who have taken her style into the modern age. Through these designers, the House of Lanvin has continued to expand its product offerings to include sportswear, fur, accessories, ready-

to-wear, knitwear, cosmetics, and additional fragrances (In an Influential Fashion). Still, their work is successfully immortalizing the Parisian, elegant Lanvin couture.

An Ambassador of French sophistication, Madame Jeanne Lanvin's leadership and distinctive vision for design has brought one of the most prestigious labels of fashion in the world. Lanvin gave her modern and global approach to the fashion industry- and the industry embraced her. She has brought a whole idea of ageless fashion, a style that could literally be worn by anyone. A businesswoman and an artist, Madame Jeanne Lanvin is the epitome of innovative, elegant design. Lanvin's legacy to fashion is timeless.

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